ASIAN UNDERGRADUATE SUMMIT 2018

Leadership in a Complex World:
Taking On Diffused Responsibilities

Summit Concept Document

Dear Seoul National University,

On behalf of the Executive and Organising Committees of the Asian Undergraduate Summit (AUS) 2018, thank you very much for indicating interest in supporting our endeavour! We are extremely excited about being able to embark on this collaboration. This Concept Document contains information regarding AUS, its 2018 theme, and the roles that Host Universities play in the AUS Experience. My team and I have done our best to ensure that it is as comprehensive as possible, however, if clarifications are needed at any point, please do not hesitate to approach either Ms Toh Le Yi, or myself. Our emails and phone numbers are contained in the email that this document was attached in.

Once again, we thank you for your interest, and we are very much looking forward to working together with you!

Kindest regards,

Chow Kit Ying (Ms)

ChairpersonAsian Undergraduate Summit 2018

AUS is a student-led and student-run international program within the National University of Singapore (NUS) University Scholars Programme. **It was initiated with the aim of building a platform for undergraduates across Asia, from various disciplines and backgrounds, to engage in meaningful academic, cultural and experiential exchange.** This mission has guided Summit organisers and partners through three iterations, and the Summit's community has grown from strength to strength.

Since the inaugural Summit in 2015, the overarching theme of AUS has been 'Leadership in a Complex World': referencing the bold thinkers and action-takers we hope to inspire through the conference. Each year, a new theme is proposed by the AUS Organising Committee at the time, and previous themes include the 'Food, Water, and Energy Nexus' (2015), 'Smart Cities, Smart Citizens' (2016), and 'Disruptive Change in Everyday Life' (2017). Beginning with 100 participants from six ASEAN universities in 2015 and 2016, the Summit expanded in 2017 to accommodate nearly twice as many students, and to include ten overseas partners in total, including four overseas host universities. As in previous years, the format of AUS 2018 will comprise two segments: (i) the Overseas Leg, where Overseas Host Universities (OHUs) will host a five-day programme, and (ii) the Singapore leg, where participants from the OHUs, as well as the Overseas Participating Universities (OPUs), will gather in NUS for six days.

Through the Summit, participants will embark on a learning journey spanning several weeks and countries. They will engage with issues pertinent to some of Asia's key cities, and be given opportunities to meet with and speak to experts studying and dealing with such issues; from the professors of some of Asia's greatest centres of learning, to captains of local and regional industry and governance. At the same time, with international exchange being a major part of AUS' programme structure, we hope to offer our peers from across Asia a unique space: one where they can get to know, and learn from one another. Out of this immersive experience, we hope to equip participants with tools to make sense of, and reflect on their learning journeys. Additionally, AUS seeks to provide participants with an opportunity to exercise their creativity, and present unique initiatives and products to combat the problems explored during the conference.
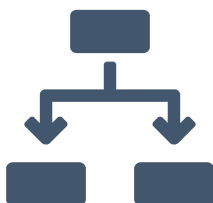
Summit Details

Target Audience

Students from your university interested in cross-cultural exchange, who are curious to learn about societies around Asia and meet their peers from these places. AUS Participants may come from any discipline, and we encourage universities to send participants from a variety of majors. They should also have a reasonable grasp of English, as this will be the language used during the Summit. Topics that may be explored will likely be quite technical and strong English capabilities will maximize their learning.

Participant Breakdown

In total, the AUS2018 cohort will have approximately 180 participants.
- 4 Overseas Host Universities: 17 students each
- 5 Overseas Partner Universities: 8 students each
- 4 Singapore Partner Universities: 8 students each
- National University of Singapore: 40 students
- Singaporean students: 72, Partner University students: 108 (include ratio?)

Overseas and Singapore Leg Dates

All of the Overseas Legs of AUS (for each Overseas Host Universities) will take place before the Singapore Leg.
- Singapore Leg: **15 July – 23 July 2018**
  - Check in on 15 July, check out on 23 July
- Overseas Leg: **1 July – 8 July 2018**
  - Check in on 1 July, check out on 7 or 8 July (at university's discretion).

Summit Costing

Programme costs, transport, accommodation, meals and planned activities borne by Overseas Host Universities (OHUs and NUS). **Each OHU will play host to a total of 45 students.**

Participants to bear cost of all round-trip airfare to OHU city and to Singapore, as well as any personal expenditures.

