

Contact  
Singapore 

# SYNERGY

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## About Contact Singapore

Contact Singapore is an alliance of the Singapore Economic Development Board and Ministry of Manpower. It aims to attract global talent to work, invest and live in Singapore.

With offices in Asia Pacific, Europe and North America, Contact Singapore is the one-stop centre for those who wish to pursue a rewarding career in Singapore, as well as individuals and entrepreneurs who are keen to invest in or initiate new business activities here. Contact Singapore actively links Singapore-based employers with global talent and provides updates on career opportunities and industry developments in Singapore. We work with private sector partners to facilitate the interests of potential individual investors in Singapore.

For more information on working, investing and living in Singapore, please visit [www.contactsingapore.sg](http://www.contactsingapore.sg)

# Contents

## News

- 04** New Contact Singapore Website
- 06** Top UK Students Show Strong Interest In Singapore Careers
- 07** The Call Of Public Service
- 07** Upcoming Events

## Lifestyle

- 08** One City, Many Festivals
- 10** Strengthening The Korean Connection

## Chemicals

- 14** Moving Up The Value Chain
- 16** Employee Profile: Combining Business And Science

## Work And Live In Singapore

- 17** Know Your Facts: Singapore Trivia
- 18** Why I Became A Permanent Resident
- 19** Folks At Contact Singapore: Patty Woo, Assistant Director, Industry Workforce



The new Contact Singapore website shows you how to work, live and move to Singapore!

Visit [www.contactsingapore.sg](http://www.contactsingapore.sg)



# Launch a bright future in Singapore



## Six user channels

Find information that fits your needs and work experience, including special channels for investors and overseas Singaporeans.



## Hot industries, hot jobs

Zoom into the most sought-after jobs per industry. Plus a job portal for job searches.



## Singapore facts and figures

Packed with national data and rankings.



## FAQs and Did You Know snippets

Answers to common questions and fun nuggets about Singapore.



## Fresh, new sections

Find information quickly under Work, Live, Play, and Move.



## Webinars and seminars

Catch our career events live, wherever you are.



## A day in the life of

Read about expat life, by expats. Leave your comments or share your story with us!



## Have your say

Polls, blogs and social media platforms will connect you with others.

# Top UK Students Show Strong Interest In Singapore Careers

Judging from the enthusiastic participation by potential employers and the number of interested students in Careers@Singapore, the city-state's attraction has not waned with the economic crisis. Held in Singapore for the second time for students from Oxford and Cambridge universities and from the University of London's London School of Economics (LSE) and Imperial College, the careers fair was an opportunity for employers and potential employees to interact with one another.

participating for the first time. It had hired staff previously through a Contact Singapore (CS) visit to some British universities to recruit. "It's a win-win, working with Contact Singapore," she said.

CS works closely with Singapore-based companies to attract global talent. To this end, it partners top universities and business associations to launch initiatives like Careers@Singapore.

Lithchai Wanithanovit, had come from Thailand just to attend the fair and was going to Hong Kong the week after to try his luck there. "I'm so used to living outside Thailand, I want to work abroad," he said.

Londoner Mat Youkee was at the fair because it coincided with a trip he was making to Asia. But he said, "I would love to work in Singapore. I had worked for five years in emerging markets in Latin



The September event attracted 27 companies from various industries such as financial services, oil and gas and semiconductor to put up booths. Some, such international legal firm Norton Rose, were present for the first time.

OCBC Bank's Vice President for Human Resources Chuang Ee Imm said that the bank was also

The event was well attended with about 160 students milling around. "We're still seeing a lot of interest in recruiting from these four universities in Singapore despite the poor economic situation," said Ms Fiona Sandford, Director of LSE's Careers Service.

Foreign students at the fair were intent on job hunting. One of them,

America, Egypt, Turkey and Bulgaria before starting on my Masters at LSE. I think Singapore has great potential compared to other countries in Latin America or Eastern Europe."

Local students were equally serious about career opportunities. Oxford undergraduate Marianne Chuo, who has just finished her first year, said, "The fair is like a buffet. I've got all the info I want. It's never too early to start looking for a job."

