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NUS, Thermo Fisher Scientific strike alliance

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Singapore: National University of Singapore (NUS) and Life Sciences Group of Thermo Fisher Scientific have struck a strategic alliance of a three to five year programme, to advance fundamental knowledge through basic and applied life sciences research, in areas that lead to food and animal safety and human health.

NUS-Thermo Fisher Scientific strategic alliance kicked off with a call for applications for short-term and multi-year sponsored research projects.

The research topics of interest for the inaugural 2014 call are in the areas of:
â€¢ New Devices for Biological Science;
â€¢ Mammalian Cell Biology and Synthetic Biology;
â€¢ Methods and Tools for Analysis and Understanding of the Human Microbiome;
â€¢ Human Stem Cell-based programmes; and
â€¢ Applications for Thermo Fisher Scientifics' Capillary Electrophoresis Systems.

Successful research projects will receive multiple year grants of up to $300,000 per year from Thermo Fisher Scientific. In addition, Thermo Fisher will be providing short-term grants for innovative investigations that need rapid and flexible support to projects that meets the alliance goals.

To encourage collaboration between both parties, each project will be managed by an NUS Principal Investigator and a research collaborator from Thermo Fisher Scientific. A joint steering committee comprising of scientists from NUS and Thermo Fisher Scientific will be responsible for reviewing and awarding grants to these high impact research projects. The first batch of grants will be awarded by the end October 2014.

"NUS Enterprise is delighted to be commencing this alliance, just a few months after we signed the MOU agreement. Collaborating with Thermo Fisher Scientific, a scientific world leader, is strong validation of the value of NUS research and our scientific expertise. We hope that this alliance will lead to future life sciences discoveries and the development of new

applications relevant for global healthcare markets," said Dr Lily Chan, CEO, NUS Enterprise.

Joydeep Goswami, Asia Pacific and Japan president for the Life Sciences Solutions of Thermo Fisher Scientific, said "We are so excited about this platform that will enable solutions for pressing issues such as securing reliable food supply and fighting heath issues such as cancer and various diseases. With the interdisciplinary scientific expertise and specialized knowledge gathered from NUS and Thermo Fisher Scientific, this initiative forms an expert knowledge network, where NUS scientists shall be offered research support and capacity-enhancing opportunities to confront the challenges of life science. Moreover, we sincerely appreciate that this alliance gives us the opportunity to fulfil our mission - to enable our customers to make the world healthier, cleaner and safer."

Ron A. Andrews, president, Genetic Sciences Division, Thermo Fisher Scientific, said "The need to establish better understanding of biological science is increasing every day, around the world. The strategic alliance with NUS is an ideal form to increase true innovation and we appreciate Singapore's vibrant scientific environment that brought us together. We are glad that we can further deepen our commitment in this country where we can be true partners to promote R&D and deliver more solutions for the better lives of people."

In addition to supporting research projects, this NUS-Thermo Fisher Scientific Strategic Alliance will also support annual life science symposiums held at NUS. This aims to accelerate crosscutting perspective exchange of knowledge and opinions amongst the scientific experts.

"Singapore's life science tools and diagnostics sector has demonstrated strong growth, with both manufacturing output and employment doubling over the last five years to account for more than S$1.5 billion of output and 2,000 jobs today," said Mr Kevin Lai, Director of Biomedical Sciences at the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB). "The NUS-Thermo Fisher Strategic Alliance is an excellent example of a private-public partnership where companies can leverage our scientific ecosystem to undertake high impact industry-relevant research."