

SOSS Insights

The research newsletter of SMU School of Social Sciences

Issue 12, August 2026

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Thought Leadership



Lily Kong

President, SMU;
Lee Kong Chian Chair Professor of Social Sciences

Keynote Speeches, Talks, Panel Speaker/Moderator

(2026) Moderator | “Championing Heritage for Loveable Cities”, Cities for People Session led by National Heritage Board, Singapore, World Cities Summit 2026, 14 – 16 June 2026, Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre, Singapore

(2026) Speaker | “From Aspiration to Acceleration: Implementing National Policies in Urban Contexts”, Opening Plenary, World Cities Summit 2026, 14 – 16 June 2026, Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre, Singapore

(2026) Speaker | “Rethinking the Future of Rankings”, VIP workshop and roundtable, QS EduData Summit 2026, 3 – 4 June 2026, Marina Bay Sands, Singapore

(2026) Panel Speaker | “Do You Trust Your Systems? Designing Standards for Responsible Data Use”, QS EduData Summit 2026, 3 – 4 June 2026, Marina Bay Sands, Singapore

(2026) Keynote Speaker | “From ‘Publish or Perish’ to ‘Purpose and People’: Going Together on Research Assessment Reform”, 3 – 5 June 2026, FORCE2026 (Future of Research Communication & Scholarship), Singapore Management University, Singapore

(2026) Panelist | “The Future of Work: Jobs and Skills in an AI-Powered World”, ATxSG Summit, 21 May 2026, Capella Singapore

(2026) Speaker and Award Recipient | “The work is not to tell a better story of relevance, but to become more relevant”, Fireside chat / President’s Forum, CASE Asia-Pacific Leadership Award 2026, 8 May 2026, Brisbane, Australia

(2026) Speaker and Award Recipient | “Why Universities Matter”, CASE Chief Advancement Officer Roundtable, CASE Asia-Pacific Advancement Conference (APAC), 7 May 2026, Brisbane, Australia

(2026) Speaker | “The role of female leaders in Asia”, Fireside chat, THE Asia Universities Summit 2026, 22 – 24 April 2026, Hong Kong

(2026) Speaker | “Silicon corridors and spice routes: Can Asia’s innovation belts redefine global tech leadership?”, Presidents’ Forum, THE Asia Universities Summit 2026, 22 – 24 April 2026, Hong Kong

(2026) Keynote Speaker | “Whole Person Education and University Transformation: Re-thinking General Education for a 100-Year Life”, iGER (Initiating General Education Renaissance) Programme, 12 March 2026, National Chengchi University (NCCU), Taiwan

(2026) Keynote Speaker | “Responsible Leadership in Current Times”, iBuildSG LEAD Milestone Programme: SMU – BCA Advanced Management Programme, 9 March 2026, Singapore

(2026) Panelist | “Reimagining Resilience: Flourishing in a Changing World”, Social Science and Humanities (SSH) Ideas Festival 2026 Launch Event, 26 February 2026, Singapore Management University, Singapore

(2026) Presidents’ Dialogue Speaker | “Partnerships for the Global Good: Navigating Challenges, Excelling Innovation and Building Trust”, APAIE Conference and Exhibition, with Presidents Dialogue, 23 – 27 February 2026, Hong Kong

Thought Leadership



Lily Kong
President, SMU;
Lee Kong Chian Chair Professor of Social Sciences

Opinion Editorials

Kong, L. Can a 15-minute city push up a 0.87 fertility rate? The Straits Times (8 May 2026)

Kong, L. Impact, Intention and Institutional Strength: SMU's Journey to Becoming the World's Most Improved University, Bridges (30 April 2026)

Kong, L. The New Social Contract for Universities: Designing higher education for the 100-year life, Elsevier (18 March 2026)

Kong, L. An ageing society tests more than our healthcare system, The Straits Times (10 March 2026)

Kong, L. Asia's future will be won by soft power, not force, The Business Times (17 February 2026)

Kong, L. Citizenship by law, history by choice: What The Albatross File asks of us, The Straits Times (23 January 2026)

Kong, L. What must change? Towards gender-equitable and inclusive academic communities, Times Higher Education (16 January 2026)

Other Articles/Videos/Interviews/Podcasts

Kong, L. (2026): "A global perspective on education, institutional trust, and the 100-year life", The Not Alone Podcast: Leaders in conversation, <https://www.buzzsprout.com/2365553/episodes/18780635>, 3 June 2026

Kong, L. (2026): "Shifting Research Paradigms: From 'Publish or Perish' to 'Purpose and People'", Addressing Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Contemporary Business School: The Role of Culture, Collegiality and Leadership, Global Focus Annual Research Vol 4 pp 150 - 157, <https://globalfocusmagazine.com/shifting-research-paradigms-from-publish-or-perish-to-purpose-and-people/>, 31 March 2026

Kong, L. (2026): "Does a degree still guarantee a good full-time job?", SPH 'In Your Opinion' podcast interview, <https://open.spotify.com/episode/1lyXVsqtuiyvfjeywP63ln>, 31 March 2026

Kong, L. (2026): "QS World University Rankings rates Singapore's university first in Asia", CNA93.8 interview, https://www.channelnewsasia.com/listen/cna938-rewind/qs-world-university-rankings-rates-singapores-university-first-in-asia-6017706?cid=internal_sharetool_web_12042026_cna, 26 March 2026

Kong, L. (2026): "The University As You Know It Is Obsolete — Here's What Comes Next", The Front Row podcast with Keith Yap, https://youtu.be/a5o2cRr9WUY?si=e_DukpylakV-Q5F0, 24 March 2026

Kong, L. (2026): "A new social contract for Higher Education - Prof Lily Kong, President of the Singapore Management University", Not Alone: Leaders in Focus by Elsevier Connect, <https://www.elsevier.com/connect/the-new-social-contract>, 17 March 2026

Kong, L. (2026): "Beyond resilience: The case for regenerative, restorative cities", Smart Cities Dive, <https://www.smartcitiesdive.com/news/beyond-resilience-regenerative-restorative-cities/811442/>, 5 February 2026