Jun Jie, who will be graduating from a Masters in Finance at Imperial College next year, had researched the exhibiting companies prior to the fair. "I talked to some people and got my questions answered. It is a good fair," he said. ●

# The Call Of Public Service

More than 200 Singaporeans living in the United States (US) were introduced to the wide range of careers available in the Singapore public service when Contact Singapore (CS) and the Public Service Division (PSD) brought Careers@Home to their doorstep last October.

"Careers@Home is an excellent opportunity to connect with overseas Singaporeans. We use the occasion to share about developments back home, and the challenging work that we do," said Ms Doris Lee, Senior Human Resource Analyst, Personnel Policy Department, PSD.

The careers fair, which visited Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York, showcased job opportunities in 11 public sector agencies and two government-linked corporations.

It highlighted to both students and working professionals how they could shape the future of Singapore.

A recurring question from participants was whether working in the public service was as fulfilling as working in the private sector. Responding, Mr Yeoh Keat Chuan of the Singapore Economic Development Board and Ms Kee Ee Wah of Contact Singapore highlighted the challenging and meaningful opportunities which were available in the public sector.

Moreover, Ms Lim Soo Hoon, Permanent Secretary, PSD, and Ambassador Vanu Menon, Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations, spoke passionately about the call of public service. ●



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Contact Singapore will be holding a number of events as well as participating in career fairs around the world in the coming months. Do log on to our website to find out more if you're interested to attend the events, or if you want to chat with us about working and living in Singapore.

DATES	EVENT	LOCATION
7 – 11 Dec	Experience@Singapore <sup>+</sup> : Engineering & Technology For students from Indian universities	Singapore
9 – 11 Dec	59th Institute of Electronics Engineer of the Philippines National Convention and Exposition	Manila, The Philippines
9 – 12 Dec	Experience@Singapore <sup>+</sup> : Engineering & Technology For students from Malaysian universities	Singapore
12 Dec	"Work in Singapore" information series for working professionals in Shanghai	Shanghai, China
4 – 8 Jan	Experience@Singapore <sup>+</sup> : Interactive & Digital Media For students from US, Canadian and UK universities	Singapore
13 – 14 Jan	Careers@Singapore*: Healthcare Services	Singapore
23 Jan	Careers@Singapore*: Legal Services	Singapore
23 Jan	Careers@Singapore*: Tourism & Hospitality Services	Singapore
30 Jan	Careers@Singapore*: Financial & Accounting Services	Singapore

\***Careers@Singapore** is an industry-specific event for Singapore-based employers and global talent, both professionals and graduating students, to network and interact. Such events are held all over the world.

\***Experience@Singapore** gives selected undergraduate and graduate students exposure to Singapore as the ideal place to work, live and play. For more information: [www.contactsingapore.sg/experience@singapore](http://www.contactsingapore.sg/experience@singapore)

Singapore's multi-racial and multi-religious society celebrates the cultural traditions of its different communities. The second half of the year is especially rich in fascinating festivals as the Indian, Malay and Chinese communities commemorate the most auspicious days in their religious calendars and as people of other faiths join the Christians in celebrating Christmas.

### Hari Raya Aidilfitri

Celebrated on 20 September this year, Hari Raya Aidilfitri marks the end of the fasting month for Muslims. As Singapore's Muslims are largely Malays, celebrations to mark this occasion were held mainly in the Malay enclaves of Kampong Glam and Geylang Serai.

Market bazaars selling everything from traditional handicrafts to Malay delicacies began during the fasting month to facilitate breaking the fast at sunset with ready-cooked meals as well as prepare for the big day at the end of fast with new clothes and accessories for themselves and new decorations and gadgets for their homes.

Street light-ups complemented the festive atmosphere together with concerts featuring traditional Malay dancers at the weekends. The Malay Heritage Centre in Kampong

Glam also showcased interactive batik and ketupat weaving workshops over the weekends of the festival.

### Deepavali

The triumph of light over darkness (good over evil in an individual), which fell on 17 October this year, is the most important festival in the Hindu calendar. The festival of lights, which is what Deepavali means, was appropriately celebrated in Little India with thousands of fairy lights lining the main Serangoon Road.

