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# SMU is Singapore Academy of Law's Academic Partner for the Future Law Innovation Programme (FLIP)

Singapore Management University

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## SMU is Singapore Academy of Law's Academic Partner for the Future Law Innovation Programme (FLIP)

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*Partnership covers student and curriculum development, thought leadership, case studies and research; SMU undergraduates stand to benefit from internship opportunities with SAL and law firms, and be involved in consulting projects through SMU-X modules.*



*[Featured Photo: (L-R) SMU School of Law Dean, Associate Prof Goh Yihan, and Mr Paul Neo, SAL's Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer (Photo: IMDA)]*

In support of the Singapore Academy of Law's (SAL) Future Law Innovation Programme (FLIP), SMU will be SAL's academic partner for issues relating to legal innovation and the future business of law. The partnership was announced at a press briefing held on 10 January 2018, where a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between SMU and SAL was officially inked.

Announced last July by Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, FLIP is a two-year pilot programme to encourage the adoption of technology, drive innovation and create a vibrant ecosystem for legal

technology. SAL hopes to bring together lawyers, technopreneurs, investors, academics and regulators; and in doing so, support the development of a model for the delivery of legal services in the future economy.

The Programme's aim is to achieve what Chief Justice Menon described in a speech last year as the 'Uberisation' of the legal practice, which is a reference to ride-hailing service Uber and its impact on efficiently matching supply and demand.



*[Photo: Press briefing held by Singapore Academy of Law on 10 January 2018 (Photo: IMDA)]*

Under the agreement with SAL, SMU and will collaborate with FLIP on several fronts, including student and curriculum development, thought leadership, as well as case studies and research.

In particular, SMU School of Law will co-host dialogues and seminars with SAL, develop thought leadership through case studies and research on future law topics, and explore the possibility of curating modular executive education programmes to support leadership and/or legal innovation for FLIP participants.

SMU undergraduates will also stand to benefit from the collaboration. Students will have the opportunity to take on internships at SAL and at firms which are participating in FLIP, as well as be involved in FLIP-based consulting projects through the University's experiential and multi-disciplinary SMU-X modules.

Commenting on the partnership, Associate Professor Goh Yihan, Dean of SMU School of Law, said, “The impact of technology on the legal landscape is clear. We are very pleased therefore to play our part and contribute our academic expertise as Singapore’s legal profession transforms in response to technology.”

“In the area of research, SMU’s partnership with SAL will certainly catalyse the development of insights into future law topics which will be meaningful, relevant and impactful to the fraternity. In legal education, we have begun to explore incorporating technology-related issues in our legal curriculum, and thus we value this opportunity for SMU undergraduates to be involved in SAL’s FLIP initiatives, as these platforms broaden their perspectives and expose our future lawyers to the possibilities of innovation in the legal sector,” he added.

One of the projects SMU students have been working on involved helping to collate a catalogue of 100 legal industry problem statements from legal counsel, paralegals, other supporting staff and service providers, as well as consumers of legal services, such as corporates, SMEs and private clients. Together with the Info-communications Media Development Authority, FLIP will look to share and compare these problem statements with other professional industries as part of a cross-industry approach. The intent is for solution providers to identify multi-sectoral opportunities and be encouraged to develop solutions that have applications across sectors for greater synergy and economic potential.

Other teams of students have also been trained by FLIP and will begin to provide consultancy services to law firms from January 2018 onwards under FLIP’s mentorship.

As of January 2018, over 30 participants from 23 entities have signed up for FLIP. Thus, SMU students will have the opportunity to interact with a range of large law firms (such as Rajah & Tann Singapore LLP and Dentons Rodyk & Davidson), small law firms (including ECYT Law LLC and Consigclear LLC), to local and international legal tech enterprises like SingaporeLegalAdvice.com, LexQuanta, MyLawyer and Zegal, as well as in-house counsel from Discovery Networks and BNP Paribas.