



Causeway

An annual publication
by CUMSA

2022

About us

CUMSA was founded in the Michaelmas term of 1948. Then known as the Cambridge University Malayan Association, it brought together a small community, worlds away from home.

CUMSA's founding committee included former Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew (as President), and former Chief Justice Yong Pung How (as Secretary). Over 60 years since, many Malaysians and Singaporeans have contributed to the organisation – a list which includes Singapore's current Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, and former Minister for Foreign Affairs George Yeo.

When Singapore gained independence from Malaysia in 1965, CUMSA did not similarly divide. The association persevered as a common meeting place for people of both nationalities. Though relationships between the communities were sometimes fraught, the years of precedence spoke volumes when it came time to make those difficult decisions about remaining under one organisation. Though a separate Malaysian association was founded in 1994, we still proudly count a number of Malaysian members among our ranks, along with people of many other nationalities.

The organisation continues to bring together members of the Malaysian and Singaporean communities, albeit on a slightly larger scale. From 12 students at our founding, the organisation has grown to over 300. With this, we have adapted, and our service to the Malaysian and Singaporean community is now multi-faceted.

We hold a number of events throughout the year with the intention of creating a social environment with a familiar South-east Asian air. Amongst others, there is the annual CUMSA Formal, Garden Party, Singapore Food Festival and Oxbridge Games (a sports competition involving the Oxford University Malaysia and Singaporean Students Association).

We also aim to serve the community as a platform for discussion, with access to – and the opportunity to share – informed opinions. Studying overseas so often changes perspectives regarding our place in the world and it is only prudent that we provide support for this through speakers' events and forums for discussion.

We not only aid incoming students in adjusting to their new environment, but also ensure there is a community to which one can turn throughout their time here – never always needed, but always there.

— Outgoing Committee's Message

1. In the blink of an eye, yet another committee term has passed. CUMSA has expanded from its ten members at its founding in 1948 to over 380 this year, including many non-Singaporean and Malaysians. The scope of its work and size of its events has also grown considerably over the years. With a high turnover of members, we thought that it would be useful to document the work of this committee in written form for reference of future committees and aspiring candidates, to allow them to understand the behind-the-scenes work of running the society.
2. There are several groups or individuals we would like to thank for their support throughout the year. Within the society, we would like to thank the previous committee for laying the groundwork for this committee, **Linus Leong** for maintaining our databases throughout the year & **Donovan Sim** and **Rajat Kale** for being instrumental in helping us set up our access programmes. Externally, we are very grateful to our sponsors – namely **Singapore Global Network** and **Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Platinum)**, **Rajah & Tann (Gold)**, **Latham & Watkins, Mapletree, GIC** and **A*STAR (Silver)** and **Smart Nation (Bronze)**.

We are also grateful to our partner societies in Cambridge and across the UK, with special thanks to Oxford for the expanded relationship we had with them throughout the year, especially in the summer. Last but definitely not least, we would like to thank the society as a whole for the confidence and trust they have placed in us throughout the year.



— Finance

3. The longest lasting achievements of this committee are perhaps the marked improvement in the society's finances and the establishment of a comprehensive access programme (discussed in next section). Over the course of the year, we formed partnerships with at least five new sponsors – A*STAR, Smart Nation, Latham & Watkins, Mapletree and GIC and renewed our long-lasting partnership with Rajah & Tann LLP. Singapore Global Network (SGN) has continued to support many of our events, funding them partially or fully, including our Garden Party, Orientation, Formal, Nasi Lemak Brunch and several upcoming events. AIG continued their commission-based sponsorship as our official insurance partner, while HSBC was a new commission-based sponsor.
4. The new sponsorship partnerships formed did not come easy. They were the result of contacting more than a hundred firms and taking numerous meetings. I took more than ten meetings and **Matthias** took a few as well. Sponsorship income funds most of our events which in turn form the backbone of the society. It is therefore important that we maintain these partnerships, a job that involved myself, treasurer Xinyi and sponsorship officer Matthias given the larger number of sponsors.
5. The new sponsorship income allowed us to achieve a large surplus, with sponsorship income from annual sponsors more than quadrupled from the previous year coupled with a projected increase in event-based sponsorships. We also diversified our income sources, through ad-hoc advertising and recruitment services provided to various entities and by offering advertising in our admissions booklet, allowing firms to reach another market namely pre-university students. With more firms expanding their online presence and being able to reach students directly and rely on SingSocs less, future committees will need to think about alternative income sources, as we have.

