

2 November 2025

## **MEDIA FACTSHEET FOR PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE FELLOWSHIPS**

### **About President's Challenge Fellowships**

1 President Tharman Shanmugaratnam launched the President's Challenge Fellowships in May 2025 to develop new approaches in the social sector, support individuals bouncing back from major setbacks, and to recognise outstanding career achievements among ITE graduates.

2 The Fellowships recognise and empower individuals along three tracks:

- **Civic Action:** Empowers social sector professionals, and those from other sectors who have been active volunteers in the social field, to deepen their expertise and develop new approaches for achieving social good. The Fellowships enable full-time and part-time sabbaticals over 1-2 years.
- **Springboard:** Empowers individuals bouncing back from major disadvantages or setbacks in life, and are determined to overcome them. It will help them embark on new pathways, such as through education and skills or entrepreneurship training.
- **ITE Inspire:** Recognises individuals who have achieved remarkable career or entrepreneurial success following a technical education background. Those chosen for this Fellowship will serve as role models and mentors for youth and others in the community, to develop themselves to the fullest.

3 The President's Challenge has partnered with Quantedge Foundation, Singapore Management University, Singapore University of Social Sciences, Temasek and Temasek Foundation, Singapore Institute of Management, Institute of Technical Education and Singapore Business Federation Foundation, to support the fellowships by leveraging their expertise, networks, and capabilities.

4 For more information, please visit: [President's Challenge Fellowship | President's Challenge](#)

## President's Challenge Fellows

| S/N                 | Fellows                                                                                                                                    | Biography                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| <b>Civic Action</b> |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1                   |  <p>Cheok Xue Ting</p> <p>COO,<br/>Trampoline Limited</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leads initiatives that empower individuals with special needs to thrive in their career and development, understanding the importance of this having herself navigated learning barriers in her early years.</li> <li>Designed and led the GATES (Growing Alternate Talent for the Engineering Sector) programme which trains and places tertiary-educated adults with autism in the engineering sector. The programme, backed by upfront funders and operating under managed outcome targets, achieved a 60% employment rate, with 70% job retention in high-skilled roles after 9 months.</li> <li>Partnered with over 150 companies, 50% of whom were first-time inclusive employers, to support inclusive hiring of persons with autism, ADHD, and invisible learning challenges.</li> </ul> <p><u>Purpose in applying for President's Challenge Fellowship</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To equip individuals with special needs, while they are still in school, with the skills and tools needed for them to achieve their potential and thrive in real-world situations. The Fellowship will enable her to collaborate across disciplines to develop sustainable solutions, including assistive tools and effective teaching and support systems.</li> <li>Aspires to push boundaries beyond the traditional organisation framework to create a future where inclusion is the norm, not exception.</li> </ul> |

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| 2 |  <p>Lim Tanguy</p> <p>CEO,<br/>Pro Bono SG</p>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veteran leader in the non-profit sector who has dedicated nearly two decades to institutionalising access to justice in Singapore.</li> <li>• Oversaw key initiatives such as integrated Community Law Centres to enhance legal access for communities in need in the heartlands.</li> <li>• Under his leadership, Pro Bono SG evolved from a department within the Law Society into a national charity that has helped over 150,000 individuals.</li> </ul> <p><u>Purpose in applying for President's Challenge Fellowship</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To build a strong, data-driven case for the systemic adoption and sustained investment in integrated justice in Singapore.</li> <li>• The Fellowship will enable him to undertake research that supports the transition of Singapore's community-based legal aid pilots into a durable, evidence-based institutional model.</li> </ul> |
| 3 |  <p>Joshua Tseng</p> <p>Director and Co-founder,<br/>Blind Mice Media Pte. Ltd.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital media entrepreneur with vision impairment, who advocates for accessible technology, inclusive employment, and self-determination for persons with disabilities.</li> <li>• In 2024, he joined the Ministry of Social and Family Development at the United Nations HQ to speak about Singapore's strategy for disability employment.</li> <li>• In 2025, he joined SG Enable at the World Expo in Osaka to speak on ways to build more inclusive digital communities.</li> <li>• Youth leader and volunteer, championing for disability inclusion with SG Enable, The Purple Parade, and SPD. Previously a Board Member of the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped.</li> </ul> <p><u>Purpose in applying for President's Challenge Fellowship</u></p>                                                                                                                                          |

