

NUS PRESIDENTIAL YOUNG PROFESSORSHIP

1. Background and Aim

- 1.1 The NUS Presidential Young Professorship (NUS PYP) Scheme, which replaces the former President's Assistant Professorship (PAP) Scheme, aims to:
- a. Attract and recruit talented young academics of the highest quality in the fields of **STEM** (such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and **non-STEM** (such as business, economics, law, arts, humanities, and social sciences);
 - b. Develop and retain recent NUS Assistant Professor hires by providing them with the resources that they need in their early academic careers; and
 - c. Raise NUS' hiring standards to match those of top-tier universities/faculties/schools by ensuring that NUS remains competitive in the current landscape of talent recruitment.

2. Benefits and Obligations

- 2.1 NUS PYP awardees will receive an internationally competitive salary package.
- 2.2 Each NUS PYP will receive a five-year **start-up grant** depending on their research track as follows, to be used to support or supplement other research grants that the NUS PYP may have from his/her independent research programme at NUS:

STEM

Track	Grant Amount
Experimental	Up to SGD 1.0 million
Non-Experimental	Up to SGD 500,000

Non-STEM

Track	Grant Amount
Experimental	Up to SGD 750,000
Non-Experimental	Up to SGD 250,000

- 2.3 In addition, each NUS PYP will be awarded a **white space fund** of SGD 250,000 to be spread over five years. This fund can be used for any legitimate purpose at the discretion of the NUS PYP, e.g. expenses to support the NUS PYP's academic (i.e. teaching and research) activities, academic travels for the NUS PYP and his/her research team, membership fees for professional societies, hiring Teaching Assistants, research manpower, academic visitors, and other expenses approved by the NUS PYP's head of department. However, the fund cannot be used for teaching buyout or to pay for their own salaries.
- 2.4 NUS PYP awardees will also have an opportunity to compete for the following:
- a. **STEM fields** – Singapore National Research Foundation (NRF) Fellowship, which currently comes with a five-year research grant of up to SGD 3 million.
 - b. **Non-STEM fields** - Social Science and Humanities Research (SSHR) Fellowship, which currently comes with a five-year research grant of up to SGD 1 million.
- 2.5 NUS PYP awardees will have equal teaching and service responsibilities as other junior academics in NUS. PYP awardees would also go through the same stringent review

procedures during the Mid-Term Advisory Report (MTAR) process as well as in their application for promotion and tenure (P&T).

3. Identification and Selection Processes

- 3.1 The call for NUS PYP applications will be open throughout the year. NUS will actively publicise the Scheme through open advertisements in relevant prestigious scientific and professional organisations and online faculty recruiting sites. Deans and Heads are expected to provide leadership and personally participate in this process, and are encouraged to seek the assistance of contacts such as visiting professors and collaborators, to identify and approach potential candidates, as well as the government's Overseas Singaporean Unit for Singaporean candidates abroad.
- 3.2 Applications to the NUS PYP is open to both new young academic hires (i.e. external candidates) as well as to recent Assistant Professor hires who are currently still in their first contract (i.e. internal candidates). Successful internal candidates will receive a proportionate top-up to their start-up grant, as well as the white space funding.
- 3.3 Guidelines for identification and the screening criteria for NUS PYP are as follows:
- a. Assessment of:**
- i. How the candidate compares with assistant professors in top institutions with comparable academic background and experience; and
 - ii. How the hiring of the candidate will help to raise the profile and quality of the department.
- b. Review of candidate's research plan/agenda:**
- iii. Whether it is independent and distinctive from the PhD/postdoc areas and/or advisors; and
 - iv. To look for evidence of progress in realising the agenda.
- c. Any other supporting evidence of the quality of candidate:**
- i. Referral letters from independent external reviewers; and
 - ii. Knowledge of any competing offer, etc.
- 3.4 To prioritise and expedite the recruitment process of NUS PYP, the selection and evaluation of candidates will follow an expedited process as shown in Figure 1 below:
- a. Interested applicants are to submit the following to the NUS PYP Appointment Committee Secretariat (at pyp@nus.edu.sg):
 - i. Curriculum vitae, including full list of publications;
 - ii. A completed [Personal Particulars Form](#);
 - iii. [NUS Personal Data Consent for Job Applicants](#); and
 - iv. Three letters of reference, including one from the applicant's main PhD supervisor (to be sent directly by the external referees to pyp@nus.edu.sg). The letters of reference should address the following questions with reference to the PYP candidate:
 - 1) "How do you compare [the candidate] with other recent graduates of your programme, specifically, [list graduates with good placements]?"

