

**Remarks by Professor Timothy Clark, SMU Provost
At the launch of SkillsFuture Festival x SMU 2024**

29 July 2024

Minister Gan Siow Huang, Minister of State for Education and Manpower;

Colleagues from SMU and the Institutes of Higher Learning;

Distinguished guests;

Ladies and gentlemen;

A very good afternoon and welcome to Singapore Management University.

1. It is my pleasure to welcome you to the SkillsFuture Festival at SMU 2024. Six years ago, SMU had the privilege of hosting the inaugural SkillsFuture Festival, and it is with great pleasure that we continue this tradition, in close partnership with our fellow Institutes of Higher Learning. Today, we stand at a pivotal juncture in our collective journey — one that embraces the future of work, driven by advancements in artificial intelligence and digital technologies.
2. At SMU, we are deeply committed to fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation. Our mission is to prepare all our students – from undergraduates, postgraduates to working professionals – for the dynamic and evolving landscape of modern working life. We recognise the transformative potential of AI and its critical role in shaping careers and industries. Our focus is not only on technological adoption but on cultivating a mindset geared towards lifelong learning and adaptability. We want our students to think of the University as their lifelong learning partner.
3. The theme this year ‘AI Unleashed: Transforming Skillsets for the Future’, resonates with our educational philosophy. In today’s competitive climate, understanding how to navigate AI is crucial and relevant for learners across sectors, hence at this year’s Festival, IHLs including ourselves will showcase how we have integrated AI into our continuing education and professional development programmes to equip our learners with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in an AI-centric world.

4. The 2024 SkillsFuture Festival is testimony to the collaborative efforts and partnerships between academia, industry, and government in exploring the future of AI and its impact on skillsets and employability, and in supporting Singaporeans on their journey of continuous learning and innovation. Throughout the day, we will engage in a dynamic panel discussion, interactive AI workshops, and an exhibition showcasing cutting-edge AI technologies. These activities are designed to provide attendees with practical knowledge and skills, highlighting the importance of adaptive learning in an AI-driven world. Therefore, I strongly encourage everyone to make the most of the opportunities presented today.

5. We are grateful for the support of SkillsFuture Singapore and our partners from various Institutes of Higher Learning. Together, we are building a robust collaborative ecosystem that encourages continuous learning and development, ensuring that Singaporeans are well-prepared for the future of work.

6. In closing, I would like to thank Minister Gan for gracing this occasion. She has been a steadfast advocate for education and workforce development, and her leadership has been instrumental in driving initiatives that align with Singapore's Smart Nation strategy. I now have the pleasure of inviting Minister Gan Siow Huang on stage to address us.

Thank you.