PRESS RELEASE

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NUS introduces new CFG Future-ready Index to track future-readiness of students

Senior NUS students have strong competencies in soft skills such as adaptability, entrepreneurial thinking and pursuing convictions, which are attributes valued by employers

Singapore, 7 February 2017 – Students from the National University of Singapore (NUS) can now find out how well they fare in skillsets that employers value in new hires through a novel index that is specially designed to assess the future-readiness of an individual. Professor Tan Eng Chye, NUS Deputy President (Academic Affairs) and Provost, today introduced the CFG Future-ready Index (CFG-FRI) at the opening ceremony of the NUS Career Fair 2017.

Developed by the NUS Centre for Future-ready Graduates (CFG), the FRI comprises nine domains of soft skills which employers value in talents – Adaptability, Curiosity, Emotional Sensing, Empathy, Entrepreneurial Thinking, Insight, Pursuing Convictions, Resilience and Vision. These key mindsets and competencies were identified by NUS CFG through a series of focus group sessions and surveys that were conducted between February to November 2016 involving more than 300 multinational and local employers.

NUS CFG also developed a self-assessment tool based on the CFG-FRI. Between June to October 2016, a total of 4,250 NUS undergraduates tested out the tool and NUS CFG examined the future-readiness profiles of NUS students based on the nine domains. The pilot findings of CFG-FRI as well as factors influencing the career choices of millennials are presented in the inaugural NUS Future-ready Report (NUS-FRR), which was also launched today at the NUS Career Fair 2017. The report can be downloaded at www.nus.edu.sg CFG/frr2017.

Prof Tan Eng Chye, NUS Deputy President (Academic Affairs) and Provost, said, “The CFG-FRI enables us to define the competencies that are valued by the industry today, and track the progress of our students in these key attributes. Most importantly, it helps us to identify areas in the NUS educational experience that we can further enhance to better prepare our students for the highly competitive global employment market. While the Index is developed for NUS students, it can also be a useful tool for organisations to assess and enhance the soft-skills competencies of their employees.”

Ms Crystal Lim, Director of NUS CFG, added, “Awareness of these preferred soft skills will enable students to bring more value to recruitment interviews and to the employer, as well as to thrive in their future careers. The CFG Future-ready Index Tool, which is a psychometrics assessment tool, will soon be available to employers on CFG’s website and we invite everyone to try it out.”
**Key findings from the CFG-FRI**

1. Overseas experiences enhance students’ future-readiness

NUS students who had overseas experiences had recorded higher scores for seven domains - Adaptability, Curiosity, Entrepreneurial Thinking, Insight, Pursuing Convictions, Resilience and Vision.

This observation suggests that students who have overseas exposure are provided with ample opportunities to develop such key competencies, which reinforces NUS’ strong emphasis in providing students with a global educational experience by encouraging them to participate in overseas study programmes and out-of-the-classroom experiences.

2. Top 3 Future-ready Aspects of the NUS Education

Senior NUS students had achieved higher scores in three domains found to be most valued by employers - *Adaptability, Entrepreneurial Thinking* and *Pursuing Convictions*.

This finding suggests that the unique NUS education helps students develop an entrepreneurial mindset and become more adaptable and dynamic. NUS CFG plans to conduct a longitudinal study to gain greater insights into the future-ready trajectory of NUS students during their candidature in NUS.

3. Gender Differences

Significant gender differences in eight domains were observed among NUS students. Male students had higher scores on *Adaptability, Curiosity, Entrepreneurial Thinking, Insight, Resilience* and *Pursuing Convictions*; while female students had high scores for *Empathy* and *Emotional Sensing*.

NUS CFG will be using these findings to tailor its developmental workshops to meet the growth needs of the different NUS student segments.

**What do millennials want from their employers**

Based on an analysis of existing research as well as interviews and surveys with NUS students from various years of study, NUS CFG identified eight factors that are considered as key motivators for millennials in choosing a career and staying with an employer, apart from a good salary which has become an expectation. These factors are: *Autonomy, Challenge, Collaboration, Corporate Social Responsibility, Growth, Purpose, Trust and Well-being*.

“In our survey of NUS students, we found that they most valued a workplace culture that encapsulates the attributes of *Growth, Purpose, Trust and Well-being*. These findings shed light on how employers can attract and retain talents,” explained Ms Lim.

**About NUS Roots & Wings programme**

Developed by NUS CFG, the Roots & Wings programme is NUS’ flagship programme focusing on personal and interpersonal effectiveness skills. This unique programme is currently open to all first-year undergraduates from five faculties and schools – Arts and Social Sciences, Computing, Engineering, Science as well as Design and Environment. Since its launch in January 2016, over 5,000 students have participated in the Roots & Wings programme. In steady state, the programme will be rolled out to 7,000 NUS freshmen per year as an essential part of the NUS educational experience.
The pilot run of the Roots & Wings programme had generated encouraging results. Over 70 per cent of participating students shared that they had developed the ability to train the brain to focus better and to develop awareness of their surroundings and others. Other pilot findings suggest that NUS students’ social emotional intelligence had increased by 7 to 11 per cent after taking the module. Participating NUS students also used the module to reflect on how to make a meaningful difference to the world and what work resonates with their values.

The findings in the NUS-FRR and CFG-FRI further reinforce the purpose of the Roots & Wings programme in preparing NUS students for the “VUCA” world of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity.

For more information on the NUS Roots and Wings programme, visit: http://nus.edu.sg/cfg/content/roots-and-wings

**NUS Career Fair 2017**

This year, NUS Career Fair is held over two days on 7 and 10 February 2017. This annual event will feature more than 260 employers offering over 4,600 job opportunities across various industries, such as banking and finance, hotel, engineering, manufacturing, telecommunications, pharmaceutical, retail and aviation. More than 9,000 NUS students and alumni are expected to attend the two-day event, which continues to be an attractive platform for them to interact with prospective employers and source for internship and employment opportunities.

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**About the Centre for Future-ready Graduates (CFG)**

CFG is a first-of-its kind centre developing programmes that contribute to holistic education to equip students for successful future careers and enabling them to lead happy and meaningful lives. Its vision is to be the leader in developing future-ready global talent, and it aims to do this by cultivating personal leadership, promote societal contribution and connect students to their future beyond NUS.

For more information on CFG and the FRR, please visit http://nus.edu.sg/cfg/content/news.

**About National University of Singapore (NUS)**

A leading global university centred in Asia, the National University of Singapore (NUS) is Singapore’s flagship university, which offers a global approach to education and research, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise.

NUS has 17 faculties and schools across three campuses. Its transformative education includes a broad-based curriculum underscored by multi-disciplinary courses and cross-faculty enrichment. Over 38,000 students from 100 countries enrich the community with their diverse social and cultural perspectives.
NUS has three Research Centres of Excellence (RCE) and 30 university-level research institutes and centres. It is also a partner in Singapore’s fifth RCE. The University has established many research partnerships and joint laboratories with academic institutions, industry leaders and government agencies. Research activities are strategic and robust, and NUS is well-known for its research strengths in engineering, life sciences and biomedicine, social sciences and natural sciences. The University also strives to create a supportive and innovative environment to promote creative enterprise within its community.

For more information on NUS, please visit www.nus.edu.sg.