

NEWSLETTER

Message from the Head of School



Welcome to the first SASS Newsletter of 2021. We want to use this regular communication to share the achievements of our staff and our students, and to alert one another and our friends to opportunities and events that we have organised or in which we are taking part. The Newsletter belongs to SASS staff and SASS postgraduate research students and we hope it becomes both useful and entertaining for everyone. We will also use this Newsletter as an informal archive so we can look back over the year and review our achievements as individuals and as a School.

The first three months of 2021 have been interesting and busy. I have met many people at many levels of the institution both in Malaysia and in Australia. There is no doubt of the talent and excellence evidenced across Monash, and SASS is a microcosm of that. We have some excellent new colleagues, representing training and experience from Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Poland and the UK. Some academic staff, including myself are working remotely, and have never set foot on Campus. Many others are missing their familiar SASS workspaces and offices. Everyone, wherever they are, has been dealing with all the personal shocks and challenges of life and work under a movement order, and the anxieties that naturally arise during a pandemic. We are looking forward to celebrating our return to Campus in Semester 2, all being well.

It is not always easy to see into the heart of a School through this very tiny laptop screen (no offence to my trusty 13" MacBook Pro which is where I 'live' at the moment), but the persistent hard work of academic and professional staff make (almost) everything possible. Key projects across Campus and Faculty include the global classroom, refashioning physical space for the post-Covid environment, and a strong focus on building research performance, not least amongst our very talented ECRs. I thank Chan Chang Tik for stepping in as our Interim Lead, Education. He has focussed on quality assurance through his workshops and his attention to student feedback. Dr Chan will remain with us for two days a week until the end of the Semester break. We have also had productive feedback from SSLC/MUSA in the past two weeks and we will pay attention to their experience.

In recent weeks we have had a successful MCMS Review, with especial thanks due to Tan Meng Yoe and Choo May May. We have managed limited access to Campus, thanks to Chan Yoke May. May May, Krystal and Nurul have kept our student processes on track (and the Student representatives thanked them especially for their care), and Eswary has handled the significant work of the research office as well as her HDR role. In academic spaces, Agata, Melissa and Ting Fai have taken on the leadership of our ECR research network, Chrishandra has become our Technology Lead, and Joseph has continued his sterling work as Undergraduate Coordinator not least on behalf of the valued Sessional lecturers who help us deliver a great education to our students. I thank everyone for their exemplary work in challenging times.

[Content:](#)

[Page 1 – Message from Head of School](#)

[Page 2-4 – Research News](#)

[Page 5 – Education News](#)

[Page 6 – Staff Achievements](#)

[Page 7-8 – General Updates](#)



Research News

Civic Engagement Forum 2021 -- The Bali Event

From 6th to 8th April, **The Bali Event** unfolded in Denpasar. Organised by the Universitas Hindu Indonesia (Bali), Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS), and Indonesian Science Institute (LIPI), this event was the second instalment of the **Civic Engagement 4.0 Forum** initiative inaugurated in the city of Solo (also known as Surakarta) in 2019.

While the Solo Forum was held under happier times with invigorating face-to-face sessions and a full-day field trip to various civil society initiatives around the city, Covid-19 necessitated that the Bali Event had to be a much toned-down virtual event.

Both events were the offspring of the Yogyakarta workshop that I was involved with in 2017. There, a group of public intellectuals, academicians, and social activists conceived of a platform that would facilitate the periodic face-to-face sharing and exchange of experiences and methodologies from a diverse range of grassroots civil society groups and social entrepreneurs based in the ASEAN region (and beyond).

In the Solo Forum, participants heard from proponents of sustainable urban farming, citizen science, village level waste management, disabled-friendly city, participatory urban planning, and empowering pedagogies for schoolchildren and the youths, among others. A small group of mayors from Indonesia and Thailand were also invited to share about and pitch their visionary plans for their cities in the light of the SDGs.

The Bali Event replicated this formula with inputs mainly from Balinese civil society groups. This time, the Mayors Symposium was much expanded with participants from Malaysia and the USA joining mayors from Indonesian cities and towns.

I moderated a lively session on **Urban Sustainability** remotely, and was able to make new and interesting civil society contacts in Bali, and which I hope to meet up in person once the Covid-19 scourge has released its grip on the world.

