

**East Asia and Pacific Summer Institutes (EAPSI)
Program with Singapore**

HANDBOOK

**2008 Summer Institute in Singapore for U.S. Graduate
Students in Science and Engineering**

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Summer Institute in Singapore for 2008 will be held during June 16th - August 8th 2008. The Summer Institute in Singapore is to provide U.S. graduate students (U.S. Citizens or permanent residents) in science and engineering first-hand research experience in Singapore, an introduction to the science and the science policy infrastructure of Singapore, and an orientation to the Singaporean culture and language. The primary goals of the program are to introduce students to Singaporean science and engineering in the context of a research laboratory, and to initiate personal relationships that will better enable them to collaborate with foreign counterparts in the future. The program is administered in the United States by the National Science Foundation (NSF) (<http://www.nsf.gov>, <http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?org=OISE>) with co-sponsorship in Singapore by the National Research Foundation (NRF) (<http://www.NRF.gov.sg>). The NRF office is a contact point for questions regarding issues such as visas, host institutions, travel in Singapore, and emergencies while the participants are in Singapore.

NSF Headquarters Office (Arlington)

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Dr. Andrew Backe, Program Specialist (PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT)

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II. PREPARATION

A. Host Institutions and Researchers in Singapore

You should remember that host researchers or institutions will not be paid for hosting you. Therefore, your technical contributions to their program will be most appreciated. Many former Summer Institute participants have become highly recognized professionals after graduation and have continued their relationships with host researchers in many productive ways. A few tips regarding host institutions and research plans are provided below.

Eight weeks pass very quickly, and every year participants say they wish they had more time to finish their research projects. Without advance planning, you may "waste" the first part of your stay discussing potential projects instead of working on the actual project itself. You are encouraged to contact host researchers and institutions as early as possible.

U.S. students are encouraged to give presentations to and/or exchange ideas with Singaporean researchers (not limited to host researchers and colleagues in host institutions) soon after they arrive. Your presentation will help introduce not only your research, but also your home university in the U.S. Students are also encouraged to establish both personal and professional connections with Singaporean research institutions and researchers and actively participate in laboratory and field work, as well as academic seminars held in Singapore.

Research Plan

With the agreement of your host, you may choose to work on research described in your proposal, become involved in your host's on-going research, or start a new research project. If you choose to work on a new research topic, you should include specific information about the change in scope in your Final Report to NSF. Please keep in mind that you may not have tangible results at the end of an eight-week period for overly ambitious research plans.

To make your research visit to Singapore productive, you may want to consider the following:

--Team-up with a graduate student in your host's research group.

--Read your host's publications and understand the methods and approaches.

--Consult with your host researcher before you arrive in Singapore and come to a mutual understanding about the scope and expected results of your work.

Facilities

While discussing your research plan, you should check with the host researcher to see if required equipment, facilities, and/or materials required for your research will be available to you during your visit. Because the months of June till August are usually summer vacation in Singapore, many students and faculty members will be out of their offices and some laboratories may close down equipment and facilities for renovation or cleaning.

Other information

Possibly the most useful information about how to survive at your host institution is from US students, research staff, or visiting faculty who have been or are currently in Singapore. You might ask your host researcher to send you contact information for current or previous U.S. researchers from the host institution. You should also ask for information about possible professional visits during your stay (see section B) and housing arrangements (see section F).

B. How to set up other professional visits.

NSF and NRF encourage participants to visit laboratories outside of their host laboratory both to gain a broader understanding of the Singaporean scientific community and to create contacts for future research collaboration. You should be aware that cultural differences between the United States and Singapore become extremely salient when it comes to setting up visits to other laboratories. In Singapore, introductions are helpful prior to visits, and a mutually known third party typically makes these.

Main resources for developing contacts in Singapore are:

1. Your advisor, professors, and colleagues in the United States

Consult with your U.S. advisor and/or other appropriate individuals before you leave home and develop a list of researchers you would like to meet while in Singapore. Letters of introduction provided by your U.S.-based advisor are extremely useful in setting up research visits with researchers.

