

## **SMU Libraries**

# **Where continuous exploration, growth and empowerment happen**

August 2023 - August 2024  
Annual Report



# Message from the University Librarian



The 2023-2024 academic year has been a transformative period for SMU Libraries, marked by reflection, realignment, and renewal. This annual report captures the innovative spirit and unwavering commitment to excellence that defines the Libraries team.

At the heart of SMU Libraries' mission is the belief that academic success extends far beyond grades. Our focus has been on nurturing lifelong learners equipped to navigate the complex information landscape of the 21st century. We have intensified our efforts to develop crucial skills in data, digital, and AI literacy, complemented by robust information evaluation capabilities.

On the research front, SMU Libraries have taken significant strides. New services have been launched to support the use of AI-powered research tools, enhancing researcher productivity. Meanwhile, the institutional repository, InK, continues to flourish, surpassing the impressive milestone of 8 million downloads and amplifying the visibility of SMU's research output.

The evolving role of academic libraries has placed SMU at the forefront of transformation.

The successful "Emerging Library Leaders Summer School for Asia Pacific" program, now in its second year, has drawn participants from over 10 countries across the Asia Pacific region. This initiative not only expands SMU's presence but also fosters connections and amplifies thought leadership across the region and beyond.

Looking ahead, SMU Libraries remain committed to being an agile, responsive, and innovative partner in the academic journey of students, staff, researchers, and faculty. The goal is not merely to keep pace with change but to actively shape the future of education and research.

As SMU Libraries move forward, it is with gratitude for the continued support and engagement of the SMU community. Together as one SMU, we are not just adapting to the future – we create it.

Warm Regards,  
Shameem Nilofar  
University Librarian, SMU Libraries

# SMU Libraries at a glance

Over the course of the past year, the Libraries introduced relevant new resources and services to support the research, teaching and learning needs of our community. These new initiatives and services are our responses to the evolving landscape and the dynamic needs of our users, as well as seizing opportunities presented by external environments.

## Refreshed Space



### Investment and Data Studio

SMU Libraries renovated the Investment Studio in August 2023 to accommodate the growing need for data-related learning and research.

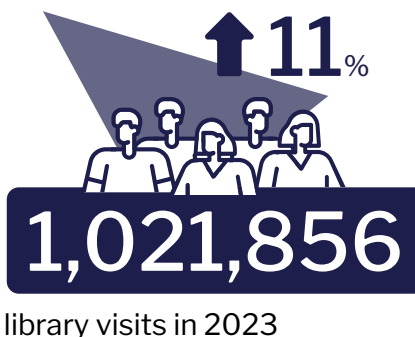
The studio now features three Data Software Terminals with licensed software to aid data and text analysis for academic research purposes.

In addition to providing access to the software, the Libraries have also expanded their data services to offer consultation on selected data-crunching tools, methods, and workshops to enhance the SMU community's data research experience.



Students exploring the new Data Software Terminal.

## Visitorship



## Open Access



## New Resources



### SciSpace

The Libraries actively explore and test new AI-driven research tools to improve the research experience for students, faculty, and researchers. As part of this effort, SMU Libraries now offers users SciSpace licenses through a pilot program. SciSpace is a cutting-edge tool that leverages GPT-based technologies, allowing researchers to navigate scientific literature with remarkable efficiency.



### "The Effective Use of AI Tools in Research" e-learning module

SMU Libraries partnered with Temasek Polytechnic to create an e-learning module titled "The Effective Use of AI Tools in Research".

This is part of a larger initiative, "A Guide to Learning with AI for Students," which consists of three modules led by the Student Success Centre in collaboration with SMU Libraries, SMU's Centre for English Communication, and Temasek Polytechnic.

In July 2024, SMU introduced the "Effective Use of AI Tools in Research" module to over 2,000 incoming freshmen. The learning resource has been developed as an Open Educational Resource (OER), accessible to the public.



