

# *University Awards* *2024*

RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE





*University Awards*  
*2024*

RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE

*President's  
Message*

The NUS University Awards is a special highlight on our annual calendar. It is a joyful occasion where we proudly recognise colleagues and members of the NUS community for the excellence they have achieved across the University's core mission areas.

It is said that excellence is never an accident, but always the result of high intention, sincere effort and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives.

Excellence is an enduring core value at NUS — we seek to be defined and distinguished by excellence. That NUS has achieved immense progress and success to become a leading global university speaks of our focus and dedication to the pursuit of excellence.

As an institution, NUS strives to be a conducive place where faculty, staff and students can do their best work, where the spirit of excellence and innovation flourishes. The world is on the cusp of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) revolution and as a future-oriented university, NUS will actively position ourselves to harness the power and potential of AI to help us achieve greater excellence, and more quickly.

The winners of the University Awards 2024 have reached a high mark and lifted the institution to a higher plane. They are trailblazers, and they inspire us to reach for the stars. We are immensely proud of what they have achieved at NUS and of their sterling contributions in various fields.

I extend my heartiest congratulations and admiration to all award recipients. Thank you for flying the NUS flag high!

**Professor Tan Eng Chye**  
President  
National University of Singapore

# *Awards*



### **OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD**

Acknowledges faculty members who have excelled in engaging and inspiring students in their quest for knowledge



### **OUTSTANDING GRADUATE MENTOR AWARD**

Acknowledges faculty members who have shown exemplary and committed mentorship in nurturing the next generation of scholars and thought leaders



### **YOUNG RESEARCHER AWARD**

Commends researchers whose works show promise in extending the frontiers of knowledge in their respective fields



### **UNIVERSITY RESEARCH RECOGNITION AWARD**

Recognises researchers whose works have impacted and advanced the frontiers of knowledge, and positioned NUS at the forefront of their areas of expertise



### **OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD**

Honours individuals who have distinguished themselves by their sustained contributions in serving the University and society

*Award  
Recipients*



**OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD**

Associate Professor Peter Thomas Vail



**OUTSTANDING GRADUATE MENTOR AWARD**

Professor Abhik Roychoudhury



**YOUNG RESEARCHER AWARD**

Assistant Professor Jasper Tromp  
Assistant Professor Wang Xinchao



**UNIVERSITY RESEARCH RECOGNITION AWARD**

Professor Wang Linfa  
Professor Brenda Yeoh Saw Ai



**OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD**

Mr Bilahari Kausikan  
Dr Teh Kok Peng



*Outstanding  
Educator  
Award*



## Associate Professor Peter Thomas Vail

PhD, MA (Cornell University)  
 MS (Georgetown University)  
 BA (University of California, Berkeley)

NUS College

### CURRENT TEACHING PORTFOLIO

- Food production and society in Southeast Asia
- Language, cognition and culture
- Understanding the social world
- NUS College Impact Experience Project Chiang Mai
- NUS College Global Experience Bali — Lombok

### TEACHING ACHIEVEMENTS

- Led the design, development and coordination of the compulsory Impact Experience (IEx) capstone course. One of NUS College's flagship programmes, IEx allows students to undertake community service and development projects in countries across Southeast Asia and Singapore.
- Managed multiple student service projects in Thailand, including sustainable elephant tourism, community water remediation, coffee and bamboo as sustainable crop substitution, organic agriculture product development, orthopaedic equipment for elephant care, and community-based wild gibbon conservation.
- Developed NUS College curricula and implemented beyond-the-classroom courses that focus on fieldwork and experiential learning about real-world issues.
- Crafted and piloted the NUS College Global Experience course, GEx Bali — Lombok, which focuses on marine conservation and participatory development strategies.

### PUBLICATION CREDITS

- *Dara'ang Futures* (Documentary film on statelessness and marginality). Produced by Peter Vail, Theeraphan Satrakhom and Harry Virtanen. Singapore: NUS, 2017.

- *Pa Khao* (Documentary film on statelessness and land tenure struggles). Produced by Peter Vail, Theeraphan Satrakhom and Majid Bagheri. Singapore: NUS, 2016.
- "Muay Thai: Inventing Tradition for a National Symbol." *Sojourn* 29, no. 3 (2014): 509–53.
- "The Politics of Scripts: Language Rights, Heritage, and the Choice of Orthography for Khmer Vernaculars in Thailand" (with Panuwat Pantakod). In *Rights to Culture: Heritage, Language and Community in Thailand*, edited by Coeli Barry. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books / University of Washington Press, 2013.

