



The Business School  
for the World®

# ALUMNI PERSPECTIVES

## SINGAPORE







ALUMNI PERSPECTIVES  
SINGAPORE

“Without action,  
the world would  
still be an idea”

**Georges Doriot**

INSEAD Founder  
(1899-1987)

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## From the Dean

It is my pleasure to present *Alumni Perspectives*, a series that spotlights, by country, INSEAD's trailblazing alumni and pays tribute to the accomplishments of our exceptional National Alumni Associations (NAAs).

Less than six decades after its inception, INSEAD has topped the *Financial Times* global business school rankings two years in a row (#1 MBA in 2016 & 2017). High-calibre students from over 70 countries bolster their knowledge across three state-of-the-art campuses – in Fontainebleau, Singapore, and Abu Dhabi – as well as via exchange programmes with select institutions around the world. Our unparalleled global alumni network includes 49 NAAs, over 57,000 alumni, and spans 175 countries. Our school's founders' bold and pioneering vision has become a reality.

As we celebrate this powerful international presence, and seek innovative responses to quickly evolving global challenges, it is essential that we invoke our school's extraordinary history. But it is equally important that we distill reflections from today's expanding INSEAD community, and draw upon them to reach our highest aspirations.

Within this series, you will hear from inspiring alumni whose journeys weave the very fabric of INSEAD's identity. Industry leaders, entrepreneurs and contributors to their communities, they have found exemplary ways to harness 'business as a force for good' at both a global and local level.

These featured alumni speak of a transformative experience at INSEAD. They also describe an enduring set of values that has guided them throughout their careers. They embrace diversity and embody a truly global mindset, born of intense multicultural immersion. Throughout the interviews, they express gratitude for the extensive support of their professors and INSEAD peers around the world, and encourage engagement in the vibrant Alumni Associations.

As Dean, I am fortunate to have heard many of these compelling stories first-hand. I believe they are worth sharing. I invite you to discover them, and to learn more about INSEAD's worldwide legacy.

Ilian Mihov  
Dean  
INSEAD



## From the President of the Singapore Alumni Association

I am honoured to introduce you to one of the largest and fastest-growing INSEAD alumni communities in the world, the INSEAD Alumni Association of Singapore.

As an adoptive daughter of Singapore (having spent over 10 years working and living here), I can testify that INSEAD and Singapore share many unique qualities, which have helped them rise to the top. To name a few:

- *Growth mindset*: A passion for innovation and entrepreneurship, and core values of diversity and inclusion that drive our successful communities.
- *Persistence despite the odds*: While both INSEAD and Singapore are now #1 in many global rankings, few would have bet on this at the first INSEAD MBA ceremony on 12 September 1959, or at Singapore's independence day on 9 August 1965.
- *Transforming division into unity*: INSEAD was set up to bring peace and unity in Europe following WWII, while Singapore became independent due to ejection from Malaysia. Both INSEAD & Singapore are now symbols of collaboration and harmony between countries and cultures.
- *Multilingual legacies*: INSEAD is the only business school that requires graduates to speak three languages, while Singapore is the only country with four official languages in its Constitution.

There was a clear reason why INSEAD set up a campus in Singapore almost 20 years ago. Singapore was the perfect home for the international, diverse, and driven group of INSEAD faculty, students and alumni who would become pioneers in Asia. Year after year, the number of students choosing the Asia Campus continues to climb, approaching parity with the Europe campus. Our Dean Ilian Mihov is also now based in Singapore, giving a pivotal role to our Alumni Association.

Today – more than ten years after my graduation from INSEAD – I couldn't be more proud to be part of the Business School for the World. INSEAD continues to thrive by remaining true to its core values and its vision of developing the next generation of global leaders who will change the world and championing Business as a Force for Good.

We look forward to welcoming you to our community!

Cintia Tavella, MBA'07D  
President  
INSEAD Alumni Association Singapore  
#INSEADforGood





Marina Bay Sands & Gardens By The Bay, Singapore

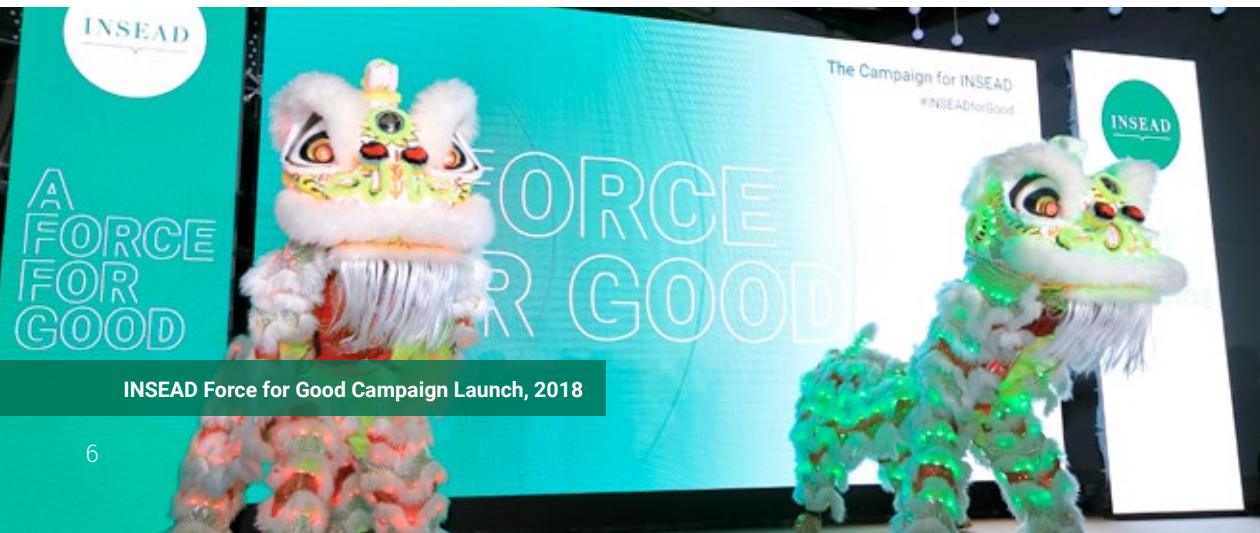


## National Alumni Associations

INSEAD has the most globally robust alumni network of any business school, with 49 active National Alumni Associations (NAAs), and over 57,000 alumni spanning 175 countries.

NAAs are typically established in countries where there are at least 100 resident alumni. Their purpose is to further strengthen the alumni community within that country, and to increase opportunities for alumni to connect on multiple levels with one another, the faculty and the school.

While many other schools are able to claim an international alumni base, none have the breadth and depth of the global INSEAD network.



INSEAD Force for Good Campaign Launch, 2018



## National Alumni Association Singapore

The maturity and diversity of the Singapore-based alumni is reflected in their executive positions within the organisations they serve and lead. From chairpersons of global multinationals to managing partners at consulting firms; from investment bank CEOs to political leaders to successful entrepreneurs – INSEAD alumni play essential roles in the Singaporean and Asian economies.

