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## MAKING AN IMPACT BEYOND THE LAB

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**DR HO WEN QI**  
Associate,  
Lightstone Singapore Pte Ltd



From a young age, Dr Ho Wen Qi knew that science was her calling. Her passion eventually led her from the classroom to the lab to the corporate world – all made possible by the A\*STAR National Science Scholarship. “It provided me with a great opportunity to pursue my interests in biomedical research.”

Upon graduating from Stanford University, she joined the A\*STAR Singapore Immunology Network (SIgN) as a Research Fellow where she delved into allergies and asthma while fronting public education programmes, exhibitions and other events.

Her interactions with fellow scientists, clinicians and

various industry project leads gave her a first-hand glimpse into the alternative paths beyond academic science and sparked a strong appreciation of what scientific training can achieve. “I realised that there are opportunities to apply what I’ve learned from my scientific training to careers outside of academia.”

With her desire to enrich her experiences beyond labs and contribute to Singapore’s life science ecosystem, she leapt at the chance for a secondment to Lightstone Singapore, which invests in early stage life science start-ups. Since November 2015, she has been elbow-deep in exploring potential



## WEN QI'S TIPS FOR EXPLORING CAREER OPTIONS BEYOND THE LAB



Network with people outside of academia by building new relationships with people in the fields you are interested in.



Gain experience outside the lab, whether through secondments, fellowships or simply volunteering your time.



Cast your net wide and stay informed of potential opportunities, especially those that interest you.



Switching from the lab to a career outside of academia can be a daunting experience. Have the courage and tenacity to pursue the opportunities that come your way.

investments, identifying commercial opportunities from academic science and networking with the movers and shakers in Singapore's life sciences circle, from government agencies and private companies to innovative scientists, entrepreneurs and investors.

"No two days are the same!" she exclaims. "The scientific training and critical thinking skills I've gained through my postdoctorate at A\*STAR have been extremely helpful in assessing the life sciences technologies we come across."

Still, making the jump has had its challenges.

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"Coming from academic science, I lack business experience," she admits. "A big part of assessing the commercial viability of a technology is in the business strategy, many aspects of which I'm still picking up."

With an eye firmly fixed on the prize, Wen Qi is staying level-headed in the game, though very

much excited about her new ventures in life sciences and fulfilling her personal goals with her secondment. "I hope to facilitate the translation of an idea to a commercial product that will have a positive impact on human health and the Singapore life science eco-system."