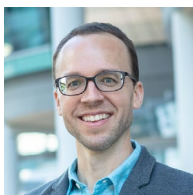
Thought Leadership



Alan Chan

Provost; Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple Chair Professor of Inter-Religious Studies and Harmony

- [“Humans stay at heart of AI mission as SMU looks inward and outward”](#), The Straits Times, 9 March 2026



Matthew Hammerton

Associate Professor of Philosophy;
Associate Dean (Education);
Lee Kong Chian Fellow



Jacqueline Ho

Assistant Professor of Sociology

- [“How to Save the Take-Home Essay With Oral Assessments”](#), Inside Higher Ed, 8 June 2026



Jacqueline Ho

Assistant Professor of Sociology

- [“For students to feel seen, class size matters”](#), The Straits Times, 28 January 2026

Thought Leadership

**Christianna Parr**

Assistant Professor of Political Science

- “[When Performance is Not Enough](#)”, Asian Management Insights, 8 April 2026

**Paulin Straughan**

Professor of Sociology (Practice); Director, Centre for Research on Successful Ageing (ROSA); Urban Fellow (Urban Experiences)

- “A 10-minute walk from the MRT. But for whom?”, The Straits Times, 1 July 2026

**Brandon Yip**

Assistant Professor of Philosophy; Lee Kong Chian Fellow

- OpenHaus podcast “[Emotions Expert: Are Singaporeans Emotionally Constipated?!?](#)” June 2026

SOSS Research At A Glance

January to June 2026



52 Publications

(Journal articles and book chapters)

13 Other Publications



29 Events

Public Lectures, Invited Talks, Seminars, etc

24 Conference Presentations



14 Research Grants

(approx. **\$11.40 m**)

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Humanities

Lily Kong

Qian, JX, Kong, L. (2026) "Spiritual gentrification amid the rise of platform urbanism: "Wanghong Temples" and emerging Buddhist cultural economies in Tianzhu Road, Hangzhou, China", *Geoforum*, Vol. 171, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2026.104593>

Das, P., Woods, O, Kong, L. (2026) "Modelling nature? The digital twinning and untwinning of urban farms", *Geoforum*, Vol. 170, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2026.104539>

Das, P., Woods, O., and Kong, L. (2026). "Navigating AI-nature frictions: Autonomous vehicle testing and nature-based constraints", *Big Data & Society*, DOI: 10.1177/20539517251406123/ ID: BDS-25-0060.R2, <https://doi.org/10.1177/20539517251406123>

Das, P., Woods, O., and Kong, L. (2026). "Seeing beyond the state: Private sector-led smart city governance in BSD City, Indonesia, *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, Sage Journals, <https://doi.org/10.1177/23996544251399513>

Grimley, E., Das, P, Woods, O., and Kong, L. (2026) "How do you fix knowledge in place? Digital nomads and infrastructural stickiness", *Tourism Geographies*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2025.2596320>

Grimley, E., Woods, O. and Kong, L. (2026) "Agglomerating faiths: Religious hubs and spatial challenges in Singapore", in Eade, J. and Tremlett, P. (eds) *Bloomsbury Handbook on Religion, Space and Place*. London: Bloomsbury.

Grimley, E., Woods, O. and Kong, L. (2026), "Home and Religion" in *Routledge Handbook of Home*, edited by Stratford, E., and Walsh, K., Taylor and Francis Group, pp. 385-394, Chapter 32



Lily Kong

President, SMU;
Lee Kong Chian Chair
Professor of Social Sciences

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Philosophy

Steven Burik

Burik, S. (2026). Auseinandersetzung: Heidegger's Black Notebooks and intercultural engagement. *Filozofia: Journal for Philosophy*, 81(1), 85.

Rand Hirmiz

Hirmiz, R. (2026). Dementia, Advance Directives, and Second-Order Volitions. *Bioethics*.

Tan Sor Hoon

"Building Trust Amidst Global Disorder: the Confucian Aspiration to Bring Peace to *Tianxia*," in Roger T. Ames and Jae Young Lee eds., *Beyond the Nation-State* (2026)

Tan, S. H. (2026). Toward Confucian Economic Democracy: A Relational Alternative to Possessive Individualism. *Democratic Theory*, 1-19.

Tan, S. H. (2026). "Power" as a conceptual tool: from a Confucian relational perspective. In *A Confucian theory of power* (pp. 97-110). Manchester University Press.

Brandon Yip

Yip, B. (2026). Commentary on Epiphanies: Epiphanic Empires.



Steven Burik

Associate Professor of
Philosophy (Education);
Associate Dean
(Student & Alumni Matters)



Rand Hirmiz

Assistant Professor of
Philosophy (Education)



Tan Sor Hoon

Professor of Philosophy;
Area Coordinator, Philosophy;
Basket Coordinator for
Modes of Thinking



Brandon Yip

Assistant Professor of
Philosophy;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Political Science & Public Policy

Kenneth Benoit

Benoit, K., De Marchi, S., Laver, C., Laver, M., & Ma, J. (2025). Using large language models to analyze political texts through natural language understanding. *American Journal of Political Science*.



Kenneth Benoit

Dean, School of Social Sciences;
Lee Kong Chian Professor of
Computational Social Science

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Psychology

Andree Hartanto

Goh, A. Y., & Hartanto, A. (2026). Daily problematic smartphone use predicts decreases in self-control capacity: Evidence from random-intercept cross-lagged panel model. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 1-10.

Guevarra, Y. A., Kasturiratna, K. S., Hartanto, A., Tong, E. M., Lua, V. Y., & Majeed, N. M.[#] (2026). How intellectual humility enhances affective well-being: Daily diary studies on the mediating roles of daily uplift and stressor exposure. *Journal of Personality*.

Hung, J. W., Lee, C. K., Kasturiratna, K. S., & Hartanto, A. (2026). Parasocial relationships with artificial intelligence (AI): A systematic review of benefits and risks. *Computers in Human Behavior: Artificial Humans*, 100323.

