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Microsoft Research Asia launches Singapore Lab to drive AI innovation and industrial transformation

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New Microsoft Research Asia lab in Singapore to drive fundamental research and talent development in collaboration with local institutions



Microsoft announced the launch of Microsoft Research Asia – Singapore, its first lab in Southeast Asia, aimed at driving cutting-edge AI research, co-innovating AIpowered solutions for key industries, and nurturing the next generation of AI talent across the region. Supported by the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB), the establishment of the lab further deepens Microsoft's commitment to Singapore's thriving innovation ecosystem and expands its global research footprint in Asia.

Guest-of-Honour, Dr. Tan See Leng, Minister for Manpower & Minister-in-charge of Energy and Science & Technology in the Ministry of Trade and Industry, delivered his remarks at the launch ceremony of the Microsoft Research Asia Singapore lab today alongside Dr. Peter Lee, President of Microsoft Research.

Singapore as a Strategic Hub in Microsoft's Global Research Network

As a key node in Microsoft's global research network, Microsoft Research Asia – Singapore will drive innovation on intertwined goals: deploying industry-transforming AI, pursuing frontier breakthroughs in AI foundations, and advancing responsible, socially beneficial applications. Its research agenda supports Singapore's National AI Strategy 2.0 and aligns with Microsoft's broader vision for AI as a force that empowers individuals, transforms industries, and addresses global challenges.

"Singapore plays a critical role in our global research strategy," said Peter Lee, President of Microsoft Research. "Its leadership in science, engineering and digital governance, along with its strong culture of public-private-academic collaboration, makes it an ideal environment for advancing inclusive and impactful AI. Through this lab, we are investing in long-term collaborations that accelerate discovery and bring real-world solutions to the region."

"The establishment of Microsoft Research Asia's first lab in Southeast Asia reflects our commitment to partner leading tech players to deliver real-world impact through AI, from Singapore," said Jermaine Loy, Managing Director, EDB. "Importantly, the new lab will create new opportunities for researchers and companies in areas such as healthcare and finance. We look

forward to deepening our collaboration with Microsoft to advance Singapore's digital economy."

The launch marks a strategic expansion of Microsoft Research Asia, building upon two decades of collaboration with Singapore's universities, research institutions and innovation leaders. With a committed presence in Singapore, Microsoft will enhance joint research, cultivate local talent, and contribute to national and regional research ecosystem and development.

Driving multi-domain AI innovation through interdisciplinary collaboration

The strategic priorities of Microsoft Research Asia – Singapore are already taking shape through a series of interdisciplinary initiatives. By collaborating with local partners and leveraging crosssector expertise, the lab is applying advanced AI technologies across key industrial and societal domains:

• Accelerating industry transformation through domain-specific foundation models and agentic AI that generate actionable insights across sectors like healthcare, finance, and logistics

• Advancing precision health by leveraging SingHealth's data and expertise to develop AI capabilities aimed at delivering personalized analysis and enhanced diagnostic accuracy to enable better patient outcomes.

• Pushing the frontiers of spatial intelligence with National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University Singapore (NTU Singapore) to develop embodied AI for complex tasks in smart environments.

• Adapting AI to align with Southeast Asian cultural context and norms, ensuring systems are both reliable and trustworthy within the region.

"These initiatives reflect our commitment to combining deep fundamental research with close cross-disciplinary collaboration," said Lidong Zhou, Corporate Vice President of Microsoft and Managing Director of Microsoft Research Asia. "By working closely with Singapore's research and innovation ecosystem, we aim to accelerate scientific discovery and build AI technologies that drive real impact for industry, society, and individuals alike."

Developing AI Talent and Strengthening Ecosystem Collaboration

Another key pillar of Microsoft Research Asia – Singapore is nurturing AI talent and deepening academic collaboration to drive scientific excellence and support Singapore's vibrant innovation ecosystem. The lab works closely with leading institutions including the National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore), and Singapore Management University (SMU) to advance both fundamental and applied research, while equipping the next generation of researchers with real-world experience.

Today's launch builds on the announcement earlier this year of Microsoft Research Asia's five-year research collaboration agreement with NUS to accelerate AI research and cultivate computing talent across the region. As part of this collaboration, the lab aims to nurture PhD students through the Industrial Postgraduate Programme (IPP), a programme supported by EDB, as well as PhD programmes offered by the NUS School of Computing.

In addition, Microsoft Research Asia is fostering academic exchange and strengthening the research ecosystem through summer schools and joint workshops with NUS, NTU Singapore and SMU.