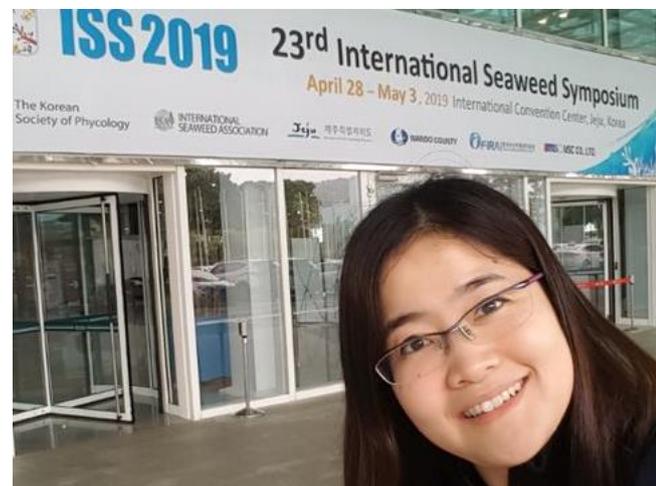


GlobalSeaweedSTAR Travel Fund Completion Report

Awardee Details

Grant reference ID	GSS/TF/008
Full name/title	Dr. Yow Yoon Yen
Position held	Senior Lecturer
Organisation	yoonyeny@sunway.edu.my



Details of Travel Activity

Name of activity	23 rd International Seaweed Symposium
Date held	April 28 to May 3, 2019
Personal contribution	Poster Presentation Title: Neuroprotective Activities of Malaysian Agarophyte: <i>Gracilaria manilaensis</i> Yamamoto & Trono with Cholinesterase and Nitric Oxide Inhibitory Activities

Report on Travel Activity

Malaysia is one of the developing countries engaged in seaweed farming. Seaweed farming was one of the National Key Economic Activities in the 10th Malaysia Plan. Malaysia was once the biggest producer for *Eucheuma cottonii* that is in Semporna (East Malaysia). My research interest focuses on discovery and development of new valuable bioactive compounds from seaweeds as functional food and nutraceutical candidates in the prevention of neurodegenerative diseases, and in anti-microbial, and cosmeceutical applications. I have also interested in the studies of

molecular phylogenetics and genetic diversity of seaweeds. I am having great collaborations with experts with different backgrounds from local institutions (University of Malaya, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman) and the University of Hong Kong (refer the attached CV for more details).

I would like to thank THE SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION FOR MARINE SCIENCE (SAMS) for offering me the travel grant to attend the 23rd International Seaweed Symposium in Jeju, Korea, from April 28th to May 3rd 2019. The title of my poster presentation was “Neuroprotective Activities of Malaysian Agarophyte: *Gracilaria manilaensis* Yamamoto & Trono with Cholinesterase and Nitric Oxide Inhibitory Activities”. *Gracilaria manilaensis* is a red agarophyte endemic to Malaysia coastal area. It is used as gelling and thickening agents for food industries. Our previous published data indicated that *G. manilaensis* has neuritogenic effect and it may possess potent bioactive compounds that mimic the neuroactivity of nerve growth factor (NGF) for neuronal survival, development and differentiation (refer the attached CV). Hence, the findings of neuroprotective effect of *G. manilaensis* is crucial to tap its potential as a promising functional food for neurological disorders treatment.

This symposium provided a full opportunity for constructive dialogue. There were 796 registrants from 41 countries. The topics of plenary talks and mini-symposia included algal natural products, functional foods and pharmacology, taxonomy and biodiversity, climate change and marine ecology, genomics, seaweed aquaculture, and industrial applications of seaweed. I shared my research findings with world experts to facilitate the latest scientific discoveries exchange and breakthroughs in algal research for the benefit of mankind. Interdisciplinary collaboration is acknowledged as an important component to improve the quality and sustainability of my research. It was an invaluable experience for me to create networking and collaboration, not only amongst phycologists but also with the entrepreneurs from the seaweed industries. I have met a number of researchers from UK and DAC-list countries who have similar research interests. Furthermore, a research collaboration network has been established with a Professor from Jeju National University. Such cooperation will undoubtedly broaden up the networking between institutions in the UK and seaweed producing DAC-list countries, creating more research opportunities and knowledge transfer for promoting the seaweed research and innovation capacity. It also helps to develop the global expertise needed to move global forward in the area of sustainable development and to protect and preserve the planet.