For more details on the programme, go to: <https://balievent.icrs.or.id/programs-schedule>

Video recordings of the sessions can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4BKEwgjbl8&t=7924s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YTKqdua0rJA&t=8224s>

Yeoh Seng Guan

Deputy Head of School (Research)



Research News

Associate Professor Yeoh Seng- Guan is part of a multidisciplinary team working on "Designing and rapid prototyping relational mental health (RELATE ME) community- based intervention among semi-rural population in Malaysia" led by Professor Tin Tin Su of the Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences. This project is itself part of a larger initiative involving 3 countries (Malaysia, Laos and Cambodia) and is funded by the World Health Organization. Amount funded for Malaysian team: MYR363,000.

Associate Professor Yeoh Seng- Guan moderated a session on "[Urban Sustainability](#)" at the "[Civic Engagement Forum 2021](#)" held in Bali. Organized by the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies, Universitas Hindu Indonesia Denpasar, and Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia (Indonesian Institute of Sciences)., this is the second instalment following the inaugural forum held in Solo in 2019.

Associate Professor Yeoh Seng Guan was an integral part of the organizing team that formulated this initiative at the Yogyakarta Workshop in 2017.

Associate Professor Andrew Ng Hock Soon gave a plenary talk at the International Gothic Association's annual conference on the 16th of March that was hosted by Simon Fraser University in Vancouver Canada this year. My presentation was titled "What's so Global about the Gothic".

Dr Koh Sin Yee participated in The Interurban Migration Industry: 'Migration Products' and the Materialisation of Urban Speculation at Iskandar Malaysia. Urbanisation, Planning and Development Seminar Series, Department of Geography and Environment, LSE, 4 March 2021 (online)

Dr Koh Sin Yee participated in the panel discussion as Panellist, "[Life in a Post-COVID World: learning from Southeast Asia](#)", LSE Festival: Shaping the Post-COVID World, 1 March 2021 (online)

Publications:

Koh, S.Y. (2021) The Interurban Migration Industry: 'Migration Products' and the Materialisation of Urban Speculation at Iskandar Malaysia. *Urban Studies*. [doi:10.1177/0042098021992219](https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098021992219)

Koh, S.Y., Zhao, Y., & Shin, H.B. (2021) [The Micropolitics of Speculative Green Urbanism at Forest City, Iskandar Malaysia](#). (Geography and Environment Discussion Paper Series No. 21) London: London School of Economics and Political Science.

Joseph N. Goh, Gay men, the invention of ecclesial injustice, and aspirations for redress and renewal. *Cross Currents* 70(4), 360-377. [doi: 10.1111/cros.12445](https://doi.org/10.1111/cros.12445)

Scholarly blogs:

Zhao, Y., **Koh, S.Y.**, & Shin, H.B. (2021, February 22) [Green Urbanism and Speculative Urbanisation at Forest City, Iskandar Malaysia](#). *LSE Southeast Asia Blog*.

Koh, S.Y. (2021, January 28) [Border\(ing\)s in the Covid-19 era: Tactics, logics and new hierarchies of mobility deservingness](#). *LSE Southeast Asia Blog*.

Featured Forum Articles

[Asian and Oceanic Forum](#): "Feminist Futures in the Time of Emergency" – **Sharon A. Bong**

Online Symposium / Conference

Sharon A. Bong presented, 'Rare earth and rare practice of "integral ecology": A feminist-postcolonial reading of 'Save Malaysia, Stop Lynas' protests' at the online symposium 'Women, Mining and Toxic Contamination', Laudato Si' Research institute, University of Oxford, UK, 11 March 2021

Sharon A. Bong presented, 'Getting from de jure to de facto gender equality: The intersectional approach', at the inaugural Women's Rights Conference of the Malaysian Bar, 20 March 2021

Research News

Upcoming Research Seminar Series:

Research Seminar Series (04/2021), 11th May, 12-1pm

Genre Publics: popular music, technologies and class in Indonesia by Dr Emma Baulch, Associate Professor of Media and Communication, the School of Arts and Social Sciences, Monash University Malaysia. Please click ([here](#)- to get the link from Suet Fun)

Research Seminar Series (05/2021), 27th May, 12-1pm

Escaping the Golden Age – Pictorial Hermitage and Non-Aspirational Youth Poetry by Dr Yi Zheng, Associate Professor of Chinese and Comparative Literature, the University of New South Wales. The abstract and speaker's profile will be updated on the School website by end of April.

