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## New research centre: growth in Singapore's next 50 years

At a time when Singapore is celebrating 50 years of independence as a nation, the University of Adelaide will launch a new Singapore-based research centre that asks "where to from here for Singapore's economic prosperity and its links with Australia?"

The new Asia Growth Research Centre will be based at the Ngee Ann-Adelaide Education Centre in Singapore.

The centre will be launched by the Premier of South Australia, the Hon. Jay Weatherill, and Head of Singapore's Civil Service, Mr Peter Ong, a graduate of the University of Adelaide, at a one-day conference in Singapore on the drivers of economic growth and Singapore's relationship with Australia, on Tuesday 18 August. The event will be hosted by the Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Adelaide, Professor Warren Bebbington.

The University's Executive Dean of the Faculty of the Professions, Professor Christopher Findlay AM, says: "Our new Asia Growth Research Centre will draw together great minds from Singapore and around the world, focussing their energies to address key economic challenges for the country. We hope this knowledge will have important flow-on effects for prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region, including Australia."

Professor Findlay says since achieving independence, Singapore has emerged as one of the world's most successful industrialising nations, but new challenges are emerging. "There is much current debate about the nation's demographic structure, competitiveness of the economy, and labour policies, and how they might need to adjust to deal with new economic realities," he says.

"The Singapore Government's plan to 'think for the future', improve productivity across all sectors, and specifically target areas of low labour productivity is a significant one.

"It will be vital to get the numbers right and build a comprehensive understanding of the varied and complex factors at play, to ultimately deliver good policy. The role of applied research in this undertaking is extremely important," Professor Findlay says.

He says the new Asia Growth Research Centre will offer clarity around the expectations for growth in Singapore, and inform the policy and business responses required for economic sustainability. "In this way, our centre stands to make a significant contribution as Singapore charts its way forward regionally and globally, offering long-term benefit to the whole community," Professor Findlay says.

The Australia-Singapore Relationship Conference – to be held at the Marina Bay Sands hotel on Tuesday 18 August – will feature sessions on services, competitiveness and growth; connectivity, infrastructure and cities; and skills and structural changes needed to achieve growth. Speakers attending the event include senior government officials, academics and business economists from Singapore and Australia, as well as Japan, and a keynote address by Mr Ong.

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