University celebrates triple triumph

IN an impressive showcase of knowledge, innovation, and teamwork, pharmacy students from IMU University swept the podium at the prestigious Pharma Quest 2025 competition in Kuala Lumpur securing the champion, first runner-up and second runner-up titles.

Held alongside the Convention on Pharmaceutical Ingredients (CPHI) South East Asia 2025, Pharma Quest, an academic competition, returns for its third edition.

The competition is designed as a platform to challenge pharmacy students from across the region in areas such as pharmaceutical science, regulation, innovation and teamwork under competitive conditions.

The competition drew 30 teams from pharmacy schools across public and private universities nationwide. From this strong field, IMU's BP122 cohort emerged triumphant – sweeping the top three spots, an extraordinary achievement rarely seen in such a fiercely contested event.

Team CCT.IMU emerged as champions during the recent Pharma Quest competition.

Coming out on top were CCT.IMU (Chua Hsuan Kai, Tham Kai Yuan and Chen Feng), followed by first runner-up Pharmageddon (Teng Wei Yin, Tan Fern Yee and Ashley Haze Kong Zhi Xuan), and second runner-up Rejuvenate (Wong Jin Hin, Yip Jin Hui and Melanie Lim Zi Ye).

Prizes were presented by the Malaysian Organisation of Pharmaceutical Industries (MOPI) general manager Sharvin A. Subramaniam, in recognition of the students' outstanding performance and excellence in pharmaceutical innovation.

The winning IMU teams were also supported and mentored by a dedicated advisory panel from the university's school of pharmacy – Dr Nadiatul Azra, Dr Cheong Siew Lee and lead advisor Dr Hazwanie Hashim.

Hazwanie shared that IMU's big wins at Pharma Quest 2025 was a testament of the students' hard work, critical thinking and the strong collaborative spirit nurtured at the university.

"Competing on a national platform such as Pharma Quest Competition which sits at the heart of the region's pharmaceutical sector has offered our students invaluable experience. We are immensely proud of their representation of the university," she added.

IMU's triumphant performance in Pharma Quest 2025 not only cements its status as a top-tier pharmacy school, but also sends a message: its graduates are ready to lead and innovate in Malaysia's evolving pharmaceutical and healthcare landscape.

IMU's Pharmacy programme offers flexibility – students may complete the full four-year curriculum locally at IMU or opt for credit transfer to partner universities such as the University of Otago (New Zealand), University of Sydney or University of Tasmania (Australia).

Among Malaysian higher education institutions, IMU's School of Pharmacy ranks No.1 in the subject area among Malaysian private universities as per QS World University Rankings (2024) for Pharmacy and Pharmacology.

Graduates are well positioned to enter roles in hospital and community pharmacy, pharmaceutical research and development, regulatory affairs, quality assurance, drug development, clinical research and industry leadership.

The next intake for the Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons) programme begins in April 2026. If you're passionate about building a diverse and rewarding career centred on the safe and effective use of medicines, apply online today and take the first step towards becoming a future-ready pharmacist.

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Inspiring innovation through design

IN today's fast-paced world, creativity has become more than just an art form, it is a vital force driving industries forward.

From film and animation to branding, advertising and immersive digital media, opportunities in the creative sector are expanding rapidly across the globe.

At Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), the Faculty of Creative Industries (FCI) prepares students to thrive in this exciting landscape, equipping them with the technical expertise, creative vision, and industry experience to transform passion into a profession.

FCI offers two flagship programmes: the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Digital Animation and the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Graphic Design and Multimedia.

The Digital Animation degree is structured around the professional animation pipeline, teaching students to craft engaging storylines, design memorable characters and master both 2D and 3D animation techniques.

Throughout the course, students gain valuable exposure to film studies, video effects compositing, motion graphics and audio design, ensuring a comprehensive skillset to meet industry demands.

Meanwhile, the Graphic Design and Multimedia programme blends traditional design fundamentals with digital innovation.

Students are trained to conceptualise impactful visual identities, develop creative advertising campaigns and produce multimedia projects across print, web, video and audio.

With versatility as a core strength, graduates are well prepared to excel in fields such as visual design, branding, marketing, publishing and events.

