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Bridging the Gap: Students' Site Visit and Engagement with Community for Design Studio Projects



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Noor Fatehah Binti Mat So'od is a lecturer in the Diploma in Architecture program at the School of Architecture and Built Environment (SABE). She graduated with a Master of Science in Built Environment from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). Her research interests include teaching and learning in physical contexts, community architecture, and architectural heritage. With 10 years of experience in both industry and academia, Noor Fatehah has published research in the higher education context, focusing on heritage through measured drawings and teaching and learning in tertiary education.



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Nor Syawallina Binti Azman is a highly motivated and results-oriented Architecture Lecturer with over 8 years of experience. Currently, she is leading the Diploma Programme (Diploma in Interior Architecture and Diploma in Architectural Studies) as the Head of Department. She possesses expertise in sustainable design principles and is eager to leverage her experience in a collaborative role that fosters closer ties between academic institutions and the architecture industry for the benefit of student learning outcomes.

Introduction

Practical experience is invaluable for students, especially those in design and architecture. The recent site visit by students enrolled in School of Architecture and Built Environment (SABE) under the course of Diploma in Architecture, to the Skatebowl (SB Langkawi) in Kuala Kedawang, Langkawi, Kedah, exemplifies hands-on learning. This initiative provided real-world experience and fostered a deeper connection with the community, highlighting the role of design in enhancing quality of life.



Figure 1 : Students from Diploma in Architecture and Interior Architecture students at SB Langkawi.



Figure 2 : Students from Diploma in Architecture, in site analysis presentation about the findings.

The Site Visit: A Step Beyond Classroom Learning

From May 4th to 7th, 2024, the students visited SB Langkawi, a community project that constructed a skate bowl. The site visit was meticulously planned to offer a comprehensive understanding of the area's context. Upon arrival, students were greeted by Mr. Luqman and Mr. Johan, founders of SB Langkawi, who explained the history and users of the skatebowl. Community leaders and residents shared their experiences, humanizing the design process and adding empathy to the students' work.

Immersive Learning: Engaging with the Community and Turning Ideas into Studio Projects

During the visit, students conducted surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions to gather data on residents' needs and aspirations, building trust and rapport. A highlight was a collaborative workshop where students and community members brainstormed ideas, emphasizing participatory design and ensuring practical, culturally sensitive solutions. Back in the design studio, students translated their experiences into concrete design proposals. Each team addressed specific community needs, including programmes, public spaces, transportation, and sustainability approached. The project brief included four main components:

- Art on Skate: Integrating artistic and Langkawi legend elements into the skate- deck.
- Site Analysis: Researching the site's physical conditions.
- The Grandstand: Designing seating areas for spectators at the skatebowl.
- The Youth Sport Complex: Developing a multi-functional sports facility.

The iterative design process involved continuous refinement based on feedback, balancing creativity with practicality.

Reflection and Impact: Lessons Learned

The site visit and design studio project had a profound impact on students, broadening their perspectives and understanding of design's societal role. This initiative serves as a model for future educational programs, integrating practical experience with academic learning, fostering holistic education, and preparing students for real-world complexities. Engaging with the community enhances learning and contributes to societal betterment, nurturing responsible and innovative designers for tomorrow's challenges.

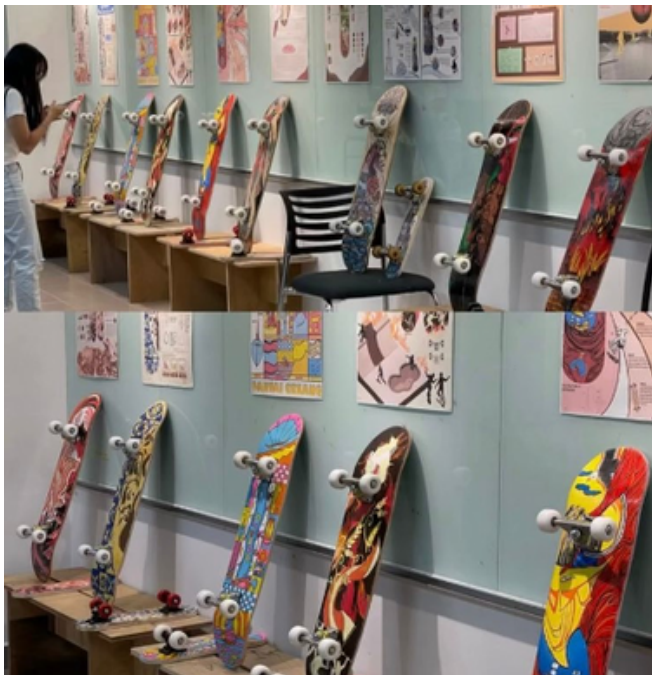


Figure 3 : Students interpretation of site study into the art on skate boards.