AUS2018 Official Theme: Taking On Diffused Responsibilities

Context

Every society faces different challenges at the systemic level. Examples quickly come to mind: income inequality, an ageing society, women's rights, issues in and around environmental sustainability. Many members of society are likely aware of these issues, and many are probably passionate about them too. We often view these challenges as large-scale, complex, and beyond the ability of individual members of society to make a difference in. Instinctually, these problems need *public policy*, or *corporations* to be solved. And just as often, a sense of intimidation ("this is a complex issue, how would I know where to begin?") or apathy ("but I don't care") leads individuals to on-pass ownership of these individuals to others ("someone else will do it – maybe the government or a business").

What Are 'Diffused Responsibilities'?

The theme for AUS2018 draws on a concept from social psychology involving individual failing to take responsibility for a situation because they believe that others will do so. It is this pushing away of one's responsibilities towards societal issues that AUS2018 is concerned with, and all AUS OHUs are invited to choose a social issue that is especially pertinent in their city, to act as a context for this phenomenon to be explored.

In Singapore, two examples of issues where responsibilities have diffused include wastage, and the difficulty low-income households face in accessing at-home care for their elderly family members. Do take note these examples are purely for explanation. AUS OHUs should not feel restricted to either 'environmental' or 'social' issues only in choosing a topic for their respective Summits. Instead, we would recommend selecting an issue that is of vital relevance to the OHU's city, and that has attracted some support from local civil society organisations or non-governmental groups. To further illustrate how a topic can be assessed for suitability, we will use the first example from above. As a reasonably affluent and fast-paced society, convenience is king. Thus, huge volumes of plastic and other non-biodegradable waste are generated daily. With Singapore's only landfill running out of space by 2035, solutions are needed fast. Individual Singaporeans, however, whilst aware of the importance of recycling their waste, have largely not changed their consumption habits. The scope of our Summit might be then to dig deeper into this issue, and to offer insight for our participants into the heart of the problem: why this problem persists, and how it may be changed.
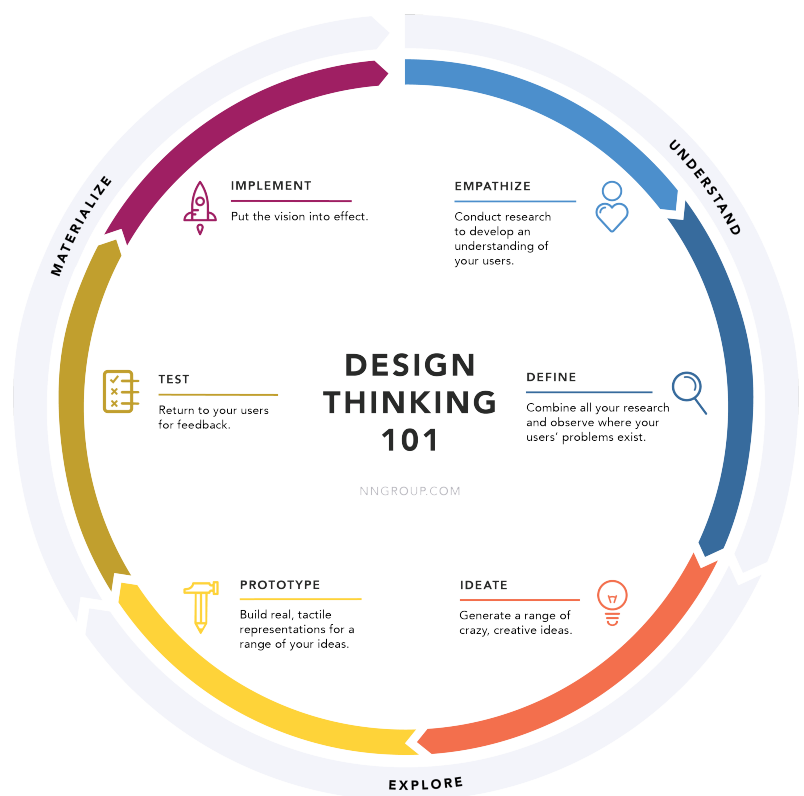
Overseas Leg

The first leg of the Summit will consist of a 5-day programme organised in partnership with our 4 OHUs. Participants will be immersed in activities planned around the topics chosen by the respective universities including talks/dialogues, site-visits, interviews and brainstorming sessions. Students will be placed into groups consisting of students from different universities, and will remain in these groups throughout the conference, from the overseas to the Singapore leg. They will also be trained in methods of formal observation, which can include ethnographic or market research techniques, including interview skills, and will be required to maintain a journal of their experiences and ideas throughout AUS. By the end of the Overseas Leg, participants' journals should also contain problem statements that they have developed, in association with what they have observed and learnt.

