

College of Design and Engineering

# Summer Engineering Research Internship for US Students (SERIUS)

## SERIUS 2024: LIST OF PROJECTS

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A/Prof Poh Chueh Loo https://cde.nus.edu.sg/bme/staff/dr-pohcl/

## Development of an automated BioModel Selection System for Synthetic Biology Gene Circuit Design

Synthetic biology, also known as the engineering of biology, involves programming of living biological systems using synthetic genetic circuits for a wide range of applications including engineering microbes to tackle infectious diseases, to produce high value chemical and to detect water contamination. Constructing a complex working gene circuit composed of different modular standardized biological parts to achieve the desired performance could be challenging without a proper understanding of how the individual modules behave. Mathematical modeling plays an important role towards better quantifying and optimizing the performance of the overall gene circuit, providing insights and guiding the design of experiments. As different gene circuits might require exclusively different mathematical representations, one of the key challenges in model development is the selection of the appropriate model. Such a process could be tedious and essentially involving prolonged iterative trial-and-error learning and testing cycles. To address this, the project aims to develop a software system using Python to automate the biomodel development and selection processes, providing a means to efficiently derive the best candidate model using characterization data from biological parts, and more complex gene circuits such as logic gates etc. Students involve in this project will have the opportunity to experience how genetic circuits are designed and characterized, and at the same time be trained to develop mathematical models using ordinary differential equations to describe and simulate simple gene circuits.

Maximum no. of participants: 1

Nature of Project Software Development

Relevant Majors Biomedical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Chemical Engineering, System Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements Programming skills (Python) Project Learning Outcomes

Developed a module of the software system which is able to take in a set of characterization data for a particular type of genetic circuits and output the model which best described the data.

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Engineering Biology Lab E6-04, 5 Engineering Drive 1, Singapore 117608

Dr Andrew W. Holle https://www.mbi.nus.edu.sg/andrew-holle/

## Designing new materials for coral reef growth and regeneration

Despite worldwide attention to the plight of coral reefs due to climate change, there has been little focus on the role of mechanobiology for supporting the attachment, growth, and development of coral planulae. This project will use biomaterial techniques to fabricate hydrogel substrates with different stiffnesses, then test the ability of these scaffolds to remain functional in seawater-mimicking media. Next, isolated stable coral cell lines will be plated on these substrates to determine the degree to which coral cells can sense the stiffness of their mechanical microenvironment. Substrate chemistry will also be controlled in order to enhance the binding of symbiotic algal species to which coral cells have been shown to interact. Finally, these substates will be tested with live budding coral species to determine if seeding efficiency is affected as a function of substrate stiffness and surface chemistry. Ultimately, these findings may lead to new designs for coral-enhancing materials that can be placed in situ to encourage coral regeneration.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Laboratory Investigation

Relevant Majors Biomedical Engineering, Materials Science, Biology

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? No

Any other information/requirements NA

Project Learning Outcomes 1. An understanding of hydrogel synthesis

- 2. Connections between mechanobiology and marine biology
- 3. Surface modification techniques

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Confinement Mechanobiology Lab T-Lab Building, Level 10, 5A Engineering Drive 1, Singapore 117411

#### Project BME3

Supervisor

Dr Jennifer Young https://www.mbi.nus.edu.sg/jennifer-young/

#### Extracellular matrix mechanobiology in aging

Aging results in drastic tissue alterations, yet the role of specific tissue properties in regulating age-related dysfunction is poorly understood. Thus, this project aims to quantify how extracellular matrix (ECM) deregulation directly affects cellular function. To do this, we will design biomaterial systems mimicking tissue properties for studying the role of individual ECM components (stiffness, composition, organization). Young vs. aged cells will be cultured on these materials and monitored for functionality using imaging-based and expression assays.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Laboratory Investigation

Relevant Majors Biology, Biomedical Engineering, Materials Science

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? No

Any other information/requirements

Some background knowledge in biomaterials and meat alternatives should be acquired before commencing the program. Specific literature will be given to the student(s) once assigned to the project.

Project Learning Outcomes
1. Design, fabrication, and characterization of hydrogels
2. Cell culture and biological assays
3. Data analysis and presentation of project findings

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Soft Nano-Biomaterials Lab, Mechanobiology Institute T-Lab Level 9 5A Engineering Drive 1, Singapore 117411

A/Prof Yu Liya E. https://cde.nus.edu.sg/cee/staff/yu-liya-e/

## How do volatile organic compounds affect urban PM2.5 and air quality?

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) (e.g., emitting from trees and household cleaning reagents) are known to be involved in photochemical smog generating compounds (such as O<sub>3</sub>) affecting public health. How do VOCs affect ambient PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations? This study aims to address the question through simulation of chemical reactions in a warm humid city in the equatorial Asia. Field measurements data are employed as inputs and validation of computational results. Specific focus can be given to investigate effects of selected VOC species originating from biogenic sources (e.g., isoprene) and anthropogenic processes (e.g., toluene). Students who are keen to integrate programming skills (Python and R) with atmospheric chemistry will enjoy the most.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Hybrid (e.g., mixture of experiment & theoretical, or experimental and numerical/software)

**Relevant Majors** 

Chemical Engineering, Chemistry, Atmospheric Science, Environmental Science Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements Familiarity of Python and R will be most suitable Strong interests in data processing and chemical reactions Project Learning Outcomes

- 1. Atmospheric reaction mechanisms in warm humid urban environment
- 2. Applications of Python or R to atmospheric environment

