

Program Title: Visualising Planetary Health in Singapore

Faculty Project Leader: [Tom White](#) (Yale-NUS College)

Programme Dates: 20th – 27th June 2022

Location: Singapore

Co-pay: None, but students must make their own travel arrangements to arrive in Singapore before the start of the programme.

Application Deadline: 28th March 11:59pm SGT

Important notes: This project will likely involve a long walk in Singapore’s Central Catchment Nature Reserve or other nature area (moderate level of physical intensity).



Programme Description:

Planetary Health is an international and interdisciplinary field focussed on characterising and addressing the human health impacts of global environmental change. Understanding the complexity of linking environmental change and human health, especially in a city like Singapore, necessitates a good story.

Photojournalism requires an understanding of complex issues in order to effectively communicate them. It demands awareness of the uses & meanings of the public image, the visual culture of the news and a high degree of visual & media literacy.

This LAB will explore how Planetary Health can be communicated through documentary photography and Photojournalistic methods to explore if and how Singapore can be as a sustainable, safe *and just* urban centre.

Singapore is often called a “Garden City”, but what does this mean? Is a garden a dynamic ecosystem, or a sterile, manicured and controlled version of the natural world? How do “wild” and “cultivated” spaces interact? What makes for a sustainable, healthy balance? Through field trips and individual exploration we will examine the environmental systems that impact the health and wellbeing of people here in Singapore including sustainable food and water systems, healthy air quality, access to open space, transportation, etc. Possible sites can include Singapore’s nature reserves and parks, forests, fisheries, and coral reefs; the wet markets, farms and gardens along with the public transportation, bike and car cultures, urban density and infrastructure. How does Singapore’s “[Green Plan](#)” align with the goals of Planetary Health?

We will hear from experts in the fields of environmental science, policy and journalism including direction and mentoring from award winning British Malaysian photographer Ian Teh, whose work on environmental issues has been widely published and exhibited, Yale-NUS instructor Tom White, and Duke University and former Yale-NUS

professor Brian McAdoo. The aim is to take this work beyond the LAB, possibly exhibiting it in Singapore at The Objectifs Centre, and in Malaysia in partnership with the Obscura Photo Festival.

This LAB is intended to focus on documenting environmental issues, using the planetary health framework as a guide, so is not intended to be a deep dive into the complexity of the science, but more an introduction to the concepts of producing documentary photography to a brief, as an investigation; what *does* Singapore look like, and how does what we see relate to the general aims of the concept of planetary health?

We will explore Singapore with an open mind and use photography to prompt the discussion and critique of how what we see fits with (or not) the concepts of planetary health. We will use the camera as an inquisitive tool, rather than as something with which to illustrate pre-existing concepts. We will keep the focus on a series of open questions rather than the illustrative, “Make me a picture of...” method that could arise from too prescriptive an approach.

The aim is to document these systems and create compelling visual narratives based upon the stories of the people and places we encounter.

Learning Objectives:

- To produce a portfolio of documentary photography on Singapore through the lens of the environmental, social & economic issues of planetary health.
- To gain an understanding of how documentary photography can be used to respond to and visualise environmental issues, using the concepts of planetary health as a guide and a framework.
- To explore the “Garden City” concept of Singapore from the point of view of rigorous environmental science and journalistic inquiry.
- To use photography to generate questions and queries, rather than provide answers and solutions — though these may arise as suggestions and examples from what we find.

To apply, complete this application form and email it to Gemma (g_green@yale-nus.edu.sg) by Monday, 28 March 2022 at 11:59pm SGT. Please rename your document using this format “*First name_Last name*”.

1. Personal information

**Please note that this information will be kept confidential, and will only be used if you are selected for the LAB.*

Full Name (<i>as on passport</i>)	
Matriculation Number (A1234567B)	
Yale Email	
Class (2022, 2023, 2024, 2025)	
Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY)	
Passport Issued By	
Passport Number	
WhatsApp Number	

2. Application Essay

What do you hope to learn during this LAB and how does this connect to your personal, academic, and/or professional goals? (Max. 500 words)