

THE CISS ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

A BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE CISS ALUMNI COMMITTEE



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ALUMNI OPINIONS: CHINESE
RESTAURANTS, BOOKS AND
MORE!

CHINESE LANGUAGE RESOURCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

WELCOME!

Welcome to the first CISS Alumni newsletter!

This newsletter aims to keep everyone up to date with what other alumni are up to, advertise events and keep a record of the CISS Alumni group. It is a bimonthly newsletter so keep an eye out for the next one! We would like as many people to get involved so if you have anything you want to contribute then please get in contact with us. This month you will find:

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+ Front cover photo credits to Claire McCarthy!

UPDATE FROM CISS

Hi everyone, my name is Calum Gibb 恺龙, and I'm your new contact at the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools. Although I've been left the unenviable task of trying to fill our wonderful colleague Katie's shoes, I'm very much looking forward to supporting the fantastic work that your committee and membership are doing to build connections that go beyond your time in Tianjin.

While I've only met a few of you so far - maybe a few more during my time at the University of Edinburgh - I'm certain that we already have a lot in common. We all hopped on a plane to China straight out of high school and have probably been filling passports with Chinese visa pages ever since. We've experienced the highs and lows of getting to grips with this language, both here in the UK and in China, and more and more of us have faced the transition to leveraging these skills in our professional lives.

At CISS we are encouraged to see a sustainable, supportive network of students and professionals coming together to provide future scholars with the advice and tools that they need. We're looking forward to the time when we can welcome you all to the Ramshorn but until then please know that our inbox is always open - 期待与大家一起合作!

- Calum Gibb

MEET THE COMMITTEE

Who are the CISS Alumni?

The CISS Alumni Association is made up of all scholars who have been fortunate enough to take part in the year-long Tianjin Scholarship in China provided by the Confucius Institute for Scotland's School's. Our scholars are a diverse group of people who now live and work all over the world. Our committee's mission is to create a network of these previous CISS scholars who can be ambassadors for Chinese language learning in Scotland and to help cultivate mutually beneficial, lifelong, and relevant relationships.

Who are our new team?

ERIN DUFFY 杜爱仁 - Chair

I became a CISS scholar in 2015 and I recently graduated from the University of Glasgow with a degree in Linguistics and Spanish. As a founding member of the committee, I have had the pleasure of watching it evolve. Now, four years later, we have over 100 alumni and a full committee, so this is an exciting year to be Chair! The CISS alumni are a diverse group of people with unique perspectives which I hope that we can share with each other and with the world. It's my job to bring us all together and make sure that all those ideas and perspectives are represented. If you would like to get involved please get in touch!



ALISTAIR PATON 阿乐 - Secretary

Hi, everyone. I'm Alistair and I was a scholar in 2018/19. I am currently in France on my Language year abroad from the University of Glasgow. I have been a part of the CISS Alumni since I returned from China and last year I was your Glasgow Events Coordinator. Last year, we put on some amazing events. This year as secretary, my job is to make sure all our operations and activities run smoothly behind the scenes.



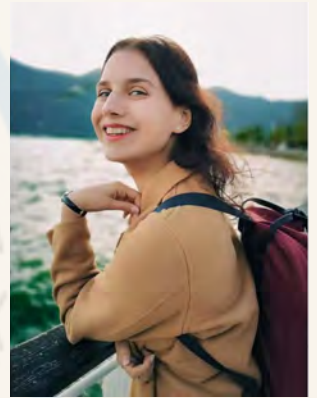


MARGARET DRISCOLL 黎珍珠 - Alumni Liaison Officer

Hi, My name is Margaret 黎珍珠. I am currently a 2nd year law student at the University of Edinburgh. I was in the 19/20 cohort of scholars. I was really excited by the events the Alumni association put on last year and couldn't wait to get involved this year! My current role is Alumni Liaison Officer. I hope that I'll be able to get us all a bit more connected than we have been in the past 18 months!

LEAH DUNCAN-KARRIM - Edinburgh Projects Coordinator

大家好! I'm Leah and I'll be the Edinburgh Projects Coordinator for this year. I'm currently doing a postgraduate degree in East Asian Relations at UofE and really looking forward to getting to know our lovely alumni in this part of the country. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you want to hear more about what's coming up next, or with any suggestions for events that you'd like to see.



CLARE O'TOOLE 陈天乐 (friends call me 船) - Glasgow Events Convener

My name is Clare and I am this years Glasgow Events Convener. I was a scholar 2015-2016. I am a trainee solicitor at an international law firm and graduated from the University of Glasgow with a Law with Spanish LLB degree. I am aiming to plan lots of networking events this year in Glasgow, both internally and externally. I plan on having a real focus on employability this year, both for students and young professionals. I am always keen to hear from anyone about what events you would like to see in Glasgow!

