

**Speech by  
Professor Lily Kong, SMU Provost  
at the Opening of DIGITEC Conference 2017 & Launch of SMU Academy  
held on 26 April 2017**

1. Good morning, Mr Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Higher Education and Skills and Second Minister for Defence, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.
2. I would like to begin by thanking all of you for your support and for making time to be with us at this conference on digital transformation and technology. I very much hope that you will find the keynotes and workshops enlightening and useful.
3. SMU has built a strong reputation for nurturing work-ready graduates. In the next phase of our development, we are highly committed to building on this strong reputation to contribute significantly to professional continuing education, to do our part in ensuring that the workforce has access to upskilling and reskilling opportunities, delivered in a timely, rigorous and relevant way.
4. The establishment of the SMU Academy is a significant step in our response to Singapore's changing needs. It represents our efforts at consolidating and growing in the area of professional continuing education. The Academy brings together several existing training arms in SMU, namely the Financial Training Institute (established in 2007), the Centre for Professional Studies (established in 2012) and the Financial IT Academy (established in 2013).
5. SMU Academy focuses on the development of functional skills across industries as well as sector-customised competencies in SMU's niche strengths of financial services, human capital, management and leadership, and technology and intelligent systems. The format of the specialised tracks in this Conference reflects this.

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

6. Since the start of the year, the Academy has also begun offering modules that can be stacked towards Graduate Certificates or Diplomas to be conferred by SMU, and which give credit recognition for modules that are relevant to the University's existing Master's degrees. Courses are conducted on weekday evenings and Saturdays, responding to the schedules of working professionals. The Academy will also be working to develop online resources to complement the face-to-face sessions, thus growing the blended learning mode of delivery and learning.
7. We are also pleased to be the first among local universities and Continuing Education Training centres to award digital credentials to participants who have completed courses with professional certification, such as Fintech and Innovation, a workshop supported by the Financial Training Scheme. These credentials or badges can accompany participants' CVs in their LinkedIn or Facebook accounts, or job applications so that employers are aware of the candidates' job-related competencies.
8. We are grateful to our many partners who have pledged to work alongside us. For DIGITEC 2017, we thank SSG, WSG, IMDA and Principals Academy. We look forward to continuing our partnership with them beyond DIGITEC. I would also like to thank Singapore Business Federation and Employment and Employability Institute, with whom we have recently signed MOUs to collaborate on curriculum design and outreach to industry. Many of our training partners and instructors are here with us, delivering keynotes and speaking at the concurrent workshops. We thank them very much for their commitment and dedication.
9. We look forward to seeing many of you again as SMU Academy ramps up its offerings. Our pledge is to offer relevant, useful courses in a timely way, in support of Singapore's transforming economy.
10. Thank you.

- End -