

Youth Regional Affairs Dialogue 2022 Programme Factsheet

About the Dialogue

Organised by Nanyang Technological University-University Scholars Programme (NTU-USP) and supported by Temasek Foundation, Youth Regional Affairs Dialogue 2022 is a platform for university students in Asia to enhance their leadership skills and broaden their understanding of geopolitics.

Participants will have an opportunity to develop an appreciation of Asia's interwoven geopolitical structure through discussions on economics, politics, and society. They can also build a deeper understanding of governance and policies across Asia as they build friendships through cross-cultural exchanges.

Programme Details

Held for the third time running, the Youth Regional Affairs Dialogue 2022 will be held from **23rd – 31st July 2022** at the NTU campus in Singapore. 80 youth leaders (40 from top Asia universities and 40 from top Singapore universities) will be selected for the dialogue.

Centred around the theme of social cohesion in the region, participants will be assigned to one of the five dialogue sub-themes: (a) Culture and Identity, (b) Income Inequality and Social Mobility, (c) Growing Intergenerational Divide, (d) Media, Information and Technology, and (e) Healthcare and Well-Being. More information on the conference theme and sub-themes can be found at the end of this factsheet in Annex 1.

With rigorous academic guidance offered by NTU faculty, participants will be challenged to critically analyse the issue of social cohesion in Asia in relation to their assigned sub-theme, as well as formulate viable solutions that can mitigate and bridge the divides and disruptions.

Benefits for Dialogue Participants

Participants will receive travel support which includes airfare, accommodation in Singapore, and living allowance for the entire duration of the dialogue.

Through the week-long programme, participants will also be able to attend multi-disciplinary talks, dialogues with experts, discourse with peers of different cultures, learning journeys, and professional workshops.

Application Process

Applications will begin on **21st January 2022** until **Sunday, 20th March 2022, 2359 (SGT)**. and selected students will be informed of their offers by April 2022. For more information, please refer to the **Application Instructions** document.

Please contact Angela/Celine at dialogue@ntu.edu.sg for inquiries about the dialogue. More information on the programme will also be available soon [here](#).

We wish you all the best and look forward to receiving your application.

To contact the organiser:

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Annex 1: Dialogue Theme

Conference Theme: Social Cohesion in Asia

Over the past year, numerous obstacles to social cohesion have emerged or expanded within the Asian region. Social cohesion can be defined as the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimizing disparities and avoiding polarization. From the tensions brought about by the global Covid-19 pandemic to the rising geopolitical unrest and competition globally, these issues threaten to undermine social cohesion within the region and its nations. These threats to social cohesions are worrisome as social cohesion is often the precursor to the discussion and solution of deep-seated social inequality and many other geopolitical issues.

In response to these rising threats, this Dialogue will hone in on social cohesion and specifically focus on five sub-themes inextricably related to it: 1) Culture and Identity, 2) Income Inequality and Social Mobility, 3) A Growing Intergenerational Divide, 4) Media, Information and Technology and 5) Healthcare and Well-Being. These sub-themes are not mutually exclusive and are interrelated.

Sub-theme 1: Culture and Identity

Culture and identity are important concepts to strengthening social relations and ties. Discrimination may stem from issues of identity, with identity encompassing a range of diverse aspects, such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, etc. Identity is a politically sensitive issue, and the social cohesion of minority and majority groups are delicate issues to maneuver. In cities with large immigrant populations, social integration is key to reducing xenophobia.

Sub-theme 2: Income Inequality and Social Mobility

Economic inclusion is an important aspect of social cohesion. This encompasses issues like rectifying inequality, providing equal access to opportunities, and improving social mobility. Most countries do focus on related policies by providing safety nets or social welfare to vulnerable groups. While focusing on payouts is one way of improving social cohesion, there is still the social aspect to consider, such as the prevalence of marginalized communities, notions of social class and equal access to opportunities. For example, all over the world, students faced challenges as classes shifted online due to the lack of reliable internet access or technology. This is especially so for those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Sub-theme 3: Growing Intergenerational Divide

With an aging population in many cities all over the world, the intergenerational divide poses an additional challenge to social cohesion. With the context of the COVID-19 situation, there remains much room for improvement in communicating social safety nets or health information to the elderly, especially in the employment of technology for processes such as contact tracing. Patient and clear communication is important to bridging the intergenerational gap.