### DataCamp

SMU Libraries have subscribed to DataCamp, an online learning platform focused on interactive courses in data science and analytics, covering topics such as ChatGPT, Python, SQL, and Power BI. This subscription enhances the offerings available through our existing LinkedIn Learning and Udemy subscriptions by providing more advanced and specialised content, helping users further develop their skills in data and AI.

# Learning Programmes

## HeadStart: UniReady

SMU Libraries collaborated with the Student Success Centre (SSC) to offer two learning programmes in their rebranded first-year transition programme, HeadStart: UniReady in July 2024.

These out-of-classroom learning programmes created meaningful impact by contributing to students' Academic and Learning Success in the SMU Holistic Student Development Framework.



Researching Your  
First Assignment  
workshop



Succeed in Learning:  
Tools & Mindsets  
workshop

## Most popular workshops in 2023

- Python 101: The Basics
- Researching with Google & Wikipedia
- Python 101: Tinkering with Libraries and APIs
- Generative AI Powered Search Engines - Elicit, Scite assistant and Scispace
- Scholarly Literature Review - Mapping and Cutting Edge Tools
- Planning for Effective Communication
- Arguing Your Case
- Key Presentation Skills
- Presentation Slide Design
- Learning Bloomberg the Fun Way

## New Artworks



### Contemporary tapestry by Turner Prize winner Sir Grayson Perry

SMU's Board of Trustees member Dato' Kho Hui Meng latest gift of artwork to SMU is a tapestry by British artist Sir Grayson Perry. Titled 'The Annunciation of the Virgin Deal', the tapestry is one of six from the series. The Vanity of Small Differences.

The tapestries tell the story of Tim Rakewell, a fictional 21st-century software developer who ascends from his working-class background up the social and economic ladder.

Through the series, Perry, a great chronicler of contemporary British life, makes stealthy comments about class and taste, décor and decorum, and the status of the artist versus that of the artisan.

The tapestry now hangs at the College of Integrative Studies.



'The Annunciation of the Virgin Deal' tapestry in the College of Integrative Studies.



### Contemporary paintings from Myanmar

SMU Libraries are pleased to receive 73 contemporary paintings from Myanmar, generously donated by Ian Holliday. The paintings were from Holliday's Thukhuma Collection, comprised of Burmese paintings largely dating from the transitional decade of the 2010s.



Library user exploring the interactive AR narrative of *Ordinary People* by Min Zaw from the Thukhuma Collection.

A specialist in Burmese politics, Holliday assembled the Thukhuma Collection to present multiple artistic perspectives on society then in reform. The gifted paintings depict the people, culture and land, from the streets of Yangon and rural peripheries to political icons and indigenous deities.

The paintings are on view at the School of Social Sciences and Li Ka Shing Library.

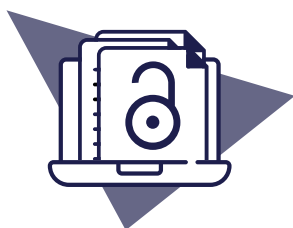
# Expanding the SMU presence

SMU Libraries are committed to raising the profile of SMU by amplifying SMU's research globally and extending the Libraries' influence in Asia.

## Ink Hits 8 Million Downloads

In March 2024, InK had been downloaded 8 million times. InK is SMU's institutional repository and its main goal is to increase the visibility and impact of SMU's research. Studies have shown that open access papers tend to receive more citations than those that require payment to access. In the last year, 19023 additional papers have been made available for open access on InK.

Over the last three years, papers on InK have been accessed by 35672 institutions worldwide. The commercial sector accounted for 36% of all downloads, highlighting SMU's impact on the industry



Over the past year

# 1903

additional papers became open access through InK.



In the last 3 years, papers on InK were accessed by

# 35672

institutions worldwide.



The number of full text PDFs on InK has grown substantially from 800 in 2010 to

# 19781

From July 8th to 12th, SMU Libraries hosted the second run of the Emerging Library Leaders' Summer School. This program, formerly known as the ASEAN Summer School for Emerging Library Leaders, has expanded, welcoming a larger class size and a more diverse group of participants from across the region. This year, 28 participants from over 10 countries attended the Summer School.

