



MEDIA RELEASE

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CCCS AWARDS RESEARCH GRANT TO NUS TEAM FOR STUDY ON GREENWASHING IN ONLINE MARKETING

The Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore (“CCCS”) has awarded a research grant¹ to Prof. Lawrence Loh, Director, and Ms. Yvonne Yock, Research Associate, of the National University of Singapore (“NUS”) Business School, Centre for Governance and Sustainability for their research project titled “Promoting Best Practices in Online Marketing: An Examination of Greenwashing in Singapore”.

2. Greenwashing refers to misleading claims about the environmental benefits of products. This includes ambiguous claims of products being eco-friendly or sustainable in the absence of evidence, the display of eco-labels that are not affiliated with any accredited organisation and withholding negative environmental information about products to give the guise of environmental friendliness. The research project will identify the prevalence and types of greenwashing in Singapore, focusing on e-commerce websites that are widely visited by Singapore residents. The research aims to inform policies regarding advertisement and consumer protection so that companies can avoid greenwashing and consumers will less likely fall prey to greenwashing. Prof. Loh said, “As Singapore and the world advance in the pursuit of sustainability, it is critical for business entities to furnish accurate disclosures for the stakeholders. This is particularly pertinent for consumers who often do not have resources to verify the information. Our funded project on greenwashing and corporate marketing will set the baselines which may guide good business actions, consumer choices and policy formation.”

3. The CCCS research grant, worth a total of S\$50,000, attracted a total of 3 proposals. The proposals were evaluated by an academic evaluation panel comprising: Ms. Sia Aik Kor (Chief Executive, CCCS), Prof. Julian Wright (Lim Chong Yah Professor, Department of Economics, NUS), Prof. Klaus Wertenbroch (Novartis Chaired Professor of Management and the Environment, INSEAD), A/Prof. Burton Ong (Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, NUS) and A/Prof. Chang Young Ho (Head, Business and Management Minors, School of Business, Singapore University of Social Sciences).

¹ CCCS invited researchers to submit proposals on the topic of “Sustainability, Competition and Consumer Protection in Singapore” in its research grant call on 17 September 2021. For more details, please refer to CCCS’s events page here: <https://www.cccs.gov.sg/media-and-consultation/ccs-campaigns/events/2021-cccs-research-grant>

4. This is the second research grant that CCCS has awarded since 2018. It aims to encourage research on competition and consumer protection issues in Singapore relating to sustainability. The completed research paper will be published on CCCS's website.

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About the Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore

The Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore ("CCCS") is a statutory board of the Ministry of Trade and Industry. CCCS administers and enforces the Competition Act 2004 which empowers CCCS to investigate and adjudicate anti-competitive activities, issue directions to stop and/or prevent anti-competitive activities and impose financial penalties. CCCS is also the administering agency of the Consumer Protection (Fair Trading) Act 2003 or CPFTA which protects consumers against unfair trade practices in Singapore. Our mission is to make markets work well to create opportunities and choices for businesses and consumers in Singapore.

For more information, please visit www.cccs.gov.sg

For media clarifications, please contact:

Ms. Grace Suen

Senior Assistant Director (Communications)

Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore

Email: grace_suen@cccs.gov.sg

DID: 6325 8216

Ms. Nawwar Syahirah

Senior Assistant Director (Communications)

Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore

Email: nawwar_syahirah@cccs.gov.sg

DID: 6325 8313