Figure 4 : SABE lecturers with Mr Johan, founder for skate school at SB Langkawi.

Celebrating Cultural Fusion



Lucas Lim, Head of Events.

With a passion for creating unforgettable experiences and a keen eye for style, Lucas will continue to make indelible contributions to both the event management and fashion education realms.

A diverse cohort of 3 senior and 6 junior students from our programs contributed their unique cultural perspectives at the Vivo V30 Media Launch which stands as a vibrant celebration of cultural fusion through the artistry of wedding gown creation. The project was structured into distinct groups representing different cultural backgrounds.



The main objective was not just to create stunning garments but to symbolize the harmonious coexistence of various cultural traditions and to showcase the intrinsic beauty of cultural diversity by crafting wedding gowns inspired by Malaysia's rich tapestry of ethnicities. The execution phase was marked by intensive collaboration and creative exchanges among the students. Drawing from their past experiences, particularly from events like the Vivo launch, senior students such as Sam and Dharmishta played pivotal roles in mentoring their junior counterparts.

Qiaolin led the Malay Wedding Group with Marsha and Adri as assistants, while Sam Ooi helmed the Chinese Wedding Group alongside Avinaash and Eunice Lai. Dharmishta led the Indian Wedding Group with support from Bella and Eunice Tan. This mentorship not only guided the design process but also facilitated profound cultural insights and knowledge sharing among the participants.

The project yielded impressive outcomes, including the creation of 6 pairs of exquisite wedding gowns that seamlessly blended Malay, Chinese, and Indian cultural aesthetics. What's more, the active involvement of 4 Chinese, 2 Indian, and 3 Malay students underscored the project's inclusivity and its role in fostering a deeper understanding of diverse cultural traditions.



vivo V30 Pro | ZEISS 50mm f/2.8 1/100s ISO203 11/03/2024, 19:33



vivo V30 Pro | ZEISS 50mm f/2.8 1/100s ISO252 11/03/2024, 19:57



vivo V30 Pro | ZEISS 50mm f/2.8 1/100s ISO245



vivo V30 Pro | ZEISS 50mm f/2.8 1/100s ISO118 11/03/2024, 19:05



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This collaborative effort not only produced stunning works of art but also generated anticipation and excitement for the upcoming Vivo phone launch. The project's influence on product inclusivity and versatility was palpable, signaling a shift towards more culturally aware designs in the future.

In essence, the Vivo V30 Media Launch x UCSI University - ICAD project stands as a testament to the transformative power of collaboration and diversity in creative pursuits. It serves as an inspiring example of cultural celebration and creative synergy, emphasizing the significance of embracing diversity in both design and technological realms. This project sets a high standard for future collaborative endeavors within UCSI University's ICAD program, highlighting the potential for innovative and inclusive initiatives in the future.

Sustainable Digitilisation: Myth and Reality

Asst Prof Ts Sr Dr Nadzirah Hj. Zainordin
 Head of Research and Postgraduates Studies
 School of Architecture and Built Environment

Asst Prof Ts Sr Dr. Nadzirah Hj. Zainordin earned her degree in Quantity Surveying from the International University College of Technology Twintech, followed by a Master's from Heriot-Watt University, UK. She obtained her PhD from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia. Currently, she is pursuing a second doctorate in Education Management.

Dr. Nadzirah achieved her professional surveyor status at a young age, being recognized by the Board of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia and the Royal Institution of Surveyors Malaysia. She is also one of the early pioneers of Professional Technologist status with the Malaysia Board of Technologists. Currently, she serves as the Head of Research and Postgraduate Studies at UCSI University.

She has published over 160 research papers and won more than 70 awards in local and international invention competitions. Dr. Nadzirah has led or collaborated on over 30 research grants both nationally and globally. She was named one of "The Most Successful People in Malaysia" by British Publishing House in 2021 and has received several prestigious awards, including the International Scholar Young Researcher and Outstanding Teaching Award, Young Surveyor of the Year by the Royal Institution of Surveyors Malaysia, and the Excellence Award Inspirational by the Board of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia.