Traditionally, Hindus will light small clay lamps filled with oil.

The religious celebrations are impressive, particularly the annual Thimithi Festival. Held at the Sri Mariamman Temple on South Bridge Road, the one-day event features

One  
City,  
Many

Fest



# ivals



Hindus walking bare-footed across a four metre bed of burning hot coals in a display of breathtaking devotion and faith to the Goddess Drupadi.

## The Mid Autumn Festival

The celebration on the 15th day of the eighth lunar month (3 October this year), is memorable for mooncakes, a delicacy that makes its appearance only around the time of the festival and a much-loved sign of the ingenuity of the Chinese mind: in the 14th century, the Chinese

were able to overthrow the Yuan dynasty by passing secret messages baked within the mooncakes that were exchanged among friends and relatives on the occasion of the festival.

Today, local initiative has resulted in mooncakes coming in a variety of flavours from traditional lotus fillings through to tropical fruit, and even Bailey's Irish Cream and champagne!

The sale of the mooncakes, particularly in the mini-streets of Chinatown, is accompanied by that of pomelos, a seasonal fruit also associated with the festival, and lanterns in the shape of all sorts of animals. The children enjoy themselves lighting these up and playing with them while their elders sip tea and read poems as they admire the fullness of the moon.

To commemorate these traditions, Singapore's Chinatown comes alive with street light-ups and lantern displays, including a mass lantern walk on the night itself. During this period, nightly stage shows and fringe events are also held to entertain locals and visitors alike.

## Christmas

The Christians' celebration of the birth of Christ has become a national occasion for all Singaporeans to share the rejoicing and spirit of giving. Orchard Road, the prime shopping belt, is appropriately the centre of the festivities. Decked out in stars, Christmas trees and more, the street, together with the malls and hotels, is a magnet attracting shoppers, carollers and those who just want to watch life pass by.

This year, the lights and decorations went up earlier than usual so that visitors to the APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) economic leaders meeting in mid-November could catch it. Another novelty was the light up of 150 trees in the Botanical Gardens to celebrate the 150th anniversary of its beginning. ●

# Strengthening The Korean Connection

With its cosmopolitan environment, meritocratic corporate culture and strong bilingual tradition, Singapore is an ideal location for talent from around the world to hone their expertise and language skills and to establish their careers. This was what Korean students found after visiting the city state as part of Contact Singapore's Experience@Singapore programme. Under Experience@Singapore, undergraduate and graduate

students from selected universities have the opportunity to find out more about Singapore as the ideal place to work, live and play, and to meet and chat with top management of companies and government organisations.

For the Koreans, Singapore's blend of East and West offered a unique opportunity to develop an international mindset. The fact that one quarter of Singapore's population

of 4.99 million comprised non-Singaporeans contributed to the rich cultural milieu of the country. Byeon Sujin, an Information Science student at Sook Myung Women's University, commented, "You can learn more about other cultures here,"

She pointed out the bilingual tradition also meant that people working in Singapore would have the opportunity to improve their linguistic skills. She said of a Korean friend who

## Exploring The IDM Opportunity



A week-long visit to Singapore was so effective in convincing Korean student Moah Kim about the merits of working in Singapore, that she wanted to give her portfolio to Singapore production house Tiny Island while she was here for the Experience@Singapore programme in August.

She was one of 17 students from the Animation Department of Hongik University who were here to find out more about the Interactive Digital Media (IDM) industry in Singapore.

Accompanied by their lecturer Mr Ray Park, the students, who were mostly in their final year, visited both academic institutions such as Singapore Polytechnic and the Digipen Institute of Technology and companies such as Lucasfilm and Tiny Island, a home-grown production house. By the end of the trip, they had better insights into the kind of training and career opportunities available in Singapore.

"The trip has been very useful," said another student, Soyoung Sohn. "There is a big entertainment

business in Singapore and I'd love to work here. There are good facilities and people with a passion for 3D."

Echoing the sentiment, Ms Kim, said, "I'm impressed how the government is investing in the IDM industry and how standards are improving. I would like to work in Singapore because I like to work with people from different cultures."