2. Your Singaporean host

Prior to your arrival, you should inform your host that you are interested in visiting other laboratories in Singapore and ask them if they have suggestions for which researchers would be

beneficial to meet. If the host responds to this request, you can then politely ask if they would be willing to make the necessary introductions for you.

3. Summer Program alumni and U.S. researchers currently in Singapore

You may also get information about professional visits from former Summer Institute participants or from NSF grantees who have collaborations with Singaporean researchers in your area of interest (see <http://www.nsf.gov/>) and search the public abstracts.

4. Publication search

A publication search can help identify Singaporean researchers within your field. In this case, you might send, fax or e-mail a polite note that introduces yourself, explains your research, and request a visit while you are in Singapore. Note, however, that this is not the normal way of doing business in Singapore and you should be prepared for no response from some of your contacts.

C. Passport and Visa/Training Employment Pass

You will need a valid passport for travel to the Republic of Singapore. For U.S. passports, application instructions and forms are available at the State Department Web site: <http://travel.state.gov/>. You can request expedited processing with an additional fee.

US citizens are not required to produce a visa to visit Singapore, if staying no more than 90 days for social visitation purposes. They should, however, possess a passport with at least 6 months' validity, onward/return ticket, entry facilities to next destination, and sufficient funds to stay in Singapore. For additional information, please visit <http://www.mfa.gov.sg/>, http://app.ica.gov.sg/travellers/entry/entry_requirements.asp, and <http://singapore.usembassy.gov/>.

In addition, you are required to apply for a Training Employment Pass (TEP) in order to work or receive training in the Singapore institutions. The application form for the TEP will be separately sent to you for completion. The duly completed TEP application form must be returned to your respective host institution, no later than 4 Apr 2008, as processing of the forms is expected to take about 4 weeks. Please also cc Ms. ANG Siok Hoon of NRF during your reply. Upon approval by the authorities, an in-principle approval letter for the TEP will be sent to your home address prior to your departure for Singapore. Please ensure that you have received the in-principle approval letter before you depart for Singapore. You are required to present the TEP in-principle approval letter along with your passport for clearance at the Singapore's immigration. After your arrival in Singapore, you will be brought to the Ministry of Manpower to collect your TEP. The cost for applying the TEP will be deducted from your allowance. Please refer to Annex A on the workflow for the TEP application.

You should check with the Singaporean embassy nearest you to make sure all your documentation is in order. Singapore embassies are located in Washington D.C., Chicago, New York, Miami, Florida, Houston, and San Francisco.

D. International Air Travel

In 2008, NSF will include an allowance for international travel in EAPSI participants' awards. This allowance may be used for purchasing an economy class, round-trip airline ticket and other costs associated with international travel between the participant's originating point in the U.S. (typically home or academic institution) and the airport designated by the host location. Students are restricted to U.S. Flag carriers or U.S. carrier tickets on code share airlines. Other restrictions pertaining to the international travel allowance may apply.

The NSF-contracted travel agency, SATO Travel, will provide each participant with a round-trip economy class ticket between the major airport nearest their U.S. city of residence and the International Airport in Singapore. Participants will be advised by e-mail when and how to contact SATO Travel to make travel international reservations.

DO NOT PURCHASE ANY TICKETS ON YOUR OWN; NSF WILL NOT BE ABLE TO REIMBURSE YOU.

There are important Federal Government and NSF travel guidelines and restrictions:

Tickets are government-purchased and issued on U.S. carriers according to the Fly America Act: <http://www.tvlon.com/resources/FlyAct.html>

Tickets will be issued at non-restricted, federal government fares. Travelers are typically authorized to travel round-trip from their domicile (permanent home address or academic institution) to Singapore only.

Tickets will be issued electronically (e-tickets) approximately three (3) days prior to departure.

