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HIGH COMMISSIONER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

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Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP
Committee Chair
Standing Committee On Industry, Science And Innovation
Parliament of Australia
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Dear *Marie,*

**INQUIRY INTO AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH
COLLABORATION**

Thank you for your letter of 10 February 2010 inviting submissions for the above inquiry.

I am pleased to submit a write-up on Singapore's research collaboration with Australia. Although a relatively new area of bilateral cooperation, there have already been positive outcomes and concrete results. We look forward to continuing to expand and deepen this valuable partnership.

With best wishes,

Yours

Sincerely,
Albert Chua

ALBERT CHUA

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S&T Collaborations with Australia

1. Singapore and Australia enjoy a good level of co-operation in Science and Technology. Warm ties are maintained between research organisations from both countries at various levels. These good relations are expected to lead to greater research collaboration and a flow of talent between both sides. In the last 2 years, there have been increased interactions through joint workshops and other frameworks promoting greater S&T cooperation.

- a. A*STAR and the **Australian Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR)** signed an MOU in Jul 2009 to jointly fund and administer a researcher exchange programme between Australia and Singapore. Known as the **Emerging Research Leaders Exchange Programme (ERLEP)**, which is administered by A*STAR and the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, this programme allows the exchange of talented young researchers between Singapore and Australia over a 2-week period in the host country. In October 2009, A*STAR sent 7 young scientists to Australia for the exchange. Singapore will receive 8 young scientists from Australia for the return leg of this programme in May 2010.
- b. A*STAR and the Australian Academy of Sciences have co-organised **joint workshops** on specific themes to encourage greater understanding of each other's research capabilities and to foster research collaborations between scientists on both sides. The first joint workshop on Energy was held in June 2009 in Canberra; another joint workshop on Stem Cells, Regenerative Medicine and Bioimaging will be held in Singapore on 24-25 May 2010.
- c. To identify research areas where Australia and Singapore can complement each other and for which both research communities would benefit from closer interactions, A*STAR and the DIISR plan to hold a scoping workshop, involving senior scientists from Australia and Singapore, in the 2nd half of 2010. This could potentially lead to a joint grant call for projects which can be co-funded by A*STAR and DIISR.

The above frameworks were mooted by Australia's Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science & Research Senator the Hon. Kim Carr, following the visit of Mr Lim Chuan Poh, Chairman, A*STAR to Australia in August 2008.

2. A*STAR is continually looking for opportunities to foster research collaborations with the research community in Australia. A*STAR has a **Research Collaboration Agreement (RCA)** with the **Australian National University's Phenomics Facility** since in June 2006, and is currently in preliminary discussion with the **Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)** on an **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** which will encompass joint seminars, grant calls and post-doctoral exchanges in the biomedical sciences.

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3. In addition, given the high calibre of talent, both at the scientist and student level in a broad range of disciplines, A*STAR has also engaged the Australian universities via the following:

- a. A*STAR offers research opportunities for PhD students from partner universities in Australia at A*STAR Research Institutes via the **A*STAR Research Attachment Programme (ARAP)**. Under ARAP, PhD students from the partner university will spend one to two years at A*STAR Research Institutes under the joint supervision of scientists from both the A*STAR Research Institutes and the partner university. Currently, A*STAR has ARAP agreements with the **Australian National University (ANU), University of Melbourne, and Monash University**.
- b. A*STAR also offers study scholarships for Australian students to do research in Singapore via the:
 - i. **Singapore International Pre-graduate Award (SIPGA)** which provides funding for research attachments of 2-6 months for senior undergraduates and Masters students at A*STAR research institutes. The aim of this award is to create more opportunities for interactions between the students from both countries in a research setting.
 - ii. **Singapore International Graduate Award (SINGA)** supports international students for up to four years of PhD studies in Singapore, at A*STAR Research Institutes, NUS or NTU. Upon successful completion, students will be conferred a PhD degree by either NUS or NTU. These graduates will become the future bridges to bring the two research communities closer together.
- c. A*STAR also encourages **A*STAR candidate scholars to consider PhD training in Australia** because of their compact (3-4 years) quality training, and have seen our scholars graduating from Australian universities including the Murdoch University, University of Melbourne and the University of Sydney.

4. In addition, the **Murdoch University of Australia** joined the **Technology Transfer Network (TTN)** as an affiliate member on 22 April 2009. TTN is a collaborative alliance of technology transfer offices formed to enhance the effectiveness of technology transfer to industry. TTN's core activities include Intellectual Property (IP) cluster mapping, training and certification of Technology Transfer Office (TTO) professionals, joint marketing and events, technology advisory services, industry collaboration, and regular dialogue and sharing of best practices. Today, TTN has expanded to a global network with 28 institutions covering the US, the UK, Germany, Turkey, Australia, Korea, New Zealand and Singapore.

*Prepared by the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR)
04 Mar 2010*