Mr Park was pleased with the enthusiasm shown by the students. He said the reason the students wanted to work in Singapore was that they liked the city. They had had plenty of opportunities to enjoy its amenities as the National Day long weekend was in the middle of their tour and they had been free to roam around on their own. "Generally, the (Korean) students are not very adventurous. They feel safe in their niche and don't want to come out. This trip has changed their minds and many want to come back," he said. ●



is currently working in Singapore, "She says it's fun and very helpful for learning English."

Singapore's corporate culture and opportunities for career development also resonated with the young Koreans. Medical student Cho Won Tae, for example, praised the high standard of the facilities

and the working conditions for the Singapore healthcare industry.

Singapore, on its part, is looking to Korea as an important source of healthcare professionals such as doctors, engineering and technology professionals as well as skills in the area of interactive and digital media. The high-calibre of its talent and strong

work ethic are some of the factors that stand the Koreans in good stead.

To tap on this talent pool, Contact Singapore has been engaging Koreans via its Experience@Singapore programmes, hosting Korean students from the fields of medicine, interactive and digital media and, earlier in July, engineering and technology. ●

## 137 Medical Students Choose Singapore For Graduation Trip

Contact Singapore hosted one of its largest groups to date when 137 Korean medical students from Seoul National University (SNU) visited Singapore this August, to explore the potential of working and living here.

"The group definitely stands out as one of the largest, if not the record for the programme," said Ms Kee Ee Wah, Deputy Director, Contact Singapore (CS). "But we are more than happy so many came at a time when two new hospitals are opening and when Singapore is trying to improve its doctor to population ratio."

The SNU class of '09 had selected Singapore as their destination of choice to celebrate their graduation and CS added to the trip by giving them an insight into Singapore's healthcare system and the opportunities and environment here.

For Benjamin Jeon, Singapore presented a perfect fit. He had surfed the Internet for information about different opportunities and he came here with the intention of registering for the Duke-NUS graduate medical school programme.

"I am interested in studying in an international environment. Even more attractive is the fact a qualification from a global health institute like Duke-NUS is recognised by the world and I will be able to use it in other English-speaking countries," he said.

"I also like the clean environment in Singapore and so I want to be here," he added.

Another student, Jee-Young Han added, "This is my second time in Singapore. I came as a tourist two years ago. It is really lovely. This is one of the cities I would like to live in."



For others like Woong-Ki Han, the high standard of Singapore's healthcare system was a big plus. "Singapore has taken the best parts of the British and Australian medical training systems," he observed.

Sun-hwa Lee was also struck. "The most impressive thing was seeing empty beds in the hospital, ready for emergencies. In Korea, all the beds are occupied. I'm impressed the government looks to the future and plans for it," she said. ●

## Singapore Medicine Ok!

Singapore's cultural diversity and its close proximity to other Southeast Asian countries present a huge opportunity for medical tourism and this, in turn, ignited the interest of some Korean medical students who were here recently for a five-day study attachment with the National University Hospital (NUH).

"This trip has really expanded my horizons," said Lee Jun Yong. "With so many races, the diverse culture is different and interesting." He was part of a six-member student group from the well-regarded Korean University Medical College which visited Singapore in September.

In his view, this inclusive diversity, combined with the nation's close proximity to so many neighbouring countries, would allow visitors to first gain access to excellent medical treatment in Singapore, and subsequently be able to feel at home recuperating in a comfortable environment. "This is a good place to get treatment and then relax in places like Sentosa," he said, recalling his enjoyable recent visit to the popular local resort.

A good place, too, it seems, for a medical practitioner to build up a career. "I would want to work in Singapore," he added.

His college mates, too, were impressed with what they saw in their first trip to the island republic and noted many advantages of practising medicine here compared to Korea. "I found that the city clean, and the people are kind and helpful," said Kim Dai Hyun. "The transportation system is very good."

More importantly, he found that the Singapore healthcare system presented many opportunities for professional development. "NUH has a system where residents can contribute to research while this is not possible in Korea," he said.

## Student Journalists Soak Up Singapore



Jeans, bermudas, sneakers and flip-flops made an appearance at the Singapore Economic Development Board's office on 7 August 2009. Casual Friday perhaps?

