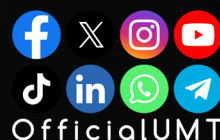


UMT NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Issue 6, June 2026



OCEAN OF
DISCOVERIES
FOR GLOBAL
SUSTAINABILITY

Every colour tells a story, every drawing carries a message.

In conjunction with World Oceans Day, the Colouring Competition at Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) brought together young participants to express their creativity while learning about the importance of ocean conservation.

Together, let's protect our oceans for generations to come.

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eISSN 2805-5578



As Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) celebrates its Silver Jubilee, this edition of the UMT Newsletter marks an important milestone in the university's journey of growth, achievement, and service. Over the past 25 years, UMT has evolved from a young institution into a recognized center of excellence, particularly in marine science and ocean studies, helping to advance the nation's Blue Economy agenda.

The stories in this edition reflect the breadth of UMT's contributions at the local, national, and international levels. From strengthening global partnerships and enhancing research collaborations to receiving international recognition for academic and scientific excellence, UMT continues to expand its impact beyond Malaysia's shores.

The achievements of our researchers, students, alumni, and staff featured in this newsletter serve as a reminder that UMT's success is built on the collective efforts of its people. Their dedication, innovation, and resilience continue to strengthen the university's reputation and relevance in a rapidly changing world.

As we commemorate 25 years of excellence, we also look ahead with confidence and determination. The challenges of the future, including climate change, food security, technological advancement, and sustainable ocean governance, require universities to play an even greater role in generating knowledge and developing solutions. UMT remains committed to meeting these challenges through excellence in education, research, innovation, and community service.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all stakeholders, partners, alumni, staff, and students who have contributed to UMT's remarkable journey. Together, we will continue to build on this legacy and chart a course toward greater achievements in the years ahead.



Zukiferee Ibrahim
Executive Editor


**UMT
NEWSLETTER**
Vol. 6 Issue 6, June 2026

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Leadership Insights



Universities now must transform into centres of innovation, community transformation, and national development. Hence, research empowerment is now an absolute necessity and obligation. Lecturers should not just impart knowledge from books but also conduct research that benefits the nation.

The culture of 'research-based education' must exist in universities, whereby teaching and research should not be separated. Beside imparting theoretical concepts from books, lecturers must incorporate actual experiences gained through research into teaching. Students learn better from actual experiences, so the more students are involved with ongoing research activities and learn about the discoveries, the more they develop critical thinking, creativity, and innovation. From my personal experience, nothing enlightens students more than lessons enriched by actual experiences in research and innovations carried out in aquaculture, marine biotechnology, and other disciplines.

In fact, working with players in industries, hatcheries, and local communities has seen my research findings translated into useful practices beneficial to both the aquaculture industries and the communities at large. Research should also benefit the country, so universities must provide scientific solutions to communities through scientific services, technical know-hows, training, and technology transfer.

Research activities also promote the national economy by fostering innovations and intellectual property rights and the creation of advanced industries. Universities and the government must continuously multiply grants for translational research, to translate scientific discoveries into practical technologies and products, policies, and community-based solutions. Through translational research, universities impact industries and the community better. Universities, governments, and industries must collaborate to ensure research outputs enhance the national economy.

Universities must ensure that good science discovered is conveyed to the world, not locked up in laboratories. They must be disseminated in other formats such as books, scientific publications, technical papers, conference presentations, policy papers, training manuals, industrial guidance papers. Scientific writing and knowledge transfer is therefore integral to science and academia, and can take various forms, including community outreach, consulting services, public talks, seminars, workshops, and training sessions. Engaging the media can also raise awareness of the latest scientific breakthroughs.

Academicians must collaborate with other scientists in related fields to generate new knowledge. Networking increases innovation capability while enhancing global exposure.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been useful in research. With the help of AI, literature mining, data analysis, and modelling, a prediction system becomes quite easy. AI also helps to identify new research areas to investigate. However, AI must not replace scientific thought; use it as an auxiliary means to improve human intellect and to make the research process faster and more accurate.