The Singapore alumni community consists of a very engaged group of 2,702 alumni, committed to INSEAD. This is reflected in the high levels of both event attendance and donor participation.

The donation statistics show that Singapore has not only one of the highest worldwide participation rates in giving back to the school, but also some of the largest donation amounts from individual alumni. A big thank you to our Singapore-based INSEAD Alumni Fund (IAF) Trustees for their continuous engagement with all the alumni based here on our 'little red dot'!

Our dynamic, hardworking Singapore National Alumni Association (NAA) Executive Committee is as diverse as our alumni base – including Argentinian, Dutch, British, Singaporean, American, Indian, German, French, Lebanese and Australian members!

### Presidents of NAA Singapore

Over the years, the following alumni have served as President of the INSEAD Alumni Association Singapore:

**Cintia Tavella (2017-present)**

**Alexandra De Mello (2013-2017)**

**Fabrice Desmarescaux (2011-2013)**

**James Copinger-Symes (2009-2011)**

**Nigel Yeung (2005-2009)**

**Karen Fawcett (2000-2005)**

**Hedwig Campman (1999-2000)**

**Ronald Ling (1997-1999)**

**Lau Siew Liang (1995-1997)**

**Eric Zoetmulder (1992-1995)**

**Goh Khean Hooi (1990-1992)**

**Didier Lemaistre (1988-1990)**

**Richard Stevens (1986-1988)**

**Mong-Lin Wang (1984-1986)**

## Singapore Alumni Association events and activities

Over the years, the Singapore Alumni Association has become a driver of vibrant activities for its community, with more than 40 events per year.

Staying true to its objectives of fostering close relations between alumni, the Singapore community and engagement with INSEAD, we have focused on events in lifelong learning, networking opportunities, sector-specialised events, social and sports activities, as well as high-level conferences, panels and exclusive access to company visits.

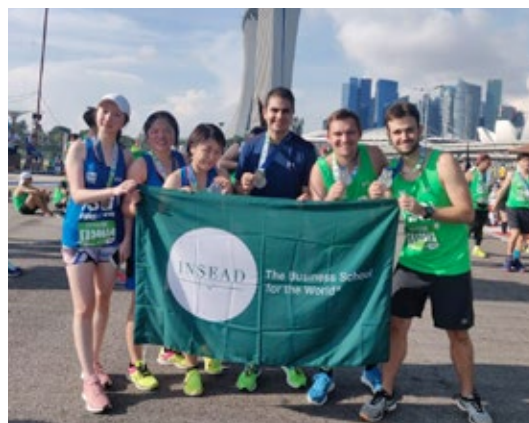
None of the above would be possible without the strong and enduring support of our committed alumni. Signature events held in Singapore include:

- Global INSEAD Day
- The annual general meeting at the Cricket Club
- Friday alumni drinks
- Career development, leadership & mindfulness workshops
- INSEAD alumni forum
- Professors' lectures
- Wharton-INSEAD alliance events
- Fintech quarterly events
- INSEAD Giving Day
- Panel discussions
- Random dinners
- ...and many more!



Annual general meeting, 2018









Experia office company visit



Club events

“In order to build continuous engagement with our Alumni in Singapore, we offer events that are as diverse as our community and have a positive impact in our businesses and society in Singapore.”

– **Cintia Tavella**, President, Singapore Alumni Association



Graduations



Professors' events







# INSEAD's journey from Fontainebleau to Singapore

by Gabriel Hawawini

INSEAD was founded in 1957 in Fontainebleau, France as a private European business school. Until the early nineties, over 80% of INSEAD's student intake, with most faculty and staff from Europe. By the midnineties, school leadership saw a need to internationalise the school beyond Europe and respond to the rise in global business and growing interest of non-European students and faculty. The question was how should INSEAD transform itself from a European to a truly global institution?



## From European to global

There were two broad answers to this question. One was to bring the world to Fontainebleau. The other was to establish new INSEAD campuses in the world beyond Europe. Leaders quickly realised that these two options were not mutually exclusive. In fact, they were mutually reinforcing. Taking INSEAD outside Europe would raise its international visibility, attracting non-European students and faculty to France. In effect, this would internationalise the institution and internationalise its home campus. The next question was where to go first?

The answer was straightforward. Asia was a prime destination because of the Euro-Asia Centre. The centre was established in 1980 to bridge Europe and Asia. The centre delivered executive education programmes to European companies active in Asia and Asian companies seeking to develop managerial talent and expand abroad.

By the mid-nineties, the centre had become the biggest provider of executive education in South-East Asia, flying INSEAD faculty to Asia to hold management programmes in rented facilities or client premises. Following the 1998 decision to go to Asia, the only thing left to determine was the destination country.

## Setting up a campus in Singapore

A number of countries were identified as potential locations for an INSEAD campus. After analysis, Singapore was chosen because of its vision to develop an international educational hub. This

vision perfectly aligned with INSEAD strategy to build a global knowledge and learning network. Other reasons that led the school to opt for Singapore were the favourable economic environment, attractive living conditions, a growing international community, good international schools for children and employment options for faculty and staff spouses.

Singapore set-up costs were low and its administrative processes non-restrictive. The school acquired a plot of land in Science Park and the new campus was inaugurated in October 2000 by the late Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew. The first intake of 54 MBA students started in January of that year in rented facilities, but graduated on the new campus. Despite initial concerns and a difficult economic environment due to the Internet bubble burst at the time, the new campus grew rapidly. The INSEAD dual-campus structure became an attractive and distinct feature of the institution, setting it apart from the rest of the world's top business schools.

**Internationalisation aligned with the mission and built on a 'one school, two campuses' principle.** Even though the school was born to serve Europe, INSEAD always embraced an approach that learning is best achieved when people of diverse backgrounds come together to study and exchange ideas in an open environment. As European companies expanded their business beyond Europe in the nineties, it made sense for INSEAD to broaden its mission from serving Europe to serving the world.





Singapore skyline from left to right:  
Helix Bridge, Marina Bay Sands, ArtScience Museum, and the Financial District.

**Opening a campus in Singapore was a natural next step.** The Asia Campus was designed to operate seamlessly with the Europe Campus. Faculty moved between the two locations with no restrictions, subject to the same evaluation and promotion standards. Students pursued their programme seamlessly across the two campuses. This model of internationalisation was expressed with the motto “One School, Two Campuses”, which the INSEAD community adhered to from the beginning.

**Dedicated senior faculty members championed the project.** Without the early and full support of some senior members of the faculty, the move to Singapore could have stalled or died. A group of dedicated senior faculty members believed

in the project and acted as champions kept the project moving forward by investing time and energy to get the initiative off the ground rapidly and successfully.

**Faculty members developed an academic expertise on Asia.** Thanks to the Euro-Asia Centre, the institute had insight and expertise in Asia, and had history of executive education programmes there. The group of faculty members and staff familiar with Asia in general and Singapore in particular played a key role in opening the Asia Campus in the city-state.

