

Chance to hear Nobel laureates

By DAVID EE

DEMAND by members of the public to hear from Nobel laureates is so great that organisers of the Global Young Scientists Summit (GYSS) held here have decided to address it.

At this year's event, seven free public talks will be given by 11 notable laureates and other eminent scientists in the fields of chemistry, physics and medicine, among others.

The closed-door summit, now in its second year, is organised by the National Research Foundation (NRF). It will be held from Jan 19 to 24, and the public talks will be held on the last five days.

The Nobel laureate line-up includes Australian pathologist John Robin Warren, 77, who proved in 1982 that bacteria – and not stress or spicy foods – cause stomach ulcers.

The laureates will talk about their lives as scientists and how science connects with the arts, among other topics.

The decision was made to organise more talks by Nobel laureates after the “tremendous success” of last year's lone public event held on the sidelines of the inaugural GYSS, said NRF chief executive Low Teck Seng on Wednesday.

“A lot of people complained that there was no access to these Nobel Prize winners,” he said. “Then we realised we should do more... we want to make science real for the public.”

Professor Low added that he hoped the talks would help youngsters see the excitement in science and choose it as a discipline.

About 2,000 members of the public and students are expected to attend the talks held at various venues, such as the National University of Singapore (NUS), the Singapore Science Centre, the School Of The Arts (Sota), and the Singapore Management University (SMU). Admission is free.

Talks held at NUS, Sota and SMU are open to the public, while the others are targeted at students and public servants.

The GYSS is the largest gathering of Nobel laureates in Asia. It gathers these pioneers and about 350 young scientists, under the age of 35, from around the world in a “village-like” environment for conferences.

It is modelled after the Lindau meetings in Germany, where Nobel laureates and young scientists get to meet and mingle.

davidee@sph.com.sg

“

MAKING SCIENCE REAL

A lot of people complained that there was no access to these Nobel Prize winners. Then we realised we should do more... we want to make science real for the public.

– National Research Foundation chief executive Low Teck Seng

”