In my view, lecturers active in research excel better as educators and researchers. Constantly involved in research activities helps lecturers be highly alert intellectually. Lecturers who contribute innovation, technology, and services to society inspire their students.

Developing a research-oriented culture requires vision, leadership, institutional commitment, and a sense of purpose among academics. Through such efforts, universities can fulfill their true mission: promoting national development and human advancement.



News & Events

UMT, WISTA MALAYSIA Drive Maritime Transformation

By Dr. Izyan Munirah Mohd Zaideen, Adzie Faraha Mo'osin and Associate Professor Ts. Dr. Nurul Haqimin Mohd Salleh, Centre for Knowledge Transfer, Industry & Community Linkages (PPIJIM), Faculty of Maritime Studies (FMS)

To provide a platform for exploring the evolving role of women in shaping the future of the maritime industry, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) recently partnered with WISTA (Women's International Shipping & Trading Association) Malaysia to host the International Day for Women in Maritime (IDWM) 2026.

The two-day programme organized by UMT's Centre for Knowledge Transfer, Industry & Community Linkages in collaboration with the Faculty of Maritime Studies gathered key stakeholders from academia, industry, government agencies, and professional bodies.

The programme was held in conjunction with the International Day for Women in Maritime celebrated every 18 May. The global observance recognizes the contributions of women in the maritime industry and promotes greater gender equality across the sector. This year's theme was From Policy to Practice: Advancing Gender Equality for Maritime Excellence.

The organizing of IDWM 2026 reflects UMT's position as the premier "engine room" of maritime talent and thought leadership in the ASEAN region.

"The university's specialized undergraduate and master's programmes coupled with an elite line-up of subject matter experts are uniquely engineered to turn academic excellence into real-world industrial impact," said Professor Ts. Dr. Noor Maizura Mohamad Noor, UMT Pro Vice Chancellor (Industrial Linkages & Community) in her welcoming remarks.

UMT's event partner WISTA is a global organization dedicated to supporting women in maritime, shipping, logistics, and trading industries. It has more than 5,000 members across 60 national associations worldwide including Malaysia. Its mission includes professional development, networking, leadership advancement, and promoting gender diversity in the maritime sector.

The keynote address by Dato' Monaliza Suhaimi, Director General of the Malaysian Institute of Maritime (MIMA) echoed the spirit of the event. Addressing a packed hall of delegates and students, she challenged traditional industry frameworks with a resounding message on gender equity.

"Competency and capability are not determined by gender," Dato' Monaliza said. "True maritime excellence can only be achieved when we dismantle the structural barriers that



restrict talent based on outdated stereotypes and actively move from policy on paper to lived practice."

The highlight of the event was the leadership forum, moderated by Reshma Yussouf, president of WISTA Malaysia. It featured panellists from PETRONAS, Johor Port Authority, Sea Teknik Robotics, and a former UMT Vice Chancellor. The forum highlighted leadership experiences, industry transformation, and the importance of diversity in driving innovation within the maritime sector.

One of the programme's most significant impacts was connecting students with accomplished women professionals from across the maritime sector. Their interactions highlighted the importance of diversity and inclusion as key drivers of innovation and resilience within the maritime industry.

News & Events

UMT Expertise Gains External Recognition

By Amirul Salam, Corporate Communications Office

Recognition of Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT)'s academic expertise continues to grow outside of the institution when two of its lecturers were recently invited by leading Indonesian universities for a series of academic engagements.

Associate Professor Dr. Nor Fatimah Che Sulaiman and Dr. Siti Nurain Muhmad were invited by Universitas Negeri Malang and Universitas Trunojoyo Madura to deliver guest lectures and discuss institutional collaboration programmes.

Attached to the Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Development (FPEPS), Dr. Nor Fatimah specializes in macroeconomics, economic development, economic growth, poverty, and sustainability-related development issues, while Dr. Siti Nurain focuses on banking, finance, sustainable finance, corporate governance, ESG (environmental, social, governance) issues, and sustainability performance.

