

Biz plan contest to pioneer new Youth Boot Camp

Through this first-of-its-kind, nation-wide Youth Boot Camp, Start-Up@Singapore hopes to teach students how to conceive innovative ideas and realize these ideas commercially.

BY VIKRAM PARSANI

COME mid-December, Start-Up@Singapore (S@S) will bring together some 80 handpicked students from colleges and polytechnics across Singapore to teach them the fundamentals required to start their own businesses.

Modeled along the lines of S@S' highly successful, two-day Semifinalist Boot Camp, this new Youth Boot Camp is distinguishable by its novel, hands-on and highly interactive Idea Generation workshop to be conducted by Mr Prabhjit Singh from the National Library Board. "Many of our younger participants over the past few years experienced some difficulty in coming up with an innovative, yet viable, business idea. In view of this, we decided to organize a Youth Boot Camp to help students with the challenging idea generation and commercialization processes," said Ms Lee Min Xuan, Vice Lead of S@S'08.

Last year witnessed a record-setting 234 teams and 902 participants taking part in S@S' business plan competition. With an average age of 22, participants were also the youngest ever in S@S' history. Mr Veerappan Swaminathan, Lead of S@S'08, was unequivocal whilst stating his organization's intention "to get more and more students involved in Singapore's entrepreneurial ecosystem through customized, youth-based events like the Youth Boot Camp."

In addition to the Idea Generation workshop, students at



S@S' Youth Boot Camp will also be exposed to many more hands-on and highly interactive workshops such as the Financials workshop by Mr Eric Tachibana from Merrill Lynch, the Marketing workshop by Mr Shane Chong from the University of Manchester, the Executive Summary workshop by Dr Bernard Leong from Singapore Entrepreneurs, the Value Proposition workshop by Mr Laurence Chan from Fortune Venture Management and the Pitching workshop by Mr Eric Feng who wrote *The FAQ Book on Public Speaking*.

The Youth Boot Camp will eventually culminate in an Elevator Pitch Contest wherein students will attempt to sell their innovative idea, value proposition, marketing strategy and projected financials to a panel of youth entrepreneurs, industry professionals and venture capitalists in the hope of taking home a substantial cash prize.

Scheduled to run from 9.00am to 6.00pm on 14 and 15 December 2007, S@S' Youth Boot Camp will be held at various venues in the NUS Business School.

Please refer to **Annex A** for Youth Boot Camp programme details.

Please refer to **Annex B** for Youth Boot Camp speaker profiles.

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Featured Sponsor:





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Annex A – Programme Details

| | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| 0900 – 0930 | Introduction Veerappan Swaminathan, S@S'08 | Setting Up a Business , Lee Min Xuan, S@S'08 |
| 0930 – 1000 | | Idea Generation Prabhjit Singh National Library Board |
| 1000 – 1030 | Lunch | |
| 1030 – 1100 | | Value Proposition Laurence Chan, Fortune Venture Management |
| 1100 – 1130 | Marketing Shane Chong, University of Manchester | |
| 1130 – 1200 | | Home Sweet Home |
| 1200 – 1230 | Home Sweet Home | |
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| 1800 – 1830 | Home Sweet Home | |
| 1900 – 1930 | | Home Sweet Home |



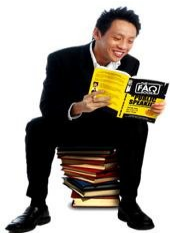
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Annex B – Speaker Profiles



Dr Bernard Leong
Co-Founder, Singapore Entrepreneurs
Steering Committee Member, Start-Up@Singapore
Mentor and Advisor, NUS Entrepreneurship Society

Dr Bernard Leong is currently a mentor and advisor to the NUS Entrepreneurship Society and sits on the Steering Committee of the Start-Up@Singapore business plan competition. Prior to working at NUS, he worked with MIT-\$100K and Cambridge University Entrepreneurs as an established and respected business plan competition organizer. Currently, he is spending his after-work time to search and mentor new start-ups in the interactive digital media space via Thymos Capital. He is also the co-founder of the SGEntrepreneurs where he serves as an eternal evangelist in getting people to start new ventures. In his capacity as an Adjunct Research Fellow at the NUS Entrepreneurship Centre, he studies the technology entrepreneurship landscape in Singapore and examines the factors influencing the rise and fall of tech start-ups. In 2007, Dr Bernard Leong won the NUS Outstanding Young Alumni Award for his work with student enterprises in Singapore and the United Kingdom.



Eric Feng
Author, *The FAQ Book on Public Speaking*
Public Speaking Coach, The Public Speaking Blog

Eric Feng is the go-to guy if you want to learn how to impress your customers, employers and investors through public speaking. Known for his generous doses of humor and incisive coaching ability, Eric has successfully helped over 3000 students, executives and entrepreneurs to become confident and compelling speakers.

As a celebrated Toastmaster in Singapore, Eric has won a number of national level speech competitions. In 2005, he won the Championship Title for the Division-Level Humorous Contest in Philadelphia, United States. He was also a two-time Winner of the International Speech Competition at Division-Level. As an acknowledgment of his speaking achievements, The Straits Times featured him as one of the top 25 Alternate Achievers in Singapore.

Apart from speech coaching, Eric also heads a training company, Area 9 Training International, that conducts corporate programs at the regional level. The success that he has created at his company recently got him featured on Business Week as one of the top 25 Young Entrepreneurs in Asia.

Eric loves to write and be written about. His latest book titled *The FAQ Book on Public Speaking* will be published in major bookstores and Amazon in mid-December this year. His dream is to become the Speaker for the Living (he thinks the name is cool though his friends think otherwise) and to travel around the world and impact people’s lives through his words and experiences. He believes that if he can touch one person’s life everyday, be it through his words or his actions, he knows that he has done his part for humanity.



