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A*STAR’s Exploit Technologies and Six Tertiary Institutions in Singapore Seal Cooperation to Boost Technology Transfer with the Formation of the Technology Transfer Network (TTN)

Singapore’s technology transfer framework has been transformed with the formation of the Technology Transfer Network (TTN). Seven leading institutions have come together to co-operate on bolstering the commercialisation of intellectual property (IP) assets through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The founding members of the TTN are Exploit Technologies Pte Ltd of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), Nanyang Polytechnic, Nanyang Technopreneurship Center, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Republic Polytechnic, Singapore Polytechnic and Temasek Polytechnic.

Effective IP management is critical as R&D in Singapore intensifies. The scope of the MOU covers areas such as the provision of a regular platform for Technology Transfer Offices (TTO) to share expertise and experience, creation of an eco-system of world-class market players (including service industries) focussed on maximising the commercialisation potential of IP assets, and enhancing the branding and thought-leadership in technology transfer capabilities. All seven parties to the MOU are founding members of the TTN.

The core focus activities of the TTN will include:

1. Enhancing:
   - The sharing of expertise and experience on technology transfer through regular meetings of TTO professionals; and
   - The overall IP portfolio management through proactive IP cluster mapping and bundling within the network and beyond.

2. Expanding market reach and penetration through:
   - Collaborative marketing activities; and
   - Technology Advisory Services (TAS) to both SMEs and the large companies.

3. Equipping the TTO community with the necessary skills and capabilities through a systematic and customised training program

The MOU provides a framework of collaboration for the founders of the Technology Transfer Network (TTN). The first phase of TTN will include Singapore-based TTOs as members, followed by international TTOs in subsequent phases. The Secretariat of the TTN is hosted by Exploit-Technologies on behalf of the TTN partners.

Launching this initiative, Mr Lim Chuan Poh, Chairman of A*STAR, and the Guest-of-Honour at the MOU Signing
Ceremony said, “Singapore is intensifying its pursuit of R&D to transform the economy into a knowledge-based and innovation-driven one. TTN is a timely initiative for all the founding members to strengthen Singapore’s capabilities and effectiveness in the transfer of intellectual property assets to the industry. This shared vision and commitment will provide the impetus needed to bring the public research community even closer to the industries in order to impact the economy and society.”

Mr Boon Swan Foo, Executive Chairman of Exploit Technologies and the Chairman of the Technology Transfer Network added, “I am delighted with the enthusiasm and commitment from all the founding members. The concept and ideas of the TTN were contributed by all the founding members. We are confident that this collaboration will stimulate positive vibes in the technology transfer industry and further Singapore’s position as a world class research and technology transfer hub. Exploit Technologies is excited to be part of the TTN. We foresee great potential in this alliance of TTOs in both the local and international scenes.”

Mr Chan Lee Mun, Principal/CEO Nanyang Polytechnic said, “As Singapore seeks to be well-positioned in today's globalised knowledge-based economy, activities associated with the creation, protection and commercial exploitation of intellectual properties (IPs) will become significantly more important. They add economic value to Singapore and its industries by developing new innovative products and enabling solutions, as well as opening up further employment and business opportunities. NYP has been a strong believer in nurturing the spirit of innovation and enterprise among its staff and students and has also extended its support to industry partners to help enhance capabilities and competitiveness. Thus, NYP sees the TTN (Technology Transfer Network) as a useful network of like-minded organizations sharing a common platform to help promote technology transfer in Singapore through close collaboration and the sharing of valuable experience and expertise.”

Sharing his views on the collaboration, Associate Professor Tan Teng Kee, Director, Nanyang Technopreneurship Center, Nanyang Technological University, said, “NTC is a multi-disciplinary university-level education center dedicated to our mission in providing world-class and revolutionary education on entrepreneurship and technology innovation. Our vision is to be one of the world's most influential institutional authorities in education for that purpose. Therefore, NTC's involvement in the TTN is specifically to participate in its education aspects. With TTN recognising the need for TTO and the research community to be equipped with necessary entrepreneurship and technology innovation skills, NTC can play a significant role to help meet that need by sharing our expertise and unique TIP pedagogy through offering transformational training or education on entrepreneurship and technology innovation.”

Mr Foo See Meng, Deputy Principal, Ngee Ann Polytechnic said, “With globalisation and the rapid growth of technology, one cannot ignore the increasing role that intellectual property plays in the knowledge-based economy. The formation of the Technology Transfer Network will provide a regular platform for sharing of expertise and experience that enables the effective leverage of knowledge, skills and resources among participating organisations. It will also create an eco-system where our staff and students can maximise the commercialisation potential of their R&D efforts.”

Commenting on the collaboration, Prof Low Teck Seng, Principal/CEO, Republic Polytechnic said, “The development of a Technology Transfer Network is a logical next-step for the IHLs in Singapore. Up to now, we have focused on our own areas of priority, and have largely developed our capabilities individually. Bringing this expertise together through the open-sharing platform of the TTN, will allow us to combine our capabilities and provide a more complete service for all our industry sectors.”

Mr Tan Hang Cheong, Principal, Singapore Polytechnic said, “At Singapore Polytechnic, we encourage our staff and students to be actively involved in applied R&D work. Some of the technologies resulting from our applied R&D projects have the potential to be commercialised. Our experience has shown that bringing such technologies into the market place has been a main challenge for our staff and students. The TTN will provide the platform for Singapore Polytechnic staff involved in technology transfer to share expertise and best practices with
Mr Boo Kheng Hua, Principal and CEO, Temasek Polytechnic said, “TP sees the TTN as an opportunity to enhance the development of our IP Management portfolio and Technology Transfer procedures and mutual sharing with other founding members on their respective areas of expertise relating to IPR issues. We look forward to working with ETPL and the IHLs through TTN in engaging industry and the SMEs in collaborative projects to maximise the commercialisation potential of our IP assets.”