Official Skills Framework Of AUS2018: Design Thinking Framework (DTF)

The DTF is a solutions-based, user-centric approach to problem solving. It has gained popularity amongst problem-solvers of all kinds, from engineers and designers, to entrepreneurs, and policy makers.

In the last 3 iterations of AUS, the DTF has been the official skills framework for our participants, and has received strong positive feedback on its applicability. We intend to continue exposing our participants to the framework in 2018, with the objective of aiding

them in their process of **consolidating and reflecting** upon the learning they derive from their AUS experience. AUS typically focuses on the 'Understand' and 'Explore' phases of the Design Thinking cycle (above). During the Overseas Leg, through their exposure to formal observation techniques, and embarking on site-visits and interview sessions, participants

would have been informally introduced to the 'Empathise' and 'Define' states of the DTF. Following the Overseas Leg, trained facilitators in the Singapore leg will help them take their observations and problem statements developed in the 'Understand' part of the cycle, and workshop them into ideas and prototypes in the 'Explore' part.

Singapore Leg

Similar to the Overseas Leg, participants will undergo a 6-day learning journey in the Singaporean context as well. They will utilise the skills of observation they picked up from the Overseas Leg to engage with the site-visits, panel discussions/dialogues and interview sessions in Singapore, and they will be encouraged to formulate problem statements for the Singapore leg, similar to what they have done with the OHUs.
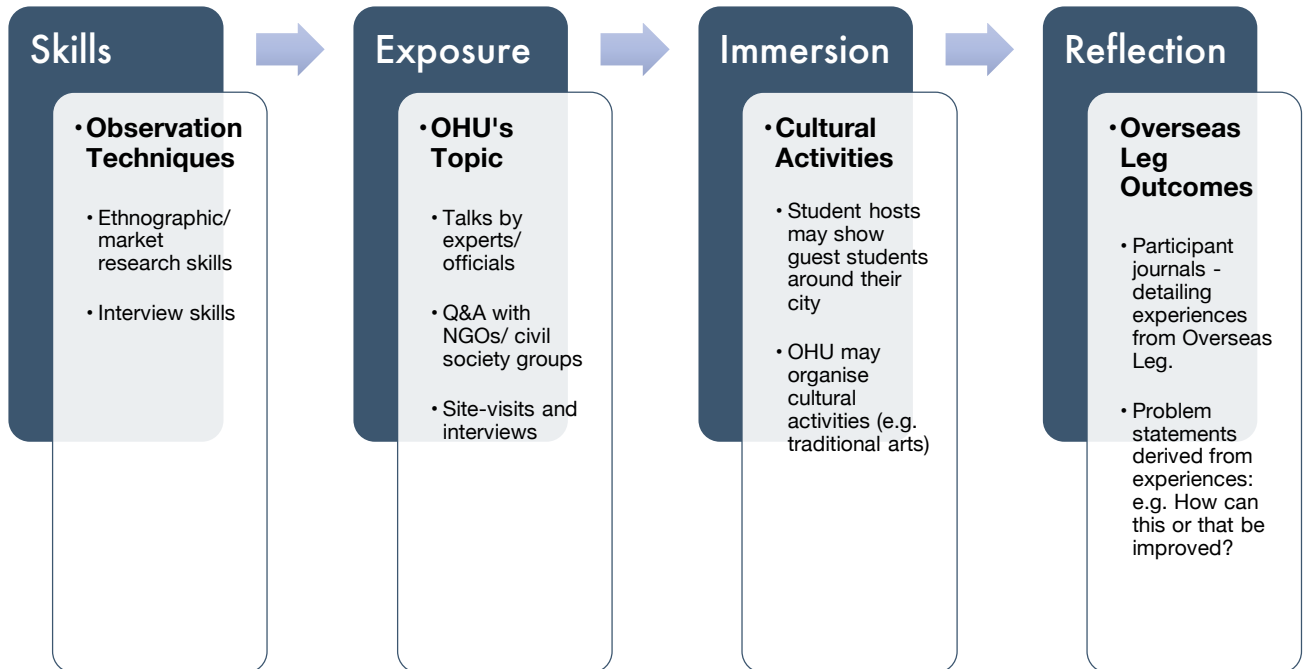
However, parallel to this will be their formal introduction to the DTF (as elaborated above). Over the course of the Singapore leg, participants will be hard at work further developing their problem statements (from the Overseas Leg or the Singapore Leg) into **ideas for initiatives and/or products**. Participant groups may opt to either pursue solutions for the issues they observed in the Overseas Leg, or they may together decide to change track and develop solutions for the topic in the Singapore Leg.

