What it’s like to Exchange @ NUS & live in Singapore!

The IARU Global Internship Program: A Wonderful Summer’s Experience!
Hey there! Welcome to another issue of Step In!

As another semester begins, a fresh batch of exchange students from all across the globe will step into the National University of Singapore (NUS). These students add to the vibrancy of the NUS campus and its academic and extracurricular programmes. In this issue, our previous cohort of exchange students share experiences and interesting stories that made their time here unforgettable and meaningful!

This newsletter will give you insights into campus life in NUS as well as what it’s like to live in Singapore. We hope you will join us here one day soon!

So get ready to Step In, explore and enjoy!

Why choose Singapore?

“To be able to move out of my comfort zone and experience various cultures were my main considerations when deciding on my student exchange destination. Singapore is a perfect choice as it is a gateway to Asia, with a multiracial society that provides a platform for me to experience different cultures and learn various languages, while allowing me to gradually integrate into the studying environment in NUS.”

Qiao Yunhong
Tsinghua University, China

Why pick NUS?

“I decided to go to NUS because I thought it had a great combination of well-structured academic curriculums, an amazing campus with great cultural activities, and easy access to the city! I also thought that my residence (University Town2) would add to a great university experience.”

Alexis Arevalo Tejada
Concordia University, Canada

“I did my research and found out that NUS is the best university in Asia! My peers from my home university who had spent their exchange here also shared their positive experiences at NUS with me.”

Byun Ji Woo
Yonsei University, South Korea

1 The mythical Merlion, Singapore’s national icon, has the body of a fish and the head of a lion. The body symbolises Singapore’s humble beginnings as a fishing village when it was known as Temasek, meaning ‘sea town’ in Old Javanese. Its head represents Singapore’s original name, Singapura, or ‘lion city’ in Malay.

2 University Town (UTown) is an educational hub which offers a model of living and learning that is distinctively NUS. Find out more about UTown at www.utown.nus.edu.sg/about-university-town/overview/

3 A wet market is a market selling fresh meat and produce. It is usually open in the mornings and frequented by locals for its fresh produce at affordable prices.
What is it like studying in NUS?

“The professors at NUS trust the students to be independent in managing their work and time, as well as to understand the teaching materials on their own. In addition, I realised that the local students tend to ask questions only after classes, whereas students back home would ask them during lectures.

When I had some time off from school, apart from my own explorations around Singapore and my trips to Bali and Hong Kong, I participated in programmes organised by the Peer Advising Leaders⁴ (PALs) such as a campus tour, exploring Chinatown, and a trip to Pulau Ubin⁵. I really enjoyed myself during these activities as I managed to meet other exchangers as well as local students!”

Alexis Arevalo Tejada
Concordia University, Canada

“Before the semester started, I went for a city tour organised by NUS i.CARE⁶, where I met both locals and exchange students from NUS for the first time. I also attended the various events organised by the NUS Archery Club, which has brought me to many interesting places in Singapore. These events, coupled with my own explorations around the city, changed my opinion of Singapore, which I initially thought would be boring.

As an Architecture student, the research I needed to do to produce industry-related content has been a great experience, and it has enabled me to identify the direction I wish to move towards in the future. Overall, it has been a great opportunity for me to be in a different and new learning environment in NUS.”

Panthira Maneejak
Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

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⁴ Check out the back cover for more information on our PALs!
⁵ Pulau Ubin is an island off eastern Singapore which offers visitors a unique off-the-beaten-track experience with its charming 1960s kampong (village) setting.
⁶ The NUS i.CARE Network Programme is a student initiated club that serves as a fun, friendly and easy platform for both local and international students to interact. They achieve this through many cross-cultural appreciation events and social activities. Find out more about NUS i.CARE at http://www.nus.edu.sg/osa/ce/ce-groups/ceicare
I loved seeing my contributions to the planning process materialise during visits and talks, even though it was challenging at times, the company and support from my colleagues made it all the more enjoyable!”

Summer Zhao IARU Intern @ NUS

The International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU) Global Internship Program provides students from IARU member universities with the opportunity to gain valuable international work experience through research and project work in another member university.

Summer Zhao from Peking University, China spent five months at IRO and shared some of her thoughts on her internship here.

**My experience in IRO...**

The internship provided me with ample opportunities to expand my skills in various areas. From researching on other organisations to conducting orientations for programme participants. I was also given the opportunity to plan and organise visits and career talks for various foreign companies which was truly a wonderful experience!

**Best part of my internship!**

I had the privilege of being involved in various assignments in my time there and the most fulfilling experience was being able to interact with other students! Making their time in NUS as pleasant and enriching as possible, and listening to the interesting stories about their stay in the NUS campus and across Singapore was very heart-warming and made my work here even more meaningful.

Students from IARU member universities interested in GLOBAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM opportunities at NUS, please visit: www.iaruni.org/for-students/internships
**SANTANDER UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH EXCHANGE (SURE) PROGRAMME**

The Santander Undergraduate Research Exchange (SURE) Programme, funded by Banco Santander, is a scholarship scheme where students from selected partner universities get to spend the summer at NUS laboratories conducting supervised research work. These universities include: Shanghai Jiao Tong University (China), Brown University (USA), Imperial College London (UK), University of Oxford (UK), and King’s College London (UK).

“During my research attachment in NUS, I learnt the importance of communication with others who are knowledgeable in their respective fields, and to be open-minded towards different perspectives. I believe this experience will undoubtedly prove to be useful throughout the rest of my studies and in my future career. This is in addition to having immersed myself in a new and fascinating culture, which has made my stay in Singapore a truly memorable one!”

