SEP Plus 2017 Summer Programme

11-28 August 2017
OVERVIEW

With the rapid growth and development in China, NUS International Relations Office (IRO) and NUS (Suzhou) Research Institute (NUSRI) initiated the SEP Plus Programme in 2015 to enhance the overall global experiences for SEP students in the region.

The NUS International Relations Office (IRO) fosters partnerships with premier institutions around the world to enhance NUS’ standing as a world-class institution. In tandem with NUS’ vision of becoming a leading global university centred in Asia, our flagship Student Exchange Programme (SEP) remains the largest programme, providing opportunities for NUS students to spend a semester or two at one of our over 300 partner universities in 50 countries around the world while earning credits towards their degree.

NUSRI (www.nusri.cn) is the first overseas research institute of NUS that is located within Suzhou Industrial Park (SIP). With the unveiling of its new building in 2013, NUSRI has received groups of students from NUS and overseas universities. For information on past programmes organised by NUSRI, please visit http://www.nusri.cn/en/edu/Past Events.

The SEP Plus programme is a summer programme specially designed for SEP students to China, Hong Kong and Taiwan to have a good understanding of China’s economy and culture before the commencement of their academic semester at the respective host universities. The programme is from 11 to 28 August 2017. Unlike other summer programmes with limited vacancies, SEP students will have guaranteed placements in the SEP Plus programme. Students can establish friendship and bond with other SEP students before their SEP stint.

Participants for the SEP Plus 2017 Summer Programme will be able to receive 2 modular credits under CP3109 Overseas Exploratory Project from NUS School of Computing upon successful completion of the programme and submission of a trip report.

Over the period of three weeks, participants will have opportunities to visit different types of companies in China: state-owned enterprises (e.g. Bank of Suzhou), multi-national companies in China (e.g. ASUS) and small and medium enterprises (ECOVACS). The management of these companies will provide a comprehensive overview on the day-to-day operations and how they remain competitive in the ever-changing environment in China. The visits are coupled with related lectures, forum etc. Students will be able to interact with local elite speakers on China’s economy and network with the management representatives at the companies to have a better understanding of the business arena in China.

Besides industrial visits and lectures, participants can discover an incredible array of historical and cultural attractions in a place where skyscrapers coexist with beautifully preserved old town of Suzhou. Suzhou, winner of the 2014 Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize, is recognised as the UNESCO heritage site and referred
as the “Oriental Venice”. Modern Suzhou, as one of the most prosperous cities in China, is home to many aspiring entrepreneurs. Students will also do some charity work to make their own contribution to China society.

PROGRAMME TAKEAWAY
You will learn about the major aspects of China’s economy and how it influences the development of businesses. Topics include an overview of China’s economy, Chinese SMEs’ and SOEs’ management, e-business and many more. NUSRI also takes the learning out of class by organizing company visits which will help students understand China’s economic environment. Being one of the cradles of world civilization, China has an extremely rich and long culture heritage and students will have opportunities to learn and appreciate this. Please refer to Annex 1 for the detailed timetable.

PROGRAMME CREDITS
Students will be able to receive 2 modular credits under CP3109 Overseas Exploratory Project upon successful completion of the programme. To receive the modular credits (for AY2017/18, Semester 2), student must submit a report within two weeks after the programme. Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade will be given according to each report. (Note that the student must register as the full-time student in NUS for AY2017/18, Semester 2, and the total modular credits received for the semester is within the upper limits as set by the student’s home faculty/school.) The requirements of the report are as following:

- 10 to 15 pages, single spacing, Arial, font size 12. Please note that photos could only take up to 4 full pages, pdf file only
- Suggested structure of the report:
  - Summary: half to 1 page
  - Introduction: half to 1 page
  - Main content: should include some personal experiences
  - Conclusion: at least half a page

PROGRAMME COST
The programme fee is S$1,350 and includes the following:

- Double occupancy lodging throughout the programme
- Local transport for planned activities
- Activities in Suzhou and Hangzhou
- Meals during major occasions

