

*Persada seni kreatif memainkan peranan penting dalam ekonomi negara ini. Ekoran demikian, Setiausaha Parlimen (Pendidikan merangkap Pembangunan Sosial dan Keluarga), Profesor Madya Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, telah menyatakan di Parlimen baru-baru ini bahawa Kementerian Pendidikan (MOE) akan bekerjasama dengan Maktab Seni Lasalle dan Akademi Seni Halus Nanyang (Nafa) untuk mempertingkatkan mutu program agar pelajar dapat meraih pekerjaan selepas tamat pengajian kelas. SHAHIDA SARHID (sshahida@sph.com.sg) meninjau antara pekerjaan yang berjaya diraih pelajar daripada kedua-dua institusi seni ini, cabaran serta bagaimana institusi itu telah mempersiapkan mereka bagi dunia pekerjaan.*

# Lasalle, Nafa lakar inisiatif bantu graduan cari kerja

PELBAGAI inisiatif telah dilakar kedua institusi seni tersebut di sini – Maktab Seni Lasalle dan Akademi Seni Halus Nanyang (Nafa) – bagi mempromosikan Pelajar dan Bekerja Sambil Belajar mereka meraih pekerjaan selepas tamat pengajian.

Semasa Festival Kerjaya Maktab Seni Lasalle yang diadakan Februari lalu selama sebulan, kesemua pelajarannya diperlukan menghadiri sesi bagaimana menulis 'curriculum vitae' atau CV bagi memohon pekerjaan dan surat irangan (cover letter).

Di samping itu, pelajar juga dilakar mengikuti sesi bagaimana mempromosikan jenama sendiri (personal branding), memulakan perniagaan kecil-kecilan serta panduan penting menjadi pekerja bebas (*The ABCs of Freelancing*).

Beberapa program pilihan lain termasuk pelbagai ceramah berkaitan industri juga ditawarkan untuk pelajar.

Bahkan semasa Festival Kerjaya tahunan itu juga, satu sesi uji bakat latihan (work) telah diadakan dengan beberapa artis manap negara.

Ini termasuk Ivan Heng daripada kumpulan teater Wild Rice; Gaurav Kripalani daripada kumpulan teater Singapore Repertory Theatre (SRT); dan personaliti terkenal Hosan Leong.

"Sesi ini amat membantu bagi siswazah seni pentas kami," kata Maktab Seni Lasalle.

Sementara itu, Nafa pula mempunyai pegawai khas yang membantu pelajarannya memahami diri mereka dengan lebih baik lagi menerusi bimbingan khusus secara peribadi.

Seperi inisiatif lain, bengkel dan pameran kerjaya juga diad-

kan bagi mempersiapkan pelajarannya untuk dunia pekerjaan.

Selain itu, nasihat kerjaya ditawarkan kepada pelajarannya sejak 2014 melalui Pejabat Pengajaran Pelajar dan Bekerja Sambil Belajar.

Pejabat itu bekerjasama rapat dengan Divisyen Akademik Nafa membantu mendapatkan pekerjaan sambil belajar bagi pelajar.

Menurut Nafa, sepanjang empat tahun lalu, pemohon diploma telah meningkat sebanyak hampir 40 peratus, dengan kursus dalam seni perentas dan disiplin berkaitan desain menjadi semakin popular di kalangan pemohon.

"Kemudahan pelajar bagi kursus diploma secara menyeluruh meningkat lebih 45 peratus bagi tempoh yang sama," kata Nafa.

Menurut Nafa, pihaknya juga sedang membangunkan Pejabat Bimbingan Kerjaya dan Pendidikan khas bagi menawarkan khidmat nasihat kerjaya termasuk pendidikan lanjutan kepada semua pelajar.

Semasa perbahasan Jawatankuasa Perbekalan di Parlimen baru-baru ini, Setiausaha Parlimen (Pendidikan merangkap Pembangunan Sosial dan Keluarga), Profesor Madya Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, telah menyatakan bahawa Kementerian Pendidikan (MOE) akan terus bekerjasama dengan kedua institusi seni ini bagi meningkatkan lagi pautan program mereka agar mempersiapkan pelajar dengan lebih baik lagi bagi dunia pekerjaan.

"ia akan merangkumi usaha untuk terus mempertingkatkan kualiti pengajaran, mempersiapkan usaha agar hasil mendapat pekerjaan lebih kukuh dan memastikan ada kemampuan kewangan," ujar Dr Faishal.

