



YOUNG SOUTHEAST ASIAN
LEADERS INITIATIVE

Fulbright

YSEALI Academy Newsletter

Inaugural Issue | Fall 2021

The YSEALI Academy Quarterly Newsletter

YSEALI Academy at Fulbright University Vietnam

1F, Crescent Plaza, 105 Ton Dat Tien, Tan Phu Ward, District 7, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Inaugural Issue, Fall 2021

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Message from Director



Welcome to the Inaugural Issue of **YSEALI Academy Newsletter Fall 2021**.

The purpose of the quarterly newsletter is to update our readers on the news at YSEALI Academy and to highlight the accomplishments of our alumni, fellows, and faculty.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, across the globe, people are responding to the new normal with remarkable innovation and creativity. The launch of the YSEALI Academy at Fulbright University Vietnam in this challenging time has demonstrated our adaptive capacity to become more resilient in higher education.

In this issue, we share with you a recap of the Public Policy Seminar on Energy Economics and Policy, highlighting U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy R. Sherman's speech to our fellows.

In addition, we feature a story of Nuzulia Fajriningrum - one of our youngest fellows from Indonesia.

We also reveal a sneak preview of the upcoming Technology and Innovation Seminar in September.

Huynh Nhat Nam is leading the seminar on digital transformation, covering three important topics – digital society, digital economy, and data privacy & cybersecurity. In this seminar, we welcome the YSEALI Academy Distinguished Speaker Series with our first distinguished speaker, Sandra Matz, David W. Zalaznick Endowed Professor of Business at Columbia Business School.

Last but not least, we introduce our Lead Faculty for Entrepreneurship, Hoang Ha Thi. Thi is joining us from Harvard Medical School and the biotech venture building company Flagship Pioneering. At YSEALI Academy, Thi will share his vision of building entrepreneurial mindset from a perspective of a scientist and an entrepreneur.

Please enjoy reading all these stories in this first issue of YSEALI Academy Newsletter.

Thank you and have a wonderful Mid-Autumn Festival – Tết Trung Thu!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Quanle'.

Le Vu Quan

Director of YSEALI Academy at Fulbright University Vietnam

Greetings Alumni!

My name is **Jason Thornton**, and I am a Regional Alumni Coordinator at the U.S. Department of State's Office of Alumni Affairs.

Located within the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the Office of Alumni Affairs mission is to cultivate and extend the impact of U.S. government funded and sponsored educational and cultural exchange programs through continued engagement with the millions of alumni of these programs.



I would like to whole-heartedly congratulate the graduates of the first seminar of the YSEALI Academy at Fulbright University Vietnam – you should be so proud of yourselves!

I would like to be the first to welcome you to the international exchange alumni network and invite you to learn more about what membership to this exclusive community offers. The best way to learn more about the wide variety of resources available you as **#ExchangeAlumni** is to register for an account at **alumni.state.gov** and explore the site.

Congratulations as well to the YSEALI Academy team and all the contributors on the launch of the new YSEALI Academy newsletter.

I look forward to reading more about the great initiatives that come about as the result of the collaboration between YSEALI Academy alumni!



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THE FUTURE OF ASEAN: THE YOUTH FACTOR

Hanoi, Vietnam - 4 September 2020

YSEALI Academy's People and Activities

Meet our Faculty: Dr. Hoang Ha Thi

Hoang Ha Thi, MD, PhD joins the YSEALI Academy as **Lead Faculty for Entrepreneurship** and **Undergraduate Faculty Member** in Integrated Science from Boston, USA, where he was a research fellow at Harvard Medical School and Flagship Pioneering, a Venture Capital company that builds world-changing biotech companies starting with revolutionary scientific ideas. At YSEALI, Thi will dedicate his efforts towards building entrepreneurial leadership capacities in South-East Asia. Thi's work has been at the intersection between life science and business. He started two biotech companies and consults leading tech transfer offices and innovation hubs across the US and Europe to make better decisions on company creation and investments.



