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5-2015

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#### Citation

Singapore Management University. SMU announces development plan to enhance its city campus. (2015).

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## SMU announces development plan to enhance its city campus

15 May 2015

*Project will ease space crunch and enliven SMU Campus Green to bring back the 'Bras Basah Spirit'*



*Singapore, 15 May 2015 (Friday)* – Singapore Management University (SMU) today announced that it will embark on a two-year development project that will not only add new and much-needed additional learning, teaching and group study spaces to its current campus in the city, but also transform the landscape of the Civic District by injecting energy, zing and activities to the SMU Campus Green, with a vision to bring back the buzz and revive the 'Bras Basah spirit'. The project will enhance the opportunities for SMU to engage with the community, and showcase the talent and vibrancy of the SMU campus and Singapore's youth.

Key features to be added to the SMU city campus include new seminar rooms; group study spaces; a centralised Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) space; an expanded, three-storey Fitness Centre; and a new Amphitheatre on Campus Green that will be a focal point of student and community-engagement activities. Altogether, these facilities add a total seating capacity of 1,185. The University is also exploring the feasibility of a jogging track on its campus grounds.



*[Photo: SMU President, Prof Arnoud De Meyer, sharing the University's city campus enhancement plans with members of the press. (L-R) Mr Ashvinkumar Kantilal (Architect), Group Chief Operating Officer, ONG&ONG Pte Ltd; Mr Sundaravadivelan Selvam, Director, SMU Campus Development; Prof Arnoud De Meyer; Mr Kenneth Tan, Director, SMU Student Life.]*

**SMU President, Professor Arnoud De Meyer**, said, “SMU wants to remain a Game Changer in the tertiary education landscape. We are constantly innovating in our curriculum and pedagogy. Therefore our spaces must also evolve in anticipation of the critical needs of the future. We are committed to providing our students and faculty with adequate and flexible learning and teaching spaces, as well as new collaboration, networking and recreational spaces that meet the needs of the millennial students and enhance their SMU experience. I’m very pleased with the design and plan that my team and the Architect have put together – they have developed a very creative and innovative plan that optimises our space within the many urban constraints that we face.”

“We are also very excited to have this opportunity to create new infrastructure on SMU Campus Green that will allow us to strengthen our engagement with the larger community. By 2017 when the project is completed, I envisage that Campus Green will be a ‘playground’ where students, stakeholders, and members of the public will interact and mingle; formally and informally; through performances, fitness activities and sports. Building upon our existing close partnership and strong ties with our community, I am confident that SMU Campus Green can become the pulsating heartbeat of the Bras Basah precinct once again,” Professor De Meyer added.



*[Photo: Press briefing on SMU's campus development plan held on 15 May 2015.]*

SMU has grown rapidly since its inception in 2000 when planning and design of the existing city campus buildings first began. The campus was built for a capacity of 6,000 but the University is currently home to around 8,800 undergraduate, postgraduate, executive and professional, full- and part-time students. To overcome the space challenge, currently some programmes are conducted in the evenings and on Saturdays. A key feature of the design of the SMU city campus is its porosity. Not only does it provide seamless access for the public on the ground and basement Concourse level, it is also the venue for key events such as the Singapore Biennale, Singapore Night Festival, and Singapore Writers Festival.

Construction cost of the project is estimated to be approximately S\$20 million. Works are scheduled to begin in August 2015 and are targeted for completion by the third-quarter of 2017. The architect for the project is Ong & Ong Pte Ltd. SMU will award the construction tender in the coming weeks.

Below is a summary of all the spaces that will be newly created or expanded:

### **New learning and teaching facilities, at Basement Concourse**

The project includes the addition of one 75-seater and two 70-seater horseshoe-shaped seminar rooms, one 45-seater flat classroom, as well as four 50-seater flexible-configuration flat classrooms. Together, they will add 460 seats (or approx. 950sqm). These new teaching spaces will add to the range of seminar rooms currently available, and enable the University to cater to larger classes for popular modules, as well as for postgraduate programmes.

### **New group study facilities, at Basement Concourse & Level 1 School of Economics-School of Social Sciences**

In response to students' requests and to provide a positive experience, the University has, in recent years, progressively provided for more spaces for group study and project-based learning around the campus. This started with a major renovation of the Li Ka Shing Library where more learning spaces with overall seating capacity of about 410 seats, better zoning and longer opening hours (24/7) were introduced. In late 2014, SMU also leased the former Vanguard Building to create the SMU Labs – a 24/7 space where students can study, collaborate, interact and incubate ideas. The SMU Labs has provided another 450 seats over three levels (approx. 2,300sqm) for students to use.

Through creative design and optimal use of spaces on the ground level of the School of Economics-School of Social Sciences building, and the SMU basement Concourse, there will be 485 seats dedicated to SMU students' use.



*[Artist's impression - New teaching and learning spaces at the SMU Concourse.]*

### **New Amphitheatre, at Campus Green**

A brand new 240-seater Amphitheatre will become a new key feature of the SMU Campus Green that will charge the ground with life and vitality. This space will be a platform for our students to express themselves artistically. We envisage that small, semi-formal or casual open-air performances of all kinds can take place here, especially in the mornings or late afternoons and during weekends. This will not only be a 'stage' for SMU's students to showcase their talents and engage with the larger community, it will also be a prominent platform on which SMU can encourage more stakeholders in the community to come and enjoy the lush greenery on Campus Green with us.

### **Expanded SMU Fitness Centre, from Basement Concourse to Campus Green**

The current SMU Fitness Centre will be expanded by 50 per cent (overall floor area is approximately 1,000 sqm). The new facility, which comprises two fitness studios and one gymnasium, will span three levels and will be disability-friendly. The expanded floor area will allow the SMU Office of Student Life

to introduce new and a larger range of fitness and training equipment, to encourage a wider genre of users to the Centre. Specialised equipment to be acquired will also reinforce SMU's training of the University's high-performance athletes.

Moreover, the glass façade of the gymnasium on the top level will offer students an enhanced user experience as they will look out to the lush greenery and vibrant activities on Campus Green. The feasibility of a jogging track on Campus Green is also being studied as this will further enhance the sports training and fitness activities on Campus Green.



*[Artist's impression - The new Fitness Centre will comprise two studios and a gymnasium that looks out to the SMU Campus Green.]*

### **The Curve CCA area, from Basement Concourse to Campus Green**

The CURVE CCA space is located at mezzanine level within the Campus Green and has glass frontage overlooking the open Amphitheatre and the Campus Green/Bodhi tree in the backdrop. The Curve CCA area will bring students from various CCAs together into one common space. In doing so, SMU hopes to generate more interactions, collaborations and buzz among the student body. It will also be a space for smaller scale events and activities to engage students, staff, faculty and even members of the public. This CCA area will also encompass an SMU Students' Association Business Centre, where the SMU Student's Association (SMUSA) can be closer to their student peers, and have more opportunities to engage with and garner feedback from them. SMUSA may also provide administrative services to the student body from here.

On the enhancements that will be brought about by the project, **SMUSA President and second-year business student, Adeline Lim Jiayu**, said, "We certainly welcome the additional study and learning spaces that will be created for SMU's student body, as well as more (and new) facilities and platforms that will allow us to engage in fitness, sports, special interests and also express ourselves artistically in front of an audience that potentially goes beyond the SMU community. In particular, the SMU Students' Association Business Centre, which SMUSA intends to set up in The Curve CCA area, will further empower student leaders in SMU to manage student-related matters more efficiently and effectively."