At the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Malang, the UMT delegation shared their expertise and perspectives on contemporary developments in economics, finance, sustainability, and social development. The session attracted active participation from students and academic staff, creating a vibrant atmosphere for intellectual exchange and professional discourse.

Through the session, participants gained exposure to emerging industry trends, innovative teaching approaches, and current research developments relevant to today's rapidly evolving economic and educational landscape. The programme also encouraged greater academic interaction between Malaysian and Indonesian scholars, further strengthening mutual understanding and regional cooperation.

At the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Trunojoyo Madura, several high-level discussions were conducted to explore opportunities for long-term collaboration between the institutions. Among the key areas discussed were curriculum enhancement initiatives, lecturer expertise exchange programmes, collaborative research projects, joint academic publications, and mobility opportunities for students and academic staff. Both institutions also explored potential collaborations aimed at strengthening organisational development and improving academic competitiveness at the international level.

Dr. Siti Nurain described the collaboration as an important milestone in strengthening academic diplomacy between Malaysia and Indonesia.



"Collaborations such as these not only strengthen institutional relationships but also provide a valuable platform for sharing expertise, enhancing research capabilities, and developing future-ready graduates equipped with international perspectives," she said.

Meanwhile, Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Trunojoyo Madura, Sutikno, described the collaboration as a valuable contribution to the university's academic development agenda.

He said the expertise and international exposure brought by the UMT lecturers would support efforts to strengthen academic systems, curriculum quality, and institutional management practices.

Dr. Nor Fatimah said the initiative aligns with UMT's aspiration to continue enhancing academic excellence, expanding strategic global collaborations, and positioning itself as a leading regional institution actively contributing to higher education development and knowledge exchange across Southeast Asia.

News & Events

UMT Student Icon Awards 2025 Celebrates Outstanding Students

By Munirah Mansor, Student Affairs and Alumni Division

Continuing its commitment to empowering student development, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), through its Student Affairs and Alumni Division (HEPA), organised the Student Icon Awards (AIS) 2025. The event recognized exemplary students who had excelled in intellectual achievement, leadership, character development, and their ability to create meaningful impact for the university, society, and the nation.

Carrying the theme "Elevating Outstanding Student Excellence", the ceremony held at UMT's Sultan Mizan Hall brought together the university's most accomplished students who had demonstrated outstanding achievements throughout the 2024/2025 academic session.

AIS 2025 featured eleven individual award categories covering leadership, arts and heritage, volunteerism, sports and recreation, public speaking, community service, innovation, unity, inclusivity, sustainability, and student entrepreneurship.

Four team award categories were also contested: Best State Student Association, Best Academic Club, Best Volunteer Club, and Best Social Club.

The event also highlighted three of the university's highest honours, the UMT Student Personality Award 2025, the Vice-Chancellor's "U and Me Together" Award, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni) Bingkas Award, to recognise students who have emerged as role models and sources of inspiration within the university community.

Muhammad Zaki Anuar was announced the recipient of the UMT Student Personality Award 2025, for being an exemplary student who demonstrated excellence in academics, leadership, character, and community contributions.

Meanwhile, the Sarawak Students' Association received the Vice-Chancellor's "U and Me Together" Award, while Muhammad Afiq Naquiddin Mohd Afizal was honoured with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni) Bingkas Award for his outstanding commitment to leadership and student development.

Hirman Awang, Director of the Student Affairs Division, Department of Higher Education, and Chief Executive Officer



of the Student Empowerment Foundation (Yayasan Perkasa Siswa), in his officiating speech said AIS as a strategic platform for showcasing students' potential as valuable national assets while fostering confidence, aspiration, and a culture of excellence among young people.

Prof. Dr. Mohd Izani Mohd Zain, UMT's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni), said the AIS 2025 finalists represented an exceptional group of students who had demonstrated a balance of intellectual capability, emotional maturity, strong character, and the courage to lead change in line with the student empowerment agenda introduced by the Ministry of Higher Education.

