



MEDIA RELEASE

SMU launched International Advisory Council to foster and deepen SMU's engagement with Thailand

Held second Industry Leaders Dialogue in collaboration with Bangkok Bank to discuss the opportunities for ASEAN amidst disruption

Bangkok, 23 March 2018 (Friday) – Singapore Management University (SMU), a premier university in Asia internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching, has launched its International Advisory Council in Thailand yesterday (i.e. 22 March 2018) to establish, strengthen and deepen SMU's collaboration and engagement with the government, academic and business communities in Thailand.

The SMU International Advisory Council seeks to collaborate with and involve friends of SMU and its alumni to reach out to corporates and grow the friends of the SMU community in overseas countries. The Council will provide platforms for active engagements between SMU's overseas alumni, international students, and the local business community and academia.

In conjunction with the launch, SMU in collaboration with Bangkok Bank organised the SMU-Bangkok Bank Industry Leaders Dialogue to discuss how governments in Southeast Asia can create frameworks to take advantage of business disruptions and foster innovation and economic growth in their country and the region, and how old and new companies alike ensure sustainable growth amidst these changes.

About 180 business, government and academic leaders from Thailand, SMU senior management and SMU alumni in Thailand, joined the event which was held at Park Hyatt Bangkok. Among the dignitaries present were Guest-of-Honour Mrs Chua Siew San, Ambassador of Singapore to Thailand who gave the Welcome Remarks; SMU Chairman Mr Ho Kwon Ping who gave the Welcome Address, and SMU President Professor Arnoud De Meyer who delivered the Introductory Address.

SMU's International Advisory Council in Thailand

Professor De Meyer said, "SMU is stepping up our engagement with countries in the region through a series of initiatives, and we are keen to foster closer ties with Thailand. Both Singapore and Thailand are the founding members of ASEAN, and enjoy long-standing relations which continue to flourish. To guide and aid us in our effort, the SMU International Advisory Council comprising prominent and esteemed business leaders from Thailand and Singapore has been established to support SMU's overall efforts to build its international reputation as a premier university in Asia. We look forward to having their advice and guidance on how SMU can be relevant to them and play our part for the region.

“The launch of the SMU International Advisory Council in Thailand comes on the heels of our successful efforts in Myanmar in July, the Philippines in October, and Vietnam in December last year, as well as in China in January this year. We plan to roll out similar initiatives to other countries in the region where we have a sizable alumni base and established relationships with local academia, businesses and governments.”

The SMU International Advisory Council in Thailand, chaired by Mr Chartsiri Sophonpanich, President of Bangkok Bank Public Company Ltd, comprises the following members:

- (1) Mr Timothy Chia, Chairman, Hup Soon Global Corporation Ltd.
- (2) Mr William Heinecke, Chairman, Minor International PCL.
- (3) Mr Ho Ren Hua, CEO, Thai Wah PCL.
- (4) Mr Alope Lohia, Group Chief Executive Officer, Indorama Ventures PCL.
- (5) Mr Kirit Shah, Chairman, G.P. Group of Companies
- (6) Khunying Jada Wattanasiritham, Independent Director, The Siam Commercial Bank PCL.
- (7) *Mr Satta Chairasmisak [Juris Doctor programme, Class of 2017]
- (8) *Ms Jittida Haputpong, Head of Partnerships, Igloohome [BSc (Economics), Class of 2011]

** denotes SMU alumni*

The members of the SMU International Advisory Council (Thailand), in their roles as ambassadors of the university, will lend support to SMU’s activities in Thailand. These activities will include dialogues and panel discussions to raise awareness of SMU’s thought leadership and our areas of excellence, as well as alumni showcase/gatherings and networking sessions. The members may be invited to be panelists, or nominate and help to invite suitable persons to participate in such dialogues and discussions or networking sessions.

Added Mr Chartsiri Sophonpanich, Chair of the SMU International Advisory Council in Thailand: “There are many synergies between SMU and Thailand which we can explore through the SMU International Advisory Council in Thailand. The collaboration between the two countries through the SMU International Advisory Council will assist Thailand’s drive to transform and modernise its economy under Thailand 4.0”.

