

## ABOUT US

**NGS Scholars' Alliance (NGSSA)** is an official student group for **NUS Graduate School for Integrative Sciences and Engineering**.

Established in 2005 to serve as a platform for exchange amongst all **NGS** scholars. This student body will also facilitate the personal development and leadership training of our scholars. **NGSSA** is also the key to developing, creating and fostering **NGS** community and identity.

Webpage:

<http://ngssa.weebly.com>

Email:

[ngs.alliance@gmail.com](mailto:ngs.alliance@gmail.com)

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## Foreword

Yay! It's the time for your NGS activity updates! In this edition we cover the awesome NGS Symposium L.O.R., with words of advice from our winners Abhijeet and Lucky. We had events to welcome this academic year's new incoming batches of students as well. Also, see if you've been pictured in one of our many NGSSA events that have been held this academic year at the end of the newsletter.

We'd also like to welcome our new 'heads' for NGSSA, She Yah and Kuan Chieh, who will be taking over Zhen Wei Tan and Wallie Lim. And now, a word from the incoming heads.



"Hello NGS scholars!! It's Kuan Chieh, She Yah and Chan Way here, and we are excited to be leading NGSSA in this coming year. We hope to continue bringing you a year of fun experiences and meet-ups as our predecessors, Zhen Wei and Wallie. Through the different social activities that we have lined up for you, we aim to build up stronger friendships amongst NGS students and to build a stronger NGS student identity. Stay tuned for the upcoming activities!"

## NGS L.O.R III Symposium: Highlights

If you were not there, well, then you have missed out on the fun. I'll try to share with you in a nutshell.

The 6<sup>th</sup> NGS Symposium, aptly short formed L.O.R. Life. Opportunities. Research held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2014. We had informative, but easy to understand talks from NGS students, as well as posters showcasing the multitude of research we have here in NGS.



We had the honour to have Prof. Paul Matsudaira as the keynote speaker where he shared his journey in research. Wondering what life after research would be like?



## Highlights of NGS L.O.R III



Our own NGS student posing with representative from one of our career partner, SAP

Student talking to partners from

Well, we had career talks from Panasonic, EURAXESS as well as a visit from our alumnus Dr Daniel Dahlmeier, currently working in SAP. As well as panelists who have been through PhD and have come back to share with us their views on a PhD, it is actually more than what you think it is.



Panelists:

A/Prof. Ooi Eng Eong

Associate Professor and Deputy Director, Program in Emerging Infectious Diseases, Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School

Distinguished Member of Technical Staff, DSO National Laboratories

Dr. Koh Soo Jin Adrian

Assistant Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, NUS

Dr. Pauline Tay

Senior Technology Consultant, Intellectual Property Intermediary

Dr. Carol Tan

Research Fellow, School of Biological Sciences, The College of Science, NTU

# How to Design a Good Poster?

By Sasidharan Swarnalatha



First of all, I would like to thank NGS for selecting my poster for the Best Poster Award in the 6th NGSSA Symposium. Although, it was not the first time I won a poster award, this is very special to me as this was the first time I presented my Ph.D. work. We all know that NGS fosters multidisciplinary research, hence the major challenge was to design a poster that appeals to everyone, and I think that's the most critical aspect. Although I am not very sure about the "Winning formula", I can share with you some points that I always follow while preparing a poster.

The 11 Rules to a great poster:

1. **Stick to the rules:** While preparing the poster always follow the poster size and orientation (landscape or portrait) as informed by the organizers.
2. **Catchy title:** The title should be short, simple yet catchy, giving a general idea of your work.
3. **Organization of data:** Keep it simple with well-organized sections that are comprehensive, clear and succinct, with clear flow of thoughts.
4. **Highlight the gap:** Clearly discuss the gap/ unmet needs in the literature and then state the main aim of your work.
5. **Schematic illustration:** Include an illustration of the main idea/ mechanism/ theme of your work.
6. **Presentation of results:** Your results form the most important part of your poster. Divide the result section into 3-4 sub-sections, add in clearly labeled figures into respective sections and provide a one line conclusion under each sub-section.
7. **Summary:** Highlight the outcome/major findings of your work by pointing out what difference or improvement your work has made to that field of research.
8. **No research is perfect:** There will always be something that you can do further to improve your work. So, you may add one section on the future work you plan to do.
9. **Self-explanatory poster:** Once you finish doing your poster, show it to someone not in your field (or someone not even in research) and check if he or she is able to get the gist of it without your help.
10. **Script:** Have a script ready especially if you are competing for a poster award and you have to keep to the time. I normally have 2 scripts: a long one that I can talk for 10 min and a short one for 2 min. I use the short one first to give them a brief idea of my work, to tell them why I am doing this and a general outcome of my research. If they are interested and engage me with questions, I will then use the longer version.
11. **Your presentation is important:** Be confident, show your interest and passion in what you do and try to answer the questions to the best of your knowledge.

And ultimately, it's the quality (novelty and depth) of your research work that really counts. I take this opportunity to thank my supervisors Prof. Zhang Yong (NUS, Biomedical Engineering) and Prof. Soo Khee Chee (Duke-NUS and NCCS) for their guidance, as well as all my colleagues for their support.



# Why Give a Talk?

By Abhijeet Patra



During the course of our graduate studies, most of us present posters at some conferences, workshops and the like. While posters are a great way to tell others about the work you are doing, it doesn't do much to boost your confidence. I think, it takes far greater courage and much more confidence to stride up the stage and present your work to an audience. All eyes are on you and the pressure is palpable.

As a graduate student, it is really important to learn to talk about your work in a way that you don't lose the audience. I am sure most of us regularly give presentations at journal clubs, either for modules or in their own labs. It is a good chance to practice but it is not quite the real deal. You know all the people who attend your journal club and hence you can be casual about the whole thing. The real challenge is when you have to present your work to an audience whom you are not familiar with. The challenge is in getting across and connecting to people from various backgrounds and varied levels of understanding. That is why NGS LOR is a must attend. The room is a cauldron of smart people working on virtually everything under the sun. It takes a lot of effort to get them all interested in your talk. It is not easy, but you will grow your confidence when you do it. And that is key – if we are not confident about talking to strangers about our own work, we will never make an impression.



So do join our next symposium, as a presenter, an audience, or even as an organizer!

# Events

We organized two events to welcome the new batch of incoming students. We had a barbeque event at PGP to welcome the August intake of students and a bowling event to welcome the January intake. They were informal and just a chance to know each other. The senior buddies and junior buddies joined in droves to chit chat the night away. We're also open to ideas for formal gatherings. Cycling at Pulau Ubin? Paintballing? Let us know! We might all be doing our PhDs, but it doesn't always have to be about research ;)



Want to share your exciting research with us? We welcome you to submit a short abstract and 2 figures of your research to [A0068121@nus.edu.sg](mailto:A0068121@nus.edu.sg) and we'll share them with the NGS community in the next issue