Before embarking on his professional career, Thi did his PhD in Neuroscience & Molecular Biology at the world-renowned MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology at the University of Cambridge, UK, the birthplace of modern molecular biology and home to 11 Nobel Laureates over the past 60 years. At Cambridge, his discoveries laid the foundation for novel drug discovery efforts by big pharma. He is a board-certified physician and obtained his MD at the Free University in Berlin, Germany, and was a research scholar at Yale University. He is the recipient of multiple prestigious international awards and scholarships. Thi is passionate about teaching and mentoring students and believes the best way to be innovative is by being playful and breaking things (and fixing them afterward). He loves trying out rare foods in places he travels to and relaxes by writing music in his home studio.

Digital Transformation Challenges and Opportunities in Post-COVID-19

September 13 - 24, 2021

Two-week seminar providing an overview of digital transformation in Southeast Asia, with an emphasis on technology readiness, firm and consumer behavior, and regulatory aspects of fintech, e-commerce, digital finance, telecommuting/teleworking, data privacy, and cybersecurity.

Find more about Technology and Innovation Seminar on YSEALI Academy Website

Publications

Nguyen, Jason Q., Le, Quan Vu, and Ha, Jasmine T., (in press 2021) Impacts of Health Concerns on Online Shopping Activities and Service Reconfiguration during Covid-19 Pandemic: Insights from Vietnam, Service Science.

Le, Quan Vu, and Lisovich Nguyen, Mai, (in press 2021) Explaining Gender Differences in Entrepreneurship: The Impacts of Motivations, Success Factors and Business Training on the Performance of Microenterprises in Central Vietnam, International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business.

Ha, Jasmine T., Le, Quan Vu, and Nguyen, Jason Q., (in press 2021) Impacts of COVID-19 on Financial Inclusion and Digital Transformation: Insights from Consumer Behaviors in Vietnam, in Financial Transformations Beyond the Covid-19 Health Crisis, edited by Boubaker, Sabri, and Nguyen, Duc Khuong, World Scientific Publishing.



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Flashback of 2021 Energy Economics And Policy Seminar

On July 5, 2021, the YSEALI Academy at Fulbright University Vietnam welcomed the first inaugural cohort of 35 ASEAN Fellows to the flagship seminar on Energy Economic & Policy. The plenary session kicked started the two-week seminar with vibrant dialogues about the latest trends and their implications on the future outlook for the region.

Opportunities and challenges are always intertwined

Dr. Le Vu Quan, Director of YSEALI Academy at Fulbright, opened the session with a brief introduction on the skill sets and knowledge that the fellows will be exploring, entrusting that the world-class yet contextual experiences and pragmatic human capital development provided in the program will enable and amplify the voices of these young Southeast Asian leaders.

“Opportunities and challenges are always intertwined,” Ms. Dam Bich Thuy, Founding President of Fulbright University Vietnam, stated. With that, YSEALI Academy at Fulbright carries a mission to help young people from across Southeast Asia to make connections, learn new skills, and build cross-border networks, including with the United States, to solve big challenges facing the region.

In her welcoming remarks, Ms. Dam Bich Thuy expressed sincere gratitude to the United States government’s tremendous support to make this initiative possible.

“You are the leaders who are going to determine what the future looks like for your countries, for the ASEAN region and for the world”

- Wendy R. Sherman, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State

Joining the plenary session was the Representative from the United States, Ms. Wendy R. Sherman, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State. She resonated deeply with the notion that challenges always go hand in hand with opportunities if we approach them from the right angle. Studies have shown that among the many challenges of our time, climate crisis is a big one, and in 2020, Southeast Asia region had more than half a million people displaced due to natural disasters. It is predicted that rising sea levels can swamp the entire region by 2050 if we do not act now and cut greenhouse gas emissions.



But, Ms. Sherman said, “addressing the climate crisis isn’t just about staving off catastrophe. It is also about creating opportunities. By transitioning to clean energy, we can prevent about half a million premature deaths a year in Southeast Asia alone. And if we prioritize clean energy, as we build back better from the Covid-19 pandemic, we can create 30 million jobs across the region”.