## Jadi konsultan firma antarabangsa di London, New York



**BERKERJA DALAM SUASANA ANTARABANGSA:** Enck Firdaus Arman (tengah) berkata pengajian di Maktab Seni Lasalle telah mempersiapkannya agar berfikir lebih terbuka sekali gus memudahkannya berinteraksi dengan teman sekerja di Ernst and Young, yang berpangkalan di New York. – Foto-foto LYRA WANG

KLIEN daripada sektor media dan hiburan yang pernah bekerja dengannya bukan calang-calang.

Ia termasuk agensi berita antarabangsa seperti Bloomberg, Thomson Reuters dan juga syarikat penyiaran seperti Walt Disney serta Scripps Networks Interactive yang memiliki Food Network dan Travel Channel.

Siaapa sangka peluang menjadi konsultan pengurusan di firma perakaunan Ernst & Young yang berpangkalan di Amerika Syarikat itu datang bergolek bagi Enck Firdaus Arman, lulusan ijazah Kejuruteraan Pertama dalam Pengurusan Seni daripada Maktab Seni Lasalle pada 2007.

Tugasnya sebagai konsultan pengurusan memerlukan transformasi perniagaan klijennya dan ini mungkin termasuk melaksanakan teknologi baru atau yang diperintek, cara bekerja dan strategi operasi khusus seperti dalam bidang kewangan, rancangan perniagaan, penulisan pengiklanan dan perbitan media.

"Lasalle telah mempersiapkan saya agar mempunyai minda lebih terbuka bukan sahaja dalam konteks Singapura, malah secara global dan mampu membincang serta menyam-

paikan idea yang mungkin baru atau berbeza," kongsi Enck Firdaus dalam satu wawancara menerusi e-mel.

Namun perjalanan mendapatkan pekerjaan berprestij itu bukan semudah disangka.

Sepanjang pengajiannya di Maktab Seni Lasalle, anak sulung dua beradik itu telah bekerja sambil bagi syarikat tarian moden, The Arts Fusion Company.

Dalam pada itu, beliau juga merupkan penagas bersama program khidmat sosial dipanggil 'Project DanceEdge' yang menawarkan belia daripada keluarga kurang berkemampuan latihan tarian padak yang membantu mereka mengekspres diri dengan lebih baik selain mempelajari kemahiran baru seperti kerja berpasukan.

Sebaik sahaja meraih ijazah, bujang 30-an tahun itu menimba pengalaman bekerja sebagai pengurus pemasaran dan tajuan di Majlis Seni Kebangsaan (NAC).

Sekitar setahun kemudian, beliau diambil bekerja di Yayasan Asia-Eropah (Asef) dan ditugaskan mereka dalam mengurus skrin geran seni pentas dan filem bagi membantu dalam usaha kolaborasi di kalangan penerbit

kreatif dari lebih 40 negara di Asia dan Eropah.

"Bekerja dalam persikatan kerja antarabangsa memang sesuatu yang saya gemari," katanya.

Kurang dua tahun bekerja di Asef, Enck Firdaus kemudian menerima bisnesnya Amanah Sekolah Ekonomi London dan Sains Politik (LSE), Singapura dan Persatuan Alumni LSE untuk meneruskan pengajian di peringkat sarjana dalam pengurusan awan.

"Ini memang antara pencapaian paling membanggakan bagi saya kerana ia mungkin tidak akan berhasil jika saya tidak meraih pencapaian cemerlang dari segi akademik di Lasalle, di samping sokongan ayah keluarga dan biasiswa yang diberi," kata beliau, yang berjaya meraih ijazah sarjana (Lulus dengan Merit) daripada LSE.

Pada 2012, beliau telah memulakan kerjayanya di Ernst & Young London selama empat tahun sebelum berpindah ke New York September lalu.

Menurutnya, pengalaman permia- gan antarabangsa yang diraih sebelum ini banyak membantu memudahkan proses beliau menyesuaikan diri dengan dan bekerja di kedua-dua United Kingdom (UK) dan Amerika.



"Lasalle telah mempersiapkan saya agar mempunyai minda lebih terbuka bukan sahaja dalam konteks Singapura, malah secara global dan mampu membincang serta menyampaikan idea yang mungkin baru atau berbeza."

– Enck Firdaus Arman, konsultan pengurusan di firma perakaunan Ernst & Young yang berpangkalan di Amerika Syarikat yang berpindah bekerja rapat dengan agensi berita seperti Bloomberg, Thomson Reuters dan syarikat penyiaran seperti Walt Disney serta Scripps Networks Interactive.