Building creative careers

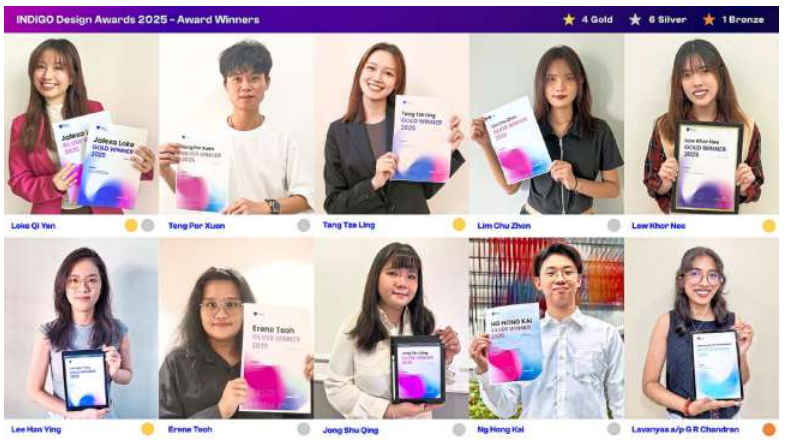
Both programmes are fully accredited, taught in English, and offered at UTAR's Sungai Long Campus, with intakes in February, June and November.

They provide a clear pathway into one of today's dynamic and fast-evolving job market.

In addition to technical training, the programmes emphasise creativity, professional ethics, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning – qualities that ensure graduates are not only ready for their first jobs but also prepared to adapt and succeed in the ever-changing creative economy.

Career pathways for UTAR's creative graduates are wide-ranging.

Alumni have gone on to pursue roles as animators, storyboard artists, art directors, VFX specialists, graphic designers, multimedia executives, and illustrators, contributing their expertise across industries such as advertising, film, media, branding and events.



Students from UTAR's Faculty of Creative Industries earned 11 accolades, including four Golds, at the Indigo Design Awards 2025.

Making their mark worldwide

In 2025, FCI students captured international acclaim when they won 11 awards at the Indigo Design Awards, including four Golds, six Silvers, and one Bronze, competing alongside renowned institutions such as Yale University and Savannah College of Art and Design.

At the 7th Stellar Prize, one of Malaysia's prestigious university-level arts competitions, student Tan Pei Xin claimed the Best Design Award, while lecturer Jeevamalar Kumarasamy was honoured as the Best Design Advisor, reflecting the strong culture of mentorship that is embedded within the faculty.

In Penang, a team of Graphic Design and Multimedia students made headlines when their project "Bersatu Kita Mekar" won the Audience Choice Award at the Terang Projection Mapping Showcase 2025, further cementing UTAR's reputation in emerging media arts.

On the international stage, student Cheng Hui Xin's artwork was selected as the official poster for United Nations World Wildlife Day 2024, bringing Malaysian creativity and environmental awareness to audiences worldwide.

Behind these remarkable successes lies a team of dedicated and passionate lecturers who provide guidance, support and mentorship to their students.

Lecturers such as Jeevamalar Kumarasamy, Lee Kin Keong, Ng Perng Jeu and Ravindran Munusamy have played pivotal roles in nurturing creativity and encouraging students to push the boundaries of their work.

Their efforts reflect FCI's mission to prepare students for the changing demands of the creative industry while fostering innovation, individuality and professional identity.

Launchpad for creative futures

UTAR's FCI continues to grow as a hub for education, research, and creative exploration. With modern facilities, active research collaborations and regular exhibitions, the faculty provides an environment where creativity is both nurtured and showcased.

Whether you are aspiring to become a digital animator, graphic designer, multimedia innovator, or brand storyteller, UTAR's FCI offers the platform, mentorship, and opportunities to design your own success story.

Aspiring students can begin their journey by joining a faculty that has already set the standard for excellence in Malaysia and beyond. Visit UTAR Open Day on Dec 20 and 21 from 9am to 4.30pm at both the Kampar and Sungai Long campuses.

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Fadillah (front row, centre) officiated the launch of the MSU Centre for Climate Resilience and Strategy, joined by senior management, partners and invited guests.

Fadillah (second from left) sharing a light moment with Prof Zaini (left), Prof Mohd Shukri (second from right) and host Syairul Islam Basmullah on the sidelines of the launch of the MSU 3P's podcast in conjunction with the launching of the Centre for Climate Resilience and Strategy in Shah Alam.

