

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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**NTU and Lien Foundation establish Lien Challenge to encourage environmental solutions for China  
- \$1 million to support competition involving senior Chinese officials from NTU's MME and MPA programmes**

Nanyang Technological University (NTU) has joined hands with the Lien Foundation to establish the Lien Challenge (连“环”挑战奖) – a competition that encourages innovative environmental solutions for China. The Lien Foundation is supporting the initiative with funding of \$1 million per annum for the next three years, starting with a pilot project involving senior Chinese officials who have enrolled for NTU's highly-regarded Master of Science in Managerial Economics (MME) and Master of Public Administration (MPA) programmes.

This latest initiative furthers the close partnership between NTU and Lien Foundation, established with the launch of the Lien Foundation – NTU Environmental Endeavour in April 2006, the Lien Chinese Enterprise Research Centre in December 2006, and the Lien Ying Chow Legacy Fellowship in September 2007.

Students from NTU's MME and MPA programmes are encouraged to participate in the Lien Challenge by submitting innovative proposals that address environmental protection and sustainable development issues in China as part of their capstone papers. The theme for the pilot year focuses on water issues and sustainable water solutions.

Leveraging NTU's technological know-how and extensive links in China, and Lien Foundation's experience in water and sanitation issues, the new initiative offers a practice-based learning platform for postgraduate students to identify and structure real-world projects that will significantly impact the community in China.

Prof Lawrence Wong, Dean of NTU's College of Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences (南洋理工大学文学学院院长王宏志教授), says: *“NTU's brand of education nurtures creative and entrepreneurial global leaders. The Lien Challenge gives the MME and MPA students an opportunity to translate innovative ideas and resources into real-life solutions and apply what they have learnt beyond NTU and Singapore. It also gives them a chance to give back to the communities by helping to improve their quality of life.”*

Five finalists will be short-listed by a panel and seed funding of up to \$10,000 will be given to each team on a reimbursement basis to help them conduct field work in China and flesh out the proposal. The short-listed teams will seek endorsement and support from their local governments to implement their proposals. They are also encouraged to seek additional resources from the local governments and industries. The finalists will submit their proposals in November and the Selection Committee will announce the grand prize winner in December. The grand prize winner will receive funding of \$700,000 to implement the

project under the facilitation of Lien Aid, an international development NGO under the Lien Foundation – NTU Environmental Endeavour, which aims to improve the quality of life for rural communities in Asia.

Mr Lee Poh Wah, Programme Director of Lien Foundation (连氏基金会项目总监李宝华先生), says: *“The Lien Challenge is significant in many ways. This is regional development in action, conducted from Singapore. Through this inaugural competition, we are harnessing the political clout and will of the “Mayor’s Class” to help deal with China’s environmental issues. In time to come, solutions and positive changes effected in China could be attributed to this initiative driven by a Singapore philanthropic foundation and university.”*

Some 129 government officials from China have enrolled for the MME and MPA programmes in March 2008. This year’s intake is one of the largest since the inception of the programmes in 1998 and 2005 respectively to meet the needs of Chinese leaders, many of whom were going beyond local shores to keep abreast of the political-economic developments in the region. Among the 46 MME and 83 MPA students are leaders from the public sector such as vice-mayors, chiefs and divisional directors of government departments.

For more information on the Lien Challenge, please refer to the annex attached.

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### **About Nanyang Technological University 南洋理工大学**

Nanyang Technological University (NTU) is a research-intensive university ranked among the top 25 technological universities in the world. The Yunnan Garden campus, NTU’s main campus, is located in the south-western part of Singapore. The NTU@one-north campus, home to educational and alumni clubhouse facilities, is located near Singapore’s biomedical research hub, Biopolis; and the new infocomm and media hub, Fusionopolis.

NTU has four colleges, namely:

- The Nanyang Business School (the College of Business), the first and only Singapore business school to be ranked in the top 50 of the Financial Times Global MBA 2008 rankings
- The College of Engineering, with six schools focused on technology and innovation and a research output among the top four in the world
- The College of Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, home to Singapore’s first professional art school offering degree courses in art, design and interactive digital media; the Humanities and Social Science School; and the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, a top journalism and media school in Asia
- The College of Science which offers Singapore’s only direct-honours bachelor’s degree programme

The S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, one of two autonomous institutes of NTU, is a world authority on strategic studies and terrorism. NTU is also home to the internationally-acclaimed National Institute of Education, Singapore’s only teacher-training institute.