He added the winners would go on to represent UMT at the national-level Student Personality Awards.

Expressing his gratitude, Muhammad Zaki said the award was not merely a personal achievement but a significant responsibility that must be translated into continued efforts to benefit students and society.

"This achievement does not belong to me alone, but to everyone who has guided and trusted me throughout my journey," he said. "UMT has provided me with opportunities to create, innovate, and develop my potential, enabling me to reach this stage."

News & Events

UMT Achieves Outstanding Graduate Employability and Graduate Marketability Performance in 2025

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nor Fazliyana Mohtar, UMT-GEM

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) has once again demonstrated excellence in graduate development when it recorded a Graduate Employability (GE) rate of 94.8% and Graduate Marketability (GM) rate of 93.9% for the year 2025.

The performance represents an increase of 0.8 percentage point in GE and 0.7 percentage point in GM over the previous year.

The achievement has been reported by the latest TalentBank Graduate Employability Index, which is an industry-driven benchmark that evaluates graduate quality and employer confidence based on actual hiring experiences.

The recognition signifies the increasing trust of employers in UMT graduates and highlights the university's efforts in aligning academic delivery with industry expectations.

"Our graduates are our greatest ambassadors, and their success reflects the strength of the university's educational ecosystem," said UMT Vice Chancellor Professor Ir. Ts. Dr. Mohd Zamri Ibrahim.

According to Prof. Zamri, the achievement reflects the collective commitment of the university community, industry partners, and stakeholders in ensuring graduates are equipped with the competencies required for success.

"Employability is no longer limited to securing employment but encompasses the development of graduates who are capable of creating value in diverse professional settings," he said.

"UMT is always committed to producing graduates who are not only knowledgeable in their respective disciplines but also possess the adaptability, resilience, and professional attributes demanded by today's workforce," added Prof. Zamri. UMT's employability agenda has been strengthened through strategic collaborations with industry, government agencies, and professional bodies. Various initiatives, including career development programmes, industry engagement activities, experiential learning opportunities, professional certification programmes and entrepreneurship interventions have contributed significantly towards improving graduate



outcomes. These initiatives have helped graduates prepare for the transition into the workforce.

These initiatives are coordinated through the Centre for Graduate Entrepreneurship and Employability (UMT-GEM), which serves as a catalyst in connecting students with industry, enhancing career readiness and fostering entrepreneurial competencies among undergraduates.

The achievement is also closely aligned with the aspirations outlined in the Malaysia Higher Education Strategic Plan (RPTM) 2026–2035, particularly Shift 1: Human-Centred, Entrepreneurial and Adaptive Learners. The plan emphasises the importance of producing graduates who possess strong human values, entrepreneurial capabilities and the adaptability required to navigate an increasingly complex and technology-driven environment.

News & Events

UMT Advances Innovation Excellence with Gold and Silver Wins at Pi-ENVEX 2026

By Cik Nur Aisyah Mustafa, Student Affairs and Alumni Office

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) continued to make its mark on the international innovation landscape with an outstanding performance at the Perlis International Engineering Invention & Innovation Exhibition (Pi-ENVEX) 2026, held at Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) from 14 to 17 May 2026.

Representing the university, the Scholarship and Welfare Section under the Student Affairs and Alumni Office (HEPA), together with a team of students from various programmes, showcased two innovative projects that garnered recognition.

HEPA secured a Silver Medal through its project, Dapo MAIDAM@UMT, a digital transformation initiative designed to enhance the management and delivery of food assistance for eligible students. The application serves as a comprehensive platform that streamlines the distribution of food aid vouchers, improves operational efficiency and strengthens transparency in welfare management.

Developed in response to the growing need for a more systematic and accountable welfare delivery mechanism, Dapo MAIDAM@UMT leverages digital technology to simplify processes that were previously managed manually. The innovation enables real-time monitoring, improves data accuracy and facilitates seamless coordination among stakeholders, ultimately ensuring that assistance reaches beneficiaries in a timely and effective manner within the university community.