Now rebranded as the Emerging Library Leaders' Summer School for Asia Pacific (ELLSSA), the program is a collaborative initiative between Singapore Management University (SMU) Libraries, programme partner, SMU Academy and Taylor and Francis, who provided five scholarships. It is a targeted leadership capacity-building program designed specifically for library and information professionals.

## Creating Future Ready Library Leaders: For Librarians By Librarians



*... you get to learn about the business model that is [for] something not in the library where our library people have thought but it really put us into a situation [where] we really have to think about how we can apply those business models into our libraries' settings. I find that very helpful and really interesting.*



Net Wanna, Director, Hun Sen Library, Royal University of Phnom Penh

ELLSSA aims to equip high-potential librarians, especially those in the Asia-Pacific region, with cutting edge knowledge and skills needed to lead the digital transformation of their libraries. The curriculum covers critical topics related to digital transformation, utilising examples from both within and beyond the library and information sectors. Moreover, the program serves as a platform for fostering cross-library collaborations and strengthening professional networks among librarians throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

Throughout the five-day program, participants learn from SMU Faculty, experienced facilitators from SMU Academy and senior librarians from SMU Libraries, as well as library leaders from across the region. They engage in

a variety of seminars and sessions, including workshops, lightning talks, and panel discussion, all designed to support their digital transformation journeys.



SMU University Librarian, Shameem Nilofar challenging librarians to think and create a mini-plan for digital transformation initiative.



“

*My driving force for attending ELLSSA is the mentorship opportunities. I really [look] forward to receiving expert advice from experienced professionals in the field enabling me to develop and implement strategic strategies to our institution's unique needs.*

”



Rizalyn Janio, College Librarian from University of the Philippines Diliman

Beyond the formal sessions, participants are paired with mentors who will guide them on an identified 'issue' they wish to resolve over three months to a year. This mentorship component is crucial for supporting participants' professional growth and ensuring the successful implementation of their projects.

During the program, participants pitch their challenges to their peers and mentors, who

provide feedback and share their own experiences. For some, the mentorship opportunity is a key motivator for attending ELLSSA.

By the end of the program, participants leave with fresh insights, new perspectives, and strong bonds with fellow emerging leaders across the Asia-Pacific region, forming a valuable support network on their leadership journey.



Emerging Library Leaders Summer School: Class of 2024!

# Fostering Connections

SMU Libraries curate diverse learning experiences, fostering a bridge between the community and knowledge, resources and culture. These experiences also serve as a conduit for the Libraries to establish meaningful connections with stakeholders and the broader community.

## Supporting the diverse needs of researchers

In support of SMU's Vision 2025 to promote research through more integrated OneSMU approaches, SMU Libraries and research staff banded together to form a project team to explore how best to support the diverse needs of research associates, research fellows / scientists etc, within the SMU community.

The project team comprising of research staff led by Heng Su Li, a research associate from Cooling Singapore 2.0 and librarians Aaron Tay, Dong Danping, Bella Ratmelia, initiated the SMU Researcher Club (SMU RC). The SMU RC's goal is for researchers to share their expertise and co-create resources useful to the community.

SMU RC in conjunction with SMU Libraries, held events which are open to the entire SMU community. These include a 3-part webinar series on AI-Powered Research Tools:

- Using SciSpace to boost your research productivity (Feb 2024)
- Making your literature review more efficient with Elicit (Feb 2024)
- Smart Citations and Scite Assistant (March 2024)



*Participants attending one of the SMU Researcher Club talks focussing on AI-powered research tools.*

SMU RC also worked with CGRS to invite postgraduates to relevant events co-created and designed by the research community.

A 4-part publication series was led by researchers like Dr. Jude Kurniawan (Postdoctoral Fellow, SOSS) and Heng Su Li (Research Associate, CIS).