Advancing knowledge for climate resilience

ON Oct 30, Management and Science University (MSU) welcomed Deputy Prime Minister and Energy Transition and Water Transformation (Petra) Minister Datuk Fadillah Yusof to launch the MSU Centre for Climate Resilience and Strategy (m-Crest).

Also in attendance were MSU president and founder Prof Tan Sri Dr Mohd Shukri Ab Yajid, pro-chancellor Prof Datuk Seri Dr Zaini Ujang and vice-chancellor Prof Puan Sri Dr Junainah Abd Hamid.

Climate resilience is instrumental to sustainable development, ensuring that communities, economies and ecosystems can withstand and recover from environmental challenges.

With its unwavering commitment to advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Conference of the Parties (COP) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), alongside well-devised strategies for mitigation and adaptation, MSU aims to strengthen water security, energy systems, food sources and urban environments, paving the way towards a more resilient and sustainable future.

Through m-Crest, MSU will undertake technical studies on flood mitigation and resilience using advanced methods such as artificial intelligence (AI) and satellite technology.

The university will also conduct policy research on water conservation and financial models for water management, as well as integrated studies on the water-energy nexus for low-carbon utilisation.

Additionally, MSU will offer postgraduate programmes related to the water and energy sectors for Petra and its associated agencies through various schemes and modes.

The collaboration will also include Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and microcredential programmes, co-organisation of events related to the water and energy sectors, carbon footprint and Ecosystem Sarawak, along with other relevant programmes as required by Petra in partnership with m-Crest.

Five dedicated clusters have been established under this strategic hub, namely Green and Biotechnology, Water and Ocean, Energy and Low Carbon, Waste and Circular Economy, as well as Health, Climate and Community.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, Fadillah emphasised MSU's significant commitment towards climate change.

"The role of higher learning institutions such as MSU is highly significant, not only as a centre for knowledge cultivation and human capital development but also as an epicentre for nurturing sustainable mindsets, pioneering green technologies and educating society on the importance of environmental conservation and our shared responsibility on Earth.

"The m-Crest is encouraged to collaborate with government agencies to ensure Malaysia can effectively reduce the risks associated with climate change.

"The centre may also work together with Petra through its agencies, the National Water Research Institute of Malaysia (NAHRIM) and the National Water Services Commission (SPAN). This includes conducting studies on flood mitigation using the latest methodologies such as AI and satellite technology," Fadillah added.

"We are looking at the foundations laid over the past 40 years. With this forward-looking perspective, we remain committed to upholding the university's core pillar, especially our commitment to community upliftment," said Prof Mohd Shukri.

He highlighted that Prof Zaini's expertise will play a pivotal role in advancing MSU's efforts towards climate resilience and strategic development.

In addition to the novel establishment, the ceremony also encompassed the seed grant handover from the MSU Foundation (Yayasan MSU) to the m-Crest initiative, signifying MSU's commitment to fostering innovative research and advancing sustainability initiatives through knowledge transfer programmes.

In line with this, Prof Junainah presented RM10mil to Prof Zaini, advisor of m-Crest, to support research, training, grants and consultancy efforts in environmental sustainability and climate resilience over the 2025–2030 period.

In conjunction with the launch ceremony, the 3P's (People, Planet, Purpose) Podcast was unveiled, an initiative by the Department of Media and Strategic Communication, under the banner of MSUTV.

The podcast will explore and discuss pressing issues surrounding climate change and sustainability by bringing together experts.

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FEB . APR . JUL . SEP

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MQA/PSA18402
FEB . APR . JUL . SEP

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2022 SETARA COMPETITIVE

Wang at her workstation during her internship.

Coding a future in data

DATA science has become a pivotal force in reshaping industries, economies and daily life. By leveraging data, businesses enhance efficiency, governments make informed policies and healthcare advances towards personalised treatments. Data science is not just a tool; it is shaping the future, making it an exciting and vital field of study for students today.

More so when Malaysia is aiming to achieve high technology status by 2030, data science is at the core of such vision.

Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology (TAR UMT)'s programme leader in the Department of Computer Science and Embedded Systems, Assoc Prof Dr Tan Chi Wee, shared his thoughts on the development of data science in Malaysia.