### INTERNATIONAL STANDING

- Affiliation at the Regional Center for Social Sciences and Sustainable Development, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University, Thailand
- Affiliation at the Mekong Sub-region Social Research Center, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Ubon Ratchathani University, Thailand
- Reviewer for journals including *Asian Ethnicity* and *Sojourn*
- External examiner for postdoctoral degree candidates at Chiang Mai University and Macquarie University

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- NUS Annual Teaching Excellence Award (2023, 2012, 2011, 2010)
- University Scholars Programme Teaching Honour Roll (2021–23, 2014–16)
- University Scholars Programme Teaching Excellence Award (2022, 2019, 2018, 2013, 2012, 2011)
- NUS Annual Teaching Excellence Award Honour Roll (2014–19)





*Outstanding  
Graduate  
Mentor  
Award*





## Professor Abhik Roychoudhury

Provost's Chair Professor

PhD, MS (Stony Brook University)  
BEng (Jadavpur University)

Department of Computer Science  
School of Computing

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Software testing and analysis
- Software security
- Trustworthy systems

### MENTORING ACHIEVEMENTS

- Emphasising creativity and collaboration over traditional problem-solving, Prof Roychoudhury has sought to recruit students from diverse backgrounds, encourage new ideas, and engage actively in research discussions with his students.
- Encouraging students to be original thinkers and collaborators, he has fostered an environment of more active student involvement in the research process, urging them to chart out new research directions via constant discussions. While acknowledging that implementation and experimentation remain critical parts of the research process, he is also a champion of imagination in research.
- Through a distinct mentorship approach that seeks to develop his students holistically, he has opened the pathway for talent from around the world — including Singapore, China, Germany, Malaysia, Russia, Vietnam, and the US — to become faculty members at highly ranked universities globally, including the Max Planck Institute, University College London, and Peking University, among others.
- He has nurtured research leaders who have excelled on the global stage, garnering international research awards — including the ACM SIGSOFT Outstanding Dissertation Award and Google Anita Borg Memorial Scholarship — and leadership recognition both during and beyond their PhD studies.

### INTERNATIONAL STANDING

- Steering Committee Chair, Association for Computing Machinery International Conference on Foundations of Software Engineering (2023–26)
- Programme Committee Chair, International Conference on Software Engineering (2024)
- Associate Editor, Communications of the Association for Computing Machinery (since 2023)
- Team lead for the National Research Foundation-appointed one-year study on foundational research capabilities in security and privacy (2021–22)

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- International Conference on Software Engineering (ICSE) Most Influential Paper Award, a ten-year test-of-time award given to the ICSE 2013 paper “SemFix: Program Repair via Semantic Analysis” (2023)
- Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers New Directions Award for contributions to research on symbolic execution (2022)
- Best paper / distinguished paper award at numerous international conferences, including recently from FSE (2024), ASE (2022), AsiaCCS (2021), and ICSE (2020)





*Young  
Researcher  
Award*



## Assistant Professor Jasper Tromp

PhD, MD, BSc, BA (University of Groningen)  
MPH (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)  
DTM&H (University of Nagasaki)

Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Heart failure
- Artificial intelligence
- Health system research

### RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS

- Leads the Tromp Research Group at the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, driving research on heart failure, artificial intelligence and health systems.
- Achievements include:
  - Identifying a lean-diabetic heart failure phenotype unique to Southeast Asia and Singapore
  - Validating machine learning algorithms for the detection of heart failure
  - Using protein-protein interaction networks to identify new treatment targets in patients with heart failure
  - Publishing landmark papers on geographical differences in quality of care of patients with heart failure
- Secured over S\$1.5 million in funding from the National Medical Research Council, Ministry of Education, and NUS as Lead Principal Investigator.

