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Ten research projects were awarded funding to look at how technology can be used to improve Singapore's living environment and possibilities for future space development and land optimisation.

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Singapore's skyline. (AFP/Roslan Rahman)

SINGAPORE: A total of S\$30.8 million in funding was awarded to 10 research projects as part of the Land and Liveability National Innovation Challenge (L2 NIC). This was announced in a joint news release from the Ministry of National Development and the National Research Foundation (NRF) on Wednesday (Sep 3).

Seventy-eight white papers were received after a call for proposals was made last November, to develop innovative technological solutions in four areas: the creation of space, optimising the use of land, creating highly liveable residential towns and supporting ICT and platforms.

Projects that made the final cut include one by the Singapore Management University's (SMU) iCity Lab, which proposes the use of sensors to support ageing-in-place. With the installation of sensors in the homes of the elderly, community volunteers could monitor and respond to seniors' calls for help in a more timely manner.

Faculty members of Nanyang Technological University (NTU) will also get funding for their proposal to develop an integrated solution for ensuring structural fire safety and life safety of occupants in underground structures. "The project will support the development of safe, robust

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and cost-effective designs for future mega underground developments in Singapore," according to the release.

One of the underground developments here is the Jurong Rock Caverns, which was officially opened by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on Tuesday.

Professor Yong Kwet Yew, the Scientific Lead for L2 NIC, said the projects selected were reviewed by international and local experts as well as a technical evaluation panel and are of "high research quality".

"I am delighted to see universities, research institutes, Government agencies and private sector companies working together to develop integrated and innovative urban solutions to make Singapore more liveable, resilient and sustainable," Prof Yong said.