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Headline: Law scholarship expanded to help more needy students pursue their dream

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More low-income students aspiring to be lawyers will soon be able to fulfil their dreams without feeling bogged down by their tuition fees, as a scholarship programme was expanded on Monday (May 23).

The Singapore Academy of Law (SAL) Undergraduate Scholarship, which has been helping students from Singapore Management University (SMU) and National University of Singapore (NUS) since 2017, will now also benefit students from the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS).

This was announced by SAL - a statutory board and a promotion and development agency for Singapore's legal industry - at a signing ceremony held at its premises at The Adelphi on Monday.

There will also be other expansions to the scholarship.

Apart from receiving full coverage of tuition fees, scholarship recipients will now also get a sum for living expenses. This means SMU and NUS recipients will receive a total of \$23,000 a year, and SUSS students will get \$21,610 a year.

They will also be given the option to participate in an internship programme with SAL.

At the ceremony, SAL chief executive Rama Tiwari signed five-year agreements with NUS law dean Simon Chesterman, SMU's Yong Pung How School of Law associate dean Alvin See Wei Liang and SUSS president Cheong Hee Kiat.

SAL's previous pacts with NUS and SMU had expired.

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The signing was witnessed by Justice Kannan Ramesh, a member of the SAL awards and prizes committee.

SAL has set aside more than \$1.4 million over the next five years for the scholarship, which will be awarded to up to three students yearly, one from each university.

Eligible candidates can apply through their universities during an annual exercise. Those shortlisted will be interviewed and selected by judges from SAL's awards, prizes and scholarship committee which comprises a panel of High Court judges.

At Monday's ceremony, SUSS law dean Leslie Chew said its law school was set up in 2017 to facilitate mid-career transitions, which by definition means its students are working adults, with about one-third of them paralegals working in law firms.

He added: "Based on our student profile, many - although working - need financial help. In fact, about 10 to 15 per cent drop out in the second year primarily because of financial constraints. Needless to say, therefore, the (scholarship) is very timely and much appreciated."

Since its inception, the scholarship has benefited 10 students.