**A group of committed pioneers ready to move to Singapore.** Having project champions and Asia experts was essential, but there was also

a number of individuals ready to relocate to Singapore to get the campus up and running. Most of the Euro-Asia Centre faculty and staff moved to Singapore when the decision was taken to establish a campus there. They were joined by faculty and staff not associated with the centre, an important signal that the campus in Singapore was an INSEAD project. Importantly, faculty members who moved to Singapore early were among school’s best, giving the Asia Campus a bright future.

**Once the decision to go ahead was made, activities were rapidly ramped up.** It was also important to move as fast as possible to achieve scale on the new campus in terms of faculty and student numbers to avoid

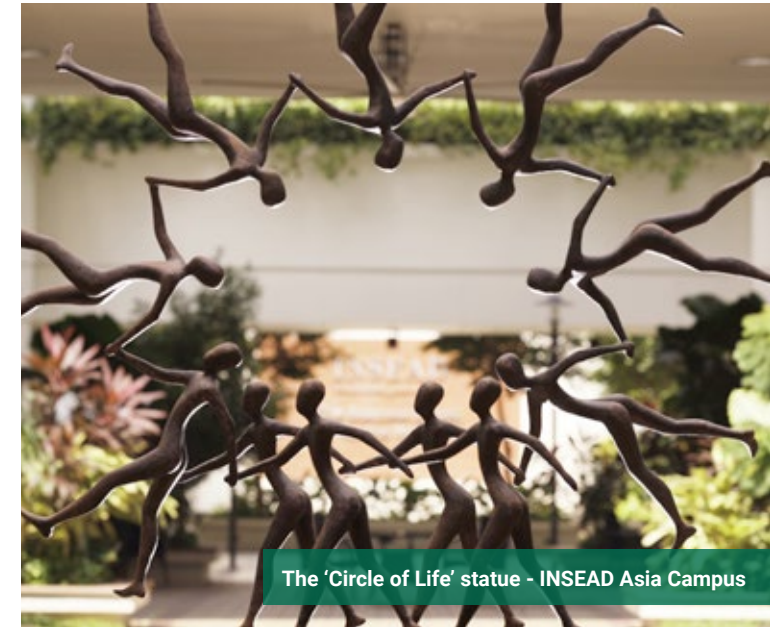


project delays. Scaling up quickly ensured the campus in Singapore contributed to the institution's overall activities and represented a significant percentage of budget and revenue. More students in Singapore meant that the new campus would quickly become economically self-sufficient. The institution had to commit a significant amount of its own funds to launch the project and sustain it during early development, a powerful incentive to remain focused on achieving financial self-sustainability.

## Asia Campus today

Singapore wanted to attract foreign higher education institutions and turn the city-state into an international educational hub. Today, INSEAD is a part of a rich academic community that serves Singapore, all of Asia and the global business community. This perfectly aligns with the INSEAD mission to bring together people, cultures and ideas to develop responsible leaders. We now operate a Middle East Campus and plan to grow even more. This ambitious aim would not be possible without pioneers who believed in INSEAD as a global institution. What began in Fontainebleau was a success in Singapore, which opens the door for INSEAD to step up as a leader in global business education. We truly are the Business School for the World.

*This article is adapted from an article by Gabriel Hawawini, INSEAD professor of Finance, former director of the Euro-Asia Centre (1988-1994) and former dean (2000-2006). To read the full article, visit the [insead.ad/journey-article](https://insead.ad/journey-article).*





A photograph of the INSEAD Asia Campus building in Singapore. The building is a modern, multi-story structure with a white facade and large glass windows. The INSEAD logo and tagline are visible on the upper left. In the foreground, there are several tall palm trees and a large green bush. A sign in the bottom right corner identifies the location as INSEAD Asia Campus, Singapore.

**INSEAD**  
The Business School  
for the World®

INSEAD

RECEPTION  
RESIDENCE

INSEAD Asia Campus, Singapore



## Key milestones



- 1957 INSEAD founded
- 1959 First MBA intake in Fontainebleau
- 1960 First MBA class graduates
- 1967 Opening of the school's first campus on the edge of the Forest of Fontainebleau (now called the 'Europe Campus')
- 1968 First Executive Education programme
- 1971 Creation of CEDEP, the European Centre for Continuing Education, on a site next to INSEAD in Fontainebleau
- 1976 Launch of the INSEAD Alumni Fund
- 1980 INSEAD Euro-Asia Centre opens in Fontainebleau
- 1983 MBA programme begins its dual intake (in January and September)
- 1987 Announcement of the INSEAD-Fundação Dom Cabral Partnership
- 1989 Launch of the PhD programme
- 1995 Launch of the first INSEAD Development Campaign, which raised funds for permanently endowed chairs and research
- 2000 Opening of Asia Campus in Singapore
- 2001 Announcement of the INSEAD-Wharton Alliance and first MBA participant exchanges
- 2003 Launch of the Executive MBA programme
- 2004 Opening of the Plessis Mornay Learning Space for Executive Education on Europe Campus
- 2007 INSEAD Centre opened in Abu Dhabi, primarily for research and executive education; launch of a dual degree Executive MBA with Tsinghua University in China
- 2010 INSEAD's Abu Dhabi Centre attains campus status (Middle East Campus)
- 2012 Launch of the Master in Finance specialised degree
- 2015 Inauguration of the Leadership Development Centre in Singapore
- 2015 Tsinghua-INSEAD Executive MBA (TIEMBA) ranked as the #1 EMBA programme in the world by the *Financial Times*
- 2016 INSEAD ranked as the #1 MBA programme in the world by the *Financial Times*
- 2017 INSEAD MBA ranked #1 globally for the second year in a row by the *Financial Times*
- 2017 Opening of new Middle East Campus in Abu Dhabi on Al-Maryah Island
- 2018 Launch of The Campaign for INSEAD: A Force for Good

A satellite map of the world, primarily showing North and South America, with a dark blue background. Numerous small yellow dots are scattered across the landmasses, representing clusters of INSEAD alumni. The dots are most concentrated in North America, Europe, and parts of South America and Africa.

## INSEAD's global community

This satellite map reflects INSEAD as the most diverse, international business school in the world.

The dots represent clusters of more than 57,000 alumni across 175 countries who transcend boundaries, nationalities, languages, and cultures to do business in new and exciting ways, every day. With 49 National Alumni Associations, INSEAD has both an unparalleled global reach and a strong local voice.

With integrated campuses in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, and alliances with top institutions spanning the globe, each individual student at INSEAD benefits not only from a cutting-edge business education, but also from intense cultural exchanges beyond the classroom.

A key driver of INSEAD's excellence – our faculty – also come from every corner of the world. International thought leaders in their fields, they are widely recognised for their groundbreaking research, innovative teaching methods, and award-winning business cases.