Research Activities

Sharing Session on Writing a Successful GA21 Research Grant Application was held on 6th April 2021. In the sharing session, Dr Koh Sin Yee, the GA 21 Leader of Culture, Values and Society Cluster briefed the attendees on GA 21 grant details and the submission timeline. Dr Tan Meng Yoe, the recipient of GA 21 grants in 2016 and 2020 shared his experiences and tips on securing and managing GA21 grants. Click [here](#) for the session's recording and resources (guidelines and application form).

The aim of this session to let staff know;

- How do you go about forming a multi-School team for the GA21 grant?
- How do you write a compelling multidisciplinary grant application?
- Once you get the grant, how do you manage your multi-School team?
- Since the project is multidisciplinary, how do you strategize research dissemination?

Pitching Session by the ECRs.

The session will feature the following: Short pitching presentations by our three ECRs and Feedback session by the audience

Chair: Agata Frymus

Speakers: Melissa Wong, Ting-Fai Yu, Agata Frymus

Date: 4th May 2021

Time: 12-1pm [15 min presentations + 45 minutes discussion]

Overview

This session is aimed at providing an overview of the work that is currently conducted at SASS by Early Career Researchers. Three ECRs will provide a short, 5-minute overview of their current research and methods. After their presentations, we will welcome feedback from other members of staff: how does the work presented fits within, or overlaps, with the expertise at SASS and beyond? What potential do these projects have in attracting external funding, or in fostering collaboration? All staff members are welcomed to attend this session.

It will be held via [zoom](#). The meeting ID is 839 8779 8108 and the passcode is 310556.

SASS RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AWARDS: The Head of School Award for Best Quality Publications by an Early Career Researcher

The award [guidelines](#) and the [application form](#) have been uploaded on the [School intranet](#).

GRADUATE RESEARCH SEGMENT

A workshop on Digital Branding - Your Digital Presence Matters conducted by Ms. Kartini Ariffin is scheduled for 28th May 2021, 11am-12pm. This workshop is organised by the SASS student representative, Ms. Kafliina Kamalul. More details of the workshop can be found [here](#).



Education News

Student Learning

Stating that in active learning the onus of learning is on the students, then students should know how to learn either in a group or individually. To this end, they have to actively assess their own learning through evidence from self-, peer and lecturer's feedback. In order to support learning the nature of feedback should be dialogic to facilitate interactions and constructive to configure self-meaning and to collectively co-construct knowledge with peers. Upon receiving feedback as evidence of learning, students compare their current learning status with the learning outcomes and assessment criteria as a means to make adjustments to the goal attainment, that is, they self-regulate their learning. Consequently, it is reasonable to state that if students know how to learn, then they would have acquired the self-regulatory skills.

In an active learning environment, group-based learning is ubiquitous. As a result, it opens up a wide range of other skills needed to learn successfully. For instance, among others, collaborative skills, emotion regulatory skills, and social interaction. Specifically, students collaborate by building on each other's views and ideas. They argue, debate, elaborate and reason with one another in a process called socio-cognitive conflict to arrive at a consensus or co-constructed meaning. When students are challenged out of their comfort zone in the socio-cognitive conflicts it may give rise to socio-emotional conflicts which may disrupt group learning if it is not regulated well by them. In terms of increasing the effectiveness of social interaction, students provide regulatory knowledge and skills support to their peers. It is known as co-regulation where the thinking is distributed among the group members showing the peers how to monitor the learning processes and to make adjustments to the strategies in order to attain the group goals.

Lastly, what are the lecturers' role in student learning? Importantly, lecturers have to set clear learning outcomes and performance criteria (rubric) in the activities. They have to explain to the students the criteria in the rubric and the expectations of the learning outcomes. Once the activities are implemented, lecturers have to elicit and interpret evidence of learning. Consequently, they have to take immediate pedagogical actions (provide constructive and dialogic feedback) based on the evidence and to promote students' active involvement in the learning process. In what follows, the focus is on facilitating the learning process and granting students the authority to collaborate in a group and to take greater responsibility for the group collective work. It may be useful to note that the success of active learning is invariably dependent on pedagogy, not technology.

