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**Remarks by SMU President Prof Lily Kong
at the Official Launch of SMU China
22 October 2026, 6.50pm, Raffles Hotel Shenzhen**

Senior Minister of State Ms Low Yen Ling

Consul-General Ms Cindy Wee

Chairman Piyush Gupta and members of the SMU Board of Trustees

Council Chair Mr Daryl Ng and members of our International Advisory Council China

Our partners, our alumni, and the SMU family from Singapore, China and around the world

Good evening! 来自五湖四海的朋友们，迎大家来到深圳。

I am a geographer by training, and I have spent much of my working life studying how cities grow and change. So, it is a particular pleasure to be in Shenzhen.

Many of you know the remarkable story of this city far better than I do. But one detail has stayed with me. When the Special Economic Zone was established in 1980, Shenzhen had two parks. Today it has more than 1,300. A city that has grown so quickly has also chosen to make room for its people to gather, to rest and to breathe. That tells us something about the kind of growth a place values.

SMU Chairman has spoken about why SMU needs to be here. Let me say a little about what our presence will mean in practice, and what we hope it will make possible.

We do not arrive as strangers. About 7,000 of our alumni are from China. Zhejiang University and Fudan University are among our strategic partners. Here in Shenzhen, we already run joint Doctor of Business Administration programmes with Peking University HSBC Business School and, more recently The Chinese University of Hong Kong-Shenzhen. We also have broader partnerships with Shenzhen Technology University, CUHK-Shenzhen Research Institute, alongside growing engagement with other institutions in the city. About a fifth of our Asia-focused research is on China.

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SMU China is our first centre in China. It joins our centres in Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam. For the first time, our regional presence reaches beyond Southeast Asia.

SMU brings together management, the social sciences and technology. What we care about most is preparing people who are Asia-ready: who do not simply know about Asia, but can work across it, understanding its markets, its systems and its people. The Greater Bay Area needs such talent, and so does Southeast Asia. That is why we have come to Shenzhen, and why we intend to stay for the long term.

When generative AI arrived, SMU chose from the start not to ban it, but to help our students use it well, because we knew both learning and work had changed. Today, our Resilient Workforces Institute studies how AI is reshaping jobs and skills, in Singapore and across the region. We have also developed a university-wide strategy for AI in education.

What will SMU China do? I would put it in three words: connect, create and contribute.

First, connect. Many Chinese enterprises are now looking to Southeast Asia, and many Southeast Asian businesses are looking to China, and to the Guangdong–Hong Kong–Macao Greater Bay Area in particular. A university can help people on both sides understand each other's markets, systems and ways of working. And, we have already begun. Earlier this year, SMU Thailand welcomed business leaders from Shenzhen, participants in our joint doctoral programme with Peking University, to learn first-hand about the Thai economy.

With SMU China, an organisation here thinking about Southeast Asia, or one in Southeast Asia exploring China, can work with SMU on both ends. The partnerships we are building here should help turn those connections into internships, jobs, professional learning and executive development, business relationships and learning opportunities.

Second, create. For students, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, Shenzhen offers something a classroom cannot: the chance to understand China from within China. Since 2011, more than 850 students have undertaken internships with over 350 companies in China, including BYD, Tencent, Huawei and DJI. We want more students to spend time

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working here, and to return home not only with knowledge of China, but with relationships, experience, business acumen and judgement.

Third, contribute. SMU brings strengths in business, law, economics, accountancy, computing and the social sciences, and relationships across Southeast Asia built over more than two decades. But contribution, if it is to last, runs both ways.

What we learn in Shenzhen must find its way back into our classrooms, our case studies and our research. We already teach more than 30 case studies on Chinese enterprises. I hope there will be many more, written with partners here. Shenzhen is an agile and innovative city where companies turn ideas into products, and products into markets, at remarkable speed. Students and professionals in Singapore and across Southeast Asia should learn from Shenzhen's experience as well as our own.

So how should we judge whether SMU China is making a difference? By the impact we create: students and professionals whose time here changes how they understand China; faculty whose research reaches practice; Chinese and Southeast Asian organisations that find one another through us. Those outcomes will take time. Opening an office is just an initial step.

There is a saying in this city: 来了就是深圳人. SMU has come. We hope to stay, to learn, and to grow alongside all of you.

My thanks to Senior Minister of State Low Yen Ling for joining us on this important occasion; to our Chinese university and academic partners who have journeyed alongside us for years; to Daryl Ng and our International Advisory Council China, for their counsel; to Consul-General Cindy Wee and her colleagues; to our partners in Shenzhen; to our alumni in China for their continued connection to SMU; and of course, to Victor Huang and the SMU China team; and to colleagues across SMU who have brought us to this point.

Thank you all for being with us this evening.