At the end of the Singapore leg, participants will be given the opportunity to pitch their ideas to the whole AUS2018 cohort. Each presentation will be graphically recorded, and entered into the AUS Idea Springboard portal: a website where ideas from across the years are stored. The portal acts as an open-source for ideas, and participants from the various cohorts and various teams of AUS will be encouraged to look through the collected ideas, and proceed to implement them in their own communities.

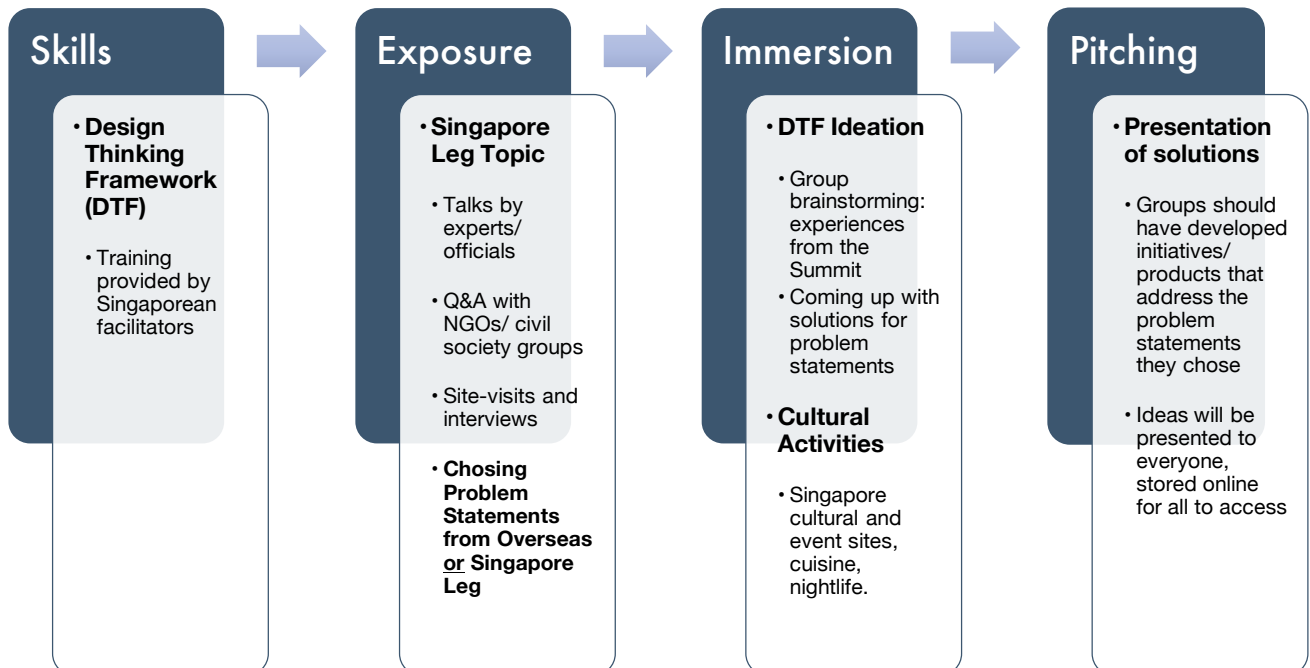The Executive Committee for AUS is in the process of discussing the judging criteria for these ideas, and hope to be able to provide monetary rewards for outstanding presentations. We will also be putting in place structures for groups that do go on to implement AUS ideas in their communities to receive funding for their initiatives. Details will continue to be furnished as they are made concrete.

AUS2018: Participant Experience Journey Map

Overseas Leg

| Skills | → | Exposure | → | Immersion | → | Reflection |

Skills
- **Observation Techniques**
  - Ethnographic/ market research skills
  - Interview skills

Exposure
- **OHU's Topic**
  - Talks by experts/ officials
  - Q&A with NGOs/ civil society groups
  - Site-visits and interviews

Immersion
- **Cultural Activities**
  - Student hosts may show guest students around their city
  - OHU may organise cultural activities (e.g. traditional arts)

Reflection
- **Overseas Leg Outcomes**
  - Participant journals - detailing experiences from Overseas Leg.
  - Problem statements derived from experiences: e.g. How can this or that be improved?