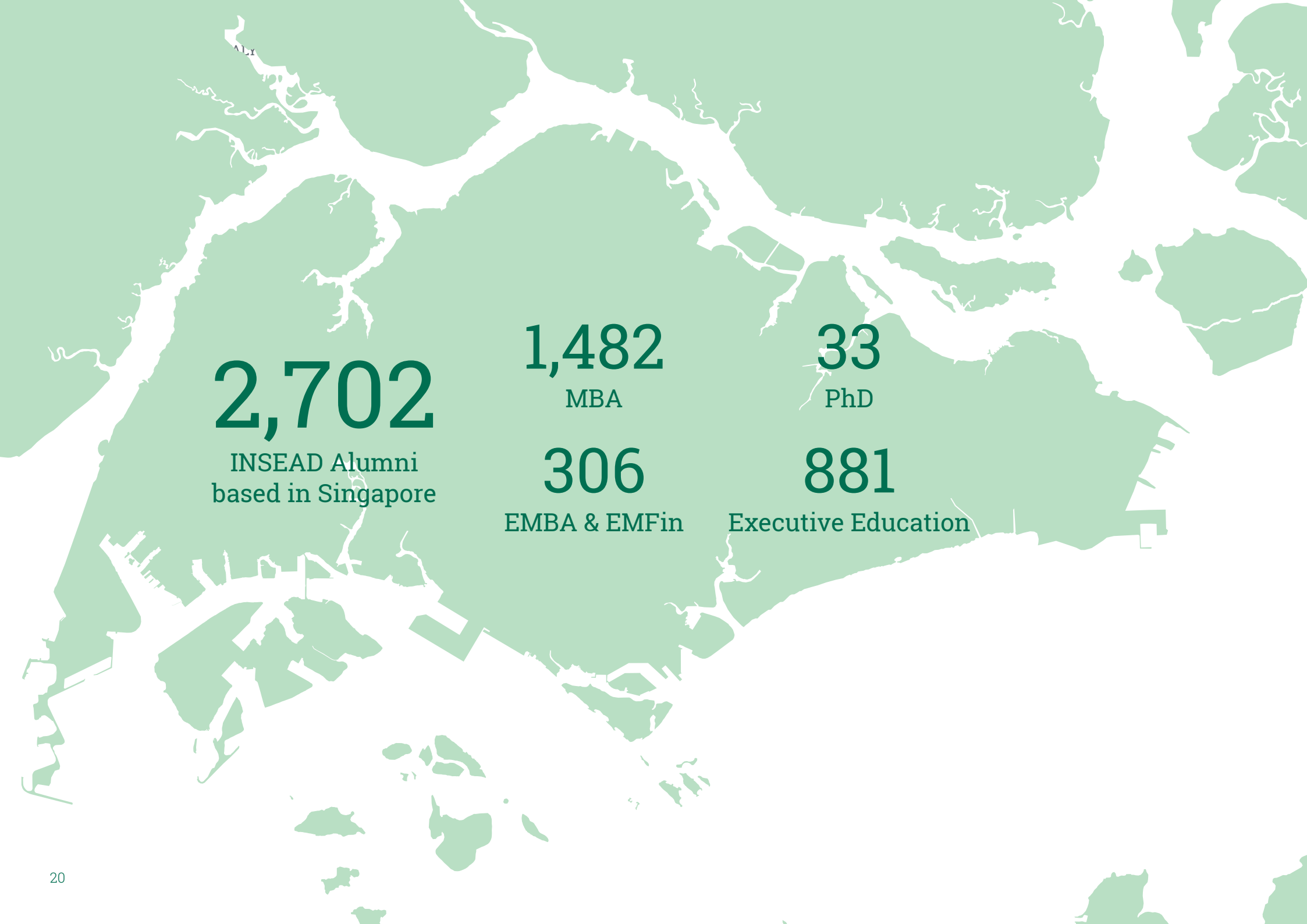


WORLD MAP LEGEND:

- Alumni
- Executive Education Participants
- National Alumni Associations
- INSEAD Campuses

In addition, over 150,000 professionals hailing from six continents have attended INSEAD's leading executive development programmes – subsequently bringing back nuanced perspectives and proven best practices to their companies, communities, and countries.

Today more than ever, INSEAD's vision of 'business as a force for good' is essential in developing thoughtful, passionate, skilled, and value-driven global business leaders.

A stylized map of Singapore in light green, showing the island and surrounding waters. The map is used as a background for the infographic.

2,702

INSEAD Alumni  
based in Singapore

1,482  
MBA

33  
PhD

306  
EMBA & EMFin

881  
Executive Education



## Alumni reflections

At INSEAD, diversity goes far beyond the number of nationalities per class. It's a genuine, continuous and spontaneous series of encounters. With 162 nationalities represented, our alumni are citizens of the world.

In the words of one graduate, INSEAD students 'experience the world as it ought to be', and become dedicated to extending that experience through their subsequent life and career choices in their own countries, as well as internationally.

This aspect of INSEAD's culture is an invaluable asset for today's leaders, who must think and act both locally and globally, in an increasingly hyper-connected world.

The following featured alumni are representative of INSEAD's mindset and qualities – demonstrating authenticity, originality, and passion for making a global impact at a local level.

## François Cadiou

GEMBA'12Dec  
Co-Founder & Chief Executive Officer  
Healint

François Cadiou is the Founder and CEO of Healint, a health data analytics company based in Singapore. He has 15 years of experience in the pharmaceutical and medical technology industries, and spent eight years in Japan leading clinical trials optimisation, pricing and market strategies. Through his work in leading IT infrastructure strategy at Sanofi, François became knowledgeable about the data-management and statistical processes used in new drug development. Soon, he was also in charge of R&D planning, purchasing, and negotiations. Inspired by his own family experience in dealing with stroke, François was determined to help patients and caregivers by providing a better monitoring solution. He took the entrepreneurial leap with colleagues met at INSEAD to start his own company, Healint.



**What were you doing before your MBA, and what drew you to INSEAD?**

I was working with pharmaceutical and medtech companies (mostly German) to help them expand in Japan. I decided to take time to reflect on my career, and on what I wanted to do with the next and important years of my life.

**Many alumni say that INSEAD helped them jump from a local to a global business career. Was this the case for you?**

I was one of many members of my INSEAD class who had already lived and worked in multiple countries. I spent 16 years in France, started my career in Japan, and was living in Munich when applying for INSEAD. But it's also true that I had never travelled as much as I have during the past five years – after graduating from INSEAD!

**What INSEAD experience immediately comes to mind?**

The exchanges with my classmates. Rediscovering how to work effectively in a group – mine included brilliant team members with exceptional skills across fields from financial modelling to marketing to business intelligence – was both

humbling and stimulating. The excellence of my group mates, and the pleasure of working with highly motivated individuals, inspired and pushed me to co-create a startup rather than going back to corporate.

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

Lifelong friends – in every city around the globe – and a redirection of my career, thanks to the (re)gained confidence. It was certainly transformational.

**“The pleasure of working with highly motivated individuals inspired me to co-create a startup... rather than going back to corporate.”**

**Which class or professor influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

Professor Patrick Turner (Entrepreneurship), with the ‘Your First Hundred Days (YFCD)’ course. That unique class helped me gain valuable knowledge about myself as a manager, as well as leadership insights far beyond the technical.