### PUBLICATION CREDITS

- Published over 120 high-impact papers, including in leading journals such as *Lancet*, *The BMJ*, *Lancet: Global Health*, *Nature Medicine*, and *Nature Communications*
- Obtained over 6,000 citations, with a Hirsch index of 40

### INTERNATIONAL STANDING

- Advisory board member of *BMJ: Public Health* (since 2024)
- Editorial board member of the *European Journal of Heart Failure* (since 2024)
- Editorial board member of the *International Journal of Cardiology* (since 2022)

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health Outstanding Researcher Award (2023)
- Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health Young Researcher Award (2022)
- National University Health System Teaching Excellence Award (2022)
- InterAcademy Partnership Young Physician Leader (2021)
- World Heart Federation Emerging Leader (2020)
- Paul Dudley White International Scholar at the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions (2018)



## Assistant Professor Wang Xinchao

PhD (École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne)  
BSc (Hong Kong Polytechnic University)

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
College of Design and Engineering

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Artificial intelligence
- Machine learning
- Computer vision
- Signal processing

### RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS

- Known internationally for his work on efficient and trustworthy machine learning for applications, including computer vision and natural language processing.
- Invented the world's most popular structural pruning approach, DepGraph, for pruning deep neural networks with one line of code in a fully automatic manner. The software has been downloaded over 125,000 times.
- Developed one of the most popular efficient neural network backbones, MetaFormer, which for the first time shows the *de facto* architectural attribution of transformer neural networks.
- Designed the world's first neural network reassembly approach, enabling users to treat neural networks as Lego models and to reassemble network blocks as Lego bricks.
- Leads research funding, as principal investigator or co-investigator, of more than S\$15 million from public funding agencies and industrial partners.

### PUBLICATION CREDITS

- Published over 150 papers in top-tier conferences and journals
- Obtained over 13,000 citations, with a Hirsch index of 61

### INTERNATIONAL STANDING

- Associate Editor of *IEEE Transactions on Image Processing* (since 2023)
- Grant reviewer for the Swiss National Science Foundation and Hong Kong General Research Fund (since 2022)
- Area Chair / Meta reviewer for leading international conferences on machine learning, computer vision and artificial intelligence, among others
- Keynote / invited speaker at various conferences, such as the IEEE Conference on Computer Vision

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Young Researcher Award, NUS College of Design and Engineering (2024)
- Outstanding Early Career Award, NUS College of Design and Engineering (2023)
- Young Author Best Paper Award, IEEE Signal Processing Society (2023)
- Listed among the World's Top 2% Scientists by Stanford University (2023, 2022)
- Best Paper Award, IEEE International Conference on Visual Communications and Image Processing (2022)
- Best Paper Nomination, Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems (2022)
- American Philosophical Association Book Prize nomination (2021)
- NUS FASS Promising Young Researcher Award (2018)



*University  
Research  
Recognition  
Award*

The bottom of the page features two thin, elegant gold lines that curve across the width of the image. To the right, there are several soft, out-of-focus gold circles, creating a bokeh effect against the light background.



## Professor Wang Linfa

PhD (University of California, Davis)  
BSc (East China Normal University)

Duke-NUS Medical School

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Zoonotic diseases
- Bat immunology
- Pathogen discovery

### RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS

- Internationally recognised for his stellar contributions to the field of emerging bat viruses and bat biology, Prof Wang has fuelled discoveries and biomedical innovations that have helped combat several viral outbreaks, from the Hendra virus in Australia to the global COVID-19 pandemic.
- Played a leading role in identifying bats as the natural host of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) virus. During the COVID-19 outbreak, he developed the world's first antibody-based test to detect infection by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and developed broad-spectrum vaccine candidates for better protection against future variants and related viruses.
- His pioneering work on bat immunology has led to the establishment of bats as a new animal model to study inflammation, metabolism and age-related diseases. Intellectual properties derived from such research have been licensed for the development of novel bat-inspired therapeutics to improve human health.
- Informed public health policies at national and international levels through his research and expertise. He is the inaugural Executive Director of the Programme for Research in Epidemic Preparedness and Response, Singapore, and has served on multiple World Health Organisation COVID-19 committees.

