



**Office  
of External  
Affairs**

# THE BRIDGE

## The Official Newsletter of the Office Of External Affairs

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### *Editor's Message*

Welcome to The Bridge Issue #29. For this issue, we have a quiz for you. Can you guess how many MoUs NSU currently has? Can you guess how many Alumni Talk Shows we've hosted so far? How many people do you think work at the OEA? What are the two main functions of the OEA? When was the OEA established, can you guess? If you get all the answers right, you can claim your prize by writing an e-mail with your answers to [oea@northsouth.edu](mailto:oea@northsouth.edu). Good luck and have fun!

Hint: <http://institutions.northsouth.edu/oea/news-events/>

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### Congratulations NSU on the latest MoUs



**N** SU has signed the following four new MoUs in last two months: University of Calcutta, UNICEF, NRB Global, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

To learn more about these partnerships, please visit <http://institutions.northsouth.edu/oea/international-affairs/partnership/list-of-mous/>, which is located on the front page of the NSU website under Int'l Partnership.

### Collaboration Meeting with Assumption University, Thailand

**T** he Office of External Affairs at NSU hosted a fruitful collaboration meeting with Assumption University in Thailand on January 09, 2023. The meeting's purpose was to explore possible areas of collaboration and renew the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NSU. The institutions were enthusiastic about extending and expanding their partnership as they had previously collaborated in several areas.



The School of Health and Life Sciences at NSU attracted the attention of Assumption University. They proposed collaborating on research projects and faculty exchange programs. They also intended to send a Thai student to NSU to complete his undergraduate education, which can strengthen the student's university experience and enrich their cultural exposure. Exploring credit transfer and summer schools was another matter of interest for both universities. Such programs will offer students a diversified academic experience, enhance their skill set, and expose them to different cultures. It will increase the universities' collaboration, create opportunities for faculty and student exchange programs, and encourage joint research and academic activities. The partnership will foster learning, educational advancement, and cultural awareness among university students, teachers, and staff. Therefore, renewing the MoU with NSU will benefit both universities. The meeting established the foundation for an exciting and beneficial collaboration between NSU and Assumption University.

### Alumni Talk Show Episode 106



*The one-hundred-and-sixth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on January 11, 2023. The guest for this episode was Dr. Mehree Iqbal, of batch 2005 from the School of Business and Economics. Dr. Mehree Iqbal is a highly accomplished professional with diverse qualifications and experiences. She graduated from North South University (NSU) in 2009 with a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA). She graduated from NSU in 2009 and continued her pursuit of excellence by*

obtaining her Masters of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Glasgow in 2011 and then a PhD from Curtin University in 2022. Her academic achievements are a testament to her dedication and hard work. Her impressive educational background and varied experiences have made her a highly sought-after professional. Dr. Iqbal is associated with the School of Business and Economics of North South University, where she has worked since 2012. She is a dedicated faculty member and has been actively involved in various teaching and research activities. Her commitment to teaching and research has made her a respected member of the academic community.

The show commenced with a discussion about Dr. Iqbal's academic and professional life. Dr. Mehree Iqbal joined NSU in 2005 to pursue her undergraduate degree in BBA after completing high school. Her excellence at the admission exam got her a merit-based scholarship upon entering NSU. During her last year of undergraduate studies, Dr. Iqbal worked as a Teaching Assistant for a year and completed an internship at British-American Tobacco (BAT). Then in 2010, she graduated from NSU and enrolled for an MBA in International Business and Entrepreneurship, for which she received a post-graduate excellence scholarship and graduated with distinction in 2011. Upon returning to Bangladesh, Dr. Iqbal joined NSU as a lecturer on the new campus in 2012. She actively researched with her colleagues on tech adaptations, the theory of planned behavior, consumer behaviors along with their intentions and transformation and so on. Later in 2016, Dr. Mehree Iqbal was promoted to the Senior Lecturer for publishing in numerous journals. A year later, in 2017, Dr. Iqbal received the Australian Government Scholarship to pursue her doctoral research degree at Curtin University, Australia. She completed her PhD in social entrepreneurship based in Bangladesh and worked with the students and their behaviors to become social entrepreneurs. After completing her PhD, Dr. Iqbal's outstanding thesis received the Dean's Recommendation from the reviewers in 2022. She then returned to Bangladesh and rejoined NSU as an Assistant Professor for both BBA and MBA students to participate in the more considerable change that NSU aims to make.

Dr. Iqbal discussed her experience during her doctoral studies in Australia and why she focused on International Business. She always wanted to get a PhD degree and narrowed down her focus area when she started publishing journals. During her undergraduate studies, she enjoyed her international business courses and took as many as she could as electives, believing that it is essential for today's world to know the relevant situation of the current world. She received a scholarship from the Australian government for her merits, and her PhD focused on Social Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Behavior. For prospective PhD students with an interest in getting scholarships, CGPA is a single criterion that helps, but research capabilities and experiences are what give a student an edge over others, according to Dr. Iqbal, as well as an interest in a particular topic. She advises that students should know they are qualified with the skill and the knowledge; they need to nurture it to bloom and succeed.

Dr. Iqbal is a professor who shares a passion for teaching with her family, viewing it as a highly gratifying and fulfilling occupation that offers immense personal contentment. She finds instructing students both challenging and invigorating and sees it as a means of maintaining a connection to the realm of academia. For those who relish learning, teaching can be a way to keep abreast of the latest developments in their field. Professors constantly engage in research, investigate new concepts, and stay current with the latest research. This can make the job incredibly enriching as it allows professors the opportunity to remain at the forefront of their field. Dr. Iqbal perceives teaching as an opportunity to assist others and further noted how professors have the potential to shape the intellects of young people and serve as guides. With the appropriate approach, professors can impart their knowledge and instill a lifelong love of learning in their students. This requires dedication, fortitude, and extraordinary forbearance. Additionally, Dr. Iqbal values the chance to form close relationships with students, other faculty members, and staff, which has resulted in a strong sense of purpose and community for many teaching faculties, including herself. Ultimately, the love and respect one receives, and the contributions one makes to the community are incomparable to Dr. Iqbal.

In the last part of the show, Dr. Iqbal briefly reflects on her positive experience during her undergraduate studies at NSU. She considers the opportunities at NSU boundless and regrets not being more involved in extracurricular activities, which she believes provide valuable networking and skill development opportunities. She is an alumna of NSU's Sanskritik Sangathan club, but her prime focus was always her studies. She regrets missing out on club activities that teach negotiation, professionalism, interpersonal skills, punctuality, understanding, and many more skills. She emphasized the importance of balancing academic and extracurricular activities. Dr. Iqbal fondly remembers her favorite teachers and their support in encouraging her to pursue her dreams. She believes that having a mentor during one's undergraduate studies is crucial in shaping a student's development, and she feels that her work is not a chore but something she enjoys. She feels a sense of familiarity and comfort at NSU that is irreplaceable to her.

To know more about the event, visit the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1168135877406699>

## NGO Talk Show Episode 28



Bangladesh Institute of Social Research Trust

The twenty-eighth episode of the 'Talk Show' aired on January 12, 2023 with one of the government-registered research organizations and the leading private think-tank of Bangladesh - Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust. The title of the event was "Developing Bangladesh: Scope for Research with Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust". The keynote speaker for this episode was Dr. M. Khurshed Alam, Chairman Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust. From North South University (NSU), Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs, was present as a Special Guest and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, OEA, hosted the live talk show.

The event started with a brief introduction of the guest including his academic and professional background. Dr. M. Khurshed Alam is a highly regarded social scientist in South Asia and the founding Chairman of the Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust. He holds a Ph.D. in Sociology and has extensive working experience with national and international agencies such as the World Bank, ADB, JICA, and UNICEF on various initiatives including poverty alleviation, rural development, gender equality and disaster management. Dr. Alam has been a National Expert of the Planning Commission in Bangladesh and held senior positions in the Water Resources Ministry, DFID, and GiZ, leading multiple study and evaluation projects. He is highly regarded for his contributions to the fields of society and development, notably for his notions and theories on poverty alleviation, governance, and the function of the populace in democracies. Dr. Alam serves on the editorial board of the BMC Women's Health Journal, acts as a referee for a multitude of prominent academic publications, and assesses Ph.D. theses at prestigious universities across the globe.

Dr. Alam presented a brief introduction about the Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust during the show including its founding history, mission and several research projects and initiatives. He addressed the challenges encountered during the organization's establishment particularly, the stipulation for more



funding and skilled researchers. BISR is a non-profit, non-partisan think tank that was developed in 2003 with the objective of promoting social improvement through research and other endeavors. BISR Trust has conducted significant studies on a wide range of topics including socioeconomic development, environmental issues, livelihoods, human rights, governance, marginalized groups, criminal activity, and participation of women in sports, public health, institutional development, and other crucial issues in Bangladesh. Many international reputable journal institutions have published the findings of BISR Trust. For the advancement of the nation, Dr. Alam highlighted the importance of public, private, and international research investment.

Dr. Alam additionally emphasized the significant contributions of the government-registered research institutes for the development of the nation. He commended the role played by organizations like BID and BISR Trust in carrying out credible research studies and reminded that these organizations frequently operate like NGOs with clear objectives that generate positive results. Dr. Alam highlighted the need for a greater emphasis on industrial research and the use of local resources to compete in overseas markets despite significant advances in agricultural research. He also called for establishing existing policies for collaboration between government and private organizations in research contrasting this with the well-defined policies of sponsorship and collaboration in industries abroad.

The guest speaker, Dr. Alam, addressed the organization's initiatives and strategies for effective research during the event's final part and underlined the necessity of creating research guidelines in Bangladesh. He noted the limitations of action research and the progress made in commissioned research and emphasized the recognition of the researchers and the creation of more research-related facilities for doing research. He further mentioned the BISR Trust's affiliations with universities and enthusiasm in collaborations for joint research and learning. Dr. Alam also cited the BISR Trust's tradition of working with academics from reputable public and private universities, offering practical training and education in research methodology.

To know more about the event, visit the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/573854127915733>



## NSU Delegation Visit to University of Calcutta, India

One of Bangladesh's leading private universities, North South University, has made tremendous progress in fostering academic and scientific partnerships with prominent institutions and universities throughout the globe. From January 11 to 15, 2023, a delegation headed by the respected Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dr. Atiqul Islam, along with Professor Dr. Sharif Uddin Ahmed, the former Chairman of the History and Philosophy department, and Dr. Hasanuzzaman, the Assistant Director of the Office of External Affairs (OEA) visited Kolkata, India, to meet with administrators of prominent universities and institutions for academic and research partnership. NSU's Office of External Affairs has actively pursued outreach measures to establish bilateral connections with reputable institutions worldwide, resulting in more than 200 MoUs. During the expedition, the delegation visited three institutes, including the University of Calcutta, the Victoria Memorial Hall, and the Weavers Studio Resource Center (WSRC).



The University of Calcutta is the first multidisciplinary, secular Western-style university in the South Asian region, founded in 1857 by the British Government. The MoU signing ceremony between NSU and the University of Calcutta ensued on January 13, 2023 after productive discussions on partnership in educational, research, and cultural interactions. Key features of the MoU comprise student-faculty exchanges, joint research, publication opportunities, organizing joint seminars, symposiums, workshops, and cultural interactions through collaborative activities. During the visit, the Vice-Chancellor of NSU delivered a public speech on the Recent History and Economic Development of South Asia with particular reference to Bangladesh, which was highly applauded. The lecture was attended by senior academicians, professors, researchers, and university students and was followed by an exciting Question & Answer session.

The NSU team also paid a visit to the Victoria Memorial Hall, a museum dedicated solely to Queen Victoria's legacy and exhibiting cultural and historical artifacts from the British Raj. The delegation, which included representatives from the Department of History and Philosophy, met with Dr. Jayanta Sengupta, the Secretary & Curator of VMH. The visit aimed to explore the

possibility of signing an MoU between VMH and NSU, which would allow NSU students and researchers to benefit from the museum's resources. The Victoria Memorial, built between 1906 and 1921, is a grand marble structure on the Maidan that serves as a museum for Indian history and culture.