Ditanya sama ada kejadian besar yang dialami kedua negara mempunyai kesan kepadanya, Enck Firdaus berkata:

"Meskipun saya alami sendiri bagaimana kejadian seperti Brexit dan pentadbiran Presiden Donald Trump merubah ekonomi dan kehidupan rakyat UK dan Amerika, saya juga kagum dengan kepelbagaian orang di sekeliling saya."

"Mereka juga bersifat inklusif dan menghormati perbezaan antara satu sama lain."

Memberikan pandangannya bagaimana seni di Singapura dapat terus diperintek, Enck Firdaus menyaran- kan agar perkampungan seni dapat ditubuhkan bagi mengembangkan lagi aspek kreatif selain memperkuatkan integrasi Singapura dengan negara rantau ASEAN lain.

"Kita perlu menorek model bagi jenama Singapura yang bukan sahaja boleh dipasarkan ke negara Barat, malah identiti kebudayaan Asia Tenggara yang diharungi jian kita."

"Mungkin kita perlu memikirkan semula antarabangsa negara seperti Korea Selatan dan Jepun berjaya menaku- luki televisyen, teknologi, makanan dan fesyen kita di Singapura," kongsi-nya.



**TEKUN BERUSAHA:** Enck Umar Mukhtar menasihati pelajar institusi seni supaya meluaskan rangkaian kenalan agar dapat meraih maklumat penting bagi membantu dalam mencorak kerjaya mereka. – Foto QASHRUL HIDAFI

## Prestasi cemerlang bolehkan siswazah ditawarkan kerja sebelum raih ijazah

"Pengetahuan khusus dalam bidang seni serta kemahiran pengurusan dan komunikasi yang saya raih semasa menuntut di Lasalle ternyata amat bermanfaat apabila saya memilih laluan kerjaya ini."

– Enck Umar Mukhtar Abdul Razak, yang pernah menjadi penaja jamin termuda di syarikat AXA Insurance apabila beliau diambil bekerja pada 2013. Kini beliau menjadi penaja jamin di syarikat OBE Insurance Singapore Pte Ltd.

TIGA bulan sebelum meraih ijazah Kejuruteraan Kelas Pertama dalam Pengurusan Seni dari Maktab Seni Lasalle, Enck Umar Mukhtar Abdul Razak telah pun menerima tawaran bekerja.

Tetapi berlainan daripada siswazah institusi seni lain yang selalunya memilih kerjaya berkaitan langsung dengan seni, Enck Umar sebaliknya mengorak langkah memilih pekerjaan sebagai penaja jamin (*underwriter*) bagi insurans seni di syarikat AXA Insurance Singapore.

Bukan setakat itu. Malah, prestasi akademiknya yang membrangsangkan di Maktab Seni Lasalle menjadikan anak sulung tiga beradik ini antara penaja jamin termuda di syarikat tersebut apabila beliau diambil bekerja pada 2013.

"Pengetahuan khusus dalam bidang seni serta kemahiran pengurusan dan komunikasi yang saya raih semasa menuntut di Lasalle ternyata amat bermanfaat apabila saya memilih laluan kerjaya ini,"

ujar Enck Umar, 32 tahun, yang sudah bertunang.

Sebagai penaja jamin, tugasnya memerlukan beliau membangunkan insurans bagi melindungi kerja seni dan aset artistik di samping menawarkan nasihat kepada klien mengenai penilaian risiko dan pengurusan bahan-bahan seni.

Menurut beliau, menjadi seorang penaja jamin tidak pernah terlintas dalam fikirannya.

Namun satu ceramah kerjaya yang dianjurkan Maktab Seni Lasalle telah membuka luas pandangan Enck Umar mengenai cabaran dan keunikan pekerjaan sebagai penaja jamin.

"Secara alaminya, saya memang seorang yang suka berfikir dan mempunyai minda analitik. Justeru ini yang membuat saya tertarik dengan kerjaya ini," katanya lagi.

Selapas tiga tahun di AXA, beliau kemudian mengembangkan kemahirannya menjadi penaja jamin bagi jabatan lalibhati profesional di OBE Insurance Singapore Pte Ltd.

"Tugas saya tetap sama tetapi kini saya memilih insurans bertubuh lalibhati profesional."

"Pengalaman saya di syarikat lama mendedik saya agar lebih berhasrat dalam melaksanakan tugas dan sering bertanya kepada rakan sekerja lain agar lebih memahami proses analisis risiko," katanya lagi.