### PUBLICATION CREDITS

- Published more than 500 scientific papers in many top journals, including *Science*, *Nature*, *New England Journal of Medicine*, and *The Lancet*
- Invited contributor to numerous scholarly publications, including as editor of *Bats and Viruses: A New Frontier of Emerging Infectious Diseases* (2015), and contributing author to *The COVID-19 Textbook: Science, Medicine and Public Health* (2024), among others
- Featured in Clarivate's list of Highly Cited Researchers, which recognises researchers who have demonstrated significant and broad influence in their fields (2024, 2023, 2022)

### INTERNATIONAL STANDING

- Elected Fellow to the Singapore National Academy of Science (2024)
- Elected Fellow to the Australian Academy of Science (2023)
- Elected Fellow to the American Academy of Microbiology (2021)
- Elected Fellow to the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (2010)
- Editor-in-Chief of *Virology* (2012–22)

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Public Administration Medal (Silver), National Day Awards (2023)
- Springer Nature Editorial Leadership Award (2022)
- President's Science Award (2021)
- SingHealth Duke-NUS Research Team Award (First prize) (2020)
- National Healthcare Group Research and Innovation Award (2020)



## Professor Brenda Yeoh Saw Ai

Raffles Professor of Social Sciences

D.Phil (University of Oxford)  
MA, BA (University of Cambridge)

Department of Geography  
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Cities of migration
- Migration and geographies of care
- Migration industry and infrastructures

### RESEARCH ACHIEVEMENTS

- Research leader of the Asian Migration Research Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, NUS, which has achieved an unrivalled international reputation for innovative Asian migration and mobilities research.
- Built an outstanding research record and reputation in the field of migration and transnationalism studies in the context of Asia, as recognised by election as Fellow (International) of the British Academy in 2022, and the award of the Vautrin Lud Prize, one of the highest international awards for outstanding achievements in Geography, in 2021.
- Scholarly work in three interrelated areas — cities of migration; migration and geographies of care; and the migration industry and infrastructures — has not only been published in top journals in geography and migration studies, but also created a distinctive body of expertise that supports the work of international bodies such as the International Organization for Migration and the Red Cross Red Crescent Global Migration Lab.
- Drew on research expertise to contribute effectively to the urban development, social service and heritage sectors in Singapore, as recognised by multiple awards from national bodies.

### PUBLICATION CREDITS

- Published over 260 peer-reviewed journal articles
- Obtained over 24,000 citations, with a Hirsch index of 85
- Ranked among the top 1% of scientists worldwide for Geography, according to Stanford University's list recognising the most-cited scientists in various disciplines (2023, 2022, 2021)

### INTERNATIONAL STANDING

- Honorary Fellow of Emmanuel College, University of Cambridge (since 2023)
- Fellow (International) of the British Academy (since 2022)
- Council member of the Asian Population Association (since 2022)
- Member of the academic advisory board of the Red Cross Red Crescent Global Migration Lab (since 2022)
- Council Vice-Chair of the United Nations University (since 2021)
- Editor of *Population, Space and Place* (since 2021) and *Asian Population Studies* (since 2015)
- Member of the advisory boards of *International Migration Review* (since 2018) and *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (since 2015)

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Friends of MCCY Award, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (2024)
- Public Service Medal, National Day Awards (2022)
- Vautrin Lud Prize (2021)
- MND Medallion, Ministry of National Development (2021)
- Friends of MSF Award, Ministry of Social and Family Development (2017)
- Public Administration Medal (Silver), National Day Awards (2015)



*Outstanding  
Service  
Award*

“ I have only done as most of us have done, and that’s what we could — for our families, for the organisations we belonged to, for our country. Some of us are fortunate in that what we did attracted greater attention, but no contribution could have been possible without the contributions of all, whether recognised or not. Only narcissists who have no reference point outside themselves lead futile lives, even if they are ones of high achievement.”

**Mr Bilahari Kausikan**



## CURRENT PORTFOLIO

- Chairman, Middle East Institute, NUS

## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENTS

- In a career spanning 37 years in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr Kausikan served in a variety of appointments at home and abroad. These included Ambassador to The Russian Federation and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York. He was appointed Deputy Secretary for Southeast Asia in 1998 and Second Permanent Secretary (Foreign Affairs) in 2001. He served as Permanent Secretary (Foreign Affairs) from 2010, before retiring in 2013, whereupon he was appointed Ambassador-at-Large, a position he held until 2018.
- Mr Kausikan became Chairman of the Management Board of the Middle East Institute (MEI) in 2017, and has guided MEI's focus and publications towards what was relevant to its primary stakeholders in the Singapore government and comprehensible to the general public, while maintaining the highest standards of academic rigour. MEI is now well-known in East Asia, the Middle East, the US and Europe. Mr Kausikan will be retiring as MEI Chairman in end-August 2024, but will remain associated with the institute as an Honorary Fellow.
- Mr Kausikan is also an author, with three books, *Dealing with an Ambiguous World* (World Scientific, 2016), *Singapore Is Not An Island* (Straits Times Press, 2017), followed by *Singapore Is Still Not An Island* (Straits Times Press, 2023), as well as many articles in international journals and magazines. He has also often lectured on geopolitics at academic institutions and think-tanks in the US, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