**Youssef Shaalan, Imperial College London, UK**

**SINO-SINGAPORE UNDERGRADUATE EXCHANGE (SSUE) PROGRAMME**

The SSUE Programme is a prestigious programme spearheaded by the respective Ministries of Education of China and Singapore. It provides students from selected Singapore and Chinese universities an opportunity for cross-cultural exchange, with the aim of creating opportunities for networking and interaction among the participants. The programme occurs in summer and consists of two legs – the first in China, followed by the second in Singapore. Let’s hear from our Chinese participants on their experience in Singapore!

“I am deeply impressed by the enthusiasm and passion of Singaporeans! SSUE provides us with a platform where we can communicate with students from universities in Singapore, as well as experience Singapore’s multicultural society!”

**Wang Yexiao, Sichuan University, China**

“I have learnt a lot from the top universities in Singapore and gained new friends! The good relationship that we built during this programme is for life and I look forward to new opportunities to work together in our respective professions in the future!”

**Wang Xizhao, Southern University of Finance and Economics, China**

Interested in a cross-cultural exchange and interaction with the undergraduates from Singapore? Please check with your home university if it is participating in the SSUE Programme.
TEMASEK FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP ENRICHMENT AND REGIONAL NETWORKING (TFI LEaRN) PROGRAMME @ NUS

With the aim of grooming leadership skills, the TFI LEaRN Programme @ NUS nurtures the next generation of Asian leaders by providing opportunities for cultural exchange, networking, community engagement and leadership development. Selected students from ASEAN countries, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan receive scholarships from the Temasek Foundation International during their semester exchange at NUS.

Read about Zachary Nazarene Sabirin Bisenio’s experience in NUS as a TFI LEaRN scholar from Ateneo de Manila University, the Philippines.

Why apply for the TFI LEaRN Programme @ NUS?

Initially, becoming an exchange student was not a part of my academic plans after realising the significant financial cost that comes with the experience. However, I chanced upon the TFI LEaRN programme while I was at my home university and I knew that this scholarship was my pathway to studying abroad. I applied for it, and I truly was fortunate to be given this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!

Being a TFI LEaRN scholar

Besides the programme’s objective to groom Asian leaders, this journey opened my mind to redefine what leadership is: a combination of service and unity. The former can be understood as a voluntary act of increasing the total welfare of others; the latter, as any group of members with a common core. I learned that combining these two concepts involves a group with the same objective of improving other people’s well-being. I believe that this mentality is what defines the TFI LEaRN programme.

For more information on the scholarship, please visit www.nus.edu.sg/iro/prog/others/tfilearn.html
NUS-UBC LEE FOUNDATION
STUDENT EXCHANGE AWARD

This award was created through a generous donation from the Lee Foundation to help fund NUS and The University of British Columbia (UBC) students on student exchange programmes, co-op internships, research attachments, and international conferences.

Daniel Duncombe from UBC shared with us some of his experiences as a NUS-UBC Lee Foundation Student Exchange Award recipient.

Why apply for the NUS-UBC Lee Foundation Student Exchange Award?

I decided to apply for the NUS-UBC Lee Foundation Student Exchange Award because I knew it would help alleviate any financial issues that I would have when going for an exchange, allowing me to focus more on my studies, embrace the culture, and make friendships instead of worrying about my budget.

Key academic experience...

The course I decided to take while at NUS was Strategic Management, because I heard great reviews from past UBC students who had taken the course at NUS. Needless to say I was not disappointed with my decision to take the Strategic Management course. The class was made up of half exchange students and half local students, and our professor did an excellent job of facilitating discussions in order to bring out the different viewpoints of the people in the classroom. It was an eye-opening experience for me to learn about the various industries in Southeast Asia, and obtain differing world perspectives from my peers in the class.

“Being an exchange student at NUS means you are a part of the large group of other exchange students, which is just a small part of the large community that makes up NUS. The people I met in Singapore have enhanced my exchange experience by providing me with lasting memories, which in turn have motivated me to reach my goals.”

For more information on the award, please visit www.nus.edu.sg/iro/fa/sch/in/ubc.html
HOW TO APPLY TO NUS

STEP 1  
Be officially nominated by your home university through the Study Abroad Office coordinator(s).

STEP 2  
Apply online at www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/edu/ng.html

STEP 3  
Prepare a study plan which includes a list of modules you intend to take at NUS.

STEP 4  
Wait for your Acceptance Letter with further instructions on visa and housing matters.

CHECK OUT THESE PUBLICATIONS!

Journey Beyond Your Shores  

Step In 2016  

Want to meet other exchange students during your time in NUS? Well, the Peer Advising Leaders (PALS) are here to help! The PALS help facilitate the integration of incoming exchangers into life at NUS and Singapore by organising various programmes and activities such as dragon boat races and welcome/farewell parties each semester! These exciting events are designed to present Singapore to incoming exchangers in a unique and interesting way. The PALS also help to give advice regarding travelling around Asia should you ever need suggestions on where to go!

For more information, please visit www.facebook.com/NUSPeerAdvising/ or www.nus.edu.sg/iro/prog/sep/peer-advising-programme.html

Fellow exchangers at a dragon boat event where they got to try their hands at one of Singapore’s unique pastimes!

For more information, please visit www.facebook.com/NUSPeerAdvising/ or www.nus.edu.sg/iro/prog/sep/peer-advising-programme.html

Incoming exchangers at a Welcome Party.

1 Dragon boating is a fun high intensity team sport that tests the elements of power, speed, synchronization and endurance. A team consists of 20 paddlers, a drummer and a steers person.

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