Ts. Sr Khoo Sui Lai
 Stream Coordinator, QS Programme
 School of Architecture & Built Environment (SABE)

Graduated with Bachelor of Building in Construction Economics from University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), now pursuing his Ph.D (Engineering) with Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). Receiving his Consultant Quantity Surveyor (CQS) with Board of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia (BQSM), fellow member of Royal Institution of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia (RISM) and a Chartered Surveyor with Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). He is also Professional Technologist (Ts) with the Malaysia Board of Technologist (MBOT). Currently as lecturer in UCSI University for Quantity Surveying programme. Furthermore, he actively participated in research, published research papers, won local/ international invention awards, and leads/ co-researcher for few research grants. His research interest is digital construction, economics, and sustainable development in the construction industry. He also actively participates with professional bodies at national and international level.

Foreword

The advent of the digital age has revolutionized nearly every aspect of our lives, from how we communicate to how we work and learn. This transformation has brought about a multitude of opportunities, promising increased efficiency, accessibility, and interconnectedness. However, as we stand on the cusp of what is often heralded as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, a critical examination of sustainable digitalization is not only timely but imperative. "Sustainable Digitalization: Myth and Reality" seeks to delve into the nuanced interplay between digital advancements and sustainable practices, challenging prevailing assumptions and highlighting the multifaceted impacts of this global shift. In recent years, the concept of sustainable digitalisation has gained significant traction, with proponents advocating for the seamless integration of digital technologies into various sectors while simultaneously ensuring minimal environmental impact and promoting socio-economic equity. This vision, though appealing, is fraught with complexities and contradictions. On one hand, digital technologies offer unprecedented potential to enhance resource efficiency, optimize energy use, and enable sustainable urbanization. On the other hand, the production, maintenance, and disposal of digital devices contribute to significant environmental degradation and resource depletion, raising questions about the true sustainability of our digital future. This explores the dual facets of digitalisation—its myths and its realities. It presents a comprehensive analysis of the current state of digital technologies, scrutinizes their environmental and social footprints, and evaluates the efficacy of existing sustainability frameworks. By bringing together insights from experts in environmental science, information technology, economics, and policy-making, this work provides a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with sustainable digitalisation. The discussion herein are designed to foster a deeper understanding of how digitalisation can be harnessed responsibly, ensuring that its benefits do not come at the cost of our planet's health or exacerbate social inequities. Topics range from the lifecycle analysis of digital devices to the role of policy in guiding sustainable practices, and from the potential of digital solutions in combating climate change to the ethical considerations of data privacy and digital inclusivity. Digitisation is not merely an aspirational goal but a necessary paradigm shift that demands our collective effort and commitment. As we navigate the complex landscape of the digital era, this book serves as a critical resource for policymakers, industry leaders, academics, and concerned citizens. It urges us to move beyond the superficial allure of digital technologies and engage with the deeper questions of sustainability, equity, and resilience. Sustainable digitalisation is not merely an aspirational goal but a necessary paradigm shift that demands our collective effort and commitment. It is our hope that "Sustainable Digitalization: Myth and Reality" will inspire informed dialogue, drive meaningful action, and contribute to the development of strategies that ensure a balanced and sustainable digital future for all. As we embark on this exploration, let us be mindful of our responsibility to harness the power of digital innovation in ways that are both environmentally sound and socially just. In the 21st century, digital technologies have become ubiquitous, infiltrating every aspect of our daily lives and transforming industries at an unprecedented pace. This digital revolution promises numerous benefits, from enhanced efficiency and productivity to improved connectivity and accessibility. However, the sustainability of this rapid digitalization is a topic that warrants critical examination. Are we truly moving towards a sustainable digital future, or are we merely embracing a myth?

The Promises of Digitalisation

Digital technologies offer significant potential for promoting sustainability. For example, smart grids can optimize energy distribution, reducing waste and increasing efficiency. Remote work and digital communication tools can decrease the need for commuting, thus lowering carbon emissions. Moreover, big data analytics can provide insights into resource management, helping industries to minimize waste and optimize supply chains. One of the most significant promises of digitalization is its ability to drive sustainable urbanisation. Smart cities, equipped with interconnected sensors and data-driven management systems, can enhance urban living conditions by reducing energy consumption, improving waste management, and optimising public transportation systems. In theory, these innovations could lead to more sustainable, livable cities.

