

MEDIA RELEASE

SMU maintains prestigious AAHRPP accreditation

Singapore, 6 September 2021 (Monday) - The Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs, Inc. (AAHRPP), which promotes high-quality research through an accreditation process that helps organisations worldwide strengthen their human research protection programmes, has announced that Singapore Management University (SMU) has been awarded Full Re-accreditation for five years. SMU was first accredited by AAHRPP in 2018.

SMU remains the only University in Singapore to become an AAHRPP accredited research organisation, and the first to be re-accredited. Besides SMU, the only other university-level accredited organisation in Asia (not specific to a medical-related research unit), is Peking University.

Professor Archan Misra, SMU's Vice Provost (Research) said "Attaining re-accreditation demonstrates AAHRPP's strong vote of confidence in the high international standards of SMU's research processes. It also reaffirms that SMU IRB continues to meet all the Accreditation Standards of AAHRPP and our commitment to continuously improve our Human Research Protection Programme to protect the safety, welfare and rights of the individuals who participate in our research, even as research projects evolve to increasingly embrace in-field experimentation and AI technologies."

In its report on the re-accreditation, AAHRPP noted that SMU has a robust process between the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Research Office that allows all grants, contracts, and other proposals being submitted for funding to be sent to and reviewed by the IRB to determine whether human participant research is involved. IRB's professional support for SMU community members' human participant research is also addressed. During the past three years, SMU IRB has successfully reviewed and approved 1,389 studies.

The review committee was impressed by SMU's processes and procedures in protecting the rights and welfare of research participants, and the attention that senior management devoted to balance the enablement of avant-garde research with the need to protect participant's rights and the university's reputation.

To attain re-accreditation, an institution needs to continue to meet all the Accreditation Standards set out by AAHRPP. These include building extensive safeguards into every level of their research operation, and that they adhere to high standards for research.

Examples of the processes and culture that SMU has built into the research operations to protect the safety, welfare, privacy and rights of research participants include the establishment of additional safeguards to protect the vulnerable populations in research, the regular evaluation of SMU Institutional Review Board's composition and performance to ensure high quality reviews of human participant research, as well as the inclusion of compliance measures to ensure the proper conduct of transnational research by the SMU researchers.

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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 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 11,000 students across undergraduate, postgraduate professional and postgraduate research programmes, SMU comprises six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Computing and Information Systems, Yong Pung How 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 AAHRPP

The Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs, Inc. (AAHRPP) promotes high-quality research through an accreditation process that helps organizations worldwide strengthen their human research protection programs (HRPPs).

An independent, non-profit accrediting body, AAHRPP uses a voluntary, peer driven, educational model to ensure that HRPPs meet rigorous standards for quality and protection. To earn accreditation, organizations must provide tangible evidence – through policies, procedures, and practices – of their commitment to scientifically and ethically sound research and to continuous improvement.

As the "gold seal," AAHRPP accreditation offers assurances-to research participants, researchers, sponsors, government regulators, and the general public-that an HRPP is focused first and foremost on excellence.