3. Measurements/quantification of airborne pollutants (only feasible for physical presence in Singapore)

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Air quality & aerosol science lab (AQASL) E2-05-24, 9 Engineering Drive 1, Singapore 117575 E8-02-06, 1 Engineering Drive 3, Singapore 117580

#### Project ChBE1

Supervisor

A/Prof Tong Yen Wah https://cde.nus.edu.sg/chbe/staff/chetyw/

## Converting food waste into energy and resources through biological processes

As the world's population continues to rise, the need for sustainability is becoming more and more pressing. Two key areas of concern involve finding new, less polluting sources of energy and an effective waste management strategy. It is here that anaerobic digestion can provide a simultaneous, sustainable solution to both challenges. The methanerich biogas generated is suitable for energy production and can replace fossil fuels. Some substrates, such as food waste, have especially high biogas yields. While it is not energy efficient to burn food waste because of its high moisture content that requires high energy for incineration, it is ideal for anaerobic digestion as it contains an abundance of organic material that is a valuable biomass resource for the anaerobic digestion process.

Maximum no. of participants: 3

Nature of Project Laboratory Investigation

Relevant Majors Chemical Engineering, Environmental Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? No

Any other information/requirements NA

Project Learning Outcomes
1. To understand about wastes and sustainability
2. To be able to link chemical engineering with biology and environment
3. To learn about the anaerobic digestion technology

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to E2S2-CREATE University Town, 1 CREATE Way, Singapore 138602

#### Project ChBE2

Supervisor

Prof Praveen Linga https://blog.nus.edu.sg/lingalab/

### Carbon capture and storage via clathrate hydrates

Global  $CO_2$  emissions are currently estimated to be around 30.6 gigatons [2020] by the International Energy Agency [IEA]. To prevent the catastrophic repercussions of global warming, such as rising sea levels, melting glaciers, and rising global temperatures, the  $CO_2$  worldwide emissions must be drastically decreased. The IEA has set a target of achieving a zero-carbon economy by 2050 and limiting global warming to 1.5 oC. Carbon capture and storage [CCS] has the potential to significantly reduce  $CO_2$  emissions in the atmosphere. The ocean can serve as a huge pool for carbon capture and storage. However, the carbon dioxide cannot be disposed of directly into the ocean due to environmental restrictions such as ocean acidification and threat to aquatic life. The storage of  $CO_2$  as gas hydrates in deep ocean sediments is an alternative approach. Through experimental tests and computational models, this research will conduct a fundamental morphological study on  $CO_2$  hydrate formation kinetics in aqueous media and porous media. The successful applicant will be responsible to help with lab experiments and computational modelling.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Hybrid (eg. mixture of experiment & theoretical, or experimental and numerical/software)

Relevant Majors Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Chemistry, Oceanic Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements

- 1. Background reading on CO<sub>2</sub> hydrates recommended
- 2. Skills in using Microsoft Excel and Matlab programming preferred
- 3. Good communication and writing skills preferred

Project Learning Outcomes 1. Experimental skills 2. Technical writing and presentation skills 3. Data analysis skills

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Biomolecular Engineering E8-04-06, 1 Engineering Drive 3, Singapore 117580

No

Supervisor

Prof Praveen Linga https://blog.nus.edu.sg/lingalab/

## Hydrogen storage via clathrate hydrates

Hydrogen (H<sub>2</sub>) with zero-emission upon combustion is projected to play a leading role in the clean energy portfolio. Establishing the hydrogen economy necessitates the development of innovative hydrogen storage technology for both onboard and stationary applications. Hydrate based hydrogen storage enabling safe, long-term, and energy-dense storage of hydrogen molecules under moderate temperature and pressure conditions is promising for stationary storage applications in the foreseeable hydrogen economy.

This project consists of the following objectives: a) to identify thermodynamic promotors to improve the temperature and pressure conditions required for hydrogen storage by gas hydrates; b) to identify kinetic promotors to enhance the hydrogen storage speed by gas hydrates; c) Optimization of the parameters for enhanced hydrate formation kinetics. Outcomes:

On successful completion of this project, students will be able to: a) understand the fundamental properties of gas hydrates; b) master the basic and necessary experimental skills to conducted gas hydrate-related experiments; c) understand and estimate hydrogen storage capacity and efficiency of various hydrate systems using fundamental thermodynamics concepts (Equation of state et al); d) be familiar with various chemical engineering equipment, e) understand the process design and optimization.

**Project Learning Outcomes** Maximum no. of participants: 1 1. To master the basic and necessary experimental skills on gas hydrate research in the state-of-the-art gas hydrate laboratory Nature of Project 2. To obtain a complete understanding of the hydrate based hydrogen storage and Laboratory Investigation, Computing and Analysis transport process 3. Possibly achieve a breakthrough in the research area with potential collaboration on a scientific research paper **Relevant Majors** Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Material Engineering Linga Lab E8-04-04, 1 Engineering Drive 3, Singapore 117582 If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually?

Any other information/requirements Candidates with prerequisite knowledge in heat and mass transfer, thermodynamics, and material characterization are favorable.

A/Prof Yan Ning https://www.yan-group-nus.com/

## Converting CO<sub>2</sub> into methanol by hydrogenation

The escalating concerns about global climate change necessitate the development of technologies that can address the excessive CO<sub>2</sub> levels in our atmosphere. The project "Converting CO<sub>2</sub> into Methanol by Hydrogenation" offers a viable solution to this challenge by converting carbon dioxide, a major greenhouse gas, into valuable methanol through hydrogenation.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Laboratory Investigation

Relevant Majors Chemical Engineering, Chemistry



CO<sub>2</sub> Hyrdrogenation Reactor

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Green Catalysis Lab E8 level 5, 1 Engineering Drive 3, Singapore 117580

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually?