Lau, G. R., Low, W. Y., Tay, L., Guevarra, Y. A., Gašević, D., & Hartanto, A. (2026). Understanding critical thinking in generative artificial intelligence use: Development, validation, and correlates of the critical thinking in AI use scale. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 22, 101103.

Ho, J. Q., Hu, M., Goh, A. Y., Pragasam, E. J., & Hartanto, A. (2026). How consistent friendlike conversation with AI companions influences our attitudes and perceptions toward AI: An exploratory experiment. *Behavioral Sciences*, 16(2), 278.

Chen, T. X., Cheng, C. Y., Koay, M., Soh, C. B., & Hartanto, A. (2026). The effect of a 14-day digital nudge-based sleep hygiene intervention on behavioural, cognitive, and emotional well-being in college students: An experimental approach. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 22, 101030.

Eun, Z. K., Koh, C. J., Yang, H., Goh, A. Y., Hu, M., Kasturiratna, K. S., & Hartanto, A. (2026). Brief virtual reality and mixed reality mindfulness breathing exercise for emotional well-being and cognitive functions in university students: Within-subjects experimental design study. *JMIR XR and Spatial Computing (JMXR)*, 3, e84239.

Ng, T. L. Y., Hartanto, A., & Tov, W. (2026). Well-being of university students in Singapore. In L. Tay & B. M. McCuskey (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of well-being in higher education* (pp. 479–488). Oxford University Press.

Reyes, M. K. G., Teo, S. S. M., & Hartanto, A. (2026). The emerging roles of AI in self-directed stress management: Systematic review. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 28, e90709.

Eun, Z. K., Yang, H., Chen, N. R., & Hartanto, A. (2026). The restorative effects of nature exposure via virtual reality on well-being, self-control, and working memory. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 103082.

Soh, X. C., Goh, A. Y., Koh, P. S., & Hartanto, A. (2026). Digital grief technology to support bereavement: A systematic review of potential benefits and risks. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 22, 101148.

Hu, M., Koh, P. S., Soh, X. C., Hartanto, A., & Majeed, N. M. (2026). From review to synthesis: A step-by-step methodological guide to systematic reviews and multilevel meta-analyses. *Behavior Research Methods*, 58(7), 197.

Jalil, N. L., Tan, Y. H., Hartanto, A., & Tong, E. M. (2026). Log off to level Up: The effect of social media hiatus on goal pursuit. *Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology*, 20, 18344909261454802.

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Psychology

Andree Hartanto

Majeed, N. M., Chen, N. R., Goh, A. Y., Hu, M., Koh, K. J., Ang, Y. H., & Hartanto, A. (2026). Examining the effects of viewing nature and animal smartphone wallpapers on affect, behaviour, and cognition: A randomised cross-over trial. *Behavioral Sciences*, 16(5), 623.

Lau, G. R., Kasturiratna, K. S., Goh, A. Y., Tong, E. M., & Hartanto, A. (2026). AI fatigue in human–AI interaction: Conceptual framework, scale development and validation, and associations with AI engagement. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 101186.

Tan, G. X., Hartanto, A., Guevarra, Y. A., Lee, A. K., Koh, K. J., & Kasturiratna, K. S. (2026). Outcomes associated with childhood parental divorce: An umbrella review of meta-analyses. *Child Protection and Practice*, 100320.

Hu, M., Ho, J. Q., Ng, C., Wong, S. S., & Hartanto, A. (2026). Emotional support through AI: Venting to artificial intelligence or a perceived human may offer comparable emotional well-being benefits. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 23, 101149.

Majeed, N. M., Chen, N. R., Guevarra, Y. A., Koh, P. S., Lua, V. Y., & Hartanto, A. (2026). Dispositional optimism and daily stressor reactivity: Trait positive affect as a mediator of affective, behavioural, and cognitive outcomes. *European Journal of Personality*, 08902070261453806.

Cheng Chi-Ying

Cheng, CY., Khoo, S., Cheng, SF. *et al.* The downstream effect of gender bias on academic performance and career aspirations amongst female students in STEM via Gender-Professional Identity Integration (G-PII). *IJ STEM Ed* 13, 38 (2026).

Huang, T., Dai, X., Cheng, C. Y., & Leung, A. K. Y. (2026). Paradox mindset in working parenthood: linking dual-role enrichment to pursuit, success, and satisfaction. *Current Psychology*, 45(3), 231.

Chen, T. X., Cheng, C. Y., Koay, M., Soh, C. B., & Hartanto, A. (2026). The effect of a 14-day digital nudge-based sleep hygiene intervention on behavioural, cognitive, and emotional well-being in college students: An experimental approach. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 22, 101030.

Tan, C. N., Han, M., Chua, R. Y., & Cheng, C. Y. (2026). AI models as cultural beings: Investigating AI cultural biases and the impact of cultural alignment on human–AI creative collaboration. *PNAS Nexus*, 5(4), pgag084.



Andree Hartanto
Associate Professor of
Psychology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow;
ResWORK Fellow



Cheng Chi-Ying
Associate Professor of
Psychology;
Area Coordinator, Psychology

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Psychology

Norman Li

Lim, A. J., Li, N. P., Colarelli, S. M., Tsai, M. H., Wei, L., van Vugt, M., & Liu, X. X. (2026). Nature Versus Non-Natural Environments: Effects on Stress and Creativity. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 102929.

Lester Sim

Ip, K. I., Wen, W., Lee, S., Sim, L., & Kim, S. Y. (2026). When stress matters most: developmental timing and socio-ecological stressors among Mexican-origin adolescents from low-income immigrant families. *Development and psychopathology*, 1-17.

Jacinth Tan

Tan, C. H., & Tan, J. J. (2026). Not just anyone: Living situation is indirectly associated with cognitive impairment via depressive symptoms. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 121218.

Kenneth Tan

Yang, Y., Nguyen, J., & Tan, K. (2026). I'm ready if you are: self-esteem moderates couples' accuracy and bias in perceptions of commitment readiness. *Self and Identity*, 1-17.