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**新加坡管理大学校长江莉莉教授
SMU 中国中心揭幕仪式上致辞
2026 年 10 月 22 日，深圳鹏瑞莱佛士酒店**

新加坡能源、贸易及工业部兼文化、社区及青年部高级政务部长刘燕玲女士
新加坡驻广州总领事馆总领事黄美美女士
SMU 董事会主席高博德先生以及董事会成员
SMU 中国国际咨询委员会主席黄永光先生以及委员会成员
来自新加坡、中国以及世界各地的合作伙伴、校友
以及 SMU 大家庭的成员们

大家晚上好！

来自五湖四海的朋友们，欢迎大家来到深圳。

我本身是学地理出身的，大半职业生涯都在研究城市如何成长、如何变化，所以今天能来到深圳，我特别高兴。

深圳的故事，在座各位比我更了解。不过有一个细节，我一直记得：1980 年深圳经济特区成立时，这里只有两个公园；如今，深圳有一千三百多个公园。一座城市发展得这么快，还愿意腾出空间，让市民相聚、休息、透透气。从中可以看出，深圳重视的是什么样的发展。

我们的董事会主席高博德先生刚才谈到，SMU 为什么要来到深圳。现在，我想和大家分享，我们来了之后会做些什么，以及希望能创造哪些新的机遇。

SMU 对中国并不陌生。我们大约有七千名校友来自中国。浙江大学和复旦大学，都是我们的战略合作伙伴。在深圳，我们和北京大学汇丰商学院以及香港中文大学（深圳）合作开办了 DBA 项目。我们还与深圳技术大学，以及香港中文大学深圳研究院，

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有着广泛的合作。与深圳其他院校的交流，也越来越多。在我们以亚洲为核心的研究中，大约五分之一聚焦中国。

SMU 中国中心，是我们在中国的第一个中心。也与我们在印尼、泰国和越南的中心一起，加入了 SMU 的海外中心网络。这是我们的区域布局第一次走出东南亚。SMU 把管理、社会科学和科技结合在一起。我们最重视的，是培养“亚洲就绪”的人才。他们不仅了解亚洲，还能自如地在亚洲各地工作，懂市场，懂制度，也懂当地人。粤港澳大湾区需要这样的人才，东南亚也一样。这就是我们来到深圳的原因，也是我们打算长期留在这里的原因。

生成式 AI 刚出现的时候，SMU 一开始就决定不禁止，而是引导学生善用它。因为我们了解，学习和工作的方式都已经改变了。今天，我们的韧性劳动力研究所，专门研究 AI 如何改变新加坡和整个区域的工作与技能。我们也制定了一套全校的策略，把 AI 融入教育。

SMU 中国中心会做些什么呢？我用三个词来说明：连接、创造和贡献。

第一，连接。今天，很多中国企业希望走向东南亚，很多东南亚企业也希望进入中国特别是进入粤港澳大湾区。大学可以帮助双方，更好地了解彼此的市场、制度与做事的方式。其实，我们已经开始行动了。今年早些时候，一批深圳的企业家——他们是我们与北京大学合作开办的 DBA 项目的学员——来到了 SMU 泰国中心，亲身了解泰国经济。

有了 SMU 中国中心，这里的机构想去东南亚，或是东南亚的机构想来中国，都能在两边找到 SMU 这个伙伴。我们在这里建立的合作，可以把这些联系，变成实习和工作机会，变成专业学习和高管培训，也变成商业关系和学习机会。

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第二，创造。不论是本科生还是研究生，深圳都能让他们获得课堂上得不到的学习体验：身在中国，读懂中国。从 2011 年到现在，已经有八百五十多名 SMU 学生，在中国三百五十多家企业实习过，包括比亚迪、腾讯、华为和大疆。我们希望有更多学生来这里工作，回去时，不只带着对中国的认识，还带着人脉、经验、商业触觉和判断力。

第三，贡献。SMU 在商科、法律、经济、会计、计算机和社会科学方面都有专长。二十多年来，也在东南亚建立了广泛的伙伴关系。但是，贡献要能长久，一定是双向的。

我们在深圳学到的一切，都要回到我们的课堂、案例与研究中。我们的课程里，已经有三十多个中国企业的案例。希望今后能和这里的伙伴合作，编写更多。深圳是一座灵活、创新的城市。在这里，企业能以惊人的速度，把想法变成产品，再把产品推向市场。让新加坡和东南亚的学生和专业人士，不仅能借鉴我们自己的经验，也能从深圳的发展中得到启发。

那么，我们要如何衡量 SMU 中国中心的成效呢？关键在于我们带来的影响：学生和专业人士在这里的经历，能改变他们对中国的理解；教授们的研究，能落到实践之中；中国和东南亚的机构，能通过我们找到彼此。这些成果，需要时间。设立海外中心，只是第一步。

深圳有一句话：来了就是深圳人。SMU 来了。我们希望留下来，好好学习，和大家一起成长。

最后，我要感谢：

高级政务部长刘燕玲女士今晚和我们一起见证这个重要的时刻；

感谢多年来一路同行的中国高校和学术合作伙伴；

感谢黄永光先生和 SMU 中国国际咨询委员会，谢谢你们一直给予我们指导；

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感谢黄美美总领事和她的同事们；

感谢我们在深圳的合作伙伴；

我们在中国的校友，谢谢你们始终和 SMU 保持联系；

当然，还要感谢黄增煜先生和他带领的 SMU 中国中心团队；

以及 SMU 各部门的同事，是大家一起，让我们走到今天。

谢谢大家今晚的莅临！

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