**For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

Meeting fellow alumni via events, and via cold contacts in my industry while traveling – especially when I'm not asking or looking for anything in particular! As INSEAD alumni, we are always ready to help one another.

**How has INSEAD's global alumni network been important to you?**

Already in the past five years, the INSEAD network has been extremely valuable in helping me grow, build a meaningful business, and further discover the world.

**What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

Consider that your ‘real MBA’ will take you 30 years to complete! This first year is just an intense, on-site introduction to a lifelong journey.



## Hak-Peng Chng

MBA'04D

Chief Executive Officer  
Singapore Symphony Group

Hak-Peng Chng is the Chief Executive Officer of the company that manages the Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO) and its family of orchestras and choruses. His professional focus has been on value creation through strategy and leadership, and a major part of his career was with the Administrative Service and with Bain & Company. Following Bain and a stint in private equity, he set up a leadership and strategy execution advisory firm, working with private equity funds on enhancing shareholder value through leadership development. Hak-Peng has been part of the National Alumni Association (NAA) Singapore Executive Committee. He also holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Stanford University. Music of any genre and Chinese history are his two loves.



**What were you doing before your MBA?**

I was working as a consultant with Bain & Company, on a project in Beijing.

**What drew you to INSEAD?**

The 10-month programme and the idea of an international environment in Europe – a region of the world I wanted to understand better.

**Did INSEAD help you jump from a local to a more global career?**

Yes. After INSEAD, I got the chance to work in the United States, and also on projects in the Middle East and India.

**What INSEAD experiences immediately come to mind?**

A couple of perspective-changing classes, as well as the social experiences – in particular, Welcome Week, barbecues and dinner parties, and mini-trips to Paris from the Fontainebleau campus.

**What stood out from your study group?**

Mine was multicultural and multi-personality, which helped me learn about goals and motivations in teams.

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

INSEAD was life-changing for a whole host of reasons. The three greatest things I gained were: new ways to think about business issues, additional perspectives on people and teams – in both business and social contexts – and friends from around the world whom I'm fortunate to see often!

**How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

INSEAD has a way of pulling you out of any comfort zone you never thought you had. That is a core foundation for any international career.

**Many alumni say that INSEAD was 'transformational' or 'the best year of my life'. Would you say the same?**

Definitely! There are milestones in life that are 'inflexion points', and INSEAD is definitely one of them.

**"INSEAD has a way of pulling you out of any comfort zone you never thought you had."**

**For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

I enjoy attending local Singapore Alumni Association events, as well as regional and global events such as the INSEAD Forum, and the class reunions.

**How would you describe INSEAD's values?**

I would highlight two: mutual respect and open-mindedness. The great diversity of people at INSEAD builds in you a natural instinct to see things from another person's – or another culture's – point of view.

**How has INSEAD's global alumni network been important to you?**

INSEAD always springs pleasant surprises – I have enjoyed meeting and learning from alumni in unexpected corners of the business world around the globe.

**What advice would you give to the current INSEAD students?**

Be open to what INSEAD has to offer. It's actually an equally important concept for life – be open to what life has to offer!



## Karen Fawcett

MBA'88D

Non-Executive Director,  
Former Multinational CEO,  
Advisor and Entrepreneur

Karen Fawcett is a proven Non-Executive Director and leader of finance and consulting businesses. She was formerly CEO Retail Banking and Group Head, Brand and Marketing for Standard Chartered Bank. A member of the Bank's Management Team, Karen was responsible for directing the global strategy and performance of the Retail Banking business, serving 10 million clients in over 30 countries. In her previous roles, Karen led Transaction Banking and was NED of Standard Chartered Bank Malaysia Bhd. She also served as Group Head of Wholesale Banking Strategy. Prior to this, Karen was a Partner at Booz Allen Hamilton where she focused on financial services in the Asia-Pacific region. She also holds an MA in economics from Cambridge, and is a member of the INSEAD board plus the Girton College campaign board.



### **What were you doing before your MBA?**

I was in London as a strategy consultant with Booz Allen Hamilton, covering financial services. At this stage, with every intention of staying in Europe.

### **What drew you to INSEAD?**

Europe, one year, fabulous reputation. At other schools I visited, I met people with mountains in the background – who complained they never had time to ski. At INSEAD, there were tanned, happy people walking around – with a better ranking and reputation!

### **What immediately comes to mind from your year at INSEAD?**

Intensity and great fun, amazing people combined with a totally inspiring education. INSEAD also broadened my geographic horizons.

### **What stood out from your study group?**

We were a very diverse group, in terms of nationality, personal style, race, religion, and perspectives. At times it was extremely frustrating – but perfect practice for future life.

### **What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

The knowledge that we can really do whatever we choose – most of the time, we ourselves are the only limiting factor.

### **Which class or professor influenced you the most?**

Professor Arnoud de Meyer taught the practicality of Operations, and Professor Hellmut Schutte inspired me to explore Asia. Meanwhile Professor Manfred Kets de Vries opened my eyes to the endless complexity of people, and Professor Theo Vermaelen can make numbers dance!

**“The knowledge that we can really do whatever we choose – most of the time, we ourselves are the only limiting factor.”**

### **Many alumni say INSEAD was ‘the best year of my life’ – would you say the same?**

Yes! One of the best years – it sets you up well for many more.

### **For you, what’s the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

I am incredibly fortunate – I am on the Board of INSEAD. Many of my closest friends and colleagues are INSEAD alums, and we have had a campus here in Singapore since 2000.

### **How has INSEAD’s global alumni network been important to you?**

It’s a constant source of inspiration and support – from friends and colleagues to an immediately helpful, friendly face whenever you meet any alum.

### **What makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

A consistent #1 in the rankings with a unique geographic footprint, broadening reputation, and very supportive alumni.

### **What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

During INSEAD, participate to the full and get to know everyone in your year. Those two factors will be the basis of your future success. After graduation, be the best you can be, grab opportunities as they come along, and add value to the world. Above all, enjoy life – we only have one!



## Hian Goh

MBA'04D  
Founding Partner  
NSI Ventures

Hian Goh is a Founding Partner of NSI Ventures, a Series A venture capital fund focused on technology and internet companies in South East Asia. Prior to NSI Ventures, Hian was the Founder of the Asian Food Channel (AFC), a 24-hour food and lifestyle Pay TV network, which was acquired by Scripps Networks in 2013. He began his career as an investment banker, and was a founding member of the Salomon Smith Barney technology investment banking practice in Asia (now part of Citigroup), in 1999. Hian also holds a degree in Jurisprudence from Trinity College, Oxford, and is a Reserve Officer with the Singapore Navy, as well as a Board Member of the Singapore Science Centre.



**What were you doing before your MBA?**

I was an entrepreneur, running a Telco startup in China. It was my first venture after leaving investment banking.

**What drew you to INSEAD?**

The calibre of the school, the emphasis on diversity, and the one-year programme.