Not quite. This was a group of 10 Korean students in town under the aegis of LG Electronics Asia. They had come as amateur journalists under the LG Face of the Future programme which sponsors student visits outside Korea to garner stories for LG's web magazine.

While in Singapore, the students took time off LG activities and sightseeing to listen to presentations by Contact Singapore on the country's attractiveness as a place to work.

Some were open to the possibility of working here. Kim Eun-a, who is studying Media at Soong-sil University, said she would like to work in broadcasting. She likes the diversity of the multiracial and multicultural environment here.

Huh Sung Jun, who studies Hindi at Hankuk University Foreign Studies, was equally enthusiastic. "Singapore emphasises education, even to foreign students. I think I want to learn and study in Singapore," he said.

He is also eyeing opportunities beyond education. "I would like to work here in film. I hear that the media and documentary fields are short of people. I want to enjoy myself and participate," he added. ●

Another advantage Cho Won Tae saw was a better medical infrastructure. "Compared with Korea, the Intensive Care Unit and surgical operations room in NUH is a lot better, as each room has its own computer," he said. "The nursing support for them is also better."

Compensation was also attractive. "Working in Singapore is a good idea, as it has low tax rates for foreigners, and doctors here have a better salary," he said.

Yoo Seok Shon agreed, saying, "The quality of life here is higher." ●



## I'll Be Back!

**Daeyong Jung was in Singapore from 26-31 July 2009 with a group of 16 Korean students for the Experience@Singapore: Engineering and Technology programme, where he had the opportunity to meet and interact with the management of companies such as Shell. He shares some of the impressions gleaned during their visit.**

"As an engineering student, I never thought that I would even consider working in Singapore, because to me, Singapore had always been a city famous for finance, tourism and education. But after a presentation by Contact Singapore, I realised that it could be one of my options. I suddenly felt that it was something I had always been looking for – an international environment full of action, a multi-cultural society, and a key business centre, which is currently one of the main hubs



for global companies to manage operations in Asia.

Upon arriving in Singapore, I noticed that there were many different kinds of people on the streets: Chinese, Indian, Malayan and many other ethnic groups. It was quite surprising

to see how so many people from different cultural backgrounds living together harmoniously. Although there are many other multicultural societies, I felt that Singapore is one of the most distinct countries where everyone respects each other's customs and beliefs...

The company visits were well planned, with each day focused on a different industry. The visit to the Shell plants at Jurong Island was very interesting because we could visit the island which needed special permission to enter. We would not have been able to experience this if we were ordinary tourists. Our visit to a semiconductor wafer fabrication facility was a great experience because we entered the clean room in special suits and could see the manufacturing processes first-hand.

The five-day programme was an eye opening experience. I am sure I will be back in Singapore someday either to work or to enjoy the diverse cultures and pleasant environment." ●

# Moving Up The Value Chain



Singapore presents unique market opportunities as industry drives towards advanced and specialised chemicals

Demand for chemicals – from basic petrochemicals to specialised advanced materials with superior performances – has been growing rapidly in recent years, with Singapore’s petrochemicals and specialties sectors contributing S\$33.7 billion of the manufacturing output in 2007.

As one of the world’s leading chemical hubs with excellent connectivity to regional markets, Singapore is working to continue staying at the forefront of the industry’s advancement with its focus on leading edge technologies and R&D.

Singapore’s strategy involves building long-term sustainability with the development of competitive and diversified feedstock options, and a drive for higher value through specialty chemicals and advanced materials. This also involves enhancing value through R&D to meet evolving market needs and move the industry up the value chain.

## By the numbers

The energy and chemical industry is a key pillar of Singapore’s economy, being the largest contributor to the country’s manufacturing output. The following gives an indication of its importance in the region and around the globe.

- S\$97 billion output in 2008
- S\$35 billion manufacturing output from petrochemicals and specialties sectors
- One of top 10 petrochemical hubs in the world
- 38.6% of Singapore’s manufacturing output in 2008
- S\$4.9 billion of economic value-add

## Infrastructure advantage

One of the keys to the growth of the industry is the supporting infrastructure, and Singapore boasts many benefits that make it an ideal location for companies to locate their business headquarters and engage in various business activities that include manufacturing, R&D, sales, and supply chain management.

