



## Innovation Centre

### **SMART Innovation Centre awarded five-year NRF Grant; focusing on developing new deep tech ventures**

*Disbursed through the Innovation Centre's grant programmes, the NRF grant will continue to help scientist-entrepreneurs nurture and commercialise their groundbreaking innovations*

- *Intensive training and mentorship will also allow researchers to develop and commercialise deep and emerging technologies to solve some of the world's most complex problems*
- *The five-year grant was awarded as part of the National Research Foundation's Research, Innovation and Enterprise 2025 Plan*
- *Innovation Grant 2.0 – the Innovation Centre's flagship program that provides up to S\$800K in funding for promising deep tech innovations – is now accepting applications till 15 October 2022*

**Singapore, 25 August 2022** – [The Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology](#) (SMART), MIT's research enterprise in Singapore, today announces a five-year grant awarded to the SMART Innovation Centre by the National Research Foundation Singapore (NRF) as part of the Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE) 2025 Plan. The SMART Innovation Centre, plays a key role in accelerating innovation and entrepreneurship in Singapore and will channel the grant towards refining and commercialising developments in the field of deep technologies through financial support and training.

Singapore has recently expanded its innovation ecosystem to hone deep technologies to solve complex problems in areas of pivotal importance. While there has been increased support for deep tech here, with [investments in deep tech startups surging from US\\$324M in 2020 to US\\$861M in 2021](#), startups of this nature tend to take a longer time to scale, get acquired or get publicly listed due to increased time, manpower and capital needed. By providing researchers with financial and strategic support from the early stages of their research and development, the SMART Innovation Centre hopes to accelerate this process and help bring new and disruptive technologies to the market.

“SMART's Innovation Centre prides itself as being one of the key drivers of research and innovation, by identifying and nurturing emerging technologies and accelerating them towards commercialisation. With the support of the NRF, we look forward to another five years of further growing the ecosystem by ensuring an environment where research – and research funds – are properly directed to what the market and society need. This is how we will be able to solve problems faster and more efficiently, and ensure that value is generated from scientific research,” says Dr Howard Califano, Director, SMART Innovation Centre.

Set up in 2009 by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and funded by the NRF, the SMART Innovation Centre furthers SMART's goals by nurturing promising and innovative technologies that faculty and research teams in Singapore are working on. Some emerging technologies include, but are not limited to, biotechnology, biomedical devices, information technology, new materials, nanotechnology, and energy innovations.

Having trained over 300 postdoctoral researchers and scientists since its inception, the SMART Innovation Centre has supported the launch of 55 companies that have created over 3,300 jobs. Some of these companies were spearheaded by SMART's interdisciplinary

research groups, including biotech companies Theonys and Thrixen, autonomous vehicle software company nuTonomy, and integrated circuit company New Silicon. During the RIE 2020 period, 66 Ignition Grants and 69 Innovation Grants were awarded to SMART's researchers, as well as faculty at other Singapore universities and research institutes.

### **Grant programmes under the enhanced SMART Innovation Centre**

The following four programmes are open to researchers from education and research facilities, as well as institutes of higher learning, in Singapore:

#### ***Innovation Grant 2.0***

The enhanced SMART Innovation Centre's flagship programme, the Innovation Grant 2.0, is a gated three-phase programme focused on enabling scientist-entrepreneurs to launch a successful venture, with training and intense monitoring across all phases. This grant programme can provide up to S\$800K and is open to all areas of deep technology (engineering, artificial intelligence, biomedical, new materials, etc).

The first grant call for the Innovation Grant 2.0 is now open, and will close on 15 October 2022.

Researchers, scientists and engineers at Singapore's public institutions of higher learning, research centres, public hospitals and medical research centres – especially those working on disruptive technologies with commercial potential – are invited to apply for the Innovation Grant 2.0.

For more information, please contact [GINFO@smart.mit.edu](mailto:GINFO@smart.mit.edu) or visit this [link](#).

#### ***I2START Grant***

In collaboration with SMART, National Health Innovation Centre Singapore (NHIC) and Enterprise Singapore (ESG), this novel integrated programme will develop masterclasses on venture building, with a focus on medical devices, diagnostics and medical technologies. The grant amount is up to S\$1,350,000.

Applications are accepted throughout the year.

#### ***STDR Stream 2***

The Singapore Therapeutics Development Review (STDR) programme is jointly operated by SMART, the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR) and the Experimental Drug Development Centre (EDDC). The grant is available in two phases, a Pre-Pilot phase of S\$100K and a Pilot phase of S\$830K, with a potential combined total of up to S\$930K.

The next STDR Pre-Pilot grant call will open on 15 September 2022.

#### ***Central Gap Fund***

The SMART IC is an Innovation and Enterprise Office (IEO) under the NRF's Central Gap Fund. This programme helps projects that have already received an Innovation 2.0, STDR Stream 2, or I2START Grant but require additional funding to bridge to seed or Series A funding. With possible funding of up to S\$5 million.

Applications are accepted throughout the year.

The SMART Innovation Centre will also continue developing robust entrepreneurship mentorship programmes and regular industry events to encourage closer collaboration among faculty innovators and the business community.

“SMART, through the Innovation Centre, is honoured to be able to help researchers take these revolutionary technologies to the marketplace, where they can contribute to the economy and society. The projects we fund are commercialised in Singapore, ensuring that the local economy is the first to benefit,” says Professor Eugene Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer and Director of SMART.

###

### **About Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART) [新加坡-麻省理工学院研究中心]**

Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology ([SMART](#)) is MIT's Research Enterprise in Singapore, established by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in partnership with the National Research Foundation of Singapore (NRF) since 2007. SMART is the first entity in the Campus for Research Excellence and Technological Enterprise ([CREATE](#)) developed by NRF. SMART serves as an intellectual and innovation hub for research interactions between MIT and Singapore. Cutting-edge research projects in areas of interest to both Singapore and MIT are undertaken at SMART. SMART currently comprises an Innovation Centre and five Interdisciplinary Research Groups (IRGs): Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), Critical Analytics for Manufacturing Personalized-Medicine (CAMP), Disruptive & Sustainable Technologies for Agricultural Precision (DiSTAP), Future Urban Mobility (FM) and Low Energy Electronic Systems (LEES).

SMART research is funded by the National Research Foundation Singapore under the CREATE programme.

For more information, please visit: <http://smart.mit.edu>

### **About SMART Innovation Centre**

The SMART Innovation Centre was set up in 2009 by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Singapore's National Research Foundation (NRF). It identifies and nurtures a broad range of emerging technologies including but not limited to biotechnology, biomedical devices, information technology, new materials, nanotechnology, and energy innovations and accelerate them towards commercialisation.

The SMART Innovation Centre runs a rigorous grant system that identifies and funds promising projects to help them de-risk their technologies, conduct proof of concept experiments and determine go-to market strategies. It also prides itself on robust entrepreneurship bootcamps and mentorship, and frequent industry events to encourage closer collaboration among faculty innovators and the business community. SMART's Innovation grant programme is the only scheme that is open to all institutes of higher learning and research institutes across Singapore.

For more information, please visit: <https://smart.mit.edu/innovation-centre/about-smart-innovation-centre>

**For media queries, please contact:**

Colin Lau

[SMART@bluetotem.co](mailto:SMART@bluetotem.co)

+65 81823633