

Academic Research PhD Programmes

Research Excellence across Management,
Social Science & Computing



Message from The Dean



The Singapore Management University's (SMU) College of Graduate Research Studies (CGRS) enhances **integration and interdisciplinarity across the various SMU postgraduate research (PGR) programmes**, enabling our PGR students to gain a **holistic learning experience and well-grounded approach to their research**. This is achieved through interdisciplinary programmes, shared courses and professional training workshops. Furthermore, CGRS will **strengthen networking, cohort building and collaborative opportunities** for PGR students across the various programmes, facilitated through the student and alumni groups. Ultimately, **our PGR students will be poised to tackle challenges affecting businesses, societies and institutions across boundaries with confidence, and create significant impact**.

SMU offers Academic Research PhD Programmes in Accounting, Business, Economics, Psychology, Computer Science and Information Systems, as well as the

interdisciplinary PhD in Law, Commerce and Technology and PhD in Asian Urbanisms. With at least a Bachelor's degree and a passion for research and teaching, you can embark on an SMU PhD in your research areas of interest – taught and supervised by our distinguished faculty members who are internationally recognised as experts in their respective fields. SMU provides every successful PhD candidate with a fully-funded scholarship. Our graduates have found diverse careers in academia and industry, both in Singapore and abroad. More information can be found in this brochure.

SMU ensures that you do not walk this journey alone. We will carefully take you through every major milestone in your PhD study. I encourage you to take this first step in shaping your future, and look forward to welcoming you on board an SMU PhD programme.

Professor Heli WANG
Dean, College of Graduate Research Studies

College of Graduate Research Studies (CGRS)

The College of Graduate Research Studies (CGRS) trains students to **uncover new knowledge and develop novel solutions that are relevant to some of today's most challenging issues**. This will be undertaken at the intersections of disciplines, cultures and industry.

Our community of learners benefit from the **diversity of expertise, disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and perspectives** so that they are well-equipped to create significant impact.



CREATE Significant Impact
Across Disciplines

TACKLE Challenging Issues
With Confidence

BUILD Strong Connections
Within Our Community

TRANSFORMATIVE & HOLISTIC LEARNING

- Through interdisciplinary programmes.
- Through the Graduate Research Interdisciplinary Topics (GRIT) comprising the training in curated topics spanning across two or more disciplines, to ensure students are well-grounded.
- Through the Graduate Research Professional Development (GRPD) programme which consists of a suite of credit-bearing courses, workshops and seminars to ensure career-readiness.

FOSTERING A SENSE OF BELONGING

- Through the Graduate Research Student Society (GRSS) to deepen interactions among students with academic exchanges and social activities.
- Through the Graduate Research Alumni Chapter (GRAC) to enhance lifelong engagement and affiliation among the graduates.
- Through meaningful engagement events and activities between students and graduates.

Globally Ranked

- **21st Worldwide** among specialist universities (QS World University Rankings 2025)
- **19th Worldwide** among the Best Young Universities (QS World University Rankings 2024)
- **1st Singapore University** to achieve AAHRPP accreditation
- **1st Triple Accredited Business School in Singapore (AACSB, AMBA, EQUIS)**
Lee Kong Chian School of Business
- **8th Business School in Asia**
Lee Kong Chian School of Business (Financial Times EMBA Ranking 2020)
- **1st in Asia, 2nd Worldwide** for Archival Accounting Research (All Topics) (Brigham Young University Accounting Research Rankings)
- **2nd in Asia** for Master of IT in Business (QS Masters in Business Analytics Ranking)
- **1st in Asia, Top 3 Worldwide** for Master of Science in Wealth Management in Finance Rankings 2020

SMU PhD Programmes

SCHOOL OF ACCOUNTANCY

PhD in Accounting

This programme equips students with in-depth knowledge of accounting theory and practice, and of related fields such as economics and finance. Students will have the ability to conduct original scientific research in accounting through theory-building and state-of-the-art quantitative research methodology, and will be trained by distinguished faculty members in fields such as financial accounting, managerial accounting, auditing and tax. Our programme's objective is to develop highly-skilled and innovative thought leaders in accounting research and education for leading research-oriented universities and industries in this region and throughout the world.

