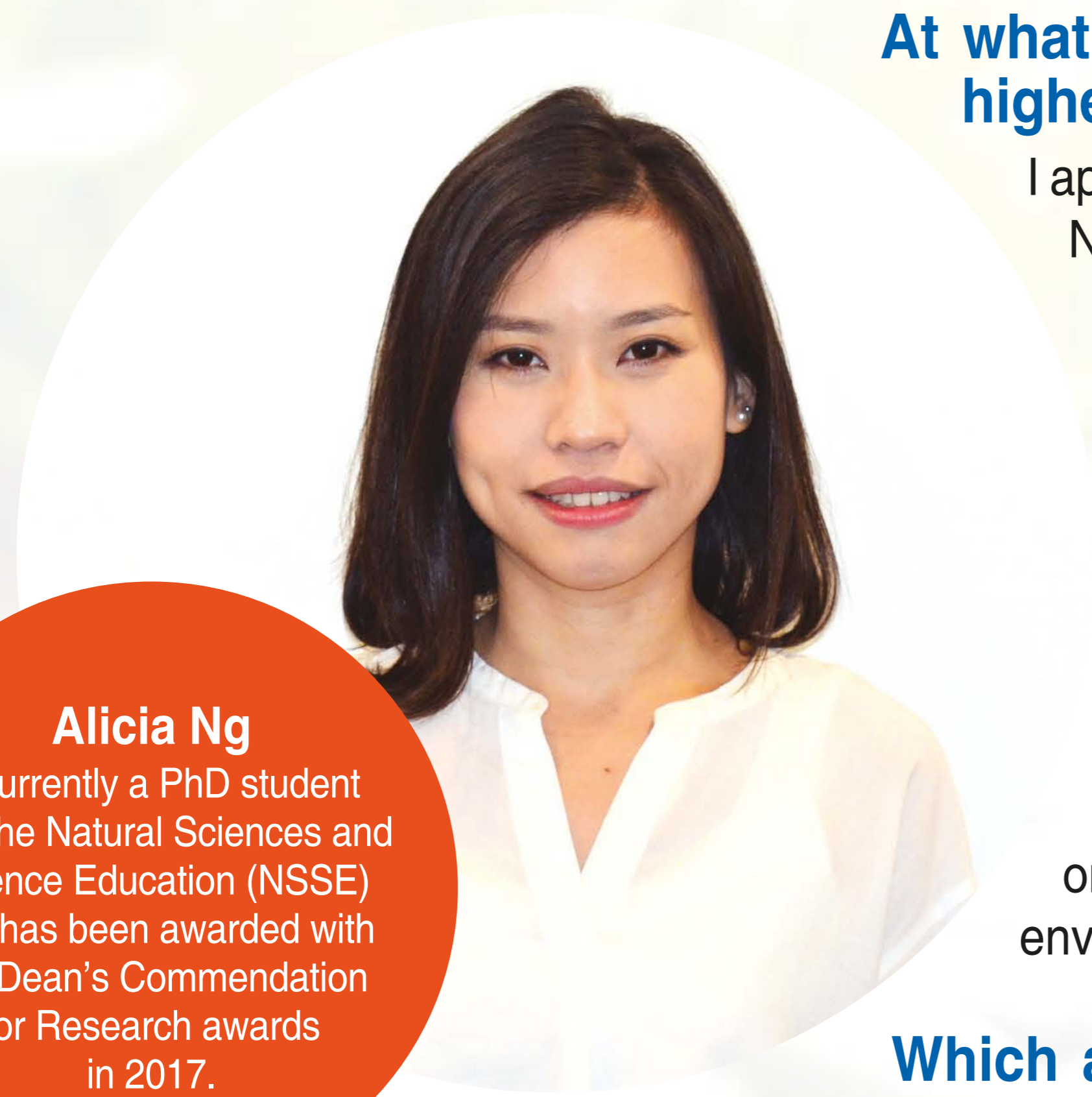


# Getting To Know Our Students

Ng Li Ling Alicia, PhD Student



**Alicia Ng**

is currently a PhD student with the Natural Sciences and Science Education (NSSE) and has been awarded with the Dean's Commendation for Research awards in 2017.

**At what point in your career did you consider pursuing a higher degree education?**

I applied to pursue a Master of Science (Life Sciences) programme with NIE during the third year of my service as a teacher (in 2009). It was a natural decision for me to pursue a PhD after the completion of my Master's programme.

**Describe the factors that led you to choose NIE.**

The Master of Science (Life Sciences) programme has an extensive list of courses focusing on the applications of Physics in the Life Sciences. I had the opportunity to complete my dissertation with my current supervisor who is established in high-resolution Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy, one of the areas I am interested in. I also like the general supportive environment of NIE.

**Which aspect of the programme and courses do you like the most?**

The Physics courses I attended were engaging. The lecturers are not only knowledgeable in their respective fields but also keen to share their knowledge with the students. Most lecturers conducted the lessons with good scaffolding, building gradually from the basics. Thus, the lectures could be followed comfortably with understanding.

My thesis supervisor, Associate Professor Augustine Tan, has been very patient and provides much support to ensure that the research process is as smooth as possible. He reviews my progress regularly to check that I am still on-track yet allowing independence in my learning.

**Share with us a memorable experience you had during your time at NIE.**

Having the opportunity to share my experiences in academic writing during the roundtable discussion segment of Quality Writing Day 2017, organised by Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Learning. It was during the preparation stage when I had to articulate those experiences that I truly sat down to think through all the challenges encountered and the strategies that were employed to overcome them. It was as much a reflective learning process for me as it was a sharing of experience. I am grateful to Assistant Professor Cheung Yin Ling for her guidance and the other higher degree students involved in the discussion (Leng Chee and Yixiong) for their insights during our rehearsal. I gained much from them.

**Describe your relationship with the NIE faculty members.**

The faculty members of NIE are generally approachable, encouraging and supportive. Despite their busy schedules, some take time to ask of your well-being. When needed, they work together to support each other.

**How did you feel when you were informed that you have won the Dean's Commendation for Research award and does winning the award spurs you on to do even better in your studies?**

I was delighted. The learning involved in the research project culminating in publication is in itself rewarding. The award is an icing on the cake and definitely serves as an additional source of motivation.