**Many alumni say that INSEAD gave them the opportunity to jump to a new level of their careers. Was this the case for you?**

The credibility of my INSEAD degree allowed me to start my second venture – a TV network called the Asian Food Channel – and receive venture capital investment. I don't think I would have been able to raise funds without the INSEAD brand name behind me.

**When you think back on your year at INSEAD, what immediately comes to mind?**

The overall intensity. It was like being sucked into a parallel universe for 12 months – a place where you make lifelong friendships, experience an accelerated learning curve, and learn a great deal about yourself.

**What stood out from your study group?**

INSEAD teaches you to have significant respect for various perspectives, and the study group is a petri dish for differences and conflicts. The experience helped shape the way I do business today.

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

The layer of teaching which forges the foundation to propel yourself into the C-suite.

**How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

INSEAD prepares you to run a company that does business internationally. Today, as venture capitalists, we talk to business people from around the world – American, European, Japanese, Chinese, Australian, and more. It feels natural to me, because of the INSEAD perspective.

**"Greatest INSEAD takeaway?  
The foundation to propel  
yourself into the C-suite."**

**Which class influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

Interestingly enough, Accounting! The level to which the course was taught prepared me to be in charge of the finances for my future start-ups. I learned that accounting is an art, not a science.

**For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

I'm fortunate to be based in Singapore – close to the campus – and I get called back regularly to give talks and interact with the students.

**How would you describe INSEAD's values?**

Diversity, initiative, responsibility to the environment, and a global perspective on coming to solutions through understanding, rather than conflict.

**What makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

There is no single dominant culture – INSEAD is the ultimate melting pot to equip you for doing business in a globalised world.



## Deepak Gupta

MBA'93J  
Founder and Chairman  
Denita Group of Companies

Deepak Gupta is the Founder and Chairman of The Denita Group of Companies. He has founded, built and sold various companies, and has many years of experience across sectors, geographies, functions and responsibilities. Deepak is a member of the Chief Executives Organization, the Young Presidents' Organization, the Family Business Network, the Indus Entrepreneurs, the Advisory Board of the Wendel International Centre for Family Enterprise, and the Advisory Council of the Carnegie Institute of Technology, among others. A longstanding supporter of INSEAD, he sits on the International Council, is part of the Circle of Patrons, and is a member of the INSEAD Board. Deepak also holds a BS (Double Major in Engineering and Business) from Carnegie Mellon University.



**What were you doing before your MBA, and what drew you to INSEAD?**

I was in India, working in the family business. I did my undergraduate degree at an American university; hence I was seeking an MBA at an established institution outside the United States, in a business-focused environment.

**Did INSEAD help transform your career?**

After INSEAD, I managed to switch functions, sectors and geographies – from a domestic India role to a global focus.

**What immediately comes to mind from your year at INSEAD?**

Two important takeaways were (a) time management – juggling family (I was married with a child), studies (INSEAD felt like drinking water from a fire hydrant!), and myself – and (b) unstoppable energy – I realised I could push myself physically, mentally and emotionally.

**What stood out from your study group?**

Going into our meetings, I always thought I knew all the answers. But following our exchange, I would inevitably become aware that there were far more dimensions to the issue.

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

Self-confidence. After INSEAD, I felt capable of handling any challenge that business – or life – could throw at me. INSEAD was transformational, and one of the best years of my life.

**Which professor influenced you the most?**

Professor Sumantra Ghoshal, an international thought-leader on Strategy, was instrumental in opening my eyes to the incredible world of business champions in the emerging markets.

**“After INSEAD, I felt capable of handling any challenge that business – or life – could throw at me.”**

**For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

I am lucky to be based in Singapore, which allows me to visit the Asia Campus for forums, conferences and seminars. I am an active member of the Singapore Alumni Association, and I also offer my time on the Board of Directors.

**How has INSEAD's global alumni network been important?**

I have kept many good friends from my class. However, I – like many of them – have moved across cities, countries, and continents. In every new place, I have connected with the local alumni and made fantastic new friends.

**What makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

INSEAD has three physical campuses in economically important locations. It has a history of excellence in teaching and research, and remains the leading (and first!) one-year MBA programme. INSEAD has also been committed to an international mindset since day one.

**What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

Take time to reflect on yourself. INSEAD is also an intensely personal journey, unique to each individual. Use the year to be transformed.



## Hari V Krishnan

MBA'05D

Chief Executive Officer  
PropertyGuru Group

Hari Krishnan has more than 16 years of industry leadership in technology and consumer internet organisations, across Asia Pacific and The United States of America. As CEO at PropertyGuru Group, he manages corporate direction and strategy, and oversees the day-to-day operations across Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. Previously, Hari was the Vice President & Managing Director, APAC & Japan at LinkedIn, where he led more than 1,000 employees across 10 offices. He has also worked in leadership positions at Fox Interactive Media, Yahoo! and Cisco, as well as at startups like Travelguru. He sits on the board for the Singapore chapter of The Indus Entrepreneurs, an organisation fostering entrepreneurship, and advises non-profits like BillionBricks (with a vision to eradicate homelessness), and startup HackerTrail.



### **What were you doing before your MBA?**

I was a Product Manager for Cisco living in the Silicon Valley, having experienced the dotcom boom and bust.

### **What drew you to INSEAD?**

The proudly multicultural brand – which INSEAD has re-enforced via the multiple campus locations – as well as the professors' real business world experience. I wanted the skills learned during my MBA to be immediately usable, and INSEAD checked the box of equipping me for a global career.

### **What INSEAD experience immediately comes to mind?**

An assignment called the 'egg drop' required our group to construct a vehicle to transport an egg, as it was dropped off a three-story building on the Fontainebleau campus. Our instructions were in Japanese, and we had only one person in our group who understood the language. Grasping the nuances – while trying to collaborate with my new group mates – made the exercise both challenging and hugely rewarding.

### **What stood out from your study group?**

The diversity of nationalities – Italian, Indian, Danish, Japanese, and British – opinions, and experiences. Every single group project involved debates, and we were all the better for it.

### **What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

The confidence to work in any work environment, and with any culture. Also – there is no city in the world where I can't find an ex-classmate or fellow INSEAD alum!

### **How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

By debating and learning across cultures – on topics from finance to marketing to ethics – we began to understand differing values and priorities. These insights have been essential in helping me to do global business effectively.

**“There is no city in the world where I can't find an ex-classmate or fellow INSEAD alum!”**

### **Which class influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

Many of my INSEAD classes influenced me a great deal, but two that stand out are Professor Peter Zemsky's course on Strategy, and Professor Jake Cohen's on Corporate Restructuring.

### **Many alumni say that INSEAD was 'transformational' or 'the best year of my life'. Would you say the same?**

INSEAD was indeed the best year of my life. It helped that my wife was a fellow classmate, making the journey extremely special for our family.

### **For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

I live with an INSEADER, work with INSEADers, and regularly visit the Singapore campus!

### **How has INSEAD's global alumni network been important to you?**

When assessing other countries or industries, I turn to the INSEAD alumni network as a first port of call to learn more.