As Singapore’s main science and technology university, NTU makes significant contributions to the nation’s renewed drive for research and innovation spearheaded by the Singapore National Research Foundation (NRF). NTU’s strengths in biomedical sciences, environmental and water technologies, and interactive and digital media mirror the NRF’s research focus.

NTU has a strong and broad international reach covering academic and research partnerships with top institutions in the US, Europe and Asia, such as MIT, Stanford University, Cornell University, Caltech, University of Washington, Georgia Institute of Technology, and Carnegie Mellon University; Cambridge University, Imperial College and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology; and Peking University, Shanghai Jiaotong University, Waseda University, and Indian Institute of Technology.

For more information, visit [www.ntu.edu.sg](http://www.ntu.edu.sg)

### **About Lien Foundation 连氏基金会**

The Lien Foundation was founded by Dr Lien Ying Chow, an eminent Asian business leader, banker and hotelier. The Foundation pioneers new ground in philanthropy by investing in innovative solutions, convening strategic partnerships and catalysing action on social and environmental challenges.

The Foundation seeks to enhance educational opportunities for the disadvantaged and the development of nascent fields of studies; excellence in eldercare; and environmental sustainability in water and sanitation.

For more information, visit [www.lienfoundation.org](http://www.lienfoundation.org)

## **ANNEX**

### **About Lien Challenge 连“环”挑战奖**

Total funding: S\$3 million (S\$1 million to pilot the project; Term funding for another two years if the pilot is successful with strong student participation)

Term funding per year: S\$1 million

Funding period: 3 years

#### Administration

The project will be administered by NTU's College of Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences.

#### Theme

The overall theme of the project will focus on water and sanitation sustainability issues in China, which has implications on education, healthcare, food security, environmental protection and poverty alleviation. On a yearly basis, the theme for each Challenge which focuses on a particular facet of water or sanitation issue will be further defined.

#### How it works

The Challenge is open to all students from NTU's MME and MPA programmes as part of their capstone papers. The competition replicates real-world challenges in project conceptualisation, negotiations, project management and implementation.

Participants are invited to integrate their project proposals to the Lien Challenge with the capstone papers. They will work in groups comprising three to five members on real-life issues addressing water and sanitation challenges facing China. The teams will submit their proposals to the Selection Committee which comprises the following:

- Dean of College of Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences (HASS), NTU
- Associate Dean of HASS in charge of China programmes
- Representatives from Lien Foundation
- Industry experts specialised in water and sanitation

The judging criteria include system thinking, innovation, technical merit, practicability, originality of concept, cost evaluation, presentation clarity and planning.

### Timeline for Lien Challenge 2008

June - July	Submission and presentation of proposals to the Selection Committee
August	Announcement of the five short-listed teams (finalists) competing for the grand prize
September	Finalists to carry out field work in China to develop full proposals
November	Submission of full proposals by finalists
December	Announcement of the grand prize winner

### **About NTU's Master of Science (Managerial Economics) 管理经济学硕士学位课程 and Master of Public Administration programmes 公共管理硕士学位课程 (dubbed the "Mayor's Class")**

MME: Current batch (11<sup>th</sup> batch): 46 students; Class of 1999-2008: 477 graduates  
MPA: Current batch (4<sup>th</sup> batch): 83 students; Class of 2006-2008: 162 graduates

Introduced in 1998, the Master of Science in Managerial Economics (MME) programme is a one-year, full-time programme that provides participants with a thorough understanding and appreciation of economic policy management and business strategies in East Asia, with special focus on Singapore. This interdisciplinary programme focuses on strategic thinking and planning, and assesses public and corporate policy effectiveness. Following the success of the MME programme, the Master of Public Administration (MPA) programme was launched in March 2005. This programme examines best practices in public administration in Asia to enhance participants' skills in decision-making, governance, and policy design and implementation. The participants are equipped with the know-how to develop and implement strategic policies to meet the challenges in their countries, and enhance their effectiveness as public administrators.

The MME and MPA programmes provide opportunities for participants to network with government officials and business leaders in Singapore.