

SMU gives unemployed PMETs a leg-up with SMEs

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SINGAPORE Management University (SMU) yesterday launched a Business Advisers Programme to match unemployed professionals, managers, executives and technicians (PMETs) with small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The programme is aimed at PMETs with at least five years' experience who would like a six-month full-time project-based attachment to an SME. Successful candidates will be matched to appropriate SMEs through a rigorous selection process. Spring Singapore will subsidise 70 per cent of the \$5,000 monthly project advisory fee. The other 30 per cent will be borne by the SME.

Annie Koh, dean of executive and professional education at SMU, said: "SMEs that lack the financial means to engage business advisers can now do so with government funding support, while jobs are created for retrenched or unemployed

PMETs with a wealth of expertise to contribute."

SMEs at yesterday's launch shared Prof Koh's enthusiasm. "I think it is very possible that we will look for a business adviser via this programme," said Philip Morgan, chief operating officer of muvee, a company that deals with automatic video editing software.

"This opportunity will give us access to skills and talent, allow us to set some new directions for our company and look at how we can improve our products so we will be stronger when the economy turns around," he said.

The response from PMETs was encouraging too. "This platform can give PMETs a taste of what working for an SME is like – and might even launch them into entrepreneurship in the future," said a person working in the insurance field who declined to be named. "However, since many PMETs might be used to working in large organisations, adjusting to working in an SME might take some time."