## Avalyn Lim

TIEMBA'14Jan  
Director and Executive Coach  
Trellis Asia

Avalyn Lim leads the Management & Teams practice group at Trellis, a consultancy that builds people strategies for fast growing Asia-based entrepreneurial firms, and start-ups. She uses coaching, training, and team facilitation in the areas of resilience, flexibility, and cross-functional team effectiveness, drawing on her 18 years of experience in creating and managing teams, in both MNC and start-up environments. A lawyer by training, Avalyn is a certified executive coach with clients from Diageo, McKinsey, Procter & Gamble and Cisco, and coaches on the INSEAD MBA programme. She also serves on the Executive Committee of the Singapore INSEAD Alumni Association, and is an avid traveller – constantly planning new adventures with her husband and three children.



**What were you doing before your EMBA, and what drew you to INSEAD?**

I was the Head of Partnerships at the International Currency Cards APAC division of American Express. My law school roommate graduated from INSEAD, and went on to change her career, which inspired me to attend. I used to drive past campus and tell myself that one day, I would be a student there. When the opportunity arose (at age 37), I spoke to that same friend, who told me: 'Honey, you're too old for an MBA – do the EMBA!'

**Many alumni say that INSEAD gave them the opportunity to transform their careers. Was this the case for you?**

Definitely. INSEAD helped me change career direction dramatically.

**What INSEAD experiences immediately come to mind?**

Meeting an incredible group of diverse, motivated, inspirational people. Spending time on four campuses – Singapore, Fontainebleau, Abu Dhabi and the Tsinghua campus for our TIEMBA programme. Being extremely challenged in my courses. Working on my thesis – and loving it!

**Some alumni like to reminisce about their study groups. What stood out from yours?**

I remember heated discussions that led to a deep understanding of how different cultures and backgrounds listen, understand and communicate. Those exchanges helped us realise that despite the apparent differences in styles and expression, every group member was bringing good intentions and a valid perspective. That was an invaluable lesson in cross-cultural understanding.

**“All the opportunities to redirect my career have arisen from my INSEAD network – both directly and indirectly.”**

**Which class or professor influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

Professor Charles Galunic opened my eyes to the world of Organisational Behaviour (OB). I have always enjoyed the development work I took part in during my corporate roles, but his course gave me a much wider perspective. OB is now the 'jet fuel' in my professional and personal life.

**For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

Get involved! I joined the Singapore National Alumni Association Executive Committee, have served as Secretary for three years, and also organise mindfulness events for the alumni community.

**Has INSEAD's global alumni network been important to you?**

Incredibly. All the opportunities I have had to redirect my career into coaching and consulting have arisen from my INSEAD network – both directly and indirectly.

**In your opinion, what makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

The unique spirit, and the diversity of thought and culture.

**What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

Be authentic, and you will make connections that last.



## Yasemin Okur

EMBA'13Dec

Head of Consumer Marketing  
and Innovation, APAC, MEA, LATAM  
Mundipharma

Yasemin Okur is Mundipharma's Head of Consumer Marketing and Innovation for Asia Pacific, Middle East & Africa, and Latin America. In this role, she leads the company's direct-to-consumer marketing and innovation practice. Prior to this position, she was the Director of Brand Insights and Strategy for IHG Group, which included overseeing flagship brands such as Holiday Inn and Intercontinental, across Asia and the Middle East. Before INSEAD, Yasemin worked in progressive roles around Europe — as well as Asia — for leading consumer brands including Danone, KFC, Pizza Hut, and SC Johnson. She also currently serves as an INSEAD Alumni Fund (IAF) Trustee for Singapore. Originally from Turkey, Yasemin is married with two children.



**What were you doing just before your EMBA?**

I was looking after consumer marketing for Yum! Brands in Asia. I was also busy being a mother to two young children.

**What drew you to INSEAD?**

To me there was no question – INSEAD was my only choice. The pull factors were the Asia Campus, the diverse student body, and the amazing faculty. An on-campus talk by Professor W. Chan Kim on Blue Ocean Strategy sealed my decision!

**Many alumni say that INSEAD gave them the opportunity to jump from a local to a global business career. Was this the case for you?**

I already had an international career, so my main motivation was industry change. I get inspired when businesses are a force for good, and through my work, I wanted to change lives for the better. Thanks to INSEAD, I am now working in a leadership role in the healthcare industry, making a positive impact.

**What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD EMBA?**

The diverse student body is one of the strongest assets of the INSEAD programme. Being exposed to different cultures and perspectives sets you up for a truly international career, and that is the aspect I most appreciated about my EMBA. From a personal perspective, though, the lifelong friendships have been the real bonus – I meet with my classmates almost every month!

**Which class or professor influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

Although I had already been living and working in Asia for many years, I was blown away by Professor Michael Witt (Strategy). I gained more insights during his 'Doing Business in Japan and Asia' class than I did during my many years of experience here.

**How has INSEAD's global alumni network been important to you?**

I was lucky enough to be granted two scholarships, and that means an enormous

amount to me. So as soon as I graduated, I started volunteering for the INSEAD Alumni Fund (IAF) to help provide similar opportunities for other eligible students. In that capacity, I often reach out to the INSEAD network – to friends, and also to alumni I don't know. The only connection is INSEAD – but how powerful it is. Our network is extremely fond of their INSEAD days, and very generous about giving back. That fills me with pride.

**In your opinion, what makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

Without a doubt, INSEAD is the only 'Business School for the World!'

**"INSEAD's pull factors were the Asia Campus, the diverse student body, and the amazing faculty."**



## Sumitra Pasupathy

MBA'01D

Social Entrepreneur and

Executive Director

Ashoka Innovators for the Public Ltd

Sumitra Pasupathy is a senior executive with over 20 years experience in initiating, managing, and leading innovation globally in the creative and education sector. Currently, she is in a leadership role with Ashoka in Singapore, Malaysia and South East Asia; particularly in the initiatives related to young people. Prior to this, she co-founded international award-winning social enterprise 'Playeum, The Children's Centre for Creativity in Singapore'. She has been recognised as a British Council Lien Foundation 'Creativity for Social Change' Fellow, as well as receiving innovation awards from the private sector, including from Procter & Gamble. Previously, Sumitra worked with Random House, Bertelsmann, Procter & Gamble, and Kraft. She is the Board Director of Playeum and sits on the Advisory Education Committee for the UWCSEA Board.



**What were you doing before your MBA, and what drew you to INSEAD?**

I was working at the European Headquarters of Procter & Gamble. The diversity of the INSEAD community was incredibly important in my choice – I was excited to learn from fellow students with a global perspective.

**What INSEAD experience or takeaways immediately come to mind?**

I had assumed that I was a global citizen prior to attending INSEAD. However, the very multicultural INSEAD setting, with such diverse classmates, was genuinely life changing. INSEAD also gave me the ability to move from a specialist area towards general management skills. This broader skillset enabled me to work effectively across both the private and non-profit sectors.

**What stood out from your study group?**

We had engineers, but also marketing professionals and consultants – we were destined to quarrel! However, the pressure of creating meaningful project outcomes stretched our abilities to collaborate. We were eventually able to harness our collective intelligence and create solutions from chaos... an extremely enriching experience.