SMU-Bangkok Bank Industry Leaders Dialogue

At the SMU-Bangkok Bank Industry Leaders Dialogue, Dr. Pichet Durongkaverroj, Minister of Digital Economy and Society at Thailand’s Ministry of Digital Economy and Society gave the Keynote Address on “Disruptive Economy - Opportunities for Thailand and ASEAN”. Dr. Pichet said as part of its digital strategy the Thai government is collaborating with Singapore in protecting the critical information infrastructure of both countries as well as the ASEAN region as a whole.

The second Keynote Address was delivered by Dr Beh Swan Gin, Chairman of Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB) who spoke on “Remaking the Singapore Economy”. Dr Beh shared about the drivers for change, EDB’s shift in its approach to economic development, and the greater emphasis on creating new businesses.

This was followed by a speech by Professor Gerard George, Dean of SMU Lee Kong Chian School of Business who spoke on the topic “Design, Build and Adapt Business Ideas that Thrive”. In his speech, Professor George suggested ways in which Southeast Asian startups can scale-up using innovative, new business models. Drawing from research on his newly launched “The Business Model Book”, he identifies ways in which businesses can create and capture new sources of value.

The event ended with a panel discussion on “An Ecosystem Approach to Innovation, Digitisation and Transformation” which was moderated by Professor Annie Koh, Vice President, Office of Business Development; Academic Director, Business Families Institute and International Trading Institute@SMU; and Practice Professor of Finance, SMU. The panel members were Dr Pichet Durongkaverroj, Minister of Digital Economy and Society, Thailand; Dr Beh Swan Gin, Chairman, Singapore Economic Development Board; Mr Nicholas A. Nash, Group President, Sea Limited; and Mr Arthur Chua, Chief Executive Officer, Goldbell Group. The panel discussed several issues, including Thailand’s efforts to enhance the innovation quotient in the country, the importance of building an ecosystem which benefits both large and small companies, and the need to transform the culture of a company to embrace technology and bring about change.

Professor Arnoud De Meyer added, “The host of disruptive technologies sweeping across the world have brought about profound impact on the lives of people, businesses and economies. These disruptions can be disconcerting, but they also present opportunities to harness new technologies to achieve greater progress and development at the individual, corporate and societal levels. Countries in ASEAN are facing up to the challenges posed by these disruptive forces, and are in various stages of devising or implementing strategies to ride the wave of disruption.

“This Industry Leaders Dialogue presents a platform for public officials and private enterprise owners from Thailand and Singapore to share their views and insights on innovation, digitisation and transformation. The Dialogue is an integral part of SMU’s overall efforts to demonstrate our faculty members’ thought leadership.”

[Please refer to Annex A for SMU’s recent engagements with Thailand.]

For more information, please contact

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About Singapore Management University

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU’s mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning, and for its technologically enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes.

Home to around 10,000 undergraduate, postgraduate, executive and professional, full- and part-time students, SMU is comprised of six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law, and School of Social Sciences. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors', masters' and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in interdisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU has an emphasis on generating rigorous, high-impact, and relevant multi-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities from USA, Europe, China and India, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector, through its research institutes, centres and labs. SMU's city campus is a state-of-the art facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community.

About Bangkok Bank

Bangkok Bank is one of Southeast Asia's leading regional banks, Thailand's market leader in corporate and business banking, and has the country's largest retail customer base. Its nationwide network includes more than 1,200 branches, including self-service outlets, over 9,000 ATMs and 1,200 cash deposit machines, and extensive mobile and internet banking services.

Internationally, Bangkok Bank has the largest overseas branch network of any Thai bank with 32 overseas locations in 15 economies, including branches in nine of the countries which make up the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). While its international network is focused on Southeast Asia and China, its global presence includes branches in New York, London and Tokyo. It is the first Thai bank with a local license in China, held by Bangkok Bank (China), and it also has a wholly-owned subsidiary, Bangkok Bank Berhad, in Malaysia.

The Bank's ongoing market leadership is due to its philosophy of developing long-term supportive partnerships with its customers. The complementary synergies between its international, corporate, investment, business, and personal-banking services means the Bank offers an impressive breadth and depth of services to both local and international clients.