For more details, please visit:
<http://smu.sg/phd-accounting>

LEE KONG CHIAN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

PhD in Business (Finance)

This rigorous and intellectually stimulating programme emphasises advanced study in the areas of finance, economics, statistics and quantitative research methods. The programme is taught by a group of dynamic faculty who consistently publish in top finance journals.

At the end of the programme, graduates will have the skills needed to conduct in-depth research into a specific sub-field in finance such as asset pricing, corporate finance and market microstructure. Graduates will also have a broad appreciation of the key research issues that resonate with the field. Given the tremendous relevance of finance to the global economy, a graduate of this programme will be well prepared for diverse careers in academia, industry, international organisations and the public sector.

For more details, please visit:
<http://smu.sg/phd-business-finance>

PhD in Business (Marketing)

The programme aims to train students to conduct rigorous and relevant research focused on understanding, modelling and predicting marketing actions of firms and managers, and the behaviour of consumers. To this end, students have the opportunity to decide the research-active faculty members they would like to work with, making this a flexible and nurturing programme. Our faculty members have published their research in prestigious journals such as the Journal of Marketing, Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Consumer Research, Marketing Science, and Management Science. This highly selective programme is geared towards helping students in their journey to becoming scholars and leading marketing faculty.

For more details, please visit:
<http://smu.sg/phd-business-marketing>

PhD in Business (Operations Management)

This is a highly competitive programme that admits a very limited number of students every year. The programme emphasises theoretical research with practical relevance. Students are expected to complete rigorous coursework, collaborate closely with the Operations Management faculty members and attend regular research seminars. Students will also have opportunities to interact with renowned visiting scholars from different parts of the world.

The programme aims to place its graduates to faculty positions in leading universities or managerial positions in industry, public sector and international organisations.

For more details, please visit:
<http://smu.sg/phd-business-om>

PhD in Business (Organisational Behaviour & Human Resources)

This programme equips graduates with the knowledge, skills and abilities to conduct highly rigorous research in Organisational Behaviour and Human Resources (OBHR) in major research universities worldwide. The programme, taught by an international group of faculty members who consistently publish in the field's most respected journals, will provide hands-on training in research right from the onset as well as a stimulating curriculum emphasising psychological foundations of organisational behaviour and human resources, statistics and research methods. A nurturing approach will be adopted by faculty members to help students succeed in the job market and in their careers.

For more details, please visit:
<http://smu.sg/phd-business-obhr>

PhD in Business (Strategy & Entrepreneurship)

This programme is designed to equip students with the skills, knowledge and competencies to conduct high-quality research in the areas of strategic management and organisation. Students can choose their research topics from a variety of sub-areas within the domains of strategic management and organisation theory, including corporate and business strategy, innovation, technology management, entrepreneurship, and corporate governance.

The programme provides rigorous training by faculty members who regularly publish in top academic journals. This ensures that students will be well equipped to start their academic careers as competent and independent researchers.

For more details, please visit:
<https://smu.sg/phd-business-se>

SMU Lee Kong Chian School of Business is one of the youngest business schools in the world to achieve 'triple crown' accreditation by AACSB (the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business), EQUIS by European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), and by AMBA (the Association of MBAs) for MBA programmes.

SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

PhD in Economics

This programme trains students to do rigorous research and analysis in economics. It is delivered by internationally recognised professors who are actively engaged in research, and who are dedicated to teaching and training the next generation of economic researchers, teachers and policy makers. We also offer interaction opportunities with top researchers in economics from around the world through our extensive seminar and visitor programmes. SMU's School of Economics is recognised internationally as a leading centre for economic research.

For more details, please visit:
<http://smu.sg/phd-econs>

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

PhD in Psychology

This programme equips students with doctoral-level knowledge in content areas in psychology and research methodology, focusing on areas in cognitive, cultural, developmental, social, personality and organisational psychology.

Students will learn, from both coursework and hands-on research experience, to link psychological theory, study design, measurement, and data analysis in order to make substantive inferences and evidence-based recommendations to practice. Students in the programme have presented their work at international conferences and published their research in top journals in psychology and related disciplines. Graduates of the programme will be well-prepared for careers in universities, research institutes and industry.