"Malaysia's data centre market is experiencing unprecedented growth. With a development pipeline of 1.2 gigawatts planned, we are looking at a 600% increase over the next five years, as reported by the media. This expansion will certainly position Malaysia as a leading data centre hub in South-East Asia."

With such rapid expansion of data science in the country, a strong pool of qualified human capital is needed to run the show.

Jane Wang En Huan is one such talent who is pursuing her Bachelor of Data Science (Honours) at TAR UMT and she is looking forward to joining the workforce when she completes her degree.

"I am very encouraged that when I graduate, there are ample opportunities for me to grow and strengthen my career. Similar to how I really enjoyed my degree programme, I am sure I can secure an employment related to data science, thanks to the government's focus in developing data centres.

"I have a deep interest in IT and machine learning. This is why my favourite subjects include machine learning, artificial intelligence and data visualisation. These areas are at the forefront of innovation, for example, in manufacturing, machine learning can detect product defects in real-time or predict maintenance schedules," she explained.

TAR UMT's Bachelor of Data Science (Honours) programme is designed to equip students with cutting-edge knowledge and practical skills. This comprehensive curriculum covers essential areas such as Programming, Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence, Data Engineering, Image Processing, Natural Language Processing (NLP) and the Internet of Things (IoT) – all of which are crucial in today's data-driven world.

Tan highlighted, "It is a common misconception that AI is simply about the coding of asking questions and receiving answers, but it is far more than that.

"For example, Image Processing is one of the latest trends in data science. It plays a critical role especially in healthcare and manufacturing for quality control and defect detection. Coupled with IoT, we can connect devices and enable real-time data collection through sensors, allowing us to predict anomalies and enhance operational efficiency."

Wang shared about her project on Image Processing and IoT: "For my project, I had to develop a smart sensor system to determine which objects were permitted to enter a garage door.

"We integrated various sensors and implemented real-time monitoring, enabling AI to decide whether to grant entry. As a result, the garage door transformed from a simple mechanism into an intelligent and responsive system. This was a valuable experience in applying my theoretical knowledge to a real-world project and it taught me the power of smart systems in everyday life."

Wang added: "My lecturers often combine theory with practical exercises and real-life case studies. This helps us understand how data science principles are applied in the industry.

"We are encouraged to think critically and solve problems creatively. The availability of online resources and advanced tools further supports our learning outside the classroom."

■ For more information, call 011-1075 8554 or log on to *www.tarc.edu.my* for details about TAR UMT and to apply online. Various financial aid and merit scholarships are available for qualified students.

Turning creativity into a career

GRAPHIC DESIGN is more than just creating images – it's the powerful art of communicating ideas, emotions, and stories through visual and textual elements.

From stunning advertisements and impactful branding to sleek web designs and captivating magazine layouts, graphic design shapes how the world sees and experiences ideas.

MSU College's School of Science and Technology offers a dynamic Diploma in Graphic Design programme that sparks creativity and equips students with the skills to thrive in today's ever-evolving creative industry.

Nurturing industry-ready designers

At MSU College, the School of Science and Technology offers a dynamic Diploma in Graphic Design programme designed to unleash creativity and prepare students for the fast-evolving creative industry.

This comprehensive two-and-a-half-year programme blends artistic vision with practical industry skills, empowering students to become a confident, innovative, and industry-ready designer.

Among the programme highlights, students will explore a wide spectrum of subjects thoughtfully selected to strengthen both creative and technical capabilities, including in visual communication, typography, communication skills, advertising design and interactive multimedia.

Through hands-on projects, real-world assignments, and industry-relevant coursework, students will learn how to craft designs that inspire, inform, and influence – across print, digital and interactive platforms.

Graduates of this programme are prepared for diverse roles such as graphic designer, layout artist, technical illustrator, art director and creative director.

Prospective students will find opportunities in fields such as advertising, branding, corporate identity, packaging design, digital media, app design, signage, and website development – anywhere creativity meets communication.

Entry requirements for the programme is a pass in Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia or its equivalent with three credits in any subject, or an MSU College certificate in a related field with passes in all subjects.

Upon completing their diplomas, they may advance directly into the second year of the bachelor's programme at Management and Science University (MSU) through the Faculty of Information Sciences and Engineering – giving students a seamless path towards higher qualifications and career growth.

