

A mind-blowing journey to Asia: The SCELSE Summer Course

I am applying for the SCELSE Summer Course at the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, an encounter of famous scientists and international students, sharing their interest in microbial systems for two and a half weeks. After I have gathered two referral reports from my supervisors of my Bachelor's thesis, the application takes me less than 5 minutes to complete.



A month later, my nose was against the window, I'm staring down into a magnificent scene of immense skyscrapers and ocean. In just a few minutes the plane is going to land in the world's only island city-state: Singapore. What will I experience? Will I meet the expectations? Who else will I meet?

My tension is blown away upon arrival. I am meeting the other 30 participants: both local and international students, from all over the world, among them, 3 other Water Science students from our university! Living in the same building, sharing dinner and exploring the city together, we are becoming the closest friends.



My excitement to meet 25 of the world's leading experts in the field of microbial systems beats my jetlag. Every teacher could be a ticket to an outstanding Master thesis or even PhD project in future. I want to absorb every single detail.



We are getting insight from different points of view, shedding light on the interface of disciplines which is embraced by everyone: Biofilms! From the fundamentals to ecology and physiology; and from sophisticated science to ongoing issues; they are conveying a

broad spectrum of highly valuable input. I am overwhelmed by the way the teachers interact with us students. Through interactive sessions and discussions we learn to ask the right questions, as we share lunch and coffee with the experts, it places us on the same level and the continuous conclusion “there is so much to discover in this field” is very encouraging. Terrific!



My encounter with legend Prof. Flemming, now here, on the other side of the globe, is one of the most enjoyable experiences. His lectures are unique and he will be back next year! During the course we are learning about water treatment and I feel like my Water Science studies are going neatly hand in hand with this Summer Course.

Then it happens: I am drinking Singaporean’s sewage! Let me clarify, this water has been purified through advanced water technologies, which will provide a sustainable source of drinking water for the water-limited country in future. Incredible and tasty!



Time is flying and I realise that I don’t even have to be sad for leaving behind all of the incredible people I have met on this journey. We are now connected through the vast network of SCELSE, which allows us to stay in touch and meet in future.

I am flying home, enriched of good experiences and new brain cells. Thank you SCELSE!

Please do not hesitate to contact me for any inquiries. You will miss out if you don’t apply for this amazing opportunity.

Cheers,
Vincent (scholzvincent@gmail.com)