— Finance

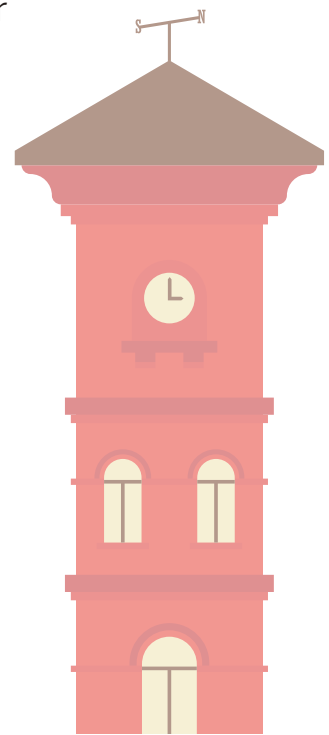
6. Despite the large influx of sponsorship income, the committee, in particular treasurer Xinyi remained extremely prudent in budgeting, and received praise from our senior treasurer Dr Victoria Bateman for her detailed accounting and record-keeping. We ensured that all funds were spent wisely and generated value for the society and Singapore and Malaysian community at Cambridge. Spending was proportionate to the size and nature of events, and there was no excessive spending on particular year or interest groups within the society, based on feedback from previous years.
7. As a principle, we only spent money that we already had. This was possible as the various sponsorships were signed or renewed throughout the year, bringing in a somewhat regular inflow of funds. We hope that this can be continued in the future, as large deficits such as that seen in the previous term are unsustainable in the long run. Sponsorship renewal is also not guaranteed, so it would not be prudent to spend funds on the assumption that a future sponsorship renewal would cover those costs. In fact, only one sponsor remains from two years ago, Rajah & Tann LLP, and we are very grateful for their continued support throughout the years.

— Access, Outreach, & Charity programmes

8. This year, we have built a rather successful access programme and infrastructure that will continue to serve the Singapore and Malaysia applicant community for years to come. This would certainly not have been possible without the tireless efforts of Access Officer **Sophia**, assisted by the passion and enthusiasm of **Natalie**. It also involves a numerous number of volunteers from the society, and we are immensely grateful for their efforts.
9. We compiled an admissions guide, with the help of over thirty current CUMSA members. This has been placed on our website and viewed nearly 1000 times. We conducted at least five admissions talks for individual schools and the public, attracting more than 200 sign-ups, a significant number considering Cambridge receives about 600 applications from Singapore yearly.

Subsequently, we conducted personal statement and admission tests workshops, and paired more than sixty applicants with confirmed interviews with current students to assist in interview preparation. We also have contacts with about twelve JCs and two polytechnics in Singapore and eight schools in Malaysia, who helped us publicise our initiatives.

We are also especially grateful to **Yvswenne**, CUMaS President, for sharing their contact list of schools in Malaysia.



— Access, Outreach, & Charity programmes

10. Future work would include establishing contacts with the remaining schools and expanding the admissions workshops to perhaps four sessions per subject and including TMUA and NSAA, in addition to the current BMAT, LNAT and ENGAA workshops. We could also establish a personal statement checking service and a mentorship programme, where students are assigned a current CUMSA member as a mentor to guide them through the entire admissions process.
11. We had received a sponsorship proposal from a prominent private for-profit admissions counselling service, where they proposed a partnership in the form of admissions talks jointly organised by themselves and CUMSA in order to allow them to acquire more customers, in exchange for a fee. We felt that such a proposal in the form that was presented to us would not have been in line with the values and nature of our access programme but we remained open to other proposals. We subsequently did not hear back from this firm however.
12. On the charity side, we had our first ever auction at our formal, raising more than £300 for two charities through auction of a photograph by Joshua Tan and painting by Karen Lee, in addition to the lucky draw that raised more than £200 for three charities. CUMSA does not support particular charities but rather the spirit of giving to the less fortunate, thus formal participants had the choice of which of the charities they wished to donate to, and the auction proceeds were donated to charities chosen by Joshua and Karen respectively. We hope that this can be expanded to a greater number of auction items in the future and more events can have a charitable aspect to them.