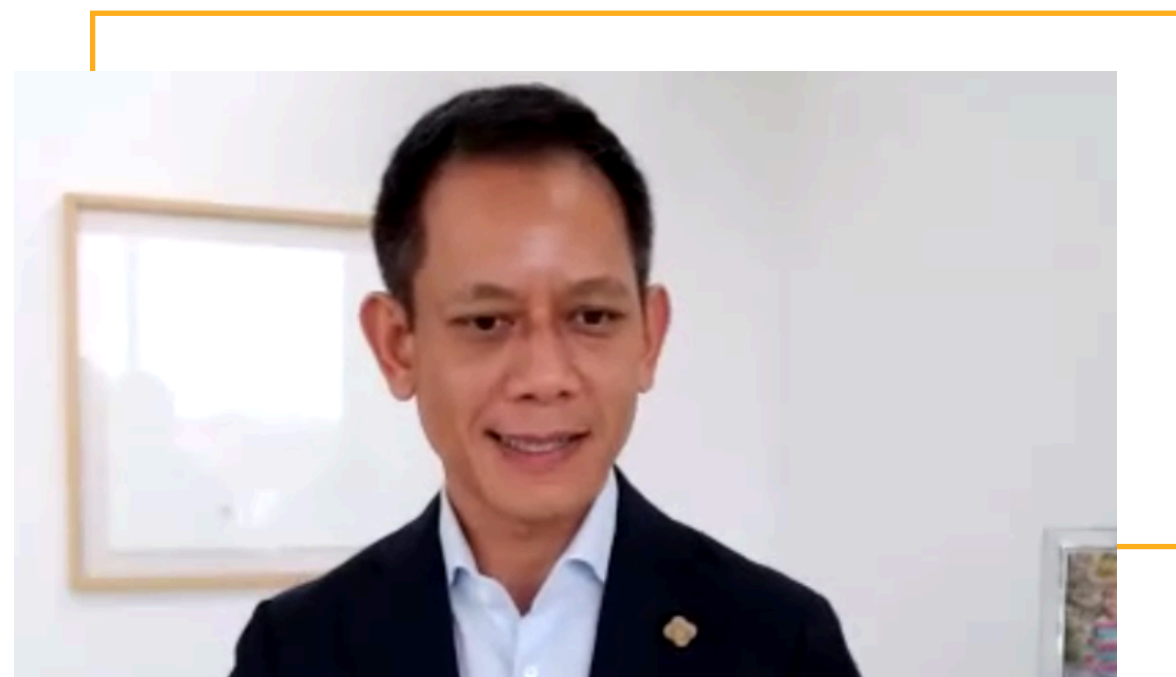
Speaking to the inaugural cohort of YSEALI Academy, she praised the Fellows for actively taking the matters into their own hands to “build NGOs, launch new businesses, and become advocates pushing [their] governments to do more,” which would help tackle the climate crisis, or get more clean energy on the grid, or create jobs for other young people. “That’s why the United States launched YSEALI in the first place and it’s why we’re so proud to partner with Fulbright University Vietnam”.

Ms. Baltazar Thea, a Fellow from the Philippines, shared that she decided to apply to the program despite the difficulties worn by Covid-19 because she truly believes that “there is no better time to open the discourse on energy security and carbon emissions than now, while the world’s economy is slowly recuperating from the effects of the pandemic”.

Dream big while also focus on the details

This pay-it-forward mindset is precisely what draws the YSEALI community together and keeps them engaged throughout various shifts of time. They are committed to solving regional and global challenges via collaborative leadership, spearheading changes as the YSEALI culture ambassadors. This spirit does not only spread amongst the fellows but also among the YSEALI Academy members, to the guest speakers and lecturers. The academic think tanks and industry-leading experts are openly engaging with the fellows to create an engrossing environment, where each can learn from one another.

In applications to the seminar itself, Dr. Pham Thai Lai, President and CEO of Siemens ASEAN, delivered in his keynote lecture that: “The important thing about climate change is that it doesn’t stop at the border of Vietnam, it doesn’t stop at the border of Indonesia, and it doesn’t stop at the border of Thailand. It’s a global phenomenon. And therefore, it really requires a global initiative and global efforts to combat climate change”.



In his conversation with YSEALI fellows, Dr. Lai identified five mega-trends that are changing the world and pose great challenges to the current generation, which are climate change, globalization, digitalization, demographic change, and urbanization. As ASEAN is projected to grow to become among the top largest economies, energy demand is going to increase, and thus requires new solutions to grow sustainably. If young professionals are equipped with the right tools, connected with the right people, and join hands together, these challenges should also present us with enormous opportunities.

Bao Tram

Meet our Fellow: Nuzulia Fajriningrum

As one of the youngest Energy Security Analysts at the National Energy Council in Jakarta, Indonesia, Nuzulia Fajriningrum is also one of the 25 YSEALI fellows selected to participate in the YSEALI Academy seminar on Energy Economics and Policy, which took place from July 05 to July 16, 2021.

