

STAYING NIMBLE IN A CHANGING ECONOMY

The fifth instalment of our SkillsFuture series had us speaking with President of LASALLE College of the Arts, **Professor Steve Dixon**, to find out how he is enabling not just his students, but himself, to stay nimble and keep abreast of new developments in the arts.

If you're unsure of where to start your SkillsFuture journey, start with something you're interested in and see where it leads you. That's **Professor Steve Dixon's** advice, and it stems from seeing groups of graduates under LASALLE's Short Courses go on to more advanced courses that continue to open new doors. "Nothing trumps passion," says the LASALLE President.

As a practicing artist himself, Professor Dixon is well-aware of the need for his students to marry the fundamental tenets of an arts education – such as creativity, critical thinking and risk-taking – with new dimensions and forms like digital and interactive elements. He emphasizes the need for graduates to be resilient, nimble and adaptable; carving out niche areas for themselves and creating jobs where there are gaps.

This same spirit of pushing oneself out of one's comfort zone extends to the SkillsFuture courses available at LASALLE. "It is this same spirit of innovation and risk-taking that will take Singapore into a changing future economy," says Professor Dixon, adding that the 100-over Short Courses at LASALLE are open to anyone – no arts background is required and personal exploration is highly encouraged.

"It has been particularly great to see adults and seniors tap on their SkillsFuture Credit to learn the skills they have always wanted to, but never had the resources nor the knowledge of where to start."

Paving The Way

Aside from LASALLE's SkillsFuture initiatives, Professor Dixon and his team are looking at ways to expose their students to different art forms and ways of thinking through industry attachments and community service projects. They have also continued to foster long-standing partnerships with top arts institutions abroad, paving the way for their graduates to work across cultures and borders.

For Professor Dixon, arts remain his hobby and greatest pleasure. The avid Manchester City fan who moved to Singapore six years ago is incredibly self-disciplined; getting up at 5:30 am every day to get work done before breakfast. "It ultimately provides lots more time for me to undertake learning activities, and to conceive forward-looking initiatives that keep LASALLE at the cutting edge of arts education."



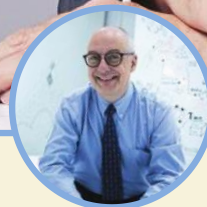
I think it's vital to continually undertake personal and professional development activities, and I try to do so as much as possible. This ranges from taking courses to enhance my leadership and interpersonal skills, to publishing research papers and presenting at academic conferences."

Professor Steve Dixon



"The bedrock today if you want to do well is lifelong learning. We must retain our sense of curiosity, the desire to find out what's going on around us, and how developments in other countries affect us."

– Ms Jeanne Liew, CEO & Principal, Nanyang Polytechnic



"The key to why SMU places so much emphasis on life lessons and community engagement is that we want to build resilience in our students and develop in them the tenacity to face the challenges of an unpredictable future."

– Professor Arnoud de Meyer, President, Singapore Management University



"Individuals need to have relevant skills, be good at applying these skills, and have the lifelong-learning mind set to keep learning and developing deeper skills."

– Ms Low Khah Gek, CEO, Institute of Technical Education



"Graduates should be aware of the scene in industries outside of, but related to their own industries. If they keep their minds curious and are constantly learning new things, they will succeed in building fulfilling careers."

– Mr Chia Mia Chiang, CEO, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts

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