

I2XL Program@SMU Initial Round-Up: Three Cheers for the Third Round of SMU I2XL Program– Maybe, The Best Ever?

Aurobindo Ghosh¹

SMU Inclusive and Immersive Experiential Learning (#I2XL) program is a mouthful, but the purpose of the program is right there in the phonetics of its acronym “I too Excel.” In her LinkedIn post I2XL 2024 Participant [Ishika Aurora](#) shared:

“During our first meeting with professor Aurobindo Ghosh, he told us why the program was named as I2XL and I can assure that it did full justice to its name “I too excel” and empowered me to excel in



Figure 1: I2XL Participants listening to Neela and Ameya



Figure 2: Discussion on life-after I2XL with Director Aurobindo

both knowledge and practice. The experience and exposure I gained at SMU were transformative.”

[Rajwardhan Kulthe](#)’s also shared his thought in his post:

“The program, designed to embody the “I too excel” principle, has truly lived up to its name, empowering me to excel academically and practically.”

In a post pandemic world, with an

impending threat from Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI), back in 2019 the American Management Association highlighted more [training in four C’s are needed](#)²-Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration and Creativity. Cut to a [recent article in Forbes](#)³, citing “...research and reports from the World Economic Forum, FlexJobs, and LinkedIn ..., ” the five skills for your resume are Communications,



Figure 3: (L to R) Ameya, Neela, Swastika, Aurobindo and Kaushik

¹ Assistant Professor of Finance Education and Director, SMU Inclusive and Immersive Experiential Learning (I2XL) Program and Citi-Foundation SMU (SMU) Financial Literacy Program for Young Adults

² <https://www.amanet.org/articles/more-training-in-the-four-cs-still-needed/>

³ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rachelwells/2024/03/17/5-good-work-skills-to-include-in-your-resume-in-2024/?sh=2879c6a16a65>



Figure 4: Sanjay explaining how to take risk, and win...

"I too EXCEL" is not just aspirational or a guidance, it's a challenge to everyone involved in the program to do so, be it the fantastic instructors (average current rating of over 4.7/5, thanks to [Prof Shantanu Bhattacharya](#), [Prof Melvyn Teo](#), [Prof Ernst Osinga](#), [Prof Hao Liang](#), Adjunct Faculty and Panel Discussion Moderator [Sayanta Basu](#), Panelists [Anindo Mukherjee](#) and [Dr Rahul Banerjee](#)), administration (average rating of over 4.8/5, thanks to [Shannon Pang](#), Amanda Soh and [Dr Flocy Joseph](#), and



Figure 5: Rituparna in her charming best on her journey to stardom... and sustaining it.



Figure 6 Somabrata explaining to Anindo sustainability

Teamwork, Leadership, Problem Solving and Self-Motivation. I couldn't agree more except that the I2XL program started in 2019, envisaged in 2018, to engender these same sets of qualities among its participants.

Inclusion though is an essential part of education and collaborative learning; the future of skills is not individual but possibly community based. It's also our support structure in times of need.

[Eddie Tritton](#) and the ExD team, our graduate Program Admin Assistant [James Simon Maliki](#)) and the program objectives being met (average rating 4.88/5). These are some of the highest the program has ever received, hence maybe it is the best ever.

The icing on the cake might have been a conversation and a sharing session about her lived journey in stardom by [Ms Rituparna SenGupta](#), a versatile and renowned artist, actor, producer and absolute icon of Indian and Bengali cinema, and for awarding of certificates

for the I2XL program. Heart to heart Interaction with entrepreneurs, business leaders, artists, writers, academics, policymakers, diplomats, civil servants was probably one of the highlights of the networking gala dinner. Thanks to [Ameya Abhyankar](#) (Head of Counsel Services, High Commission of India in Singapore), [Sayanta Basu](#) (Founder and MD, Agrud Advisors and Agrud Technologies, Adjunct Faculty, SMU), [Ajay Bhattacharya](#) (MD and Founder, Fortrec) [Prof Shantanu Bhattacharya](#) (Deputy Dean Programs, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, SMU), Roma Bose (Author), [Subhendu Bose](#) (MD,



Figure 9: Original Gangsters Sayanta and Aurobindo... sorry, for starting I2XL



Figure 8: Gautam sharing his view on life...with a smile...

Duferco Asia), [Sanjay Chakrabarty](#) (Founder and Managing Partner, Capital Square Partners), [Dr. Kaushik Ghatak](#) (Entrepreneur, Adjunct Faculty SMU, President of Bengali Association of Singapore), [Dr Shoumo Mitra](#) (R&D Director, Corteva Agriscience), Dr Neela Mohanan (IAS Officer), [Anindo Mukherjee](#) (COO, Fullerton Financial Holdings, subsidiary of Temasek International), [Mr Gautam Rudra](#) (Head of Post Trade, SGX), [Devak Saha](#) (Program Director, Group Risk, Standard Chartered Bank), [Ms Rituparna](#)



Figure 7 ...Now its Shantanu's turn... yes, join LKCSB

[SenGupta](#) (actor and producer, Indian Film Industry), [Mukesh Sharda](#) (Managing Partner, Capital Square Partners) among significant others just to name a few for gracing the occasion and engaging the participants.

[Anagha Menon](#) described in her LinkedIn post about the holistic experiential part of the program:

“Discussing stocks, portfolios, finance, economics, Singapore and Everything under the Sun with Prof. Aurobindo Ghosh, who made sure the I2XL Week would be an unforgettable learning experience for each one of us. Meeting the wonderful Rituparna Sengupta ma'am and



Figure 10 Subhendu and Shoumo...Cheers to good health

interacting with the other participants from the E-MBA programme felt like icing on the cake. Thank You James Simon Maliki, for making this so easy for us.”

Without the Corporate Visit hosts, project partners and mentors, the immersion part (ongoing) would not be possible, so my sincere gratitude to [Dr Taimur Baig](#), [Mr Gautam Rudra](#), [Mr Geoff Howie](#), [Vijay Iyengar](#), [Projit Chatterjee](#),



Figure 11 No roll call...no syllabus...no problem...I2XL network

[Subhendu Bose](#), [Anindo Mukherjee](#), [Nikhilesh Goel](#), [Milena Naitoh](#), [Prof Jeremy Goh](#), [Prof Massimiliano Landi](#), [Adj Faculty Victor Ong](#) to name a few.

[Sarthak](#) shared on his I2XL experience:

“...it was a whirlwind of learning, networking, and cultural immersion! I had the privilege of attending the immersion program at Singapore Management University (SMU) hosted by Prof Aurobindo Ghosh.”

[Rishi Dam](#) shared his own take, alluding to an unforgettable experience of a lifetime, maybe more than meets the eye:



Figure 12 Rituparna awarding I2XL certificates, with Shantanu and Aurobindo



Figure 13 I2XL Participants all smiles with Shantanu, Aurobindo and James

“Another part of our learning was through the several opportunities to network with eminent industry stalwarts, for which I am truly grateful. We also made it a point to extensively explore the dynamic and lively heritage of Singapore and experience its unique cultural blend. Through this programme, I have made some core memories and had amazing experiences that I will continue to cherish for a lifetime!”

[Saikat Dutta](#) summarized:

“Thank you for a wonderful detailed and practical learning experience at Singapore Management University arranged by VGSoM - IIT Kharagpur and Singapore Management University.”



Figure 14: SMU-I2XL Networking and Awarding of Certificates. Honored Guest Rituparna SenGupta joins Aurobindo and Shantanu, Galbraith Room, The American Club, May 2, 2024