Norman Li
Professor of Psychology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow



Lester Sim
Assistant Professor of
Psychology



Jacinth Tan
Associate Professor of
Psychology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow



Kenneth Tan
Assistant Professor of
Psychology

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Psychology

Tsai Ming-Hong

Lim, A. J., Li, N. P., Colarelli, S. M., Tsai, M. H., Wei, L., van Vugt, M., & Liu, X. X. (2026). Nature Versus Non-Natural Environments: Effects on Stress and Creativity. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 102929.

William Tov

Ng, T. L. Y., Hartanto, A., & Tov, W. (2026). Well-being of university students in Singapore. In L. Tay & B. M. McCuskey (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of well-being in higher education* (pp. 479–488). Oxford University Press.

Serena Wee

Tang, C., Newman, D. A. Song, Q. C., & Wee, S. (2026). Reducing shrinkage in diversity tradeoff curves for personnel selection: Comparing local validity studies, meta-analysis, and Bayes-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Advance online publication.

Wee, S., Newman, D. A., Song, Q. C., & Tang, C. (2026). [Reducing adverse impact by hiring on vocational interests: A Pareto-optimal approach](#). *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 111(3), 370-387.

Xia, M., Dunlop, P. D., Tian, A. W., & Wee, S. (2026). Social Class Signals in Recruitment: Investigating When and Why Signal Relevance and Job's Customer Contact Requirement Shape Hiring Outcomes. *Human Resource Management*, 65(3), 653-677.

Kirk, J. D., Wee, S., Dunlop, P. D., & Holtrop, D. (2026). Investigating a Persona-Based Social Distance Intervention Aimed at Increasing the Use of Evidence-Supported Assessments. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 34(1), e70051.

Wee, Serena, 'Employing Meta-Analysis to Build Validity Evidence in Personnel Selection' (21 May 2026), in Neal Schmitt, and Ann Marie Ryan (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Personnel Assessment and Selection*, Second Edition, Oxford Handbooks (New York, NY, 2027; online edn, Oxford Academic, 18 Dec. 2025



Tsai Ming-Hong
Associate Professor of
Psychology; Interim PGR
Coordinator, PhD
Psychology Programme



William Tov
Associate Professor of
Psychology; Deputy
Director, Centre for
Research on Successful
Ageing (ROSA);
Lee Kong Chian Fellow



Serena Wee
Professor of Psychology

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Psychology

Sarah Shi Hui Wong

Wong, S. S. H., & Lim, S. (2026). The powerful teacher: A power hypothesis for the benefits of learning-by-teaching. *Educational Psychology Review*, 38(1), 26.

Wong, S. S. H., & Qiu, S. X. (2026). Think first, ChatGPT later: Guiding human-AI collaboration for learning gains in independent human creativity. *Educational Psychology Review*, 38(1), 45.

Wong Zi Yang

Veiga, F. H., Wong, Z. Y., Reeve, J., Jimerson, S., Leite, A., Perales, J., ... & Martínez, I. (2026). Secondary School Students' Engagement in Learning Activities: Validation of a Short Scale. *Education Sciences*, 16(2), 279.

Veiga, F., Reeve, J., Veiga, C. M., Wong, Z. Y., Martínez, I., de Carvalho, N. A., & Pereira, A. (2026). Higher education student engagement in learning activities: Clarifying concepts and introducing a short-scale. *Plos one*, 21(2), e0340391.

Veiga, F., Wong, Z. Y., Veiga, F. M., Seabra, F., Festas, I., Faria, L., ... & Martínez, I. (2026, March). Higher education student engagement in the academic community: clarifying the concept and proposing a short measure. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 11, p. 1773320). Frontiers Media SA.

Wong, Z. Y., Quek, F. Y. X., & Yang, H. (2026). RIASEC self-assessment tools as career interventions: theory and effectiveness. *Frontiers in Organizational Psychology*, 4, 1792707.

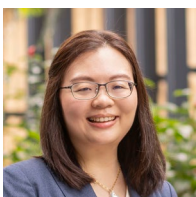
Yang Hwajin

Ng, W. Q., & Yang, H. (2026). The moderating effects of executive functions: A multi-level analysis of daily stress and problematic social media use. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 21, 100917.

Wong, Z. Y., Quek, F. Y. X., & Yang, H. (2026). RIASEC self-assessment tools as career interventions: theory and effectiveness. *Frontiers in Organizational Psychology*, 4, 1792707.

Eun, Z. K., Koh, C. J., Yang, H., Goh, A. Y., Hu, M., Kasturiratna, K. S., & Hartanto, A. (2026). Brief Virtual Reality and Mixed Reality Mindfulness Breathing Exercise for Emotional Well-Being and Cognitive Functions in University Students: Within-Subjects Experimental Design Study. *JMIR XR and Spatial Computing (JMXR)*, 3, e84239.

Eun, Z. K., Yang, H., Chen, N. R., & Hartanto, A. (2026). The Restorative Effects of Nature Exposure via Virtual Reality on Well-being, Self-Control, and Working Memory. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 103082.



Sarah Shi Hui Wong
Assistant Professor of
Psychology



Wong Zi Yang
Research Fellow



Yang Hwajin
Professor of Psychology;
Associate Dean (Research);
Lee Kong Chian Fellow;
ResWORK Fellow

Publication Highlights

(Journal Articles and Book Chapters)

Sociology

Yasmin Ortiga

Ortiga, Y. Y. (2026). A market of care skills: Profiting from professional education and practice. *Economy and Society*, 55(2), 366-386.

Paulin Straughan

Salai, K. H., Tan, Y. W., Cheong, G., & Straughan, P. (2026, March). High-Frequency Functional Trajectories Predict Depressive Worsening in Singapore's Community-Dwelling Older Adults. In *Healthcare* (Vol. 14, No. 5, p. 629). MDPI.

Forrest Zhang

Yang, C., & Zhang, Q. F. (2026). Counter-Urbanization in China: A Systematic Review Toward a Comprehensive Typology. *Sustainability*, 18(3), 1564.

