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MEDIA RELEASE

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Nestlé expands research and innovation activities in Asia with new Research Centre in Singapore's Biopolis

Centre to focus on Healthy Ageing and nutritional interventions which support older populations both regionally and globally

Singapore – Nestlé announced today that it will expand research and innovation activities in Asia with the establishment of Nestlé Research Centre (NRC) Asia in Biopolis, the biomedical research hub of Singapore. The expansion builds on Nestlé's strategic innovation partnership with Singapore's Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), and provides a new base for Nestlé Research Centre, with a focus on Healthy Ageing.

Longer life expectancy and a marked decline in fertility rates have resulted in a rapidly ageing global population, with significant economic, healthcare and societal repercussions. In particular, Asia's ageing population is expected to reach 1.2 billion and account for 60 per cent of the world's population of older people by 2050¹.

Nestlé has identified a strategic need for a research footprint within Asia to study the role of nutrition and early development in health and disease, so as to better address the needs of the region's ageing population.

NRC Asia's strong focus on Healthy Ageing leverages Singapore's strong biomedical research capabilities and diverse ethnic population to enrich the wellbeing, health and longevity of Asia's aged. The regional insights gleaned on geriatric nutrition could also lead to nutritional interventions across the globe.

Furthering a longstanding relationship

¹ United Nations Population Division. Population Facts. August 2014. Number 2014/4.
http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/popfacts/PopFacts_2014-4.pdf

The establishment of NRC Asia builds on the success of Nestlé's strategic innovation partnership with A*STAR, Singapore's lead public sector research agency driving economic-oriented research. The origins of Nestlé's partnership with A*STAR date back to 2011, when NRC began collaborative projects in clinical nutrition research with A*STAR's Singapore Institute for Clinical Sciences (SICS).

Since then, the partnership has gone from strength to strength, giving Nestlé the confidence to anchor NRC Asia in Singapore. NRC Asia's scope of research encompasses both new and existing platforms which have been jointly developed with A*STAR.

For Nestlé, the appeal of A*STAR comes from its spectrum of research capabilities and ability to integrate these expertise together with that of the wider innovation ecosystem in Singapore.

Since the signing of a Framework Research Agreement with A*STAR in Jan 2014, Nestlé Research has set up strategic platforms around food science and technology, materials science and packaging, nutrition, health and behaviour.

The collaboration will also increasingly expand on biotransformation – the use of natural processes, such as fermentation, to transform raw materials into ingredients with nutritional or functional benefits.

Yielding positive results

The ongoing research collaborations between both partners are already delivering impactful outcomes. An example is a project to improve the sustainable use of raw materials, such as barley, in Nestlé's malt extract production. A team from Nestlé, and A*STAR's Institute of Chemical and Engineering Sciences (ICES) and Bioprocessing Technology Institute (BTI) have achieved break-through results in Nestlé's malt extraction process. The result: the sustainability of Nestlé's malt extraction facility in Singapore has been boosted, furthering Nestlé's commitment to environmental sustainability.

With the new focus on Healthy Ageing, key platform projects between Nestlé and A*STAR are also in progress. One such project, a multi-party collaboration with Nestlé, A*STAR's Singapore Immunology Network (SIgN), the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Sanofi Pasteur rides on an existing vaccination study in the elderly. It seeks to understand the role of nutrition and lifestyle on immune robustness and frailty, with the end goal of developing nutritional interventions to improve immunity and wellbeing in the elderly.

NRC Asia will be situated within Singapore's Biopolis, alongside A*STAR's biomedical research institutes. With the centre's close proximity to private and public sector research at Biopolis as well as neighboring hospitals and universities,

Nestlé will be able to tap on Singapore's integrated R&D ecosystem to conduct collaborative research to develop quality nutritional products.

The launch of NRC Asia brings upstream research activities that complement Nestlé's existing facility for applied research and product development. This expansion is also supported by the Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB), which has played a significant role in facilitating Nestlé's business and growing presence in Singapore and the region, since its inception.

Nestlé is expected to increase its total headcount at NRC Asia by 25 in the next three to five years. This includes key positions such as Dr Fabrizio Agrigoni, Head of NRC Asia and Head of Nestlé's Healthy Ageing programme.

"The Nestlé and A*STAR partnership has shown significant results and great potential for both partners. The collaboration and the founding of our Healthy Ageing programme also marks the start of a new drive of scientific innovation efforts which support unmet nutritional needs of Asia's ageing population," said Dr Fabrizio Arigoni.

Professor Stefan Catsicas, Chief Technology Officer, Nestlé S.A. added: "Singapore's focus on higher education and scientific excellence with strong industrial development purpose makes it an ideal place to broaden our research base while bridging our NRC presence in China and Japan.

"Our priority is to participate in building an unprecedented ecosystem where the government, academia and industry worlds come together to improve people's quality of life. Through open innovation with key players in the region, Nestlé believes that nutritional science will provide enhanced solutions that support health and wellness."

Mr Lim Chuan Poh, Chairman of A*STAR, stated, "We are delighted at Nestlé's expansion in Singapore. As one of our valued partners, Nestlé has been instrumental in collaborating with A*STAR to significantly grow our research in food and nutrition in Singapore. We look forward to working closely with Nestlé to meet the needs of Singapore's and Asia's ageing populations and empower them to live longer, healthier and more fulfilling lives."

For media queries and clarifications, please contact:

Ms Shree Ann Mathavan
Corporate Affairs & Public Relations Manager
Nestlé Singapore
Tel: +65 6836 7173
Email: shreeann.mathavan@sg.nestlé.com

Ms Tang Xin Ning
Senior Officer, Corporate Communications
Agency for Science, Technology and Research
Tel: +65 6826 6452
Email: tang_xin_ning@a-star.edu.sg

About Nestlé Research & Development

Nestlé operates the largest Research and Development network of any food company in the world. It has 40 R&D Centres worldwide with over 5,000 people involved in R&D.

About Nestlé's Heritage in Asia

Nestlé's first Asian R&D Centre was established in Singapore in 1980 and now employs 135 people from 19 different nations with expertise in food science and technology, engineering, packaging and nutrition to support product and process development.

About the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR)

The Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) is Singapore's lead public sector agency that spearheads economic oriented research to advance scientific discovery and develop innovative technology. Through open innovation, we collaborate with our partners in both the public and private sectors to benefit society.

As a Science and Technology Organisation, A*STAR bridges the gap between academia and industry. Our research creates economic growth and jobs for Singapore, and enhances lives by contributing to societal benefits such as improving outcomes in healthcare, urban living, and sustainability.

We play a key role in nurturing and developing a diversity of talent and leaders in our Agency and Research Institutes, the wider research community and industry. A*STAR oversees 18 biomedical sciences and physical sciences and engineering research entities primarily located in Biopolis and Fusionopolis.

For more information on A*STAR, please visit www.a-star.edu.sg.