POSTGRADUATE

SMU
SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY

School of
Computing and
Information Systems

AY2026

SCIS DEAN'S LIST AWARD

The SCIS Dean's List Award for PhD students recognises outstanding SCIS PhD students who have consistently shown exceptional research achievements in their research.

LEGEND: ACHIEVEMENTS IN AY2025-26 | PREVIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS

Brahmanage Janaka Chathuranga THILAKARATHNA

IJCAI 2026 *0.5 | ICAPS 2026

AAAI 2025 | NeurIPS 2023

Think from first principles and always ground your ideas in the basics. Avoid overcomplicating solutions, start with simple, clear baselines and iterate fast. Value consistent feedback from your advisor and peers and try to stay emotionally detached from your results so setbacks become learning opportunities.

HU Changshuo

Ubicom 2026 *1.3 | SenSys 2026 *0.5

BodySys 2025 Best Paper Award *0.5 | Ubicom 2024 *2 | Ubicom 2024 Distinguish Paper Award

(1) Focus on important problems that have real impact, rather than starting from a preferred technique; (2) Read broadly and critically. The limitations of existing work often reveal valuable research opportunities; (3) Communicate frequently with supervisors, seek their advice early, and stay open to critical feedback. Good research usually emerges through repeated discussion, refinement, and validation.

LYU Yunbo

ASE 2025 | ASE 2025 SIGSOFT Distinguished Paper Award | ACM MM 2025

ICSE 2023 *0.5

PhD research is a marathon, not a sprint. Read papers daily, move forward steadily, and treat rejection as an opportunity to learn. Rather than settling for incremental work, think more deeply and pursue meaningful questions. In collaboration and reviewing, always be KIND—and do not hesitate to ask about opportunities. A strong conference presentation can leave a lasting impression. Finally, protect your well-being through regular aerobic exercise and hobbies, whether badminton, playing Counter-Strike, or poker with labmates.

PHAM Quang Anh

ICML 2026 | NeurIPS 2025

AAMAS 2025

Choose a research problem that genuinely interests you and take time to understand it deeply. Try to question assumptions, validate ideas through both theory and experiments, and learn from every failed attempt. Discuss your work regularly with supervisors and collaborators, remain open to feedback, and focus on steady progress. Consistency, curiosity, and persistence often matter more than short bursts of productivity.

SUN Zhensu

ASE 2025 | ICSE 2026 *0.5 | ICSE 2026 ACT SIGSOFT Distinguished Paper Award *0.5

TOSEM 2025 | ISSTA 2024-ACM SIGSOFT Distinguished Paper award | ByteDance Scholarship

Before starting a project, clearly define an interesting research question to guide your work. More importantly, prioritize completion over perfection—finishing a first draft or prototype quickly allows for feedback and improvement, while chasing perfection early often leads to delays or unfinished work. Progress matters more than flawless beginnings.

ZHANG Zhihan

ACM MM 2026 | ACL 2026

ACM MM 2025 | ACL 2024

(1) Read broadly: Explore diverse disciplines to spark innovative ideas and uncover hidden connections; (2) Validate early. Run quick preliminary experiments to spot practical challenges and refine your direction; (3) Stay resilient. Approach setbacks with curiosity and adaptability to maintain long-term progress.

BUI The Viet

ICML 2026 | NeurIPS 2025

ICLR 2025 | NeurIPS 2024 *2 | ICML 2025 | AAMAS 2023

My success stems from great supervision from Prof. Tien and support from SMU faculty and friends. My advice: fully embrace your academic community. Actively seeking mentorship and collaborating with peers is the best way to expand your knowledge, diversify research, and achieve your goals.

LIANG Jinggui

EMNLP 2025

ACL 2025 | EMNLP 2024

There is no single secret to good research. Start with a question that genuinely matters, and keep the core idea simple enough to explain clearly. Read broadly, test assumptions early, and seek honest feedback. Treat setbacks as signals for refinement rather than failure. High-quality research grows from sustained curiosity, careful execution, and the patience to improve one step at a time.

NONG Minh Hieu

ICML 2026

ICML 2025 | AAAI 2025

Always keep a ledger of conjectures/unsolved problems/failed approaches for later revision. You may encounter the proof idea while working on other projects. If the solution to a hard problem you have been working on turns out to have a trivial answer, do not be disappointed. Think of interesting constraints, relax assumptions, or just accept you learned something new. Small progress is still progress.

QIAO Hezhe

NeurIPS 2025 *0.5 | ICML 2026 *0.5 | KDD 2026 *0.5

KDD 2025 *0.5 | NeurIPS 2024 | IJCAL 2025 *0.5 | TKDE 2024 | NeurIPS 2023

(1) Practical problems should guide methodological innovation; (2) A simple and well-motivated idea is often stronger than an unnecessarily complex method; (3) Producing one high-quality paper is often more meaningful than publishing many less-developed papers; (4) Publication is not the end of a paper's journey; it is often the beginning of its real impact.