- Evaluating Journals and Conference Proceedings! What makes a good journal and proceeding to reference and/or submit to? (April 2024)
- Negotiating authorship: How should you be credited for your work? (April 2024)
- Writing with AI: Insights and Experiences from Researchers (May 2024)
- My paper is rejected. What now? (June 2024)

## Pop-up @ SMU Libraries



*Students taking a moment of respite from their exam preparation during The Exam Angel pop-up.*

SMU Libraries collaborated with campus partners to test a new concept to bring services closer to students. The pop-up concept seeks to transform the spaces within Level 2 of the Li Ka Shing Library into a dynamic, flexible environment that encourages collaboration and strategic partnership with our campus partners.

By providing customised, timely services that align with students' needs throughout their academic journey, the Libraries aim to create a seamless and connected student experience.

This approach also strengthens the ties with various campus partners by offering a library space that complements their needs and providing them with opportunities to engage students where they spend their time. As part of this pilot initiative, a pop-up IT Help Centre service desk was set up in August, followed by an Exam Angels programme in November 2023.

Both pop-ups received positive feedback. In a post-pop-up survey for the Exam Angel programme, students expressed their appreciation with comments such as "This was my favourite study week in all four years," and "Thank you for motivating me to come to the library."

## Artist in Residence Programme

SMU Libraries Artist-in-Residence (AiR) Programme inaugurated its first cycle with Singapore artist Priyageetha Dia whose practice looks into speculative narratives on Southeast Asian plantations as sites for recovering stories of resistance. The residency spanned four months from August to November 2023.

The Artist-in-Residence Programme is one of the library initiatives to create opportunities to facilitate diverse learning experiences for SMU students. Priyageetha worked with two SMU courses (VR in Business and Cultural History of the Cold War in Asia: The Battle for Hearts and Minds) to create intentional opportunities to explore issues from different perspectives.

Priyageetha also conceptualised "Overgrowth", a one-day programme on speculative narrative, and collective imagination and resistance. The programme brought together arts practitioners and students who have an interest in digitality and Southeast Asia.



*SMU Libraries Artist-in-Residence, Singapore artist Priyageetha Dia, in discussion with arts practitioners and students during the "Overgrowth" programme.*

# Understanding Users

SMU Libraries conducted its biennial library survey in 2024. The survey provides SMU Libraries with input to help enhance existing services and to anticipate the emerging needs of the SMU community. It also helps SMU Libraries understand what the library means to users.

## Key Results

Half the respondents indicated they would recommend SMU library services to their peers. While significant improvements were noted in the library's learning spaces, there is still room for further enhancement.

## Planned Actions

Enhancement of the space for group work and quiet study:

- **Level 4 Quiet Zone:** During exam periods, we're designating Level 4 as a quiet zone to give you a peaceful environment for studying.
- **Booking Review:** We're reviewing the blackout period for booking library spaces for events, making sure you have access when you need it most.
- **Social Media Campaigns:** We're launching user education campaigns on platforms like Instagram and TikTok to keep you informed and engaged.



*SMU library has a wealth of online resources that really helps me as an academic. I can almost always (99.5%) get the papers I need, including newly released papers my peers in NUS/NTU do not have access to, so I think the library is doing an amazing job! :)*



## Facility Upgrades for a Better Experience

Several upgrades are in progress to improve the library experience:

- **Live Occupancy Heatmap:** People-counter sensors will be installed to provide real-time occupancy updates, helping users find less crowded areas.
- **Refurbished Project Rooms:** Project rooms and study booths will be revamped with built-in HDMI cables and freshly varnished tabletops for a more comfortable environment.

## A Clean and Welcoming Space

The Libraries will continue working closely with the Office of Campus Infrastructure and Services (OCIS) to address concerns promptly, ensuring a clean and inviting space for all.

## Workshops tailored for researchers and PhD students

Recognising the need for more tailored research support, the Libraries are collaborating with the SMU Researcher Club and other partners to offer specialised workshops for researchers and PhD students, addressing specific academic areas.

## New Initiatives

Exciting changes are also on the horizon:

**Relaxation Area:** We're creating a dedicated relaxation area with comfy seating and cozy lighting, perfect for unwinding between study sessions.

