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<td><strong>Author(s)</strong></td>
<td>Hor, Andy.</td>
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Paper No. 18
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

Mission

As the premier tertiary institution in Singapore, the National University of Singapore (NUS) is committed to support the nation’s social and economic development by:

(a) Producing graduates with the requisite knowledge and skills, capable of independent life-long learning and adapting to changing circumstances; and

(b) Developing their creative potential and promoting research and innovation.

Staff/Student Strength

In 1996 the University has 2318 (22.6% women) full time staff and 60 (21.7% women) part time staff. There are 17109 undergraduates and 3737 postgraduates. Among the undergraduates, 43.7% are in the Faculties of Science and Engineering. The Science Faculty has a (undergraduate) student number of 4757, which is the second largest (next to Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences) among the eight faculties.

Research

Research is given top priority in NUS. This is reflected in the more than 1500 ongoing research projects carried out by the academic community of about 1600 teaching staff and 800 full-time research staff.

In line with the national emphasis on the development of high technology and knowledge-intensive economy in Singapore, the University’s Institute of Systems Science (set up in 1981), Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology (1987), Institute of Microelectronics (1990), and the National Supercomputing Research Centre (1993) have made important contributions to the advancement of information technology, biotechnology, microelectronics technology, and advanced computational technology in Singapore. The National University Medical Institutes (NUMI) was established in 1994 to strengthen the research capabilities of the Medical Faculty while the Institute of Molecular Agrobiology (1995) will undertake innovative world-class research in agrobiology at the genetic and molecular levels.

Beside these six speciality research institutes/centres, there are several other research centres established in the various faculties and institutes to spearhead R & D for specific applications in industry and business. In the Faculty of Science, there are (i) Bioscience Centre and (ii) Centre for Remote Imaging, Sensing and Processing. In the Faculty of Engineering, there are 18 research centres covering area such as optoelectronics, intelligent control, computational mechanics, bioprocessing technology etc. In the Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology, there is Centre for Natural Product Research. In the Institute of Systems Science, there are (i) Apple-ISS
Research Centre and (ii) ISS-Johns Hopkins Centre for Information-enhanced Medicine.

In 1996, there were 453 postgraduate students in the Faculty of Science, 536 in Faculty of Engineering, 563 in Postgraduate School of Engineering, 31 in Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology, 180 in Institute of Systems Science. These constitute 47% of the total postgraduate population in NUS.

Industrial Collaboration

NUS contributes to the economic well-being of the country by supplying industry with well-trained R & D manpower in sufficient numbers to meet the nation’s socio-economic needs, and producing research ideas and findings with potential for commercial development. The Industry and Technology Relations Office (INTRO) was established in 1992 as a one-stop information and service centre for industry and organisations seeking collaboration. NUS Technology Holdings Pte Ltd, a private company wholly owned by the University, was established in 1995 to further facilitate the commercialisation of University research results and inventions.

Academic Linkages with Overseas Universities

NUS has established links with more than 60 renowned institutions in the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Belgium, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal, the Netherlands, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the PRC.

Links with School

The Faculty of Science has been organising the Science Research Programme jointly with the Gifted Education Unit of the Ministry of Education for a decade. It accepts a number of students from the junior colleges to come to NUS to do research projects with the staff. We also have the Science Mentorship Programme and the Science Camp which cater to the gifted secondary school students. The Science Vision Programme brings a large group of students from the junior colleges to the University for innovative talks, demonstrations and laboratory-based learning. We also work with the Ministry of Education to organize and host the Singapore Chemistry Olympiad, Singapore Physics Olympiad and Singapore Mathematics Olympiads. These Olympiads are national projects which are well publicised. Special training and coaching are conducted by staff members to prepare the national teams to compete in the international Olympiads in chemistry, physics and mathematics.