Any other information/requirements NA

**Project Learning Outcomes** 

1. Students will develop basic understanding of the principles and mechanisms behind the hydrogenation of  $CO_2$  to produce methanol, encompassing both thermodynamic and kinetic aspects.

2. Through hands-on experience with the synthetic robot, students will acquire skills in designing, synthesizing, and characterizing various catalysts tailored for  $CO_2$  conversion.

3. Students will become adept in setting up, operating, and troubleshooting the advanced multichannel reactor, ensuring safety and optimal performance throughout the process.



Synthesis Robot

4. By collecting and analyzing experimental data, students will gain the ability to derive meaningful insights, understand catalyst behavior under different conditions, and optimize reaction parameters for maximum methanol yield.

5. Students will be challenged to innovate and optimize the process continuously, fostering their analytical and problem solving skills.

Prof Sam Ge Shuzhi https://cde.nus.edu.sg/ece/staff/ge-shuzhi-sam/

## Dynamic and Control of Mechanical System in Offshore Engineering

Offshore engineering is concerned with the design and operation of systems in harsh environment conditions. It is one of the most challenging tasks in offshore engineering. The modeling and control of such system have received increasing attention in recent years with growing energy demands extending oil and gas explorations. Offshore applications are characterized by the timevarying environmental disturbances and the sea conditions. For riser systems, vibration and deformation of the flexible structures due to the ocean current disturbances and the tension exerted at the top can produce premature fatigue problems and failures that require costly repairs. Proper control techniques are desirable for preventing damage and improving the lifespan of the structure. The problems and the proposed solutions will be of interest to the offshore engineering community, to the academic control community, and to who may be able to make even further contributions in wide range of industrial and control area.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Hybrid (e.g., mixture of experiment & theoretical, or experimental and numerical/software)

Relevant Majors Engineering, Computing

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements Python, Matlab, Control Science

Project Learning Outcomes

1. Theoretical exploration on dynamics of marine mechanical system

2. Developing advance strategies for control design of systems with guaranteed stability

3. The control design are coupled with numerical simulations to illustrate the effectiveness

Supervisor

Prof Sam Ge Shuzhi https://cde.nus.edu.sg/ece/staff/ge-shuzhi-sam/

## Develop digital twin of interacting systems in complex sea scenarios

In offshore operations such as FLNG offloading or rig installation, the environment envelopes are very conservative due to the high risks of explosions and environmental pollution. Operators are interested to enhance the productivity of the offshore assets through better understanding and predictability of the global performance of the coupled systems, predictability of operations and active control strategies.

In this project, students are expected to design and develop digital-twin for Offshore operations to achieve its controllability and predictability by working together with our group. During the project, students are expected to strengthen the abilities of self-motivated study, project planning, algorithm development, system integration, and academic writing.

Maximum no. of participants: 3

Nature of Project Hybrid (e.g., mixture of experiment & theoretical, or experimental and numerical/software)

Relevant Majors Engineering, Computing, Mathematics, Physics

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements

- 1. Enjoy Programming and familiar unity, python
- 2. Enjoy Design and Development of Software or Hardware
- 3. Good at Math, Physics and writing and teamwork
- 4. Excellent learning and take challenges

Project Learning Outcomes

- 1. Describe the aspects of offshore robotics and technological solutions
- 2. Understand digital twin and apply to offshore engineering
- 3. Understand digital representation and marine robot motion

Supervisor

Dr Kelvin Fong Xuanyao https://blog.nus.edu.sg/seeder

## Domain-specific Computing using Emerging Electronic Device Technologies

Future computing systems will require unprecedented levels of energy-efficiencies and can solve much more challenging problems that are beyond the capabilities of existing electronics. In this project, students will explore the mapping of challenging problems (e.g., MAX-CUT) to electronic devices that may be able to better model the atomic operations needed in algorithms to solve those problems. Students will attempt to prove their ideas using simulations and evaluate the designs.

Maximum no. of participants: 4

Nature of Project Computing and Analysis, Design

Relevant Majors Applied Mathematics, Applied Physics, Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electronics Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements Familiarity with Python and MATLAB Good to know the Finite Element Method and COMSOL but not required Project Learning Outcomes

- 1. Map a computational problem to an electronic device technology
- 2. Demonstrate and evaluate their proof-of-concept using simulations

Supervisor

Dr Kelvin Fong Xuanyao https://blog.nus.edu.sg/seeder

### Memory-centric Data Processing Hardware

Future Cognitive Internet of Things will deploy data-intensive machine learning and artificial intelligence algorithms on edge devices for various applications. However, the hardware architecture needs to be designed to drastically reduce the energy consumption and meet the unique energy requirements for edge devices. Memory-centric microarchitectures have emerged as a promising solution. In this project, students will be involved in the design of a memory-centric microarchitecture based on non-volatile memory devices (e.g. ferroelectric RAM, RERAM, STT MRAM and SOT MRAM).

