NEW COLOMBO PLAN SCHOLARS
Local Friends, Local Stories

INSIGHTS INTO THE
Operations of NUS IRO!
A NOTE FROM IRO...

A warm hello and welcome to sunny Singapore! Once again, the National University of Singapore (NUS) welcomes a vibrant cohort of exchange students from universities all across the world in the new semester. While they may come from different countries, our exchange students all share one thing in common: the desire to study in Singapore!

This newsletter of the NUS International Relations Office (IRO) shares the programmes and happenings at NUS, as well as stories from exchange students. We are sure their experiences in NUS and Singapore will inspire you to study here!

Wait no further, Step In, explore and enjoy!

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT IT IS LIKE TO WORK AT IRO?

The 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.

Dao Duy Anh Duc from Australian National University interned at IRO for five months and he shared with us some insights into working at IRO.

Your experience... During my internship with IRO, I was involved in various tasks such as analysing data, organising events, conducting research on programme opportunities, as well as helping to interview and select students for various overseas programmes.

But perhaps the most meaningful experience during my time here is the satisfaction that I gained from interacting with the students and supporting their NUS experience. I was given an opportunity to be involved in organising the Temasek Foundation Leadership Enrichment and Regional Networking (TF LEaRN) Young Asian Leaders Forum, and it left a strong impression on me because this exciting platform provided me the opportunity to build cross cultural understanding. I made many new friends from around Asia and learned about their captivating and diverse international journeys made possible by the TF LEaRN Programme @ NUS.

How has the experience benefitted you? I gained project development and management skills, research and analytical skills, as well as networking skills that will certainly be beneficial to my career. I truly appreciate IARU and IRO for supporting me in my internship, as it has allowed me to be a part of, and learn from, the organisational excellence that has sustained NUS’ reputation as a high-achieving institution of higher education in Asia and in the world.

“I would highly recommend students of IARU member universities to consider opportunities with the IARU Global Internship Programme because you will develop greater insights into the operations of an elite university, while gaining valuable working experience and immersion in a different culture.”

Dao Duy Anh Duc IARU Intern @ NUS
We had a delightful chat with Praeploy Pongpamorn from Mahidol University, Thailand, who took part in the Student Exchange Programme here at NUS through the ASEAN University Network (AUN) Student Exchange Programme last year.

Why NUS/Singapore? There are many reasons why I chose Singapore as my exchange destination, first of all because Singapore is a very safe country to live in. I love to explore and travel on my own, and I could enjoy my experience here without having to be afraid. NUS is also a prestigious university. I know that I will be able to gain a lot of experience and knowledge from taking the modules here, and through my interactions with my fellow classmates.

What is it like to be an exchange student at NUS? I really enjoy staying on campus. There are always people playing sports or other fun activities and there’s so much to do here! I joined a lot of sports groups, like frisbee, captain’s ball and tchoukball. Many of the sports are new to me but I learned fast and enjoyed it because everyone was so kind and warm. During my exchange in NUS, I interacted with locals more than other exchange students and most of my closest friends here are locals! Everyone was very welcoming and it helped me to adapt easily. I even picked up some Singlish as well!

What have you learnt from your experience? Besides learning to be more independent and responsible, I also learned how things work in NUS and Singapore. It was really challenging but I came out as a more mature and stronger person than I was before.

“This is my first time ever, living alone abroad. It’s a fresh and challenging experience. I truly fell in love with this country and its people. I encourage anyone interested in student exchange to go for this exchange scheme and study here at NUS. You’ll definitely gain more than you expect. It’s a life-changing opportunity that you will never forget.”

Praeploy Pongpamorn
AUN Student Exchange Programme

This innovative summer programme gives students the opportunity to learn from professors from both Duke and NUS, as well as forge lifelong friendships with fellow participants from these two esteemed universities.

Focussing on environmental changes in Southeast Asia (SEA), the exciting programme brings the participants on experiential learning field trips to countries in SEA and within Singapore.

“I love the environment and ecology, and the field trips were an amazing experience! We hiked around in the hot sun, went bird watching, and really lived in the nature we were trying to protect. We met the people who were working to effect change in Southeast Asian policy, and also went through practice policy negotiations, which was great.

