

Inaugural Medical Research Fund Launched by Tanoto Foundation to Drive Research into Range of Diseases Prevalent in Singapore

- *New fund to support research into cardiology, maternal and child health, diabetes, oncology, infectious diseases*
- *Up to S\$5 million per year set to be distributed to a range of medical research projects*

Singapore, 28 September 2023 - Tanoto Foundation has today announced the launch of a new Medical Research Fund that will provide up to S\$5 million per year in funding to support research into a range of diseases that are prevalent in Singapore, in the areas of cardiology, maternal and child health, diabetes, oncology and infectious diseases.

The Fund will prioritise research projects in the cardiology and maternal and child health areas in its first year of operation. Projects will be selected based on a number of specific criteria and will be reviewed and assessed by an external advisory panel comprised of clinical experts and medical professionals.

The clinical areas were selected based on their impact on local populations in Singapore and the wider region - e.g.: about one in three deaths in Singapore is due to heart disease or stroke and it is estimated that the number of people living with cancer will continue to increase, while improving maternal and newborn health remains a key focus of public policy in Singapore and in other countries in the region.

Belinda Tanoto, Member of the Board of Trustees, Tanoto Foundation, said: “We have set up this Fund as a way to consolidate our support for medical research. The Fund will focus on these five clinical areas, which affect the lives of thousands of people in Singapore and Asia”.

“We aim to support research projects that are first in their field and game-changing, potentially addressing healthcare concerns for diseases common in Singapore and the region, and to cultivate local research talent. In addition, we also aim to attract additional funding into medical research initiatives here in Singapore and in neighbouring countries,” said Ms. Tanoto.

The criteria which will be used to evaluate proposals submitted to the Fund include the following:

- **Potential for impact:** potential to improve health outcomes, clinical practices and technical capabilities leading to clinical translation and innovation.
- **Robustness of approach:** relevance and robustness of strategy, methodology and analyses to accomplish project aims and impact outcomes.
- **Track record of study team:** the excellence and accomplishments of the study team and potential/plan for talent development.
- **Strength of collaboration:** the collaborative effort of multi-disciplinary teams, ideally involving cross collaboration across Singapore healthcare clusters.

The new Fund, which is the first of its kind to be set up by a private philanthropic organisation in Singapore, will build on Tanoto Foundation’s existing support for medical research in Singapore. Since 2009, the Foundation has given more than S\$20 million to support various medical research and healthcare programmes in Singapore.

The Foundation has partnered with SingHealth Duke-NUS Academic Medical Centre to establish Professorships and research initiatives in the areas of diabetes, medical oncology and cardiovascular medicine. Also, last year, in line with nationwide efforts to combat diabetes, Tanoto Foundation joined forces with the National Healthcare Group to set up a diabetes reversal programme in Singapore.

The Fund is also designed to encourage collaboration between medical institutions and to take advantage of Singapore's standing as a regional hub for medical research.

"The Fund is not just focused on providing monetary support but encouraging collaboration between people, ideas and networks. We also want to strengthen Singapore's medical research ecosystem by promoting research excellence and better healthcare here and in the wider region. In recent years, Singapore has been able to attract world renowned scientists and healthcare talent and is uniquely positioned to serve as a medical research hub for Asia," said Ms. Tanoto.

About Tanoto Foundation:

Tanoto Foundation is an independent philanthropic organisation founded in 1981 by Sukanto Tanoto and Tinah Bingei Tanoto based on the belief that every person should have the opportunity to realise his or her full potential. Tanoto Foundation programmes stem from the belief that quality education accelerates equal opportunity. We harness the transformative strength of education to realise people's full potential and improve lives. Tanoto Foundation focuses on making an impact in three main areas: improving learning environments, future leader's development, as well as medical research and sciences. More information is available at www.tanotofoundation.org/en/.