**What was the greatest thing you gained at INSEAD?**

I made several significant sector and role changes post-INSEAD... first, from product researcher in consumer goods to running complex M&A deals in the media sector. A few years later – with strong support from the INSEAD community – I successfully founded a non-profit, Playeum, that fundamentally shifts how young people grow up by inspiring creativity. I am now a regional leader of Ashoka, one of the world's largest social impact organisations.

**"INSEAD is an invaluable time to reflect deeply on the opportunity to create impact and make a difference."**

**Which professors influenced you the most?**

Professors Helmut Schütte (Management) and the late Patrick Turner (Entrepreneurship) were tremendous influences, during and after INSEAD. Patrick was a true visionary who inspired the best in everyone.

**For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

I am an Entrepreneur in Residence and a donor, and am frequently on campus, staying closely connected through INSEAD events and emails.

**How has INSEAD's global alumni network been important to you?**

I have been active in the Alumni Association in both London and Singapore. Meeting alumni through the years – friends with a common purpose and shared values – is always inspiring.

**What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

The world is operating to a new paradigm: increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous and hyper-connected. This requires new ways of living, leading, organising, and collaborating – with a strong sense of purpose and values. INSEAD is an invaluable time to reflect deeply on the opportunity to create impact and make a difference... in whatever path you choose!







## Christophe Inglin

MBA'93J  
Managing Director  
Energetix Pte Ltd

Christophe Inglin is a veteran of the solar photovoltaics (PV) industry, with two decades of experience throughout the value chain, from silicon ingots to turnkey solar power plants. He is co-founder and Managing Director of Singapore-based Energetix Pte Ltd, which designs and builds solar power plants. This is his second start-up company in the solar industry. Before joining the solar sector, Christophe worked in semiconductors and management consulting with Siemens, in Munich, California and Zurich. A regular donor and INSEAD Salamander holder, Christophe is a Swiss and British national, born in Calcutta. He is married to Patricia (also an INSEAD alum) with three children, and also holds a BSc in Electronic and Electrical Engineering.

## Patricia Sharma-Inglin

MBA'98J  
Head, Retail Marketing  
Standard Chartered Bank

Patricia Sharma-Inglin is an experienced senior general manager and consumer marketer from the telecoms, banking, retail, and consulting industries. Patricia began her career as a strategy consultant with Bain & Company. She then joined global retailers Royal Ahold in The Netherlands and The USA, before returning to Singapore as Head of Marketing for StarHub. More recently, Patricia has been with Standard Chartered Bank, first as Head of Marketing for Singapore, and now as Group Head of Retail Marketing. Patricia is Singaporean, but has lived and worked for more than 10 years overseas in Europe (UK, France, Italy, The Netherlands), the USA, and Asia (in particular Indonesia and The Philippines). Awarded an INSEAD Salamander, she is married to fellow INSEAD alum Christophe.



## Christophe Inglin

### **What were you doing before your MBA, and what drew you to INSEAD?**

I was in Zurich, working at Siemens-Albis AG. INSEAD's truly international culture – and the one-year MBA programme – attracted me most.

### **Many alumni say that INSEAD gave them the opportunity to make a career jump, geographically or to a new industry. Was this the case for you?**

Yes. I went from semiconductors to management consulting, and I was spoilt for choice of companies to join after INSEAD.

### **What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA?**

An understanding of the importance of soft skills in any career, along with exposure to the variety of ways of doing business, around the world.

### **How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

Like many INSEAD alumni, my career was already international. But my INSEAD classmates opened my mind to the – sometimes counter-intuitive – viewpoints of cultures I had not yet experienced.

### **Which class or professor influenced you the most?**

Professor Dan Muzyka's New Ventures entrepreneurship class. It inspired me to move from a multinational and start my own company, when the time was right.

### **Many alumni say that INSEAD was 'the best year of my life'. Would you say the same?**

Best year of my life was when I got married; and fatherhood transformed me. But INSEAD came a close second!

### **How would you describe INSEAD's values?**

Keep an open mind, and respect other points of view. Seek first to understand, before trying to be understood.

### **What makes INSEAD unique among top business schools?**

Having graduates competent to do business in several languages – as well as operating on three distinct campuses, on three continents – gives INSEAD more than just an academic claim to understanding global diversity. INSEAD's truly international alumni network has also opened doors on many occasions.

**"The INSEAD experience does not end when you receive your diploma; it continues for life."**

### **For you, what's the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

Participate! The INSEAD experience does not end when you receive your diploma; it continues for life. Beyond alumni reunions, INSEAD professors continue to inspire us with new research; our Alumni Association arranges dozens of events each year; and we can contribute to the future by interviewing candidates and mentoring younger alumni, as well as by donating to the INSEAD Alumni Fund (IAF).

### **What advice would you give to current INSEAD students?**

Take the at least three months of vacation after INSEAD, before you launch the next step in your career. Don't worry about repaying the loan – you will clear that soon enough.

# Patricia Sharma-Inglin

## **What were you doing before your MBA?**

### **Where were you?**

I was a strategy consultant with Bain & Company, based in Singapore, but working regionally in South East Asia.

## **What drew you to INSEAD?**

All the INSEAD alumni I spoke to were unanimous about how much fun they had at INSEAD! Also – it seemed like my only chance to live in a château – so I grabbed it.

## **Many alumni say that INSEAD gave them the opportunity to jump from a local business environment to a global business career. Was this the case for you?**

Definitely. My first job after INSEAD was based in The Netherlands, and the one after that was in The United States of America.

## **When you think back on your year at INSEAD, what immediately comes to mind?**

The fun, the friends, lots of hard work, plenty of French wine, and too little sleep!

## **What stood out from your study group?**

During the last three periods of the one-year programme, we were able to choose our own study groups – and I really enjoyed the learnings and the time together.

## **How did INSEAD prepare you for an international career?**

In the end, I have chosen to come back to my home country of Singapore. But not before doing several international career stints.

**“INSEAD memories? The fun, the friends, lots of hard work, plenty of French wine, and too little sleep!”**

## **What was the greatest thing you gained from your INSEAD MBA? Business knowledge? A multicultural experience? Career advancement or redirection? Lifelong friendships?**

All of the above – and an INSEAD husband as well!

## **Which class or professor influenced how you see business – or the world – the most?**

Too many to count – but two professors who made a real impact were Professors David Young (Cost Accounting) and Ingemar Dierickx (Negotiation Analysis).

## **Many alumni say that INSEAD was ‘transformational’ or ‘the best year of my life’. Would you say the same?**

INSEAD was definitely life-changing!

## **For you, what’s the best way to stay connected to INSEAD?**

Stay involved, and give back – by interviewing, attending events, volunteering on the Alumni Association committee, and more.

## **How important has INSEAD’s global alumni network been to you?**

Very important. It means that wherever in the world I travel, I can reach out to fellow alumni.



## Singapore Alumni Association Executive Committee

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