



Research Skills for Social Services Mentoring Programme (25 Apr – 25 Jul 2023)

Programme Description:

This 13-week course is a research mentoring programme that offers social service professionals an opportunity to complete a small-scale research project with guidance from experienced researcher-mentors. Participants in this programme will be supported by workshops, peer group discussions, and regular feedback from mentors. Throughout the programme, social service professionals will be guided from the conceptualisation of the research problem to data collection, data analysis, and presentation of their research findings.

While the workshops and mentors may provide support on specific research methods or skills, these would tailor towards the needs and requirements of the research projects proposed. The programme strives to provide a holistic guidance and support on the different stages of research for each proposed research project.

Programme Objectives:

At the end of the programme, participants are expected to achieve the following objectives:

- Conceptualise and construct sound research questions relevant to their social service practice that would develop into feasible research projects completed within the programme time-frame;
- Apply appropriate research methods to their research projects;
- Understand and appreciate ethical concerns on social service research;
- Conduct data collection or fieldwork necessary for their research projects;
- Conduct appropriate data analyses and provide accurate data interpretations for their research projects; and
- Prepare and present research findings for a mini-conference.

Programme Requirements:

All participants are required to:

- Conceptualise and complete a research project, either individually or in small groups
- Submit two assignments to the mentors for comments
- Attend and contribute actively during the workshops and mentoring sessions
- Present research findings on programme graduation day

All participants of the programme are expected to attend and contribute actively during the workshops and the discussion groups organised by the mentors.

Programme Structure:

The research mentoring programme will be conducted over 13 weeks (in-person). There will be 2 full-day workshops, 6 mentoring sessions, and 1 end-of-course graduation presentation.

- Workshop 1: 25 Apr 2023, 9:00AM – 6:00PM
- Workshop 2: 26 Apr 2023, 9:00AM – 6:00PM
- 6 mentoring sessions: to be arranged with mentors
- Graduation presentation (for participants): 25 Jul 2023

For each mentoring session, participants will be organised in small groups of 3 – 4 members each and they will arrange with their mentors on suitable times to meet. Each mentoring session will last about 2 hours at timings agreed by the group.

Programme Expectations:

The programme requires participants to be committed to completing a research project. Other than attending the 2 workshops and the 6 required meetings with mentors, participants will need to have sufficient time to prepare for their research proposals, conduct library research, collect data, perform data-analyses, write reports and prepare for their final presentations. Please consider the time needed for completing this programme and other commitments for work, family, rest, and leisure.

A substantial part of the learning from this programme will come from mutual sharing of their research progress among the participants. Participants must be prepared to share the different stages of their research projects with their mentors and with other participants. If participants are handling confidential data or information from their agencies, they must be prepared to obtain prior consent from the sources of their data or be able to remove personal identifiers from their data before sharing.

Assignments:

There will be two assignments that participants are expected to submit during the duration of the programme. Mentors will give feedback and comments on the assignments.

The first assignment is a written research proposal (800 – 1,000 words) outlining the following parts:

1. The research question(s)
2. Literature review
3. Methods

The second assignment consists of two components. The first component is an abstract of the research findings (200 – 300 words) and the second component must be submitted as either a) a set of presentation slides or b) a written report (2500 – 3500 words), excluding the words in references and appendices), according to the following general format:

1. Title
2. Abstract
3. Introduction (including a literature review, the research question(s)/hypotheses, and, if applicable, a conceptual/theoretical framework)
4. Methods
5. Findings /results (including interpretations)
6. Discussion (including limitations and implications for policy and/or practice)
7. References and, if applicable, appendices

Target Programme Participants:

The programme welcomes all participants working in the social service or health sectors, who have a strong interest in research. Participants should have at least a Bachelor's degree in any discipline and basic knowledge on social research. In particular, the programme is targeted at:

- Social workers
- Medical social workers
- Allied health professionals
- Social service practitioners and professionals from government agencies or voluntary welfare organisations

Programme Materials:

All participants will be given access to **on-site** NUS e-library resources during the period of the programme. Hence, they are expected to make good use of the available library resources for their research projects. However, software such as SPSS, STATA or NVivo will not be available and participants will need to purchase their own software if they need to use them.

Programme Mentor:

Dr Ng Guat Tin is an Associate at the Social Service Research Centre (SSR), NUS. Her past research and evaluation studies were related to recovery from the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, well-being of older persons, family caregiving, family violence, training needs assessment, and service design. Her current research interests include aged care, family caregiving, transnational families, and documentation of social services.

Programme Trainers:

Dr Seah Lay Hoon is a Senior Research Fellow at the Social Service Research Centre (SSR), NUS. She received her postgraduate diploma in Education from the National Institute of Education (NIE) and her masters and Ph.D. in Science Education from the University of Melbourne, Australia. Her research work entails the use of qualitative methods and analysis such as interviews, ethnographic observations, researcher-practitioner collaborative inquiry, thematic analysis, discourse analysis and applied linguistic analysis.

Dr Xu Jianbin is a Research Fellow at the Social Service Research Centre (SSR), NUS. He holds a PhD in Social Work from NUS. His research interests include exploring the role of spirituality in ageing and examining the application of mindfulness, narrative therapy, and existential therapy in the social work context. He enjoys mining the nuggets of meaning and insight from the bonanzas of qualitative data.

Dr Gerard Chung is an Adjunct Research Fellow at the Social Service Research Centre (SSR), NUS. He completed his Ph.D. in social work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA. He is interested in researching parenting and families, intervention development, and casework processes in social service agencies.

Course Fees:

This course is SSG-approved. Participants who are **Singaporeans or Singaporean Permanent Residents** will be eligible for subsidies of 70% of the course fees, excluding GST. **Singaporean participants who are aged 40 years old** and above will be eligible for higher subsidies of up to 90% of course fees. Participants are required to attend at least 75% of the course and obtain a pass grade for the required assignments. The following table shows the breakdown of the course fee payable.

	International Participants	Singapore Citizens		Singapore PRs
		39 years old or younger	40 years old or older	
Full Programme Fee	\$4000.00	\$4000.00	\$4000.00	\$4000.00
Less: SSG Grant Amount	\$0.00	\$2800.00	\$2800.00	\$2800.00
Nett Programme Fee	\$4000.00	\$1200.00	\$1200.00	\$1200.00
8% GST on Nett Programme Fee	\$320.00	\$96.00	\$96.00	\$96.00
Total Nett Programme Fee Payable, Including GST	\$4320.00	\$1296.00	\$1296.00	\$1296.00
Less Additional Funding if Eligible Under Various Schemes	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$800.00	\$0.00
Total Nett Programme Fee Payable, Including GST, after additional funding from the various funding schemes	\$4320.00	\$1296.00	\$496.00	\$1296.00

GST is increased from 7% to 8% WEF 1 Jan 2023.

Registration:

You may register online through the [NUS Online Application Portal \(OAP\)](#).

For corporate-sponsored participants, please click [here](#) for the registration guide.

For self-sponsored participants, please click [here](#) for the registration guide.

Please also submit a **brief research proposal** at this [link](#). A sample of the proposal template is available at the end of this document.

Registration closes on 3 Apr 2023.

Research Proposal Sample (Please fill out form at this [link](#))

I. Research Objective – What is the purpose of this research project?

II. Research Question – What is the research question I'm asking?

III. Tentative Research Plan and Methods – How will I collect data to answer my research question?