

Metamorphosis: The 2023 Chrysalis Award Journey

written by Hazrul | 08/05/2024

Every great adventure begins with a single step. Our journey with the 2023 [Chrysalis Award](#) began as participants, yet it soon transformed into an extraordinary odyssey, propelling us from mere participants to finalists and, ultimately, champions.

The 2023 Chrysalis Award competition, organised by the [Young Scientists Network-Academy of Sciences Malaysia](#) (YSN-ASM), is not simply a competition but a profound transformation, encompassing many experiences and emotions.

The first step is **curiosity**. Whether it was a wise senior who had embarked on this quest before or a trusted supervisor who whispered the tales of the transformative journey that awaited, the essence of our adventure remained the same. This journey was about embracing opportunities, venturing into the unknown, and willingly accepting new challenges.

The second step requires **unwavering patience**. Following the submission of our applications, we braced ourselves for a period of agonising anticipation. Then, the monumental day arrived, marking our selection as one of the 15 finalists from an astonishing pool of over 70 top-tier applicants representing universities across Malaysia. The journey was fiercely competitive, and our triumph signalled a remarkable achievement.

The first online workshop marked our initial encounter, where all 15 finalists were introduced to each other. However, it was during our first physical meeting at [Akademi Kepimpinan Pendidikan Tinggi](#) (AKEPT) that our bonds truly began to form. Through engaging in ice-breaking activities, we delved deeper into each other's backgrounds, connecting across various disciplines and universities.

Moreover, the leadership program at AKEPT not only enriched our knowledge but introduced us to young leaders from various universities and industries, expanding our network and greatly enhancing our collective learning experience. This journey has opened new doors and united us in pursuit of excellence.

Throughout the Chrysalis Award journey, we participated in ten workshops, each covering a distinct vital aspect of our academic and professional development. These workshops encompassed a wide range of topics, including science communication, the [10-10 MySTIE](#) research direction, responsible conduct of research, leadership, creativity and development towards the commercialisation of innovative research, commercialisation and business planning, research proposal development, pitching, financial and investment, and the humanisation of science and research for the community.

The impact of these workshops was profound, as they provided us with valuable knowledge and insights and honed our skills, which will undeniably be crucial in our future careers. One remarkable example is Workshop 6: "Ideation and Development Towards Commercialisation of Innovative Research," which empowered us to identify critical problem statements and generate innovative ideas for the commercialisation of research. During this workshop, our team selected [Sustainable Development Goal 6](#) (SDG 6), Clean water and sanitation, and brainstormed innovative solutions.

Next, each team was called upon to align our collective expertise, resulting in a unified project focus. Since we were placed in group 4, we cracked our heads and finally came to the consensus to name our team - FAWUnity. After thorough deliberation, we proposed a research project entitled "Circulating Tumour Cells Isolation and Detection: Design, Comparison and Validation". Our next steps involved the drafting of a concept paper and the design of an informative poster, both of which we diligently reviewed with our mentors, Dr Lee Tze Yan (academic mentor) and Dr MD Azman PKM Seeni Mohammed (industrial mentor). Their unwavering guidance, feedback, support, and motivation were pivotal in our journey.

AKADEMI SAINS MALAYSIA **YOUNG SCIENTISTS NETWORK** **CHRYALIS**

CIRCULATING TUMOUR CELL ISOLATION & DETECTION: DESIGN, VALIDATION & COMPARISON

YSN-ASM Mentor:

Dr. Lee Tze Yan (Academic) **Dr. Azman PKM Seeni Mohammed (Industrial)**

Presented by Group 4 FAWUnity

Subproject 1 Member Muhamad Sharafee Shamsudin **Subproject 2 Member** Cheong Wei Mun **Subproject 3 Member** Dr. Francis Tieng Yew Fu (Leader)

Research project proposed by Team 4 with their academic and industrial mentors.

With our concept paper finalised, we convened in person to develop a prototype for our project. During this process, we conducted physical meetings to refine our pitching skills, ensuring we were well-prepared for the upcoming challenges.

Prototype



Subproject 1



CTC capture

Subproject 2



CTC imaging

Subproject 3



Validation & Comparative study

Prototype designed by Team 4, which consisted of three sections, each representing one of the subprojects: CTC isolation, detection and comparative study.

The day before the final pitching, we arrived at the Nilai Springs Resort Hotel, preparing for a night of intensive practice. During this crucial period, we dedicated ourselves to perfecting our presentation, fine-tuning our script, and strengthening our teamwork. The following day, a palpable blend of nervousness and excitement hung in the air as we took the stage to present our project proposal. As the saying goes, practice makes perfect, and our diligent preparations were about to be tested! Go, team FAWUnity!

The following day was filled with great anticipation as we awaited the announcement of the results. We were immensely fortunate to have the presence and support of YB Tuan Chang Lih Kang, the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation ([MOSTI](#)), who graced the occasion to witness and award us. It was a moment of immense pride for Team 4 as we were honoured with the Best Poster Award. Moreover, the group leader, Dr Francis Tieng Yew Fu, emerged as the Chrysalis Award winner. Our heartfelt gratitude extends to everyone who provided guidance and motivation throughout the Chrysalis journey, enabling us to transform much like a caterpillar into a butterfly and evolve into better versions of ourselves. Thank you so much!



YB Tuan Chang Lih Kang, the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI), awarded Team 4 the best poster award.



The winner of the 2023 Chrysalis Award is Francis Tieng Yew Fu from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM).



Thank you from Team 4 FAWUnity and the mentor, Dr Lee Tze Yan.