13. As for outreach, we partnered with the Islamic Society as part of their homeless outreach programme. A small group of CUMSA volunteers joined regular Islamic Society volunteers in distributing food and hot drinks to the homeless in Cambridge on a weekly basis, and made recycled blankets for them during a session in November. We hope that these outreach events can be expanded in the future such as by partnering volunteer organisations including soup kitchens in Cambridge and Singapore.

— Events

14. CUMSA held many events this year, with a consistently packed term card averaging slightly more than one event a week. Our summer term card was also rather full, with numerous events for freshers and non-freshers, including a dialogue with Minister Lawrence Wong co-organised by OUMSSA, the Warwick Summer Games, and a movie outing with other SingSocs.

For the first time since 2019, our orientation was entirely in-person, which was even before most current final-year students had matriculated. We have our event officers **Helen** and **Jermaine** to thank for taking the lead and planning events in a very thoughtful and creative manner, paying close attention to individual details yet ensuring that events served their individual purposes well.

15. The ski trip held at La Plagne, France in December was our largest in recent history, with 82 participants, including from other universities. Special mention to sports secretary **Yuxuan** for handling the administration related to the ski trip, even as it increased with the greater number of participants.

— Events

16. Beginning this year, we also organised weekly brunches and badminton sessions. The brunches were either in the form of a free local meal, such as chicken rice or nasi lemak, or a meal at a college brunch. The local meals were very well-received, but the number of such meals were limited due to budgetary concerns. The badminton sessions were held weekly at Kelsey Kerridge with CUMSA paying the court booking fees, and were similarly very well-received.
17. We would like to highlight the large number of collaborations that we undertook as a committee and the good relationships formed with others. We have a dozen or so partner societies with whom we offer discounted tickets to some of our events in exchange for publicity, with some of their members subsequently joining CUMSA after attending our events. We also organised swaps with many other national and cultural societies.

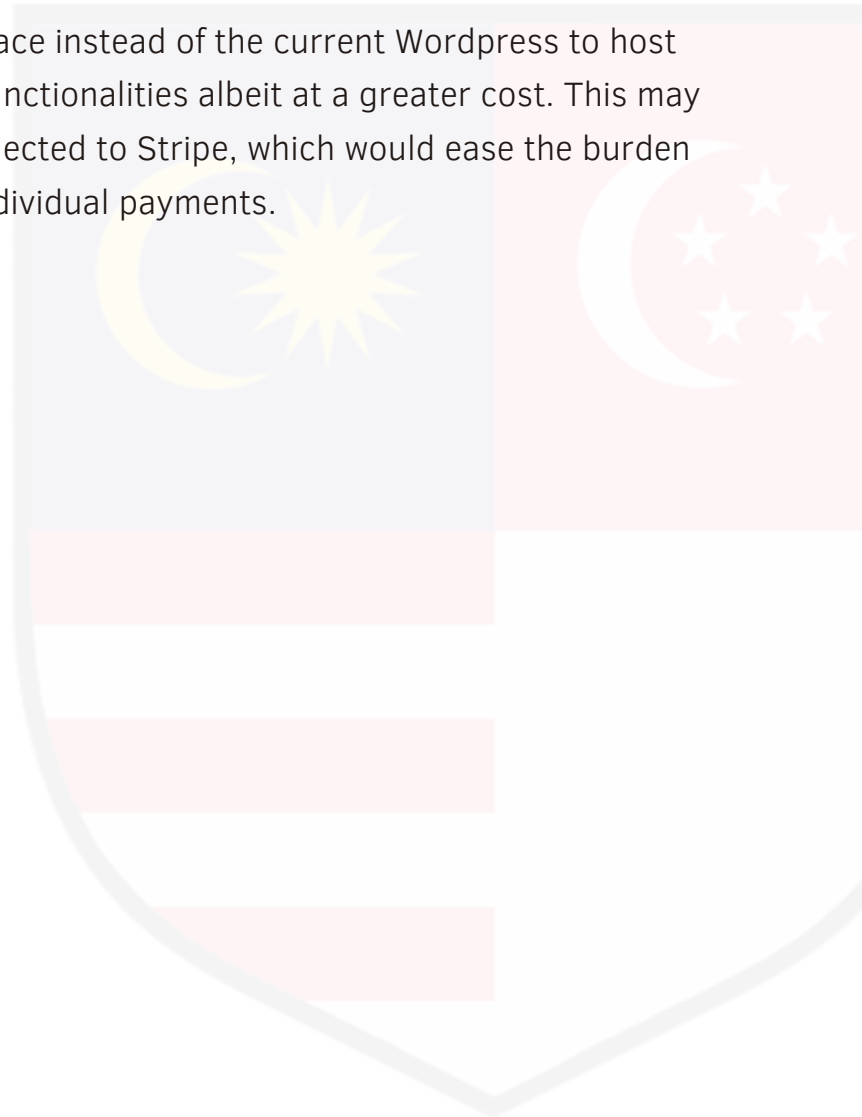
On the access side, we partnered with Downing's Medical Society to deliver our BMAT workshop, and OUMSSA and UKSLSS to deliver our LNAT workshop. This allowed more people to benefit from these workshops as they reached a wider audience. A*STAR, our Silver sponsor, assisted in publicising our talks to their mailing list of JC and Polytechnic students. We are very grateful for this.