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|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a person with disability himself, he is deeply committed to building a digital future that leaves no one behind.</li> <li>• The Fellowship will enable him to undertake research to advance digital accessibility, including supporting organisations in making their digital platforms inclusive and user-friendly for all.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Springboard</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 4                  |  <p>Nur Shahirah Binte Omar</p> <p>Part-time F&amp;B staff</p> <p><i>Track: Education and upskill for employment</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A single parent living with her three children in a rental flat, who was previously in abusive relationships.</li> <li>• Shown commitment to personal growth despite life's challenges.</li> <li>• She actively volunteers with Singapore Council of Women's Organisations and completed a course on Emotional Intelligence and Psychology, while juggling a full-time job.</li> <li>• Has a diploma in Business with PSB Academy and aspires to further her studies to obtain a degree in Psychology.</li> </ul> <p><u>Purpose in applying for President's Challenge Fellowship</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although she had long hoped to further her studies, early marriage and motherhood shifted her priorities, and her parents were unable to support her education.</li> <li>• The Fellowship will enable her to pursue her passion in Psychology – helping her build a better future for herself and her children, and inspiring other single parents to do the same.</li> </ul> |

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| 5 |  <p>Selva Raju S/O Arumugam</p> <p>Medical Technologist,<br/>SingHealth</p> <p><i>Track: Education and upskill for<br/>employment</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing up, his mum required frequent hospital stays, and he was orphaned in his teens.</li> <li>• His turning point in life was when his CCA advisor in ITE encouraged him to pursue Higher Nitec and polytechnic studies.</li> <li>• He obtained a Bachelor of Sciences from The University of Queensland and plans to pursue a Master's Degree in Applied Biomedicine or Sustainable Healthcare.</li> <li>• Has volunteered for 10 years and currently volunteers with Youth Corps Singapore, coaching athletes at the Special Olympics.</li> </ul> <p><u>Purpose in applying for President's Challenge Fellowship</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Fellowship will enable him to pursue his master's degree and pair him with a mentor to guide his journey.</li> <li>• It will give him opportunities to expand his knowledge, exchange ideas and collaborate with peers, and strengthen his leadership skills to make a greater impact in his field.</li> </ul> |
| 6 |  <p>Shirlene Ng Shan Yu</p> <p>Temasek Polytechnic Graduate</p>                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grew up in a dysfunctional family. Lost her mother to suicide, suffered from trauma, and attempted to take her own life. Was placed under Child Protective Service. At one point, she juggled three part-time jobs.</li> <li>• Motivated to do better for herself, and to succeed in her studies. Graduated from Temasek Polytechnic with a Diploma in Psychology studies.</li> <li>• Committed to healing herself and others from trauma, she actively volunteers in Owena, the Alumni group of HSCA Dayspring which provides shelter to young female trauma survivors.</li> </ul> <p><u>Purpose in applying for President's Challenge Fellowship</u></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