ANA SCOUGALL - Ordinary Member

I became a CISS scholar in 2017 and I am currently in my final year of my MA Hons Chinese and Spanish at the University of Edinburgh. CISS Alumni members began their journey as young 17 year olds moving to China, and have grown into a large group of young Scottish professionals in a broad range of fields and at different stages on their own paths. Our network allows us to guide, support and share knowledge, whether you are deciding what to study at undergraduate/masters level, thinking about what career path to take, seeking opportunities to travel or volunteer, or maybe even what language to study next. There will be someone is CISS Alumni who can help! I am greatly looking forward to being part of the committee again this year and hope to see you all soon!



AILSA BROWN 白艾翎 - Ordinary Member

Hello! I am Ailsa and I was a CISS scholar from 2017 to 2018. I am currently in my final year of Chinese Studies at Oxford University. Last year I was part of the CISS Alumni Committee as Alumni Liaison Coordinator and this year I am joining the committee as an ordinary member. CISS Alumni is a great way to stay in touch with everyone who had a similar experience of moving to China at the age of 18 - there aren't many of us who have done that! This year I will be helping the committee as much as I can with new projects. I would also like to mainly focus on online communication between alumni as there are many of us who don't live in Scotland!

NATHAN EPEMOLU 南森 - Ordinary Member

My journey with CISS has been near linear since I went on the bridge camp in 2015. Following my return from the 2016-2017 Tianjin Scholarship I have been involved with the CISS Scholarship, interned with CISS themselves as a communication and events intern and all in all, kept up interests in business, educational exchange and language learning through a mix of things and looking forward to adding my support to the team as an ordinary member this year. I'll be completing the final year of a Master's in International Business and French, but China is never far from my brain nor heart.



CAREER PROFILE

Rowen Strachan (2015-2016), Social Media and Content Marketing Executive

What is your job?

I work as the Social Media and Content Marketing Executive for Hatching Dragons, a bilingual English-Mandarin Early Years Education group, with nurseries based in London.

What did you study?

After a fantastic year of studying Mandarin in Tianjin, as part of the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools Scholarship, I continued to pursue my love of Chinese, graduating from Edinburgh University with an MA in Chinese Studies in 2020. I then went on to recently complete my MSc in Marketing at Edinburgh University Business School.



What led you to working in this job?

I truly believe that learning a second language can enhance your life, providing you with new opportunities and helping to foster a global mindset, as well as helping you to connect with new people, cultures and ways of thinking. Hatching Dragons helps children aged 6 months to 5 years old develop proficiency in two of the world's most important languages, and therefore allows me to work in an area I am enthusiastic about every day.

What does a normal day look like in this job?

In my role I am responsible for keeping all of the company online communications aligned to the brand, creating engaging content across our blog and social media, as well as delivering impactful campaigns across the web. In addition, I help develop relationships with the community and potential customers.

What is the one thing you really like about your job?

What I love most about my job is the impact it has on our children, helping them to learn all about our multicultural world, in a diverse and inclusive setting. There is nothing better than hearing about children hitting important developmental milestones, such as learning new words, especially when they are in Chinese! The little ones continue to impress me!

What advice would you give to someone wanting to pursue a career in this area?

I would say that learning a language and learning about marketing go hand in hand. I found it incredibly beneficial to study marketing, as an understanding of business gave me the tools to use my language abilities in an effective way! So if you are still in university, or thinking of going, I recommend taking a class or two, as you may just enjoy it as much as me!

What skills do you need for this job?

It helps to be creative, as you work with imagery and videos, and to have strong writing and verbal communication skills. The role also allows you to develop more technical skills, as you become equipped with an understanding of SEO, and gain experience of CMS and various marketing tools!

CAREER PROFILE

Jamie Lindsay (2014-2015), Building Performance & Systems Engineer at Arup

What is your job?

Building Performance & Systems Engineer at Arup



What did you study?

Aero-Mechanical Engineering at the University of Strathclyde

What led you to working in this job?

Currently, the building sector is responsible for approximately 40% of all global carbon emissions. The way we build, design and operate our buildings has a massive impact towards not only our planet as a whole, but also towards our individual comfort and wellbeing. In combination with wanting to tackle these climate related issues and enjoying the

technical aspect of solving problems, I was naturally drawn towards a career where I can help shape a better world through better engineering practices and to enhance our built environment.

What does a normal day look like in this job?