TIAN Zichen

ICLR 2026

CVPR 2025 | Highlight Award from CVPR 2025 (top 0.6%) | NeurIPS 2024

(1) Question deeply and continuously; (2) Engage closely with your collaborators and supervisor; (3) Practice writing with very high priority; (4) Frequently evaluate your research as a strict AC/reviewer; (5) Thought is creative, so always be positive and faithful; (6) Remain grateful for supervisor and environment.

ZOU Xiandong

ICML 2026

ICLR 2026 | ICML 2025

I am grateful for Prof Zhou's guidance and the support of SCIS faculty and fellows, which have shaped how I approach research. The first lesson is to cultivate research taste: identify problems that matter and recognize promising directions. The second is to sharpen research sense: reason from first principles and tackle technical bottlenecks systematically.

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SCIS PHD RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AWARD

The SCIS Research Excellence Award recognises self-financed SCIS PhD students for their research achievements.

LEGEND: ACHIEVEMENTS IN AY2025-26

CAI Xuemeng

TOSEM 2026

Stay curious to uncover puzzles, stay rigorous to guard conclusions.

CHEN Junkai

ACL 2026

(1) Think it through before choosing a research direction; (2) Ask for help early, don't struggle alone; (3) Failure is a normal part of research, stay calm about it.

HUANG Huihui

ICSE 2026 | ACL 2026 *0.5

Work hard, play harder. Stay curious, focus on meaningful problems, and keep improving through feedback and persistence. At the same time, make space to rest and enjoy life, because good research also needs energy, balance, and fresh ideas.

Ivana Clairine IRSAN

TOSEM 2026

Look for real-world problem that need fixing. Grounding your ideas in actual challenges keeps your work exciting and meaningful.

LI Zhe

ICLR 2026 | NDSS 2026

Stay curious and passionate about research. Great ideas emerge not only from high-level thinking, but also from the details of implementation, where valuable insights often lie.

LIANG Zhengyang

ACM MM 2025 | CVPR 2025 *0.5

(1) Be proficient in using Claude Code and strive to explore the limits of the model's capabilities; (2) Have lunch and discuss ideas with the researchers around you as often as possible, they can offer you different perspectives and inspiration.

LYU Yunbo

ASE 2025 | ACM MM 2025

PhD research is a marathon, not a sprint. Read papers daily, move forward steadily, and treat rejection as an opportunity to learn. Rather than settling for incremental work, think more deeply and pursue meaningful questions. In collaboration and reviewing, always be KIND—and do not hesitate to ask about opportunities. A strong conference presentation can leave a lasting impression. Finally, protect your well-being through regular aerobic exercise and hobbies, whether badminton, playing Counter-Strike, or poker with labmates.

NGUYEN Huu Hung

TOSEM 2026

Don’t rush into experiments right away. Start with a deep literature review to identify real gaps and build strong motivation. Then define clear research questions. You can’t write a good paper with a poor motivation.

SONG Shiwen

TSE 2026

Choose problems that genuinely interest you, because curiosity is the best motivation for long-term research. Don't be afraid to spend time reproducing prior work and understanding its limitations. Careful experiments, critical thinking, and continuous refinement are more valuable than rushing to publish. Every failed attempt is an opportunity to improve the next idea.

SUN Zhensu

ASE 2025 | ICSE 2026 *0.5

Before starting a project, clearly define an interesting research question to guide your work. More importantly, prioritize completion over perfection—finishing a first draft or prototype quickly allows for feedback and improvement, while chasing perfection early often leads to delays or unfinished work. Progress matters more than flawless beginnings.

WANG Chenyu

ASE 2025

Research is rarely easy, but overthinking can make it feel even harder. Start before you feel ready, even if the first draft is far from perfect. Iteration beats hesitation. Every revision brings you closer to a stronger piece of work.

WANG Yuekun

ASE 2025

I consider myself an ongoing learner in research. Build regular working habits and record all experiments honestly. Raise questions and communicate obstacles with supervisors promptly. Failed attempts are important references. Avoid rushing for outputs. Take time to refine ideas step by step, and keep consistent effort over time.

XIAO Xiangjie

ICLR 2026

Act before overthinking. When an idea is uncertain, turn it into a small experiment or a simple baseline as soon as possible. Concrete results are more useful than prolonged speculation: they reveal what works, what fails, and what to improve next. Good research rarely begins with a perfect plan; it develops through testing, reflection, and continuous refinement.

ZHANG Zhihan

ACM MM 2026 | ACL 2026

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