In addition, the NSU delegation met with the Managing Director, Ms. Darshan Mekani Shah, and explored the Weavers Studio Resource Center, a Kolkata-based research institute, to assess collaborative possibilities in textile research, publication, and international cooperation encompassing Bengal textiles. The center aims to revive and reproduce some of the most outstanding qualities of textiles produced in the region in the past, such as Muslins. The delegation headed to the textile museum, which houses the world's most extraordinary collection of renowned Muslin clothing in various styles and qualities.

Overall, this official trip successfully established a substantial academic and research collaboration between North South University and the University of Calcutta. The MoU signing and the Vice-Chancellor's lecture will undoubtedly facilitate a deeper understanding and appreciation of the cultural and academic resemblances and differences between Bangladesh and India, leading to more extensive collaborations in the future.

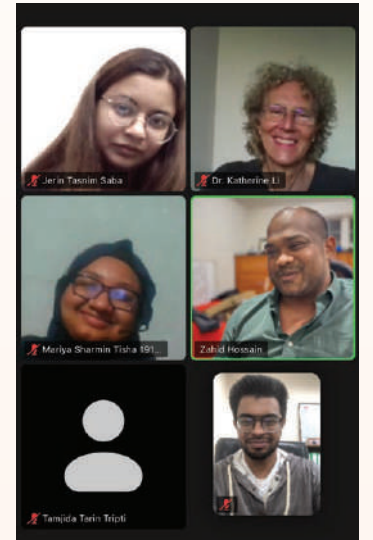


## BdAF Scholarship Recipients 2nd Quarterly Meetup with Students



*The Office of External Affairs facilitated the second quarterly meeting between the members of Bangladesh Alumni Foundation (BdAF) and the scholarship recipient students on January 15, 2023.*

According to the initial arrangement, BdAF members engage in regular interaction with the students to learn their academic updates, plans for future and more. Different conversations were held among the students, BdAF members and members of OEA. Dr. Zahid Hossain, President of Bangladesh Alumni Foundation attended the meeting on behalf of his team and took updates from the students. He was delighted to learn about the progress of their scholarship recipients. From the Office of External Affairs, Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA and Sk. Fardin Yaman, Alumni Affairs Officer, OEA were present. As BdAF and NSU have welcomed 2 new scholarship recipients under this program, it was decided that the new students will also be invited in the upcoming meetings.



## Bangladesh Alumni Foundation (BdAF) and NSU selects New Recipients for their Scholarship Program

It is a matter of great joy that NSU and Bangladesh Alumni Foundation (BdAF) have selected 2 new scholarship recipients for their scholarship program. They are Shadman Shadid (Bachelor of Business Administration) and Md. Azmal Hossain (Bachelor of Biochemistry and Biotechnology). Both of the students have gone through rigorous screening and have shown remarkable talents throughout the process. Shadman and Azmal join Tamjida Tarin, Mariya Sharmin and Jerin Tasnim who were selected in the first screening of the program. BdAF and NSU welcome the new students in this program and express their interest to bring in more and more students under this scholarship program in the future.



## Introductory Meeting between Pathfinder International, Bangladesh



*On January 16, 2023, NSU arranged an introductory meeting with Pathfinder International, Bangladesh. The meeting was conducted online, and it was attended by Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs (OEA), NSU; Mr. Mahbub Alam, Country Director, Pathfinder International, Bangladesh; Dr. Sharmin Sultana, Technical Director, Pathfinder International, Bangladesh; Mr. Sohrab Hussain, Project Manager, (re)solve, Pathfinder International, Bangladesh; Ms. Marufa Khan, Manager, Knowledge Management, Pathfinder International, Bangladesh; Dr. Mohammad Delwer Hossain Hawlader, Associate Professor & Chair, Dept. of Public Health, NSU; Dr. Md. Mainul Hossain, Associate Professor & Chair, Dept. of Biochemistry and Microbiology, and Research Coordinator, School of Health & Life Sciences, NSU, and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, (OEA), NSU.*

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Katherine Li, Director of External Affairs (OEA). Mr. Mahbub Alam, Country Director of Pathfinder International, Bangladesh, expressed gratitude for the invitation to explore potential collaboration between NSU and Pathfinder International, Bangladesh. Mr. Alam briefly introduced the organization, a US-based international organization known for its expertise in sexual and reproductive health, particularly family planning, in over 20 countries worldwide. He explained that Pathfinder International, Bangladesh, has been partnering with the Government of Bangladesh since 1978 to ensure access to contraception for even the hardest-to-reach communities.

Pathfinder International, Bangladesh is currently implementing the USAID-funded "Shukhi Jibon" project in 32 districts across eight divisions, as well as the "Women Led Climate Resilience" program in 5 districts of Bangladesh. The latter program integrates sexual and reproductive health with climate change and disaster management activities at the community level, a groundbreaking approach funded by Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited. Additionally, Pathfinder International, Bangladesh, has a small project for the Rohingya community in Cox's Bazar, which focuses on SRHR activities for both the Rohingya and the host community. In addition to this, Pathfinder International, Bangladesh has implemented other vital projects, including the "Smiling Sun" urban initiative project, which was branded and successfully completed in 2018. Pathfinder International, Bangladesh, has offices in Dhaka, Chittagong, Mymensingh, and Sylhet and co-located staff in all 32 districts.

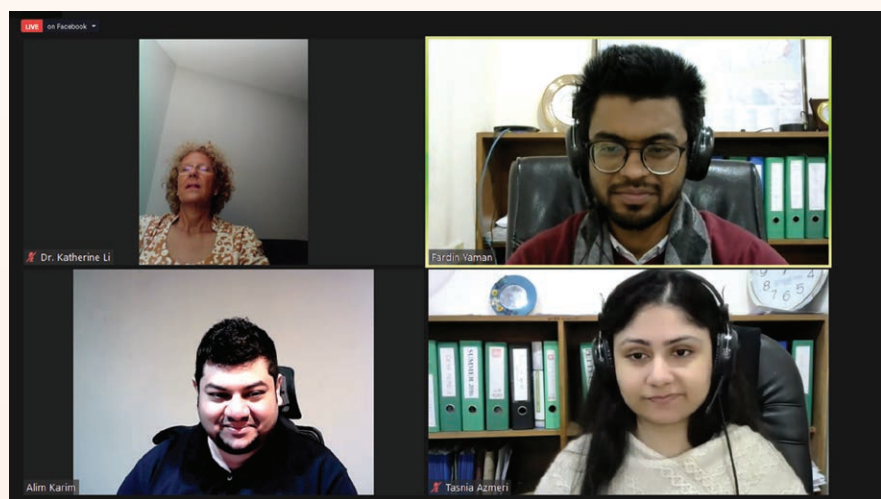




Dr. Sultana elaborated on the organization's ongoing initiatives. She explained that in addition to the "Shukhi Jibon" project, Pathfinder International, Bangladesh, provides technical support to improve the accessibility and availability of family planning services for women. The organization is also working towards capacity development and providing clinical services. Another key focus is on adolescent health, which includes adolescent-friendly services. Pathfinder International, Bangladesh, supports the government in these areas and works towards standardizing the content of government curricula and manuals. The organization is also working on digital technology training to raise awareness and monitor services. Furthermore, Mr. Hussain highlighted their current focus on adolescents and youth due to their vulnerability to SRHR-related and public health issues. Collaborating with North South University (NSU) and its experienced faculty members, researchers, and a large youth population would enable both parties to research positive SRHR practices, particularly in sexual and reproductive health. Ms. Khan expressed her interest in partnership with NSU and utilizing the young, energetic students for the flagship project. She also proposed being an intellectual partner with NSU, offering opportunities for NSU students to intern and prepare informative documents.

During the meeting, Dr. Hawlader proposed several areas of collaboration between NSU and Pathfinder International, Bangladesh, including research, joint publications, research funding, and student internship programs. He expressed interest in creating an effective partnership between the two organizations to benefit NSU students and faculty members. Dr. Hossain added that NSU's Public Health Department, led by an expert in this area, could partner with Pathfinder International, Bangladesh, to promote joint research, exchange research outcomes, and facilitate joint training workshops. Dr. Li noted that NSU's robust research infrastructure, expert faculty, and Career and Placement Center (CPC) would facilitate successful research collaboration, joint publications, research projects, and training and internship opportunities. Dr. Hawlader requested the Director of External Affairs to formulate a draft memorandum of understanding between the two organizations.

## Alumni Talk Show Episode 107



The one-hundred-and-seventh episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on January 23, 2023. The guest for this episode was Md. Alim Ul Karim from batch 2011 of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, majoring in Computer Science and Engineering. Md. Alim Ul Karim is a highly accomplished software engineer and technical professional with over 17 years of experience in the field of programming. He has an exceptional record of technical expertise, coupled with strong leadership skills, having held several key positions throughout his career. Currently, Mr. Karim is working as the Principal Software Engineer of Validata Group, Greece.

The show began with a synopsis of Mr. Karim's professional and academic life. Md. Alim Ul Karim is a highly skilled software engineer and technical expert with over a decade and a half of programming experience. He is accredited for his strong leadership skills, having held positions such as CTO, Full-Stack Architect, System Analyst, Software Engineer, and Programmer. Mr. Karim is a highly recognized mentor for C#.NET Architects Bootcamp at Crossover, where only the most exceptional talent is recruited. His extensive expertise in .NET and VB programming has led to the co-creation of the 'C# Automatic Unit Test Framework' at Crossover, restructuring how code is analyzed. In addition, Mr. Karim has developed a state-of-the-art static code analyzer tool that can forecast code coverage for each pattern in the catalog without even running the device. His comprehensive skill set includes excellence in API, Jenkins, C#, .NET Framework, Java, Scala, ASP.NET, Git/SVN, Angular, AWS Stack, PowerShell, and more. He has worked at noteworthy enterprises such as Crossover, Evatix, Relisource, and Enosis.

During the show, Mr. Karim provided valuable advice to current Computer Science and Engineering students and graduates. He discussed the importance of embracing Artificial Intelligence in one's professional journey and advised students to acquire proficiency in various programming languages to enhance their skills and market value. Mr. Karim recommended committing to one language for 3-4 years to ensure comprehensive understanding and mastery. He highlighted the demand for languages such as Java, Python, and JavaScript in the market for CSE students and graduates. He also spoke about his experience seeking guidance from a senior colleague who encouraged him to delve into AI. Finally, Mr. Karim emphasized that AI requires human intelligence to be directed effectively for optimal results and dispelled the misconception that AI will replace human effort and capabilities.

As the show progressed, Mr. Karim spoke about the global influence of technology during the COVID-19 crisis. Despite reports of a temporary slowdown in the sector, which resulted in job losses for some, he emphasized the success of companies such as Netflix, whose value surpassed Disney due to the surge in over-the-top platforms. He encouraged against disregarding the technology sector during periods of decline, as he believes that this is the ideal time to invest with a deep comprehension of the emotional, engineering, business, and value factors of the market and the capability to make strategic predictions and plans. Mr. Karim boasts exceptional summarizing abilities and emphasizes the importance of focusing on key elements, utilizing mind-mapping techniques with the aid of color coding and concise wording. He suggests seeking out training resources readily available on the internet.

Mr. Karim discussed his reasons for choosing North South University (NSU) for his Computer Science studies. He realized the value of NSU and chose it due to its prompt recognition of North American degrees by the World Education Services (WES) and favorable QS ranking. Despite his unsuccessful attempt to join the computer science club at NSU, Mr. Karim had a supportive network of friends who helped him with his studies and maintained excellent grades. He balanced work and other commitments and received a job offer from a welcoming professor at the university. He built strong relationships with professors, including one who served as his thesis advisor, resulting in a national newspaper publication. Ultimately, Mr. Karim described NSU as a congenial and stimulating environment to learn and socialize.

At the show's end, Mr. Karim mentioned that he recently considered pursuing an MSc. degree. He noted that numerous universities in the USA recognize NSU, which holds accreditation in the USA as well. The only hindrance is the prerequisite for IELTS and language proficiency tests. Despite this, NSU boasts a highly esteemed reputation. He concluded the show by encouraging students to start early on business or work to exemplify their abilities and be ahead of their peers. He also emphasized the importance of training oneself prior to embarking on academic studies.