For more details, please visit:
<http://smu.sg/phd-psychology>

COLLEGE OF INTEGRATIVE STUDIES

PhD in Asian Urbanisms*

As the only university located in the centre of Singapore, itself located in the heart of one of the most dynamic regions in the world, SMU is uniquely positioned to offer students the opportunity to study urbanising Asia. Taught by world-class faculty working on some of the most urgent problems facing Asian cities, our interdisciplinary PhD programme in Asian Urbanisms offers students unrivalled immersion into the theoretical debates and empirical insights that are shaping Asia's future. We offer a uniquely interdisciplinary approach to the study of Asian cities; one that starts from the urban studies paradigm, but which reaches out into cognate disciplines.

Primarily supervised by faculty from the College of Integrative Studies, students will have the chance to tap into SMU's vibrant intellectual community and secure co-supervision from faculty in other Schools, thus maximising their chances of securing employment in academia, research, consulting, or government.

For more details, please visit:
<https://smu.sg/phd-asian-urbanisms>

SCHOOL OF COMPUTING AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

PhD in Computer Science PhD in Information Systems

These programmes develop researchers and educators who address deep technology challenges in real-world computing systems that help tackle societal issues or impact business processes, or who develop tools and methodologies to translate business goals into technological solutions.

The core research areas are namely: Artificial Intelligence & Data Science, Human-Machine Collaborative Systems, and Information Systems & Technology.

Our graduates are capable of collaborating with researchers from different disciplines, designing technology solutions for real-world problems and applications, and producing top-rated academic publications. The programmes will equip them for careers with research and development laboratories, academia and industry.

Part-time study and the **Industrial Postgraduate Programme** are available to Singapore Citizens/Permanent Residents who are interested in pursuing the PhD in Computer Science.

For more details, please visit:
<http://smu.sg/scis-phd>

YONG PUNG HOW SCHOOL OF LAW

PhD in Law, Commerce and Technology*

This interdisciplinary PhD programme is the first of its kind in Asia-Pacific and among a handful of interdisciplinary research doctoral programmes offered by law schools around the world. The programme trains prospects to have a deep understanding of law as a social mechanism in the context of commercial activities and technology development.

This programme provides rigorous academic training. Besides preparing students for a career at leading academic and research institutions, it also adopts an industry-focus and policy-oriented approach with the purpose of producing cutting-edge research that can help regulators, companies and societies face the challenges of today's changing world. Graduates from this programme will be prepared for a career as thought leaders in academia, judiciary, regulatory agencies, and industry organisations.

For more details, please visit:
<http://smu.sg/phd-law-com-tech>

VISITING GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRAMME

The programme provides opportunities for students from universities in Singapore and worldwide to spend one or more academic terms at SMU as non-graduating students. PhD and Master's students from other universities may enrol in our postgraduate research courses and participate in research projects under the co-supervision of SMU faculty members.

For more details, please visit:
<http://smu.sg/vgsp>

* Students of these interdisciplinary programmes will be provided with an incentive package, which provides additional funding support.

Programme Structure

A PhD student will focus on coursework in the first one to three years, followed by dissertation research in subsequent years. The coursework is intended to lay the ground in preparation for the Qualifying Examination and dissertation research.



Preparatory Coursework
(Over Years 1 to 3)



Qualifying Examination
(By Year 3)



Dissertation
(Between Years 3 & 5)

The coursework requirement of the various PhD programmes is a combination of these courses:

- ▶ **Foundation Courses**
- ▶ **Electives**
- ▶ **Advanced Research Topics**
- ▶ **Empirical Research Projects**

On completion of all required coursework, the student will sit for a PhD Qualifying Examination (QE). It will assess his or her mastery of the foundation required for the next stage of the PhD programme – the dissertation. This is the student’s original work in his or her specialised area through independent research. On successful completion of the QE, the student will be ready to embark on the dissertation. If he or she feels comfortable with the PhD curriculum along the way, the dissertation research can commence even before the coursework is completed. The dissertation is marked by two major milestones, as follows.