There are designated contract carriers for the U.S. government for specific cities and routes, and SATO Travel is required to issue tickets through the designated airlines, if possible. Do not expect SATO travel to enter "frequent flyer" numbers or any other services.

After making your flight arrangements, please inform Ms. Siok Hoon ANG at NRF.

E. Stipend

NSF US\$5,000 Stipend

An official NSF award letter will be issued to you by the Division of Grants and Agreements. The award notification will include instructions about how to request electronic transfer of the US\$5,000 stipend. Additionally, students who attend the pre-departure orientation will be reimbursed the costs of attending through their awards.

Questions concerning tax liabilities cannot be answered by NSF and should be directed to the Internal Revenue Service.

As a recipient of the US\$5,000, you must make sure you will not be “double-funded” from NSF or other federal sources. This restriction applies to ANY federal source. Consult with your advisor, your fellowship coordinator or contact NSF to verify. For example, if you are a recipient of an NSF-sponsored Graduate Research Fellowship (GRF) award, you should consult with your university's Coordinating Official (CO) for the Graduate Research Fellowship and your advisor about whether or not to accept the GRF stipend or the EAPSI stipend. If you decide to continue to receive a non-EAPSI federal stipend during the Summer Institute period (the typical case), then you will be issued a zero dollar NSF Summer Institute award (i.e., you will not receive the EAPSI stipend). However, you will still receive the airline ticket through the Summer Institute program and in-country living expenses from the counterpart science agency.

Living Allowance in Singapore

The host institution will provide you with a living allowance of S\$4000 to be paid in two tranches. The 1st payment of S\$2000, less the amount deducted for housing and miscellaneous cost, will be made when you first arrive in Singapore. The 2nd tranche of S\$2000 (less the amount deducted for housing and miscellaneous cost, if applicable) will be made at the start of the 5th week of your stay in Singapore. You would need to open a bank account when you are in Singapore as inter-bank GIRO payment method is preferred. The campus of the host institution has banking facilities which enable you to open the bank account. You are required to bring along the Letter of Award issued by NSF, stating your host institution and the period of your attachment in order to open the bank account.

The S\$4000 covers your local transportation while in Singapore, food, accommodation and miscellaneous expenses during your 8-week stay in Singapore. You are advised to bring at least US\$500 of your own money to cover extra expenses not supported by the host institution.

F. Housing Arrangements

Your host institution will help to arrange for your accommodation needs. Such accommodation is typically within the campus. If, however, you wish to make your own housing arrangements other than those provided by the host institution, you need to notify your host institution as soon as possible.

G. Insurance

Your host institution will assist in arranging for the insurance. Details of the insurance coverage and claims procedure will be provided to you during the orientation in Singapore. The cost of the insurance will be deducted from your allowance.

H. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

NSF and NRF do not anticipate that the Summer Institute in Singapore, undertaken pursuant to the memorandum of understanding between NSF and NRF exchanged in May 2007, will result in the creation of intellectual property. However, the host institutions will require you to sign a non-disclosure agreement. If you wish to negotiate IPR provisions, you should work out arrangements with your host researcher and responsible officials at your host institution BEFORE you go to Singapore.

I. Mobile Phones

You may want to arrange for mobile phone service during your stay in Singapore, particularly since the use of such phones has become ubiquitous. Mobile phones may be purchased and temporary, prepaid service arranged through companies such as Singtel, Starhub and M1. Your buddy can direct you to the local office of one of these companies after your arrival.

J. Health and Safety

For your general health, consider the following, as appropriate:

If you wear eyeglasses or contact lenses, bring an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses with you for backup. You may also wish to bring a copy of your corrective lens prescription in the event you must have glasses made. Don't count on finding your specific brands of eye care products overseas- take them with you.