The Myths of Digitalisation

Despite these promising aspects, the reality of digitalisation is more complex. The production, maintenance, and disposal of digital devices contribute significantly to environmental degradation. For instance, the extraction of rare earth metals required for electronic components results in severe ecological damage and resource depletion. Furthermore, the energy consumption of data centers, which power our digital world, is enormous and growing. In 2018, data centers consumed about 1% of the world's electricity, and this figure is expected to rise sharply in the coming years. Additionally, digitalisation can exacerbate socio-economic inequalities. Access to digital technologies is unevenly distributed, often leaving behind those in underdeveloped or rural areas. This digital divide can deepen existing inequalities, creating a chasm between those who can benefit from digital advancements and those who cannot.

Environmental Footprint of Digitalisation

The environmental impact of digital technologies is multifaceted. E-waste is a growing concern, with millions of tons of electronic waste generated annually. Many electronic devices contain hazardous materials, posing serious environmental and health risks if not properly managed. Recycling efforts are often insufficient, and much of the e-waste ends up in landfills or is incinerated, releasing toxic substances into the environment. Moreover, the energy required to power digital devices and infrastructure is substantial. The increasing demand for cloud services, streaming, and cryptocurrency mining contributes to a significant carbon footprint. While renewable energy sources can mitigate some of this impact, the transition is slow and uneven across regions.

Social Implications and Ethical Considerations

The social implications of digitalization are profound. While digital technologies can democratize access to information and services, they also raise concerns about privacy, surveillance, and data security. The widespread collection and analysis of personal data by corporations and governments pose ethical dilemmas regarding consent, transparency, and accountability. Furthermore, the automation and digitisation of jobs can lead to significant workforce disruptions. While some jobs are created in the tech sector, many traditional roles are being rendered obsolete, leading to job displacement and economic instability. Ensuring that the benefits of digitalisation are equitably distributed requires proactive policies and social safety nets.

Pathways to Sustainable Digitalization

To navigate the complexities of digitalisation and achieve sustainability, a multifaceted approach is necessary. Firstly, the lifecycle of digital devices must be considered. This includes sustainable sourcing of raw materials, designing for longevity and recyclability, and establishing robust e-waste management systems. Policies that promote circular economy principles can help mitigate the environmental impact of digital technologies. Secondly, the energy consumption of digital infrastructure must be addressed. Transitioning to renewable energy sources for powering data centers and promoting energy-efficient technologies are crucial steps. Additionally, innovations in cooling technologies and energy management can reduce the carbon footprint of digital operations. Thirdly, bridging the digital divide is essential for ensuring that the benefits of digitalization are inclusive. Investments in digital infrastructure, particularly in underserved regions, can provide equitable access to digital tools and services. Education and training programs are also vital for equipping individuals with the skills needed to thrive in a digital economy. Finally, ethical considerations must be at the forefront of digitalization efforts. This includes robust data protection regulations, transparent practices, and accountability mechanisms. Engaging diverse stakeholders, including civil society, in the development and implementation of digital policies can help ensure that technological advancements align with societal values and priorities.

Conclusion

Sustainable digitalisation is not an oxymoron, but achieving it requires a critical and holistic approach. While digital technologies hold immense potential for promoting sustainability, their environmental and social impacts cannot be overlooked. By addressing the myths and realities of digitalisation, it can develop strategies that harness the benefits of digital advancements while minimizing the negative consequences. It is imperative that to move beyond the allure of digital technologies and engage in thoughtful, proactive efforts to ensure a balanced and sustainable digital future for all.

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Emotional Intelligence Impact on Academic Achievement and Psychological Well-being Among University Students: The Mediating Role of Positive Psychological Characteristics



Professor Dr. Zahari Ishak is a distinguished researcher and academician at UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur. He is an Educationist and Applied Psychologist specializing in quantitative research, and he earned his doctorate from Universiti Malaya. He actively trains academicians and educators across Malaysia and Asia and has been a keynote speaker at numerous international conferences. With extensive publications to his name, he has served as a Senior Panel Assessor for the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) since 2001. Additionally, he has been a vital member of the Research Evaluation Panel at the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia and an Auditor for the Malaysia Research Assessment (MyRA) since 2018.