## Redesigned Learning Spaces:

Level 2 is getting a makeover (hopefully soon!) to provide student-centric services, ensuring you have access to everything you need throughout your academic journey.



*I like more open spaces like on lks [Li Ka Shing] library level 5, i think its important for students to be able to take a breather in nature.*



*The addition of monitors in lvl3 is good but more monitors would be great!*



# Amplifying Thought Leadership

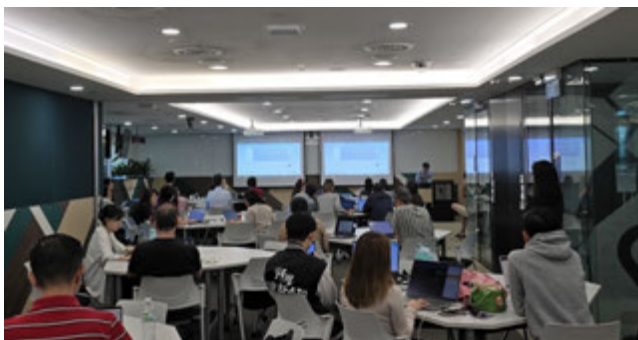
SMU Libraries take an active role in collaborating with faculty members and external partners to organise thought leadership events to enrich the SMU community, alumni, and industry partners. These events serve as platforms for highlighting the research and expertise of SMU faculty members and fostering meaningful interactions between academia and industry.

## AI for Research Week

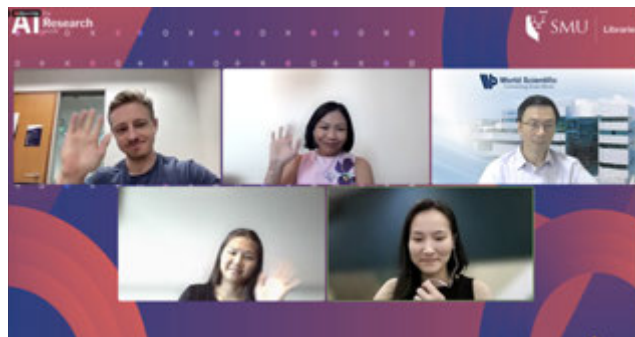
Recognising the impact AI can have on the entire research workflow, SMU Libraries organised an AI for Research Week to bring together experts, researchers, and enthusiasts to explore and discuss how AI can enhance research efficiency and effectiveness.

Throughout the week, attendees engaged in various activities, including insightful talks, interactive workshops, and thought-provoking discussions. The event was attended by Postgraduates, Faculty, Researchers and Academics, including librarians from SMU and other universities in Singapore.

*Dr Karryl Kim Sagun Trajano, Research Fellow, S.Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Dr Rick Lee Chi Wai, General Manager, World Scientific Publishing, Heng Su Li, Research Associate for Cooling Singapore 2.0; Co-founder, SMU Research Club, Singapore Management University and moderator, Marc Astbury, Head of Product, Jenni AI, discussed how AI can augment manuscript writing and other parts of the workflow as well as the pitfalls to watch out for*



Participants of the “Try it Together” workshops tried out AI-powered applications for common research tasks such as searching for papers for literature reviews, transcription, etc.



## Centre of Practice x SMU Libraries Lunchtime Talks

Centre of Practice collaborated with SMU Libraries to spice up the community with two lunchtime talks tackling some tough issues.

### **Lunchtime talk with Prof Mark Chong: Cultivated Meat on the Menu – Yay or Nay**

SMU Professor Mark Chong shared key findings from his studies on what makes Singapore consumers' tick when it comes to cultivated meat.

### **Inside the Storm: My journey as the Wirecard Whistleblower**

Whistleblower Pav Gil spoke about the ins and outs of whistleblowing, including navigating the challenges and protections of being an informant for justice, ethics, and truth.



*Audience listening intently as Whistleblower Pav Gil spoke about the ins and outs of whistleblowing.*

## The World Ahead

In 2024, The World Ahead returned to its in-person format, offering insights to the SMU community. Syetarn Hansakul, Senior Analyst for Asia at the Economist Intelligence Unit, led a session focused on Asia's prospects for the coming year.

