

Building the ideal research eco-system

-Koh Eng Beng



RESEARCH STRATEGIST: Prof Seeram looks forward to building peaks of excellence in NUS.

HE is ranked among the leading 150 materials scientists in the world by *Essential Science Indicators*. Today Prof Seeram Ramakrishna is also a strategist – to help his fellow researchers make an impact. In his new role as Vice President (Research Strategy) at NUS, Prof Seeram will be developing strategies to build up an enhanced research eco-system at the University.

“I see my new role as a match-maker to match our researchers’ interests with opportunities in Singapore and around the world,” said Prof Seeram. “For researchers to excel, they need resources, funding, infrastructure, and conducive research and innovation policies and initiatives so that they can pursue the kind of research questions they want to.”

Prof Seeram is a recipient of several awards and honours including Lee Kuan Yew Fellowship, NUS Outstanding University Researcher Award and the ASEAN Outstanding Engineering Award. He is also a leader in the global engineering community, serving as the Vice-President of the International Federation of Engineering Educators Societies and Chair of Global Engineering Deans Council, just to name a few. The former Engineering Dean was also instrumental in increasing external research funding by several folds, and drawing corporate R & D labs into the Faculty.

For a start, Prof Seeram will be looking to raise the overall quality and impact of research across all disciplines, before identifying niche areas to build peaks of excellence. To do that, he will continue to engage in research work in the laboratory – to better understand the evolving challenges on the ground.

“The research eco-system is always changing, if I do not walk the talk, how am I going to convince sponsors to pump in more resources to support our colleagues’ research?” he asked.

His laboratory, for instance, is now developing next-generation solar energy harvesting materials in response to the world’s growing demand for energy and society’s need for cleaner technologies.

“Always keep your curiosity alive!” he said.

<http://newshub.nus.edu.sg/ke/0710/articles/pg15.htm>