Sub-theme 4: Media, Information and Technology

The prevalence of social media platforms as a way of information dissemination has changed the landscape of communication in countries all over the world. While the viral nature of social media platforms allows timely dissemination of news, they may also have propagated the spread of fake news. The spread of fake news may take a toll on the citizens' mental health, causing unnecessary worry in the population. At the same time, the large variety of media sources globally may also make it hard for citizens to absorb or stay afloat with the latest updates.

Sub-theme 5: Healthcare and Well-Being

Healthcare and well-being are topics clearly relevant in a global pandemic. Some related issues include accessibility, accurate information dissemination for health advisories, mental health, and work-life balance issues during a global pandemic. Issues of accessibility are even more salient with classes moving online, as lecturers must now consider how the new medium impacts students with disabilities.

About Nanyang Technological University

A research-intensive public university, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has 33,000 undergraduate students and postgraduate students in the colleges of Engineering, Business, Science, and Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, and the Interdisciplinary Graduate School.

NTU is also home to world-class autonomous institutes — the National Institute of Education, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Earth Observatory of Singapore, and Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering — and various leading research centres such as the Nanyang Environment & Water Research Institute (NEWRI) and Energy Research Institute @ NTU (ERI@N).

Ranked amongst the world's top universities by QS, NTU has also been named the world's top young university for the past seven years. The University's main campus is frequently listed among the Top 15 most beautiful university campuses in the world and has 57 Green Mark-certified (equivalent to LEED-certified) buildings, of which 95% are certified Green Mark Platinum. Apart from its main campus, NTU also has a campus in Novena, Singapore's healthcare district.

Under the NTU Smart Campus vision, the University harnesses the power of digital technology and tech-enabled solutions to support better learning and living experiences, the discovery of new knowledge, and the sustainability of resources.

For more information, visit www.ntu.edu.sg

About Temasek Foundation

Temasek Foundation supports a diverse range of programmes that uplift lives and communities in Singapore and beyond. Collectively, our programmes strengthen social resilience, foster international exchange, enhance regional capabilities, advance science and protect the planet for a sustainable world. Temasek Foundation's programmes, made possible through philanthropic endowments gifted by Temasek, strive towards achieving positive outcomes for individuals and communities now, and for generations to come.

Managed by Temasek Foundation, this programme is part of a series of regional youth exchange programmes that bring together like-minded youths across Asia to learn, bond and build friendships. The various programmes cover one or more areas of interest that include arts and culture, science and technology, as well as entrepreneurship and innovation. Such programmes provide youth with opportunities to come together as one community to connect and learn through common interests and foster better understand and empathy across different communities.

For more information on Temasek Foundation, visit <https://www.temasekfoundation.org.sg/>

About Nanyang Technological University — University Scholars Programme

The Nanyang Technological University — University Scholars Programme (NTU-USP) is committed to providing an intellectually stimulating environment for students to explore the realms which complement each student's major areas of study.

Our programme takes a holistic approach where classes are delivered in small groups, with maximised interaction and engagement. NTU-USP students consider fundamental questions about arts, culture, and science from interdisciplinary perspectives, and are exposed to exciting opportunities arising from our unique curriculum. Global focus is a particular feature of NTU-USP, with travel components encouraging proactive international citizenship and diversity. The Travel Overseas Programme for Scholars (TOPS) offers all freshmen a chance to participate in fieldwork and documentation in a regional country. With the NTU-USP Study Abroad programme, students have the opportunity to spend a semester or more at any of the NTU-USP partner Universities. Additionally, we offer electives which provide students with opportunities to venture beyond Singapore's shores. Students graduate with broad perspectives and experiences that prepare them well for the challenges and opportunities in the ever-changing world.