To know more about the event, visit the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1343220943142915>



## Delegation Visit from University of Ottawa, Canada

*On January 22, 2023 Marc-André Gougeon, a representative of the University of Ottawa's Strategic Enrollment Management, paid a visit to North South University. He was at North South University to represent and introduce the University of Ottawa to the students and officials. With an emphasis on collaborative research activities, short exchange programs, and credit transfers, the visit's objective was to explore prospective areas of collaboration between NSU and the University of Ottawa.*



uOttawa



The delegation was taken on a thorough campus tour and briefed on the specific departments and courses offered by NSU. The discussion listed potential areas of collaboration between the two universities, such as joint research, short exchange programs, and credit exchanges. The delegation was impressed with the caliber of education that NSU provides and expressed an interest in forming a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NSU, leaving room for more official and detailed discussions in the future. The collaboration has tremendous potential for mutually advantageous opportunities that will enhance the academic experience of both students and faculty. Overall, the visit represented an important and promising start to what is hoped to be a fruitful partnership between NSU and the University of Ottawa. The visit has certainly provided many opportunities for both universities to explore and enhance their academic horizons.

## NSU and UNICEF Bangladesh sign MoU to set up a Knowledge Hub on Child Rights and Business



*North South University (NSU) and UNICEF Bangladesh, on January 24, 2023, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for establishing a knowledge hub on child rights and business in the country. NSU Vice-Chancellor Professor Atiqul Islam and UNICEF Bangladesh Representative Mr. Sheldon Yett signed the MoU at the UNICEF Bangladesh office in the capital today on behalf of the respective organizations.*

সকল শিশুর জন্য

Through setting up a center for corporate sustainability and child rights, the MoU aspires to undertake joint activities in advocacy, incubation and networking, knowledge management, and capacity development. The Child Rights and Business concept will be dovetailed through NSU's course curriculum, providing on-job e-learning facilities and disseminating knowledge products and exchanges on good practices.

Moderated by Ms. Elisa Cortes Gil, UNICEF Bangladesh's Chief of Resource Mobilization and Partnership, the signing ceremony was also addressed by Professor Helal Ahammad, Dean of NSU's School of Business and Economics, and Mr. Vedprakash Gautam, UNICEF Bangladesh's Corporate Alliances Specialist.



## Information Session with Brunel University, UK

*North South University's Office of External Affairs (OEA) arranged a virtual information session with Brunel University, UK, on January 26, 2023. From Brunel University, UK, we had Dr. Sean Holmes, Vice Dean of the International College of Business, Art and Social Science; Ms. Dilruba Karim, Senior Lecturer in Economics and Finance; Ms. Polly Lu, Senior Study Abroad Officer; Mr. Simon Stanley, International Recruitment Manager and Mr. Ibrahim Hamid, North South University Alumni in Postgraduate studies in Brunel University, UK as speakers for this session. From NSU OEA, Ms Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, Coordination Officer OEA, attended the session. The interactive session was conducted through Zoom and streamed via Facebook Live on the official Facebook page of NSU OEA.*



Brunel  
University  
London

The event started with a brief discussion on the advantages of pursuing higher studies in the UK. The UK is renowned for its top-ranked universities and



welcoming environment for international students. Brunel University is no exception, offering a campus-based experience with structured support, hands-on learning opportunities, and a diverse community of students, faculty and staff. Scholarships and funding options are available, making higher education accessible to international students. At Brunel, students can learn, grow and socialize through face-to-face instruction and extracurricular activities. Campus resources such as career services, health care, and technical support are also available to students. The UK provides a fantastic opportunity for international students to pursue higher education and experience a diverse community.

Brunel University, located in the heart of West London, welcomes international students to join its dynamic and diverse community. With a proud history dating back to 1966, Brunel offers students the chance to challenge themselves and pursue their passions, with a strong reputation in engineering, business, and sports science. With over 150 student-led clubs and societies, students can explore new interests and meet like-minded individuals, and with world-class sports facilities, including an Olympic-sized swimming pool, Brunel prioritizes student life. With a short train ride from central London, students can easily access one of the world's most vibrant cities.

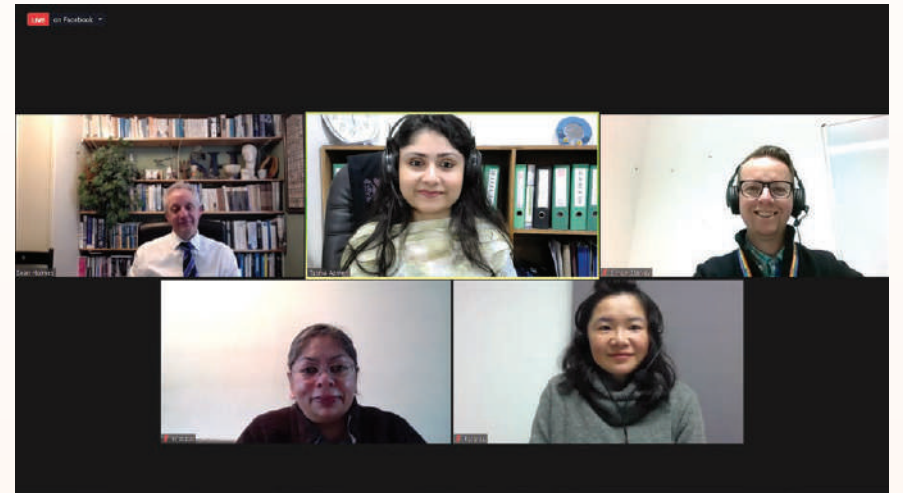
Brunel University offers a range of programs through its four colleges - College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences, College of Engineering, Design and Physical Sciences, College of Health and Life Sciences and College of Business and Law. The College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences offers programs in subjects like management, marketing, media and arts, focusing on practical skills and hands-on learning. The College of Engineering, Design and Physical Sciences provides a comprehensive engineering, design and physical sciences education. The College of Health and Life Sciences offers programs in fields like nursing, psychology and sports science aimed at improving health and well-being. The College of Business and Law provides a comprehensive education in law and business, with a focus on practical skills and a strong reputation and partnerships with leading organizations in the business and legal sectors. With a combination of theoretical and practical training, Brunel University prepares students for successful careers in today's world.

Brunel University, UK, offers a Master of Science (MSc) program in finance with a comprehensive curriculum that includes financial markets, financial instruments, corporate finance, and risk management. The program is taught by experienced faculty with a strong background in finance and provides workplace placements for practical experience. The university also offers award-winning placements and prepares students for CFA Level 1, the first level of the globally recognized Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) program. The Professional Development Centre (PDC) offers training and development opportunities in various areas, including business skills and personal development. Brunel University UK also provides a study abroad program for international students to earn credits towards their home degree. With modern facilities, hands-on learning opportunities, and a strong emphasis on practical skills, Brunel University UK prepares students for successful careers in finance.

Throughout the event, we also heard from some current students and alums of Brunel University, UK, about their experiences of studying there. Moreover, the speakers informed and instructed the audience about the application procedure, requirements, fees, funding and scholarships, deadlines, etc., for enrolling into Brunel University, UK. Lastly, they provided contact details of the appropriate persons and offices for the students to reach out to retrieve any information related to the university, and the speakers concluded the information session with an interactive Question-Answer segment.

To know more about the event, visit the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/918532172494421>



## Information Session on Oxford Institute Summer Camp 2023

*The information session on the Oxford Institute Summer Camp 2023 was a highly anticipated event held at North South University (NSU) on January 30, 2023. This session was led by Mrs. Mona Masud, the Country Coordinator of Bangladesh and Asia, who provided an in-depth overview of the Summer Camp program and its benefits for students. From North South University, Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, Coordination Officer, OEA and Mr. Sk. Fardin Yaman, Alumni Affairs Officer, attended the information session.*



The information session kicked off with an introduction to the University of Oxford and Oxford Institute. The Oxford Institute is a prominent academic institution that provides students with tremendous educational opportunities. The Institute provides students with the opportunity to explore their passions and attain their full potential while putting a high priority on high-quality education. Students at the information session learned about the University of Oxford, a famous and prestigious academic establishment providing a top-notch education for more than nine centuries. The University is renowned for bringing in the greatest minds from every corner of the world and creating a stimulating environment for creative thinking and interactive learning.

The Oxford Institute is a non-profit organization founded by Oxford University academics and alumni, offering two-week residential summer programs called "The Oxford Experience." The program emphasizes Oxford Learning, Leadership, and Lifestyle and is offered in July and August. Students will receive the remarkable opportunity to experience Oxford University, including residing on campus, dining at a 'Harry Potter/Hogwarts' ambience dining halls, and attending

classes instructed by Oxford professors. The program is acclaimed for its individualized education and counseling approach and is approved by the British Accreditation Council.

The program's academic focus is on individualized education and customized counseling. From a multitude of options, including Physical and Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities, students may choose two disciplines. Students are separated into small groups with tutors during the program's second



week, thereby incorporating Oxford's renowned tutorial teaching methodology. The curriculum also includes a tour of Imperial College London, where students will participate in various co-curricular activities and attend guest lectures. Students will receive a certificate, an academic reference, career counseling, and assistance with university applications after successfully completing the program. The program also comprises a variety of sports and outdoor activities, movie and musical nights, excursions to historic landmarks and architecture in Oxford and London, and other entertaining events. The program is an extraordinary chance to improve knowledge, leadership capabilities, and personal growth while experiencing the greatest of Oxford and London.

The informative lecture on Oxford Institute Summer Camp was delivered successfully, followed by a lively question-and-answer session. The students asked various questions regarding major and elective courses, scholarship opportunities, fees, the application process, visa applications and other relevant questions regarding the program. The program was concluded by presenting Mrs. Masud with a token of appreciation.

## Delegation Visit from Sejong University, South Korea



Senior Vice-President of International Affairs, Dean of Graduate School, Mr. Suengbin MOON along with the Associate Coordinator of Office of International Affairs, Ms. Julie Anne Pineda, from Sejong University, South Korea, visited North South University on February 02, 2023. He was at NSU to represent and introduce Sejong University to the students and officials of North South University.

The primary agenda of the meeting between NSU and Sejong University was to discuss possible collaborations and student exchange programs to boost the number of Bangladeshi students enrolled at Sejong University. The attendees explored a potential academic collaboration between Sejong University and North South University (NSU) at the meeting between the two universities. Various opportunities for the partnership were established through discussions, including joint research activities, joint publications, and sharing of resources. To render these possibilities a reality, both universities expressed interest in a partnership. Sejong University expressed interest in the suggestion to implement a sabbatical system made by the Pro-Vice Chancellor of NSU. Additionally, Sejong University stated its desire to send students to NSU for a semester-long exchange program. Both institutions showed interest in working together following the conference to raise their global research rankings and strengthen their research capabilities. After exploring all the suggestions, the OEA and NSU representatives, along with the delegates from Sejong University, concluded that more discussion should be held before signing a partnership agreement between NSU and Sejong University in South Korea.

## North South University and UNICEF organize a National Symposium to commemorate 10 years of Child Rights and Business Principles in Collaboration with the UN Global Compact and Save the Children



A decade ago, UNICEF, the UN Global Compact and Save the Children, developed the Child Rights and Business Principles (CRBP) - a voluntary framework for businesses. The CRBPs were the first tool to clearly articulate how corporate responsibility to respect children's rights can be realized in the workplace, marketplace, community, and environment. These principles direct companies on how to mitigate detrimental effects on children while maximizing the positive effects that activities and business partnerships may have on children and youth. Addressing global challenges requires putting children's rights at the center of sustainability and responsible business practices. And though the corporate world has made huge strides in incorporating children's rights over the last decade, there is still a long way to go.

Based on this premise, on February 01, 2023 a national symposium was convened in the Syndicate Hall of North South University with support from the Office of External Affairs (OEA). Key stakeholders and duty bearers from the business ecosystem in Bangladesh shared and deliberated on how the framework of child rights and business principles can help to move the needle on key child rights indicators in the country and help to mitigate the impact of businesses on children and their communities.



