

PRESS RELEASE

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RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND ENTERPRISE COUNCIL APPROVED PLANS FOR THREE STRATEGIC RESEARCH SECTORS AND A CAMPUS FOR TOP R&D TALENT

- *The RIEC approved three strategic research programmes: Biomedical Sciences Phase II; Environmental and Water Technologies; and Interactive and Digital Media. These three sectors target to provide a total of 86,000 jobs with value added of \$30 billion by 2015.*
- *To build up a concentration of research talent to foster innovation and creativity, the RIEC approved the concept to establish a Campus for Research Excellence and Technological Enterprise (CREATE), and the proposal to set up the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART) Centre as the first centre within the Campus.*

The Research, Innovation and Enterprise Council (RIEC) concluded its inaugural meeting today. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Chairman of the RIEC, said, "Singapore is committed to invest in R&D as a driver for economic growth and as a foundation for our long-term competitiveness. Our priorities are firstly, to build up core R&D capabilities in selected strategic areas, and secondly, to attract and develop a significant concentration of talent to sustain a critical mass of advanced research activity into the long term. The abundance of career opportunities in R&D will encourage more to pursue advanced higher education."

2 The RIEC considered and approved three strategic research programmes to be implemented over the next five years (2006 – 2010):

- Biomedical Sciences (BMS) Phase II** focuses on efforts to translate basic science into better medicines and treatments to improve patient care. The BMS Phase II programme will build on Singapore's basic research and drug discovery capabilities initiated in the first phase of the BMS programme, its BMS industry cluster, and its strong foundation in healthcare services delivery, to develop Singapore as the best location in Asia for scientific proof of concept in man.

ii) The **Environmental and Water Technologies (EWT)** programme builds on Singapore's strong foundation in water technologies and management, established over many decades. RIEC members highlighted the scale of the world's water problem, in our region and beyond. With climate change, even rain abundant areas could face severe drought, further exacerbating water shortage in the world. Singapore, with its capabilities and technologies for water recycling and water resource management, is well placed to take a leading role in developing new technological solutions for managing the water life cycle.

iii) With the rise of **Interactive and Digital Media (IDM)**, established business models are being challenged and disrupted by new technologies, new players, and new business models. The landscape has not settled and is going to be evolving for some time yet. The IDM programme will leverage Singapore's unique multi-cultural, multi-lingual identity with our strong foundation in Infocommunication Infrastructure to create new innovative niches in this vast and fast-changing sector. Games and edutainment are potential focus areas in the programme.

3 The RIEC members, including leaders of industry and academia, were convinced that Singapore had a unique competitive edge to gain a leadership position in each of the three sectors. The RIEC has set a target of 86,000 jobs and S\$30 billion of value added by 2015 for the three strategic sectors combined, underscoring the aim for R&D efforts to result in economic benefits. Attention would be given to market and commercial development to successfully bring scientific knowledge from the lab to the market.

4 The RIEC approved the allocation of S\$1.4 billion over the next five years to fund the development of the three strategic research programmes. The funds will be held in the National Research Fund administered by the National Research Foundation (NRF), which will oversee the implementation of programmes approved by the RIEC. (Please refer to the **Annex** for the breakdown of funds.)

5 The RIEC and NRF will continue to explore other emerging areas beyond these three programmes; and opportunities for synergy and cross-disciplinary research at the interfaces between the three research areas.

6 The RIEC emphasized the importance of building strong linkages with global institutions to enhance Singapore's connectivity to other centres of research in the US and Europe, and accelerate Singapore's thrust towards an inventive, innovative and entrepreneurial economy. The RIEC therefore also approved the concept to establish an international **Campus for Research Excellence and Technological Enterprise (CREATE)** in Singapore, and the proposal to set up the **Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART) Centre** as the first centre within CREATE. CREATE will foster joint research programmes between the world's top research universities and Singapore-based research institutions, and recruit young

graduate and postdoctoral talent to nurture a cadre of extraordinary scientists, whose discoveries and innovations could generate new growth engines for Singapore.

7 The RIEC will hold its second meeting from 15 to 16 March 2007 in Singapore.

**Initiatives approved by RIEC to be implemented
over the next five years (2006 – 2010):**

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| Biomedical Sciences (BMS) Phase II | S\$550 mil |
| Environmental and Water Technologies (EWT) | S\$330 mil |
| Interactive and Digital Media (IDM) | S\$500 mil |
| Total | S\$1.38 bil |