18. The greater number of events naturally placed greater pressure on publicity officer **Nicolas** to design and post publicity material promptly. He performed extremely well, in addition to designing stash in multiple different forms for the society and responding to our social media inboxes, which received many more messages from prospective students as a result of our comprehensive access programmes. For the future, as the society continues to expand, it is hoped that the newly created role of Vice-President would be able to assist the publicity officer in posting on our many different social media channels, while the publicity officer focuses on designs.

— Database & website

19. One of the shortcomings of this committee is probably the lack of a database officer, which meant that the rest of the committee took on the job of updating the website and databases. The previous database officer, **Linus Leong**, was very kind to help us maintain the databases where our abilities fell short. It is also for this reason that we have amended the constitution to ensure that a database officer is present in each committee, as the skillset required is very specific to the job.

20. We maintained and updated the website to the best of our abilities, including creating a new section dedicated to our access initiatives. Future committees could consider using Squarespace instead of the current Wordpress to host the website, as it has greater functionalities albeit at a greater cost. This may include a ticketing system connected to Stripe, which would ease the burden on the treasurer of checking individual payments.



— Concluding remarks

21. There were events and ideas that we would have liked to pursue but were unable to for various reasons. These included a day trip to another city, possibly to visit another SingSoc in the UK, volunteering at a food bank in Cambridge, a Chinese New Year event and networking/career advice sessions with alumni. Future committees could consider holding these events.
22. All in all, it has been a tremendous honour to serve the society as a committee. To the next committee, we hope your time on the committee is as enjoyable and fulfilling. We encourage you to be creative in planning your events and not being afraid of trying out new events, even if there is a small chance of failure. We have had many events, as described in the previous point, that did not go to completion, but we learnt tremendously from the process. We would also encourage you not to feel compelled to replicate the events from our years, even the well-received ones, if you feel that budget and organisational manpower is better spent elsewhere. Moreover, with about 2/3 of each CUMSA batch continuing on to the next year, the novelty of such events may wear off.
24. As your outgoing committee, we collectively hope that CUMSA continues to grow and expand while maintaining its original purpose of uniting and serving Singaporeans and Malaysians at the university. For any of our shortcomings as a committee, we ask for your forgiveness and understanding. We hope that the shared memories formed will last a lifetime and form the basis for long-lasting friendships in the years to come.

Muzammil Arif






President

On behalf of the CUMSA Committee 2022-23



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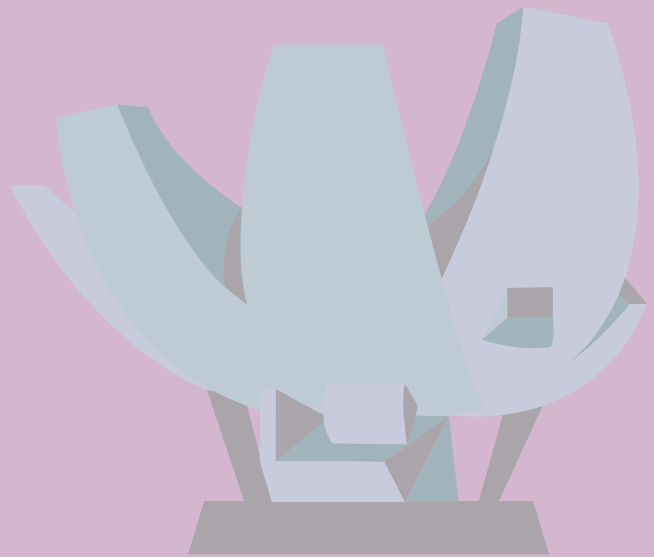
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Committee

