



A group photograph taken during the Hari Raya Open House

Hari Raya Open House

UNMC Graduate School recently held its annual Hari Raya Open House on 15th July 2016 in conjunction with the festive celebration. Open House, known in Malaysia as *Rumah Terbuka*, is prevalent in the Malaysian culture especially during major festivals and celebrations.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all those who attended the Open House. Through it, we hope to promote and foster the spirit of unity and solidarity among the members of postgraduate community at UNMC.



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Future Event

Exhibition: Malaysian Independence Day Special

In conjunction with the celebration of Malaysian Independence Day or *Hari Merdeka*, we will be holding an exhibition from 26th August 2016 till 23rd September 2016 at the Postgraduate Hub.

Full details will be announced in due course.



UNMC 2016 Three Minute Thesis Competition (3MT[®]) — Final Call

The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus (UNMC) will hold its 2016 Three Minute Thesis Competition (3MT[®]) on **6th September 2016** at the **Great Hall**. For those who have registered at the Graduate School's Moodle page, we say thank you. For those who have not and are interested — as long as you have successfully passed your first year confirmation review milestone (including thesis under submission), you are welcome to register at the Moodle page.

To help support your research development, the prize winnings for this year's competition are as follow:

UNMC 2016 3MT[®] Winner:

Conference funding of RM1500

UNMC 2016 3MT[®] Runner Up:

Conference funding of RM750

UNMC 2016 3MT[®] People's Choice:

Book voucher worth RM250

The conference funds will be accessible once the winners decide to attend a conference of their choosing.

Below are the dates and times of key activities:

Activity: To register your interest:

http://moodle.nottingham.ac.uk/mod/tutorialbooking/tutorialbooking_sessions.php?tutorialid=9944&courseid=11606

Deadline: 9th August 2016 (Tuesday)

Time: Registration closes at midnight

Activity: Compulsory 3MT[®] workshop for participants

Date: 10th August 2016 (Wednesday)

Time: 10am — 12pm

Venue: H1B13

Activity: Submission of static Power Point (**MUST** be done in person and **NOT** via email)

Date: 22nd August 2016 (Monday)

Time: 9am—12pm

Venue: BA61

Activity: 3MT[®] full dress rehearsal

Date: 5th September 2016 (Monday)

Time: All day

Venue: Great Hall

Activity: Participants' check-in for the 3MT[®] event

Date: 6th September 2016 (Tuesday)

Time: 10am — 10.30am (**Late check-ins will be DISQUALIFIED**)

Location: Great Hall

Activity: 3MT[®] competition

Date: 6th September 2016 (Tuesday)

Time: All day (time of completion is subject to change depending on number of participants)

Venue: Great Hall

Activity: Video-recording of the UNMC winner

Date: 14th September 2016 (Wednesday)

Time: All day (or as long as the winner needs)

Venue: F2B13

We look forward to your participation!

The View by...

Dr Ahimsa Campos-Arceiz

Associate Professor, MEME's Principal Investigator, School of Environmental Science

It's all about the people

The pride of seeing UNMC grad students shining at an international conference

Bill Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign was famously summarised by James Carville as *It's the economy, stupid*. Conserving biodiversity in the 21st century is a bit more complex than designing catchy political campaigns but, if I had to try, I would follow a similar formula – *It's all about the people*. (And I spare you the insult.)

But please don't get me wrong. This is not about New Conservation and the idea that for conservation to matter it needs to serve the interests of people. Not really. I strongly believe in conservation for the sake of conservation; in wilderness; in that biodiversity matters more than people. This is a whole different discussion...

No. What I mean is that the best way to achieve effective conservation policies and practices is by infecting people with conservation values and then empowering them to have long and impactful careers. Andy Mack eloquently put it in a recent interview with Mongabay – 'The key to tropical conservation: invest in people'.

Few times I've felt as proud as I did at Conservation Asia 2016, the joint conference of SCB Asia and ATBC Asia-Pacific (29 June - 2 July, Singapore). One of the largest and most interest conservation conferences ever held in Asia. For me, it was the first time I attended an academic conference without presenting any paper in the official program. And the reason why I didn't present any paper is because I'm becoming redundant in a team with plenty of very well-qualified students and staff. MEME and our extended research group contributed as many as **13 presentations**. The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus had 21 delegates, including five undergrads and 10 grad students!