MSU College also serves as an MSU APEL Centre, offering potential candidates the opportunity to take the APEL Aptitude Test – a non-conventional pre-qualification for entry into higher studies.

MSU currently offers APEL A and APEL C at T-3 (certificate), T-4 diploma), T-6 (bachelor's degree), and T-7 (master's degree) levels.

■ For more information on programmes offered, call 06-764 8686, 03-5521 6868 or email enquiry@msucollege.my or visit *www.msucollege.edu.my*

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NUS LEADING HEALTH LEADERSHIP WITH NEW HEALTH ECONOMICS PROGRAMME

WHEN Covid-19 emerged in 2019, it exposed critical gaps in how governments make healthcare decisions under pressure.

Faced with limited budgets and urgent demands, policymakers had to rapidly evaluate which interventions offered the best value.

It's a challenge that persists today as ageing Asian populations demand access to increasingly expensive medical technologies.

To address this gap, the National University of Singapore (NUS), Asia's top-ranked university, has launched its MSc in Health Economics and Outcomes Research (MScHEOR) programme.

As Singapore's only specialised MScHEOR, it is tailored specifically to Asian healthcare systems and addresses critical regional shortages in health economics and outcomes research (HEOR), health technology assessment (HTA) and market access talent.

MScHEOR programme director Assoc Prof Alec Morton said strong demand and a need for focused training led to the programme's creation.

"The main difference is that the Master of Public Health (MPH) focuses on building general skills in public health – designing epidemiological studies, understanding how to develop health promotion campaigns. But the MScHEOR focuses specifically on the skills necessary for health economics," he said.

The programme emphasises modelling the benefits of new medical technologies, including drugs and devices, as well as health financing and collaborating with Ministries of Health on budgeting for these innovations.

To address increasing gaps in regional healthcare needs, NUS launches a new master's programme tailored to Asian healthcare systems.

Students gain hands-on experience through capstone projects, building practical skills directly applicable to pharmaceutical and medtech industries, government agencies and consulting firms.

While this is the programme's first intake, it builds on years of teaching health technology assessment within the MPH programme.

"As a school, we learnt a lot from Covid-19. And one of the important learnings is the need to be able to provide policy advice on a rapid basis in an emergency scenario."

"We are keen to see what students make of it and how the programme evolves," said Morton.

The programme welcomes applicants with or without prior work experience and offers a flexible and work-friendly learning structure, with classes delivered either in intensive one- to two-week in-person blocks or through online sessions, accommodating a range of professional commitments.

For those seeking a role that influences public health policy, applies research to real-world challenges and advances community well-being, the long-standing MPH programme offers the ideal pathway for aspiring public health professionals.

It features a holistic, interdisciplinary curriculum grounded in evidence-based approaches and collaborative learning, with new elective courses introduced to address post-pandemic shifts.

Leveraging NUS's position as Asia's top-ranked university, the programme gives students access to world-class faculty, research infrastructure and extensive academic networks.

"Through our School of Public Health's regional and global research collaborations, students gain international perspectives while engaging deeply with South-East Asian health systems and challenges," said MPH programme director Assoc Prof Mary Chong.

"This exposure cultivates public health leaders who are adaptive, thoughtful and equipped to drive meaningful change, both regionally and globally."

Unlike MScHEOR, the MPH programme requires applicants to have at least one to two years of work experience.

"Students who have at least one to two years of work experience tend to benefit most," Prof Mary Chong explained.

"Their prior work exposure allows them to better connect classroom concepts with practical insights, which enriches discussions and enhances the collective experience for all their peers."

Programme alumni have gone on to join government agencies and international organisations, including the World Health Organization (WHO), Unicef and World Bank.

Notable alumni include Dr Margaret Chan, a former WHO director-general.

Apart from financial aid and scholarships, the programme offers subsidised fees of up to 70% for international students by Singapore's Health Ministry as part of its commitment to cultivating public health leaders in the region.

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Contact us :
Tel : 03 5521 6868
Email : enquiry@msu.edu.my
MSUmalaysia
MSUmalaysia.official
MANAGEMENT AND SCIENCE UNIVERSITY (MSU) DU019(B)
No.4, Persiaran Olahraga, Seksyen 13, 40000 Shah Alam, Selangor.
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