

MIT unveils plans for a major new research Center in Singapore — It's SMART!

SINGAPORE—The Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the National Research Foundation of Singapore today announced plans to establish a major new research center in Singapore in 2007.



The Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART) Center will be MIT's first such research center of its kind outside of Cambridge, MA and MIT's largest international research endeavor ever. MIT's decision to partner with the National Research Foundation in this new venture reflects tremendous interest and enthusiasm on the part of MIT's faculty.

The SMART Center will serve as an intellectual hub for interactions between MIT and global researchers in Singapore at exciting frontier areas of science and technology. The center will be first of several world-class centers planned by the National Research Foundation in the international Campus for Research Excellence and Technological Enterprise (CREATE).

MIT President Susan Hockfield and Chairman of the National Research Foundation Tony Tan announced the plans at a joint press conference in Singapore today.

"The SMART Center will offer participants from MIT and Singapore unique opportunities to advance research agendas that will shape the development of science and technology in the coming decades," Hockfield said. "It also represents a new way for MIT to engage in research on topics of great societal importance and presents new mechanisms for MIT's engagement in this important region of the world."

The SMART Center will allow faculty, researchers and graduate students from MIT to collaborate with their counterparts from universities, polytechnics, research institutes and industry in Singapore and in Asia. There will be a continuous cohort of MIT professors and students at the SMART Center. Major research interactions will involve groups of post doctoral fellows and Ph.D. students from MIT as well as affiliated researchers from other institutions working side by side in the SMART Center.

Teo Ming Kian, permanent secretary of National Research and Development, said, "SMART will be a magnet for attracting and retaining the best and brightest research talent from Asia and all over the world."

The Center will be led by a senior MIT professor and housed in a building that will offer laboratories and computational facilities for research in a number of areas, including biomedical science, water resources and the environment, interactive digital media, and scientific and engineering computation.

The SMART Center will also include a Center for Technological Innovation, modeled after the highly successful Deshpande Center for Technological Innovation at MIT, whose mission will be to foster close interactions between SMART researchers and industry in Singapore and the region. This new center at SMART will provide seed funding and grants on a competitive basis, aimed at technology transfer.

The SMART Center will build on the already-strong relationships between MIT and Singapore that began with the establishment of the Singapore-MIT Alliance (SMA) in 1998. This innovative educational and research collaboration between MIT, the National University of Singapore, and the Nanyang Technological University promotes academic excellence in graduate education.

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