

## **SINGAPORE'S LARGEST SCIENCE FESTIVAL WANTS YOU TO ASK WHY!**

*Over six weeks, science.09's lineup of 147 events aims to fire the imagination*

**Singapore, 12 August 2009** – Millions have seen an apple fall. But Sir Isaac Newton was one of the first to ask “why?”, leading to the theory of gravity. This simple question is at the heart of science. And, this year, science.09, Singapore's largest science festival, hopes to re-ignite that spirit of inquisitiveness and discovery with an exciting program centering on the thought-provoking theme – **Ask Why**.

Jointly organised by the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR) and the Science Centre Singapore (SCS), science.09 festival features 147 events, activities, talks and workshops taking place island-wide from 14 August to 30 September 2009. Whether your interest lies in genetics, physics, astronomy, or nature, to science fiction or even gardening, there is something for everyone.

science.09 kicks off with **X-periment!**, a three-day mega science carnival at Marina Square Central Atrium from 14 August 2009. One of the highlights at X-periment! is a special performance by Dr Bunhead, also known as Dr Tom Pringle, from the United Kingdom. TV's most extreme educational scientist, Dr Bunhead's unique brand of explosive science experiments, such as Fire Tornado, Flaming Trump Tube and more, will thrill both the young and the old. The public can also learn more about the latest scientific developments and discoveries at X-periment! by visiting the exhibits and activities set up by the various science.09 partners.

Professor Miranda Yap, Executive Director of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR) Graduate Academy said, “We are pleased to partner with the Science Centre to reach out to students of all levels and the community at large through the exciting and educational activities in science.09. As part of our efforts to cultivate interest in science among the public, scientists from A\*STAR's research institutes will share their knowledge and expertise on a wide range of topics. For example, participants can find out more about the influenza A (H1N1) virus from A\*STAR researchers, doctors and other experts at the Biopolis Flu Forum.”

In August and September, students, families, professionals and visitors will be able to enjoy a plethora of activities - from science fiction movie festivals, to topical forums discussing the latest advances in understanding pandemics such as H1N1, to the wonders of Singapore gardens and robotics competitions. Visitors will be able to interact with practicing scientists and find out more about the exciting, current multi-disciplinary science.

Dr Chew Tuan Chiong, Chief Executive, SCS said, "Today, Science is borderless and multi-disciplinary. Through technology we are able to connect and share scientific knowledge and exchange ideas with the World. Science has indeed taken on a substantial role in our society and the world; impacting the way we live, work and play now and in the future. Increasingly, Singapore is involved in global scientific developments and it is encouraging to see Singaporeans becoming more aware and interested in developments in the science, technology and biomedical areas. Through science.09, we hope to - spark a passion for learning among Singaporeans by encouraging their inquisitiveness to "Ask Why" and actively seeking answers to their questions.

A unifying thread through the diverse activities is this year's theme - "**Ask Why**". It was chosen to inspire Singaporeans to rediscover their curiosity about the world and encourage them to actively ask questions about why things happen the way they do in the world around them. Their "mentor" is the charming, quirky mascot named Professor Why<sup>1</sup>.

In keeping with the theme, an online micro-site has been created to stir interest among the public and elicit their active participation. From 14 August to 4 September 2009, members of the public are invited to post and share their own questions about the world around them on the official science.09 website – [www.sciencemonth.org.sg](http://www.sciencemonth.org.sg). Selected questions will stand a chance to win attractive prizes. They can also check out the calendar of events and play educational, science-themed interactive games.

Launched in 2001, the science month is an annual national event committed to cultivating scientific interest, nurturing the passion for scientific enquiry and stimulating

---

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the fact sheet for information on Professor Why

Singapore's talent development in science, technology and biomedicine.<sup>2</sup> For more information, log on to [www.sciencemonth.org.sg](http://www.sciencemonth.org.sg).

### **About Science Centre Singapore**

The Science Centre Singapore is a non-formal educational institution dedicated to the promotion of science and technology among students and members of the public. As a leading Science Centre in the region, the Science Centre Singapore has twelve exhibition galleries with more than 1,000 exhibits, and another 18,000 sq metres of outdoor space showcasing the Waterworks, Ecogarden and the Kinetic Garden exhibits. The Centre also houses the Omni-Theatre — Singapore's only dome-shaped, 5-storey high theatre with a capacity of 276 seats. The Science Centre received 1.049 million visitors, while Omni-Theatre and Snow City received 400,000 visitors for FY2008/2009. For more information, please visit [www.science.edu.sg](http://www.science.edu.sg)

### **About the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR)**

The Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR) is the lead agency for fostering world-class scientific research and talent for a vibrant knowledge-based Singapore. A\*STAR actively nurtures public sector research and development in Biomedical Sciences, and Physical Sciences and Engineering, and supports Singapore's key economic clusters by providing intellectual, human and industrial capital to our partners in industry and the healthcare sector. It oversees 23 research institutes, consortia and centres located in Biopolis and Fusionopolis, and the area in their vicinity, and supports extramural research in the universities, hospitals, research centres, and with other local and international partners. For more information about A\*STAR, please visit [www.a-star.edu.sg](http://www.a-star.edu.sg).

For media enquiries, please contact:

Eunice Choy  
Science Centre Singapore  
DID: 6425 2375  
Email: [ekm\\_choy@science.edu.sg](mailto:ekm_choy@science.edu.sg)

Koh Wei Ling  
Hill & Knowlton (SEA) Pte Ltd  
DID : 6390 3363  
Mobile: 9847 6949  
Email: [weiling.koh@hillandknowlton.com.sg](mailto:weiling.koh@hillandknowlton.com.sg)

Yvonne Li  
Hill & Knowlton (SEA) Pte Ltd  
DID : 6390 3352  
Mobile: 9744 0778  
Email: [yvonne.li@hillandknowlton.com.sg](mailto:yvonne.li@hillandknowlton.com.sg)

---

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to fact sheet for more information for science.09 highlight events