I'm currently striking a balance between working from home and going into the Glasgow office for a couple days at a time, which is nice to rotate between the two. A lot of my work involves using CAD to produce technical drawings, using energy modelling software, undergoing design meetings and using my knowledge of engineering to write building controls specifications. At the moment, the current projects I'm involved in include:

- A new build Data Centre, to be constructed near Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam.
- HS2 - designing the many ventilation shafts along the tunnel section of the line.

What is the one thing you really like about your job?

Working in building services is very rewarding, as you get to see your projects become a reality and integrated into the built environment. It's also very relatable, as we all spend most of our working days inside a building. Being able to improve someone's user experience within an indoor space and to also reduce the environmental impact of our infrastructure are the two main aspects which make this job rewarding. Another exciting part of the job is that many of our projects at Arup are global, meaning that you can apply your knowledge of engineering to help shape cities across the world.

What advice would you give to someone wanting to pursue a career in this area?

Besides studying engineering, it's important to keep up to date with global events and to enhance your networking skills. Being an engineer obviously requires a profound base of technical knowledge, but a large part of being a successful engineer comes down to how well you can influence people and make key decisions.

What skills do you need for this job?

Background experience in engineering and good problem solving abilities. Curiosity towards control systems, Internet of Things, and modern technology. A desire to make our world more sustainable. Good communication and influencing skills are also a vital component to the job, we find ourselves having to convey ideas and solutions to a wide variety of personnel.

CELEBRATIONS

Congratulations to **Nathan Epemolu (2016-2017)** has been elected as BAME rep for Strathclyde University this academic year!

In addition to his Master's and work with CISS Alumni, he works to ensure the voice of BAME Students are heard on campus. He works closely with other reps and officers at the union to lobby for change, take part actively in the life students at Strathclyde, host drop-ins, attend parliament, plan events and represent BAME Students in university matters.



Congratulations to **Robin Wilson (2018-2019), Owen Wilson (2018-2019), Alex McCombie (2018-2019) and Brodie Lawrence (2018-2019)** who won the Youth Cultural Ambassador award for the UN Chinese Language Day video festival.

After winning this award, they were invited to attend a summer course organised by the IUP Chinese Centre at Tsinghua University. The video they made for the official closing ceremony of the event is amazing and can be found here:

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6851532338631897088/>



RESTAURANT REVIEWS

Sichuan House, Glasgow, 5/5 stars

Great Peking duck and dandan mian!

Jay's Grill Bar 苏格兰调情自助餐, Argyll Street, Glasgow, 5/5 stars

This is a Chinese hotpot and Korean grill restaurant where you can have the full cooked-at-the-table experience. On one side of the table is a hot pot and on the other side a grill. There is a set price for the meal and you can order as much food as you like within two hours. They have all of the Chinese hot pot classic options, as well as a buffet table with an excellent array of sauces and extras! A very authentic experience - but definitely go when you are hungry! - Erin Duffy (2015-2016)

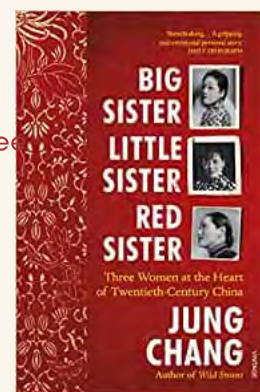
BOOK REVIEWS

Big Sister, Little Sister, Red Sister by Jung Chang 4/5 stars

The author of Wild Swans, her books are always very good to read and give a good understanding of the history through the lens of people and families. This book follows three sisters who were all very involved in politics in the early 20th century.

I thought it was a very good book and I learned a lot. The three Song sisters are incredibly interesting people. However, I found that Chang missed out some important parts about the Nationalists moving to Taiwan which I thought undermined her narrative as it came across very pro-Nationalist.

I would definitely recommend as an easy way to have a good overview of the events leading up to 1949. - Ailsa Brown (2017-2018)



TV SHOW REVIEWS

都挺好 All Is Well, YouTube, 5/5 stars

My current recommendation (and for the last 6 months because it's so great) is 都挺好. It's a TV show set, mostly, in Suzhou. It focuses on a family after the loss of their mother. The three grown-up children have to cope with the loss, figure out how to take care of their ageing father while working through work out their own relationships with each other and the changes that their lives are going through in other ways. It's quite different to most of the other Chinese dramas I've seen recently. The style is much more naturalistic and subtle than most that I've seen. It's based on a book of the same name and has been hugely popular since its release in 2019. It's all available on Youtube which is great with both English (that can be removed) and Chinese subtitles.
- Margaret Driscoll (2019-2020)



CHINESE LANGUAGE RESOURCES

FILMS

后来的我们 Us and Them, Netflix - Set in Beijing about a couple who break up and about their relationship. Focuses a lot on the idea of the "China Dream". Get ready to cry it is super sad!