If you take prescription medications regularly, and will be traveling with prescription drugs, bring a signed script or letter from your physician indicating your medical need(s) for the drug(s) and identify the drug(s) you will possess while traveling. If you require insulin and syringes, or have allergies and require epinephrine pens, you should look into the requirements for international travel with these paraphernalia.

Please consult your personal health care provider about your trip (destination and time abroad). Ask your health provider to review your vaccination record and any other medical needs you might have. You should do this at least 4-6 weeks prior to departure.

The U.S. Government's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) maintain a traveler's web site with health information and travel advisories; the URL is <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/> . Please review travel safety information and guidelines at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1747.html

A comprehensive set of tips is available at <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/index.shtm>.

You are also encouraged to register upon arrival with the U.S. Embassy in Singapore at <http://singapore.usembassy.gov/>.

III. TRAVEL AND LOGISTICS

A. Arrival

All participants in the Summer Institute (SI) are expected to arrive at Changi International Airport on 14th or 15th June 2008 and stay in Singapore for the entirety of the SI. The host institution will make arrangements for a representative to pick the students up from the airport. There will also be a student partner assigned to each of the participant. The student partner will be the "buddy" for the participant to help ease and facilitate their stay in Singapore.

B. Early Arrival

For participants who will be traveling in Singapore prior to the start of the Program, it may be convenient for you to have the bulk of your luggage delivered directly to your host institution from Changi International Airport at your own expense. Check out services available at <http://www.changiairport.com/>. If you plan to arrive prior to the start date, please notify Ms. ANG Siok Hoon of NRF and Dr. Andrew Backe of NSF.

C. Daily Schedule

The Opening Ceremony will be held at the National University of Singapore (NUS) while the closing Ceremony will be held at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU). The orientation program is scheduled for 2 days and is summarized below:

Day 1 (16th Jun):

Opening ceremony + Tour of NUS + Lunch + Tour of A*STAR + Evening (free and easy)

Day 2 (17th Jun):

Tour of NTU + Visit to NRF + Collection of Training Employment Pass + Tour of Singapore (culture, food, etc)

There will be a Closing Ceremony on 8th Aug 08. You are required to make a 20 mins (15 mins & 5 mins Q&A) presentation to the audience at the closing ceremony. The presentation should cover mainly the research findings as well as your experiential stay in Singapore. A short summary of your research conducted in Singapore should also be submitted on the last day of the programme.

IV. COMMUNICATING AND REPORTING

It is important to keep your host, NRF and NSF Arlington informed of any problems or proposed changes in your EAPSI plan. If there are problems during the stay in Singapore, please cc KEY PERSONS:

Dr. Andrew Backe abacke@nsf.gov
ANG Siok Hoon ANG_siok_hoon@nrf.gov.sg
Cc your Singapore host and U.S. advisor

You are required to submit a Final Report to NSF and their host institutions no later than **December 1, 2008**. Reports to NSF must be submitted electronically via the NSF Fast Lane system.

V. OTHER INFORMATION

1. The fellowship will not be given to the participants if:
 - (a) a false statement is found in the application documents.
 - (b) an applicant's participation is cancelled by the host location.
2. You are strongly encouraged to keep your host researchers/advisors advised of progress in your application status and build mutual expectations about your research plan.

Information about Singapore can be found at the following URLs:

<http://www.stb.com.sg/>

<http://www.visitsingapore.com/publish/stbportal/en/index.html>

http://www.worldtravelguide.net/country/250/country_guide/South-East-Asia/Singapore.html

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/destinations/asia/singapore/>

<http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/intl/students/resources.html>

<http://nus.edu.sg/osa/international/>

<http://www.ntu.edu.sg/eapsi/departinfo/default.htm>

http://www.ntu.edu.sg/eapsi/departinfo/eapsi_guide.htm

**WORKFLOW FOR THE APPLICATION OF TRAINING EMPLOYMENT PASS (TEP)
FOR NON-GRADUATING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
(INTERNSHIP / SHORT TERM PROJECT)**