I know well that research alone doesn't necessarily translate into effective conservation for biodiversity. But seeing so much good research coming from young Malaysians and an institution that six years ago had no conservation in its program, makes me feel extremely optimistic about the role that this generation will play for the conservation of Malaysian wildlife and other biodiversity. This is very good news for Malaysia.



Composite image of UNMC's students, staff, and close collaborators attending and presenting papers at Conservation Asia 2016

SWIRL @ Nucleus

So What's It Really Like?

Lee Yee Mun

PhD graduate, School of Psychology

There was a period of time where I never felt so down in my life, which was during the end of my PhD. I think it is a common fear for most graduates, which is to be asked career questions when the PhD ends. I hated those questions and had no answer to them. It was not because I did not know what I want to do, but I did not know how to achieve something that seemed difficult.

When I started writing my thesis, I signed up to different job search webpages. This was so I would receive notifications every week about postdoc opportunities in the UK. What I realised was that getting a postdoc in a research area that was related to my PhD was rarer than expected. I told myself to be flexible and expanded my area of interest and also looked at lectureship positions. I applied for many many jobs where I met the minimum requirements and managed to obtain a few interview opportunities. I tried my best during each interview, I got very good feedback from the interviewers despite getting rejections.

At one interview, they told me that they believed I will be able to get a job in the UK, and advised me to keep my enthusiasm, to keep trying, that they were very impressed with me, that I had "great potential in this field" and that I did very well as a fresh grad. However, they gave the job to someone else who had more years of postdoc experience. They invited me to apply for their next postdoc position. I went for interviews in the UK and I was left waiting, I did not get notified if I was accepted or rejected. I thought that if I really am good, why couldn't I get a job? If they do not give me a job, how could I get more experience? How could I succeed in my field? It is not even easy for locals to get a job because it is very competitive; there are hundreds of PhD graduates in Psychology every year and they would give priority to locals and European Economic Area (EEA) citizens due to UK job regulations. I started asking myself, how long more to try before giving up searching for a job in the UK. After a particular interview followed by quite a long silence, they decided to offer me the lectureship. It took them months to notify me because it is part of the UK policy where they are supposed to complete the resident labour market test for employing a non-EEA citizen. I feel so lucky.

My advice to you is: What seems impossible or extremely difficult may not be so. Good luck shines on someone who tries. If you are determined and persistent enough, something good will definitely happen. It is not easy to be able to feel confident all the time during applications and interviews, but at the very least you should just try your best to be a strong competitor.