ORAL DEFENCE OF THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

This is an oral presentation of the proposed topic to a Dissertation Committee. In general, a written dissertation proposal will have to be submitted before the presentation. A supervisor with the expertise in the chosen topic will be appointed. He or she guides and mentors the student throughout the dissertation work.

ORAL DEFENCE AND COMPLETION OF THE PhD DISSERTATION

This is an oral presentation of the written dissertation report to the Committee. After possible revision(s) to the report and upon fulfillment of all necessary requirements, the Committee will recommend to the University to award the PhD degree.



Admission and Application

GENERAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- ▶ **At least a good Bachelor’s degree.**
- ▶ **A Master’s degree is useful but not required.**
Some disciplines require a Bachelor’s degree in related areas.
- ▶ **Good GRE or GMAT results.**
Some disciplines may specify a preferred test.
- ▶ **Good TOEFL or IELTS scores.**
For applicants whose medium of instruction at the Bachelor’s/Master’s level was not in English.
- ▶ **Submission of the following documents:**
 - Copy of Identity Card/Passport
 - Latest Curriculum Vitae
 - Copies of Degree Certificates and Transcripts
 - Personal and Research Statements
 - Recommendation and/or Reference Letters
 - Writing Samples

APPLICATION INFORMATION

All the PhD programmes are full-time¹. The University’s application windows are listed below.

Intake	Programmes	Opening Date for Application	Closing Date for Application
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PhD in Accounting• PhD in Asian Urbanisms• PhD in Business• PhD in Economics• PhD in Psychology	1 August (of prior year)	31 December (of prior year)
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PhD in Computer Science• PhD in Information Systems• PhD in Law, Commerce & Technology	1 August (of prior year)	31 January (of intake year)
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PhD in Computer Science• PhD in Information Systems	1 February (of prior year)	30 June (of prior year)

A successful candidate who applies early may be provided with an early offer.

1. Part-time study is available to Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents for the PhD in Computer Science programme only.

Application procedure for each programme can be found in the relevant programme’s website, as indicated in the “SMU PhD Programmes” section of this brochure.

Financial Assistance Schemes

SMU awards four types of scholarships and fellowships on a competitive basis. We assess applicants for different award schemes either at the time of admission based on qualification and suitability for these schemes or during their PhD journey based on their outstanding academic performance.

SMU RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarship covers registration and subsidised tuition fees. This scheme also provides successful recipients with monthly living stipends.* The scholarship is renewed yearly, conditioned on good academic performance, for a maximum duration of four years. Beyond the scholarship duration, students who have been on the scholarship may receive continued support through research and teaching assistantships or industry grants.



SMU PRESIDENTIAL DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP IN COMPUTING

The SMU Presidential Doctoral Fellowship in Computing* is provided to exceptionally qualified students, who are offered candidatures into SMU School of Computing and Information Systems' PhD programmes. The Fellowship is a one-year award that is renewed annually, for up to four years.

SMU PRESIDENTIAL DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

The SMU Presidential Doctoral Fellowship* is awarded to exceptionally qualified students, who are offered candidatures at SMU, as well as to existing PhD students who have outstanding academic performance. The Fellowship is a one-year award that is renewed annually, for up to four years.

SMU INTERDISCIPLINARY DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

The SMU interdisciplinary Doctoral Fellowship* is awarded to existing PhD students who have shown exemplary pursuit of research that crosses traditional disciplinary boundaries. This Fellowship is also a one-year award.

* The latest stipend rates are published on our website and subject to change.