## SERVICE TO NATION AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- Mr Kausikan has contributed to steering Singapore's foreign relations in an increasingly complex and uncertain international environment. Known for his pragmatic and candid views, he has written and spoken extensively on the complexities of diplomacy, nation-states and international politics, particularly the role of ASEAN vis-à-vis the global powers.
- As Chairman of MEI, Mr Kausikan has leveraged on his decades of diplomatic service experience, and wide global and national recognition, to drive the institute's impactful research, and enhanced its stature and reputation.
- He has been a true leader for the MEI team, always available to everyone, honest and insightful in his many discussions with the research team, and clear and precise in his guidance to the Board and the administrative team.

## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- The Oman Civil Merit Order, Second Class, Oman (2013)
- Pingat Jasa Gemilang (Meritorious Service Medal), National Day Awards (2012)
- Order of Bernardo O'Higgins with the rank of Gran Cruz, Chile (2002)
- Public Administration Medal (Gold), National Day Awards (2001)

## EDUCATION

- BA (University of Singapore)
- MA (Columbia University)

“As far back as I can remember, and perhaps instinctively, I’ve had the urge to combine the life of the mind with a life of action, and for a purpose greater than myself. I hope that I have succeeded, in my limited ways.”

**Dr Teh Kok Peng**



### CURRENT PORTFOLIO

- Chairman, East Asian Institute, NUS
- Independent Director, Seviora Holdings Pte Ltd
- Independent Director, CM Capital Corporation
- Independent Director, Fullerton Health Corporation
- Chairman of Advisory Council, Granite Asia
- Chairman of Advisory Board, Seraya Partners
- Member, Trilateral Commission

### LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENTS

- Dr Teh served as President of GIC Special Investments from April 1999 to June 2011, and oversaw investments in private equity, infrastructure and international venture funds. Prior to this, he was concurrently Deputy Managing Director of the Monetary Authority of Singapore and Deputy Managing Director of GIC. He began his career with the World Bank, joining its Young Professionals Programme in 1975.
- Dr Teh was formerly Chairman of Ascendas Pte Ltd and Azalea Asset Management Pte Ltd. He was a member on various boards, including China International Capital Corporation, Overseas Chinese Banking Corporation, Taikang Life Insurance, Sembcorp Industries, Singapore Life Ltd, and the Urban Redevelopment Authority. Dr Teh's contributions also encompassed the higher education sector, where he served on the boards of the National University of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, and Institute of Policy Studies. Additionally, he was President of the Economic Society of Singapore from 1992 to 1997, succeeding the late Professor Lim Chong Yah.

### SERVICE TO NATION AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- Dr Teh was appointed as a Member of the NUS East Asian Institute (EAI) Management Board in 2015. In 2018, he succeeded Professor Wang Gungwu as Chairman of EAI.
- Among Dr Teh's contributions as Chairman of EAI are the initiation of a strategic review of the EAI Board. Following this, the Board was reconstituted to include members from the corporate sector, harnessing a more diverse range of relevant expertise in service of the institute's mission of promoting academic and policy-oriented research on East Asian development.

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- AVCJ (Asian Venture Capital Journal) Special Achievement Award (2022)
- Public Administration Medal (Gold), National Day Awards (1992)

### EDUCATION

- BA (La Trobe University)
- M.Phil, D.Phil (University of Oxford)

# Award Recipients



**Mr Bilahari Kausikan**  
Outstanding Service Award



**Dr Teh Kok Peng**  
Outstanding Service Award



**Associate Professor Peter Thomas Vail**  
Outstanding Educator Award



**Professor Abhik Roychoudhury**  
Outstanding Graduate Mentor Award



**Professor Wang Linfa**  
University Research Recognition Award



**Professor Brenda Yeoh Saw Ai**  
University Research Recognition Award



**Assistant Professor Jasper Tromp**  
Young Researcher Award



**Assistant Professor Wang Xinchao**  
Young Researcher Award