During the inaugural session, through a pre-recorded speech, Begum Monnujan Sufian, Hon'ble State Minister, Ministry of Labour and Employment, observed





Chatterton Dickson, High Commissioner, High Commission of the United Kingdom in Bangladesh, H. E. Ms. Alexandra Berg von Linde, Ambassador, Embassy of Sweden in Bangladesh, and high-level representatives from the Ministries of Labour and Employment, Women and Children Affairs, and Foreign Affairs as well as the private sector - Unilever, Grameenphone, PRAN-RFL Group, DBL Group, and Bangladesh Tea Association – also graced the symposium with their presence.



that the framework of child rights and business principles could help mitigate the likely adverse impact of businesses on children and their communities.

"Businesses, investors and governments have it in their immediate power to turn promising developments into routine practice. A commitment to children can help recruit and maintain a motivated workforce by supporting employees who are parents and caregivers, promoting youth employment and guaranteeing that the next generation has the skills a business needs to prosper," said Mr. Sheldon Yett, UNICEF Representative to Bangladesh.

H. E. Mr. Charles Whiteley, Ambassador and Head of Delegation, EU Delegation in Bangladesh, H. E. Mr. Robert



H. E. Mr. Robert Chatterton Dickson, High Commissioner, High Commission of the United Kingdom in Bangladesh, H. E. Ms. Alexandra Berg von Linde, Ambassador, Embassy of Sweden in Bangladesh, and high-level representatives from the Ministries of Labour and Employment, Women and Children Affairs, and Foreign Affairs as well as the private sector - Unilever, Grameenphone, PRAN-RFL Group, DBL Group, and Bangladesh Tea Association – also graced the symposium with their presence.

Furthermore, the symposium celebrated the inauguration of an MoU between NSU and UNICEF Bangladesh – the establishment of a national "knowledge hub" for child rights and business in the country. The MoU aspires to undertake joint activities in informing policy debate, incubation and networking, knowledge management, and capacity development. The child rights and business aspects and case studies will be embedded into North South University's course curricula and be utilized for providing on-job e-learning courses. The knowledge hub is envisioned to disseminate policy briefs and other research-based knowledge products and facilitate gainful exchanges on 'good' practices and learnings.

## Alumni Talk Show Episode 108

The one-hundred-and-eighth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on January 23, 2023. The guest for this episode was Mohammad Mazharul Islam from the Department of Business Administration of batch 2010. After graduating in 2014, Mr. Islam completed his MBA from NSU in 2016. Mohammad Mazharul Islam has a solid academic background that is a foundation for their successful career. As a Product Manager at ACI Pure Salt, Mazharul's dedication to creating and developing innovative products has earned them recognition within the company. His ability to lead teams, communicate effectively, and think innovatively makes him a valuable asset to the brand. Despite his impressive achievements, Mr Islam strives to foster a positive and welcoming work environment.

As the show kicked off, Mohammad Mazharul Islam gave a brief insight into his professional roles and responsibilities as a product manager. As a product manager, Mr. Islam oversees a product's life cycle, from conception to market launch. He began his journey as a Product Executive and has since progressed to his current role as a Product Manager, working primarily with ACI Salt, Sugar and developing new products. He manages product pricing, development, branding, communication, placement, distribution, and supply chain while collaborating with finance and support functions. Mr. Islam takes a hands-on approach to business, assuming responsibility for everything from sales to profit management. He thrives in a challenging environment, facing new obstacles daily and consistently finding innovative solutions for his brand.

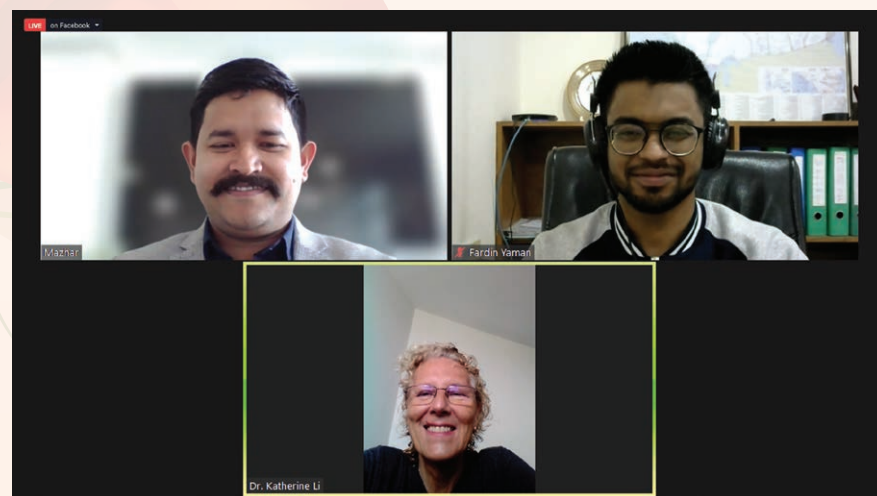
Moving forward in the conversation, Mr. Islam discussed the opportunities and challenges faced by the company. As a top player in the industry, they offer refined vacuum salt and have won several awards for being the No.1 brand. However, they face hurdles in branding, communication, and placement, such as competition and counterfeit products. Mr. Islam and his team use creative strategies to overcome these obstacles. On the positive side, increasing consumer awareness provides opportunities for growth in the sector. For a successful career in brand management, Mr. Islam emphasizes the importance of possessing creativity, innovation, hard-working, technology proficiency, proactivity, and adaptability, qualities which make a well-rounded and effective brand manager.

As the show progressed, reflecting on his career journey, Mr. Islam shared his future plans and proudest moments. Starting as an intern, he has progressed through the ranks to become a product manager, which he considers his greatest accomplishment. He expresses gratitude for the opportunities he has been given to contribute to the brand's successes, including achieving superbrand status and being honored with the best brand award and ISO certification. These milestones serve as a testament to his hard work and dedication to the industry. Mr. Islam chose NSU, the best private university in Bangladesh and was impressed by the highly-skilled and talented faculty. During his studies, he enjoyed volunteering with organizations and socializing with peers. The courses he took at NSU have been invaluable in shaping his career and success in the corporate world. Mr. Islam reflects on the exceptional support he received from his professors and credits his time at NSU for his evolution from an intern to a successful product manager.

The show concluded with Mr. Islam offering some insightful advice to help current and recent graduates stand out in the competitive job market. He emphasizes the importance of developing both technical and soft skills, as these can give one a significant advantage over others. Keeping up-to-date with the latest trends and information in the corporate sector is also crucial. Additionally, Mazharul encourages young professionals to focus on developing their leadership skills, as these will be valuable assets in the long run. NSU provides a wealth of opportunities to develop leadership skills, including group work and team projects in BBA courses, leadership positions in clubs, and opportunities to learn from experienced leaders and mentors. Mr. Islam urges the students to take advantage of these opportunities and not to be afraid to reach out and ask for advice from professionals in their respective fields.

To know more about the event, visit the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/3283434341910408>





## Follow-up Meeting with Brunel University, UK

A follow-up meeting between Brunel University, UK, and NSU was held to discuss potential areas of collaboration between the two universities on February 07, 2023. Brunel University expressed enthusiasm about working with NSU, notably with the Economics, Accounting, and Finance department. The meeting explored the possibility of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The specific areas of collaboration were discussed in brief. It was agreed that there were significant opportunities for collaboration in various fields, like joint research projects, co-authoring of academic papers and publications, sharing of research data, joint academic conferences and seminars, and many more.



**Brunel**  
University  
London



Both institutions are enthusiastic about bringing the collaboration forward and arranging a follow-up meeting between the Chairman and Dean of the Department of Economics and Finance. This meeting will open the door for discussing the proposed collaboration's specifics in greater detail and determining the following steps. It will also strengthen the partnership between the two institutions and pave the track for a beneficial and rewarding union. Altogether, the follow-up meeting was favorable and exciting regarding the potential collaboration between the two prestigious institutions.

## IU International University of Applied Science, Germany

**iu**

INTERNATIONAL  
UNIVERSITY OF  
APPLIED SCIENCES

The Office of External Affairs had a collaboration meeting with The International University of Applied Sciences (IU) in Germany on February 06, 2023. From the Office of External Affairs, Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA, attended the meeting with Ms. Shrutika Joshi, Senior Country Manager- International Student Center, Strategic Partnership, IU International University of Applied Sciences. The meeting provided an opportunity for both institutions to discuss potential partnership opportunities and explore ways to collaborate in research, academic programs, and other initiatives. With IU's focus on practical learning and innovation and NSU's commitment to excellence in research and education, the collaboration has the potential to create new and exciting opportunities for students and faculty alike. This partnership would undoubtedly enhance students' educational experience at both universities and strengthen the institutions' global reach and impact.

IU International University of Applied Sciences in Germany is a world-class university providing international students with many programs. With a tremendous priority on hands-on training, internships, and academic projects, students get valuable discernment into their professional life and are comprehensively prepared for the workforce after graduation. It also provides international students with various courses accredited by Canada and the United States. The outstanding faculty at the university is renowned for delivering personalized support to students, assuring they receive the guidance they require to achieve their academic and career objectives. With English-taught courses and a strong job placement history, IU offers online and on-campus learning hybrid. Additionally, the institution features a thriving campus life that includes a plethora of extracurricular activities and events.

During the discussion, it was highlighted that both universities are dedicated to providing students with an excellent education while training them for successful professions. At the meeting, there was an additional discussion about various collaboration methods, including giving exchange programs, joint research projects, and facilitating faculty and student exchanges. The representatives from both universities also addressed the feasibility of joint degree programs and student internships. The officials agreed that partnerships would provide students with significant international exposure while aiding them in improving their skill sets. Additionally, these collaborations can provide students with opportunities to explore diverse cultures and educational systems, enhancing their experiences and strengthening their employability in an age of globalization. The partnership between these two prestigious universities has the potential to create exciting opportunities for academic and professional advancement for students, professors, and researchers alike.

## Delegation Visit from MacEwan University, Canada

A delegate, Ms. Erin Wight, Director, MacEwan International RCIC, from MacEwan University, Canada, visited North South University on February 08, 2023. During her visit, the guest attended a meeting with Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA; Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, Coordination Office, OEA and Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Office, OEA of North South University.



**MacEwan**  
UNIVERSITY

The purpose of the visit was to explore possible areas of partnership between our two institutions and to strengthen the existing affiliation between both universities. During her visit, Ms. Wight had a fruitful conversation with the officials about various approaches to assisting the students. Both institutions agreed that working together on academic ventures, exchange programs, and credit transfers has tremendous potential. Both universities were thrilled about the vast opportunities for future collaboration. One of the highlights of the discussion was the emphasis on the NGOs with MoUs with NSU and the possibilities and assistance they provide to





NSU students. This gives our students exceptional opportunities to research and gain hands-on experience while contributing to a noble cause. A one-year school/exchange program was also considered, enabling students from both universities to engage in a unique cultural and educational environment actively. Such programs would provide students an excellent opportunity to broaden their perspectives and learn from diverse perspectives.

During the visit, OEA representatives gave Ms. Wight an overview of NSU and showed them around the university. They had the opportunity to witness NSU's vibrant academic and social atmosphere personally. The visit was a tremendous success, and NSU is thrilled about the prospects ahead. NSU is enthusiastic about working closely with MacEwan University to advance academic exploration whilst providing students with unique experiences. The collaboration aims to achieve outstanding results, setting the path for a bright future for both schools.

## Nepal Student Recruitment Meeting

*North South University (NSU) is considered one of the most prominent universities in Bangladesh, and Nepal is a substantial market for international students. Authorities can take various measures to increase the number of Nepalese students at NSU. On February 08, 2023, a meeting was convened with the distinguished members, including Directors, Deans, and Chairpersons of various departments at NSU to address the challenges of recruiting Nepalese students and devise potential solutions to overcome them. The meeting was attended by Dr. M. Ismail Hossain, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Treasurer; Dr. Ahmed Tazmeen, Registrar; Professor Sk. Tawfique M. Haque, Director, South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SAIPG); Dr. Abdur Rob Khan, Professor and Dean, School of Humanities & Social Sciences; Dr. Javed Bari, Professor and Dean, School of Engineering & Physical Sciences; Dr. Hasan Mahmud Reza, Professor and Dean, School of Health and Life Sciences (SHLS); Dr. Mohammad Delwer Hossain Hawlader, Associate Professor and Chair, Public Health; Dr. Helal Ahammad, Professor and Dean, School of Business & Economics and Director of Economics Research Platform; Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs (OEA); Dr. Hasanuzzaman Sohail, Associate Director, OEA; Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Officer, OEA; Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, Coordination Officer, OEA*



One effective way is to invest in promotional material. Engaging in promotional material can create more awareness about NSU among Nepalese students and encourage them to apply. A well-crafted marketing campaign, which highlights NSU's unique strengths and opportunities, can attract more students. One of the primary approaches is the development of targeted promotional materials that highlight the benefits of attending NSU, including its academic programs, cultural programs, and affordable cost of living. These materials will be designed to appeal to Nepalese students and distributed through appropriate media to reach potential applicants.