Adding to UMT's success, a group of five students from various academic backgrounds, supervised by Captain Dr. Amir Syawal Kamis, captured a Gold Medal with their OCEANIC ORDER: NAVIGATE AND LEARN project. The digital maritime application was developed as an integrated platform that combines maritime education and real-time vessel monitoring within a single smart ecosystem.

Designed to enhance maritime literacy and operational efficiency, Oceanic Order integrates maritime learning modules with real-time yacht tracking and marine operations management features within a single



digital platform. The application supports learning in seafaring, navigation and maritime safety while providing practical tools for vessel monitoring, regatta tracking and race analysis.

Pi-ENVEX 2026 attracted 221 innovation entries from Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Taiwan, Indonesia, Egypt, Palestine, Sudan, Yemen, Nigeria and Romania. The exhibition served as a platform for innovators, researchers, educators and students to showcase groundbreaking ideas, exchange knowledge and establish meaningful collaborations across borders.

Amirul Hafez Mohamed Masarik, a member of the Oceanic Order: Navigate and Learn team, said Pi-ENVEX 2026 provided exposure to international innovation standards and opportunities to engage with experts and innovators from diverse backgrounds.

"The experience enhanced our team's technical knowledge, presentation skills and confidence, while inspiring us to further develop innovative solutions with real-world impact," he said.

As UMT continues to champion excellence in education, research and student development, achievements such as these reaffirm the university's position as a dynamic institution dedicated to producing impactful innovations that address real-world challenges and create lasting value for communities locally and globally.

News & Events

UMT Strengthens Australia–Malaysia Research Collaboration

By Syarifah Noormaisarah Tuan Besar, International Centre

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) has strengthened its international academic and research network with Australia following a courtesy visit by representatives of the Australian High Commission on 6 June 2026, paving the way for expanded collaboration in marine science, the blue economy, climate change, and maritime research.

The engagement underscored growing interest in leveraging UMT's expertise as Malaysia's leading marine-focused university to address global environmental challenges through strategic international partnerships. Both parties explored opportunities to enhance research cooperation, academic mobility, and knowledge exchange between Malaysian and Australian institutions.

The Australian delegation was led by Her Excellency Danielle Heinecke, High Commissioner of Australia, accompanied by Ms Imogen D'Souza, Second Secretary, and Mr Nik Mohd Yusof, Political Research Officer. Their visit reflected Australia's continued commitment to strengthening ties with Malaysian higher education institutions, particularly in areas related to sustainability, marine resources, and the blue economy.

During discussions, the High Commission highlighted UMT as a promising partner for future collaboration, citing the university's established strengths in marine science, biodiversity, climate change, renewable energy, blue economy development, and maritime studies. Maritime research emerged as a particularly strong area of mutual interest, given the shared priorities of both countries in ensuring sustainable ocean governance and marine conservation.

UMT also expressed its commitment to expanding collaborative initiatives with Australian institutions, particularly in ocean-related research. Areas identified for potential cooperation include marine plastic pollution, sustainable ocean management, and capacity-building programmes that promote the exchange of researchers and students.

Such initiatives are expected to strengthen joint research output while providing valuable opportunities for academic and cultural exchange. They also align with broader efforts to develop innovative solutions to pressing environmental issues affecting marine ecosystems and coastal communities across the region.

The discussion further explored opportunities to enhance existing and future collaborations with James Cook University,



a renowned Australian institution recognised for its expertise in marine and tropical research. Both parties acknowledged the potential for expanding joint research projects, student mobility programmes, and academic partnerships that would contribute to regional and global sustainability goals.

As a university with a strong focus on marine and coastal studies, UMT continues to play an important role in advancing scientific knowledge and fostering international cooperation in ocean-related fields. The engagement with the Australian High Commission reinforces the university's growing international profile and highlights its capacity to contribute meaningfully to global research networks.

The visit marks another important milestone in deepening Malaysia–Australia academic relations while positioning UMT as a regional hub for marine and coastal research dedicated to addressing shared environmental challenges through collaboration and innovation.