2021-2022

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SPORTS SEC.	ANDREW XIE
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EVENTS OFFICERS	JERMAINE WONG HELEN CAI
SPONSORSHIPS OFFR.	MATTHIAS SEAH
WELFARE OFFR.	NATALIE SEAH



CAUSEWAY 2022

— Orientation 2022



This year, CUMSA was able to hold its annual orientation camp in-person, after a hiatus on in-person events due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Held from 19 to 21 August, the event saw incoming first-year students competing in a range of team-building activities across sunny Singapore. Each of the six orientation groups were led by dedicated second- and third-year facilitators and group leaders, who not only looked after their wellbeing and welfare during the camp, but also participated in the games

with them, and answered any questions and concerns they had about starting their journey at Cambridge.

Orientation camps have been a fixture of CUMSA's event offerings for many years now, and are instrumental in creating long-lasting friendships and ties amongst participants. This year's iteration was the no different, where it served to welcome incoming students into the fold, and helped to build strong ties within the Singaporean community in Cambridge.

Welcome (Back) Social & Treasure Hunt

by Natalie Seah, Welfare Officer 21/22

To kickstart CUMSA events at the beginning of Michaelmas Term, we had a whole range of activities for freshers and returning students alike. We returned to the annual Fresher's fair at Parker's Piece, and hosted a Welcome (Back) Social at St Catherine's College, which provided a great opportunity for CUMSA members to get to know new friends and reunite with old ones. It was a great time enjoying T4 bubble tea and chatting with everyone after the long summer break!

The Treasure Hunt was intended to encourage CUMSA members to explore Cambridge and discover new places they have never visited before! The challenges included locating the Dinky Doors around Cambridge, taking creative photos of items that reminded them of Singapore, and trekking to Granchester. They were all great fun for everyone who participated.

We also encouraged members to sign up with their CUMSA families and it was a great time of family bonding with prizes for the best groups. Finally, mystery dinners during term allowed CUMSA members to meet new friends through a close intimate dinner with a chance to have the dinner sponsored.



CAUSEWAY 2022

Pub quiz at Newnham Iris Cafe

CUMSA's pub quiz at the Newnham Iris Cafe saw teams of 2-4 going head to head on a range of quiz topics, from A-level revision to pop culture and current affairs.

Of course, participants were not put through A-level revision again without the prospect of attractive prizes - top performers walked away with cash prizes, while runners-up received Jack's Gelato vouchers, to indulge in a sweet treat after a mind-boggling pub quiz.



Local food brunches

by Muzammil Arif, President 21/22

Ask anyone in CUMSA, and they'll definitely tell you that one of the biggest things they miss about home (whether Singapore or Malaysia) is the food.

Throughout the year, we had a mix of free and highly subsidised buffets with quintessential Singaporean foods such as nasi lemak, chicken rice and chilli crab.

Through these delightful brunch gatherings, CUMSA members have the chance to not only savor delicious food but get to know each other on a personal level.

CAUSEWAY 2022

Welfare pack distribution

by Natalie Seah, Welfare Officer 21/22

The Cambridge term is notoriously rigorous and can feel overwhelming, especially when students are in the thick of it and facing “Week 5 Blues”.

We rolled out a Week 5 welfare giveaway of Jack’s Gelato ice cream to 200 CUMSA members, which was well-received. In addition, welfare packs were packed and distributed to over 300 CUMSA members with local snacks such as instant Teh Tarik and other sweet treats!



Outreach to the homeless

by Muzammil Arif, President 21/22

Throughout the year, CUMSA members took part in homeless outreach sessions organised by the Islamic Society. As part of these sessions, our members helped distribute food and hot drinks to the homeless in Cambridge on a weekly basis.

We also took part in a blanket making sessions, where unused crisp packets were collected and combined to form a warm blanket for the homeless.



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Additionally in the US and Canada, Mapletree owns 21 student accommodation assets with over 15,000 beds.

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Ski Trip 2022

La Plagne Le France, France

by Andrew Xie, Sports Secretary 21/22

CUMSA organised a 7 day ski trip to France, La Plagne. This was the largest ski trip organised by CUMSA to date, with over 70 participants.

