

NU Women

GOING GLOBAL

GOING GLOBAL: DR CINDY LEE

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This month's entry is by Dr Cindy Lee, Assistant Professor and Director of Excellence in Learning and Teaching at Newcastle University in Singapore. We are delighted to introduce the network to another member of staff from NUIS who shares her experiences of going global in pursuit of her research interest.

My love affair with supercritical fluids began in 1999 when I learnt about the unique properties of supercritical CO₂ during a special course in thermodynamics during my undergraduate studies. Since then, I've travelled to several countries around the world in pursuit of my research interest.

In 2002 and 2004, I had the chance to travel to Boston, Massachusetts to study and research at MIT as part of my scholarship by Singapore-MIT alliance. I learnt and worked alongside postgraduate students in Professor Jefferson Tester's laboratory in MIT. During the rest of my PhD research in National University of Singapore (NUS), I worked with international students from China, Malaysia, India, Myanmar and Iran.



Dr Cindy Lee studying and researching at NUS and MIT during her PhD.

Upon completion of my PhD, I joined FeyeCon B.V in Weesp, Netherlands, working on research consultancy projects for multinational companies such as Unilever, Friesland-Campina etc., and with research groups in TUDelft. Nevertheless, this appointment has taken me to various cities in Europe (Koln, Groningen etc.) where I represented the company in conferences and workshops.

Returning to Singapore and joining Newcastle University in 2012 allowed me to continue my research interests and fulfil my ambitions in educating young engineers for future generations. Research-informed teaching plays a very important role in my teaching activities as I hope to encourage and motivate my students (both male and female) to pursue their interest. I believe that multidisciplinary and global networking and collaboration are key to innovation and research development. I have presented and shared my research around Asia (Japan, Malaysia etc.).



Dr Cindy Lee working and presenting on supercritical CO₂ research around the world.

In the midst of my exciting career with FeyeCon and Newcastle University, I have been blessed with 2 lovely daughters and taken short career adjustments and breaks during pregnancy and their birth. They are my motivation and inspiration in many things that I do today, including my research. They are also an important part of the research blog (www.thesupercriticals.blog) which I develop to promote and introduce the concept of supercritical fluid processing to the general public (where they contribute drawings for Mummy's blog).

The balance of career and family is no mean feat. We learn and evolve everyday as the needs of our family members changes with time (children grow up, our parents grow older, even ourselves grow older). Luckily, I drawn inspiration from the remarkable women (Dr Daniela Trambitas, Special Projects Manager for FeyeCon; Dr Ana Mesbahi, former Director of Operations for MAST, Newcastle University in Singapore) that I have worked with throughout my career. They have demonstrated that with a positive mindset and dedication to work and family, we can do it!