News & Events

UMT Showcases Success of Its Kampung Angkat MADANI Project

By Siti Nurhassira Abu Hassan, Centre for Knowledge Transfer, Industry and Community Linkages (PPIUM)

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) proudly highlighted the impact of its Kampung Angkat MADANI Project in Kampung Menerong during the recent launch of the Higher Education Roadshow @ Terengganu in Hulu Terengganu.

The university showcased a range of initiatives that have directly benefited the local community through knowledge transfer, capacity building and socio-economic empowerment programmes. Among the key outcomes were entrepreneurship projects and skills enhancement programmes designed to improve livelihoods and create sustainable income-generating opportunities for residents.

The ceremony also saw certificates presented to participants who successfully completed the Kelulut Entrepreneurship Programme, the Oyster Mushroom Cultivation and Downstream Products Entrepreneurship Project, and the English Language Enhancement Programme for Local Tourism Operators. These initiatives were implemented to strengthen community competencies and enhance economic competitiveness.

As part of its commitment to advancing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education, UMT also presented the Sekolah Angkat STEM appointment certificates to 12 schools in the Hulu Terengganu district. The initiative aims to nurture students' interest and strengthen their mastery of STEM subjects, supporting the state's efforts to develop future talent in science and technology.

Visitors were also introduced to UMT's B20 Biodiesel Production Project from used cooking oil, a research-based innovation that promotes environmental sustainability and renewable energy through the recycling of domestic waste.

The initiatives were showcased during the launch of the Higher Education Roadshow @ Terengganu, a Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) programme that will also be implemented across eight districts in the state. The roadshow aims to bring the services, expertise and benefits of higher education institutions closer to communities, while contributing to local development and well-being.

The programme featured community projects, research innovations, and knowledge-transfer initiatives. Participating institutions included UMT, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Universiti Malaysia Pahang Al-Sultan Abdullah, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Hulu Terengganu Polytechnic, and Hulu Terengganu Community College.



Among the highlights were the STEM on Wheels exhibition, Fun Walk, higher education study fair, educational counselling sessions, mobile health clinic services, free market, Mobile Veterinary Clinic and Agro MADANI sales programme. Government agencies and private-sector organisations, including PTPTN, NADI and MAXIS, also participated by introducing various services and initiatives to visitors.

The programme was officiated by the Minister of Higher Education, Dato' Seri Diraja Dr. Zambray Abd Kadir, and attended by senior leadership from MOHE, public universities, polytechnics, community colleges, government agencies, private companies and local community representatives. Also present were the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Higher Education, Dato' Ts. Dr. Haji Aminuddin Hassim; the Director-General of Higher Education, Department of Higher Education, YBhg. Datuk Professor Dr. Azlinda Azman; and UMT Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ir. Ts. Dr. Mohd Zamri Ibrahim.

News & Events

Student Entrepreneurship Incubator Launched to Nurture Talent

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nor Fazliyana Mohtar, UMT-GEM

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) through the Student Affairs and Alumni Division (HEPA) and the Centre for Graduate Entrepreneurship and Employability (UMT-GEM) has recently launched the Student Entrepreneur Incubator to nurture and strengthen entrepreneurial talent among students while providing them with structured opportunities to develop sustainable business ventures.

The initiative aligns with the aspirations of the National Entrepreneurship Policy and the Higher Education Entrepreneurship Action Plan (PTK-IPT).

The Student Entrepreneur Incubator provides more than just business space for students. It is a comprehensive development platform that combines entrepreneurial training, mentoring, business coaching, industry networking, product enhancement, pitching opportunities and access to potential funding and commercialisation pathways. Through this initiative, students are encouraged to transform innovative ideas into viable business ventures while pursuing their academic studies. The incubator also functions as a one-stop centre showcasing products developed by student entrepreneurs at UMT.

UMT Deputy Vice Chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni), Prof. Dr. Mohd Izani Mohd Zain, described the incubator as an important platform for fostering an entrepreneurial mindset among students. He emphasised that the initiative aligns with UMT's broader agenda of enhancing graduate employability and strengthening entrepreneurship outcomes among students and graduates.