Maximum no. of participants: 4

Nature of Project Computing and Analysis, Design

Relevant Majors Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electronics Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements Knowledge of Python and MATLAB Familiarity with concepts of memory subsystems Project Learning Outcomes 1. Be able to simulate a memory-centric microarchitecture 2. Identify key design problems in the microarchitecture

Supervisor

Dr Kelvin Fong Xuanyao https://blog.nus.edu.sg/seeder

#### Non-volatile ferroelectric transistor memory

Non-volatile ferroelectric memory is a promising technology for future non-volatile memories. In this project, we will be exploring the design of the non-volatile ferroelectric transistor using simulations. Students will work with Python libraries and COMSOL to work with the simulation tools, benchmarks and test suites. The simulation tools will also be calibrated to experimental measurements from collaborators or in the literature.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Computing and Analysis, Software Development

Relevant Majors Applied Mathematics, Applied Physics, Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electronics Engineering, Materials Science

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements Familiarity with Python Good to know the Finite Element Method and COMSOL but not required Project Learning Outcomes
1. Create a test suite to test their simulation programs
2. Calibrate the simulation programs to experimentally measured device characterization data
3. Perform an analysis of the non-volatile ferroelectric transistor

Dr Kelvin Fong Xuanyao https://blog.nus.edu.sg/seeder

## Non-volatile Mem-ristive Memories

Non-volatile mem-ristive memory devices exhibit stochastic behavior that increases the complexity of models and analysis methodologies that are needed for design. In this project, we will be exploring the Fokker-Planck based simulation framework to study emerging mem-resistive memories. Students will work with Python libraries and COMSOL to work with the simulation tools, benchmarks and test suites. The simulation tools will also be calibrated to experimental measurements from collaborators or in the literature.

Maximum no. of participants: 3

Nature of Project Computing and Analysis, Software Development

Relevant Majors Applied Mathematics, Applied Physics, Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electronics Engineering, Materials Science

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements Familiarity with Python Good to know the Finite Element Method and COMSOL but not required Project Learning Outcomes 1. Create a test suite to test their simulation programs

2. Calibrate the simulation programs to experimentally measured device

characterization data

3. Analyse one novel device concept using the developed simulation framework

Supervisor

Dr Kelvin Fong Xuanyao https://blog.nus.edu.sg/seeder

## Machine Learning Applied to Intelligent Farming

Climate change will severely impact the global land availability for agricultural activities. High tech farming techniques may provide a solution that is labor and cost efficient. In this project, students will explore the application of machine learning techniques for diagnostic activities on an aquaponics system. One aspect of the project is to explore the generalizability of machine learning models, where publicly available datasets are used for training models, which are then deployed in an aquaponics system. Students will then address the generalizability issues by developing novel solutions.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Computing and Analysis, Hybrid (e.g., mixture of experiment & theoretical, or experimental and numerical/software)

Relevant Majors Applied Mathematics, Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Computing, Electrical Engineering, Biology

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements Familiarity with Python and at least one machine learning framework (e.g., PyTorch, Tensorflow)

Project Learning Outcomes Students will learn to apply machine learning concepts on an engineering project, and create software tools that can be applied.

Dr Kelvin Fong Xuanyao https://blog.nus.edu.sg/seeder

## AloT for Aquaponics

Climate change will severely impact the amount of land available for agricultural activities. High tech farming can be a promising solution to transform the agricultural industry. Artificial Intelligence Internet of Things (AIoT) is a potential pathway towards improving the labor and cost efficiency for future high tech farming. In this project, students will leverage existing tools/software/hardware to implement AIoT solutions for an aquaponics system. They will work with a local startup to conduct research on prototypes of AIoT solutions for an aquaponics system.

Maximum no. of participants: 4

Nature of Project

Design, Feasibility/Case Studies, Product Development, Software Development, Hybrid (e.g., mixture of experiment & theoretical, or experimental and numerical/software)

**Relevant Majors** 

Biology, Computer Engineering, Computing, Electrical Engineering, Engineering Science, Environmental Engineering, Robotics

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? No

Any other information/requirements Experience working with Arduino or Raspberry Pi will be a plus. Project Learning Outcomes

Students will learning about aquaponics and IoT for aquaponics. The project will also provide participants with experience working on an engineering project.

Prof Aaron Thean

https://sites.google.com/atresearchgroup.net/at-research-group/about-us

## Al Chips that rewire themselves

We are working on new semiconductor device technologies that may allow chips to learn and reconfigure themselves. The devices are oxide-based semiconductors with ferroelectric memory that can be integrated into the interconnect wirings of advanced chips. Here, in this project, we would like to explore the design and integration of circuit components for novel neural network on 3D chip applications. Interested students will have a choice to work on the system design, circuit design, or material development/integration.

Maximum no. of participants: 5

Nature of Project Laboratory Investigation

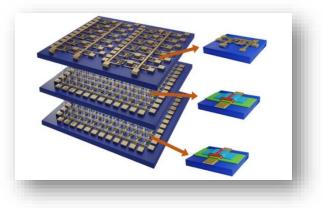
Relevant Majors Electrical Engineering, Materials Science

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? No

Any other information/requirements Basic semiconductor device theory and processing. Basic electronic circuit concept. Project Learning Outcomes

- 1. Student to learn basics of semiconductor processes
- 2. Student to learn the basics of Al chip architecture
- 3. Student to learn about memory device material

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to E6Nanofab E6-05-03, 5 Engineering Drive 1, Singapore 117608



#### Project EDIC1

Supervisor

Dr Tang Kok Zuea https://cde.nus.edu.sg/edic/staff/tang-kok-zuea/

### **Development of a Web-Based Virtual Reality System**

This project aims to develop a web-based system virtual reality (VR) wearable systems to be used for team collaboration using web hosting apps (e.g. Zoom) and VR headgear. There are many different tools available for such purposes. But the effective use of such tools for team collaboration is not guaranteed. The developed VR system should be relatively easy to adopt, produce more reliable results (in part through provision of real-time feedback on team's performance) as compared to current offerings. Ultimately, it is envisaged that this project will translate into more practical applications to allow teams to effectively collaborate. This project involves software development.