My greatest takeaway from this programme was that change must come from the collective action of many individuals. It takes everyone to spread the message of conservation, limit consumption, and work to make the planet a better, safer, healthier place. Intersectional ways of looking at the environment (through the lens of post colonialism and women’s issues, for example) are critical to solving environmental issues.”

Eeeyi Oon Electrical and Computer Engineering, Computer Science Double Major, Duke University, Duke-NUS Summer Program @ NUS

“"I chose this programme because I was interested in studying the relationship between conservation, policy and citizen action. With trips to Endau Rompin and Tioman Island in Malaysia, the programme offers amazing opportunities for experiential education. The trips were extremely helpful in helping my understanding of various conservation efforts in action.

In addition, the Duke-NUS Summer Program gives a very holistic perspective on preservation efforts within the context of Southeast Asia. The coursework also sheds light on the dynamic relationships between citizens, government and the environment. After taking this course, I feel much more equipped both as an individual citizen and future policy maker to enact effective change.”

Meryl McCurry Major in Public Policy, Minor in Economics, Energy and Environment Certificate, Duke University, Duke-NUS Summer Program @ NUS

ABOUT AUN STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMME: AUN (ASEAN University Network) was established in November 1995 with the main objective of strengthening the existing network of co-operation among leading universities in ASEAN. It is done by promoting co-operation and solidarity among ASEAN scholars and academicians through a range of activities. The student exchanges activities offered include the AUN Student Exchange Programmes, ASEAN Studies programmes, Internship Programme, the Educational Forum & Young Speakers Contest, and the ASEAN Youth Cultural Forum.

1 Singapore Zoo is set in a beautiful rainforest environment and it is world famous for its animals roaming freely in open and natural habitats.
The New Colombo Plan is a signature initiative of the Australian Government that offers Australian undergraduate new opportunities for prestigious scholarships, internships and financial grants for their study in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Plan aims to build a more regionally aware workforce by expanding the students’ understanding of Asian cultures, markets and languages, through their studies abroad. The scholarship programme involves up to one year of study and internships or mentorships, and a flexible mobility grants programme for both short- and long-term study, internships, mentorships, practicums and research.

Local Friends,

James Victor Panaretos

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, EXCHANGE @ NUS

Here on the Australian Government’s New Colombo Plan scholarship programme, James Panaretos, an exchange student from Australia, has found new love for Singlish and Singapore.

MY TRANSFORMATIONAL JOURNEY @ NUS

I am very excited to have embarked on this transformational journey in Singapore, which has not just strengthened me academically, but also developed my international perspectives. Singaporean culture is rich and intriguing due to its multi-faceted and influence by a number of different cultures.

Living on campus has proven to be a very rewarding experience. It has enabled me to forge some great friendships and involve myself with extra-curricular activities such as Road Relay. I looked forward to daily discussions with my local friends who shared local stories and explained the derivation of Singlish words. In addition, my Chinese-speaking friends have been extremely helpful in teaching me to improve on my pronunciation and tone-usage for my Beginner’s Chinese module.

"I took a module on Public Speaking at NUS which was not offered back home. Through it, I learnt a lot about the techniques that can make or break a speech, and became more self-aware of filler words and bad habits. One of the most enlightening parts of this course was listening to speeches from my fellow students, who spoke on a broad spectrum of usually local topics."

James Victor Panaretos, The University of Western Australia, Exchange @ NUS, New Colombo Plan Scholar
Anton Lucanus

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, EXCHANGE @ NUS

New Colombo Plan Scholar, Anton Lucanus, worked on his open-access research database aimed at transforming Indonesia’s research sector by making important data easily accessible. His website, Neliti.com, is the first attempt at gathering Indonesia’s research information into a single database, and has been covered by Tech In Asia, an online platform for Asia’s tech community.

I chose NUS because the Singapore government has a strong focus on the areas of research and innovation. Singapore is also home to some of the best research institutions in Australasia. This environment has helped me develop and hone my medical research skills and provided a network with which I expanded a research database that I recently built.