She began by engaging the audience, asking them to raise their hands to signal whether they believed 2024 would be an improvement over 2023.

From there, Hansakul touched on the potential risks and opportunities that lie ahead, outlining key factors that could shape the region's future.



*Attendees and Syetarn Hansakul, Senior Analyst for Asia at the Economist Intelligence Unit, posing for a group photo.*

In celebration of International Women's Day 2024, SMU Libraries collaborated with Office of Alumni Relations to organise a crucial and thought provoking panel discussion on gender discrimination in the workplace. In 2023, the Singapore government has taken steps to build a fairer and more inclusive society by endorsing the White Paper on Singapore Women's Development as a whole-of-nation plan and the acceptance of the Workplace Fairness Legislation (WFL).

Moderated by Dr Flocy Joseph, Head of Commercial, SMU Executive Development and featuring notable alumnae Nadia Ahmad Samdin (LLB 2013) Member of Parliament, Dr Jaclyn Lee (MBA 2015), Chief Human Resources Officer at Certis and Sandra Lim, Managing Director of Verian, they shared their thoughts and ideas on how gender discrimination can be tackled at the workplace and policy level and how such changes may affect future generations of women leaders in terms of achieving full gender parity.

## "You are good at this for a woman": A panel on gender discrimination at the workplace



*The panelists shared their experiences and insights on gender discrimination in the workplace.*



# Celebrating Staff Excellence

## Awards



### **Library Association of Singapore (LAS) Passion Award 2023**

Bella Ratmelia, Senior Librarian, Research and Data Services

*The Library Association Singapore Passion Award aims to recognise an individual for outstanding contributions to the library profession or the Library Association of Singapore.*



### **Singapore Management University (SMU) Staff Excellence Award**

Dino Yeo, Senior Library Specialist, User Services & Experience

*The Singapore Management University Staff Excellence Award is The Singapore Management University Staff Excellence Award is given to exceptional staff members who have exceeded their roles by providing outstanding service and innovation.*



### **Artistic Directors Academy**

Kamiliah Bahdar, Curator, Corporate Services and Art

*The Artistic Directors Academy (ADA) is a year-long laboratory to develop Artistic Directors. It is helmed by T:>Works, an independent arts institution that supports the pioneering of thought leadership in the arts focused on transdisciplinary, transcultural, and inclusive processes.*



### **Pacific Rim Research Libraries Alliance 2024 Karl Lo Award**

Yeo Pin Pin, Head, Research Services

*Karl Lo Award grant for a joint collaborative research project on digital preservation with Chulalongkorn University and Peking University.*

# Professional Appointments

## **Libraries of ASEAN Universities Network (AUNILO)**

- Shameem Nilofar, Chair

## **Asia Pacific Business School Librarians' Group (APBSLG)**

- Redzuan Abdullah, Member
- Sumita Govindan, Member

## **CORE Advisory Board**

- Aaron Tay

## **Digital and Information Literacy Community of Practice (DIL CoP)**

- Benedict Yeo, Member

## **EconBiz**

- Melody Chin, Member
- Rajen Munoo, Member

## **Library Association of Singapore (LAS)**

- Sumita Govindan, Member (Awards Panel)
- Rajen Munoo, Member (Programmes and Engagement Committee)
- Shameem Nilofar, Vice President

## **International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)**

- Rajen Munoo, Standing Committee Member (Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning (CPDWL) Section)
- Nazimah Ram Nath, Standing Committee Member (Professional Section Standing Committee: Acquisition and Collection Development)

## **Open Educational Resources Special Interest Group (OER-SIG)**

- Melody Chin, Co-Chair
- Nazimah Ram Nath, Member

## **Singapore Alliance of University Libraries (SAUL)**

- Dong Danping, Member (Research Support)
- Ooi Kooi Cheng, Member (eResources)
- Vincent Ong, Member (Resource Sharing)
- Benedict Yeo, Member (Digital Literacy)
- Salihin Bin Mohamed Ali, Member (Technology)

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