

Global conference to adopt code on research integrity

The statement will be first step in defining principles of research conduct

By LYNN KAN

MORE than 300 international delegates from research and publishing circles are in town to pledge their commitment to research honesty and integrity.

The delegates from 59 nations will agree on the Singapore Statement on

Research Integrity – the world's first research integrity code – tomorrow at the second World Conference on Research Integrity here. The statement will be signed by the four conference hosts – Nanyang Technological University, the National University of Singapore, Singapore Management University and A-Star.

The co-chairs of the conference's international planning committee, Tony Mayer and Professor Nicholas Steneck, have opened up the state-

ment for comment by participants since it was drafted in February this year. After registering online, participants could view the draft statement and comment on what they thought ought to be reflected in it.

"The Singapore statement is meant to be the first step towards defining fundamental principles of research conduct," said Prof Steneck, who is a consultant for the Office of Research Integrity in the US.

"We then hope that universities

and professional societies can adopt and translate it for their own use," he said.

The first Conference of Research Integrity was held in 2007 in Lisbon, Portugal. While headway was made then towards a common understanding of research misconduct, participation from Asia was lacklustre due to the location.

Mr Mayer, who sits on the European Science Foundation, said: "We wanted to give people from Asia – the

third pole of research activity – the opportunity to be involved, and give them more ease of access, since there has been a growth of interest about this issue. More and more research is global, after all."

In his opening address to conference delegates, Minister for Education and Second Minister for Defence Ng Eng Hen lauded its pertinence to Singapore's growing research and development scene.

Highlighting that one per cent of Singapore's work force and 3 per

cent of its GDP is sunk into R&D, Dr Ng said the city-state needs to "build a reputation of being able to produce high-quality scientific outputs under strict ethical standards and academic integrity".

"Knowledge without integrity can harm," he said. "The conference is therefore timely and will assist us in reviewing our systems and procedure for our universities and research institutes."

The conference, at Pan Pacific Hotel, ends tomorrow.