Another factor that can play a crucial role in recruiting Nepalese students is budget allocation. NSU can allocate an increased budget towards promoting NSU in Nepal. This can involve hosting education fairs and seminars to provide a platform for students to learn more about NSU and its offerings. By investing in targeted advertising campaigns, education fairs, and other promotional events, NSU can effectively reach Nepalese students and demonstrate its commitment to attracting international talent. The Nepal embassy can be a vital partner in this regard. An education fair can be organized inside the embassy premises, or a suitable location outside can be hired to host the event. This will require a coordinated effort across multiple departments at NSU and stakeholders to ensure that resources are allocated efficaciously.

One key challenge in recruiting Nepalese students is the reliance on education consultants to facilitate the application and enrollment process. While NSU does not allow such education consultants to operate on campus, it is still important to engage with reputable education consultants who can help connect prospective students with the university. NSU can collaborate with education consultants who are popular in Nepal to reach out to more Nepalese students. However, the university should be vigilant in vetting these education consultants, as some education consultants may need to be more legitimate. NSU can verify the authenticity of education consultants by consulting alumni residing in Nepal who can provide reliable information about their legitimacy.

Furthermore, NSU can offer scholarships to Nepalese students to attract them to NSU. Scholarships are highly attractive to students and can act as an incentive for them to apply. Currently, NSU has ten scholarship students, which can be increased to attract more Nepalese students. These scholarships will be advertised through education consultants or alumni residing in Nepal or appropriate channels and distributed to eligible applicants fairly and transparently. The aim is to demonstrate NSU's commitment to excellence and to attract the best and brightest students from Nepal.

NSU's significant impediment in recruiting Nepalese students is verifying their submitted educational documents. Nepalese educational documents are often in languages other than English, making verification challenging. In such cases, NSU can consult the embassy or high commission to verify documents and ensure they meet NSU's requirements. Additionally, NSU should be careful in processing applications and ensure that students' educational documents meet the university's requirements before accepting them while verifying education consultants' legitimacy through alumni residing in Nepal.

NSU should also focus on internationalizing the university and attracting Nepalese students interested in public health, microbiology, and biochemistry. By creating programs tailored to the Nepalese market, NSU can attract more students from Nepal. NSU can also learn from previous case studies to understand how



Nepalese students operate and tailor its recruitment strategies accordingly. The university will also offer spot admissions to qualified applicants at these events, demonstrating its commitment to recruiting the best and brightest students from Nepal. NSU will participate in education fairs in Nepal to further support recruitment efforts, both within and outside the embassy premises. This will allow NSU to showcase its academic programs and facilities to prospective students and their families. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a decline in Nepalese student applications to NSU. However, NSU can increase the number of Nepalese students by investing in promotional materials, offering scholarships, and working with authentic education consultants. Furthermore, NSU can collaborate with the Nepal embassy and high commission to verify educational documents and ensure students meet NSU's requirements.

In conclusion, increasing the number of Nepalese students at NSU requires a coordinated effort across multiple departments and stakeholders. By investing in targeted promotional materials, allocating sufficient budgetary resources, engaging with reputable agents, offering scholarships, verifying documents, and participating in education fairs, NSU can effectively reach Nepalese students and demonstrate its commitment to diversifying and internationalization with excellence.

## Graduate Business Programs in Canada: Opportunities and Challenges, St. Mary's University, Canada

North South University's Office of External Affairs (OEA) arranged a seminar with Saint Mary's University on February 09, 2023, titled "Graduate Business Programs in Canada: Opportunities and Challenges,". From Saint Mary's University, Dr. Rahman Khokhar, Associate Professor and Program, Director of Master of Finance at the Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University, was present. From North South University, Dr. Nurul Kabir, Chair, Department of Accounting & Finance; Dr. Hasanuzzaman Sohail, Assistant Director, OEA; Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, Coordination Officer, OEA; Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Officer, OEA and Mr. Sk. Fardin Yaman, Alumni Affairs Officer, OEA were present in the meeting. The session was conducted at the North South University at Syndicate Hall, with the university's students as the audience for the session.



Students from North South University gave an enthusiastic welcome to the seminar when the event commenced. The student's academic background in the audience particularly impressed the guest speaker. The seminar's primary focus was on discussing the opportunities and difficulties encountered by graduate schools throughout Canada. The speaker hailed Canada for its inclusive and dynamic environment while highlighting its exceptional quality of life, ranked as the third-best globally. He further emphasized the affordable expense of higher education in Canada, making it a desirable destination for students. The speaker presented the audience with an insightful session, presenting them with invaluable information and insights into the prospects in Canada.



As the event continued, Dr. Khokhar answered questions and concerns raised by students while advising them to choose wisely a program that aligns with their career aspirations. He recommended students to maximize their chances of success by appropriately preparing for their visa applications. Throughout the discussion, Dr. Khokhar presented additional information regarding the multiple academic programs available, including educational expenses.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Khokhar welcomed the students to contact him if they needed further advice or assistance. The energetic session culminated in an interactive question and answer session, where the students displayed keen participation. Students received swift responses to any lingering questions concerning Saint Mary's scholarships and programs, which improved their understanding of the discussion and rekindled their excitement for attending Saint Mary's University. Ultimately, the seminar was an eye-opening experience for the students, providing them with relevant information and understanding of their opportunities in Canada and at Saint Mary's University. At the end of the session, Dr. Sohail, Assistant Director, OEA presented him with a small token of gratitude on behalf of North South University.

To know more about the event, visit the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1518756898614141>

## Follow-up Meeting with PROSHIKA



The second meeting between PROSHIKA Manobik Unnayan Kendra and North South University (NSU) transpired on February 13, 2023. Prof. Dr. Helal Ahammad, Dean, School of Business & Economics (SBE), NSU; Mr. Shibu Kanti Das, Director, Social Development & Program, PROSHIKA Manobik Unnayan Kendra; Mr. Md. Insar Ali Pasha, Director, Micro Finance Field Operation, PROSHIKA Manobik Unnayan Kendra; Ms. Jueana Yeasmin, Head, Dept. of Communication & Public Relation, PROSHIKA Manobik Unnayan Kendra; Dr. Mustafa Abdur Rahman, Associate Prof., Dept. of Economics, NSU; Dr. Nurul Kabir, Associate Prof. & Chair, Dept. of Accounting & Finance & Research Coordinator, School of Business & Economics, NSU; Dr. Katherine Li, Director, External Affairs (OEA), NSU and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, (OEA), NSU had

attended the meeting.

Prior to discussing the drafted MoU between PROSHIKA and NSU, Prof. Dr. Helal Ahammad, Dean of the School of Business & Economics (SBE), highlighted that NSU possesses experienced research experts while PROSHIKA has field-based expertise. Both parties can leverage these strengths to conduct and seek internal and external research grants. He also mentioned that NSU has successfully implemented many research grant projects, some running individually and jointly



with other organizations. Although NSU provides small internal grants to researchers through CTRGC, Dr. Ahammad encouraged seeking external funds jointly. Based on previous experiences, he assured PROSHIKA's representatives that there would be no issues implementing joint projects in the future. Following a detailed discussion on behalf of NSU, Prof. Dr. Helal Ahammad, Dean, School of Business & Economics (SBE), Dr. Mustafa Abdur Rahman, Associate Prof., Dept. of Economics, Dr. Nurul Kabir, Associate Prof. & Chair, Dept. of Accounting & Finance & Research Coordinator, School of Business & Economics, Dr. Katherine Li, Director, External Affairs (OEA) and from PROSHIKA Manobik Unnayan Kendra, Mr. Shibu Kanti Das, Director, Social Development & Program, Mr. Md. Insar Ali Pasha, Director, Micro Finance Field Operation, Ms. Jueana Yeasmin, Head, Dept. of Communication & Public Relation, agreed to amendments made to the MoU. Finally, Prof. Dr. Helal Ahammad, Dean, School of Business & Economics (SBE), requested Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs (OEA), arrange a befitting MoU signing ceremony.



## Discussion of MoU Renewal with Niigata University, Japan



A meeting was held between North South University (NSU) and Niigata University, Japan, on February 13, 2023. From NSU, Dr. Hasan Mahmud Reza, Professor & Dean, School of Life and Health Sciences; Dr. Asim Kumar Bepari, Associate Professor, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences; Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA; Dr. Hassanuz-zaman Sohail, Associate Director, OEA and Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Officer, had attended the meeting. Mr. Takuo GOTO, Administrative Staff, Student Affairs, School of Medicine, was present at the meeting as the representative from Niigata University. The meeting's primary objective was to discuss the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)



between the two universities and explore the potential areas of collaboration.

Niigata University was interested in the School of Life and Health Sciences at NSU because this school has persistently generated high-quality research in various life and health sciences-related areas. To cite a few, Niigata University acknowledges the potential for significant partnerships in multiple fields, notably public health, pharmaceutical sciences, and medical sciences. Additionally, the fact that Niigata University's School of Medicine was explicitly interested in partnering with NSU's Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences attests to this department's remarkable commitment to advancing pharmaceutical research and development. The potential for cooperation between these two areas is tremendous, given the global demand for better innovative and cutting-edge medications and therapies. This reinvigorated commitment to collaboration speaks well for future research and development efforts. The meeting was fruitful, and representatives from both universities expressed a strong desire to collaborate in pursuing a mutual purpose.

## Speak Up for the Poor



On February 15, 2023, North South University (NSU) and Speak Up for the Poor convened a successful introductory meeting. Dr. Katherine Li, the Director of the NSU's Office of External Affairs (OEA), Mr. Troy Anderson, the Founder and International Director of Speak Up for the Poor, and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer in the OEA, all participated in the meeting. Dr. Li chaired the meeting and expressed her enthusiasm for active learning. She emphasized how standard textbook learning education systems provide students with few practical possibilities. The main discussions included prospects for research collaboration, joint publishing, training, and internships.

After that, Mr. Troy Anderson briefly introduced Speak Up for the Poor, a US-based international organization established in 2004 that empowers underprivileged girls through education.

To keep girls in school and break the cycle of deprivation and child marriage, it officially began operating in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2008. It implemented the Girls Education Program (GEP) in Khulna Division, Bangladesh, in 2012. The project collaborates with families and communities to transform how society perceives and comprehends impoverished girls and recognizes their potential. According to Speak Up for the Poor, the greatest way to overcome injustice and impoverishment is by educating and empowering underprivileged girls. As of January 2023, the organization had financed 1,570 girls' educations in numerous villages and urban regions in western Bangladesh's Khulna district. The majority of these girls are Dalits or severely poor Muslim girls, who are among the most marginalized and destitute subgroups in the country. Sponsors of Speak Up for the Poor contribute \$40 monthly to help finance each girl's education, including daily tutoring, books and school supplies, and monthly seminars. The GEP gives girls a step-by-step strategy for reaching their long-term goals, assisting them in navigating the problematic route to academic achievement and opposing child marriage. Many young girls aim to be teachers, nurses, physicians, and other professionals to help their disadvantaged neighborhoods. GEP makes it possible for them to pursue their dreams.

Dr. Li subsequently emphasized the university's research strengths and encouraged collaboration between the two research institutions. Before pursuing the partnership, Mr. Anderson approved another conference with experienced academics from NSU. Joint publications, research activities, training, internships, and submitting collaborative research proposals for external funds are examples of possible collaboration. NSU is the ideal match for research collaboration since it has a highly integrated Office of Research and qualified faculty members in a broad range of disciplines.