Dr. Nadia Samsudin is an accomplished academic and researcher at UCSI University. Specializing in applied statistics in public health, she currently serves as a post-doctoral research fellow at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts (FOSSLA). With a Doctorate in Science from Universiti Malaya, her research focuses on using statistical analysis to address public health issues. Dr. Nadia's expertise and contributions play a crucial role in advancing knowledge and improving public health outcomes.



Ye Shengyao is a PhD student in Education at Faculty of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts, UCSI University and a dedicated lecturer at Wenzhou Vocational College of Science and Technology, Zhejiang Province, China. With nearly 15 years of expertise in the fields of Social Sciences and Psychology, he has consistently demonstrated a deep passion for his work. Ye's commitment to the betterment of individuals shines through in his exceptional skills in counseling, where he has made a positive impact on countless lives. His unwavering dedication to his students and the community sets him apart as an educator who truly cares about the well-being of others.

A recent study delves into the significant role of emotional intelligence (EI) in shaping the psychological well-being and academic achievement of university students in China. The research integrates theories of emotional intelligence and positive psychology to provide a comprehensive understanding of these relationships. The primary aim of this research was to examine how EI influences students' psychological well-being and academic performance through positive psychological characteristics, such as self-efficacy, motivation, and resilience. The study included both postgraduate and undergraduate students, collecting data from 518 participants. Structural equation modeling was employed to analyze the data, revealing insightful findings (see Figure 1).

The study established that EI is positively related to psychological well-being and academic achievement. This relationship was particularly strong among postgraduate students. The research highlights that students with higher EI possess better self-awareness and emotional regulation skills, which in turn bolster their confidence, resilience, and intrinsic motivation. These positive psychological traits enable students to handle academic and personal challenges more effectively, resulting in improved mental health and academic success.

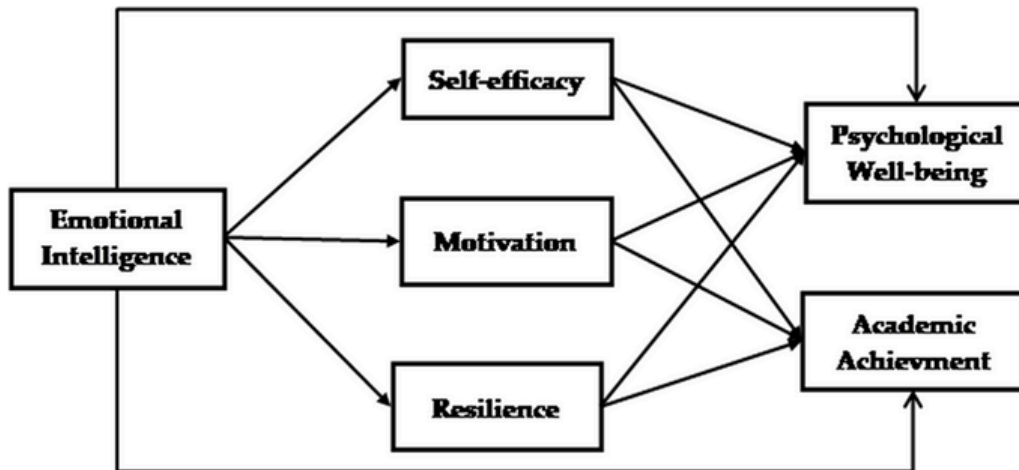


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

One of the key contributions of this study is the introduction of a sophisticated framework that incorporates EI as the main independent variable, with self-efficacy, motivation, and resilience acting as mediators. Psychological well-being and academic achievement are treated as the dependent variables. The findings indicate that these positive psychological characteristics significantly mediate the relationship between EI and the outcomes of interest. The research also underscores the importance of EI in fostering self-efficacy among students. Those with high EI are better equipped to understand and manage their emotions, leading to greater confidence in their abilities. This heightened self-efficacy enables students to tackle complex academic tasks and overcome obstacles with a positive outlook. Furthermore, students with high EI are intrinsically motivated, finding fulfillment in the learning process itself, which enhances their engagement and persistence in academic endeavors.

Resilience, another crucial psychological characteristic, is significantly influenced by EI. University life often presents numerous stressors, and students with high EI are better able to navigate these challenges. They employ effective coping strategies, maintain a positive attitude, and seek support when needed, all of which contribute to their ability to bounce back from setbacks. Moreover, the study highlights the dual impact of EI on both psychological well-being and academic performance. Students with high EI manage the demands of university life more effectively, leading to lower stress levels and better mental health. This, in turn, translates into improved academic performance, as these students are able to concentrate better, develop effective study habits, and interact positively with peers and educators.

