Address by A*STAR Chairman at ICM Outreach 2013
(I²R Industry Engagement Gala Dinner)
7.30pm, 8 May 2013 (Wed); Stamford Ballroom,
Raffles City Convention Centre (The Fairmont Singapore)

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Distinguished guests, A*STAR partners, friends and colleagues, a very good evening to all of you.

Thank you for joining us tonight for a showcase of technology innovations for the Infocomm industry, as well as to recognize partnerships and milestones from “I-Square-R”.

**Growth of the Infocomm Sector in Singapore**

Our infocomm industry is in good shape with growth of 18.5% in 2011, up from an impressive 12.2% in 2010.

The revenue generated by Singapore’s infocomm industry revenue rose from S$70billion in 2010 to S$83billion in 2011.

Despite economic uncertainties, the sector still managed to clock a respectable 3.8 per cent growth in the fourth quarter of 2012 (1Q12- 3.8%; 2Q12- 1.8%; 3Q12- 1.1%; Overall growth for 2012 projected at 2.6%).
Such robust growth would not have been possible without the strong commitment of both the public and private sector to research and innovation to transform the industry. On the public side, R&D expenditure for the Electronics, Infocomm and Media sector have grown steadily from $450 million in 2002 to $620 million in 2010. This, in turn, has catalysed private sector R&D expenditure to increase by more than two-fold to $2.3 billion over the same period.

Amidst this growth, I²R continues to focus on developing cutting-edge capabilities that enable companies to attain greater efficiency, higher productivity, and enhanced competitiveness.

Tonight, I am glad to announce that I²R will be furthering these efforts with the setting up of Joint Laboratories with 2 industry leaders in the infocomm sector – Singapore Technologies and Singapore Power.

These partnerships are aligned with I²R’s key focus areas and will enable the companies to deepen their technological capabilities.

The Joint Lab with Singapore Technologies will focus on building capabilities in advanced software defined communications.

On the other hand, the Joint Lab with Singapore Power will work on developing cutting-edge R&D for the purpose of developing capabilities and solutions to enhance the reliability of Singapore’s grid networks.
I²R’s expertise

From mobile smart devices to wireless network sensors, the explosion of information sparked by the penetration of on-line access has led to the convergence of intelligence, communications and media to provide new opportunities and transformed business processes.

Since being re-grouped 10 years ago to become part of the A*STAR family, I²R has been developing a spectrum of deep capabilities to better serve a broader segment of industry and society.

Clocking over 650 industry projects to-date, it has made 1,200 technology disclosures and has been awarded with over 200 patents in the infocomm sector.

It has also been ranked first in eight international benchmarking competitions organized by global bodies such as the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), the International Telecommunications Union and the European Union.

Partnering the Infocomm Value-Chain

It has been internationally recognized that Singapore is one of the best places in the world for doing business.

With open access to talent and expertise, global connectivity, and a reputation as a trusted IP hub, Singapore-based companies are well-positioned to seize regional and global opportunities to sustain their growth.
Increasingly, the competitive edge to this growth is through adopting an Open Innovation Strategy that fully leverages on the growing world class research capabilities in Singapore and the region.

A*STAR’s role, including that of research institutes like I²R, is to grow research in strategic areas that are aligned to industry needs and to work in a mutually beneficial way with the industries to develop productive public-private partnerships.

Earlier, we announced the setting up of Joint Labs with ST and Sing Power.

Over the years, I²R have also worked with many multinationals.

Last year, it worked with VISA to develop a security system to enhance online electronic payments.

Using advanced transactional data analysis to provide early warnings of fraudulent or deceptive e-commerce activities, it has the potential to save merchants and card-holders millions of dollars annually. Boeing is another partner that has tapped on I²R to improve its manufacturing and assembly processes via the development of an integrated sensor platform.

A jointly-developed Intelligent Factory Alert System has since been successfully deployed in the current production of Boeing 777 Airplanes.

This System enables mechanics to summon help from Ship Side Support teams and eliminate unnecessary delay in contacting and searching for relevant support personnel.

The recent adoption of the Speaker Verification technology in the Lenovo A586 smartphone, developed by the Baidu-I²R Research Centre (BIRC), also demonstrates
I²R’s success in translating results from research collaborations with corporations in Singapore to the global market.

A*STAR and I²R also work closely with our SMEs. One of them is Hoestar, a local micro-SME (less than 10 staff) that provides engineering and inspection services to its customers. Through collaborating with I²R in fibre optics technology, they are now able to provide innovative systems solutions to help their customers improve reliability maintenance and boost productivity.

Apart from the ongoing GET-UP Program which was featured in the local papers today, the Technology Adoption Programme (or TAP) from A*STAR will improve the access to technology for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to enable them to become more productive and competitive in the growing Asian market and beyond.

Through this programme, A*STAR will intermediate between the technology needs of the SMEs with the solution providers. Beginning July this year, this programme will be piloted across six sectors, namely, Construction, Food Manufacturing, Precision Engineering, Marine, Aerospace as well as Retail. At the end of this pilot phase, there will be a review and a decision will be taken to extend the programme to other sectors where beneficial.

**Conclusion**

To conclude, earlier, many of you would have the chance to interact with the technology demonstrations on show at the lobby.
From seamless apps that enable people to have private and secured communication instantly, to “sensor-cubes” that contain advanced sensors for customizable usage, I²R’s capabilities are creating solutions that are potential game-changers for the infocomm markets.

Going forward, I am confident that I²R’s innovations will continue to make a difference with our partners to enable companies to gain an edge in a challenging global marketplace.

On this note, may I invite all of you to join me in two toasts.

The first is to the continued success of our Infocomm industry.

The next is to another 10 successful years for I²R.

Cheers!