



Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth deputy secretary Ang Hak Seng (far left) and Singapore University of Social Sciences provost Tsui Kai Chong with the memorandum of understanding on the new Centre of Excellence for Social Good yesterday. With them were Culture, Community and Youth Minister Edwin Tong (second from left) and SUSS president Cheong Hee Kiat, who witnessed the signing. PHOTO: SINGAPORE UNIVERSITY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

# New SUSS centre to boost capabilities of non-profit sector

**Goh Yan Han**

Efforts to step up education and research for non-profit organisations to help vulnerable members of society will get a boost with the formation of the Centre of Excellence for Social Good at the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS).

The centre will bring together expertise from the non-profit, public and private sectors in a collaboration to enhance the non-profit sector's capabilities and practices.

It will have courses to train and educate volunteers and staff of non-profits in the areas of digitalisation, productivity, organisation effectiveness and governance.

The centre will also conduct research to help inform policies and direct effort where it is needed, and identify where partnerships and collaborations will be most effective.

To launch the new centre, the university signed a memorandum of understanding with the SG Cares Office, a unit under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY), yesterday.

The SG Cares Office will provide the new centre with support and resources to form partnerships between the private and people sectors, promote ground-up initiatives and encourage volunteerism.

The memorandum was signed by MCCY deputy secretary Ang Hak Seng and SUSS provost Tsui Kai Chong, and witnessed by Culture, Community and Youth Minister Edwin Tong and SUSS president Cheong Hee Kiat.

Said Mr Tong: "In times of change and uncertainty, there is a pressing need for non-profits to improve capabilities. In doing so, non-profits can better engage givers, adapt the modality of volunteering programmes, and also deliver services that best suit the needs of vulnerable groups.

"The launch of the Centre of Excellence for Social Good is indeed timely. It is also crucial in developing capabilities in the non-profit sector."

With non-profit organisations having stronger capabilities, the entire sector will become more trusted and vibrant, and be able to effectively partner one another to

address needs in a more coordinated and systematic way, he added.

Professor Cheong said: "For SUSS, the addition of this centre will bring social sector networks to us, extend our reach into the community, and strengthen our commitment of promoting engagements for social good."

He added: "There are calls for increasing partnerships and coordination to provide services on the ground. But the collaborative focus can also be increased in education and training, applied research, advocacy and informing, and strategic collaboration."

One non-profit organisation that hopes to benefit from the new centre is the Lions Home For The Elders, which aims to tap SUSS' expertise for its clinical staff to further their education and improve their professional capabilities.

Its board chairman Henre Tan said the home can provide data to SUSS for research in eldercare, which the centre can analyse.

The home could use the findings to review its processes, he added.

gyanhan@sph.com.sg