Maximum no. of participants: 4

Nature of Project Software Development, Design, Product Development

**Relevant Majors** 

Electrical and Computer Engineering, Mechanical and Product Development Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements NA

Project Learning Outcomes **Proof-of-concept development for the proposed approach** 

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Engineering Design and Innovation Centre (EDIC) E2A-04-05, 5 Engineering Drive 2, Singapore 117579 Project EDIC2

#### Supervisor

Dr Tang Kok Zuea https://cde.nus.edu.sg/edic/staff/tang-kok-zuea/

## Surgical Tool Checker using Deep Learning and Smart Vision

An article in the Outpatient Surgery magazine has written that an instrument processing department in the US has to process 900 trays of instrument per day. Due to this high volume of surgical tools, hospitals are facing a challenge of reducing the number of missing tools in their inventory as well as incomplete surgical sets in operation theatre. The problem also lies on the close similarities between 2 different tools, which are difficult to be noticed by a human's naked eye. Hence, this project aims to develop an intelligent system to reduce the number of human errors occurred in the hospital. The scanner should be able to identify the tool placed on the platform and tally it with the reference toolset. As such, if there is any missing or wrong tool placed on the platform, the software will be able to warn the user about the error before the tool set is being out processed which in turn reduce the occurrence of missing tools in their inventory as well as incomplete surgical sets in operation theatre.

With this innovation, it will benefit a large group of people such as the instrument processing department, surgeons and patients. Packaging staffs will be able to work in a less stressful environment and more efficiently without the use of count sheets. With the reduction of human errors, it will reduce the time wastage of the surgeons and the patients. Overall, the efficiency in every aspect will be improved with the success of this innovation.

Maximum no. of participants: 4

Nature of Project Software Development, Design

Relevant Majors Electrical and Computer Engineering, Mechanical and Product Development Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements NA

Project Learning Outcomes Proof-of-concept development for the proposed approach

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Engineering Design and Innovation Centre (EDIC) E2A-04-05, 5 Engineering Drive 2, Singapore 117579

Dr Tang Kok Zuea https://cde.nus.edu.sg/edic/staff/tang-kok-zuea/

## Detection of vehicles with excessive exhaust

In the drive towards a city in a garden with good air quality, curbing exhaust emissions from vehicles is one of the active ongoing efforts conducted by our National Environment Agency (NEA). We aim to reduce this type of emissions to near zero by 2025, with the gradual introduction of electric vehicles to the roads in Singapore. However, transport companies and other commercial organisations in Singapore, Malaysia and nearby areas still rely heavily on vehicles with carbon emissions for their daily operations. Vehicles running on diesel and petrol for their combustion engines emit smoke with different profiles. Monitoring the carbon emissions of these different type of vehicles from different parts of the vehicles that are moving along the roads relies heavily on the attentive traffic officers on duty. In this project, we are interested to develop a more efficient method to detect and determine the excessive emissions from the exhaust of the vehicles.

The objective is to develop a smart method to detect and determine the excessive emissions from the exhaust of the vehicles. This system will recognise and register the number plates of the vehicles too. Experiments will be conducted on actual video footages to evaluate the effectiveness of the system.

Maximum no. of participants: 4

Project Learning Outcomes Proof-of-concept development for the proposed approach

Nature of Project Software Development, Design

Relevant Majors Electrical and Computer Engineering, Mechanical and Product Development Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements NA

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Engineering Design and Innovation Centre (EDIC) E2A-04-05, 5 Engineering Drive 2, Singapore 117579

#### Project ME1

Supervisor

A/Prof Loh Wai Lam https://cde.nus.edu.sg/me/staff/loh-wai-lam/

## Multiphase Flow in Pipelines and Multiphase Equipment Development

In oil & gas production, a multiphase mixture of oil, water and gas flows through a pipeline for long distances. Due to differences in densities, viscosities, and other physical properties, various flow regimes, i.e. stratified, wavy, bubbly, slug, annular and dispersed flows, can develop as a result, depending on the superficial velocities of the fluids. Different flow regimes have different effects on the pressure drop, flow pattern, etc., and ultimately on the stability of the flow. Pipeline integrity can also potentially be compromised due to force loadings from some of the flow regimes. This project looks into multiphase flow and also into the development of equipment for the oil & gas industry.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project

Laboratory Investigation, Computing and Analysis, Product Development, Hybrid (e.g., mixture of experiment & theoretical, or experimental and numerical/software)

Relevant Majors Chemical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Process Engineering, Offshore Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? **Yes** 

Any other information/requirements NA

Project Learning Outcomes Students will have a better appreciation of multiphase flow in pipelines and an understanding of multiphase equipment used in oil and gas transportation.

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to NUS Multiphase Oil-Water-Air Flow Loop Laboratory

Dr Sing Swee Leong https://cde.nus.edu.sg/me/staff/sing-swee-leong/

## 3D Printing Enabled Urban Farming

Urban farming has gained traction in recent years, especially for developed regions to attain selfsustainability. In this project, the feasibility of using 3D printing for design and fabrication of efficient structures for urban farming will be explored. The project aims to achieve high efficiency in urban farming via space saving and higher nutrient/water transport effectiveness.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

#### Nature of Project

Laboratory Investigation, Product Development, Feasibility/Case Studies, Hybrid (e.g., mixture of experiment & theoretical, or experimental and numerical/software), Design, Computing and Analysis

#### **Relevant Majors**

Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Materials Science, Biological Science, Bioengineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually?

