大华银行与新大设基金促进企业界与学术界交流

在这项计划下，本地中小型企业可利用这个基金资助它们的商业计划，而管理大学的学生则有机会参与这些计划，从中吸取实际经验。

面对的挑战与问题，这正是促使大华银行展开这个计划的原因。

教育部长尚达曼昨天在大华银行与管理大学的联合记者会上表示，这是
United Overseas Bank has established a fund with SMU to facilitate the exchange of knowledge resources between students and local enterprises.

Local small and medium enterprises can tap on this fund to finance their business projects while SMU students can benefit from the opportunity to be involved in these projects, thus gaining practical experience.

Announced yesterday, the UOB-SMU Entrepreneurship Alliance Fund hopes to raise S$3 million by the end of June 2005 to kick off its programmes.

As of today, the fund has already achieved S$2.4 million with the sponsorship of 38 local enterprises, including an S$800,000 sum from UOB itself. For every S$2 raised, UOB will match it with S$1.

UOB Deputy Chairman Mr Wee Ee Cheong said, “I am very happy with the response of the industry to our call for sponsorship. UOB has always worked very closely with local enterprises. In the short span of 2 months, we have more than 30 companies who are willing to come in as sponsors.”

Mr Wee added that UOB itself started off as a small local enterprise and therefore the bank understood the challenges and difficulties faced by SMEs. This was the motivation for setting up this fund.

Under this alliance, local enterprises can tap on the resources and expertise of SMU to develop management and marketing strategies such as market surveys, product analysis etc. SMU students, under the close supervision of their professors, will generate new and innovative business ideas and gain practical experience in the process.

Business leaders and students will also have the chance to network through talks, seminars and workshops. Several CEOs have also agreed to come onboard the “CEO Mentorship Programme” to provide guidance to students.

Education Minister Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam said at the press conference that this was a win-win initiative which allowed young promising entrepreneurs the chance to display their business acumen. He praised this unique alliance between UOB and SMU, and hoped to see more of such contributions towards grooming our pool of local enterprises and entrepreneurs.