Zhang, Q. F. (2026). The Smallholder's dilemma in agroecological transitions: the diseconomy of agroecology for small farmers in industrial agriculture. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 1-32.



Yasmin Ortiga

Associate Professor of Sociology;
Area Coordinator, Sociology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow



Paulin Straughan

Professor of Sociology (Practice); Director, Centre for Research on Successful Ageing (ROSA); Urban Fellow (Urban Experiences)



Forrest Zhang

Professor of Sociology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Events

What if ... social solutions are the key to our future?

ideas
festival

25 Feb to
30 Mar
2026
Reimagining Resilience:
Flourishing in a
Changing World

Organised
by



In partnership
with

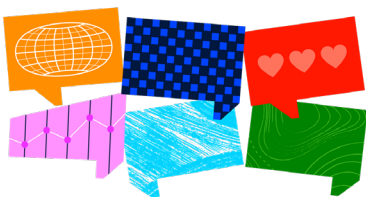


The [Ideas Festival 2026 \(IF\)](#) was a month-long showcase of the latest insights and contributions from social science and humanities researchers in Singapore. Co-organised by seven partner universities in Singapore, namely the National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore Management University (SMU), Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD), Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) and University of the Arts Singapore (UAS). The festival was supported by the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), which promotes and supports social science and humanities research in areas of strategic relevance to Singapore and the region. SMU SOSS Dean Professor Kenneth Benoit chaired the organising committee for IF 2026.

The 2026 theme, ***Reimagining Resilience: Flourishing in a Changing World***, explored how people, communities, and systems could adapt and thrive amid profound technological, cultural, and societal change. Resilience is a topic that matters to every field in the social sciences and humanities.

As part of the festival, **SMU** presented eight events spanning five thematic categories:

- Resilience and Mental Wellbeing
- Adapting to Change I: Urban, Social, and Cultural
- Adapting to Change II: AI and Emerging Technologies
- Regional, Policy, and Global Resilience
- Careers, Education, and Skills for the Future



[Launch - Reimagining Resilience:
Flourishing in a Changing World](#)

26 February 2026



[Embedding Holistic Wellbeing into
the Fabric of the University
Through Fostering A Resilient
Student Community](#)

4 March 2026

Events

What if ... social solutions are the key to our future?

ideas
festival

26 Feb to
30 Mar
2026

Reimagining Resilience:
Flourishing in a
Changing World

Organised
by



In partnership
with



[Speculative Future Frames Workshop](#)

10 March 2026



[Building Resilient Legal Systems in the AI Age](#)

12 March 2026



[Resilient Singapore: Reimagining the Civic Core through Environmental History](#)

14 March 2026



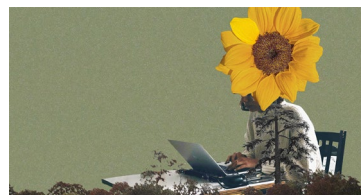
[Managing Technology and Trade Disruptions: Building Resilience in a Shifting International Landscape](#)

17 March 2026



[Navigating the World of Social Science Careers](#)

19 March 2026



[Still Worth Doing? A Public Conversation on the Future of Work](#)

24 March 2026

Events

SOSS Seminars/Workshops

Book Launch: *Dialogues on Immigration and the Open Society*

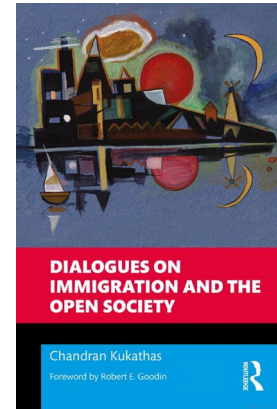
Author: Chandran Kukathas, Professor of Political Science, SMU

Moderator: Christine Dunn Henderson, Professor of Political Science, SMU

Commentators:

- William Maley, Emeritus Professor of Diplomacy, The Australian National University
- Matthew Longo, Senior Assistant Professor of Political Science, Leiden University
- Yasmin Ortiga, Associate Professor of Sociology, SMU

23 January 2026



Research Sharing on "Wellbeing in Modern Society: An Evolutionary Mismatch and Competitive Stress Perspective"

Speaker: Jose Yong, Senior Lecturer, James Cook University

11 February 2026

The New Politics of Knowledge: Globalizing Knowledge and the Future of Intellectuals, Universities, Issues and Publics

Speaker: Michael D. Kennedy, Professor of Sociology and International and Public Affairs, Brown University

12 February 2026



SOSS Postgraduate Research in Psychology Seminar

PhD Candidate in Psychology Speakers:

- Nicole Chen Ruiying
 - K.T.A. Sandeeshwara Kasturiratna
 - Hu Meilan
 - Ho Qi Hui, Jerlyn
 - Adalla Goh Yin Hui
 - Yang Yingjia
 - Davelle Lee Jing Yi
- 13 February 2026

Events

SOSS Seminars/Workshops

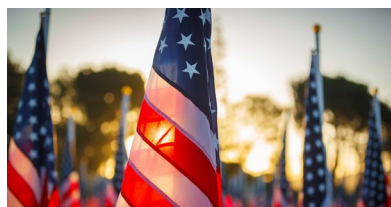
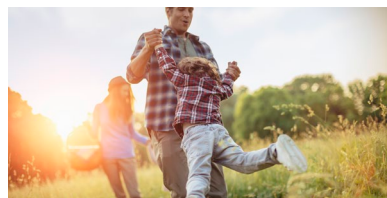


What is populism?