FINANCIAL SUBSIDY
Participants can apply for the following financial assistance at IRO to defray the cost of the 3-week programme:
a. **NUS Awards for Study Abroad (NASA) Enhancement Bursary** – NASA Enhancement Bursary is available on a need basis to undergraduate students who are on short term and special overseas programmes administered by IRO. The range of quantum for a 3-week SEP Plus programme is between S$400 – S$800 depending on per capita gross monthly household income (PCI).

b. **China Initiatives Steering Committee (CISC) Funding** - The CISC funding is valued at S$100 per week depending on the duration of the programme (S$300 for 3 weeks) plus S$500 airfare support.

c. **Young Talent Programme (YTP) - Market Immersion** - NUS undergraduates who are awarded funding from NUS for participating in international programmes (e.g. short term study programme – on a case-by-case basis) are eligible for co-funding from International Enterprise (IE) Singapore under the Young Talent Programme (YTP) - Market Immersion. The co-funding from IE Singapore is between S$100 – S$300 per week depending on destination (SEP Plus : S$300 for 3-week programme).

Most applicants can look forward to the subsidy range of around S$1,100 (CISC : S$800 and YTP : S$300). Students who are on the financial aid scheme by the Office of Financial Aid can apply for NASA Enhancement Bursary.


**REVIEWS AND COMMENTS FROM PAST PARTICIPANTS**

Fong Xin Hui (School of Business, National University of Singapore)
2015 SEP Plus Summer Programme Participant

“In conclusion, the SEP Plus Programme was a meaningful, memorable and motivating experience. Embarking on this journey has really changed me as a person: I have grown and matured, and acquired vital knowledge and skills – both hard and soft ones – that could give me an edge when I enter the workforce upon graduation.”

Goh Shi Ying (Faculty of Science, National University of Singapore)
2015 Summer Immersion Programme Participant

“NUSRI Summer Programme 2015 has been a great experience, where I get to understand the way of life in China, understand China’s heritage and the economy. To be able to see various companies and hear from them the motivation and methodology behind running a successful industry in China is truly insightful.”

Ow Song Sim Dennys (Faculty of Science, National University of Singapore)
2016 SEP Plus Summer Programme Participant

“Please continue to promote this trip, because it is of utmost importance for students to discover how life-changing this trip can be.”

Lee Shea Min Samantha (Business School, National University of Singapore)
2016 SEP Plus Summer Programme Participant

As a business student, it was particularly beneficial to me in terms of the company visits and the lectures on the business environment in China. The economy and society of China is very dynamic and it is of utmost importance to companies there that they are adaptable, flexible and competitive. The differences in operations between the different types and sizes of companies were also very interesting to observe.
Jan Bronauer (Yale-NUS College, National University of Singapore)
2016 Winter Immersion Programme Participant

“On December 24, the NUSRI Winter Programme 2016 in Suzhou concluded—a programme which proved to be much more encompassing, diverse and lively than I had expected before I joined. Almost three weeks of exploring, learning, presenting as well as networking with professionals gave me very close insights into China which will help me enormously in the future.”

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Lecture: Chinese Economy and Firms Strategic Alliances: the Importance of Cross-cultural Literacy**
   Globalization implies that firms operate in different countries, and the presence of foreign companies is regularly cited as a major factor explaining Chinese rapid development - notably through the policy of “Special Economic Zones”. However, despite the number of foreign players, entering into the Chinese market is not a straightforward operation. This lecture will start by recalling some facts about Chinese development and growth policies since the beginning of the reforms in 1978 and explain and then explain how complex strategic alliances between companies can be when they involve partners from different cultures.

2. **Lecture: Tapping into China’s E-commerce Market**
Have you heard about the recent “legend” of Bachelor’s Day or the online shopping carnival in China? Recently, Taobao has exceeded a total daily transaction of 35 billion Yuan (USD 5.71 billion). With 580 million online shoppers, the rapid development of e-commerce in China is hitting a new high. The lecture is intended to provide an understanding of the development of e-business in China. This will involve the various forces which influence the behavior of national and international firms, thereby providing an appreciation of the global nature of e-business.

