

Opening Address
by Mr Dennis Lui, CEO, Tax Academy of Singapore
at the launch of Singapore Tax Academy Research Initiative
held on 11 August 2025

Professor Lee Pey Woan, Dean, Yong Pung How School of Law, Singapore Management University

Professor Michael Dirkis, University of Sydney

Professor Zhu Yansheng, Xiamen University

Dr Leopoldo Parada, King's College London

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome and Introduction

1. It is my pleasure to welcome you to the launch of the Singapore Tax Academy Research Initiative, or STARI in short. This strategic partnership between the Tax Academy of Singapore and the Singapore Management University's Yong Pung How School of Law is a significant milestone in Singapore's tax research landscape.
2. We are lighting a beacon for tax excellence in Singapore. By leveraging Tax Academy's diverse network – spanning government agencies, academic institutions, and industry practitioners – and combining it with SMU's academic excellence, we deliver unparalleled tax education and training programmes that bridge theory and practice.

STARI's Strategic Vision

3. There are unprecedented changes in the global tax environment. These include the implementation of the OECD's Two-Pillar Solution, tax challenges of digitalization, the global minimum tax regime, and more. Singapore must continue to strengthen its capabilities and thought leadership in taxation. STARI will serve as a catalyst for tax research, knowledge development, and international collaboration in tax matters, positioning Singapore at the forefront of tax innovation and expertise.

STARI's Leadership and Strategic Pillars

4. Assistant Professor Vincent Ooi will lead the STARI initiative, housed under the SMU Centre for Commercial Law in Asia. STARI will conduct world-class international tax research that seeks to address contemporary global taxation challenges, with an **Asian perspective**.
5. STARI will be supported by a very distinguished Academic Expert Panel comprising top tax Professors from all over the world, as well as a Technical Expert panel, which I am honoured to chair in my capacity as CEO of the Tax Academy of Singapore.

6. STARI will forge strong links with international thought-leaders in taxation. This collaboration, combined with our practical focus, ensures every research initiative, academic programme, and partnership develops Singapore's tax profession.
7. STARI will also focus on developing local academic capacity in taxation. This investment in human capital is crucial for building a sustainable ecosystem of tax expertise in Singapore. Our goal is to build a self-sustaining community of tax experts who will drive innovation in research and practice.
8. We are launching a Research Affiliates Programme with academic writing workshops to equip tax professionals with research and publishing skills, building robust capacity within our tax community.

Academic Exchange and Events

9. Central to STARI's mission is our flagship Annual Conference and Visiting Academic Seminars. Today's launch features our inaugural conference with Professor Michael Dirkis delivering the keynote lecture, alongside distinguished speakers from Asia and Europe. Looking ahead, we have secured leading tax experts from Europe, Asia, and Australasia for upcoming seminars, creating platforms for dynamic dialogue that will drive innovation in tax research and practice.

Closing Remarks

10. STARI will strengthen Singapore's position as a thought leader in international taxation. We are creating a hub that will shape the future of tax excellence in Singapore and beyond.
11. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all who have contributed to making this launch possible. Your presence today reflects the strong support for this important initiative within our tax community.
12. Thank you for being part of this momentous occasion. I look forward to the valuable contributions STARI will make to the tax community in the years to come. Together, let us make STARI shine bright in the years ahead.

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