



A Message

FROM THE PRESIDENT

6 May 2020

Dear alumnus,

I trust this letter finds you and your loved ones well, safe and in good spirits.

I am writing to share with you the letter that I have just sent to the Graduating Class of 2020. This class is graduating in very difficult times and to assist them, we have launched the NUS Resilience and Growth Initiative which will provide assistance in four key ways.

1. Financial Aid

- Raising donations for the NUS Students Solidarity Fund, which supports students with financial needs.
- Offering short-term, interest-free loans to international students facing financial hardships. (Interest-free loans are already available to Singaporean and Permanent Residents.)

2. Jobs and Internships

- Creating 1,000 jobs and traineeships within NUS for graduates from the classes of 2019 and 2020.
- Ramping up efforts to offer guidance and advice, through the Centre for Future-ready Graduates and NUS' extensive alumni network.

3. Lifelong Learning

- Offering a total of 26 days of free Continuing Education and Training.
- Providing 150 CET courses and 23 graduate and professional certificates on competencies of high market relevance.
- Deferring for three years, tuition fee payments for any of our Master's degree programmes.

4. Innovation Challenge

- Launching the Innovation Challenge to support 115 projects (to mark our 115th anniversary) led and facilitated by recent NUS graduates. We are looking for projects that will make our people, our society and our world better. Each selected project will be funded up to \$50,000, over a period of 6 months.

Let me take this opportunity to thank those of you who have already contributed to the NUS Students' Solidarity Fund. Your generosity is deeply appreciated. If you are able to assist by providing internships or be a mentor to one of the Innovation Challenge projects, please write to volunteer@nus.edu.sg.

My letter to the Graduating Class of 2020 is appended below for your information. Once again, thank you for your continued support.

With best wishes,

Professor Tan Eng Chye (Science '85)
NUS President

Dear Graduating Students of the Class of 2020,

The examinations will end soon, and many of you are in the midst of applying for jobs and considering your next steps in life. During this unprecedented time, I am writing to share news about Commencement and some timely initiatives we have put in place to support you in landing jobs and developing yourselves professionally.

Many of you are looking forward to the Commencement Ceremonies in July to celebrate this important milestone with your families, loved ones and the rest of us in the NUS community.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted campus life in many ways. Classes and examinations had to be moved online and the past three months have been difficult for students, faculty and staff. I am very proud of how you have shown grace under pressure and resilience in the face of adversity.

Unfortunately, in light of the current situation, I have taken the very difficult decision to postpone the Commencement Ceremonies for the Class of 2020 to January 2021. We acknowledge that it is important to keep alive the tradition of celebrating the accomplishments of each graduating class. However, the safety and wellbeing of the students and others attending the ceremonies are more critical considerations. You should feel tremendously proud of what you have accomplished. You will still receive your final transcripts and degree scrolls in the usual timeframe. The Registrar's Office will share the details on these arrangements in due course.

In these trying times, NUS is sparing no effort to support you in your success and growth. We have developed the NUS Resilience and Growth Initiative, which will help you in four ways:

1. Financial Aid

- *Raising donations for the NUS Students Solidarity Fund, which supports students with financial needs.*
- *Offering short-term, interest-free loans to international students facing financial hardships. (Interest-free loans are already available to Singaporean and Permanent Residents.)*

2. Jobs and Internships

- *Creating 1,000 jobs and traineeships within NUS for graduates from the classes of 2019 and 2020.*
- *Ramping up efforts to offer guidance and advice, through the Centre for Future-ready Graduates and NUS' extensive alumni network.*

3. Lifelong Learning

- Offering a total of 26 days of free Continuing Education and Training.
- Providing 150 CET courses and 23 graduate and professional certificates on competencies of high market relevance.
- Deferring for three years, tuition fee payments for any of our Master's degree programmes.

4. Innovation Challenge

- Launching the Innovation Challenge to support 115 projects (to mark our 115th anniversary) led and facilitated by recent NUS graduates. We are looking for projects that will make our people, our society and our world better. Each selected project will be funded up to \$50,000, over a period of 6 months.

More information on the Innovation Challenge will be shared by Senior Deputy President and Provost Professor Ho Teck Hua in a circular later today.

For 115 years, this institution and its graduates have weathered generation-defining challenges. We survived World War 2. We were there at the birth of this nation. We strengthened after the oil crisis of the 70s, the Asian Financial Crisis of the 90s, SARS in 2003, and the 2008 Financial Crisis. Though occasionally bruised, we have always emerged stronger. I am confident that we – collectively and individually – will persevere, grow, and come out of the current crisis more resilient and self-assured. Like all crises, this too will present us with opportunities.

My colleagues and I very much look forward to celebrating your extraordinary achievements with you and your families at the NUS Commencement Ceremony in 2021, and in the years to come.

I wish you and your loved ones happiness and good health.

*With best wishes
Professor Tan Eng Chye*