2) "To which departments in the National Research Council (NRC) list (<http://sites.nationalacademies.org/pga/resdoc/>) list would you recommend the candidate for: (i) tenure-track position, (ii) post-doctoral fellowship?"

v. A statement of research and a 3-page research plan with a proposed start-up research budget and utilisation plan.

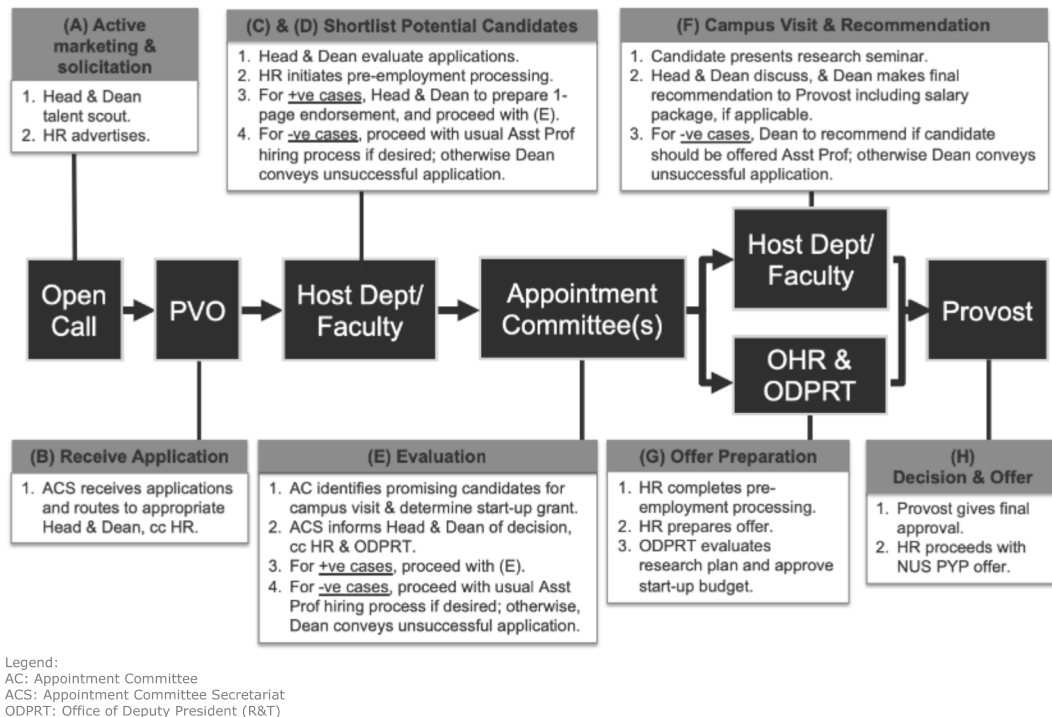


Figure 1 – Application and Selection Process for NUS PYP

- b. Provost’s Office will be receiving and consolidating all applications for NUS PYP, and will route applications to relevant hosting Faculty/Department for consideration together with applications received directly by the Faculty/Department.
- c. Each Faculty would also need to normalise the quality of applications by making sure that the candidates are junior faculty whom top institutions seek to hire on a competitive basis. Departments could take the initiative to approach potential candidates who have yet to enter the job market, i.e. those who are in their final year of PhD studies (for some disciplines) or those who are in their first postdoctoral stint. In addition to fresh PhD graduates/postdocs, the University would also consider outstanding candidates who are appointed within the first contract at NUS or other universities. Hosting Faculty/Department will do the first round of evaluation, benchmarking and shortlisting of prospective candidates for selection by the respective Appointment Committee for STEM and non-STEM. Larger faculties/schools like Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Science and Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine could nominate a maximum of 5 candidates for each round of Appointment Committee meeting while the rest of the faculties/schools could nominate up to 3 candidates. The deadline for submissions would be two weeks before the Committee meeting each month.
- d. For each supported NUS PYP candidate, the Faculty/School is to prepare a one-page write-up incorporating the following considerations:
 - i. Ambition – signs of passion and ambition from the candidate;

