

PROVOST'S MESSAGE



Dear Students

The COVID-19 situation has been challenging for every one of us – individuals, institutions and communities. As we step into the extended phase of the circuit breaker period in Singapore, we would like you to know that we are thinking of you. We hope you and your loved ones are keeping safe and healthy.

In this climate of uncertainty, your well-being remains our utmost priority and we remain committed to being here for you. During these trying times, we recognise that there are students in our community who are facing financial hardship and a very difficult job market due to the pandemic.

University initiatives to assist you

To help those postgraduate students who are facing financial hardship because of the pandemic, the University has leveraged a number of platforms to raise funds. Our fund-raising efforts, which are ongoing, comprise contributions from SMU faculty, staff and alumni. Initiatives to help postgraduate students include:

- The **SMU PG Emergency Grant** available to students in need of immediate assistance. The SMU PG Emergency Grant provides one-time financial support for postgraduate students who are faced with sudden, unforeseen financial hardship outside their control during the course of their study. Recipients are expected to “pay it forward”, either through a contribution back to the SMU PG Emergency Grant at a later time so it can continue to help other students in financial need or through other meaningful charitable work or donations to other causes. More details can be found [here](#).
- Launch of **SMU Imagine Better coffee-table book** on 30 May. The book celebrates more than 100 alumni who have made a difference through their work or personal/social causes. With a minimum donation of S\$50, donors will receive a limited edition of the book.

- **SMOO Challenge**, to be launched on 1 July, will bring the SMU community together as 'One SMU' through a virtual race on a platform powered by one of our alumni businesses, while doing good at the same time.
- **The Wishing Tree** project, which anchors on the Bodhi Tree standing on SMU's Campus Green and representing respect for our past and a yearning for a better future, will be launched on 1 July. A virtual Wishing Tree will come alive for members of the SMU Community to pen well wishes and kind thoughts to the University and to each other, as well as to contribute to bursaries to support financially challenged students in their educational pursuits.

The University continues to pursue ongoing conversations with donors to provide additional financial aid in the coming months.

In addition, the **Global Exposure Contingency Fund** (renamed from SMU Financial Assistance Scheme) was set up in early April 2020 to help defray the financial costs of students who were affected due to the cancellation of overseas programmes and the recall to Singapore. University funds have been set aside to help students who are unable to recover expenses associated with air tickets, accommodation, local transport, mobile/data plans, visa/entry fees associated with the recall/cancellation, as well as to cover alternative accommodation for serving Stay Home Notice requirements in Singapore. More details can be found [here](#).

Students can approach their respective Postgraduate Programme Academic Coordinators for enquiries on financial assistance.

Continuing to serve your needs

In addition to actively approaching employers to facilitate permanent and contract employment opportunities, the **SMU Postgraduate Career Services Centre (PGCS)** is working hard in reaching out to alumni, corporate partners and friends for assistance in sourcing for referrals and networking platforms that you can benefit from.

You would have received regular communications from PGCS on the pipeline of postgraduate activities such as virtual career fairs that you can engage in. Do continue to keep a lookout for updates on University initiatives coming in the next few weeks, which include:

- Organising events such as **virtual career fairs** and **virtual panel discussions** on job search/career management in times of crisis. Virtual career fairs, organised in collaboration with EFMD and Job51 (China), will include a combination of both local and international employers.
- Collaboration with **SMU Office of Alumni Relations (OAR)** on initiatives and communications to **encourage alumni to consider SMU postgraduate students for full-time job and internship opportunities**.
- Tapping into the **networks of SMU faculty and advisory boards members** for job and internship opportunities.
- Stepping up the **sourcing of job opportunities in key overseas markets** such as China, India and Southeast Asia.

- **Coaching students** to increase their employability such as by sharpening their resumes, polishing their interview skills (especially online), refining search strategy and addressing any skill gaps. Please reach out to your dedicated career coaches for advice.

Looking ahead

We recognise that these are challenging times ahead and would like to assure you that we are committed to do all we can to help you through these unprecedented times.

From all of us at SMU we hope you stay safe and healthy. We stand with you, and know we can overcome this together. I look forward to seeing you back on campus when the situation improves.

Warmest regards

Timothy Clark
Provost