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Institute for Societal Leadership officially launched by Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam at Societal Leadership Summit 2016

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Media Release

Institute for Societal Leadership officially launched by Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam at Societal Leadership Summit 2016

“SUSTAINABILITY – In for the Long Haul”

Singapore, 7 November 2016 (Monday) – The Institute for Societal Leadership (ISL) under the Singapore Management University (SMU) was today officially launched by distinguished Guest of Honour Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Coordinating Minister for Economic and Social Policies of Singapore, during the Societal Leadership Summit 2016. DPM Tharman also delivered a keynote address on societal leadership.

ISL is the first and only institution in Asia that focuses on societal leadership. The Institute was formed to advance Societal Leadership in Southeast Asia and beyond. It is anchored on SMU’s foundation of academic rigour and aims to achieve a greater applied understanding of societal leadership. ISL seeks to be a thought leader in societal leadership for the betterment of society. It provides a convening and collaborative platform for societal leaders, and is a capacity builder to inspire and develop current and emerging societal leaders.

Professor Arnoud De Meyer, President, SMU remarked in the opening address, “Creating societal impact has always been at the core of what SMU stands for. With the launch of the Institute for Societal Leadership (ISL), we take the next step in our journey of being a socially responsible university, advancing societal leadership and building thought leadership and practices that can help the future of our community, country and beyond. The role we play as an academic institution is critical in advancing the understanding of societal leadership.”

ISL will focus on creating knowledge, convening societal leaders, curating leadership lessons, catalysing change, and communicating good. It has rolled out several initiatives on various platforms to achieve a greater applied understanding of societal leadership – the Societal Leadership Summit, Catalyst Asia, Digital Narratives of Asia, Southeast Asian Global Undergraduate Leaders’ Programme (SEAGULL), Service For Asia fellowship programme, Applied Research, Country Insights Labs, Catalyst Conversations, and Partner Programmes. *(For more information on ISL initiatives, please refer to the Appendix for the Factsheet.)*

The Societal Leadership Summit, ISL's annual flagship event, is aimed at generating deeper conversations to catalyse the growth of societal leadership. This year's Summit, which was held with the launch of the Institute, featured over 10 influential speakers who shared key insights on the social impact landscape across Southeast Asia.

The two-day Summit will discuss pressing issues affecting long-term sustainability for social impact organisations in Southeast Asia. The discussion topics included:

- Being financially viable – Rethinking the Business Model
- Talent Management – Retaining and attracting good staff
- Burnout – Need for self-care
- Succession Planning

The distinguished speakers at the Societal Leadership Summit 2016 were:

- Prof Arnoud De Meyer, President, SMU
- Mr Martin Tan, Executive Director, Institute for Societal Leadership, SMU
- Prof David Chan, Lee Kuan Yew Fellow & Professor of Psychology, and Director, Behavioural Sciences Institute, SMU
- Mr Alfie Othman, Executive Director, raiSE
- Mr Arnel Casanova, Advisor to the Vice President of The Philippines
- Mr Ben Cheong, Founder, Magical Light Foundation
- Dr Goh Wei Leong, Chairman & Co-Founder, HealthServe
- Mr Jeff Cheong, President, Tribal Worldwide Asia
- Mr Koh Seng Choon, Founder, Project Dignity
- Ms Kuik Shiao-Yin, Director, The Thought Collective
- Ms Lynna Chandra, Founder, Rachel House
- Mr Ong Boon Hwee, CEO, Stewardship Asia Centre
- Dr Patrick Liew, Managing Partner, Global Enterprise Exchange
- Ms Veronica Colondam, Founder & CEO, YCAB Foundation

ISL hosted the first Societal Leadership Summit at SMU on 26-27 November 2015, focusing on ways to catalyse the growth of societal leadership so as to better deal with Southeast Asia's (SEA) complex challenges.

ISL is helping the relatively new concept of societal leadership to spur more integrated approaches that lead the way in addressing societal issues.

For more information on ISL, please refer to the Appendix for the Factsheet, or visit isl.smu.edu.sg.

Appendix – Fact Sheet

THE INSTITUTE FOR SOCIETAL LEADERSHIP

The Institute for Societal Leadership (ISL) was established by Singapore Management University to advance the understanding of societal leadership in Asia and beyond. In our increasingly complex world, we need a distinct type of leadership to tackle new societal challenges - one that weighs the betterment of society above all else. We call it Societal Leadership.

As the **first and only institute in Asia that focuses on societal leadership**, ISL seeks to be a **thought-leader** in the understanding of Societal Leadership for the betterment of society. We aim to be a **convening and collaborative platform** for societal leaders, and **capacity builder** for current and emerging societal leaders through leadership development programmes in the region.

ISL brings a foundation of academic rigour as part of SMU. The over-arching objective of ISL is to achieve a greater applied understanding of societal leadership while creating channels and programmes to amplify this understanding.