- ii. Talent – expertise of the candidate which stands him/her out, and for comparison with peers in the top institutions such as MIT and UC Berkeley;
- iii. Research area – how the candidate’s research agenda is cutting edge, and how it fits into the faculty/school’s strategic direction; and
- iv. One paragraph to describe the most important paper by the candidate (as main author).

This assessment should be done by the Dean and/or Head of Department, and not by the candidates themselves.

- e. The relevant Appointment Committee (AC) will deliberate and decide on the list of suitable candidates for NUS PYP. PVO will advise the faculty of suitable candidates at the end of each Appointment Committee meeting. Faculty HR should start with pre-employment processing and prepare the potential offer packages for the candidates. To streamline the appointment process, ODPRT will delegate the evaluation and decision on the start-up budget to be offered to the candidates to the respective Dean of the hosting Faculty, with the understanding that ODPRT will only fund up to the cap indicated in paragraph 2.2. Table 1 below summarises the start-up budget process for NUS PYP candidates.

Table 1 – Start-up Budget Process for NUS PYP Candidates

Activity	External Candidate	Internal Candidate
At AC meeting	AC should decide if shortlisted candidate is on experimental/non-experimental track.	
After AC meeting	Dean to decide on the start-up budget amount to be offered to the candidate. ODPRT will provide a start-up budget up to the cap indicated in paragraph 2.2. Should the Faculty require the University to fund beyond the stipulated caps, they have to consult and obtain ODPRT’s approval.	Dean to decide on the start-up budget top-up to be offered to the candidate. ODPRT will support a start-up budget up to the cap indicated in paragraph 2.2, taking into consideration the total start-up funding already provided to the candidate to date. Should the Faculty require the University to fund beyond the stipulated caps, they have to consult and obtain ODPRT’s approval.
After Campus Visit	Faculty is required to present the recommended outcome for approval by Provost. They should indicate the total start-up package offered in the same document (i.e. from University, Faculty or other sources).	N.A.
Conveyance of NUS PYP appointment	N.A.	Faculty will issue conveyance of NUS PYP appointment to staff and a copy should be shared with ODPRT. The duration of the start-up top-up & white space funding would be 5 years from the start of the NUS PYP appointment.

- f. Selected candidates will be invited to NUS for a campus visit. Hosting Faculty/Department will be responsible for the planning and logistics of the campus visit of the respective candidates. The Head of Department should take personal charge of the visit programme to ensure it is held in a timely way, fits the needs of the Appointment Committee, exciting to the candidate, and maintain close rapport between key decision makers in the process. Each candidate is expected to give at

least one research seminar. The Dean of the hosting Faculty and at least one other member from the relevant Appointment Committee should be present at the seminar to meet and assess the candidate.

- g. Based on the assessments during the campus visit, the Dean of the hosting Faculty will present the recommended outcome for approval by the Provost.
- h. Successful candidates will be notified of the award by the end of their campus visit. Unsuccessful candidates can still be considered for regular faculty appointment in NUS, and an offer for a regular assistant professorship may be made without going through the assistant professorship appointment process again.

3.5 The Appointment Committees will be chaired by the Provost.

4. Funding

- 4.1 NUS is targeting to award up to 15 NUS PYP (both STEM and non-STEM) per year.
- 4.2 The salaries for successful NUS PYP appointees will be funded primarily by the Provost's Office Strategic Hires budget maintained by the Office of Human Resources (OHR) for up to four years. Other appointment-related costs will be borne by the respective hosting Department/Faculty.
- 4.3 The start-up research grant (details available from the [NUS Start-up Grant Scheme](#)) and white space fund will be funded by ODPRT.
- 4.4 Positions (or headcounts) for NUS PYP appointments are not accrued to those allocated to Faculties/Schools.