

Asian Scientist Salon for Leadership in STEM

		
Location	Target group	Budget
Singapore	Southeast Asian region (Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka).	\$50,000/year (2022) \$75,000/year (2023-2024)



Primary outcome

Coaching women researchers in Singapore to take on leadership positions in science and technology, and tackle the underrepresentation of Asian women.

Overview

According to Elsevier’s 2024 Gender Report, an estimated 41% of the world’s researchers are women. However, this number declines greatly across Asia and when we look at the percentage of women who have taken up leadership positions in their organizations.

In 2024, the Summit’s goal was to go beyond gender and explore other aspects of a diverse and inclusive STEM community in Singapore. The Summit convened experts from large STEM organizations to share their experiences and insights, enabling participants to join hands-on interactive workshops, and support one another in their professional journeys. The Summit was also supported by the James Dyson Foundation, and participants received science communication training from EurekAlert!, the AAAS news service.



Juliana Chan, Founder and Editor-in-Chief of Asian Scientist Magazine, and 2024 Salon for Leadership in STEM participants

Goals

- Empower early and mid-career women scientists with the skills required to be successful in the academic, industry and policymaking sectors.
- Build a supportive community that enables opportunities for collaboration and a more inclusive pipeline of leadership in STEM.

Activities and milestones

The 2024 Summit was held in Singapore from the 26-27th of June, 2024 and achieved a 60:40 women to men ratio among the 132 participants. It included:

- A keynote on successful leadership from guest of honour Ambassador Prof Chan Heng Chee.
- Workshops on inclusive science communication, and personal branding.
- Discussions on impactful leadership as well as cultivating and sustaining inclusive teams.
- A special panel on Success Strategies from the Global South featuring 2024 OWSD-Elsevier Foundation Women in Science Award winners from the Asian region

Challenges

- Inclusion is a complex, multifaceted concept and during the initial registration phase the EcosySTEM team found that potential participants were struggling to connect its relevance to their personal and professional growth.
- They quickly pivoted their promotional efforts to focus on individual benefits to potential participants, rather than the community impact. This resulted in the highest number of registrations for the Summit across three years.

Sustainability and future plans

- In the next iteration of the leadership Summit, EcosySTEM would like to offer training on the essential skills for being a leader (e.g. conflict resolution/resource allocation), and to introduce more creative discussion formats to increase audience participation.
- In addition to the flagship Summit, EcosySTEM will consider the potential of organizing similar scaled-down satellite events across the APAC region to meet the needs of the wider STEM community.



We know that women scientists are more likely to view natural resources as public goods and the Elsevier Foundation's Climate Women partnership equips talented women scientists to form teams to tackle concrete projects in their communities—fostering the collective action essential for protecting our planet.”

Joyeeta Gupta, Full Professor of Environment and Development in the Global South, University of Amsterdam

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