For more information, visit the following link:

<https://www.speakupforthe poor.org/>



## Collaboration Meeting with Western Sydney, Australia

### WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY



*North South University (NSU) had a fruitful discussion with Western Sydney University, Australia, on February 15, 2023, where both institutions discussed possible joint initiatives. Ms. Namrata Anand, the Regional Director of South Asia at Western Sydney University, Australia, attended the meeting as the institution's representative. From North South University, Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA; Dr. Hasanuzzaman Sohail, Assistant Director, OEA were present at the meeting.*

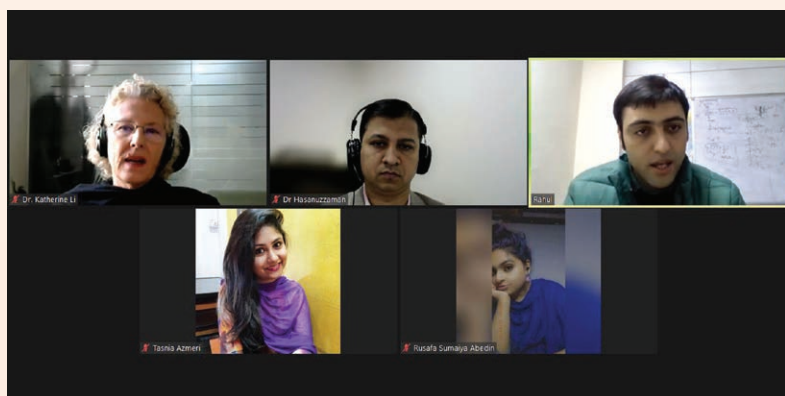
At the meeting, NSU agreed to assess HADRI's participation in the Center for Peace Studies (CPS) Certificate Course on Humanitarianism, Policy, and Diplomacy. This review's objectives are to find strategies to enhance the program and explore promising areas for collaboration. The meeting highlighted short-term student exchange programs as one of the most viable sectors for partnership. These programs will provide NSU and Western Sydney University students with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to study in a vibrant academic setting and acquire international exposure. Such experience is highly beneficial since it enhances students' cultural awareness, global understanding, and educational and personal development. Ms. Anand also showed keen interest in determining whether some of their graduates might be interested in leveraging NSU's NGO network. This network gives students hands-on experience and a unique opportunity to engage with professionals in their respective sectors.

In conclusion, the NSU and Western Sydney University collaboration meetings were productive. NSU and Western Sydney University look forward to the next delegation visit scheduled for April 2023. A joint seminar to be organized during the visit will serve as a forum for networking, information exchange, and exploring potential future partnerships. The seminar will be a terrific opportunity to strengthen and solidify international connections. The collaboration between NSU and Western Sydney University resonates with their vision of promoting global relationships and alliances that will allow them to influence the world positively.



## Collaboration Meeting with Lovely Professional University, India

*A meeting between North South University (NSU) and Lovely Professional University (LPU) was held on February 15, 2023, with the agenda to have a fruitful discussion on opportunities for collaboration in education. The meeting was conducted online via Zoom. From North South University, Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA; Dr. Hasanuzzaman Sohail, Assistant Director, OEA; Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, Coordination Officer, OEA, was present at the meeting. Additionally, Mr. Rahul Chhabra, Senior Officer representing the Division of International Affairs at Lovely Professional University, was in attendance at the meeting.*



Following an introduction of each organization, Mr. Chhabra proposed the idea of credit transfer pathways for students at the university. The universities have committed to formulating 2+2 and 1+1 pathways in departments such as Computer Science, Engineering, and Business, alongside any additional pathways that both parties may agree upon. Furthermore, the two universities discussed the prospect of a brief program called the "Incredible India program," where NSU students would have the opportunity to attend LPU for two to four weeks to improve their academic knowledge while better understanding India's culture and educational system. LPU also acknowledged further discussion concerning research possibilities and semester exchange programs. LPU is establishing a centralized research portal they intend to share with affiliated universities. Researchers from other institutions could explore one another's research fields and identify prospects for collaborative projects, co-supervision, and financed activities. In addition, LPU showed an interest in designating NSU academics as Honorary Adjunct Professors to enhance faculty exchange and guest lectures.

At the end of the meeting, Mr. Chhabra thanked Dr. Li and her colleagues for an informative session. At future discussions, he expressed an interest in examining LPU's possible engagement in NSU's growing NGO network. Mr. Chhabra eagerly appreciated the proposal to host online webinars to offer NSU students a complete overview of LPU's offerings. The fruitful discussion laid the groundwork for future collaboration between NSU and LPU. The universities are thrilled to have the opportunity for collaborative research projects, exchange programs, and academic partnerships to benefit professors and students.



## Alumni Talk Show Episode 109



The one-hundred-and-ninth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on February 19, 2023. The guest for this episode was Sarfaraz Anwar Upol from the Department of Business Administration of batch 1998. After graduating in 1998, Mr. Anwar completed his MBA from IUB. Mr. Upol has a substantial academic background and a thriving career. After completing his MBA from IUB, he joined his family business, Lyric Group, which operates in the RMG sector. He also owns Crimson Cup, a North American coffee chain, and founded Healthcare Solutions. This pharmaceutical company has become the sole agent of Philips air purifiers and A.O. Smith water purifiers.

During the interview, Mr. Upol shared his experiences in his family business and the challenges he faced, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Despite these difficulties, he successfully increased efficiency levels and maintained business operations. He

expanded his business ventures, which include producing ladies' suits, jackets, and swimming trunks for Walmart, Tesco, Next Primark, Montrix, and Canada Sportswear. Bangladesh is one of the most prominent garment-producing countries, and Mr. Upol's business plays a significant role in the country's RMG sector.

Mr. Upol started Crimson Cup at the suggestion of a friend and has expanded to 13 locations in Dhaka alone. Crimson Cup Bangladesh has quickly become a staple in the country's coffee culture. The coffee shop's success can be attributed to its welcoming atmosphere, quality beverages, and excellent customer service. Crimson Cup Bangladesh has also been recognized for its efforts to support local farmers and promote sustainable practices in the coffee industry. With its commitment to providing a top-notch experience to every customer, it's no wonder that Crimson Cup has become a beloved brand in Bangladesh, with the utmost dedication and commitment from Mr. Upol. His pharmaceutical company, Healthcare Solutions, is affiliated with 69 hospitals in Bangladesh and delivers high-quality pharmaceuticals and medical equipment that have garnered significant attention. Due to its success, Healthcare Solutions has become Bangladesh's sole agent of Philips air purifiers and A.O. Smith water purifiers. The company's focus on excellence and commitment to customer satisfaction has made it a trusted brand in the industry. Healthcare Solutions' success is a testament to the dedication of its founder and the hardworking team behind it. Mr. Upol believes in exploring new ventures and emphasizes the importance of building an excellent team to lead a business.

Mr. Upol's academic journey started when he planned to attend Dhaka University, but he was impressed with NSU's curriculum and environment. The academic curriculum of NSU is also affiliated with other foreign universities. He always wanted to go abroad for a master's, so in the end, he chose NSU. He credits NSU for his evolution as a businessman, reflecting on his professors' exceptional support. He spent his university years doing voluntary work and hanging out with friends. The four years at NSU propelled him to become more hardworking and passionate about his life goals.

The show concluded with Mr. Upol offering insightful advice to young professionals to stand out in the competitive job market. He encourages them to focus on their studies and develop rational thinking and hardworking ethics. He believes being sincere, kind, and compassionate can help see things more clearly. Overall, Sarfaraz Anwar Upol's journey is inspiring and showcases the importance of education, hard work, and building a good team.

To know more about the event, visit the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/6285696468148716>

## Follow-up Meeting with BISR Trust



North South University (NSU) arranged a follow-up meeting with BISR Trust on February 20, 2023. The meeting was attended by Dr. M. Khurshed Alam, Chairman, Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust; Prof. Dr. M. A. Farukh, Adjunct Researcher, Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust; Ms. Navira Azmi, Communication & Research Officer, Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust; Professor Sk. Tawfique M. Haque, Chair, Dept. of Political Science and Sociology and Director, South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPIG), NSU; Professor Dr. Mahbubur Rahman, Dept. of Political Science & Sociology & Research Coordinator, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, NSU; and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, (OEA), NSU. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss potential academic collaboration between North South University (NSU) and BISR Trust by examining the activities of BISR Trust and suggesting areas for partnership between the two institutions. The outcome of the meeting was an agreement to start an academic collaboration through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between NSU and BISR Trust.

The meeting commenced with Dr. M. Khurshed Alam, Chairman of the Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust, providing attendees with background information on the Trust's establishment in 2002 as an independent, non-profit, non-partisan, multi-disciplinary think tank. The Trust's primary purpose is to research fundamental development challenges in Bangladesh, with an emphasis on the social economy in specific. Dr. Alam highlighted that the BISR Trust has partnered with national and international organizations on gender and social challenges. He noted the Trust's significant accomplishments, such as collaborating with prominent international funding bodies and establishing a global scholar community. Dr. Alam also discussed the research divisions of the BISR Trust, including social and gender issues, economic issues, business, industry, and labor concerns, environmental and climate change issues, and criminal justice and human rights issues. Dr. Alam expressed an intention to establish a Memorandum of Understanding with NSU, which might help with large-scale projects, and the organization has a great interest in partnering with North American and European partners on international research initiatives.





Prof. Haque appreciated the future partnership and stressed the advantages of a consortium relationship. NSU has experienced social researchers and faculty members who undertake research that is published nationally and globally. Prof. Haque underlined the significance of practical, field-based experiences in conducting successful international research projects, and he outlined prospects for collaborative research and publications, resource and funding mobilization, student internships, and the interchange of research findings and academic information. He added that integrating NSU's experience in social issues with BISR Trust's concentration areas will create a win-win situation for both parties. Following a thorough discussion, the two parties agreed to establish an Agreement to launch their academic partnership. This collaboration will involve joint research projects, publications, and funding proposals. Moreover, this collaboration will provide NSU students with training and internship opportunities.

## Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Program

*On February 21, 2023, a delegation team of five international students from North South University (NSU) - Kinga Tshering, Nima Seldon Lhazom, Sonam Lodey, Sonam Tshomo, and Bali Raj Subba, accompanied by Dr. Cynthia McKinney and her team, attended a cultural program hosted by the Shilpakala Academy at the Central Shaheed Minar. The event was a stirring tribute to the language martyrs. The program commenced promptly at 3 pm, with faculty and students from various universities paying homage to the martyrs. The performers sang the national anthem and a song dedicated to the martyrs. A minute of silence was observed in their honor, after which the event host delivered a speech, marking the opening of the cultural program.*



বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি  
BANGLADESH SHILPAKALA ACADEMY



The program officially commenced with a stunning jazz performance by Dr. McKinney and her team, leaving the audience spellbound. The Bhutanese students also delivered a mesmerizing dance performance that wowed the crowd with their beautiful Bhutanese dance to traditional music. The event was a resounding success leaving a lasting impression on everyone in attendance and forging a stronger bond between the Shilpakala Academy and North South University.

The delegation team and their hosts relished the opportunity to participate in such a unique and moving tribute to the language martyrs.

## Alumni Talk Show Episode 110

*The one-hundred-and-tenth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on February 22, 2023. The guest for this episode was from batch 2014 of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEED) of NSU, Ishmam Md. Arif Aktab. Mr. Aktab is a promising Junior Civil Engineer working with Nippon Koei Bangladesh Ltd. Having joined the Japanese engineering consultancy in March 2020, he underwent an arduous six-month training and subsequently secured a permanent position. His outstanding work ethic and talent have earned him a role in the New Business Development department, where he makes significant contributions. With his remarkable track record and growth potential, Mr. Aktab is an invaluable asset to the company's future endeavors.*

As the show commenced, Mr Aktab summarized his academic and career odyssey. Since joining the Japanese engineering consultancy company in March 2020, he has completed a rigorous six-month training program and secured a permanent position. Mr. Aktab has been involved in numerous projects, including Consultancy Services for Management, Design & Supervision for Haor Flood Management & Livelihood Improvement Project (BWDB Part), MRT Line 5 North Project under Utility Survey Department, and the Industrial and Economic Zones Sector Development Plan for Moheshkhali-Matarbari Integrated Infrastructure Development Initiative (IEZ-SDP). Nippon Koei Bangladesh Ltd., a subsidiary of Nippon Koei Co., Ltd (Japan), was established to emphasize the importance of projects in Bangladesh and abroad. With experienced professionals, Nippon Koei aims to contribute to developing infrastructure for both public and private sectors through excellent engineering services based on advanced technology and abundant project experience. As Japan's No. 1 International Engineering Consultants, Nippon Koei has been committed to providing consultancy services since 1946. The company has been providing consulting services for infrastructure projects in various fields. Furthermore, Nippon Koei Bangladesh Ltd. is associated with numerous mega-projects in Bangladesh, including the notable metro rail project, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport terminal 3 projects, and special economic zone project.





