



Infectious diseases to be first focus of Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology

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March 30, 2007, Infectious diseases will be the focus of the first research group through the proposed Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (SMART) Center, as announced by the Singaporean National Research Foundation (NRF), which will sponsor the center.

This research group "aims to develop an integrated, cutting-edge research program to study pathogen-host interactions of infectious diseases," as described in a fact sheet released by Singapore's Research, Innovation and Enterprise Council.

"It will focus on infectious diseases of importance to Singapore, Asia and the world. These diseases are respiratory syncytial virus, influenza, tuberculosis and malaria."

MIT Professor Jianzhu Chen of the Department of Biology will lead the group, which will comprise eight MIT faculty members and 17 Singaporean researchers from universities, industry and research institutes in Singapore.

"This research activity, along with the future programs of SMART, will strengthen and expand ongoing educational and research collaborations between MIT and Singapore," said Subra Suresh, Ford Professor of Engineering at MIT and MIT team leader for SMART.

SMART will serve as an intellectual hub for interactions between MIT and global researchers in Singapore at the frontiers of science and technology. SMART is the first of several world-class centers planned by the NRF in the international Campus for Research Excellence and Technological Enterprise.

MIT has eight years of educational and research experience working with Singapore through the Singapore-MIT Alliance. Plans for MIT and Singapore to formalize SMART are expected to be completed in the next several months.

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