



Congratulations to the following BSc Real Estate undergraduates who have won the following case competition at the Youth Ecosperity Conference 2019!

Champion Team (Innovation Challenge)

Member: Heng Kai Jie, BSc (Real Estate) Year 2 undergraduate

Runner up Team (Innovation Challenge)

Member: Sevilla Chea, BSc (Real Estate) Year 2 undergraduate



Heng Kai Jie (2nd from right) and his team mates

Below is the sharing by Kai Jie on his experience:

“Youth Ecosperity Dialogue (YED) is a fully sponsored programme organized by NUS School of Continuing and Lifelong Education (NUS SCALE) in partnership with Temasek Foundation International and Ecosperity Week 2019. It is a platform that connects budding tertiary students across Asia to interact and come out with viable solutions to help make the World more sustainable. I am fortunate and thankful to be 1 of the 100 selected students to be part of this meaningful programme.

Through YED, we were given the opportunity to attend the Ecosperity conference held at Marina Bay Sands, where all the World leaders in sustainability field took turns to conduct their speeches, such as Christiana Figueres, Former Executive Secretary of UNFCCC, Victoria Kwakwa, Regional Vice President for East Asia and Pacific, World Bank, etc. This once in a life time opportunity was so insightful and educational because besides learning about the importance of sustainability, we were able to grasp how public speaking should be done right.

Of course! Not forgetting the case competition that came along with YED. Every single group was made up of diverse group of students, as for mine, it was made up of Emily from United Kingdom, Fatimah and Eunike from Indonesia, Ivan from Malaysia and Govind from India. Our assigned company was IKEA and we were tasked to solve one of two pressing issues that IKEA faced.

- 1) Recycling Right for Singapore for Asia, where we need to redesign the recycling experience to ensure that the consumers right-site their recycling efforts.
- 2) Reduce and reuse in the dining area, where we need to redesign the dining experience to reduce food waste, usage of water and energy and efficiently use the resources available.

My team and I decided to tackle something that all humans are guilty of which is to curb wastage. Prior to our case competition, we were able to gain exclusive access to IKEA and better understand IKEA's sustainability efforts and problems. The tour was conducted and led by IKEA's head of sustainability, Ms Bee. After the tour, we were given 24 hours to solve and propose a feasible yet interesting idea to help IKEA solve its sustainability issues.

It was my first time working in a group made of up of people of different nationalities, it was very interesting and informative as we were able to gather unique point of views due to our different backgrounds. Through hours of grueling brainstorm sessions, we came out with three solutions that aimed to 1) make food reduction easier and accessible, 2) educate and encourage customers to be responsible toward the foods they bought, 3) educate customers about the consequences of their food wastage.

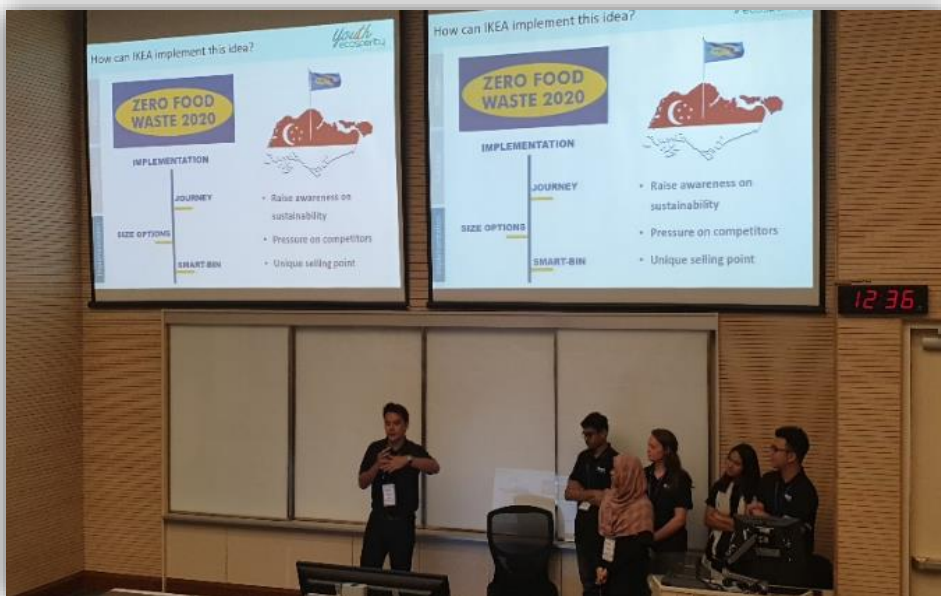
Solution 1: Restaurant Journey, this solution is somewhat similar to IKEA's current unique shopping experience where customers are led by arrows and instructions throughout their shopping journey. As for our restaurant journey, it will be consisted of 4 steps: (1) Choose your food, (2) Buy your food, (3) Eat your food, (4) Disposal. There will be signs all the way of the route, on the walls on the tables, etc. Given that some customers have to come to the spot first to know that is the clearing place. Meanwhile, some customers may have other priorities so they will not go all the way around to look for the clearing place, now we give them steps and instructions to follow. This is the baby step towards raising the awareness.