Jurong Island is the centrepiece of the energy and chemical industry. Its state-of-the-art “plug-and-play” infrastructure ensures companies can ramp up their operations and start-up quickly. Common pipelines, utilities and chemical logistics services allow companies to enjoy economies of scale and operational efficiencies.

Moving forward, resource optimisation and emissions management will also be a strong feature as Jurong Island continues to develop sustainably. It has already attracted investments of over S\$30 billion.

One of these is Shell’s multi-billion dollar integrated petrochemicals complex, the main facility of which is an 800,000 tonne ethylene cracker plant. Recently, another plant, a mono-ethylene glycol plant with a production capacity of 750,000 tonnes a year was opened as part of the complex.

Another essential requirement for the success of the high-tech chemical industry is a strong intellectual property protection policy. Just as proprietary manufacturing processes are vital to the competitiveness of petrochemicals and advanced material companies, product differentiation is critical to the growth of specialty chemicals.

Singapore’s respect and track record for intellectual property rights help create a trusted environment for technology-intensive manufacturing processes, to undertake fundamental



Jurong Island, centre of Singapore’s energy and chemical industry.

research, create platform technologies and develop new commercial applications.

The nation has also invested, and continues to invest heavily in R&D infrastructure and seeks to work with the industry to create new beginnings in the nation.

## Skilled Talent and Sustainability

Talent is the key enabler for this complex and dynamic industry, and Singapore offers a strong pool of engineering and management talent, as well as skilled technicians, from the many relevant academic institutions including the best universities and polytechnics.

In addition, Singapore is a safe and attractive environment, making it easy for companies to attract top talent from all over the world. The result is a motivated, productive and world-class workforce for the chemical industry.

While growth is important, Singapore views social responsibility with equal passion, and sustainability will be a key theme in the nation’s next phase of growth in the energy and chemical sector.

To address climate change concerns, Singapore is taking the

lead in raising the bar in energy efficiency, emissions management as well as in accelerating the development of new, sustainable feedstock and technologies for the industry. Companies are encouraged and supported in their plans to improve energy efficiencies and reduce their carbon footprint.

## Global Leaders

The combination of excellent infrastructure, global connectivity, and manpower capabilities and conducive support policies, make Singapore an ideal business location for companies looking to set up their headquarters. Companies can leverage the government’s pro-business environment to undertake a whole slate of business activities that encompass a diverse range of regional operations from sales, manufacturing, to R&D.

Industry leaders like Shell, Dupont, ExxonMobil Chemical, 3M, BASF SE, and Kanto Kagaku, are companies that have already taken advantage of these competitive advantages to better position themselves not just in Asia, but around the globe.

With the momentum provided by both government and the private sector, the future for the chemical industry in Singapore looks bright and vibrant. ●

# Combining Business And Science

## Dr Zhiyong Duan, Ph.D.

Senior Research Scientist I,  
Albany Molecular Research  
Singapore Research Centre Pte Ltd