Continued on next page

Skiing in La Plagne catered to all skill levels. The expansive, picturesque resort is perfect for beginners and intermediates to improve on long, wide open pistes. Meanwhile, experts can challenge themselves on the vast freeride terrain and off-piste slopes.

The newly renovated centre at La Plagne which received top comfort ratings proved to be one of the most luxurious amongst others. Each room is an ensuite and there is an excellent selection of shops.

The evenings were equally fantastic, with a great selection of drinks at the bar and group games brought the people closer together.

If you love skiing and adventure, this trip is a must! Until the next journey, cheers to the joy of discovery and the thrill of the mountains!



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CUMSA Formal at Churchill College

by Jean Huang, Secretary 21/22

Our annual CUMSA formal brought together over 170 of our members and friends. Apart from food and good company, we also held a lucky draw, a best dressed contest, and gave back to the community through charitable donations and fundraising.

We auctioned two art pieces self-made by our fellow CUMSA members, together with allowing for voluntary additional donations. Donating participants were given the freedom to choose which charities they wished to donate to. We raised £90, £92 and £43 for Ukraine, Cancer Research UK and the floods in Pakistan respectively through the lucky draw, £170 for Oxfam through auction of Karen Lee's painting, £160 for UNHCR through auction of Joshua Tan's photograph and £450 for earthquake victims in Syria and Turkey.

Other fun highlights of the formal included the winner of the best dressed contest, Yang Qize, who not only dressed up as the Joker from the hit movie, but also treated the crowd to the Joker's signature stair dance as he was receiving his prize.



Karen with her art piece, the winning auction team & Arif





Baking with friends

Baking connoisseurs and aspiring bakers alike came together to whip up all sorts of sweet treats (baking expedition courtesy of CUMSA).

Participants were given the option to sign up in pre-selected groups, or to have group members assigned for them. The event gave members the chance to meet with their CUMSA families and orientation group mates, as well as the opportunity to meet new friends.



From cupcakes to cookies and egg tarts, there was no shortage of sweet bakes and smiles in Lent 2022!



Garden Party

by Jermaine Wong,
Events Officer 21/22

Held at the St Edmund's College Garden Room and Orchard, our final farewell for the graduating students was an intimate event, featuring catered hot and cold buffet from the college, as well as Aromi pastries and gelato!

There were also lots of outdoor games and gifts for final year students.



Formal swaps

Throughout the year, CUMSA fostered intercultural connections through swaps with various societies.

From brunch with BanglaSoc on a bright Saturday morning to a desserts social with Middle East and North Africa (MENA) society at Heavenly Desserts, these events created opportunities for our members to forge new friendships and embrace diverse cultures.



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Key Dates

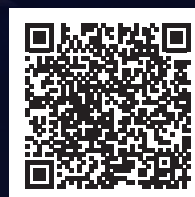
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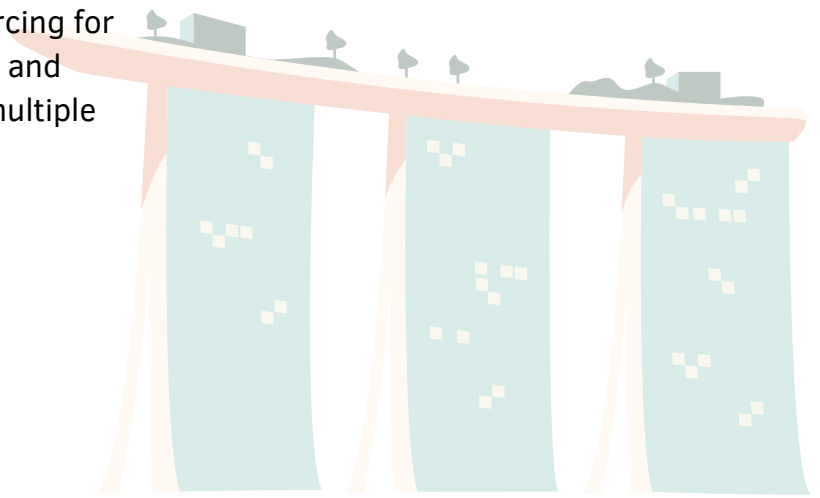
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Singfest

Every year, Singfest is one of CUMSA's biggest events on its Lent term calendar. It brings together the Singaporean and Malaysian community to celebrate our unique culture, heritage, and food.