Singapore Leg

| Skills | → | Exposure | → | Immersion | → | Pitching |

Skills
- **Design Thinking Framework (DTF)**
  - Training provided by Singaporean facilitators

Exposure
- **Singapore Leg Topic**
  - Talks by experts/ officials
  - Q&A with NGOs/ civil society groups
  - Site-visits and interviews
- **Chosing Problem Statements from Overseas or Singapore Leg**

Immersion
- **DTF Ideation**
  - Group brainstorming: experiences from the Summit
  - Coming up with solutions for problem statements
- **Cultural Activities**
  - Singapore cultural and event sites, cuisine, nightlife.

Pitching
- **Presentation of solutions**
  - Groups should have developed initiatives/ products that address the problem statements they chose
  - Ideas will be presented to everyone, stored online for all to access

Topic Selection

Based on the explanation of the theme above, each OHU is invited to submit a Summit Programme Proposal based on a topic of their own choosing. If at any point the organisers of the OHU Summit would like to discuss their choices with members of the Singapore organising committee, they should feel free to contact us. Additionally, a Programme Proposal Template (PPT) can be found in an annexe of this Concept Document.

Programme Requirements for OHUs

1. Provide participants with one lecture/seminar/short course on **ethnographic, market research and/or formal interviewing and observational techniques**.

   This course can be taught by a professor of the university, or an otherwise recognised third party. The objective of this is to allow for participants to become better observers of the places they visit as part of the Summit, and the people they interview, as these skills are vital to the practice of the Design Thinking Framework.

2. Construct learning activities (talks, site-visits, brainstorming sessions, interview sessions) based on a **5W1H model**

   5W1H stands for *Who, What, When, Where, Why, How*. Each activity in the PPT should be geared towards helping participants ask a question beginning with one of these question words, rather than providing them with a strict answer. As much as possible, each of the question words should emerge over the course of the programme.

   In the example given for Singapore, we may organise a **talk** conducted by a government representative from the National Environmental Agency, with the **topic**: *What* are the challenges facing Singapore recycling system?

3. Proposed activities **must include** a site visit, interview session, and sharing.

   Talks and seminars will almost definitely be a part of the proposal, however, we will also require that universities offer at least one site-visit to a place relevant to the chosen topic; one interview session where participants are able to interact with people living in the university's city (this may be at any location); and one Question and Answer sharing session where a local advocacy group/civil society group/non-government organisation is invited to interact with students, and where participants are allowed to ask them questions. OHUs are encouraged to offer more than one.

OHU Student Participants

In total, each OHU may send 17 students to participate in AUS. In order to foster a spirit of mutual hospitality and care-taking amongst students from the various OHUs and Singapore, we would require that students from our OHUs who are AUS participants also attend their own university's Summit.

Cultural Activities and Immersion

To better facilitate the interactions and bonding amongst students, the OHU is encouraged to set aside time for cultural activities, or free time. At these points, Host Students (above section) may take the lead and show guest students around the OHU city, or OHUs may organise cultural activities within the university itself. In past Summits, when we worked with the University of Delhi, free time was given to students to explore local markets with host students. And in Thailand's Mahidol University, Summit organizers there opted to offer Muay Thai exposure lessons to students. These are simply examples, and we look forward to reading 2018 OHUs' creative suggestions.

Discussion with AUS Singapore Organising Committee

Once the PPT has been submitted to the Singapore team, we will be in touch with the relevant OHU organising committees. This is to make the process of refining OHU programmes simpler, and also to allow for interactions between NUS student organisers, and their overseas counterparts. More details of this can be worked out at a later stage in the planning process.

AUS Partnership Ecosystem

Three kinds of partners exist within the AUS Ecosystem, these are the Overseas Host Universities (OHUs), Overseas Partner Universities (OPUs), and Local Partner Universities (LPU). The AUS Singapore Leg will be hosted by NUS, the only local host university.

Overseas Host University (OHU)

Our invitation to your university pertains to this class of partnership. OHUs are a special type of Overseas Partner University (OPU): instead of simply sending students to take part in AUS, OHUs host a Summit themselves in conjunction with AUS, and these Overseas Summits are collectively called the Overseas Leg.