"Currently the incubator offers 40 products developed by students with 10 of the businesses producing the products registered with Companies Commission of Malaysia (SSM)," he said.

The launch also received positive feedback from student entrepreneurs. Muhammad Haris Syahmi Hashim, a student entrepreneur involved in the Serambi Niaga residential college initiative, expressed his appreciation for the university's efforts in providing dedicated support for student businesses.



"This incubator gives us access to mentors, networking opportunities and guidance that can help us expand our businesses. It motivates student entrepreneurs to be more confident in pursuing entrepreneurship as a serious career pathway," he shared.

The ceremony was officiated by Hirman Awang, Director of the Student Development Division, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). He is also the Chief Executive Officer of Yayasan Perkasa Siswa (YPS).

Speaking at the event, Encik Hirman said entrepreneurship is no longer an alternative career pathway but an essential competency for graduates in facing the increasingly competitive and dynamic job market. The incubator reflects UMT's aspiration to produce graduates who are adaptable, innovative, and capable of creating employment opportunities for others.

The launch further reinforces UMT's commitment to producing holistic graduates equipped with entrepreneurial competencies, leadership qualities and the resilience needed to contribute meaningfully to the nation's socio-economic development.

Through strategic collaborations with industry partners, government agencies and entrepreneurial support organisations, the initiative is poised to create greater opportunities for students to innovate, compete, and thrive in the evolving entrepreneurial landscape.

Researcher Spotlight

Associate Professor Dr. Riswadi Azmi

Associate Professor Dr. Riswadi Azmi specialises in Islamic heritage and Qur'anic manuscript studies and is currently attached to the Centre for Fundamental and Continuing Education (PPAL), Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT). After secondary school, he pursued higher education at Al-Azhar University, Egypt, where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) in al-Quran and Variant Readings (Qira'at) in 2003. He was subsequently awarded the Federal Training Award (HLP) by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, which enabled him to further his studies at Universiti Malaya and earn a Master of Usuluddin in Quranic Studies in 2012 and then a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Islamic Studies in 2018.

Dr. Riswadi's research centres on Qur'an manuscript studies in Southeast Asia, particularly manuscripts dating from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. His work examines the historical, codicological, artistic, and textual dimensions of these manuscripts, contributing significantly to the understanding of the development of Islamic intellectual traditions in the Malay world.

A strong advocate of digital heritage preservation, Dr. Riswadi led the development of the Cultural Heritage Digital Gallery (CHDG), an innovative platform that showcases Malay-Islamic manuscripts through Augmented Reality (AR) technology. The application enables users to interact with rare cultural artefacts in immersive digital environments, making heritage more accessible to younger generations. The project has been featured at the My5G Portal, Tun Razak Exchange (TRX).

His expertise has gained international recognition through his appointment as a Visiting Researcher at the King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archives (DARAH) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. There, he conducts comparative research on Qur'an manuscripts, examining the influence of Malay manuscript traditions within the broader Islamic world and fostering scholarly collaboration between Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

Beyond academic research, Dr. Riswadi actively engages in community development through education and social empowerment initiatives. He currently leads a consultancy grant funded by Yayasan Hasanah aimed at enhancing



educational opportunities for 250 B40 children from coastal communities in Kuala Nerus, Terengganu. The programme integrates educational intervention, mentoring, and community engagement to improve learning outcomes and expand access to quality education.

Dr. Riswadi's contributions to cultural heritage preservation have also had a lasting national impact. Through his research and advocacy efforts, four Terengganu Qur'an manuscripts have been successfully gazetted as Malaysian National Heritage. These manuscripts have subsequently been selected to represent Malaysia in nominations for the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme.

Through his interdisciplinary approach that bridges manuscript studies, digital innovation, heritage conservation, and community engagement, Dr. Riswadi continues to advance the understanding of Islamic civilisation while ensuring that valuable cultural legacies remain relevant and accessible to future generations.