During the discussion, he fondly recollected his undergraduate life at NSU. Despite the Civil Department being relatively new then, Mr. Aktab was impressed by the highly qualified faculty and facilities from the department's brochure. He was part of a small and closely-knit community within the department, where he actively participated in organizing and contributing to successful events like the Civil Fest and many more. His time at NSU gave him lifelong memories and good times with friends. Mr. Aktab focused on the department's growth, participating in intra-departmental tournaments and receiving immense support from the faculty during his undergraduate studies. He also attended courses outside his department, going on tours to Sitakunda and Cox's Bazar with the Environmental Science Department. Mr. Aktab believes that NSU not only shaped him to be efficient and intelligent for the job market but also fostered a sense of community and personal growth, like all those who graduate from NSU.

Alongside this, he attributed his professional readiness to the diverse knowledge Mr. Aktab acquired from NSU's academic curriculum. He highlighted the importance of identifying and honing a particular skill set to leverage as a strength in one's career. Looking forward, Mr. Aktab expressed a desire to pursue higher education to develop his career trajectory further. When advising students, he stressed the importance of being determined and getting as much experience as possible for those who want a professional career. He encouraged those interested in academia to apply to higher education programs early to get ahead.

During the program's conclusion, Mr. Aktab elaborated on the mutual benefits offered by the MoU signed between Nippon Koei Bangladesh Ltd. and NSU in 2020. The agreement included provisions for fresh NSU graduates to be hired by Nippon Koei, as well as joint workshops and seminars. In pursuit of research and development, a team from Nippon Koei visited NSU to hold a workshop, while NSU faculty members are slated to visit Japan to collaborate on R&D. Notably, NSU's Miyazaki program offers language and skills training to students seeking to qualify for Japanese jobs. Furthermore, Nippon Koei's R&D sector is partnering with NSU for joint research initiatives, allowing students to receive hands-on training and international exposure in Japan. Overall, this has been a highly successful collaboration, according to Mr. Aktab.

To know more about the event, visit the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1390700431768736>

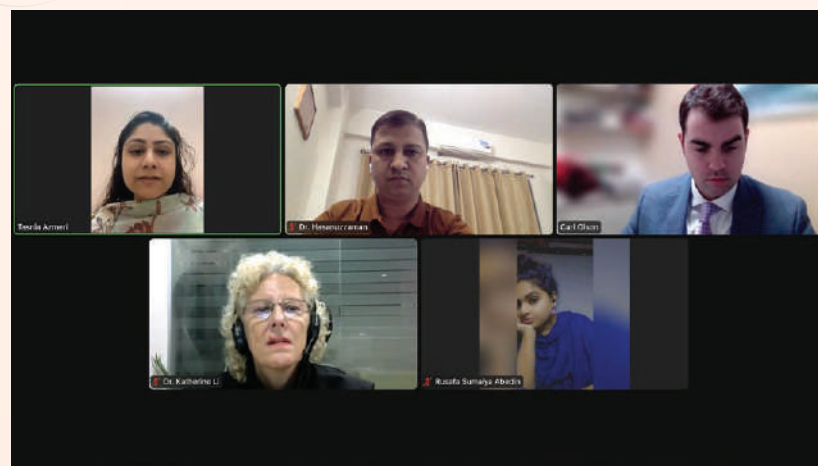
## Collaboration Meeting with St. John's University, USA



**ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY**

*North South University (NSU) and St. John's University had a collaboration meeting on the 07th of February 2023 to introduce their respective institutes. Mr. Carl Olsen, Adjunct Professor, School of Law from St. John's University; Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA; and Dr. Hasanuzzaman Sohail, Associate Director, OEA from NSU, all were present at the meeting. The meeting's main objective between North South University (NSU) and St. John's University was to familiarize both institutions and discuss prospective areas of partnership.*

After introducing NSU briefly, Mr. Olsen expressed his enthusiasm about NSU's Law department. He put forth several suggestions, including establishing a student exchange program and facilitating the transfer of credits. The potential benefits of a partnership between NSU and St. John's University for law students were also discussed during the meeting. Dr. Li recommended the involvement of NSU Law faculty members, such as the former and current Chairs of the Law department, in future deliberations. Mr. Olsen welcomed this idea, expressing his belief that St. John's University could invariably contribute to the Department of Law. The meeting was a great success, and the possibility of a partnership between NSU and SJU holds great promise for the future of NSU's Department of Law.



## Korean Embassy Visit

On February 28, 2023, North South University sent a delegate consisting of Dr. Katherine Li, Director of the Office of External Affairs, and Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Officer, to the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Dhaka to meet Mr. Seo Youngmin, First Secretary, and Mr. Lim Kyong Rae, Cultural Officer of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea. The objective of this meeting was to introduce North South University and explore ways to enhance academic and cultural exchange yielding promising possibilities for increased Korean student enrollment at NSU and greater opportunities for NSU students to study abroad in Korea. The fruitful meeting sparked new academic and cultural collaboration opportunities, fostering a hopeful future for NSU and Korean students.





## International Faculty Feature



*Samiksha Koirala is an Assistant Professor of Journalism and Media at North South University in Dhaka, Bangladesh. As a journalism educator and researcher, she has worked with Tribhuvan University, Nepal Open University, Oslomet University, and different UN agencies. In 2018, she completed her Ph.D. in Journalism and Gender from the University of Oslo, Norway. Similarly, she completed her master's degree in Journalism, Media, and Communication from the University of Dhaka. She has led and conducted various studies on gender and journalism, digital harassment, gender equality, and the safety of journalists. Her journal article on digital harassment was featured in multiple news media and has been cited in different policy documents of the different INGOs, the government of Nepal, and United Nations agencies. As a former advisor to the Minister of Women, Children, and Senior Citizens, Nepal (2020-2021), she continues to serve as a think tank member at the ministry. Prior to entering academia, she was a full-time journalist working with the national daily Republica in Kathmandu. She started my career as a Radio Jockey at the age of 16.*

**Interviewer:** Why did you choose Journalism & Media as your field of study?

**Samiksha Koirala:** I was determined to be a journalist from a young age. I was already working as a journalist and had received some practical training before starting my formal education in Journalism and Media. At that time, I thought studying journalism would help me grow as a responsible journalist.

**Interviewer:** Tell us more about your experience as a radio jockey.

**Samiksha Koirala:** I was just 16 when I started as a radio jockey and worked on the same radio station for over five years. When I joined radio in the early 2000s, FM radio stations saw a rapid upsurge in popularity. In a very short span, I received a lot of attention which was hard to handle for a teenager. My job connected me with opportunities like working as a voice-over artist and emceeing, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I slowly switched my radio jockey's role to a newsreader and then to a talk-show host. I thought those roles were taken more seriously then. There were very few women journalists in my city at that time. It was a challenging job as I was expected to work late-night too. I also faced harassment, and there was no clear policy against workplace harassment. On the positive side, I am grateful for my journey as I understood many practical aspects of journalism. It helped me understand my community better. More importantly, it boosted my confidence, and I was determined to remain in this field.

**Interviewer:** What was the topic of your doctoral dissertation? Tell us more about how you carried out the study.

**Samiksha Koirala:** My doctoral dissertation was titled "Gender representations in the Nepali press during pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict periods." I was also curious about the relationship between gender and media. I strongly believe that the media is an important agent in addressing gender-based discrimination and inequalities. Access to information empowers women, gender/sexual minorities, and people of marginal communities. My study investigates gender representations in Nepali mainstream daily newspapers to discover whether the ten-year-long armed conflict of 1996 to 2006 has impacted the way men and women are represented in the press. It interrogates the content of three mainstream daily newspapers in three time periods (pre-, during, and post-conflict) across a period of 20 years (1994–2014). Methodologically, I adopted mixed methods research and was guided by feminist media studies. The Maoist insurgency in Nepal is one of the most significant armed conflicts in the South Asian region. While 'horizontal inequality' with both ethnic and caste dimensions is considered the major reason for the armed conflict, gender inequality in Nepali society was also one of the contributing factors. This decade-long armed conflict in Nepal provided an opportunity for women to take on new roles and responsibilities. Therefore, in my thesis, I focused on whether there has been an increment and improvement in the nature of representation in the newspapers on the gender realm in post-conflict Nepal.

**Interviewer:** You have quite a bit of international experience. Can you describe what got you interested in studying and working in other countries?

**Samiksha Koirala:** I think it's mainly two things: I love challenges and always want to learn and experience a new culture. I firmly believe that when you study and work abroad, you learn every other moment. It takes courage to leave your home country, pack up your belongings in a suitcase or two, and head to a country you might have never been to. My experience has definitely broadened my worldview, and I think it has helped me to be a better version of myself.

**Interviewer:** What attracted you to come to Bangladesh? What is your impression so far?

**Samiksha Koirala:** I completed my Master's degree from Dhaka University. I am back here after more than ten years. In the last ten years, many things have changed here, particularly in infrastructural development. There are many socio-cultural similarities between Nepal and Bangladesh. People are incredibly friendly and helpful. I consider Bangladesh my second home, and it's incredible to be back.

**Interviewer:** You mention that you have experience working with the United Nations. Can you elaborate?

**Samiksha Koirala:** I have worked with various UN agencies as a Research Consultant. I've closely worked with organizations like UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women, and UNESCO in Nepal and other countries. The best part of working with the United Nations is you get a multicultural work environment. It's always fascinating to see how the UN works at the intersection of the government and civil society organizations. My main contributions have been in the area of training journalists, developing training manuals and handbooks, and also in conducting studies in the area of gender, journalism, and safety of journalists.



**Interviewer:** What inspired you to begin your career in journalism?

**Samiksha Koirala:** I have always wanted my career to directly contribute to society and address the issue of marginal communities. With the help of journalism, I wanted to be the "voice of the voiceless." I used to read different news-based magazines and newspapers from a young age. My exposure to news stories at a young age must have inspired me. I don't think it was about a particular incident or a person. The career somehow aligned perfectly with my dream of changing society for good. My school was located just opposite one of the local FM radio stations. I always dreamt of working there as a student and ended up working there too.

**Interviewer:** What made you focus on digital harassment?

**Samiksha Koirala:** During my Ph.D. in Norway, I got an opportunity to participate in different events around this topic. This issue needs serious attention as it gets often ignored in developing countries. Digital harassment has a silencing effect, and it's not always easy to understand the situation or to conduct research. As someone who was always interested in the relationship between gender and media, I am closely following the issues around gender-based online harassment. While digital harassment affects all genders and people in different occupations, women journalists, activists, women politicians, and people from the LGBTQ+ community are disproportionately targeted by hate speech online.

**Interviewer:** Tell us more about your experience working with the national daily Republica in Kathmandu. What kind of articles did you write? Are you still writing for any form of print journalism?

**Samiksha Koirala:** I worked as a full-time journalist in Republica for three and half years in the business bureau. I covered issues in Information Technology, Aviation, Tourism, and Banking. I did some investigative stories during my career questioning irregularities in these sectors. I also got an opportunity to travel to different countries and to meet and interview political leaders, diplomats, and entrepreneurs in Nepal and abroad. I write opinion articles occasionally, but I think I should do it more often.