3. Lecture: Chinese SMEs’ and SOEs’ Management and Growth
   Chinese economy has now entered the so-called “New-normal” period characterized by the economic structural adjustment. The development of the Chinese local enterprises is crucial for this adjustment. Presently, among all the Chinese local enterprises, the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the state-owned enterprises (SOEs) are dominating. The SMEs and SOEs have grown in a different social, economic and policy background, and they have their respective impacts on the Chinese economy. The SMEs have contributed a lot to the economic growth and employment in China, while the SOEs in China are so huge in scale that they have great influences in industries such as telecommunication, banking, natural resources, etc. The lecture will cover the challenges of the Chinese SMEs and SOEs, their causes and possible solutions.

4. Workshop: Design Sprint China-Igniting Entrepreneurship
   Google Ventures developed an intensive Product Design Sprint to help their portfolio companies get started, get unblocked, and develop new directions for their products and services. Design Sprint China (DSC), undertakes the mission of spreading product design ideas in China. This workshop is a quick process for answering critical business questions through design, prototyping, and testing ideas with customers. Let’s ignite your own entrepreneurship by designing your own product first!

5. Industrial Learning and Dialogue Session @ ASUS
   Do you know how many kinds of tests any laptop has to go through before it is being sold? Come to ASUS Research & Design Center in Suzhou to discover these “secrets” yourself and learn how ASUS, a worldwide top-three consumer notebook vendor, can continue being a market leader in this ever-changing industry.

6. Industry Learning and Dialogue Session at Bank of Suzhou
   The bank plays a central role in the allocation of the resources in the market. Different from state-owned commercial bank, the Bank of Suzhou has combined with the regional social and economic status to serve the development of local economy and society. Come to explore how the Bank of Suzhou makes sustainable development.

7. Lecture: Chinese Culture
As one of the four ancient civilizations, China is famous for its glory history and Chinese people create many splendid cultures. In this session by the invited Professor of Soochow University, students could get a better understanding of Chinese culture from different perspectives.

8. **China Art Appreciation - Fan Painting**
   During the Neolithic period, the Chinese people began to practice the art of painting on pottery vessels. A fan is transformed into a piece of artwork when it is combined with calligraphy and painting. Fan painting plays an indispensable role in the art history. In this lecture, you will understand that the Chinese painters’ artistic language is very different from that of the Westerners. By mastering the techniques and artistic language of painting, you can see how Chinese paintings reflect Chinese history.

9. **Historical sites visits**
   West Lake, Humble Administrator’s Garden, Suzhou Museum and Pingjiang Road, First Silk Factory, Tiger Hill and Tongli Village (water town).

   ![Fan Painting](image1)
   ![Historical Sites](image2)

   *Note: The highlights of the programme are subject to modifications without compromising its overall objectives.*

**PROGRAMME FACILITATORS:**

**Prof. Tristan W. Chong** is the key person initiating the IBM Big Data Analytics and Technology Center (BDATC) at Xi’an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU) together with IBM China, and Suzhou Industrial Park (SIP) government to support the strategic economic focus on business analytics. Prof Chong joined XJTLU in February 2010 after having several years of professional work experience in Malaysia, China, and UK. Prior entering to academia, he worked as an E-Business Consultant in Malaysia and UK and his main role including development and implementation of the commercial needs and business opportunities through infocomm technology. His research interests focus on the area of B2B e-marketplace integration and interoperability, B2B marketing, e-marketing strategies for SMEs and Internet technology. He has published more than 50 academic articles including journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings, and teaching cases since 2007. His research has been continuously funded by both internal and external funding bodies including the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC). Prof Chong was a TEDx speaker and frequently invited by companies and international business schools to deliver guest lectures, seminars and roundtable discussions on various business topics.
Prof. Benoit Desmarchelier is a Lecturer at the International Business School Suzhou (IBSS) at the Xi’an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China. Before that, he was temporary Assistant Professor in Economics, Lille 1 University, Lille, France. In addition to his teaching activities, he is currently creating a new Master program in Business Analytics at XJTLU. He also pursue an active interdisciplinary research agenda by investigating the formation of collective behaviors (ex. emergence of panics and various diffusion dynamics) and their consequences for the socio-economic world, i.e. for the economic growth, business cycles, structural change or market selection of firms. I investigate these questions by building up dedicated agent-based models.