Alumni Spotlight

From The Shores of UMT to The Frontiers of Aquatic Genomics

The academic journey of Associate Professor Dr. Lilian Wong, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) graduate of 2007, now attached to UMT's Institute of Climate Adaptation and Marine Biotechnology (ICAMB), demonstrates how unexpected opportunities can lead to rewarding and impactful careers. Although she initially aspired to pursue a medical degree, her path took a different direction when she enrolled in the Bachelor of Applied Fisheries Science programme at UMT. She discovered not only a profession but also a lifelong passion for fisheries and aquatic sciences.

Her years at UMT provided a strong foundation in both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Thanks to the university's distinctive learning environment, enriched by fieldwork and hands-on training, she learned various aspects of fisheries and marine science. Among her most memorable experiences were sampling expeditions aboard UMT's research vessels, field trips to Kenyir Lake, and opportunities to obtain a scuba diving licence. These experiences broadened her understanding of aquatic ecosystems while fostering resilience, adaptability, and scientific curiosity.

Through the programme's experiential learning approach, she gained first-hand experience in the entire shrimp production cycle, from hatchery operations to harvesting. From the exposure, she was able to connect classroom theories with industry practice and appreciate the real-world applications of scientific knowledge.

Beyond academics, Dr. Lilian Wong actively participated in co-curricular activities that contributed to her personal and leadership development. She performed with the university orchestra, organized programmes through the Chinese Student Association, and served as Vice President of AKASIA. As a result, she strengthened her communication, teamwork, and organizational skills, qualities that continue to support her academic career today.

Following graduation, her interest in biomedical science evolved into a desire to integrate fisheries science with molecular biology and biotechnology. Motivated by the



potential of genetic research to contribute to human health, animal welfare, and environmental sustainability, she pursued advanced studies in these fields.

She pursued her doctoral studies at Auburn University in the United States, under the sponsorship from the Ministry of Higher Education. She conducted research on Fish Genetics and expanded her expertise in aquatic genomics.

Today, Dr. Lilian Wong is a lecturer specializing in Aquatic Genomics and Bioinformatics at UMT. Through teaching and research, she guides students in understanding genetic and bioinformatics applications while exploring innovative approaches to sustainable aquaculture.

She credits UMT for providing the foundation that enabled her to excel internationally and contribute to advances in aquatic science. She encourages students to embrace the university's strong culture of experiential learning, research, and innovation, as these opportunities can shape both careers and their future contributions to society.



2nd International Biodiversity Symposium 2026 (IBDS2026)

8 - 10 September 2026

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT)

**Connecting people and nature:
Advancing biodiversity and climate resilience for a sustainable future**

Scopes

- Biodiversity & Climate Resilience
- Biodiversity in Sustainable Living & City
- Biodiversity, Ecosystem & Restoration
- Biodiversity & Community
- Biodiversity, Education & Society
- Biodiversity Innovation & Policy

Important dates

**Abstract
Submission**

3 March 2026

**Early Bird
Deadline**

30 Apr 2026

**Normal Rate & Full
Paper Deadline**

31 July 2026

**Conference
Day**

8 Sept 2026

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Physical

Virtual

Local Participants

Early bird

Normal rate

Early bird

Normal rate

Presenter (Researcher)

RM400

RM500

RM300

RM400

Presenter (Student)

RM300

RM400

RM200

RM250

Poster presenter

RM300

RM350

-

-

Listeners

RM300

RM350

-

RM250

International Participants

Early bird

Normal rate

Early bird

Normal rate

Presenter (Researcher)

USD200

USD250

USD150

USD200

Presenter (Student)

USD150

USD200

USD80

USD120

Poster presenter

USD150

USD180

-

-

Listeners

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USD180

-

USD120

Contact us:

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FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

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Acceptance Notification 1 June 2026

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For further enquiries,
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Razifah Mohd Razali
(BIOSES 2026 Secretariat)

+6019 9569981

razifah@umt.edu.my

Official seminar email

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