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|   | <p><i>Track: Education and upskill for employment</i></p>                                                                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Fellowship will enable her to pursue a Psychology degree and pair her with a mentor to guide her journey.</li> <li>• It will help her build the skills and knowledge to help vulnerable children and others, and to support others facing the challenges she once overcame.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 7 |  <p>Barry Yeow</p> <p>Director,<br/>5Seventeen Pte Ltd.</p> <p><i>Track: Education and upskill for entrepreneurship</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spent much of his early years imprisoned and was sentenced to 10 years in 2008 for drug-related charges.</li> <li>• Discovered his passion for the arts in prison and used it as a transformative tool to rebuild his life.</li> <li>• Artist mentor at Gladiolus Place since 2023, where he shares his passion for visual arts with beneficiaries.</li> <li>• Volunteer with Singapore Prison Service (SPS) since 2019, where he co-founded and co-leads CANVAS, a support group that provides mentorship and guidance to inmates through art.</li> <li>• Recently awarded the Throughcare Hero Award at SPS Volunteer Awards Ceremony in recognition of his sustained mentorship and support for individuals transitioning from incarceration.</li> </ul> <p><u>Purpose in applying for President's Challenge Fellowship</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Fellowship will support his pursuit of courses that will equip him with both the soft and technical skills needed for impactful community work.</li> <li>• It will pair him with a mentor to guide his journey, as he works towards using art to uplift and positively impact lives over the long term.</li> </ul> |

## ITE Inspire

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*Photo Credit: Seatrium*

Edmund Lek Hwee Chong (陸惠聰)

Senior Vice President, Operations,  
Seatrium Limited

- Started at Vocational and Industrial Training Board (VITB) to gain practical skills and industry-relevant training. Retook O-levels while at ITE to enter polytechnic, demonstrating commitment to self-improvement.
- Joined the offshore and marine industry in 1998. Rose through the ranks and became Senior Vice President, Operations, at Seatrium in 2023.
- Oversees a network of marine yards and leads complex, high-value engineering projects for global energy clients, directing cross-functional teams.
- Attributes his success to ITE's influence – instilling a 'can-do' attitude and a passion for lifelong learning.
- Provides internship opportunities and actively partners ITE on the Work-Study Diploma programme, bridging education and industry.
- Drives talent development by mentoring a diverse pipeline of early-career professionals across Seatrium's global network.

### Plans to give back to ITE Community

- Plans to organise yard tours and attachment programmes and provide mentorship to ITE students to gain real-world exposure and industry insights.
- Aims to co-design and sponsor short courses through the Seatrium's Digital Learning Lab at ITE, further strengthening the talent pipeline and technical capabilities of future professionals.



*Photo Credit: Institute of Technical Education*

Mohamad Suhaimi Bin Sukiman

Co-Owner & Coffee Director, Dutch Colony Coffee Co.

- Didn't perform well in his O-Level studies as he had to juggle school with caring for his mother, who was seriously ill.
- Enrolled in ITE, but had limited course options due to his colour blindness.
- While studying, he worked part-time as a barista to pay for his school fees and partially support his family. His passion for coffee grew as he progressed, and he was motivated to make this his career.
- Launched Singapore's first carbonated cold brew (2017); introduced public education programmes like the Barista Throwdown (2009 & 2010) Public Cupping Series; authored *Kopi, Coffee & Craft* (2025), and was a World Barista Championship-certified judge (2013-2025).
- While in ITE, he excelled academically for the first time and gained confidence in his abilities.
- He regularly mentors students, delivers talks at ITE, conducts career talks in secondary schools and designs programmes for youth at-risk and students on the autism spectrum.

#### Plans to give back to ITE Community

- Plans to introduce a 'Brew Your Career' programme to help students see a potential career in coffee, use it as a platform to build transferable skills, and embrace innovation and entrepreneurship.
- The \$10,000 fund will be used in areas, such as investing in equipment, and trainers to run coffee workshops for ITE students on ideation and entrepreneurship.
- His ideas include setting up a coffee cart in ITE that is run by students; setting up a podcast for ITE students by ITE students; and creating a coffee-related CCA for ITE and other educational institutions.

