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SINGAPORE : Nanyang Technological University (NTU) has launched a new S\$30 million Centre for Optical and Laser Engineering (COLE).

COLE aims to drive research with the aim of developing commercial applications in the area of optical and laser engineering.

NTU said small and medium-sized enterprises are set to benefit from innovations in optics and lasers.

COLE has secured industry and research funding of more than S\$10 million.

Projects at the new centre include new ways of

taking 3D measurements which are useful for structural engineering, and new devices such as a patented "lenseless" microscope.

Medical projects also in the pipeline include those to lower the cost of medical imaging for tissue and cancer diagnosis.

Located at NTU's School of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering, COLE has secured four initial joint projects with industry.

The centre with 100 faculty members and researchers will focus its research on three key areas of computational optics, optical metrology and instrumentation, and laser processing and patterning.

Seven local companies and one multinational company have come onboard as the centre's first industry partners.

The companies are Sunny Instrument, WaveLab Scientific, KLA Tencore, JM Vistec System, Life Technologies Holdings, Disco Hi-Tec (Singapore), Opto-Precision and Precision Optical Systems Singapore. - CNA/ms