The findings have important implications for educational practice. By emphasizing the development of EI, educational institutions can enhance both the mental health and academic success of their students. This dual focus can create a more supportive and effective learning environment, fostering long-term success and well-being.

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the vital role of emotional intelligence in the academic and psychological development of university students. The research suggests that interventions aimed at enhancing EI could significantly benefit students, helping them to achieve better psychological well-being and academic performance. As such, educational strategies that incorporate EI training could prove invaluable in various educational settings, promoting a holistic approach to student development.

Research Journey of Assistant Professor Ts. Sr Dr. Nadzirah Hj. Zainordin, CQS, FRISM

This section highlights the research journey of Assistant Professor Ts. Sr Dr. Nadzirah Hj. Zainordin. Dr. Nadzirah has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to academic excellence and sustainability throughout her educational and professional career. She began by obtaining a Master of Science in Quantity Surveying from Heriot-Watt University. Driven by a passion for sustainable practices in education, she pursued and completed a Ph.D. with a focus on Sustainable Education.

Dr. Nadzirah concluded a post-doctorate fellowship in Sustainable Smart Cities. Continuing her dedication to lifelong learning and academic progression, Dr. Nadzirah recently embarked on her second doctorate, pursuing a Doctor of Education. Dr. Nadzirah's research journey reflects her commitment to integrating sustainability into various domains, from construction and urban development to education. Her work not only advances academic knowledge but also has practical implications for creating more sustainable and intelligent communities.

Notable Achievements:

Achieving her registered and professional surveyor status at a very young age, Dr. Nadzirah Hj. Zainordin stands out as the youngest professional surveyor (academic) with the Board of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia (BQSM) and the youngest Fellow with the Royal Institution of Surveyors Malaysia (RISM). She is also among the earliest pioneers to attain Professional Technologist status with the Malaysia Board of Technologists (MBOT).

Dr. Nadzirah's prolific academic career includes the publication of over 180 research papers and the receipt of more than 80 awards at local and international invention competitions. She has successfully led or collaborated on over 30 research grants both nationally and globally. Recognized for her outstanding contributions, she was listed as one of "The Most Successful People in Malaysia" in the 3rd Edition of the British Publishing House in 2021. Her accolades also include the "International Scholar Young Researcher and Outstanding Teaching Award," the "Young Surveyor of the Year" by the Royal Institution of Surveyors Malaysia (RISM), and the "Excellence Award Inspirational" by the Board of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia (BQSM).



Receiving Excellent Inspirational Award from BQSM



Receiving Young Surveyor of the Year Award from RISM

Collaborations and Global Outreach:

Dr. Nadzirah has established numerous collaborative projects with academic institutions, research centers, and professional bodies throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Her ability to secure and lead numerous international research grants is a testament to her collaborative spirit and research acumen. Dr. Nadzirah frequently participates in international conferences and workshops, where she shares her research findings and insights with a global audience. Her presentations at these events often spark valuable discussions and collaborations, furthering her impact on the international stage. She has also been involved in organizing and leading seminars and training sessions, aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of professionals worldwide.



Witnessed the VC from Ngurah Rai University signing MoU document with UCSI University



Invited as Judge of Final Year Project by one of private university



Welcoming and chair collaborating meeting with NCKU, Taiwan



Invited & delivered international guest lecturers



Chairing international collaboration research meeting between UCSI and Trisakti University, Indonesia

No	Funding Scheme	Submission Close Date
1	Knowledge Frontiers: International Interdisciplinary Research Projects programme by British Academy https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/funding/knowledge-frontiers-international-interdisciplinary-research/	18 September 2024
2	LIF Global 2024 https://raeng.org.uk/programmes-and-prizes/programmes/international-programmes/leaders-in-innovation-fellowships/lif-programmes/lif-global	16 October, 5PM BST
3	Darwin Initiatives https://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/	8 Jul 2024
4	UKRI-MRC 1. Molecular and cellular medicine 2. Neurosciences and mental health 3. Infections and immunity 4. Population and systems medicine https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/	17 September 2024
5	Industry Linkage Fund (ILF) https://www.myrubbercouncil.com/industrylinkagefund/	Open all year round
6	MOSTI Grants https://sdb.mosti.gov.my/sdbcms/ms/garispanduan/	Open all year round

Please refer to your respective Head of Research for more information

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