

Tax Academy Appreciation Event and Year-End Party for Alumni Network Members Speech – 2 Dec 2025

Mr Tham Sai Choy, Chairman Board of Tax Academy

Board of Directors, Colleagues and friends

1. A very warm welcome to the annual Tax Academy Appreciation Event and Year-End Party for our Alumni Network Members.
2. This year, on top of celebrating the dedication of our trainers, we also have alumni network members joining us. I am delighted that we now have more than 450 Alumni network members who continue to be part of our growing tax community.
3. Thank you for being here.

**Our Foundation & Purpose**

4. Tax Academy has an expansive mandate. We exist 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)
5. Let me share on how we have been bringing this vision to life through our initiatives this year.

## **Highlights of 2025**

6. Demand for our core training programmes remain robust. We have achieved record participation numbers this year.
7. All our Level 1 programmes have transitioned fully online – Income Tax, GST and International Tax.
8. Moving to e-learning has enabled us to enrol more participants while giving trainers more time for case studies. Each intake now exceeds 100 participants. GST Level 1 achieved a record 140 participants in our most recent intake, including 4 overseas participants from China, Hong Kong, Australia and Thailand.
9. Another example is our flagship Advanced Tax Programme. In 2025, we had 2 intakes with more than 100 participants in total, a big jump from fewer than 30 participants in 2007 when the ATP was first launched. Clearly, the industry highly values Tax Academy's structured programmes.
10. On the conference front, we organised the International Tax Disputes Day: The Asian and Global Landscape conference, in May 2025, with Dr Achim Pross from the OECD as our keynote speaker. We introduced the NextGen award to nurture the next generation, receiving over 40 applications from university students. Around 24 recipients were selected to attend the conference as part of the award.
11. The take-up rates for our seminars and webinars have also been strong. We hosted the Global IFA Travelling Lectureship Programme in Apr 2025, which featured regional experts and attracted over 200 participants. In Sep 2025, we conducted a joint lunchtime webinar with CPA Australia on "Understanding

Singapore's GST System", which attracted over 600 participant – almost 40% tuned in from overseas!

12. We launched the Singapore Tax Academy Research Initiative, known as STARI, with the goal of conducting world-class international taxation research on issues that are not only relevant to Singapore but also to the global tax community. We have engaged with top academics from the United States, Europe, China, and more to deliver seminars and conferences. I am also pleased to share that Ms Chua Jia Ying, former Tax Director from IRAS, has joined SMU/STARI as the first Senior Research Associate.
13. We launched the Research Affiliates Programme alongside the Professional Writing Workshop, designed to empower both tax and non-tax professionals with effective writing skills. Assistant Professor Vincent Ooi, Head of STARI will be sharing more details later.
14. This year, we supported a total of 8 students from NUS and NTU to participate in the TEI International Tax Student Case Competition in Montreal. We are proud to announce that NTU Singapore emerged as champion in this global competition. Thank you for flying Singapore's flag high.

### **Partnerships and Internationalisation**

15. We have signed MOUs with CPA Australia, Tax Executives Institute, ICAEW, and an upcoming MOU with the Law Society of Singapore. These alliances enable us to conduct joint programmes and seminars while growing our regional network for international knowledge exchange. We are positioning Tax Academy as a regional hub for tax education excellence.

## **New Office Space and Logo**

16. In 2026, Tax Academy will celebrate our 20th anniversary! To mark this milestone, we will be relocating to a new and expanded premise at Level 1 of Revenue House. There will be three modular training rooms accommodating up to 40 participants each, which can be opened to host events for up to 200 participants. These training rooms will be equipped with hybrid capabilities and video conferencing solutions to significantly expand our reach and enhance programme delivery. Let me give you a sneak peek preview of our new venue on the screen behind me.
  
17. Of course, no anniversary would be complete without a fresh look – we are proud to unveil our new 20th anniversary logo [shows logo]. As we embark on this new chapter, Tax Academy will continue to work together with IRAS, industry partners, and academic institutions to uplift and strengthen the tax community not just in Singapore, but across the region and beyond.

## **Conclusion**

18. Before I conclude, I want to thank everyone gathered here this afternoon. A special shout out to the Tax Academy team, led by Associate Director Eunice Toh, for their very hard work.
  
19. Next year, we have exciting new programmes, including our upcoming BEPS e-Learning Programme and International Taxation of Ultra-High-Net-Worth Individual, Family Offices and Trusts with Cross-Border Investments. We will continue to shape the future of taxation excellence!
  
20. Thank you, and let's make today a memorable celebration as we anticipate this milestone year ahead!!