

## **LEADERSHIP CHANGES AT NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION AND THE AGENCY FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & RESEARCH**

Professor Low Teck Seng, Managing Director of the Agency for Science, Technology & Research (A\*STAR), will be appointed Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Research Foundation (NRF), Prime Minister's Office, when the current CEO, Dr Francis Yeoh, steps down after six years. Dr Yeoh will remain with NRF as Adviser.

Dr Raj Thampuran, A\*STAR's Science and Engineering Research Council (SERC) Executive Director (ED), will succeed Prof Low as MD of A\*STAR while remaining as ED SERC. Dr Thampuran will also be appointed to the Board of A\*STAR.

All the appointments will be effective on 20 Jul 2012.

### **In Appreciation**

Thanking Dr Yeoh for his contributions, Ms Yong Ying-I, Permanent Secretary (National Research and Development), Prime Minister's Office, said, "As founding CEO, Dr Yeoh developed NRF very rapidly in the first phase of NRF's development. He was instrumental in strengthening Singapore's R&D capabilities. Our dynamic R&D landscape today, with a much bigger ecosystem of more research-intensive universities, top research institutes and international research collaborations, owes much to his drive and determination."

"I am delighted to welcome Prof Low Teck Seng to NRF. With his strong academic and scientific credentials, as well as his leadership and managerial experience, I am confident that Teck Seng will be able to take NRF forward in the next stage of our development, to bring R&D leaders across Singapore together on board an even stronger and more coherent national strategy and to better govern and manage the research programmes we fund," she added.

Mr Lim Chuan Poh, Chairman of A\*STAR, said, “I would like to especially thank Teck Seng for his contributions and leadership during his time with A\*STAR. He has worked hard to bring about greater organisational coherence and alignment as well as enhancing administrative excellence. I wish him all the best in his new appointment at the National Research Foundation, where I’m sure he will continue to help shape the research landscape of Singapore.

“I look forward to Raj taking on the role of Managing Director. Raj has been with A\*STAR for more than 10 years and has held several key appointments at A\*STAR. His familiarity with A\*STAR, vast corporate experience and distinguished career in research will stand him in good stead to take on this new role,” Mr Lim added.

Mrs Ow Foong Pheng, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, added, “I would like to thank Teck Seng for his contributions to A\*STAR and the R&D landscape. Under Teck Seng’s stewardship, A\*STAR has forged many collaborations with its partners in both the public and private sectors, while continuing to deliver excellent science. I look forward to working with Raj as MD of A\*STAR and am confident that he will be able to steer A\*STAR to the forefront of R&D.”

“These leadership changes will allow us to continue harnessing the collective effort of our R&D agencies to boost research, innovation and enterprise (RIE) under the RIE2015 plan,” she added.

### **Professor Low Teck Seng**

Prof Low Teck Seng has been actively involved in the Research and Development (R&D) landscape in Singapore. As the founding Executive Director of A\*STAR’s Data Storage Institute, he has helped to spearhead world class R&D in data storage technologies.

After leadership roles in the education sector as Dean of Engineering at the National University of Singapore and as the founding CEO of Republic Polytechnic, Prof Low joined A\*STAR as the Deputy Managing Director (Research) in April 2009 to synergise the work of A\*STAR’s Science and Engineering Research Council (SERC) and the Biomedical Research Council. He took on the additional role of Executive Director of SERC in February 2010 to lead SERC into the next decade and shape the future of science and engineering research in Singapore.

As A\*STAR’s Managing Director since October 2010, Prof Low has played an instrumental role in furthering A\*STAR’s strategic priorities of driving innovative research and developing scientific talent to support Singapore’s economic and industry development goals. He has also put in place systems and processes to promote greater integration and alignment within the A\*STAR community, and

initiated an organisation-wide adoption of the Balanced Scorecard as a tool to drive alignment and excellence.

### **Dr Raj Thampuran**

Dr Raj Thampuran has had a distinguished career in A\*STAR, having taken on many leadership roles in various capacities since joining in 2000. He is the first A\*STAR Managing Director to have been with the agency when it was known as the National Science & Technology Board (NSTB).

As the Executive Director of the Institute of High Performance Computing (IHPC) from 2006 to 2010, Dr Thampuran played an instrumental role in forging strategic partnerships with multi-national corporations and Institutes of Higher Learning. During his term as the Director, Planning and Policy Department from 2008 to 2010, he helped to spearhead the development of A\*STAR's Five-Year R&D plan (Science, Technology and Enterprise Plan, STEP 2015), which set out the strategic directions for A\*STAR from 2011 to 2015.

Dr Thampuran has also played a critical role in steering SERC, first as the Deputy Executive Director in April 2010 and later as Executive Director in Oct 2010. He was heavily involved in the transformation of SERC as part of the SERC Strategic Transformation Committee. He will continue to oversee the implementation of strategic plans and initiatives for A\*STAR in the science and engineering arena as ED SERC.

### **Dr Francis Yeoh**

Dr Francis Yeoh joined NRF as its Chief Operating Officer in 2006, and was appointed as its first Chief Executive Officer in 2009. Under his leadership, Dr Yeoh helped to articulate NRF's R&D vision to accelerate Singapore's transformation to a knowledge-based, innovation-driven economy.

Dr Yeoh has implemented strategic research programmes in environmental and water technologies, interactive and digital media, and biomedical sciences - translational & clinical research. He executed the Campus for Research and Technological Enterprise (CREATE) programme to bring world class research universities into Singapore.

Dr Yeoh was instrumental in establishing the Research Centres of Excellence and the Singapore NRF Fellowship to grow Singapore's research capabilities. He also oversaw the growth and development of startups and venture companies in Singapore as part of NRF's National Framework for Innovation & Enterprise (NFIE) initiative.

**NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION, PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE  
AGENCY FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & RESEARCH  
MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY  
13 JULY 2012**

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**BACKGROUND**

**About National Research Foundation, Prime Minister's Office (NRF)**

The National Research Foundation (NRF), set up on 1 January 2006, is a department within the Prime Minister's Office. The NRF sets the national direction for research and development (R&D) by developing policies, plans and strategies for research, innovation and enterprise. It also funds strategic initiatives and builds up R&D capabilities and capacities by nurturing local talents and attracting foreign ones.

The NRF aims to transform Singapore into a vibrant R&D hub that contributes towards a knowledge-intensive, innovative and entrepreneurial economy; and make Singapore a talent magnet for scientific and innovation excellence.

For more information, please visit [www.nrf.gov.sg](http://www.nrf.gov.sg).

**About the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR)**

The Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR) is the lead agency for fostering world-class scientific research and talent for a vibrant knowledge-based and innovation-driven Singapore. A\*STAR oversees 14 biomedical sciences and physical sciences and engineering research institutes, and six consortia & centres, located in Biopolis and Fusionopolis as well as their immediate vicinity. A\*STAR supports Singapore's key economic clusters by providing intellectual, human and industrial capital to its partners in industry. It also supports extramural research in the universities, and with other local and international partners.

For more information about A\*STAR, please visit [www.a-star.edu.sg](http://www.a-star.edu.sg).