Selected Dissertations

PhD IN BUSINESS

Operations Management

- Essays on New Business Models in Operations (LU Liling, 2024)

Organisational Behaviour and Human Resources

- Social Attention in Realistic Work Environments (Theodore Charles WAAGE, 2022)

Strategy and Entrepreneurship

- Essays on Interorganizational Alliances and Acquisitions (MA Jiawen, 2024)

Marketing

- Consumer Search and Marketing Actions in Retailing (PENG Yi, 2022)

Finance

- Essays on Stakeholder Economy (ZHANG Hanyu, 2024)

PhD IN ECONOMICS

- Policy Impact Evaluations on Labour and Health (CHAY Junxing, 2020)
- Essays on Heterogeneous Large Panel Data Models (MIAO Ke, 2020)
- Essays on International Trade (SONG Shenxi, 2022)

PhD IN PSYCHOLOGY

- Is this Behaviour Impressive or Repulsive? The Influence of Our Ecology on Our Social Evaluations (Lynn TAN Kai Lin, 2024)
- Daily Stress, Problematic Social Media Use, And Executive Functions: A Daily Diary Approach (NG Wee Qin, 2024)

PhD IN ACCOUNTING

- Informed Trading in Peers of M&A Firms: Evidence from M&A Advisor Banks (LI Xuanbo, 2024)

PhD IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AND PhD IN INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Artificial Intelligence & Data Science

- Effective and Efficient Semantic Representations and their Applications (CHIA Chong Cher, 2024)
- Data-Driven Optimization Approaches for Dynamic Urban Logistics Operational Problems (YANG Jingfeng, 2024)
- Generalizing Graph Neural Networks across Graphs, Time, and Tasks (WEN Zhihao, 2023)
- Reinforcement Learning for Sequential Decision Making with Constraints (LING Jiajing, 2023)
- Learning Dynamic Multimodal Networks (ANG Meng Kiat Gary, 2023)

Human-Machine Collaborative Systems

- Vision-based Analytics for Improved Real-World AI-driven IoT Applications (AMIT, 2021)
- Enhanced Gesture Sensing using Battery-less Wearable Motion Trackers (TRAN Huy Vu, 2020)
- Exploiting Approximation, Caching and Specialization to Accelerate Vision Sensing Applications (HUYNH Nguyen Loc, 2020)
- Gesture-based Profiling of Commonplace Lifestyle and Physical Activity Behaviors (Meeralakshmi RADHAKRISHNAN, 2020)

Information Systems & Technology

- Fortifying the Seams of Software Systems (KANG Hong Jin, 2023)
- Can We Make It Better? Assessing and Improving Quality of Github Repositories (Gede Artha Azriadi PRANA, 2022)
- Learning to Interpret Knowledge from Software Question and Answer Sites (XU Bowen, 2022)
- How Do Monetary Incentives Influence Prosocial Fundraising? An Empirical Investigation of Matching Subsidies on Crowdfunding (GAO Zhiyuan, 2021)

SMU PhD Student Life and Achievements

Gain outstanding research achievements and international exposure to get a competitive edge in the job market, be it for an academic or industry position.



Become Skilled Thought Leaders through Interdisciplinary Learning and Professional Training Workshops
(through the Graduate Research Professional Development programme)



Share Your Research with the International Research Community
(e.g. presenting at distinguished/peer-reviewed international conferences through generous conference funding provided by SMU)



Experience On-the-Job Academic Training through Research Assistantships, Teaching Assistantships & Graduate Instructor Positions



Gain Outstanding Research Achievements
(e.g. winning best paper awards at international conferences & receiving SMU doctoral fellowship awards)



Learn to Interact & Collaborate with Fellow PhD Candidates



Secure Competitive Internships with Prestigious Organisations in Singapore & Overseas



Over 240 SMU academic research PhD graduates have found good placements at prestigious international academic institutions and industry organisations in various regions including Singapore, Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America. Read what two of our graduates have to say about their PhD experience at SMU.



Lynn TAN
PhD in Psychology,
Class of 2024
Researcher,
NUS Global Asia
Institute, National
University of
Singapore

“ SMU has provided me with wonderful, friendly and supportive supervisors, peers and support staff. This allowed me to hone my research skills comfortably in a conducive environment which eventually helped to advance my career in academia with the National University of Singapore. I thoroughly enjoyed my PhD here! ”



Li Xuanbo
PhD in Accounting,
Class of 2024
Assistant Professor,
City University of
Hong Kong

“ My PhD journey at SMU was enriched by exceptional research opportunities and the invaluable guidance of dedicated professors, which broadened my academic horizons and laid a solid foundation for my future career in research. ”



Website



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