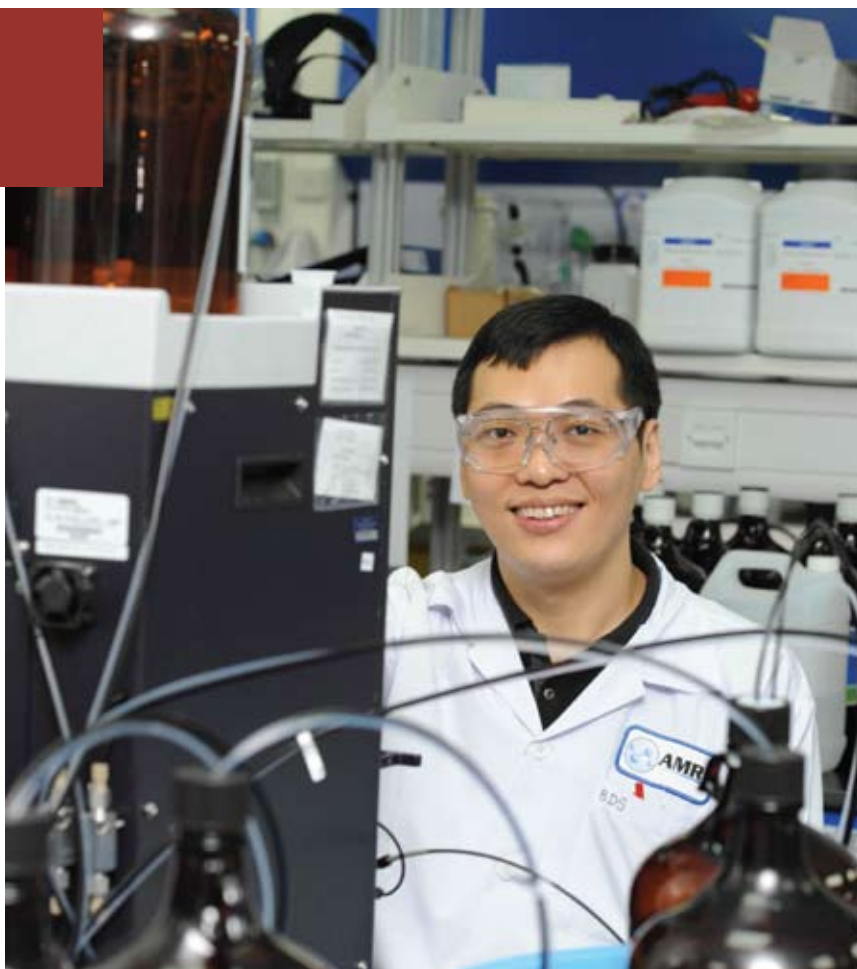


I was deciding between doing research after my doctorate in organic chemistry at the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Shanghai or starting a career in industry when I found out that Albany Molecular Research (AMRI) was about to set up its Singapore Research Centre and was looking for people with experience in organic synthesis.

I was attracted by the prospect of being involved in the launch of AMRI's operations in Singapore. In April 2005, I came here for an on-site interview. Three months later, I became a formal employee of the AMRI Singapore Research Centre.

It is now four years since I joined AMRI and it has turned out to be a great learning experience. Compared to academia, the industry's focus is on both business (the customer's satisfaction) and science (mostly organic chemistry), rather than the latter alone. The day-to-day management of projects in the lab and the communication with customers is such a different experience from what I had in academic life. The combination of the two is the most challenging and exciting part of my work.

Singapore is an attractive place to work and live in, with its diverse cultures, races and religions. It has



a well-established and stable social and financial system as well as a safe working and living environment.

Like many other foreigners, one of the things that impressed me was the fact that it is so clean. And despite its high population density, Singapore does exceptionally well in terms of public transportation. I can easily catch an MRT or jump onto a bus and it will take me almost anywhere. I also appreciate the efficiency of government agencies here. I can easily find up-to-date information on their website, make appointments or check statements online.

Another factor that attracted me to work in Singapore was the effort which the government has put in to develop frontier science and technology, especially in areas such as biology, pharmaceuticals and IT, and to train quality human resources. This has made the country an attractive option, other than Western countries, for those with the right qualifications and who want to develop a successful career in research.



*Dr Duan, who comes from Tianjin, a northern city in China, is married and his wife is expecting their first child. ●*

# Singapore Trivia

You may think you know Singapore but you will probably pick up some quirky facts and figures new to you if you scan the points below ...



## Relatively big-sized

Singapore may be just a little red dot on the world map. But it is far from being the smallest country in the world. Its total land area of 710 sq km is gigantic compared to the 0.44 sq km of the smallest country in the world, the Vatican.



## Singapore records

Singapore has the world's highest man-made waterfall, standing at 30 metres, at the Jurong BirdPark and the largest fountain in the world at Suntec City. Made of cast bronze, the fountain cost an estimated US\$6 million to build in 1997.

## More than an island

The state of Singapore is made up of 64 islands, not one! Most of the 63 tiny islands are uninhabited.

As for night life, it innovated the world's first night zoo, The Night Safari and the world's first Formula One night race.



