

## **The Law Society of Singapore – Tax Academy of Singapore**

### **MOU Signing Ceremony - 9 Dec 2025**

Ms Lisa Sam, President of The Law Society of Singapore

Mr Edmund Leow S.C., Co-Chairperson of Tax & Trust Committee of The Law Society of Singapore

Members of The Law Society Council, Tax & Trust Committee and Membership Services team

1. A very warm welcome to today's MOU Signing Ceremony.
2. The Law Society of Singapore is one of the founding partners of the Tax Academy of Singapore. You are not just an ordinary partner. Since 2006, a Law Society representative has sat on our Board – currently it is Ms Ong Ken Loon with Mr Eugene Lim before her. This relationship is very special.
3. This MOU is the natural next step; we are honoured to strengthen this legacy. Thank you for being here.

### **Our Foundation & Training Programmes & Reach**

4. The Tax Academy of Singapore has an expansive mandate (Footnote 1) - we exist to promote education, research and information exchange in the field of taxation and related fields of knowledge.
5. Today, we are most well-known for our core structured programmes, including Level 1, 2, 3 Income Tax, GST and International Tax, which are recognised for accreditation with the Singapore Chartered Tax Professionals.

6. Some interesting facts - we had more than **1,700** trainees for our core structured programs in the last completed FY, of which **63%** were from smaller firms, inhouse practitioners - they are neither from IRAS nor Big 4 International Accounting Firms. We play a critical role in uplifting the entire tax eco-system.
7. For our flagship Advanced Tax Programme (or ATP for short), we started with about 30 trainees in 2007. This year, we have more than 100 participants over 2 intakes. Mr Balasubramnian Arvind is on ATP Intake 2/2025 – I hope you are finding the course fruitful!
8. For seminars/webinars/conferences, Tax Academy had **4,806** participants in the last completed FY, of which **97%** were from industry. (not IRAS, not Big 4). Our reach has grown.
9. This year alone, Tax Academy signed a total of 5 MOUs (including today's MOU), and 5 Bursary agreements with each of the 5 Autonomous Universities (NUS, NTU, SMU, SUSS and SIT) that offer Accountancy degrees. I am humbled that the bursaries contributed by Tax Academy will directly benefit more than 40 financially eligible students over the next few years. (**Annex 1**)

### ***Collaboration with The Law Society of Singapore Members***

10. I am pleased to report that we have always enjoyed good collaborations with members of your Tax & Trust committee. A few examples:
11. We are very grateful for Senior Counsel Edmund Leow's support – he conducted a highly successful webinar on Family Offices in Singapore earlier this year, with 180 attendees. In March 2026, he has agreed to partner Professor Martin Wenz from University of Lichenstein to speak at a 3-day programme that Tax Academy will be conducting, [*The topic is on International Taxation of Ultra-High-Net-Worth Individual, Family*

*Offices and Trusts with Cross-Border Investments*]. Thank you, SC Edmund.

12. Vikna and I were former colleagues in IRAS! Vikna is the President of the International Fiscal Association “IFA” Singapore Branch, and in that capacity, we have worked closely on many fronts, notably the successful Global IFA Travelling Lectureship Programme in Apr 2025, which attracted over 200 participants.
13. Mr Eugene Lim’s “Liberation Day or Armageddon - Impact of U.S. Trade Measures for Businesses Navigating Through Treacherous Waters” complimentary webinar hosted by Tax Academy drew over 400 participants.
14. Ms. Ong Ken Loon and SC Edmund Leow contributed important chapters to the “The Law and Practice of Singapore Income Tax” Book. And Mr. Leon Kwong Wing was a key panellist at our Law Society-Tax Academy joint seminar on Decoding Revenue Cases back in April 2014.
15. I had the privilege to travel with Ms Lisa Sam to Ho Chi Minh City for the ISCA (Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants) PS Centre opening; both Tax Academy and The Law Society of Singapore are founding members of the ISCA’s Professional Services Centre.
16. With this new MOU, I am confident that our collaborations will reach new heights!

### ***Singapore Tax Academy Research Initiative (STARI)***

17. We launched the Singapore Tax Academy Research Initiative, also known as STARI, in August 2025. This is a partnership with Singapore Management University (SMU) Yong Pung How School of Law. Assistant Professor of Law Dr Vincent Ooi heads this initiative.

18. The goal is to conduct world-class international taxation research on issues that are not only relevant to Singapore but also to the global tax community.
19. STARI has opened new training and collaboration opportunities. We have engaged with top academics (almost all are tax law professors) from the United States, Europe, China, and more to deliver seminars and conferences.
20. We launched the Research Affiliates Programme, alongside the Professional Writing Workshop, both led by Vincent. I hope Law Society members would find these new initiatives useful and interesting. **(Annex 2)**

### ***Tax Academy turns 20 in 2026***

21. In 2026, Tax Academy will turn 20. Not yet an adult, but we have come a long way. To mark this milestone, we will be relocating to new and expanded premises at Level 1 of Revenue House. Three modular training rooms which can take up to 40 trainees each. When opened, the entire space can host events for up to 200! These facilities will be equipped with good hybrid capabilities and video conferencing solutions so that we can expand our reach, to the region and the world. We look forward to welcoming and hosting you at our new premises. In addition, we are planning for a signature 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary conference in May 2026, and a STARI conference in the second half of 2026. An exciting year ahead.

