



Media Release

Inaugural V3 Group Professorship in Family Entrepreneurship Lecture held at SMU

Research survey reveals insights into the role and importance of innovation in family businesses

Singapore, 15 August 2019 (Thursday) - Singapore Management University's (SMU) Professor Annie Koh has been named the inaugural V3 Group Professor of Family Entrepreneurship. The Professorship has been made possible by a generous endowed gift of \$3 million from the V3 Group in July 2018. It aims to support research and programmes on best practices in family entrepreneurship, such as placing emphasis on shared family values and effective succession planning; resource mobilisation to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in business families, as well as family wealth management and impact investing.

As the V3 Group Professor of Family Entrepreneurship, Professor Annie Koh, who is SMU's Vice President for Business Development, Professor of Finance at SMU Lee Kong Chian School of Business and also Academic Director of SMU's Business Families Institute (BFI@SMU) and International Trading Institute (ITI@SMU), will contribute to the development of family entrepreneurship through research, teaching and engagement with industry.

Professor Koh today delivered the inaugural V3 Group Professorship in Family Entrepreneurship Lecture on '*Innovation in Singapore-based Family-owned Enterprises*', where she shared the key findings of a study of the same title conducted by BFI@SMU between December 2018 and May 2019. The six-month study surveyed 86 Singapore-based family firms across a range of sectors, including F&B, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, healthcare, hospitality, real estate and financial services. 78% of the respondents are small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with an annual turnover of up to S\$100 million, with the remaining being large corporations with an annual turnover above S\$100 million.

The research survey revealed that:

- 83% of the respondents found it challenging to grow and scale their businesses due to the limited size of Singapore's domestic market, and 74% viewed innovation as a key strategy to stay ahead of the competition.
- 40% of the respondents felt that product innovation and service innovation were most important to their businesses, followed by process innovation (29%) and organisational innovation (27%).
- Among the companies surveyed, those who tapped on external financing to support their innovation utilised bank loans (67%), followed by angel investors (15%) and crowdfunding (5%).
- Over 60% of the respondents felt that regardless of the availability of government financial grants, their firms will still proceed with innovation initiatives.
- The majority of respondents had not collaborated with education institutions (56%) nor government institutions (62%) to develop innovation initiatives.

Professor Annie Koh said, “I am honoured to be named the inaugural V3 Group Professor of Family Entrepreneurship. Innovation is what sparks many success stories among sustainable family enterprises, and Mr Ron Sim and V3 Group encapsulates that spirit with vision, values and valour. I hope to build on the foundation of what we have learnt through research and case studies, and offer programmes to families to help grow family entrepreneurial spirit across generations. Business families in Singapore can do this by leveraging the robust and dynamic ecosystem comprising government, startups, educational institutions and innovation labs, while collaborating with MNCs and other family firms”.

Mr Ron Sim, Founder, Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of V3 Group, said, “I strongly believe that family businesses are important contributors to the economy. For family businesses to be sustainable, family entrepreneurship is key. I hope that through this Professorship, the named professor is able to spearhead meaningful research and programmes with BFI@SMU to generate thought leadership and education to benefit more family businesses and the community.” Mr Sim has been a Founding Family member of BFI since 2013. He was also an advisory board member of the SMU Lee Kong Chian School of Business from September 2004 to December 2014, and had supported SMU Shirin Fozdar’s programme in empowering women entrepreneurship.

On the same day, BFI@SMU also announced a new research partnership with Bangkok University through a Memorandum of Understanding signed between Professor Annie Koh and Associate Professor Dr Veerapong Malai, Vice President for Innovation and Creative Entrepreneurship Development of Bangkok University. Under the agreement, Bangkok University will collaborate with SMU to collect data to uncover insights into innovation in Thailand-based family-owned enterprises. The findings of this study are expected to be ready by the end of 2020.

- End -

Enclosures:

- Slides – *The 3Cs of Innovation in Singapore-based Family Businesses*

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 to produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU’s education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning

Home to over 10,000 students across undergraduate, postgraduate professional and post-graduate research programmes, 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 multidisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU emphasises rigorous, high-impact, multi- and interdisciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities around the world, as well as with partners in the business community and public

sector. SMU's city campus is a modern facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community. www.smu.edu.sg

About Business Families Institute @ SMU

SMU established the Business Families Institute (BFI@SMU) in August 2012 in response to the growing needs of business families in Asia. Since 2010, SMU had recognised the emergence of Asian business families and discerned that they require specifically contextualised thought leadership and applied knowledge.

With this in mind, BFI@SMU intends to collaborate with various partners, academic or otherwise, to be a knowledge leader in Asian business family-related education, engagement and research. The Institute will address business family-specific issues such as family, ownership, business succession and governance. The vision of BFI@SMU is to facilitate business families in Asia to develop, harness and leverage their family and financial capital across generations. <http://bfi.smu.edu.sg/>

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