Yes. The designing of components can be done using open source or commonly used computer aided design (CAD) software. Analysis of performance of the designed components can also be done using numerical methods.

Any other information/requirements Experience with computer aided design, flow analysis will be advantageous. Project Learning Outcomes

 Evaluate current methods in urban farming and study the design features
 Design suitable structures for urban farming and their feasibility to be manufactured by additive manufacturing

3. Evaluate the efficiency of 3D printed structures for urban farming

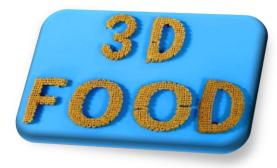
Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to NUS Centre for Additive Manufacturing (AM.NUS)



Dr Sing Swee Leong https://cde.nus.edu.sg/me/staff/sing-swee-leong/

## **3D Food Printing for Sustainability**

3D food printing provides the opportunity to create alternative food source using correct material combinations and print patterns that can mimic the texture of natural m eat. In this project, the material combination chosen will be used to evaluation the feasibility of such technology in sustainable causes in terms of benchmarking the texture and appearance to conventional meat sources.



Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Feasibility/Case Studies, Laboratory Investigation, Hybrid (e.g., mixture of experiment & theoretical, or experimental and numerical/software)

Relevant Majors Materials Science, Mechanical Engineering , Chemistry , Applied Physics

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements NA

Project Learning Outcomes

1. Evaluate current development in 3D food printing

2. Study of suitable materials for 3D food printing using material extrusion technology

3. Evaluate the 3D food printing as alternative method of food production technology

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to NUS Centre for Additive Manufacturing (AM.NUS)

Dr Tan Yu Jun https://yujuntan.com/

## Exploration of light-field-based control methods for light-driven robots

With the rise of light-driven materials such as liquid crystal elastomer (LCE), light fields are ready to produce actuation to the robot, which opened up a wide room of innovation, such as making robots as small as paramecia with remote control capability. However, current control methods for light-driven microrobots are mainly based on ON/OFF control of the light source, while other unique properties of the light field including direction, reflection, and polarization haven't been systematically utilized for robot control yet. Here, you are going to make smart use of these properties and figure out a new control strategy for light-driven robots to achieve better or novel functions. The content of the project includes (i) testing and mathematical modeling of the control method, and (ii) a robot demo to show the strength. Students with interests or skills in remote robot control, simulation, and smart materials are preferred.

To get more understanding of light-driven robots, you can refer to: <u>https://pubs.rsc.org/en/content/articlehtml/2020/cs/d0cs00363h</u> <u>https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/aisy.202000148</u>

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Laboratory Investigation, Design

Relevant Majors Mechanical Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually?

Project Learning Outcomes 1. Testing and mathematical modeling of a control method 2. Hands on skills to build a mini soft robot.

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Materials Lab E3-04-01/02, 2 Engineering Drive 3, Singapore 117581

Any other information/requirements Students with interests or skills in remote robot control, simulation, and smart materials are preferred.

#### Project ME5

Supervisor

Dr Tan Yu Jun https://yujuntan.com/

## From Kombucha Tea to sustainable wearable electronics

With each passing year, we blithely discard more and more electronic devices in the name of upgrading to better and more high-tech ones. The amount of global e-waste generation is estimated to be at 74 million metric tons by 2030 – which is equivalent to the weight of 247 empire state buildings! The main reason behind this is that our current electronic devices are fabricated using raw materials which are non-recyclable and non-biodegradable. To tackle this problem, scientists have successfully incorporated green materials such as cellulose into electronics and achieved great electrical properties. Cellulose is a naturally occurring biopolymer usually extracted from wood chips using a traditional process called "kraft pulping". Interestingly, cellulose can also be extracted from a simple process via fermentation of Kombucha tea. In this project, the student will learn how to extract cellulose from fermented Kombucha tea. He/she will then fabricate a flexible wearable electronic device using the extracted cellulose. Student will be challenged to program the electronic device to perform various tasks such as wireless communication.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Laboratory Investigation

Relevant Majors Materials Science, Mechanical Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? **No** 

Any other information/requirements

- 1. Feels strongly for a more sustainable future
- 2. Prior undergraduate research experience
- 3. Strong interest in electronics and material science
- 4. Prior programming experience (Arduino, Python, or relevant programming languages)

Project Learning Outcomes

- 1. Extraction of cellulose from Kombucha tea
- 2. Fabrication of a sustainable wearable electronic device
- 3. Programming of a sustainable wearable electronic device

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Materials Lab E3-04-01/02, 2 Engineering Drive 3, Singapore 117581

#### Project ME6

Supervisor

Dr Tan Yu Jun https://yujuntan.com/

## Fabrication of a self-healing optoelectronic device

Cellulose is the most abundant naturally occurring polysaccharide which has been lauded for excellent properties like mechanical robustness, biodegradability, and biocompatibility. It has widespread use in various fields like nanotechnology, food industry, and biomedical industry but has recently found its way to the electronic industry. The main reason is because cellulose is a sustainable substitute to the raw materials used to fabricate electronical devices. Our group has synthesised a fully bio-derived material from cellulose that exhibits good physical properties and self-healing ability. In this project, the student will be fabricating an optoelectronic device using the material our group has created. He/she will then program the device to transmit light of various wavelengths.