CATALYST ASIA

Catalyst Asia is an online content platform and twice-yearly publication that presents a collection of stories on the good that societal leaders and social impact organisations do in Southeast Asia. Each issue contains a selection of feature stories, interview articles and opinion pieces about how change makers work for the betterment of society.

The intent of Catalyst Asia is to document narratives to amplify the work of societal leaders. It is hoped that the availability of this resource would inspire and invigorate readers – stimulate interest, encourage participation and catalyse new ideas for the betterment of society.

DIGITAL NARRATIVES OF ASIA (DNA)

Digital Narratives of Asia (DNA) is an online repository of interviews with distinguished societal leaders who have shaped or contributed to Asia's collective history.

These highly respected leaders from the government, corporate, media, arts and social spheres share invaluable insights on their leadership journeys – their challenges, motivation and reflections on key leadership decisions, effective leadership styles and traits.

DNA gives viewers the exclusive inside track on how leadership is practiced in Asia through the personal accounts from prominent leaders.

SOCIETAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

The annual gathering for societal leaders and change makers who are working to make a difference in Southeast Asia, the Societal Leadership Summit is a platform for engaging discussions on pressing issues faced by change makers in the region.

The Summit aims to raise deeper questions, facilitate meaningful sharing, and generate fresh perspectives on how to tackle issues faced by individuals and organisations in the social impact sector.

SOUTHEAST ASIA GLOBAL UNDERGRADUATE LEADERS' PROGRAMME (SEAGULL)

SEAGULL is a leadership training programme specially designed for undergraduate leaders in Southeast Asia.

Aimed at developing the next generation of young emerging societal leaders, the 7-month programme strengthens their critical thinking and problem solving skills by putting them through Design Thinking, and offers invaluable networking opportunities by connecting them with like-minded peers in the region. Through such interactions, SEAGULL participants get to expand their paradigms of thinking about society and gather insights that would help them to understand and shape their role in creating responsible, sustainable and meaningful change.

APPLIED RESEARCH

ISL aims to advance our understanding of helping others do good better by engaging in applied research that focuses on four main themes:

1. Understanding the contextual antecedents of societal leadership; how a societal leader comes to being, why and how does he/she want to do good and contribute to society?
2. Studying the roles and organisational models of social impact organisations; how do social impact organisations influence the development and maintenance of societal leadership?
3. Investigating the future trends of societal leadership and management.
4. Examining mindfulness, emotional regulation and wellbeing issues of societal leaders; how do these impact on the performance and sustainability of societal leadership?

COUNTRY INSIGHTS LABS (CIL)

Country Insights Labs seek to uncover critical issues facing societal leaders in a given country and pinpoints the underlying causes behind issues within the countrywide context.

Findings are gathered through a series of interviews and roundtable discussions involving social impact organisations and individuals who are deemed exceptional leaders in their respective societies.

Since 2014, ISL has published a series of CIL reports from 11 Southeast Asian cities. For each report, researchers reached out to social impact organisations operating in each of the target countries. Additionally, individuals who are deemed exceptional societal leaders, such as philanthropists, social entrepreneurs, thought leaders and change makers were also part of the study.

IN-MARKET PROGRAMME

Designed to bring societal leadership programmes into capital cities in Southeast Asia and beyond, each In-Market Programme is designed with a local partner based on the needs of each country or city.

Taking the societal leadership programmes directly to leaders in their home country is an affordable and cost effective way of helping to increase and build capacity of leaders and participating social impact organisations in the region.

The in-depth societal leadership programme typically tackles highly relevant and challenging issues including change and transition management, design-thinking and leading with a keen understanding of societal complexities – identities, values, aspirations, reality and trade-offs.

To date, In-Market Programmes have been completed in Myanmar, Pakistan, Bhutan and Philippines.

SERVICE FOR ASIA (SFA)

Service For Asia is an 18-month fellowship programme designed for Southeast Asian professionals to be part of a regional experiential learning opportunity. Successful candidates will undergo a 12-month deployment to a social impact organisation in Southeast Asia and complete the fellowship programme with a Masters degree in Tri-Sector Collaboration (MTSC) offered by SMU.

SFA Fellows will explore an issue of interest arising from their deployment and be given the opportunity to design and implement a capstone project to benefit their respective deployment organisations.

In the course of the programme, SFA Fellows will also engage with leaders in academia, business, social impact organisations and government in Asia.

About Singapore Management University

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU's mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning, and for its technologically enabled pedagogy of seminar-style teaching in small class sizes.

Home to around 9,300 undergraduate and postgraduate students, SMU comprises six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law, and School of Social Sciences. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors, masters and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in interdisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU has an emphasis on generating rigorous, high-impact, and relevant multi-disciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities from USA, Europe, China and India, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector, through its research institutes, centres and labs. SMU's city campus is a state-of-the art facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community. www.smu.edu.sg

About the Institute for Societal Leadership

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Media Contacts:

Charlene Liew
Assistant Director, Corporate Communications
Singapore Management University
DID: +65 6828 0020
Email: charleneliew@smu.edu.sg