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### Lien Foundation and Singapore Management University to Set Up Asia's First Centre For Social Innovation

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**9 February 2006**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**LIEN FOUNDATION AND SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY TO SET UP ASIA'S FIRST CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION**

**Lien Foundation's gift of \$6m will fund research, education and outreach**

*Singapore, February 9, 2006* – A collaboration between the Lien Foundation and Singapore Management University (SMU) is set to springboard Singapore's leadership in the arena of social innovation. Under the collaboration, the Lien Foundation will donate \$6 million, given over a five-year period, to fund the establishment of the Centre. Announced today, the Lien Foundation Centre for Social Innovation at Singapore Management University is the first such centre in Asia. It is envisioned that the Centre will become a nexus for scholars, non-profit leaders, corporate executives, philanthropists and government agencies to strengthen their capability as a unified and talented body promoting social change. For SMU students, this landmark Centre heralds another unique initiative underscoring the University's commitment to producing graduates who will become socially responsible and civic-minded leaders in the communities in which they live and work.

Focused on supporting the growth and quality of non-profits by strengthening the governance, management and best practices in the sector, the Lien Foundation Centre for Social Innovation at SMU is established to:

- Promote social innovation as a key element to advance society and address social problems in a productive manner;
- Build capabilities in leadership, management, personnel development, research, information systems, financing and other areas for non-profits that they might otherwise lack;
- Cultivate a new generation of socially conscious business leaders.
- Provide a forum for interaction, discussion and formulation of ideas for information exchange and development of best practices.

Through ongoing dialogues, research by SMU professors, the University's curriculum development and classroom teaching, executive education, collaboration and outreach activities, the Lien Foundation Centre for Social Innovation at SMU aims to build up the capacity of the non-profit sector to achieve positive and sustainable outcomes on social issues and benefit the community at large. Concomitantly, the aim is to prepare and enable students and social leaders for work in the sector.

Said Mr Laurence Lien, Governor of the Lien Foundation, "The Lien Foundation Centre for Social Innovation at SMU is a part of the Foundation's ongoing commitment to non-profit governance and management, philanthropic giving, corporate social responsibility and community outreach. We are pleased to have found in SMU an academic partner that shares our vision and values. We look forward to the Centre setting the benchmark for excellence in social innovation and hence, becoming the preferred partner for organisations seeking to find new initiatives to support social causes in Singapore and Asia."

Said Professor Howard Hunter, President of SMU, "We are grateful to the Lien Foundation for collaborating with us to develop new directions in university education. From the start, SMU's pedagogy has been directed to the education of well-rounded graduates who will distinguish themselves as socially responsible, civic-minded,

ethical leaders. The Centre will foster important research that will, in turn, directly affect our students in their classes and in their community-service projects, as well as the business community through our Executive Education programmes.”

Apart from research, publications and the development of case studies, there is the Lien Foundation Distinguished Fellows programme whereby notable academics, non-profit managers and philanthropists from abroad will be appointed for seminars, workshops, research, executive teaching or faculty development. There is also the Lien Foundation Internship programme offering up to 20 SMU students each year the opportunity to work in teams serving the non-profit sector.

It is envisaged that the Lien Foundation Centre for Social Innovation at SMU will have a significant role in future elective courses on non-profit management and social entrepreneurship to be offered at SMU. More social innovation projects are also expected to be introduced as part of the University’s current Leadership Team Building course. Leveraging on SMU’s networks, the Centre will continue to form strategic alliances with other institutions and organisations that focus on the developing the areas of social innovation and social entrepreneurship.

To be housed at SMU’s new campus, the Lien Foundation Centre for Social Innovation at SMU will be governed and supported by a Board comprising representatives from the Lien Foundation and SMU as well as community leaders. The Board, chaired by Mr Gerard Ee, Governor of the Lien Foundation, will facilitate the selection of fellows, staff, research and other projects.

<b>Community Outreach at SMU</b>
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In grooming visionary entrepreneurs and global business leaders of tomorrow, Singapore Management University recognises the importance of preparing its students to be responsible citizens, demonstrating leadership and integrity within the communities they live and work. SMU wants its students to give back to society. To that end, the whole school-to-work transition is facilitated by a greater sense of responsibility. The community service attachment, which is part of the University's internship programme, requires students to spend two weeks (or 80 hours) with a community, social or civic organisation. In addition, a foundational course required of all students, Leadership & Team Building, provides for a variety of student-driven projects, many of which are community-directed.

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## **About Singapore Management University**

Incorporated on 12 January 2000, SMU's aim is to groom outstanding business leaders and creative entrepreneurs capable of excelling in a rapidly changing and dynamic world. A collaboration with the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania allows SMU to draw on Wharton's academic and research strengths across all major disciplines. Today, SMU is home to over 3,800 students and comprises four schools: Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Accountancy, School of Economics & Social Sciences and School of Information Systems. SMU offers bachelor's degree programmes in Business Management, Accountancy, Economics, Information Systems Management and Social Science. The University offers master's degree programmes in Wealth Management, Applied Finance, Professional Accounting, Applied Economics and in Economics and Finance (by research). It also has a dedicated Office of Research and provides public and customised programmes through Executive Education. The newly completed SMU campus is a state-of-the art facility located right in the heart of Singapore's civic and business district. [www.smu.edu.sg](http://www.smu.edu.sg)