As with previous years, the food served at Singfest is prepared by multiple teams of CUMSA volunteers. Groups prepare for the festival weeks in advance, sourcing for hard-to-come-by local ingredients and produce, and testing out recipes multiple times to perfect the dishes.



CAUSEWAY 2022

Singfest typically attracts over 150 attendees - and not all of them are from CUMSA! On top of CUMSA members, members from other Southeast Asian organisations also attend to feast on the smorgasbord of Singaporean and Malaysian food offerings at Singfest.

Singfest this year was held on 4 February 2023. It featured familiar local flavours, ranging from chicken rice to *kaya* toast, to *popiah* and *bak ku teh*. As with previous years, attendees were encouraged to bring their own cutlery, in order to reduce the amount of disposable utensils and waste produced by the event.

Singfest also celebrates more than food. Ultimately, it is an opportunity to celebrate our heritage and culture, and to enjoy all the things that make us uniquely Singaporean and Malaysian. Attendees got to mix with familiar faces and friends, and were also treated to performances by talented members of the CUMSA family.

Singfest this year was also a resounding success, and married the best of Singaporean and Malaysian culture and fare in one enjoyable, memorable night.



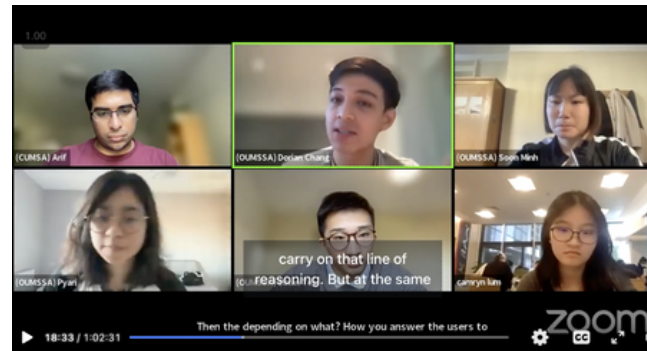
Access & outreach talks

by Sophia He, Access Officer 21/22

CUMSA organised several access talks throughout the year, reaching out to schools across Singapore. We conducted Zoom sessions that attracted over 100 attendees each, working closely with higher education offices to ensure that the application and preparation process was as transparent as possible. This forms part of CUMSA's efforts in giving back to the communities that have nurtured us — ensuring that future generations of potential Cantabs will not be limited by a resource or information deficit.

All in all, we conducted three general admissions talks, a personal statement workshop, an interview workshop and workshops for the ENGAA, BMAT and LNAT, the latter two in collaboration with Downing College's Whitby Medical Society and OUMSSA respectively. In total, we reached more than 200 students across more than 15 schools in Singapore and Malaysia. In addition, nearly 50 CUMSA members came together to write an online 103-page admissions guide (tiny.cc/CUMSAAdmGuide) with college and subject specific information on all parts of the process, with more than 1,000 views to date.

Going forward, CUMSA hopes to formalise our relationships with these schools, and work closely with them in bringing our annual talks and workshops to more students.



LNAT Workshop co-organised with OUMSSA

CUMSA X WHITBY BMAT SESSIONS

Advice on how to tackle the BMAT from current Cambridge Medicine students

Date: 1st and 8th October 2022
Time: 10 - 11am (United Kingdom)
 5 - 6pm (Singapore/Malaysia)

Sign-up Link: tinyurl.com/WhitbyCUMSABMAT



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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA
AND SINGAPORE ASSOCIATION

APPLICATION GUIDE

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Graduate events

While the majority of students at Cambridge are undergraduates, there is still a sizeable Singaporean and Malaysian graduate population at Cambridge.

CUMSA has a range of graduate-focused programs and events, such as inter-college family groups, where first-year graduates are matched with current graduates at Cambridge.

This year, CUMSA held two graduate events, a sponsored brunch and dinner, to allow graduate students an opportunity to meet their fellow peers in a relaxed setting.

In the coming years, CUMSA hopes to be able to build upon its existing graduate-focused efforts, to continue fostering and maintaining its tightly-knit graduate committee.

