

Press Release

Students answer challenge to keep Singapore exceptional

Winners of the Public Policy Challenge 2011 announced

Some 56 local university students became policy makers for a day and competed in the Public Policy Challenge organised by the Public Service Division, Prime Minister's Office to make recommendations to keep Singapore exceptional. The competition was based on a case study of Singapore facing realistic multi-faceted challenges in the near future.

The winning team, comprising Mr Ng Kaijie, Ms Grace Leong Shu Hua, Ms Tiffany Tham Hui Min and Ms Serene Tan Mei Fang from the Nanyang Technological University, proposed that the Government facilitate the building of Singapore brands through financial incentives and the creation of a vibrant community to support entrepreneurship. They also proposed to export Singapore's urban solutions.

Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Finance and Minister for Manpower was the Guest of Honour at the event and he had a dialogue session with the students. He also presented the prizes and certificates to the participating teams

"The Public Policy Challenge is into its fourth run and has received good feedback and enthusiastic support from the participants. The Challenge gives students a glimpse of the intricacies involved with policy development, where they have to wrestle with policy dilemmas and trade-offs that policy makers actually face.

"I'm heartened to see the teams rising to the challenge and encouraged to hear their fresh perspectives. I look forward to seeing many of them step forward in public service to contribute and shape the future of Singapore," says Mr Peter Ong, Head of the Civil Service.

About the Public Policy Challenge 2011

Introduced in 2008, the Public Policy Challenge is organised by the Public Service Division, Prime Minister's Office, to create awareness among university students of the challenges in the policy making process. Over the years, more than 1,600 students have participated in the Challenge.

This year, 95 teams comprising more than 340 local students from our Institutes of Higher Learning registered for the preliminary round in August/September 2011. Of these, participants from 15 teams were shortlisted and given 24 hours to work on a case study and present their policy ideas to a panel of two judges during the semi-finals. The top three teams proceeded to the finals held at the Changi Village Hotel on 9 October 2011 and presented to a panel of three judges, led by the Head of the Civil Service.

In this Challenge, participants from the 15 teams had to assume the position of a policy maker in 2016 to respond to the loss of our economic competitiveness amidst a prolonged economic recession that is coupled with socio-political turbulence.

The winners of Public Policy Challenge 2011 are:

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| Champion Team | Polynomial | 1) Mr Ng Kaijie, Communication Studies, NTU 2) Ms Leong Shu Hua Grace, Communication Studies, NTU 3) Ms Tiffany Tham Hui Min, Communication Studies, NTU 4) Ms Tan Mei Fang, Serene, Asian Studies, NTU |
| First Runner Up | BAM! | 1) Mr Tan Boon Heng, Arts & Social Sciences, NUS 2) Mr Cyan Lee Ming Hui, Arts & Social Sciences, NUS 3) Ms Ong Wee Wee, Arts & Social Sciences, NUS |
| Second Runner Up | Policy Entrepreneurs | 1) Mr Iftikhar Ahmad Lodhi, Public Policy, NUS 2) Ms Shieh Kai Cheng, Public Policy, NUS 3) Mr Tan Heng Kwang Johny, Chemistry & Biochemistry, NTU |

The champion team received a cash prize of \$3,000 while the first runner-up and second runner-up teams received cash prizes of \$2,000 and \$1,500 respectively. The top three teams will also be awarded internship opportunities in the Public Service. The other 12 participating teams received a cash prize of \$400 each.

A separate Singapore Public Service Policy Challenge is organised overseas. The inaugural run was conducted in London in March this year. The next overseas Challenge will be held in New York in 2012.

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