

# FEIAP ENGINEER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2015



## **PROF DR CHAM TAO SOON**

FIES, FSEng, FReng

**President (Emeritus),  
Nanyang Technological University**

**The Institution of Engineers, Singapore (IES)**

Cham Tao Soon was born in Singapore in June 1939. He received his secondary education at Raffles Institution and entered the University of Malaya in 1960 on a Singapore State Scholarship, graduating with a first class honours degree in Civil Engineering in 1964. Prof Cham went to England on a UK Commonwealth Scholarship and for postgraduate research work at the University of Cambridge, and obtained a Doctorate (Fluid Mechanics), in 1968. He also acquired a degree in Mathematics from the University of London.

In 1981, when Nanyang Technological Institute (NTI) was formed to provide the major part of the engineering manpower output for Singapore, Prof Cham was appointed President, whilst remaining Dean of Engineering at the National University of Singapore (formerly University of Singapore) until 1983. He directed the building up of NTI as a technological university, with a practice-oriented curriculum. It was named as the best engineering institution in the world by the Commonwealth Engineering Council in 1985. He held the post of President of NTU from 1981 to 2002. From 2005 to 2014, he was holding the position of Chancellor and Chairman, Board of Trustees of the SIM University for a period of 9 years.

Prof Cham has served on many government bodies, including the Singapore Science Council, the Council of the National University of Singapore, the Jurong Town Corporation and the Land Transport Authority. He was at one time also the Chairman of the then Construction Industry Development Board (now the Building & Construction Authority). Prof Cham also served as Member of the Council of Presidential Advisers from 2004 to 2010.

He has also been active in Singapore business, serving on the boards of major listed companies like Keppel Corporation, United Overseas Bank and Singapore Press Holdings. Prof Cham was awarded the Public Administration Medal (Gold) at the National Day Honours in Singapore, in 1986 and the Distinguished Service Order in 2003. He also holds the title of Chevalier des Palmes Academiques, France, a foreign member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences, a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering, U.K and a Fellow of the Academy of Engineering, Singapore. In March 2006, Prof Cham received the first ever International Medal of the Royal Academy of Engineering of the UK. The award was presented in Singapore by the Academy's Senior Fellow, HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, during his state visit to the republic.

He has also contributed to the development of the professional practice of engineers.

From 1973 to 1978, Prof Cham was a member of the Professional Engineers Board administering the Professional Engineers Act and qualifying engineers for professional practice. He was a member of the Council of IES, from 1975 to 1986, serving as Honorary Secretary, Vice President, President, as well as Past President.