Speaker: Joseph Heath, Professor of Philosophy, University of Toronto
23 February 2026

Being Well Cared for and Growing up Slowly: Parenting Slows Human Life History

Speaker: Chang Lei, Chair Professor, Head of Department of Psychology, University of Macau
24 February 2026



Multipolarity: living in a Hobbesian world

Speaker: John Gray, Emeritus Professor of European Thought, London School of Economics
20 March 2026

Bastardised Republicanism: Montesquieu and the Spirit of Public Law

Speaker: Thomas Poole, Professor of Law, London School of Economics
26 March 2026



The Role of Graduate Education in the Rising Wage Premium for Professional and Managerial Occupations, 1980-2019

Speaker: Paula England, Dean of Social Science, Professor of Social Research and Public Policy, New York University Abu Dhabi
1 April 2026

Events

SOSS Seminars/Workshops

AI is Not a Natural Monopoly

Speaker: Simon Goldstein, Associate Professor of Philosophy,
University of Hong Kong
2 April 2026



SMU-NTU Joint Sociology Seminar

SMU-NTU Joint Sociology Seminar

Presenters:

- Christopher Chapman, Assistant professor, Nanyang Technological University
- Annika Rieger, Assistant Professor of Sociology, SMU

10 April 2026

AI-Powered Qualitative Analysis in R

Trainers:

- Kenneth Benoit, Dean, School of Social Sciences, SMU
- Seraphine Maerz, Senior Lecturer in Political Science (Research Methods), School of Social and Political Science, University of Melbourne

17 April 2026



Why Staging Matters in Global Diplomacy:

Reflections on the Bandung Conference of 1955

Speaker: Naoko Shimazu, Professor and Deputy Director,
University of Tokyo
30 April 2026

Events

Southeast Asia Seminars

Short-Term Pains, Long-Term Gains: Education and Economic Effects of Malaysia's Language-of-Instruction Policy Reform

Speaker: Jeremy Siow, Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Quantitative Political Science, Department of Politics and International Relations
University of Oxford

14 January 2026



Nehru's India in Asia and Beyond

Speaker: Swapna Kona Nayudu FRHistS
19 January 2026

Transnational Propaganda and Ethnic Polarization: Experimental Evidence from Malaysia

Speaker: Tony Yang, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Emory University and Associate at University, Oxford China Centre
9 March 2026



Legality in Motion: How Myanmar People Navigate Thailand's Asylum and Labour Systems

Speaker: Nyi Nyi Kyaw, Marie Curie Research Fellow, University of Bristol
7 April 2026

Events

Behavioural Sciences Initiative Seminars

"Singaporean with an Asterisk": Racial Categorisation and its Implications for National Belonging among Malay and Indian Singaporeans

Speaker: Davelle Lee, PhD Candidate, SMU
3 February 2026

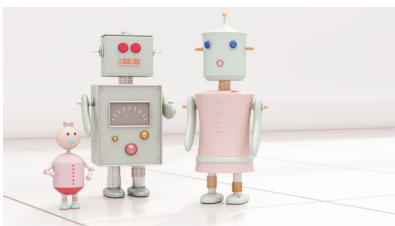


Personal strengths and marital function: Linking intrapersonal strengths to relational behavior through marital satisfaction

Speaker: Lester Sim, Assistant Professor of Psychology, SMU
10 February 2026

The Power in Learning by Teaching

Speaker: Sarah Shi Hui Wong, Assistant Professor of Psychology, SMU
17 March 2026



Relationships linking task conflict, work-family conflict, and psychological detachment

Speaker: Tsai Ming-Hong, Associate Professor of Psychology, SMU
31 March 2026

Faculty Spotlight



William A. Callahan

Professor of Political Science;
Academic Director of Politics, Law and
Economics (PLE) major

The growing US challenge to the Liberal International Order is creating a vacuum in global leadership, and many now look to China to fill this gap with new international institutions, norms, and ideas. William A. Callahan's current book project, "Strange Creatures: China Visualizes the World," explores this question. Building on his award-winning book [*Sensible Politics: Visualizing International Relations*](#) (OUP, 2020), "Strange Creatures" will be the first book to analyze how Chinese views of the world shape its worldview, especially when it is involved in exerting the PRC's growing global power -- often in unexpected ways.

The research examines Chinese images of foreign peoples and places from three main sources: official documents, public intellectuals, and everyday experiences. It employs theories and methods from International Political Sociology to explore how the Chinese self is constructed with and against foreign Others from Central Asia, Africa, and Euro-America.

Bill has published two of the book's chapters as journal articles: "Chinese Visions of Self and Other: The International Politics of Noses" (*International Affairs*, 2023) and "The Imperial Gaze: Affective Governance, Hybrid Cartography, and China's U-Shaped Line" (*Geopolitics*, 2025). These articles exemplify his interest in 1) the interplay between policy, politics, and culture, and 2) the tension between rational understanding and affective experience. Bill develops these themes not just in academic publications, but also through making research films.

For example, Bill won funding from the British Academy to make the *International Affairs* article into a documentary film: "The Nose Knows: Foreignness and Fortune in China" (co-director, 2024), which premiered at the London School of Economics' LSE Festival (2024), and was screened to show off the highlights of the British Academy's research achievements at the BA's "Ideas Festival" in June 2026.

Bill's most recent film, "Gone South Village: A Thai Family's Journey to China" (director, 2026), builds on his research on migration, diaspora and Global China to explore what it means to be "Chinese" in Thailand and "Thai" in China. "Gone South Village" thus provides an interesting counterpoint to the blockbuster Chinese film "Dear You" (Lan Hongchun, 2026) that is provoking similar discussions about diaspora and identity. A British Academy grant funded GSV, which premiered at the LSE Festival in June 2026. Through these and other activities, Bill has innovated audio-visual research methods in International Relations.

For his next research project, Bill will develop the concept of "techno-globalism" by investigating the interplay of technology and sustainability, especially when they are part of the PRC's quest to shape future world orders.

If colleagues are interested, Bill would be happy to talk to their classes about these topics and methods.

Faculty Spotlight



Beomgeun Cho

Assistant Professor of Public Policy;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

As a public administration and policy scholar, Beomgeun is interested in how to nurture and manage collaborative networks to improve community-level outcomes in multiple policy contexts, including regional innovation systems, local food systems, and regional economic development.