Living and studying in NUS has given me exposure to a diverse cultural, political and social environment. While I faced many initial challenges, such as having to adapt to foreign customs and learning about new religious ideologies, these challenges have given me the opportunity to become more adaptable and to enhance my cultural awareness.

The many presentations and seminars NUS Enterprise organised, have guided me in the right direction while building my website. They also provided a wealth of information about funding and incubation programmes, which I am currently looking to join.

2 Road Relay is a race conducted in the format of a Team Relay.

3 Established in 2001, NUS Enterprise provides an enterprise dimension to NUS teaching and research that involves the university’s students, staff and alumni. NUS Enterprise augments and complements the University’s academic programmes and nurtures talents to possess an entrepreneurial and global mind-set by providing experiential entrepreneurial education, active industry partnerships, comprehensive entrepreneurship support, catalytic entrepreneurship outreach, and being Asia’s thought leader in innovation and enterprise, as well as the bridge to industry for NUS.
The Education Resource Centre (ERC) is open to the NUS community, where many of the facilities such as IT and multimedia are accessible 24/7.

The NUS Centre for Language Studies teaches thirteen different languages – Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Chinese, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Malay, Spanish, Tamil, Thai and Vietnamese.

This Fellowship is awarded by the Singapore government to promote student exchanges between NUS and European Asia–Europe Meeting (ASEM) member universities. The Award, based on merit, is for paired exchanges between a university in Singapore and its respective partner institution in Europe, in any academic field.

Novén Michael Filip, an engineering student from Sweden’s Linköping University, shared about how receiving the DUO-Singapore Exchange Fellowship has helped him expand his global connections.

I chose to come to NUS because of its stellar global reputation. To be able to study at one of the world’s leading universities is a once in a lifetime experience which gave me a real chance to challenge myself academically. NUS has really good language modules, and I took the chance to learn Chinese. As a European and Media Technology student, it was really challenging to learn to read and write all the Chinese characters. However, it was also really fun as classes were intense and interactive, and everybody participates. In the end it really paid off and I find it quite cool to be able to speak and understand some Chinese.

Even though food is affordable here, living abroad in a first-world country like Singapore can be expensive. The DUO-Singapore Exchange Fellowship award has certainly helped me out in these areas. Expenses like the return tickets from my home country, as well as my housing rent here were heavily subsidised. The DUO Award gave me a chance to enjoy my time here as much as I can without worrying about a big student loan.

“I chose to come to NUS because of its stellar global reputation. To be able to study at one of the world’s leading universities is a once in a lifetime experience which gave me a real chance to challenge myself academically. NUS has really good language modules, and I took the chance to learn Chinese. As a European and Media Technology student, it was really challenging to learn to read and write all the Chinese characters. However, it was also really fun as classes were intense and interactive, and everybody participates. In the end it really paid off and I find it quite cool to be able to speak and understand some Chinese.

Even though food is affordable here, living abroad in a first-world country like Singapore can be expensive. The DUO-Singapore Exchange Fellowship award has certainly helped me out in these areas. Expenses like the return tickets from my home country, as well as my housing rent here were heavily subsidised. The DUO Award gave me a chance to enjoy my time here as much as I can without worrying about a big student loan.

Novén Michael Filip
DUO-Singapore Exchange Fellowship recipient

Novén Michael Filip, an engineering student from Sweden’s Linköping University, shared about how receiving the DUO-Singapore Exchange Fellowship has helped him expand his global connections.

I chose to come to NUS because of its stellar global reputation. To be able to study at one of the world’s leading universities is a once in a lifetime experience which gave me a real chance to challenge myself academically. NUS has really good language modules, and I took the chance to learn Chinese. As a European and Media Technology student, it was really challenging to learn to read and write all the Chinese characters. However, it was also really fun as classes were intense and interactive, and everybody participates. In the end it really paid off and I find it quite cool to be able to speak and understand some Chinese.