## Fish exporter

Singapore imports almost all its food, including fish. But fish are also pets and here, Singapore is second to none: it is the world's largest exporter of ornamental fish, with 25% of the world market.

## Tree wonder

Singapore may not have any forests to boast of. Yet it is blessed with more species of trees than the entire North American continent. You can see the variety at the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve.



## Official Singlish

The Singaporean patois has two entries – *lah* and *sinseh* – in the online version of the Oxford English Dictionary.



## Bat haven

The flying fox, the world's largest bat with a wingspan of up to 1.5 metres and an endangered species usually known to be in the Philippines, can be found on *Pulau Ubin*, one of the islands off mainland Singapore.



# Why I Became A Permanent Resident

## Koert Breebaart

Director Customer Experience  
SingTel

“ After two years in Singapore, I am convinced I should become a Permanent Resident (PR), following up on the initial decision my wife and I made to move here. I am Dutch and before coming, I had worked for nine years as a management consultant for Accenture in the Netherlands, France, Germany and the UK.



Asia beckoned with its thriving business ecosystem combined with unlimited market opportunities. And a significant change in environment, language, culture and people provokes fast learning and developing. Of all Asian cities, Singapore seemed as if it could provide the right balance for both of us to advance our careers while enjoying life.

Experience has proved us right! Singapore is:

- **In the heart of the Asian network** – Singapore hosts regional headquarters to over 7,000 multinationals and thus forms an excellent hub in the region. Amongst other experiences, I spent over half a year in China.
- **Dynamic** – it combines science and innovation, highly educated people with strong work ethics and a common language among multiple cultures.
- **Convenient living** – it offers luxury housing, alien to most westerners with nice architecture and city planning, beautiful national parks, clean public spaces, high quality public services, cheap transport, low crime and excellent healthcare.
- **A great place to spend money** – excellent restaurants, golfing in Indonesia (a short one-hour ferry ride from Singapore), wakeboarding, diving, holidays in the region, Formula 1, pubs, to name a few, are waiting. And taxation is low.
- **Compact** – on this one island you have everything within 30 minutes' reach: beaches, sea, mountains, original rainforest and all facilities that you need.
- **Top notch childcare** – most of my friends who have children consider child care options the biggest loss leaving Singapore. They employ a full-time maid, so there is a 24/7 baby sit service in your house. While you play tennis, meet friends or do whatever you like, meals are prepared and fresh baby clothes are in the closet. Childcare services outside the home are also very professionally organised. This has become personally important as our first son was just born.

Unfortunately, I have to take a lot of water with me when I go cycling and can only watch the European soccer games at night. But I did not think of that when I had the chance to go elsewhere. I just wanted to stay put in Singapore.



# Folks At Contact Singapore

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Interview with Patty Woo, Assistant Director, Industry Workforce



## What is your role in Contact Singapore?

I work with our partners in the public research sector to attract international research talent to supplement their base of local researchers. Particularly in research, this helps to maintain a diverse pool of expertise so that the public research sector can benefit from fresh perspectives. The talent can range from bright students who are interested in research, to more senior research fellows and post doctorate holders. I also work with large Singapore-based conglomerates to help them source for suitable international talent to plug expertise gaps. In terms of activities, I organise inbound visits to introduce Singapore to foreign talent as well as conduct overseas talent engagement initiatives and study trips.

## How does your job further the mission of CS?

Our mission is to serve as a one-stop centre to generate interest among international talent to work and live in Singapore and facilitate those

who are keen to do so. I guess on a broader level, our work contributes, in a way, towards Singapore's goal of becoming a research hub and a knowledge economy.

## What qualities do you look for when sourcing for talent in R&D?

What comes to my mind is passion for research, interest in working in Singapore and an open mind to try new experiences.

## What do you like best about your job?

Interacting with people of diverse nationalities and the opportunity to travel! I just came back from a trip to Brazil in August and it was certainly an eye-opener. In the course of promoting Singapore to international talent, I have also developed a new-found appreciation of Singapore and what it has to offer – things which I used to take for granted, such as the cheap and plentiful good food, perpetual summer climate and the sense of security. ●



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