

# Talent Investment

Ongoing efforts to develop Singapore into a leading international maritime centre (IMC) are seeing promising returns on investment.



**BELOW, FROM LEFT:**  
Nur Hazirah bte Jimani, Dr Teo Chee Chong, and Chia Wei Tao Darren.

As the world's largest transshipment hub, Singapore's vibrant IMC boasts a dynamic marketplace comprising international shipping groups, commodity traders, logistics players, and maritime service providers, and is a key gateway to business opportunities in the Asia-Pacific. It is also fast becoming Asia's hub for maritime law and arbitration, and a key centre for offshore and marine engineering activities. Additionally, its pro-business environment is complemented by a well-respected legal system, political and economic stability, and a highly skilled and culturally adaptive workforce.

As such, the Government and key maritime stakeholders are continually exploring new ways to strengthen network effects within the maritime clusters and open new cross-sector growth opportunities in related sectors such as logistics, commodity trading, and technology. One recent development was the IMC 2030 Advisory Committee's recommendation to develop a multi-skilled maritime workforce with a global mindset. Nanyang Technological University (NTU) took this to heart in the development of its comprehensive and dynamic Maritime Studies (MS) undergraduate programme.

"As the maritime industry is broad and diverse, it is essential for our students to appreciate the big picture of the role maritime plays in the global system," says Dr Teo Chee Chong, a senior lecturer who teaches logistics-related MS courses at NTU. "Our curriculum is designed to equip them with the capabilities to contribute to the sector's various segments. For example, logistics encompasses the transportation and storage of goods in a logistics chain stretching from point of origin to point of consumption, and sea freight transport is a vital link in most logistics chains." The programme combines in-depth modules on topics like maritime law,



marine insurance, and shipping strategy, with broad foundational courses in mathematics, general business, technology, and such. "MS students with a Business Major take additional relevant courses like accounting, business law, finance, and marketing," Dr Teo adds. "This gives them an edge in our industry's competitive work environment, giving them more career options and accelerating their career development."

Nur Hazirah bte Jimani, a final year MS student at NTU, says that she's "always understood that Singapore was a booming transshipment hub and felt that a career in the maritime industry could provide [her] with exciting challenges and experiences". Having chosen to delve into distribution, warehousing, and port planning and operations, she adds, "I've always been interested in exploring the intricate details of port and transportation systems." She hopes to work in offshore maritime commercial services and to "assist and guide those who are looking to enter the industry".

## MARITIME SINGAPORE

### A Brief Perspective

- 7% of Singapore's GDP
- 150 top global international shipping groups and maritime service providers
- >5,000 maritime establishments
- >170,000 employees in various commercial and technical functions

### IMC 2030 Strategy #4

- Strengthen quality of maritime education and training
- Enhance standards of professionalism in the maritime industry
- Raise profile of the maritime industry to attract talent

Chia Wei Tao Darren, also a final year MS student at NTU, notes that general knowledge about the importance of Singapore's port "sparked an interest in [him] to find out more about the maritime industry and how it has contributed to [Singapore's] growth as a nation". He's already secured his first post-graduation job as a management trainee with Pacific International Lines – something he's eagerly looking forward to.

NTU's MS course links much of its students' academic requirements to industrial attachments. Says Dr Teo: "Besides a 20-week internship in a leading maritime company and a compulsory semester at Erasmus University Rotterdam, students can choose to satisfy part of their academic requirements through two additional 10-week attachments. In this arrangement, each student will work on an industry-sponsored project, jointly supervised by an NTU faculty member and a senior representative from the internship company." This enables the seamless integration of institution-based learning and structured on-the-job training. Darren shares, "I've learnt that it is essential for a company to make sound decisions to take advantage of ever-changing market conditions and stay competitive." Nur

Hazirah's main takeaway was to not be afraid to learn on the job – "Mistakes can be fixed, and valuable lessons can always be learnt!"

It's not all about work, of course. Nur Hazirah describes her overseas semester as "wonderful", adding that the experience taught her to be "independent and self-sufficient". As for Darren, he and his course mates shared food that they prepared in their hostels every day, and it taught him to appreciate life in Singapore. "My best memories of my semester at BI Norwegian Business School are of those lunch breaks. The friendships I gained then are something I will be grateful for, for the rest of my life."

For more information on maritime careers and education, visit [www.smf.com.sg](http://www.smf.com.sg).