Networks and collaboration have been firmly adopted as one of the main modes of public governance, as wicked public problems go beyond the scope and capacity of a single public organization. This governance mode is expected to facilitate deliberation and interest-based negotiation among various actors, enabling effective and innovative problem-solving. However, it has become clearer over time that this positive effect of networks is not inherently guaranteed. Rather, as is the case with other traditional market-based and hierarchical approaches, collaborative networks are prone to failure.

Against this backdrop, Beomgeun has explored the research question of how collaborative networks can produce effective policy outcomes. His core theoretical and methodological approaches are drawn from Social Network Analysis (SNA). That is, he argues that the extent and quality of collaboration depend on what social relationships and network structures collaboration participants are embedded in, because network structural characteristics influence the quality of resource exchange, deliberation, trust, and shared motivations for collective action.

Building upon this foundation, he has developed two streams of studies. First, he examined how formal network facilitators manage collaborative networks in the context of regional renewable energy innovation systems. He has explored how regional public research institutes (RPRIs), established to perform the role of formal network facilitators as innovation intermediaries, nurture and maintain regional renewable energy innovation systems. Using a longitudinal dataset of multiple regional renewable energy innovation networks, He has examined how RPRIs' social relationships enable them to improve regional innovation outcomes and catalyze network evolution. He has found that RPRIs' positions in networks influence their capacity to orchestrate collective action and pursue entrepreneurial behaviors.

Second, he has examined how to address the paradoxical nature of collaboration in order to facilitate effective and sustainable collaboration in the context of regional economic development and local food systems. Due to the paradoxical nature of collaboration, indicating that required components for effective collaboration also produce challenges, no single network structural characteristics can serve as a prerequisite for effective collaboration. Instead, the combinations of network characteristics and other contextual factors need to be explored to understand multiple causal pathways toward effective collaboration. To identify these causal pathways, he has employed multi-method approaches, combining SNA, Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA), and/or interviews, to systematically compare multiple collaborative networks.

Research Centres

Centre for Research on Successful Ageing

ROSA continues to strengthen its leadership in ageing research through significant achievements in research excellence, funding, and community impact. A major milestone this year was the successful award of a \$10.2 million MOE Tier 3 grant for the project, “The Curation of Blue Zone 3.0 – Examining Societal Nudges to Promote Well-being of a Super-aged Population.” ROSA also secured an additional \$948,481 in external funding from the National Cohort Office, The Association of Banks in Singapore, and Singlife to advance research on healthy ageing, retirement preparedness, and population ageing in Singapore.

Beyond research, ROSA continued to shape national conversations on longevity through its contributions to SMU City Dialogues 2026 and the Embracing Longevity white paper, as well as its growing influence in public discourse through over 40 media features. With publications in peer-reviewed journals, presentations at international conferences, and strategic collaborations with industry and public-sector partners, ROSA remains committed to translating research into practical solutions that support healthy, purposeful, and inclusive ageing for Singapore’s rapidly ageing population.

Lien Centre for Social Innovation

Impact assessment work at LCSi continues to progress steadily, with the Centre building on and extending this line of work across multiple ongoing studies in close collaboration with academic and government partners. It is working with Dr. Andrew Koh, SMU College of Integrative Studies on the SG Enable (SGE) ELI3 Impact Assessment Project, and Associate Professor Ho Kong Weng, SMU School of Economics on the Ministry of Social and Family Development’s (MSF) Food Insecurity Project, strengthening the integration of academic expertise with research that informs policy and evaluates real-world impact.

LCSi is deepening engagement with government stakeholders through the co-creation of pilot solutions arising from work on food insecurity. The Centre is currently engaging MSF to translate emerging findings into practical pilot interventions aimed at addressing food insecurity in Singapore. These efforts reflect LCSi’s ongoing commitment to rigorous evidence on social issues and to partnering on practical, testable solutions.

Achievements – Awards/Recognitions



Lily Kong
President;
Lee Kong Chian
Chair Professor of
Social Sciences

- 2026 CASE Asia-Pacific Leadership Award, Council for Advancement and Support for Education, USA



Alan Chan
Provost; Kwan Im Thong
Hood Cho Temple Chair
Professor of Inter-Religious
Studies and Harmony

- Appointed Vice President of East Asian Classics Association



David Chan
Professor of Psychology

- Appointed the Co-Chairman of the 2026 Judging Panel of the WorkWell Leaders Awards.



Cheng Cheng
Assistant Professor of Sociology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

- Population Association of America (PAA) 2026 Poster Award Winner, for the poster: Cheng Cheng and Yang Zhou. " Perceived Penalties for Women at Work: Evidence From a Conjoint Survey Experiment in China".

Achievements – Awards/Recognitions



Matthew Hammerton
Associate Professor of
Philosophy;
Associate Dean (Education);
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

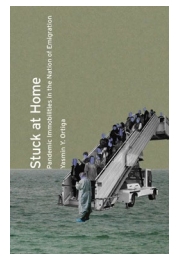


Brandon Yip
Assistant Professor of
Philosophy;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow

- Matthew Hammerton and Brandon Yip won the 2025 Association for Informal Logic & Critical Thinking (AILCT) Essay Prize, for their paper “How to Teach Fallacies Virtuously”.



Yasmin Ortega
Associate Professor of
Sociology;
Area Coordinator, Sociology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow



Stuck at Home: Pandemic Immobilities in the Nation of Emigration received Honorable Mention, 2026 Thomas & Znaniecki Best Book Award International Migration Section, American Sociological Association



Jacinth Tan
Associate Professor of
Psychology

- Elected Fellow of the Society of Experimental Social Psychology

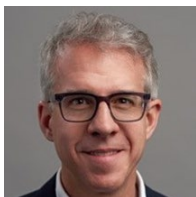


Sarah Shi Hui WONG
Assistant Professor of
Psychology

- APS Rising Star by the Association for Psychological Science

Achievements – Awards/Recognitions

Lee Kong Chian Professorship

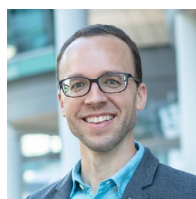


Kenneth Benoit
Dean, School of Social Sciences

Lee Kong Chian Fellowship



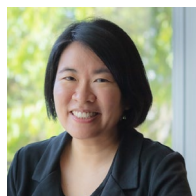
Cheng Cheng
Assistant Professor of
Sociology