Prof. Meng Xiangchun, Ph. D in Literary Criticism, is now Lecturer and Deputy Director of English in School of Foreign Languages, Soochow University. He received his M.A. and Ph.D in Soochow University. His publications include 8 translated books on literary theory, politics and traditional culture, a dozen of papers on top journals themed on translation and literary criticism. His major academic interests include traditional Chinese culture, comparative religion and translation studies. He has been the special instructor of Studies on Contemporary Chinese Society and Culture for Furman University of South Carolina, USA for 4 consecutive years. He was involved in and in charge of a series of cultural exchange programs/activities held in Italy, America and Canada.

Prof. Eddy S. Fang joined Xi’an Jiaotong Liverpool University in 2012 after spending four years as a doctoral researcher at the University of Cambridge, where he conducted research in the field of International Political Economy. More specifically, Eddy worked on the diffusion of alternative financial practices in the United Kingdom – e.g. Islamic Finance. This led him to articulate his research within the frameworks of behavioral economics, economic sociology, and economic philosophy. In addition to his doctoral research, Eddy has previous teaching experience at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management (Belgium), conducted research at the European Center for Advanced Research in Economics and Statistics (2007-2008), and consulted for the World Bank. Upon his arrival in China, Eddy started investigating additional questions specific to the Chinese economy such as (i) environmental behavior - this project is funded by the Suzhou Science and Technology Association (ii) trust and food safety among Chinese consumers, and (iii) social networks in rural China.
SEP Plus Programme 2017
### ANNEX 1: PROGRAMME TIMETABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Morning</th>
<th>Afternoon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 11 Aug (FRI) | Arrival and pick-up at Hangzhou International Airport  
Coach time: 14:30 (TBC)  
Hotel check-in | | |
| 12 Aug (SAT) | Cultural Visit: West Lake | | |
| 13 Aug (SUN) | Free-and-easy time in Hangzhou | | |
| 14 Aug (MON) | Industrial Visit: Kids Global (TBC)  
Bus ride to Suzhou  
Hotel check-in | Lecture: Chinese SMEs’&SOEs’ Management and Growth  
Industrial Visit: Suzhou Industrial Park Exhibition Hall & Dialogue Session @ CSSD  
Welcome dinner with local elite | |
| 15 Aug (TUE) | Lecture: Chinese Culture  
Industrial Visit: ECOVACS (TBC) | Lecture: Chinese Economy and Firms Strategic Alliances: the Importance of Cross-cultural Literacy  
Industrial Visit: ASUS (TBC) | |
| 16 Aug (WED) | Cultural Visit: Humble Administrator’s Garden, Suzhou Museum and Pingjiang Road | | |
| 17 Aug (THU) | Lecture: Chinese Culture  
Industrial Visit: ECOVACS (TBC) | | |
| 18 Aug (FRI) | Lecture: Chinese Economy and Firms Strategic Alliances: the Importance of Cross-cultural Literacy  
Industrial Visit: ASUS (TBC) | | |
| 19 & 20 Aug (SAT & SUN) | Free and easy | | |
| 21 Aug (MON) | Workshop: Design Sprint China-Igniting Entrepreneurship  
Preparation of Design Sprint Workshop | | |
| 22 Aug (TUE) | Workshop: Design Sprint China-Igniting Entrepreneurship  
Company Visit: Bank of Suzhou (TBC) | | |
| 23 Aug (WED) | Lecture: Tapping into China’s E-commerce Market  
China Art Appreciation - Fan Painting | | |
| 24 Aug (THU) | Cultural Visit: First Silk Factory, Tiger Hill and Shantang Street | | |
| 25 Aug (FRI) | Visit to one public undertaking  
(nursing home or charity school)  
Forum: Innovation & Entrepreneurship | | |
| 26 Aug (SAT) | Preparation for final presentation  
Farewell presentation  
Farewell dinner | | |
| 27 Aug (SUN) | Cultural Visit: Tongli Water Town | | |
| 28 Aug (MON) | Departure to other cities in China or departure to Hong Kong/Taiwan for start of SEP  
(own arrangement is needed) | | |

*Note: The schedule is subject to modifications due to unforeseen circumstances.*