SMU's recent engagements with Thailand

In the last few years, SMU has steadily increased its engagement with Thailand. These include:

- **Case Writing and Case Studies:** SMU's Centre for Management Practice (CMP) has conducted case writing workshops at King Mongkut's University of Technology and Thammasat University. It has also written case studies "Unilever Platinum Stores: Building a Brand for the Community" (2015) and "Siam Park City: Can Affordable Pricing be Profitable?" (2016). Several articles about Thailand have also been written and published in CMP's Asian Management Insights and Asian Management Briefs.
- **Research:** Faculty members of various schools at SMU have been conducting research on Thailand, topics include economic growth and poverty reduction, and the situation of Thailand's older population.

The Institute for Societal Leadership, which is a centre within SMU, produced a special country edition on Thailand for its Catalyst Asia magazine in July 2017. The publication was jointly sponsored by Crown Property Bureau and Siam Cement Group. The institute has also produced seven short videos on social issues in Thailand.

The Lien Centre for Social Innovation at SMU is currently conducting a study on social entrepreneurship in six countries, including Thailand. For the study in Thailand, the Centre is working with Thammasat University, Mahidol University, Suranaree University, King Mongkut's University for Technology Thonburi.

- **Youth Development:** SEAGULL is an exclusive leadership development programme by the Institute for Societal Leadership at SMU. As part of the programme, it conducted a one-week immersion in Bangkok in 2017. Participants gained valuable insights on tri-sector collaboration and saw first-hand how change happens when social impact organisations work with partners from diverse sectors, including corporate and government.
- **Study Missions:** Various schools at SMU have been organising study missions to Thailand to enable students to better understand various aspects of the country.

The Lee Kong Chian School of Business organized a MBA Business Study Mission on Social Entrepreneurship to Thailand in 2017 to understand the basic conditions in Northern Thailand, and apply entrepreneurial knowledge to specific problems. A Business Study Mission will be held in 2018 for students to learn about the business ecosystem of Thailand, its industry structures and emerging technologies.

Accounting Study Missions Bangkok and Chiang Mai were conducted in 2015 for students from the School of Accountancy to better understand the investment and business opportunities in the country, and the social, cultural, economic, and political environments under which companies operate.

- **Forums:** The Mastercard-SMU 2nd Research Seminar on Financial and Social Inclusion was held in October 2017. Pearl Phaovisaid, a lecturer from School of Global Studies, Thammasat University, and Kanokporn Rienkhemaniyom, Associate Dean for Academic Service and Social Engagement at King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, Thailand spoke at the forum.

Ms Sutatip Yuthayotin, Head of a Judges Panel at a National Court of Thailand (Udonthani Provincial Court), spoke at the Asean IP Colloquium organized by Applied Research Centre for Intellectual Assets and the Law of Asia at SMU.

- **Student exchange:** SMU has hosted 68 exchange students from Thailand, and sent 80 students to three Thai universities, namely Mahidol University, Chulalongkorn University, and Thammasat University.
- **Overseas community service projects in Thailand:** SMU students serve annually in projects based in Chiang Rai, Khorat, Loei, and Chiang Mai, in partnership with local communities and organisations.
 - o The Teung Project 2 (with Thai Youth Community Foundation)
 - o Project Nok Hook (with Non Thon District, Education Office 12 and Wang Sa Phung District, Loei Primary Educational Service Areas Office 2)
 - o Project Heart2heart (with Itapon Foundation)
- **Support for Thai students:**
 - o *Bangkok Bank Scholarship:* For full-time first year undergraduates from Thailand and of Thai nationality enrolled in any degree programme. Successful recipients may be granted internship and/or career opportunities with Bangkok Bank and/or its designated companies.
- **Support for overseas experiences in Thailand:**
 - o *Wilmar Overseas Internship Grants:* Seeks to expose students to emerging economies of the world, including Thailand. Up to five grants for recipient's travel and cost of living expenses during his/her overseas internship attachment in selected markets.
 - o *The Temasek Foundation International Leadership Enrichment and Regional Networking Programme @ Singapore Management University 2017:* Overseas exchange scholarship for up to 15 undergraduate students in our partner universities (including Thailand) to study for a semester at SMU. The programme provides scholars with opportunities to develop leadership skills, forge friendships and build ties with each other.
 - o *Doris and Mick Aw Accounting Study Grants:* Provide assistance to full-time School of Accountancy undergraduates participating in the Accounting Study Mission.