Matthew Hammerton
Associate Professor of Philosophy;
Associate Dean (Education)



Norman Li
Professor of Psychology;
Director, PhD Psychology
Programme



Yasmin Ortiga
Associate Professor of Sociology;
Area Coordinator, Sociology



Jacob Ricks
Associate Professor of Political
Science; Area Coordinator,
Political Science



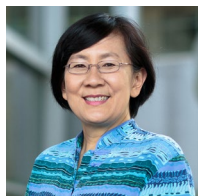
Jacinth Tan
Associate Professor of Psychology



William Tov
Associate Professor of Psychology;
Deputy Director, Centre for Research
on Successful Ageing (ROSA)

Achievements – Research Grants

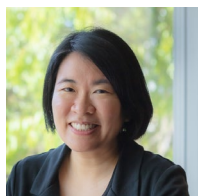
MOE AcRF Tier 3



PI: **Paulin Straughan**, Professor of Sociology (Practice); Director, Centre for Research on Successful Ageing (ROSA); Urban Fellow (Urban Experiences)

Project title: The Curation of Blue Zone 3.0 – Examining Societal Nudges to Promote Well-being of a Super-aged Population

SSRC 2025 Special Programmatic Grant



PI: **Yasmin Ortiga**, Associate Professor of Sociology; Area Coordinator, Sociology; Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Project title: Inclusive AI governance in SEA cities

LKYSPP Social Mobility Foundation (SMF) Grant



PI: **Jacqueline Ho**, Assistant Professor of Sociology

Project title: “Broadening the Meritocracy”: Families’ Experiences of Education Reform in Singapore’s Primary Schools



PI: **Nathan Peng**, Assistant Professor of Political Science (Education)

Project title: Understanding Intergenerational Mobility Among Public Rental Flat Residents

British Academy



PI: **William A. Callahan**, Professor of Political Science; Academic Director of Politics, Law and Economics (PLE) major

Project title: Chinese Keywords: Alternative ideas about society and politics

Achievements – Research Grants

MOE Social Science and Humanities Research Fellowship



PI: **Kenneth Tan**, Assistant Professor of Psychology

Project title: From Ambivalence to Action: Cultivating Paradox Mindsets for Relationship and Family Decisions in Singapore

SMU Education Research Seed Grant



PI: **George Wong**, Assistant Professor of Sociology (Education); Urban Fellow (Urban Experiences), Basket Coordinator for Asia Insights

Project title: From Area Studies to Asia-Readiness: Re-Calibrating Asian Studies' Pedagogical Purposes in Higher Education

Longevity Societies and Economies Institute (LSEI) Seed Grant



PI: **Kenneth Tan**, Assistant Professor of Psychology

Co-PIs: **David Chan**, Professor of Psychology; **William Tov**, Associate Professor of Psychology; Deputy Director, Centre for Research on Successful Ageing (ROSA); Lee Kong Chian Fellow



Project title: Navigating Singlehood in the Longevity Society: The Influence of Inequality, Social Capital, and Solitude Capacity for Holistic Well-Being Among Singles in Singapore

Achievements – Research Grants

SMU Internal Research Grant – MOE AcRF Tier 1 (Category A)



PI: **Steven Burik**, Associate Professor of Philosophy (Education);
Associate Dean (Student & Alumni Matters)

Project title: The New Anatomy of Critical Thinking:
Employer Attitudes in the AI Age



PI: **Cheng Chi-Ying**, Associate Professor of Psychology;
Area Coordinator, Psychology

Project title: Cultural Hybridity Fosters Self-Constructual Flexibility



PI: **Jacqueline Ho**, Assistant Professor of Sociology

Project title: “Broadening the Meritocracy”: Families’ Experiences of
Education Reform in Singapore’s Primary Schools



PI: **Ishani Mukherjee**, Associate Professor of Public Policy;
Urban Fellow (Urban Governance)

Project title: Policy Innovation Labs– Building a Typology for
Policy Design Outcomes



PI: **Sarah Shi Hui Wong**, Assistant Professor of Psychology

Project title: Learning-by-Teaching Improves Higher Order Learning
and Transfer: Unravelling the Psychological Mechanisms



PI: **Brandon Yip**, Assistant Professor of Philosophy; Lee Kong Chian Fellow

Project title: The Partisan Effects of Political Awe

Achievements - Appointments

The School of Social Sciences is delighted to announce the following:

PROMOTION **with effect from 1 Jul 2026**



Forrest Zhang
Professor of Sociology;
Lee Kong Chian Fellow
Office: #05-04
Email: forrestzhang@smu.edu.sg

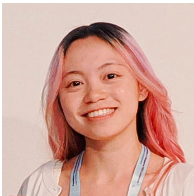
Student Achievements

The School of Social Sciences is proud to share the following student achievements:



Jessie Lim
School of Social Sciences
Class of 2026

- Jessie Lim was awarded the PAS 2026 Best Undergraduate Student Paper Award for her paper, “Living Near (or Without) Children: Proximity, Marital Status, and Gender Differences in Older Adults’ Mental Health.” at the Population Association of Singapore (PAS) 2026 Annual Conference.



Lim Yi
School of Social Sciences
Class of 2026

- Lim Yi received an Honourable Mention for the PAS 2026 Best Undergraduate Student Paper Award for her paper, “Gendered Effects of Children’s Marital Status on Parental Emotional Well-Being.” at the Population Association of Singapore (PAS) 2026 Annual Conference.



Claudelle Ashley Kay
School of Social Sciences
Class of 2027 (*Expected*)

- Claudelle Ashley Kay’s paper, “Examining the Gendered Effects of Own and Spousal Work Status on Mental Well-Being in Later-Life,” was selected for oral presentation at the Population Association of Singapore (PAS) 2026 Annual Conference.