Lee Yee Mun

Doctoral Training Programme

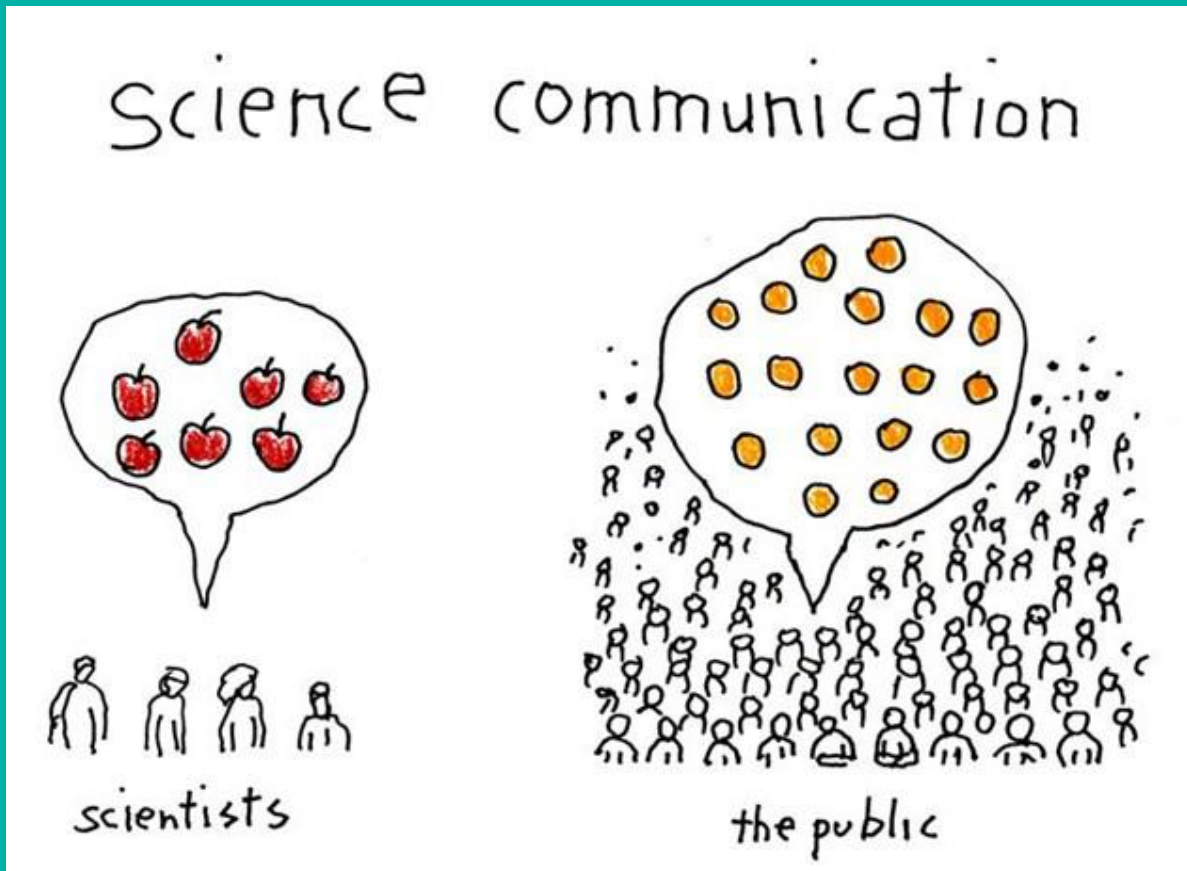
CFF-UNMC DTP

Scientific Communication

Welcome to the ongoing CFF-UNMC DTP column. In this month's issue we look at how researchers use communication tools for sharing scientific knowledge with non-specialised audience.

Communication is a powerful tool in our daily lives, and no less so for researchers. Knowledge sharing is increasing in importance. Our issues and challenges are no longer restricted locally, thus there is an increased need for scientists to communicate within and beyond their individual disciplines.

Scientific communication is the act of conveying science related topics to non-experts. It involves the use of specific skills, media tools and other activities to create a dialogue for sharing scientific knowledge with the public. Scientists are blessed with a credibility factor, as the general public have a tendency to accept scientific facts as valid or truth. Thus, it is important to ensure that the right message is communicated in an understandable language. Moreover, the message ought to be delivered in an engaging manner to retain public attention. It is the scientists' responsibility – and in their best interest – to ensure scientific discoveries are not miscommunicated. Therefore, regardless of the individual field of research, there is a pressing need for scientists to develop skills in effective communication.



Dunne, T (2015) in 8 Myths About Public Understanding of Science. *American Scientist*.

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Scientific communication has numerous advantages for all parties involved. In 1914 Sir Francis Darwin said, “In science the credit goes to the man who convinces the world, not to the man to whom the idea first occurs”. While research may not be driven by who warrants the credit, it is important to engage the public in our ongoing scientific feats. This serves to:

1. Promote wider understanding of science and its relevance to society;
2. Build support and lobby for scientific endeavours;
3. Encourage informed decision-making at all levels, from government to individuals;
4. Foster collaboration and innovation across disciplines;
5. More impactful training of the next generation of scientists;
6. Secure funding for continuing scientific progress;
7. Encourages scientists to look at the bigger picture;
8. Personal development: scientists can become better communicators.

Social media has made it significantly easier to communicate with the masses – often at the expense of accuracy or truthfulness. Therefore it is important for scientists to use the right tools to engage with the desired crowd. Common modes include direct communication with reporters for scientific or non-specialised news outlets, blogging platforms, Twitter, or direct communication with audiences (such as the annual Three Minute Thesis competition). While these different tools may vary vastly in how the message is delivered, the principle remains the same: know your audience, your goal and your message thoroughly.

While scientific training may often include communication skills, a lot of emphasis is placed on communication within a specialised circle such as through peer-reviewed papers. This is indeed beneficial, however, helping scientists develop their public communication skills will most certainly increase the impact of science in the various dimensions of our daily lives.

Take away message: Have you been actively involved in developing your scientific communication skills? The Graduate School offers a strong support platform, and can be contacted for more information.



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