The MOU will be signed in Singapore on 12 February 2008 by Mr Boon Swan Foo, Executive Chairman, Exploit Technologies Pte Ltd; Mr Chan Lee Mun, Principal/CEO Nanyang Polytechnic; Associate Professor Tan Teng Kee, Director, Nanyang Technopreneurship Center; Mr Foo See Meng, Deputy Principal, Ngee Ann Polytechnic; Prof Low Teck Seng, Principal/CEO, Republic Polytechnic; Mr Tan Hang Cheong, Principal, Singapore Polytechnic; and Mr Boo Kheng Hua, Principal and CEO, Temasek Polytechnic. The ceremony will be witnessed by Chairman of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) Mr Lim Chuan Poh.

About the Technology Transfer Network (TTN)
The Technology Transfer Network is a collaborative alliance of Technology Transfer Offices formed to enhance the effectiveness in the transfer of technology to the industry. The core activities of the TTN include collaboration on IP Cluster Mapping, Training & Certification of TTO professionals, Joint Marketing & Events, Technology Advisory Services, Industry Collaboration and regular dialogue and sharing of best practices.

About the TTN Logo
The arc represents:

- the link and value chain for technology transfer from research to the industry; and
- the symbol of global vision, that the TTN will become a global network.

All enquiries on the TTN can be directed to:

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About Exploit Technologies Pte Ltd
Exploit Technologies is the marketing and commercialisation arm of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR). Its charter is to identify, protect and exploit promising intellectual property (IP) created by A*STAR’s research institutes. This includes facilitating the IP management process (ie the protection of inventions through patents and copyrights, etc), analysing the strength of our IP and the market that they could serve, and working with companies to commercialise the technologies. For more information, please visit http://www.exploit-tech.com

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About Nanyang Polytechnic
Nanyang Polytechnic is a modern tertiary institution that offers quality education in engineering, design, interactive & digital media, IT, business management, health sciences and chemical & life sciences. With the mission to prepare its graduates for life and work, NYP constantly collaborates with the industry in cutting-edge technology projects, so as to provide relevance and a firm foundation for its students. For more information, visit: http://www.nyp.sg.

About Nanyang Technopreneurship Center (NTC)
NTC is a multi-disciplinary university-level center of the Nanyang Technological University and is the focal point for education on entrepreneurship and technology innovation within the University and the region. NTC's specific interest in the Technology Transfer Network is to solely participate in the education aspects of the TTN.

About Ngee Ann Polytechnic
Ngee Ann Polytechnic is one of Singapore's leading institutions of higher learning. The polytechnic offers both business-related and technology-based diploma and advanced diploma programmes. The polytechnic aims to provide relevant, balanced and value-added curricula by creating an effective teaching and learning environment. A key thrust for the polytechnic is forging partnerships with industry and other institutions in order to keep students close to current industry and market practices. For more information, please visit www.np.edu.sg.

About Republic Polytechnic
The first educational institution in Singapore to adopt the Problem-Based Learning approach for all its diploma programmes, Republic Polytechnic has five schools and two centres offering twenty nine diploma courses in Information & Communications Technology, Engineering, Applied Science, Technology for the Arts, Sports, Health & Leisure, Innovation and Enterprise, and Culture and Communication. Republic Polytechnic is committed to nurturing innovation and entrepreneurial learning in an environment that develops problem-solving process skills and a life-long learning attitude. Its holistic, broad-based curriculum, covering culture, enterprise development and cognitive processes, prepares students for an active and meaningful role in society.

About Singapore Polytechnic
Established in 1954 to meet the manpower needs identified by the government, Singapore Polytechnic (SP) is Singapore's first educational institution of its kind. Its eight academic schools offer 44 full-time diploma courses for its 16,000 students and courses are kept relevant through close links with industry and government bodies, as well as with various overseas institutions.

SP offers broad-based, multi-disciplinary and flexible curriculum dedicated to hands-on experience and is committed to the development of its applied research and development capability to enhance the quality of teaching and commercialisation efforts. Beyond the classroom, over 80 student clubs covering areas like arts, culture, sports and community service make student life vibrant and fulfilling. The presence of foreign students from countries such as China, India and Indonesia also provides a variety of cultures and perspectives, nurturing a global mindset in Singapore Polytechnic students.

Among SP’s 140,000 graduates are successful entrepreneurs, top executives in multinational and public-listed corporations, and well-known professionals, many of whom are captains of industries, university professors and researchers, and leaders in government.

Please visit www.sp.edu.sg.
About Temasek Polytechnic

Temasek Polytechnic (TP) is a significant contributor to the field of para-professional education in Singapore and a pioneer in Problem-based Learning (PBL). Our combination of hands-on experience, relevant life skills and an enriching learning environment enables our graduates to excel in both career and life. Through our holistic approach to education, we ensure TP graduates are economy relevant, future relevant and life relevant. The Polytechnic is also a firm believer in forging partnerships with industry to keep students close to current industry practice. TP currently offers 45 full-time diploma courses in the areas of Applied Science, Business, Design, Engineering, Humanities & Social Sciences and Informatics & IT and over 40 part-time courses, up to the Advanced Diploma level. For more information, please visit www.tp.edu.sg