



Media Release

First cohort graduates from International Trading Professional Conversion Programme

20 PMETs awarded Specialist Diploma in International Trading

Singapore, 15 November 2017 (Wednesday) – Singapore Management University (SMU) today celebrated the graduation of the first cohort of 20 International Trading Professional Conversion Programme (PCP) participants, and also welcomed its newest cohort. The PCP, which was launched in July 2016, has another 54 participants currently enrolled in its Commodities and Non-Commodities Tracks.

At a ceremony held today at SMU, the 20 graduates from the PCP's Non-Commodities Track received their Specialist Diploma in International Trading from Mrs Josephine Teo, Minister, Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Home Affairs and Manpower. Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry, Dr Koh Poh Koon, also addressed the graduates, highlighting the importance of international trade and the array of jobs that it offers, including those requiring digital skillsets as technological advancements impact global trade.

Developed by the ITI@SMU in partnership with International Enterprise (IE) Singapore, Workforce Singapore (WSG) and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Academy, the International Trading PCP is designed to give participants a first-hand, immersive experience of the international trading environment and to provide an overview of the wholesale trading value chain. The 20 graduates have been matched to 16 companies across the Food and Beverage, Commodities, Electronic Consumables and FMCG sectors, and have successfully taken on diverse roles, including business development, finance, logistics, supply chain management and trade operations.

Stretched across one year, the three-phased part-time programme is designed to prepare participants adequately for a variety of middle office roles in the trading value chain. To provide an immersive and enriching experience, classroom training is blended with e-learning components, and enhanced with seminars with industry experts, site visits to companies and project work. Aside from key and fundamental modules such as 'Supply Chain', 'Risk Management', 'Trade Documentation', the curriculum now includes digitisation-relevant modules, such as 'Online Marketing and eCommerce Platforms' and 'Fintech', in line with the increasing digital needs of the sector. This will empower participants to effect business model transformation for the companies they have been matched to.

Professor Arnoud De Meyer, SMU President, said, "In the current dynamic and disruptive landscape, and as Singapore's economy transforms, I am convinced that all stakeholders have to work together to address the urgent need for our workforce to be continually upskilled and reskilled. Over the years, SMU has developed an excellent track record built on its practise-based and application-centric curriculum. As an Institute of Higher Learning, I am pleased that our University has this opportunity to play our part in grooming talent for Singapore's Wholesale Trade sector, and in preparing PMETs adequately for their new careers."

Professor Annie Koh, SMU's Vice President for Business Development and Academic Director of ITI@SMU, said, "We attribute the success of this PCP to the strong support from our both our government and industry partners. Their vision and confidence in this programme, together with the commitment from the enrolling companies and expertise of the programme lecturers, have provided a rewarding new career and learning journey for the programme participants."

To date, ITI@SMU has rolled out three intakes of the Non-Commodities Track and one intake for the Commodities Track (Please see Annex 1 for intake details). The Institute, which also matches PCP participants to companies, has successfully placed all 74 participants in 53 different companies. All of them are transitioning smoothly into their new roles and companies. Going forward, ITI@SMU targets to train 100 PMETs each year.

Mr Satvinder Singh, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, IE Singapore, said "Amid global uncertainties, international trade remains a key driver of Singapore's economic growth in jobs and business spend. While digitalisation will change how B2B trade is done, it brings new opportunities for companies to access more trade flows. IE Singapore will work closely with wholesale trade companies to adopt digital technology to enhance their growth and productivity, and work with partners to establish training such as this PCP to prepare talent for jobs in this sector.

Mr Tan Choon Shian, Chief Executive of WSG, said, "Wholesale trade is a high growth sector with many job opportunities spanning multiple job functions and roles. WSG will continue to work with our partners to develop conversion programmes to help jobseekers, whether they are midcareer switchers or mature workers, find fulfilling career opportunities in other growth sectors."

- End -

Enclosures:

- Annex 1: Fact sheet on objective and intake-statistics of the International Trading PCP
- Annex 2: Profiles of interviewees
- Annex 3: Curriculum outline - International Trading PCP (Non-Commodities Track)
- Annex 4: Curriculum outline - International Trading PCP (Commodities Track)

About SMU

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. It is known for its interactive and technologically enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small-size classes.