Even though food is affordable here, living abroad in a first-world country like Singapore can be expensive. The DUO-Singapore Exchange Fellowship award has certainly helped me out in these areas. Expenses like the return tickets from my home country, as well as my housing rent here were heavily subsidised. The DUO Award gave me a chance to enjoy my time here as much as I can without worrying about a big student loan.

Novén Michael Filip
DUO-Singapore Exchange Fellowship recipient

Novén Michael Filip at University Town (UTown), with Education Resource Centre in the background

“IF YOU GET THE CHANCE TO GO ABROAD, DON’T THINK TWICE – JUST DO IT. IT WILL BE ONE OF THE MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES IN YOUR LIFE AND YOU WILL CHALLENGE YOURSELF IN SO MANY DIFFERENT AREAS. I AM REALLY HAPPY THAT I GOT THE CHANCE TO BE IN SINGAPORE FOR TWO SEMESTERS – SINGAPORE IS AWESOME!”

Novén Michael Filip
DUO-Singapore Exchange Fellowship recipient

4 The Education Resource Centre (ERC) is open to the NUS community, where many of the facilities such as IT and multimedia are accessible 24/7.

5 The NUS Centre for Language Studies teaches thirteen different languages – Arabic, Bahasa Indonesia, Chinese, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Malay, Spanish, Tamil, Thai and Vietnamese.
TEMASEK FOUNDATION LEADERSHIP ENRICHMENT AND REGIONAL NETWORKING (TF LEaRN) PROGRAMME @ NUS

With the aim to groom the next generation of Asian leaders, the TF LEaRN Programme @ NUS provides opportunities for cultural exchange, networking, community engagement and leadership development.

Made possible by the generosity of the Temasek Foundation, selected students from ASEAN, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan receive a scholarship during their semester exchange at NUS.

Hear from Kurt Callum Silva Famanila from De La Salle University, the Philippines, how the TF LEaRN Programme @ NUS has shaped him.

The TF LEaRN Programme @ NUS provided me an opportunity to learn about neighbouring Asian countries, and also gave me a lot of memorable experiences. There was a project, titled “From Singapore, with love!” that I undertook with my fellow TF LEaRN scholars, where we visited different places around Singapore to talk to the migrant workers. During our interactions with the workers, we provided them some postcards so that they could write messages for their loved ones back home. We would then help to send these postcards to their own countries. Through this project, I really felt a sense of unity with both my friends and the community.

In addition, TF LEaRN Programme @ NUS offers an endless list of experiences! From spontaneous dining hall moments, to the nightly project meetings and group studying sessions, I enjoyed a great campus life with my newly found friends! Being an exchange student is one thing, but being a TF LEaRN scholar @ NUS is another!
We know that there are so many things to see and do (and eat!) in the vibrant city of Singapore that sometimes, one could be at a loss of where to begin! But fret not, our very own Peer Advising Leaders (PALS) are here to help facilitate the integration of incoming exchange students into NUS and Singapore.

From exhilarating sports events to get your heart pumping and blood racing, to providing advice on travelling around Asia, our PALS organise exciting events designed to present Singapore to incoming exchange students in a unique and interesting way! Since the PALS are also full-time students at NUS, they definitely know how to have fun like a university student should!

The ever popular Dragon Boat activity! Challenge your boat rowing skills with fellow exchange students!

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/NUSPeerAdvising or http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/sep/pals/in.html

Pulau Ubin is an island off eastern Singapore and offers visitors a unique off-the-beaten-track experience with its 1960s charming kampong (village) setting.

Spend a weekend and take a stroll at Pulau Ubin that brings you back to Singapore in the 1960s with the simpler pleasures of life!

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
http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/home/jbys.html

Step In 2015

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE
3rd Storey, Unit 03-03, Shaw Foundation Alumni House, 11 Kent Ridge Drive, Singapore 119244

TEL (65) 6516 4356
FAX (65) 6778 0177
WEBSITE nus.edu.sg/iro
FACEBOOK fb.com/nusiro.sg

EDITORIAL BOARD
Global Relations and Marketing Team, IRO
Tsoi Tat Yan, IRO Student Ambassador
Chong Qing Yu, IRO Student Ambassador

Information is accurate at the time of printing March 2016.