OHUs are identified by region, initially. The AUS Organising Committee in Singapore began by dividing Asia into broad regions, seeking to represent China, India, Northeast Asia, and Southeast Asia. This is to maximise the diversity of options that all participants have, as well as the make-up of each Summit cohort. Precisely because the Overseas Leg makes up one-half of the AUS Experience for all of our participants, we naturally extend our invitations judiciously, and have specially selected your university. We hope you will grant us the privilege of being our esteemed partners and guests.
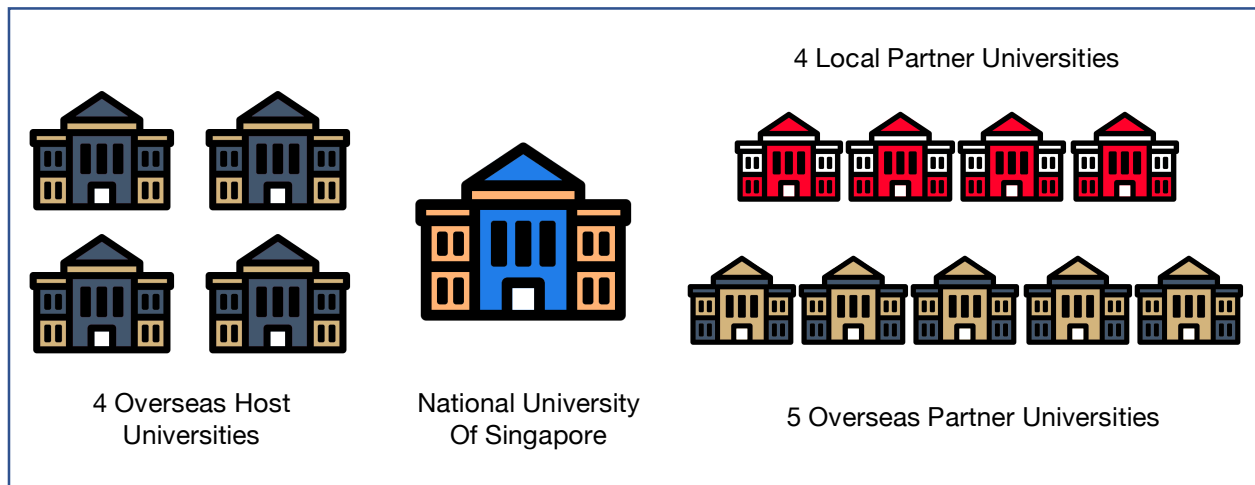
Overseas Partner University (OPU)

OPUs are normal overseas partners that do not host Overseas Summits, but are no less important contributors to AUS. Similar to OHUs, we ensure that the different regions of Asia are represented by selected OPUs, and students from these institutions add different perspectives and experiences into the mix of AUS participants. OPU participants will each select one Overseas Leg, and embark upon that learning journey. And together with OHU participants, all overseas participants will make their way to Singapore for the second leg of AUS.

Local Partner University (LPU)

LPUs function similarly to OPUs, but consist of four Singaporean universities: Singapore Management University, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore University of Technology and Design, and Singapore Institute of Technology. Each of these universities inhabits a niche in the educational landscape of Singapore, with different foci on business, management and finance, engineering and research, design, and computing. They will add depth to the variation in Singaporean participants.

AUS2018 Participant Journey

4 Local Partner Universities

4 Overseas Host
Universities

National University
Of Singapore

5 Overseas Partner Universities

OVERSEAS LEG

OHU 1

OHU1:	5 Students
Other OHUs:	12 Students
OPUs:	10 Students
NUS:	10 Students
LPUs:	8 Students

OHU 2

OHU2:	5 Students
Other OHUs:	12 Students
OPUs:	10 Students
NUS:	10 Students
LPUs:	8 Students

OHU 3

OHU3:	5 Students
Other OHUs:	12 Students
OPUs:	10 Students
NUS:	10 Students
LPUs:	8 Students

OHU 4

OHU4:	5 Students
Other OHUs:	12 Students
OPUs:	10 Students
NUS:	10 Students
LPUs:	8 Students

68 Students from OHUs
40 Students from OPUs
Total: 108 Overseas Participants

SINGAPORE LEG
Total of 180 Participants

40 NUS Students
32 Students from LPUs
Total: 72 Singaporean Participants