



**TEMASEK
FOUNDATION
International**

PARTNERS LAUNCH STEM PROGRAMME

Bangkok, (February 2017) – The Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST) together with Temasek Foundation International (TF International), Singapore National Institute of Education (NIE) and The Office of Vocational Education Commission (OVEC) Thailand is launching a STEM Program, an educational event that will take place at S31 Hotel, Sukhumvit Road on 24th February 2017.

IPST and TF International have foreseen the importance of extending STEM Education to the vocational education level. With this initiative, the vocational system is expected to gain advantage in long-term duration study and an ability to apply knowledge and skills in STEM occupations in response to high demand in the labor market. The technical and vocational systems are deemed to be a powerful mechanism in producing a workforce in the labor market ready for 21st century skills demands.

STEM Education is the academic discipline that integrates Sciences, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) for the purpose of analyzing and solving problems, and applying creativity in daily life and occupations. STEM in vocational systems is considered a new era in enhancing educational learning capabilities in the long run. Realising the significance of STEM education in Thailand, TF International and the NIE Singapore will partner with IPST and OVEC to develop a STEM Education programme.

Associate Professor Sanya Mitaim, Deputy President of IPST, said that STEM Education learning is in line with Thai government policy that intends to drive new technology entrepreneurs included in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics workforce to be able to compete at the international level and to ready workforces for the future. The Thai Ministry of Education strives to develop and promote STEM education continuously.

Under this collaboration, the process begins with selecting and training teachers in academics at junior and senior high schools and vocational schools to build up leadership in propelling STEM Education by implementing curricula developed by NIE, Singapore sole teacher education institution.

Working with partners, TF International seeks to build capabilities in Asia and beyond. In the area of education in Thailand, TF International is already involved in 16 programmes since 2007 and has worked closely with partners such as the Ministry of Education of Thailand.

Mr. Benedict Cheong, Chief Executive of Temasek Foundation International said, "One key area that TF International has supported strongly is Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Building on the programmes in TVET, TF International is now placing more emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education so that our young leaders will be "future ready" in meeting the needs and managing the challenges of technology." This STEM education programme is supported by the foundation through a grant of about THB 12 million.

NIE International, the official consultancy arm of NIE, have been working with Thai partners to customise a curriculum and programme structure meant to enhance the STEM education abilities of Thai teaching professionals. Teachers are recognised to play a crucial role in the success of the STEM Education implementation. In addition, the STEM Education programme aims to be relevant in its national aim to further the skills and knowledge of 140 IPST and OVEC STEM trainers in its inaugural cohort. The 2-year programme will have a focus on integrating pedagogical knowledge and skills in the teaching of STEM to build capabilities in STEM education.

NIE Director, Professor Tan Oon Seng, commented that the partnership is an example of NIE's global extension in teacher education. He says: "Teacher Education and Professional Development Programmes at the National Institute of Education (NIE), Singapore are not limited by geographical location but instead, enhanced through such international alliances. Because we view the world as our classroom, we welcome the unique opportunity to further calibrate our pedagogical approaches and research efforts to be relevant and beneficial to another country system. In turn, I hope, that NIE Singapore's expertise can together break new ground for our Thailand partners to meet their national aim to focus on building a future-ready economy.

Mr. Wanit Uamsri, Deputy Secretary-General of OVEC said "OVEC has been working to support workforces more efficiently by implementing STEM Education policy in vocational education level. Some parts have been on the way. With this collaboration, OVEC gives a strong support in personnel and budget for this training programme and has been chosen to be master trainers in this program. This initiatives will extend to schools under OVEC in regional accordingly.