

# Harvard Business School grads to mentor students from 5 schools

**Each pair of mentors will guide batches of six students of three polytechnics and two universities over six months**

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## Singapore

STUDENTS at five post-secondary institutions here will soon get the opportunity to be mentored by graduates of the prestigious Harvard Business School (HBS).

The mentorship programme, to be rolled out at the end of this year, was announced on Tuesday, at the launch of the HBS Club of Singapore.

This club was set up to serve the

Boston-based business school's 800-plus alumni now living and working in Singapore, which has one of the largest HBS alumni communities in a single city anywhere in the world.

Speaking at a dinner at the Capella Hotel, the club's founding president Omar Lodhi announced that the mentorship programme would involve students from Nanyang Polytechnic, Republic Polytechnic, Temasek Polytechnic, the Singapore Institute of Technology and the Nanyang Technological University.

The plan is to have a ratio of two mentors to every six students, and for them to meet every month for a six-month period.

Some 30 HBS graduates have already signed up to be mentors, said Mr Lodhi.

The programme will cover various areas such as business ethics, innovation, how to develop a spirit of entrepreneurship and the importance of building self-awareness.

"We also hope that this mentorship scheme will set the stage for reverse mentoring, which would allow us, the at-times jaded alumni, to gain from the fresh insights of these young students," quipped Mr Lodhi.

Education Minister Heng Swee Keat hailed the programme as a "meaningful" way to give back to the local community, compared to other methods such as providing financial assistance.

The minister, a former managing director at the Monetary Authority of Singapore, is himself a Harvard alumnus, having obtained a masters degree in public administration from Harvard University back in 1993.

"All of you have a wealth of experience and expertise, you run businesses in various forms, you hold professional jobs of different types and have such a diverse range of skills," he told his 200-strong audience at the event.



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The club will also provide a platform to stimulate a discussion of regional business and social issues, both among the school's alumni and with business and government leaders.

Mr Seah, who is also the chief executive officer of NTUC FairPrice and Singapore's deputy speaker of parliament, urged all alumni, regardless of the organisation to which they belonged, to give back to society in different ways.

"We all have a duty to make the world a better place, wherever we are working. We should always do our part to be a part of the community and to help the less-privileged. Our most valuable asset is our members, and I urge all alumni to step forward and do your part," he said.

"It is much more meaningful to mentor our students and teach them important life skills, rather than just give financial aid. This is a much more unique value proposition that does demand a lot more of you."

HBS Club of Singapore chairman Seah Kian Peng said the new club would help fulfil the school's ideals of service to one's community, country and region, as well as to advance the school's interests and welfare.