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| 10 |  <p><i>Photo Credit: Institute of Technical Education</i></p> <p>Jocelyn Ng Ling Hui (黄灵慧)</p> <p>Assistant Director of Nursing (Nursing Education), Ang Mo Kio – Thye Hua Kwan Hospital</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jocelyn's transformation into a distinguished leader in the healthcare sector began at ITE.</li> <li>• Motivated by her grandfather's illness and her desire to better care for her family, she took up the <i>Nitec</i> in Nursing course.</li> <li>• Has continually upgraded herself and has completed a Bachelor in Nursing and Master of Education. She has a special interest in caring for the elderly and a passion for nurturing future nursing talent.</li> <li>• Actively contributes to the advancement of eldercare in Singapore; received multiple awards including Nurses' Merit Award (2014), President's Award for Nurses (2015), Service Quality Awards (Multiple), and Superstar Award – Nursing Merit (2022).</li> <li>• ITE equipped her with the skills and knowledge to embark on a successful nursing career. Her lecturers firmly believed in her and inspired her to shape the industry. Similarly, she wants to open doors for ITE students and believes that they can be excellent nurses.</li> </ul> <p><u>Plans to give back to ITE Community</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans to set up a 'live' online platform enabling ITE students, graduates and alumni across different career stages in the healthcare industry to connect, seek advice, and expand their networks.</li> <li>• One of her key objectives for this platform is for juniors to link up with seniors within the industry to seek advice and learn from their experiences</li> </ul> |
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| 11 |  <p><i>Photo Credit: Noel Ng</i></p> <p>Noel Ng Sing Guan (黄星元)</p> <p>Owner &amp; Director of Harts, Hint, Hei, and Hove Salons</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspired by what he experienced at his auntie's neighbourhood hair salon, he undertook the newly launched <i>Nitec</i> in Hair Services course at ITE, where he could also learn how to manage his own unruly hair.</li> <li>• Discovered his flair for hairstyling at ITE. Won several awards; Gold Medal at WorldSkills ASEAN (2010), Medallion for Excellence at WorldSkills London (2011), owns/co-owns 4 salons and has 46 staff.</li> <li>• Pursued a different vision for his salon; promoted work-life balance by keeping operating hours shorter than usual and granting staff more leave.</li> <li>• ITE empowered him in his journey, helping him build up his confidence and hone his management skills. He gained international exposure through WorldSkills Competitions and networking opportunities through entrepreneurship programmes.</li> <li>• Regularly returns to ITE to inspire new students through motivational talks. Offers internship and permanent positions to ITE graduates and supports the industry and ITE by sharing knowledge at seminars.</li> </ul> <p><u>Plans to give back to ITE Community</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has found success in using social media as a promotional tool for his salons, and he plans to leverage on his strength in social media to increase awareness of the hairdressing profession and the unique opportunities it offers.</li> <li>• His objective is to demonstrate to youths and their families that hairdressing is a viable career pathway, comparable to other professions.</li> </ul> |
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*Photo Credit: Institute of Technical Education*

Anders Tan Wei Siong (陈伟雄)

Founder, Inclus Pte Ltd

- After his *Nitec* in Info-Communication Technology course at ITE, Anders pursued a diploma and attained a degree in Information Systems Management.
- Began advocating for inclusivity after witnessing the difficulties his autistic brother-in-law experienced while job hunting.
- Started 'Inclus', a self-sustaining social enterprise, in 2018 with his own savings to empower persons with disabilities, and founded 'InSchool', an after-school care and therapy programme for children with special needs in 2024.
- NCSS 40 under 40 Leader (2021); Tatler Asia Gen.T Leader (2024); American Express Impact Leader [APAC] (2024), and ASEAN Inclusive Business Award (2024).
- ITE was a turning point for Anders, where he learned resilience, adaptability, and confidence. The highly supportive environment and staff helped him grow, and he maintains contact with his lecturers and ITE friends today.
- Continues to uplift the ITE community; is the Honorary Secretary of ITE Alumni Association Management Committee, mentors ITE students, launches programmes for those with special needs, leads fundraising efforts, and offers free mentoring and industry immersion programmes.

Plans to give back to ITE Community

- Plans to support ITE students in implementing their social innovation ideas, by providing resources to bring their ideas to reality.  
The \$10,000 fund will be used for programmes that promote social innovation and entrepreneurship for ITE students. He hopes to train up their social spirit.