Memberikan nasihat kepada siswazah lain daripada institusi seni di sini mengenai pilihan kerjaya mereka, Enck Umar, yang berurusan jauh dan mempunyai keinginan meneruskan pengajian di peringkat sarjana, berkata:

"Bersedia agar lebih serba boleh dan cepat menyesuaikan diri dengan keadaan."

"Pelajar kemahiran di luar kepompong kelessaan anda."

"Tambahlah itu, ambil peluang menghadiri sesi *networking* agar meluaskan rangkaian anda selain mengikuti ceramah berkaitan industri yang ingin diceburi agar anda lebih peka dan mendapat nasihat serpadu panduan penting bagi mencorak laluan kerjaya anda."

*Creative arts plays a major role in shaping today's economic landscape. In line with this trend, Assoc Prof Dr Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education & Ministry of Social and Family Development, said in Parliament recently that the Ministry of Education (MOE) will work closely with LASALLE College of the Arts, and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (Nafa) to improve the effectiveness of programmes in order to increase the employability of students once they graduate. **SHAHIDA SARHID** (sshahpida@sph.com.sg) reviews the different types of jobs successfully landed by students from both art institutions, the challenges faced and how the institutions continue to prepare them for the professional world.*

### **LASALLE outlines initiatives to help graduates find work**

LASALLE College of the Arts and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (Nafa), two of the largest art institutions in Singapore, have implemented various initiatives to help students acquire employment after graduation.

One of such initiatives was the month-long LASALLE College of the Arts' CareerFest held in February. All students were required to attend this event which taught them how to write a 'curriculum vitae' or CV and a cover letter to apply for jobs.

In addition, the institution provides specialised sessions on how to promote their own brand (personal branding), how to start a small business, as well as tips for freelancers (The ABCs of Freelancing). Industry-related lectures are also offered, which further help students increase their employability after graduation.

At the annual LASALLE's CareerFest, a mock audition was held with a number of local well-known industry practitioners.

These included Ivan Heng from the theatre group W!ld Rice; Gaurav Kripalani from the theatre group Singapore Repertory Theatre (SRT) and the famous media personality, Hossan Leong.

"The session was very helpful for our performing arts graduates," said a spokesperson from LASALLE College of the Arts.

During the Committee of Supply Debate 2017 in Parliament recently, Assoc Prof Dr Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education & Ministry of Social and Family Development, had said that the Ministry of Education (MOE) will continue to work with both art institutions to further improve the standards of their programmes, in order to better prepare students for the professional world.

"We will include efforts to further enhance teaching quality, strengthen employment outcomes, and ensure financial sustainability," said Dr Faishal.

### **A consultant in an international consulting firm in London, New York**

**WORKING IN AN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** Mr Firdaus Arman (seated, centre) said that his time at LASALLE College of the Arts has prepared him to be more open-minded and at the same time made it easier to interact with colleagues at

Ernst & Young in New York. - Photos LYRA WANG

“LASALLE prepared me to be open minded, not just in the Singapore context but globally and be able to discuss and articulate ideas that might be new or different.”

**- Mr Firdaus Arman, a management consultant at the accounting firm Ernst & Young based in the United States, who had the opportunity to work closely with news agencies such as Bloomberg, Thomson Reuters and broadcasting companies such as Walt Disney and Scripps Networks Interactive.**

Clients from the media and entertainment sectors whom they have worked with are renowned names.

They include international news agencies such as Bloomberg, Thomson Reuters, and broadcasting companies such as Walt Disney and Scripps Networks Interactive, which owns Food Network and Travel Channel.

Who would have thought that the chance to work as a management consultant with Ernst & Young accounting firm based in the United States would become a reality for Mr Firdaus Arman, who graduated with First Class Honours in BA(Hons) Arts Management from the LASALLE College of the Arts in 2007.

His job as a change management specialist requires him to look at how a business and their employees can successfully transition to their desired outcome over a period of time. This may involve designing new operational processes, helping them to visualise how the changes are going to impact various teams, and creating effective communications to engage with the wider business on critical changes that will take place within an organisation.

“LASALLE prepared me to be open minded, not just in the Singapore context but globally and be able to discuss and articulate ideas that might be new or different,” said Mr Firdaus in an interview via e-mail.

But the journey to landing a prestigious job was not as easy as he thought.

During his studies at LASALLE College of the Arts, Mr Firdaus, the eldest of two brothers, was working part-time for a modern dance company, The Arts Fission Company.