### ***Conclusion***

22. Let me conclude. There are only 2 certainties in life, and one of them is taxes. Yet, for something as ubiquitous as tax, many people, especially the younger generation, perceive the tax profession to be boring – some say a subset of Accounting or a niche specialisation in Law.

23. I choose a different perspective. I submit that the true power of the Tax Profession can only be unleashed when we embrace the fact that Tax is truly a multi-disciplinary and at the intersection of Accounting, Tax Law, Economic Theory, Finance, Psychology, Behavioural Insights, Digital and AI, and more!
24. Thank you very much to The Law Society of Singapore, for your faith and trust in the Tax Academy. I want to especially thank Ms Lisa Sam, for her strong sponsorship of the MOU, as well as Mr Eugene Lim and Ms Ong Ken Loon.
25. Let's work together to build a Tax profession that is not only ready for today but is also equipped for tomorrow's opportunities.
26. I now have the honour of inviting Ms Lisa Sam to share her thoughts before we sign the MOU.
27. Thank you.

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**Footnote 1:**

"The objects for which the Academy is established are to promote education, research and information exchange in the field of taxation and related fields of knowledge, for the purposes of educating the public, raising the overall competency of tax professionals for the benefit of the public and raising the vibrancy of the tax community in Singapore or elsewhere, providing taxation-related training for policymakers and tax administrators in Singapore and abroad, and serving as a strategic tool for engagement with foreign tax officials from the region." (extracted from Tax Academy's Memorandum and Articles of Association)

## Annex 1: List of MOUs and Agreements Signed by Tax Academy (2024 to 2025)

EVENT/DEVELOPMENT	
Date	Organization
Feb 2025	MOU with WU Vienna Transfer Pricing Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10<sup>th</sup> intake of the WU-TA Advanced Transfer Pricing Programme</li> </ul>
Mar 2025	MOU with International Fiscal Association (IFA) Singapore Branch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IFA Travelling Lectureship Programme</li> <li>IFA Congress 2029</li> <li>Launch of Young IFA Network</li> <li>International Tax Disputes Day Conference</li> </ul>
Jul 2024 May 2025 Jun 2025	MOU with CPA Australia MOU with Tax Executives Institute (TEI) MOU Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint webinar series</li> <li>Joint seminars</li> <li>Outreach and profiling TA</li> </ul>
Aug 2025	Launch of Singapore Tax Academy Research Initiative (STARI) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Affiliates Programme</li> <li>Tax Professional Writing Workshops</li> <li>Research articles/Publications</li> </ul>
Dec 2025	MOU with The Law Society of Singapore
BURSARIES: EMPOWERING FUTURE TALENT	
Mar 2025	National University of Singapore (NUS)
Apr 2025	Nanyang Technological University (NTU)
May 2025	Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS)
Jul 2025	Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT)
Aug 2025	Singapore Management University (SMU)

*\*Tax Academy of Singapore signed 1 Research Collaboration Agreement with SMU (STARI), 5 MOUs and 5 Bursary agreements in 2025. 1 MOU with CPA Australia was signed in 2024.*

## **Annex 2 –About Singapore Tax Academy Research Initiative (STARI)**

### *A New Chapter in Singapore's Tax Research Journey*

STARI was launched on 11 August 2025 by the Singapore Management University Yong Pung How School of Law, housed under the Centre for Commercial Law in Asia, with the support of Tax Academy of Singapore. It was established to conduct leading tax law research in today's rapidly evolving international tax landscape, where key players like the OECD, UN, US and EU are reshaping global tax policies. STARI addresses Singapore's need for world-class tax research with industry relevance, local academic development and global expertise exchange.

### **Three Core Focus Areas of STARI:**

- 1) Conducting World-Class International Tax Research
  - [Research Affiliate Programme](#)
- 2) Developing Local Academic Capacity in Taxation
  - [STARI Tax Professional Writing Workshop](#)
- 3) Building Links with International Thought-Leaders in Taxation
  - [STARI Research Seminars](#)
  - [STARI Annual Conferences](#)

### **Research Focus: Meeting Industry Needs**

STARI research topics address challenges facing business and policymakers today:

- Harmful Tax Competition
- Digital Economy
- Pillar 2
- Crypto Assets
- Environmental Taxation

These focused research areas provide tax professionals with practical insights to navigate complex tax challenges, strengthening Singapore's position as a leading international business hub.

### **STARI Impact Since Launch**

STARI has conducted 4 seminars, published 2 publications and held 2 workshops featuring 9 international speakers and 9 local speakers, including Professor Sonali Walpola, Professor Adrian Sawyer, Professor Martin Wenz, Professor Jérôme Monsengo, Dr Stefanie Geringer and Professor Craig Elliffe.