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Eric Tachibana
Vice President, Global Business Technology, Merrill Lynch
Adjunct Associate Professor, NUS Entrepreneurship Centre

Eric Tachibana has been an entrepreneur for the last 12 years creating, building and eventually exiting successful, small companies in Silicon Valley, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and the United Kingdom. Today, Eric’s entrepreneurial endeavors are as a regional angel investor, mentor and strategic adviser to young, developing entrepreneurs. As the Founding Director for 7 companies ranging from IT and F&B to Retail and Fashion in addition to being the author of 7 books on technology development and innovation management, Eric continues to focus on blending academic rigor with experience and intuition-driven, real-world execution.



Ivan Lau
Marketing Director, Start-Up@Singapore 2008
University Scholars Programme, NUS

Ivan is a sophomore studying Industrial & Systems Engineering at the National University of Singapore. His passion for leadership, learning and public speaking took off during National Service where he trained to be a Combat Engineer Officer and later served as a Platoon Commander. Since then, he has been actively sharpening his leadership skills. In his first year in university, he was the Vice-Welfare Director of the University Scholars Club and Marketing Director for Big Hands Bigger Hearts 3, a Youth Expedition Project to the Philippines. In addition to this, he has always enjoyed the fine arts and is currently volunteering as an art teacher at Art Outreach. Ivan believes strongly in honesty and compassion, and aspires to be an effective leader by making a difference where it matters most.



Laurence Chan
Founding Director, BioInvest Capital
Founding Director, Fortune Venture Management
Deputy Managing Director, NIF Management Pte Ltd

Laurence is a pioneer veteran in the private equity and venture capital industry in Singapore. He has extensive experience in private equity, venture capital, fund management, fund-raising activities, corporate finance, IPOs and working with technology start-up companies. He started two technology venture capital firms in Singapore, BioInvest Capital and Fortune Venture Management.

In private equity investment, he was Deputy Managing Director of NIF Management Pte Ltd, the venture capital division of Daiwa Securities (Japan). In marketing and operational expertise, Laurence was general manager of a brand management, marketing and distribution company in Hong Kong which he brought to IPO on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. Previously, he held various managerial positions in corporate, commercial and investment banking in Security Pacific National Bank and First National Bank of Chicago. He started his career as an engineer in the Ministry of the Environment.

He is Chartered Financial Analyst Charterholder (USA) and holds a Diploma in Marketing from Chartered Institute of Marketing (United Kingdom). He obtained his MBA from University of Manchester, Manchester Business School, United Kingdom, and Bachelor of Engineering from University of Singapore.

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Lee Min Xuan
President, NUS Entrepreneurship Society
Vice Lead, Start-Up@Singapore 2008

Min Xuan is a sophomore majoring in Finance and minoring in Technopreneurship at the National University of Singapore. She is also the President of the NUS Entrepreneurship Society and Vice Lead of Start-Up@Singapore 2008. However, her interest in entrepreneurship started much earlier. At the age of fourteen, her team won an award in the Central Singapore CDC Youth Entrepreneurship Programme for having the best business plan. Three years later, she turned a hobby into an enterprise and founded her design company, Ming Lee International. Her entrepreneurial journey culminated in a pioneering expedition to Silicon Valley which inspired her to dream big. Min Xuan is currently going on to her second year in the NUS Business School and living life by her passions - as a designer, photographer and musician.



Prabhjit Singh
Senior Executive, INVENT Division, National Library Board

Prabhjit Singh is part of the National Library Board's (NLB's) INVENT division's team of facilitators, proficient in the Ask Stupid Questions and TEAMS workshops. Prior to joining INVENT, he was in charge of overseeing and managing quality and customer services for NLB. He implemented several initiatives to smoothen the customer service and relationship process in NLB and played a key role in developing frontline staff's customer service skills. In addition, he also managed NLB's Contact Centre, playing a key role in its set-up, management and staff training.

Prabhjit's background is in the communications field, having handled a variety of portfolios in the private and public sectors in the field of public relations, marketing, customer service, promotions and publicity, and in conferences and seminars production. Apart from being a facilitator, he handles the marketing and business development functions for INVENT's range of creativity workshops and customizes them to suit client needs.

Prabhjit is a Bachelor of Arts graduate from the National University of Singapore, with majors in Political Science and Mass Communications. He enjoys organizing and participating in social and community programmes for the development of youths.



Shane Chong Zi Jun
Undergraduate Student, University of Manchester

An activator with an eye for details, Shane's expertise includes consumer behavior, market research and market communication. He regards turn-around situations and start-ups as opportunities. With prior entrepreneurial experiences in negotiations, consumer behavior and market research, new product launches and project management. He finds joy in meeting people and acquiring new skills and finds balance in life with a passion for sports and establishing life-long relationships. Today, Shane serves as a mentor, member and volunteer with various international leadership affiliations. A former top student in Creative Strategy Management and Consumer Behavior, he graduated with a diploma in Marketing in 2003. He is currently pursuing undergraduate studies at the University of Manchester.

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Veerappan Swaminathan
Lead, Start-Up@Singapore 2008

Veerappan is a sophomore studying Mechanical Engineering at the National University of Singapore. Since the age of fourteen, he has founded four societies in diverse areas like web development, handicrafts and sports. In late 2005, Veerappan became a pioneer partner at Jivin' Hive Pte Ltd, an agency specializing in youth-centric marketing services, and only recently left due to educational commitments. At present, he is actively involved in a social entrepreneurship project spearheaded by him involving the development of solar fruit dryer systems for farmers stricken by poverty in the Indian state of Maharashtra. In the years to come, Veerappan hopes to gain a steady, growing income via his entrepreneurial pursuits so that he can positively impact the lives of the less fortunate.