At the same time, he co-founded one of their social service programmes by the name of *Project DanceEdge* which offered underprivileged youths with rigorous dance training to help them express themselves and learn new skills such as teamwork.

After he graduated with BA(Hons) Arts Management, the 30-year old bachelor started gaining experience working as a marketing and sponsorship manager at the National Arts Council (NAC).

About a year later, he was hired by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and assigned to manage grant schemes in order to facilitate collaboration and mutual understanding among creative producers in over 40 countries in Asia and Europe, to financially support aspiring performing arts and film artists.

“Working in an international work environment is something I enjoy doing,” he said.

Less than two years in ASEF, Mr Firdaus then received a Trust scholarship from London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) of Singapore and the Alumni Association to pursue his Master's in General Management.

“This certainly has to be amongst my proudest achievements. I attribute it to my outstanding academic achievement at LASALLE, in addition to the family support and scholarships I received,” said Mr Firdaus who successfully graduated with a Master’s degree from LSE.

In 2012, he began his career at Ernst & Young in London which lasted four years, before he moved to New York last September.

According to him, the international business experience he gained previously, enabled him to adapt to living and working overseas, both in the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States.

When asked if the changing political climate in the two countries had affected him in any way, Mr Firdaus said:

“Although through personal experience, I know how something like Brexit and the administration of President Donald Trump have changed the economy and people's lives in the UK and the US, I was also impressed by the diversity of the people around me.

“Both countries are inclusive societies and people are respectful of each other’s differences.”

Sharing his views on how arts can be further promoted in Singapore, Mr Firdaus suggested that an arts village be set up to encourage further creative development, in addition to strengthening Singapore's integration with other ASEAN countries.

“We need to explore models for Singapore brands that not only facilitate local talents to export their work to Western countries, but also to Southeast Asia where we share cultural affinity with our neighbours.

“We need to see how countries such as South Korea and Japan have successfully invaded our television, technology, food and fashion landscape here in Singapore,” he shared.

**STRIVING HARD:** Mr Umar Mukhtar advised students of art institutions to expand their network of contacts to acquire vital information that will go a long way in shaping their careers. – Photo QASHRUL HIDAFI

“Specialised knowledge in the field of arts and communication and management skills which I acquired while studying at LASALLE were extremely helpful in helping me choose my career path.”

**- Mr Umar Mukhtar Abdul Razak was the youngest underwriter at the AXA Insurance company, when he was hired in 2013. Now he is an underwriter at QBE Insurance Singapore Pte Ltd.**

### **Outstanding performances allow graduates to be offered employment even before they graduate**

Three months before receiving a First Class Honours in BA(Hons) Arts Management from LASALLE College of the Arts, Mr. Umar Mukhtar Abdul Razak had already received a job offer.

But unlike graduates from art institutions who prefer to opt for careers that are directly related to the arts, Mr Umar chose a job as an underwriter for arts insurance at AXA Insurance Singapore.

The eldest of three siblings, Mr Umar's excellent academic achievements at LASALLE College of the Arts enabled him to become the youngest among all the underwriters in the company when he was hired in 2013.

“Specialised knowledge in the field of arts and communication and management skills which I acquired while studying at LASALLE were extremely helpful in helping me to choose this career path,” said Mr Umar, who is 32, and engaged to be married soon.

As an underwriter, his duties require him to develop insurance products to provide protection for artists' works, as well as offering advice to clients on risk assessment and management of art materials.

According to him, becoming an underwriter never crossed his mind.

However, a career talk organised by LASALLE College of the Arts widened Mr Umar's perception on the challenges and uniqueness of a job as an underwriter.

“By nature, I am a person who likes to think and have an analytical mind. So that made me interested in this career,” he said.

After three years at AXA, he developed his skills as an underwriter for the liability department at QBE Insurance Singapore Pte Ltd.

“My job remains the same, but now I handle insurance concerning professional liability.

“My experience in my previous company taught me to be more cautious in carrying out my duties and I often consult my colleagues to better understand the process of risk analysis,” he said.

Giving advice to other graduates from art institutions about their career choice, Mr Umar, who is a visionary and desires to continue his studies to achieve his master's degree, said:

“Be prepared to be more versatile and adaptable to circumstances.

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“Learn skills outside your comfort zone.

“In addition, take the opportunity to attend networking sessions to expand your network, and attend lectures on the industry you want to focus on, so that you are more aware and can get pertinent advice and guidance in shaping your career path.”