流浪地球 The Wandering Earth, Netflix - Chinese sci-fi film in which they need to move the earth away from the sun before it turns into a black hole. Inspired by a short story written by the incredibly popular (both in China and abroad) sci-fi writer Liu Cixin.

TV SHOWS

流星花园 Meteor Garden, Netflix - kind of problematic but equally binge-able. About a teenage relationship at high school. Don't know how it is so good to watch but it is!

BOOKS

小王子 The Little Prince - originally in French but a very good first book to read in Chinese. Is technically a children's book but has a good story too.

PODCASTS

说说 Chinese, Youtube - not a podcast but very clear videos about various topics. Has Chinese subtitles, pinyin subtitles, English subtitles. Around HSK 3 level.

打个电话给你 One Call Away, Spotify - two girls talking about daily topics such as relationships etc. They speak very clearly and it sounds like a friend is giving you a call. Ideal for advanced level.

CHENGYU OF THE MONTH

A great chengyu for all those struggling to keep up a language, or daunted by a big task:

聚沙成塔，厚积薄发 (jù shā chéng tǎ, hòu jī bó fā)

Literal meaning: Gather specks of sand little by little and one day form a tower, to have accumulated knowledge and deliver it slowly

Metaphorical meaning: As long as you put work into it everyday, even if you don't see results right away, one day you will see the fruits of your hard work

加油!

UPCOMING EVENTS

"LinkedIn 101", Thursday 25th November at 7.30 PM, Zoom

We will be walking you through the basics of LinkedIn. We will show you how to set up a strong profile that will show off your best attributes and act as a virtual CV. We will try and make it as interactive a session as possible so please feel free to come and ask as many questions as you want.

This webinar is suitable for all, whether you don't have a LinkedIn or you're looking for a refresher. This will be ran by 2 of our own Alumni: Clare O'Toole and Alistair Paton. The Webinar will be hosted via Zoom.



STUDY / WORK ABROAD OPPORTUNITIES

BACS-Taiwan Huayu Enrichment Scholarship

Taiwan Ministry of Education scholarship programme for either nine, six, three or two month language programmes at approved language centres in Taiwan.

Applications open from *29th January to 29th March 2022*.

Come On Out Japan Global English Camp

5 week programme teaching English in Japan, open to university students and recent graduates. Unpaid, but expenses covered. Takes place July / August 2022. Must have passion for teaching.

Early phase application deadline *31st December 2021*.

GET INVOLVED WITH CISS ALUMNI

Hey guys, we want to thank all alumni who have given time, effort and ideas to make this newsletter happen, we hope it's been an insightful read and gives a glimpse of the expertise, passion and achievement of the alumni since inception. But that's not everything, we are working harder than ever this year to create something truly professional and unique here in Scotland. And we'll need as many of us as can to get involved to see the CISS Alumni grow from strength to strength. There are multiple ways you can do this!

Subcommittees

Even if you have a spare hour a week, this can be a way to get involved without having to commit to a full committee role. This is an informal role, helping with the current work of the CISS Alumni committee. We have subcommittees in the following areas:

- Social Media
- Glasgow Events
- Edinburgh Events
- Alumni Liaison
- Newsletter

If you are interested in getting involved with a subcommittee, drop as a line at: ciss.alumni@outlook.com or message our Facebook or Instagram pages (both found at "cissalumni")

Newsletter

If you would like to contribute to the next newsletter, you can write reviews or give someone a shoutout for the celebrations page using the following Google Docs:

Celebrations:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeU8IfcftN9wzlmkyyy6TCpIPzU8ImX8qxEWTJNDjG5bMl4Gw/viewform?usp=sf_link

Book recommendations (any books!):


https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScHszIsO8rd9yFTqo4Av-5pLgNgG0vniTohLYFGrGwlbTewIQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

Restaurant recommendations (any restaurant!):

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeO6NjPJsZ8-cl5O6cnVhcfzG7vtNE7OJQYTrNDXr-aRFbEzQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

We are really keen to make sure this alumni makes and creates things that at first instance, interest the alumni, if you want Chinese classes, say so, help us plan them! **Get in touch** via:

@ ciss.alumni@outlook.com

 <https://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/confuciusinstituteforscotlandsschools/scholarship/cissalumni/>

 <https://www.instagram.com/cissalumni/>

 <https://www.facebook.com/CISSalumnischolars>

 Group (for scholars): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1931393547136913>

 LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/ciss-alumni>