

DBS partners SMU on sustainability initiative

The bank plans to contribute more than S\$1m and has committed S\$600,000 in the first 2 years of the tie-up

By Vivienne Tay
vtay@sph.com.sg
@VivienneTayBT

Singapore

DBS BANK and Singapore Management University (SMU) are joining hands on a comprehensive initiative that focuses on promoting and growing sustainability. The lender plans to contribute more than S\$1 million towards the programme and has committed S\$600,000 in the first two years of the partnership.

Under the DBS-SMU Sustainability Initiative, the SMU Lee Kong Chian School of Business will offer a major in sustainability in academic year 2019. There will also be funding for sustainability research, scholarships, fellowships and community engagement. This will provide further support to academics, businesses and students "passionate about tackling real world sustainability challenges", the statement added.

The initiative will also see the involvement of up to 10 social enterprises supported by DBS Foundation, the bank's social entrepreneurship foundation. They include Adrenalin, Betr Barista, boxgreen, CaptionCube, Edible Garden City, Homage, Treedots, UglyGood and WateROAM.

Each year, SMU will pair students with relevant skills to work on projects related to organisational improvement in these firms. Students will then provide support and receive on-the-job learning in various areas of the businesses.

These include developing digital strategies for media campaigns, raising visibility, fundraising, reviewing current processes and minimising inefficiencies; as well as exploring entrepreneurial approaches to benefit clients and organisations. Each project team will comprise two SMU students, with the first batch of project teams expected to be in place from May to July 2019.

The two inaugural DBS fellowships created for the programme will look to attract and retain research scholars in the field of sustainability, conducting research in sustainability and expanding outreach efforts to "create meaningful impact".

Two new DBS Sustainability scholarships will also be established per academic year for students looking to make an impact for sustainability

in Singapore. The scholarships are expected to be awarded in academic year 2019 which starts in August.

Lastly, the initiative will also organise one DBS Sustainability Business Study Mission per academic year, starting in academic year 2019 for SMU students to visit regional centres of excellence in sustainabil-

ity. The study missions aim to provide added experiential learning opportunities and aid in developing critical thinking and practical application skills.

"In many ways, Singapore is well-placed to become a model city for sustainable development and our hope is that this partnership will cultivate a thriving pool of talent and businesses that will help us become a world-class centre of sustainable de-

velopment excellence," Shee Tse Koon, Singapore country head at DBS Bank, said.

Gerard George, dean of SMU Lee Kong Chian School of Business, added that the multi-pronged efforts under the initiative will help nurture SMU students to meet the needs of the job market, foster research excellence and build intellectual capacity among its faculty members, as well as raise the general awareness of sustainability issues.



Under the DBS-SMU Sustainability Initiative, the SMU Lee Kong Chian School of Business will offer a major in sustainability in academic year 2019. There will also be funding for sustainability research, scholarships, fellowships and community engagement.

BT FILE PHOTO