Exchange scheme to forge bonds among Asian students

FORTY students from the Singapore Management University (SMU) will get to spend a semester at an Asian university and take on community work.

Likewise, 40 students from Asian universities will come to SMU and do the same.

The participants, to be chosen for their leadership qualities and commitment to social work, will receive scholarships worth up to $4,250 each for SMU students and $6,500 each for non-SMU students.

Temasek Foundation, a philanthropic organisation based here, has given $430,000 to fund the exchange programme. The Government is matching this gift dollar for dollar.

Called the Temasek Foundation-SMU Leadership Enrichment and Regional Networking (LEaRN) Programme, it was launched on Friday at SMU.

The programme will allow Asian students “to develop their leadership skills, forge friendships, and build ties with one another”, said Mr Goh Geok Khim, the foundation’s chairman.

A total of 31 universities, including China’s Shanghai Jia Tong, Japan’s Waseda and Thailand’s Chulalongkorn universities, are involved in the scheme.

Last year, 67 SMU students went on exchange trips to SMU’s partner universities in Asia, with 102 students from these universities coming to SMU.

So far this year, 28 SMU undergraduates are spending time at these Asian universities, with 57 non-SMU students here in exchange.

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