Home to around 10,000 undergraduates and postgraduates, SMU comprises 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 [bachelor's](#), [master's](#) 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](#) 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. www.smu.edu.sg

About ITI@SMU

SMU's International Trading Institute, or ITI@SMU, was formed in 2007 as the result of a collaborative effort between SMU, International Enterprise (IE) Singapore and leading industry players in the trading sector. The first trading institute in the world to be set up within a university, ITI@SMU boasts a specialist focus on international trading and is supported by a unique public-private partnership. ITI@SMU is Singapore's premier industry platform for thought leadership and talent development in the arena of international trading.

The Institute launched the International Trading Track (ITT) in 2007 with the primary aim of providing in-depth knowledge on the trading sector to prepare SMU undergraduates for careers with companies operating in the trading value chain, through various experiential learning opportunities. The programme is offered to SMU students who have opted for Finance as a major in SMU's Bachelor of Business Management (BBM) programme.

From 2013, the Maritime Economics Track (MET), a multidisciplinary programme, was offered by the SMU School of Economics in partnership with ITI@SMU. Supported by the Singapore Maritime Institute and the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, MET aims to produce SMU graduates who are equipped to meet the talent needs of Singapore's growing maritime industry. The MET is designed to ensure that students establish a firm foundation in economics and develop essential knowledge and contextualised skills relevant for maritime related roles

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ANNEX 1

International Trading PCP Objectives

The programme's objectives are three-prong:

1. To equip mid-career professionals with the skills and knowledge they need to secure new opportunities in the International Trading Sector;
2. To enable current professionals to upskill themselves so that they are able to help their companies become future ready;
3. To help Singapore companies become 'disruption ready' by providing them with the talent they require to meet the demands of rapidly changing global economy.

International Trading PCP in-take statistics to-date

From November 2016 to date, ITI@SMU has rolled out three intakes of the Non-Commodities track and one intake in the Commodities track.

Programme start date	Programme	Intake
7 Nov 2016	1 st cohort Non-Commodities track	20 graduands
3 Jul 2017	1 st cohort Commodities track	24 enrolled
10 Jul 2017	2 nd cohort Non-Commodities track	19 enrolled
27 Nov 2017	3 rd cohort Non-Commodities track	11 enrolled

ANNEX 2 – PROFILES OF INTERVIEWEES

International Trading PCP (Non-Commodities Track) – 1st cohort (completed programme)

Name: Mr Jumadi Bin Mohamed Yosop
Age: 44 years old
Qualifications: Diploma
Company: Riverwood Pte Ltd (Integrated logistics solutions company)
Designation: Finance and HR Manager
Previous job: Administrative role in public service

Jumadi joined Riverwood in November 2016. As a result of networking, discussions and exposure which he received in the course of the PCP, he has introduced new ideas for internationalisation to his current employer. And as a result of this, Riverwood is now exploring the global halal logistics market.

International Trading PCP (Non-Commodities Track) – 1st cohort (completed programme)

Name: Ms Grace Chua
Age: 43 years old
Qualifications: Bachelor of Arts in Economics & Statistics, Master of Commerce in Applied Finance
Company: Assure IT Pte Ltd
Designation: Account and Project Manager
Previous: 15-year hiatus from work to take care of family

Grace had taken a 15-year hiatus from work to concentrate on taking care of her family. She joined Assure IT Pte Ltd in February 2017, and is now playing a key role in growing the company's interactive and collaborative solutions.

International Trading PCP (Non-Commodities Track) – 3rd cohort

Name: Ms Emily Tan
Age: 56 years old
Qualifications: Graduate Diploma in HR, MBA
Company: Corlison Pte Ltd* (Distribution and brand management firm)
Designation: Explore Manager
Previous job: Worked 34 years in various FMCG supermarket retail chains

Emily has worked for 34 years in various FMCG Supermarkets, and was responsible for training, administration and procurement. She is making a career switch from the 'buy' side to the 'sell' side, and will join Corlison Pte Ltd on 22 November 2017 as an Export Manager.

*Corlison Pte Ltd is a 53-year-old family-run business that created Singapore's only home-grown oral brand Pearlie White. It makes 60 of its own products and distributes more than 600 products.

Note: The above candidates are available for interviews upon request.