**Interviewer:** Why has the safety of journalists become a concern globally?

**Samiksha Koirala:** Journalists worldwide are attacked and harassed for simply doing their job. It's essential to prioritize journalists' safety so they can work without fear. The security of journalists is a fundamental precondition for freedom of expression and press freedom. It is also directly related to strengthening peace and democracy. In the last few years, several journalists have been murdered because of their reporting, and many hundreds of violent assaults have taken place. It has been a global concern as impunity has gradually been allowed regarding these killings and serious assaults against journalists.

**Interviewer:** What kind of research do you hope to do while you are at North South University?

**Samiksha Koirala:** I will continue researching my area of interest. I am also considering doing comparative studies between Bangladesh and Nepal on gender and media.

**Interviewer:** Describe your teaching philosophy.

**Samiksha Koirala:** My past work experience has made me aware that each individual is unique. Therefore, I try to create an atmosphere where students from different backgrounds can meet their full potential. I always incorporate multiple learning modalities so students can learn through their preferred learning styles. For me, the ideal classroom environment can be created only when we keep students at the center. I encourage group projects and interactions where I work as a facilitator. Besides that, I also encourage students to share their experiences and think about different concepts and theories from the local context.

## Alumni Feature

*Nibras Yaman is a graduate of the Department of Business Administration of North South University, majoring in Finance and Economics. She graduated in 2009 as Summa Cum Laude. After completing her bachelor's, she pursued her Masters in Financial Economics from the City University of London, School of Social Sciences in the United Kingdom. She graduated in 2010 with Distinction. After completing her Masters, she returned to Bangladesh and joined Citibank N.A. as Management Associate under their Graduate Program. She has worked in the Banking Industry for over 12 years and has gained experience in both corporate and commercial banking. She is specialized in Anti Money Laundering (AML) Compliance and is passionate about pursuing her career further in this field. She works at Citibank N.A. in Canada as Vice President of AML Compliance. She often mentors young skilled immigrants and is driven to help newcomers navigate their job search journey in Canada. Apart from her daytime job as a Banker, she is a proud mother of two young boys. She loves hiking, traveling, and trying new experiences with her family.*



**Interviewer:** What are some challenges of your work as an Anti-Money Laundering specialist?

**Nibras Yaman:** AML is a control function within the corporate banking sector. It requires professionals working in this field to detect patterns and mechanisms by which a bank's client can use the bank's network to funnel illicit funds. The main challenges involve keeping oneself apprised of the evolving methods by which individuals and entities launder money. Emerging challenges come from the rapidly evolving digital currency world. Virtual currency exchanges, online gambling platforms, payment intermediaries, or money service businesses pose greater threats in correctly tracing money movements, thereby increasing money laundering risks for any financial institution.



**Interviewer:** Are you involved in mentoring young skilled immigrants? What motivated you to start this? What are your plans regarding this mentorship?

**Nibras Yaman:** Skilled immigrants often find it difficult to start their careers in the western world. While individuals may have had a successful career in their home country, some find it difficult to merge into a developed country's financial industry workforce. This is mainly due to a lack of knowledge of the hiring process as well as a lack of networking skills. As a skilled immigrant, I could help newcomers by sharing my knowledge. I mentor pro-bono at various voluntary organizations, but time management is challenging. I wish to continue this work and hope I can manage to get more time out from my busy schedule and help out as many skilled women newcomers as I can who are looking to find work in the financial sector.

**Interviewer:** What motivates you? What is your source of inspiration?

**Nibras Yaman:** My motivation for everything I do comes from my parents. My father has always nurtured my sister and me to be financially independent and always gave me the confidence to pursue everything I ever wished to pursue. He is a prominent banker in Bangladesh and has always inspired me to become one.

I strongly believe in women's empowerment and will always take on the opportunity to challenge myself. My husband and my children are very accommodating and encouraging in everything I wish to pursue. They inspire me to be better every day.

**Interviewer:** How much impact do you think NSU has had in your career and life later?

**Nibras Yaman:** I believe NSU's graduate programs provide building blocks for any self-conscious young adult committed to their education. I have had outstanding lecturers during my bachelor's at NSU; my passion for economics and finance came from my teachers. The standardized curriculum is world recognized. It definitely provided me with a strong stepping stone towards my future Master's degree in the U.K. NSU has given me amazing lifelong friends.

**Interviewer:** What is your advice for current students of NSU?

**Nibras Yaman:** Be sincere with your studies. There are many distractions; however, the time spent in NSU can make a difference in your future. Identify the subjects that stimulate your learning and focus your education around those. Make respectful connections not only with your friends but with your seniors and your teachers, and those will go a long way.

## International Student Feature



*Hassan Abdirahman Abdullahi is from Somalia; currently, he lives in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and is a student at North South University in the department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. He completed his primary and secondary schooling in Garowe, the capital city of Puntland state of Somalia, and finished his SSC in 2019-2020. He likes to watch football games, read the football news, watch factual life documentaries, experience different new things, and sometimes listen to music. He enjoys reading books related to his field. He also has an excellent joint family, and loves his family members. The family's oldest member is his grandmother, and the youngest is his baby sister. Hassan's family consists of his grandparents, parents, siblings, uncles, aunts, and cousins. Hassan firmly believes that his parents work hard to earn money to provide him and his family with all the necessary needs. His mother works at home, caring for everyone in the family and keeping the house in order. He believes that we should respect and love all members of our family. When he graduated from high school in 2019-2020, he got a short vacation to tour. After the holiday, he returned to his hometown to enjoy the vacation and take time with his relatives and childhood friends. Hassan applied to NSU in Bangladesh right after NSU accepted him and got his admission immediately.*

**Interviewer:** What was it like growing up in Somalia? How is it different from Bangladesh?

**Hassan:** I grew up and was raised in Somalia. I have been here for a while; growing up in Somalia has been a wonderful life with ups and downs. I'm lucky to have loving parents and siblings and friends I've grown up with since childhood and spend a lot of time with them, but here it's a bit different. Although both countries have many similarities culturally and religiously, there are still some differences, like rickshaws which I had never seen before, which surprised me. I like how people behave, their behavior, and how they feel sorry for each other.

**Interviewer:** You studied elementary to secondary school in Somalia. Then why did you choose Bangladesh and North South University for higher studies?

**Hassan:** My uncle, who also studied at NSU, suggested it to me. In addition, I searched on the internet and found more details about North South University. My family also wanted higher studies abroad, so I joined this university.

**Interviewer:** What are your plans for higher studies once you complete your undergraduate degree?

**Hassan:** I plan to start my postgraduate studies right after graduation as I find it interesting. I have many plans, but I am working on my master's in Computer Engineering.

**Interviewer:** What is your opinion about the academic structure, education quality, and culture of North South University?

**Hassan:** It is superior, as the university is one of the leading Universities in Bangladesh, its quality, culture, and well-prepared academic structure. In addition, as an international student, I liked how the NSU team, whether staff, faculty, or students, welcomed me.



**Interviewer:** You have been staying in Bangladesh for a while now. Kindly share your opinion and observations about Bangladesh's people, language, and culture. How do you like it here?

**Hassan:** I have been here for a while; I like how people behave, their behavior, and how they feel sorry for each other. Most of the cultures in this country are similar to my country's; the first one is the religion of Islam and many other things. I liked how the faculty and students of the university welcomed me.

**Interviewer:** What else do you do apart from your studies?

**Hassan:** Whenever I'm free or not studying, I spend my free time watching documentaries and movies, playing football, reading stories and books, and sleeping. Also, I enjoy traveling, learning languages, and hanging out with my friends and family.

**Interviewer:** Is there anything inspiring from your life that you would like to share with us?

**Hassan:** In my life, many people inspired me to achieve success, my parents sacrificed a lot, but hiding their pain, they never gave up and always motivated me with my work; they are working hard only for me to live a better and happy life. My teachers are my second parents; they gave me knowledge treating us like their own children. My sibling always helps me in every situation whenever I have difficulties. My friends always share their things with me. They always remind us whenever I am happy.

**Interviewer:** Do you have any suggestions for the future applicants of NSU?

**Hassan:** I recommend NSU to all, especially international students. NSU is the first University in Bangladesh that provides quality education. NSU is open to all nations and ready to accept international students regardless of race, culture, or religion. After that, as an international student, if you are looking for the best quality education, NSU is here for you to become the best version of yourself. Take advantage of North South University's available resources, which will help you reach your full potential. NSU offers many programs to keep you on the path to graduation and career success.

## Special Feature



University of  
South Australia

*The University of South Australia (UniSA), a partner of NSU since 2018, annually organizes an International Social Entrepreneurship Case Competition. It is a month-long case competition where undergraduate students from different countries participate. Several NSU students participated in the competition after being selected by the honorable faculty members. The NSU team secured the first runner-up position in the competition. Their business idea also appeared as the only proposal based in Bangladesh, and they were delighted to present it to the market. Participants from NSU went through every stage under the supervision of Amreen Talukdar, Lecturer, Department of Management, North South University.*

*Each team in the competition was formed randomly by the University of South Australia, with students from Australia, Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka. The content of the competition includes:*

- Understanding the business environment
  - Writing a business case
    - Developing a business idea
      - Assessing social benefits
        - Analyzing the market
          - Assessing competitors
            - Marketing a product
              - Cost-benefit analysis
                - Budgeting
                  - Risk assessment
                    - Presentation skills and pitching business ideas in a professional setting



*The NSU team recently received their prize money for the 2022 competition. Everyone is anxiously waiting for the announcement of Case Competition 2023.*



## New to the OEA



*Rusafa Sumaiya Abedin:* I was first prompted to apply by a friend when the OEA published a post on their Facebook page seeking a student worker. I was intimidated, to say the least, but I always intended to find a way to give something back to NSU, as I mentioned during my first interview for the position. I believe that North South University and its people have played a huge part in shaping me to be the woman that I need to be to achieve success in my future endeavors, and being able to give something to NSU in return was what I had in mind. Working at the OEA has been a blast so far. Assisting students and catering to their needs brings a sense of fulfillment. Attending and hosting seminars is always interesting, as you learn a lot of new information firsthand during these interactions. The people in the office are welcoming to the point where you feel like you've always been a part of them. I can definitely say this office has become my family in a really short amount of time. Working alongside everyone in the office never seems tedious, and there is always something new to learn every day. I'm thankful to everyone in the office for making me feel so at home.

*Zafreen Islam:* As a student of the Department of Biochemistry and Microbiology and a new student worker at the OEA, I have dedicated myself to learning and evolving every day. I am an individual who thrives on challenges and opportunities, always seeking new ways to expand my knowledge and dexterities. Animal rights advocacy is an area that resonates deeply with me, barring my career. Despite their inability to vocalize their needs and emotions, animals deserve to be treated with respect and care. As an active participant in animal rescues and advocate for better treatment of animals in the community, I believe every action we take can significantly impact their lives. Our treatment of animals reflects our society's quality, and a compassionate and sustainable society values the well-being of all living beings. I believe that success is not just about achieving personal goals but about positively impacting the world around us. My aspiration is to inspire others and learn from them to create a more humane future for all creatures.

Sometimes, the greatest opportunities in life come from the most impulsive decisions. That's precisely what happened to me when I applied for the student worker position at the OEA on a whim. And now, looking back, I am filled with gratitude for that one impulsive decision that has led me to this fantastic opportunity of a lifetime. I have experienced tremendous growth and learning in my short time at the office. Every day is a new adventure, and I am constantly inspired by the dedication and punctuality that everyone at the OEA demonstrates in their work. Working directly with professionals who are experts in their field has been a truly enlightening experience.

I have had the opportunity to attend seminars, talk shows, and meetings with representatives from different NGOs and universities from overseas, which has taught me about professionalism and given me more knowledge and insights about the work being done in other parts of the world. As the writer/reporter for The Bridge, I have had the privilege of running extensive research on various topics, honing my critical thinking, analysis, and articulating communication skills. However, this experience has also revealed to me the vastness of knowledge and the infinite potential for self-improvement. I am grateful to the Director, Dr. Katherine Li, for giving me this opportunity and to everyone at the office for being the best mentors I could ever ask for. Their support, understanding, and unique perspectives have made every moment here one to be cherished. Working with such professionals has equipped me with valuable professional skills. Ultimately, I am reminded that sometimes, the best things in life come when we take a chance and follow our instincts. And for that, I will always be thankful.