Maximum no. of participants: 1

Nature of Project Laboratory Investigation

Relevant Majors Materials Science, Mechanical Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? **No** 

Any other information/requirements

- 1. Feels strongly for a more sustainable future
- 2. Prior undergraduate research experience is preferred
- 3. Strong interest in electronics and material science
- 4. Prior programming experience (Arduino, Python, or relevant programming languages)

Project Learning Outcomes **1. Fabrication of a sustainable optoelectronic device** 

2. Programming of a sustainable optoelectronic device

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Materials Lab E3-04-01/02, 2 Engineering Drive 3, Singapore 117581

Dr Tan Yu Jun https://yujuntan.com/

## Fabrication of a Flexible, Self-healing Material for Electronics

Conventional stiff electronics generally have rigid architecture and lack the capacity for editability into desirable shapes. Therefore, it is essential and critical to develop the next generation of flexible and self-healable electronics with elastic-recovery properties. Inspired by injury organisms that can be automatically healed wounds, the self-healing function groups were introduced into the materials system to achieve high stretchability, even after damage. Besides, in order to transmit optoelectronic information, imparting the healable ability to light-emitting devices are stretch, bend and twist that can be integrated into human-machine interfaces for next-generation wearable electronics, clothing and electronic skin. Compared to conventional light-emitting devices, such device structures have advantages in flexibility, resistance to atmospheric environments and mass production, which can effectively enhance their reliability.

In this project, we will develop a self-healing material that can quickly and effectively repair the crack or damage for light-emitting devices. Specifically, the dynamic crosslinking sites in self-healing materials can be formed to stabilize the electronics from damage or disruption during ion diffusion processes. Thus, we provide a convenient and efficient approach for electronics by utilizing the self-healing property of materials.

Maximum no. of participants: 1

Nature of Project Laboratory Investigation

Relevant Majors Materials Science

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? **No** 

#### Project Learning Outcomes

At the end of the program, it is expected that students can familiarize themselves with equipment in the area of materials chemistry. Additionally, they can develop their potential in learning materials synthesis and investigating the structure and reactivity of self-healing materials. Finally, students can independently integrate key concepts regarding the functional materials for electronics in the process of exploring self-healing mechanisms.

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Materials Lab, E3-04-01/02, 2 Engineering Drive 3, Singapore 117581

#### Any other information/requirements

This project requires students who have strong interests and foundation in material chemistry and material science. They also need to read literatures about mechanism involving with stretchable, and self-healing polymers crosslinked by dynamic bonds before materials fabrication. Paper studies for references are as follows:

1. Tan YJ, Susanto GJ, Anwar Ali HP, Benjamin Tee CK. Progress and Roadmap for Intelligent Self-healing Materials in Autonomous Robotics. Adv. Mater. 2020; 2002800. 2. Tan YJ, Godaba H, Chen G, Tan MST, Li G, Lee PM, Cai Y, Li S, Shepherd RF, Ho JS, Benjamin Tee CK. A Transparent, Selfhealing and High-κ Dielectric for Low-field-emission Stretchable Optoelectronics. Nat. Mater. 2020; 19: 182–188.

Dr Guillaume Sartoretti http://marmotlab.org/

#### Control of a Hexapod Robot for Visual Tasks

Articulated legged robots, such as quadrupeds or hexapods, have the ability to locomote over a wide variety of uneven terrains where wheeled robots would naturally struggle, such as rock piles or rough inclines. Combining such advanced robots with onboard sensors, such as cameras/LiDARs, can increase their autonomy levels and allow complex deployments in hazardous or human-denied environments. In particular, this project will be centered around the problem of coordinating the usually large number of degrees of freedoms (DoF, actuators/motors) for these complex robots. You (the student) will first get familiar with our simulation environment and code base. Using these tools, you will devise and test your own locomotion controllers, based on different state-of-theart methods (such as Central Pattern Generators, CPGs) to allow the robot to move and integrate visual feedback from an onboard camera (e.g., for target tracking, obstacle avoidance, or gait adaptation). If successful and safe, you could then implement these controllers on a physical hexapod robot, and/or in a high-fidelity physics simulator otherwise.

Maximum no. of participants: 3

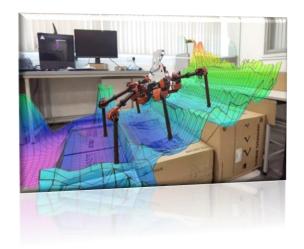
Nature of Project Laboratory Investigation, Software Development, Computing and Analysis

Relevant Majors Computer Science, Robotics, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements Python3 (or at least Matlab) programming skills required ROS/other simulation experience preferred Strong mathematical background Enthusiasm and passion for (legged) robot Project Learning Outcomes

- 1. Demonstrate their simple locomotion controller in simulation
- 2. Develop a new hexapod locomotion controller for a visual locomotive task of their choosing
- 3. If possible, validate their controller on our hexapod robot



Dr Guillaume Sartoretti http://marmotlab.org/

## Reinforcement Learning-Based Decentralized Multi-Agent Pathfinding

Given the rapid development of affordable robots with embedded sensing and computation capabilities, we are quickly approaching a point at which manufacturing applications will involve the deployment of hundreds, if not thousands, of robots. To support these applications, significant research effort has been devoted to multi-agent path finding (MAPF), to support deployments in distribution centers, potential use for airplane taxiing and test applications to multi-agent search and rescue.