— Dinner & Dance

by Jermaine Wong,
Events Officer 21/22

D&D 2022 was held at the Hilton and included lots of fun games, performances, food, and drinks! The Jazz Catz performed at the reception while guests sipped on prosecco (and non-alcoholic drinks), played mahjong/poker, and took photos at our little photo booth corner.

Later on during the dinner, we had a variety of acts, from K-pop dances to a game show and lucky draw, before ending the night with an open dance floor – it wouldn't be a true D&D without one!



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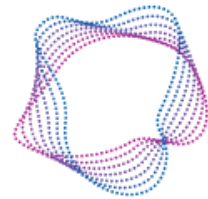
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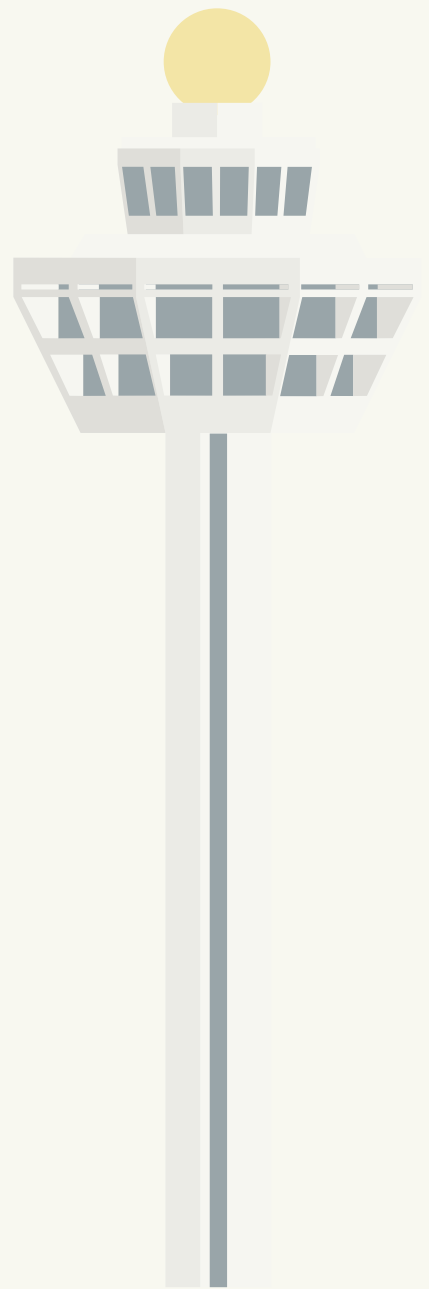
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“The opportunities to learn from more experienced colleagues and build my network of contacts while I am still studying is just one of the many advantages of being a Foreign Service Scholar, and will be something I continue to value going forward.”

Joshua Lim
University of Cambridge, UK
Leiden University, The Netherlands

▼ Joshua getting advice from senior FSOs during his Pre-Departure Programme



An FSO's work comes with many unique challenges. As a Foreign Service Scholar, I have had the chance to pick up plenty of invaluable tips and techniques even before starting my career. During my studies in the UK, my mentor was an FSO who worked at the Singapore High Commission in London. He never failed to catch up with me and was always willing to offer guidance and advice. Even when we could not meet in person due to COVID-19 restrictions, we would still keep in touch via email.

During my internships at the various directorates and overseas missions, there was also always something to learn from the senior FSOs and supervisors I met. They all had interesting and unique career experiences to share. The opportunities to learn from more experienced colleagues and build my network of contacts while I am still studying is just one of the many advantages of being a Foreign Service Scholar, and will be something I continue to value going forward. Looking ahead, as I gain more experiences of my own, I hope to share them with new FSOs too!

A world of unique experiences awaits you as a Foreign Service Scholar



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YOU
ANSWER
THE CALL
TO TAKE
SINGAPORE
FURTHER?

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COURSES:

Most disciplines

INSTITUTIONS:

Most reputable overseas universities, including those in China, France, Germany and Japan

TERMS OF AWARD:

Tuition fees and approved charges

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Return airfare

Sponsorship of approved exchange programme and Master's Degree*

REQUIREMENTS:

Singapore citizens or permanent residents intending to take up citizenship

Strong leadership qualities, an interest in public diplomacy and international relations

GCE 'A' Levels, International Baccalaureate, Polytechnic Diploma (with Merit) or equivalent

BOND PERIOD:

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*Subject to meeting the requirements for sponsorship of Master's programmes.