Chan Chang Tik

SASS Education Lead – Interim

Staff Achievements

The Journal of Contemporary Asia (JCA)

The *Journal of Contemporary Asia* (JCA) recently congratulated Shaun Breslin (Warwick) and **Helen Nesadurai** (SASS/MUM), co-authors of the article "Who Governs and How? Non-State Actors and Transnational Governance in Southeast Asia" for being the first JCA article to reach 20,000 electronic views since viewing records began in 2011 (see the 2nd April post on the [JCA blogsite](#) and the attached screenshot). This article introduces a Special Issue volume of JCA, published in 2018 as Volume 48, Number 2. Both the article and Special Issue were outputs from a Monash-Warwick Strategic Alliance Grant workshop led by the co-authors and held at SASS in [December 2014](#).

1st Malaysian Epilepsy Congress 2021

In the recent 1st Malaysian Epilepsy Congress 2021, the multidisciplinary GA21 research team comprising of **Dr Tan Meng Yoe** (SASS), Dr Mohd Farooq Shaikh (JCSMHS), and Dr Aiedah Khalek (Malaysia Immersion Hub), placed 3rd in the category of "Best Oral Presentation" for their flash presentation, "A Preliminary Study on Tackling Epilepsy Associated Stigma Through Religion: Misinformation, Trust, and Empowerment". Here's to more research collaboration between the social and medical sciences!

Appreciation Award 2020 from Monash University Postgraduate Association [MUPA]

Ms. Eswary Sivalingam (School Research Manager) was awarded "Management personnel of the year" non-academic category.

Comments from nominees: "Aside from being a fountain of information and support, she inspires with her positive attitude and also demeanour. I have never had anything but a good and pleasant interaction with her. Even when she is visibly stressed, she is always courteous and kind. A lesson for professionalism. Eswary's kind guidance and support are behind many of the successful PhD graduates in the School of Arts and Social Sciences."

Dr. Rizwanah Souket documents a 'herstory' of Paddy Schubert (now called Paddy Bowie), a British-born Malaysian public relations pioneer and her 60 years' experience in Malaysian public relations.





General Updates

Introducing our new staff



[Professor Stephanie Hemelryk Donald](#)

Professor in Film, FASSA FRSA
HEAD OF SCHOOL

Communications and Media Studies



[Dr Dyah Pitaloka](#)
SENIOR LECTURER



[Dr Kyle Moore](#)
LECTURER



[Dr Seo Young-Nam](#)
LECTURER

Film, TV and Screen Studies



[Dr Chrishandra Sebastiampillai](#)
LECTURER



[Dr Agata Frymus](#)
LECTURER

Post-Doctoral Research Fellow



[Dr Lai Jia Yen](#)

Professional Staff



Ms Choo Suet Fun
ADMINISTRATIVE EXECUTIVE



General Updates

About Us

Knowing Yoke May....

Hails from the town in the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia, Kuantan, Yoke May grew up spending her many weekends at the beach.

Prior to joining Monash, Yoke May worked in the Pharmaceutical industry in charge of managing the medical department's administration and secretarial duties.

With 20 years of experience, she embarked in a new adventure joining one of the most prestigious university in Australia, its branch campus - Monash University Malaysia. These 4.5 years have seen her wearing different hats, multiple at times; handling interesting yet challenging duties in the Operations, Research and the Head of School office.

From her window, Yoke May sees a great opportunity of growth together with SASS. She already seen a good start in 2021, with a good number of new staff pledging their expertise to the School joining hands with the existing robust team. She foresees she will have a whale of a time supporting the school's external engagement events, Head of School office matters and at the same time learning the ropes in revamping the administrative processes to align with the campus objectives.

Tapping into a lot unfamiliar areas of work, the feeling brought her back to the very first place she had chosen Monash University. Monash University holds the motto: Ancora Imparo - I am still learning. That's what she believes too.

Chan Yoke May (Emily)