However, as the number of agents in the system grows, so does the combinatorial complexity of coordinating them. Current state-of-the-art optimal planners can plan for up to several hundreds of agents, and the community is now settling for suboptimal planners as a potential solution for even larger multi-agent systems. In this work, we will focus on pushing the state-of-the-art in reinforcement learning based MAPF (e.g., PRIMAL/PRIMAL2), to improve performance, decrease training times, and simplify implementation on real robots.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Computing and Analysis, Software Development

Relevant Majors Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Robotics

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements Python3 programming required, and experience with tensorflow/pytorch very much preferred Familiarity with GNU/Linux and command line interface Enthusiasm and passion for multi-robot systems and coordination

#### Project Learning Outcomes

 Get familiar with existing RL-based MAPF techniques and code base.
 Help the team formalize and implement one of our existing concepts to improve decentralized MAPF solvers, and test its performance against some baselines in simulation, toward hardware implementation.



Dr Guillaume Sartoretti http://marmotlab.org/

## Decentralized Traffic Signal Control for Urban Mobility

Recent advances in robotics, artificial intelligence and sensing are bringing us closer to the systematic replacement of most human-driven cars by autonomous driving vehicles. However, intelligent cars will require novel intelligent traffic coordination methods, likely on the side of the infrastructure (e.g., traffic signals such as traffic lights at road junctions). Centralized approaches to traffic management are infeasible, in cities that will likely count thousands to millions of vehicles and junctions, and decentralization will be necessary. In this project, you (the student) will develop novel methods to control the traffic signals at each junction, based on that junction's traffic conditions (number and speed of incoming vehicles, queue lengths, etc.) as well as the conditions of neighboring junctions. After studying a textbook case involving a simple 4-way junction, we will look to scaling up the size of the network and consider such decentralized traffic monitoring and optimization at larger-scales in the city. We might also consider more complex cases such as vehicle breakdowns/accidents, green waves, etc. This project will be simulation-based (using an open-source traffic simulator such as SUMO).

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Computing and Analysis, Software Development

Relevant Majors Computer Science, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Robotics

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes

Any other information/requirements Python3 programming required Familiarity with GNU/Linux and command line interface Enthusiasm and passion for traffic optimization Project Learning Outcomes 1. Develop a simple simulation (in SUMO) of a 4-way junction, using a state-of-the-art traffic signal controller of the student's choosing.

2. Investigate a larger-scale scenario involving many such junctions, representing a larger portion of an urban road network, for which a more advanced traffic signal controller will be devised.



#### Project ME11

Supervisor

Dr Guillaume Sartoretti http://marmotlab.org/

## Visibility-Based Mobile Target Localization and Tracking with Robots

Given the rapid development of affordable robots with embedded sensing and mobility, autonomous mobile robots may soon be able to replace humans in a variety of hazardous and repetitive tasks. Recently, much research effort has been devoted to pursuit-evasion problems, where mobile robots with limited sensing capabilities need to localize an evasive target and track/capture it. In this project, we will focus on the localization of a mobile target by an autonomous flying robot equipped with an onboard camera. The robot will reactively track the agile target that might try to escape from the pursuit of robots (e.g., TurtleBot) thereafter. This research will be carried out in simulation, but a hardware demo can be investigated if the student(s) progress(es) fast.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Laboratory Investigation, Software Development, Computing and Analysis, Field Testing and Instrumentation

Relevant Majors Computer Science, Robotics, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? Yes. (Note: Project can be conducted virtually as he experimental portion of this project can be removed in favor of more simulation work. The robot can be operated in ROS-based simulator.)

Any other information/requirements Python3 or C++ programming required, and experience with ROS/other simulation very much preferred Enthusiasm and passion for mobile robots. **Project Learning Outcomes** 

 Get familiar with existing object tracking techniques.
 Demonstrate the localization and tracking controller in simulation or real robot.



Dr Tan Xipeng https://cde.nus.edu.sg/me/staff/tan-xipeng/

## 4D metal printing

Nickel-titanium has shown to be the most attractive shape memory alloy with many potential applications due to its outstanding capability of recovering the original shape upon heating or upon removal of the applied stress. Therefore, they can be used for biomedical and aerospace components, such as coronary stents, artificial muscle, and actuators. This project aims to design and 3D print nickel-titanium parts with shape memory properties, namely the so-called "4D printing".

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Design, Laboratory Investigation

Relevant Majors Mechanical Engineering, Materials Science

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually?

Any other information/requirements NA

Project Learning Outcomes 1. Learn about shape memory alloys and their properties 2. Learn about metal 3D printing techniques 3. Understand how to realise 4D metal printing

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Materials Lab E3-04-01/02/03, 2 Engineering Drive 3, Singapore 117581

Dr Tan Xipeng https://cde.nus.edu.sg/me/staff/tan-xipeng/

## High-throughput design and fabrication of soft magnetic materials

Soft magnetic materials are those materials that are easily magnetised and demagnetised. The demand for next-generation, high-performance soft magnetic materials has tremendously risen in the context of sustainable and electrified world. Electrical machine design is facing challenges in terms of power densities and conversion efficiencies, thereby motivating the exploration of advanced materials and manufacturing for the future robust and ultraefficient electrical machines. The objective of this project is to explore the high-throughput design methods for discovering and developing high-performance soft magnetic materials. Advanced manufacturing technologies such as high-purity arc melting and 3D printing will be used for materials fabrication.

Maximum no. of participants: 2

Nature of Project Design, Laboratory Investigation

Relevant Majors Materials Science, Process Engineering

If the summer program needs to be suspended physically (e.g., due to COVID 19), can the project be offered and conducted virtually? **No** 

Any other information/requirements NA

Project Learning Outcomes

1. Learn about soft magnetic materials.

2. Learn about high-throughput materials design.

3. Gain hands-on experience in advanced materials manufacturing techniques.

Name and Address of Lab that participants will be attached to Materials Lab E3-04-01/02/03, 2 Engineering Drive 3, Singapore 117581