Solution 2: Meal Size Options, where you choose the food you want. We realised this problem while we were at IKEA and we wanted to try a couple of chicken wings, but we had to buy six as this was the only option available. This got us thinking, is there is a fundamental flaw with the way that food is presented in restaurants? So, we thought, how can we take inspiration from other food outlet styles to innovate this process. Initially we thought about when you go to a candy shop as a child and you choose exactly which sweets you want, and you pay for the food by weight. We also thought about a cafe drinks style solution, where you have multiple options on the size of coffee you want. We decided that the more feasible solution

for IKEA would be to implement multiple size options. This allows customers to make a more responsible decision about how much food they think they will actually eat and provoke them to think about reducing the amount of food waste.



Solution 3: **Smart Bin**, thanks to Singapore’s dedication to 2019 as a year of zero waste, many of us are now more aware about sustainability, however how many of us truly made the effort to make it more sustainable? We felt that although we are all aware of the persisting problems such as global warming, sea level rising, etc., but once the problems are out of sight, it is usually out of mind. It hit us when we saw the amount of food wastage left behind by IKEA’s patrons. People were not even realizing the value of the resources, which were being wasted by them. So, for people to realize this value and make them aware about their importance, we innovated a ‘Smart Bin’, which can impactfully bring the message across.



Smart Bin

Display
screen

Measuring
scale

Food
Waste



When the food wastes are disposed into the smart bin, it will display the exact amount of food wasted by weight, the amount of money wasted and lastly the number of people that could be fed by that amount of food. We understood that Singaporeans are very mindful when it comes to money, therefore we hope that by translating it into monetary form will bring more awareness about food waste to them. However, we felt that some people might not even bother as the money values are insignificant to them. Hence, we incorporated the 'people you could have fed' function into the system. This is to basically guilt trip them to stop wasting food and remind them that they are taking food for granted.

Singapore has dedicated 2019 as a year towards zero waste, with the help of this campaign Singaporeans are now more aware of sustainability. Therefore, we planned to take this opportunity to ride along with the wave of sustainability and implement our very own IKEA's ZERO WASTE 2020 campaign in Singapore as our flagship store. If it is successful, we planned to scale it globally. Many people are unaware of the consequences of food waste and through our innovation, we can educate them. On top of that, it will be our unique selling point to attract more consumers to patron us, a corporation who is corporately responsible to our Mother Nature. Lastly, we hope that through our efforts, we are able to put pressure on our competitors to join us on our movement 'ZERO WASTE 2020' to make our World more sustainable. Change the World with IKEA, starting with YOU.

With that, we were able to come out as the overall champion for Innovation Challenge NUS Youth Ecosperity Dialogue 2019! The challenge was tough yet interesting. Really blessed to have the opportunity to work and exchange pointers with teammates all around the World. That was my first time attending such international conference, but it will definitely not be the last. Till we meet again my fellow international friends.

100 students, 14 different countries, 1 common goal.”

Article by:

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