An inseparable aspect of life

Nuzulia Fajriningrum graduated from the Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesia, with a degree in Chemical Engineering in 2015, and is currently working as an Energy Security Analysts at the National Energy Council (NEC). “When I was learning about the law of thermodynamics, I started to realize that energy is an inseparable aspect of our life. Anything that we’re working on, we’re working on it by converting energy,” she says. “The reality is that our development as a nation relies heavily on energy strategy. That’s why I became very much interested in the energy sector”.

Her extensive experience as a young government official has strengthened Fajriningrum’s belief in the interconnection between energy, economics, and policy. “The YSEALI seminar’s title, ‘Energy Economics and Policy’, immediately struck a chord with me. I wanted to gain more knowledge and insights on this specific topic and expand our regional and global coordination”, she comments.

*“The seminar gave me a clearer idea on how I want to develop my career”
- Nuzulia Fajriningrum*

Virtual but deeply inspired

The first of a series of three virtual seminars hosted by YSEALI Academy in 2021, the Energy Economics and Policy Seminar brought in a prominent cohort of scholars, industry experts across the globe and young professionals from Southeast Asia to confer on today’s most important and complex issues in energy development in the region. Despite being held online, Fajriningrum found the two-week program “exceed far beyond expectations”.

“For me, the most valuable aspect is to have discussions with other fellows and the renowned speakers, which always took unexpected turns and became very intriguing,” she says. “Not only did the lecturers share knowledge as leading experts in the energy sector, but they also gave clear explanations and practical approaches for us to thoroughly comprehend the topics”.

Fajriningrum was particularly inspired by a lecture delivered by Dr. Youngho Chang, Associate Professor and Head of Business and Management Minors at the School of Business, the Singapore University of Social Sciences, which demonstrated the empirical relations between energy and economy, cross-sector decision making, as well as policy selection and implementation.

“I vividly remember, he managed to sum up in 20 minutes what I’ve been working on for the past three and a half years. It all made sense, all the dots were connected,” she smiles. Right at that moment, Fajriningrum saw herself pursuing higher education to support her goal of becoming an expert of energy planning and policy in the future. “The seminar gave me a clearer idea on how I want to develop my career,” Fajriningrum continues. “Because of it, YSEALI has become one of the most important milestones in my career”.



Intrigued to explore and grow

Aside from renowned lecturers and guest speakers, the seminar also connected Fajriningrum to YSEALI fellows from her own country alongside young professionals from Southeast Asia, who all share the same passion and vision of clean energy for the region. “[The seminar] makes me feel like I’m not alone in this fight,” she says. “Although we only met each other online, I’m thankful that I can find new friendships here!”.

Fajriningrum still keeps in touch with her YSEALI fellows, with whom she often has discussions about energy developments. Their exchange has helped Fajriningrum better understand the contexts of recent developments in the region, to compare and envision policies that she can formulate in Indonesia. She was able to consult with Singaporean fellows regarding carbon management strategy, as theirs was the first Southeast Asian nation to introduce a carbon tax in 2019. From her friends in the Philippines, who are tackling similar geographical challenges as the archipelagic states, she has learned about their electricity scheme, how the country welcomes the private sector and its impacts on their energy policy.

“The pandemic has shifted our perspective on life and occupation,” she reflects. “It also sheds more light on the urgency of energy transition, as well as the importance of keeping air pollution low. I remember in the lecture of Professor David Dapice, Senior Economist, Harvard Kennedy School, he talked about how Southeast Asia is going to be impacted the most from the climate crisis, and how we have to make it our priority to transition to cleaner energy”.

Fajriningrum recognizes the great potential of her YSEALI fellows to combat those challenges, trusting that in the future, these young professionals will become leaders of their countries. The YSEALI Academy’s Energy Economics and Policy Seminar thus serves as a catalyst for the positive changes. The network established and maintained has kindled Nuzulia’s confidence in future coordination between countries in the region towards a common goal.

Bao Quyen - Bao Tram



Private Secretary Room
Executive Secretary

YOUNG SOUTHEAST ASIAN LEADERS INITIATIVE (YSEALI)

REGIONAL WORKSHOP

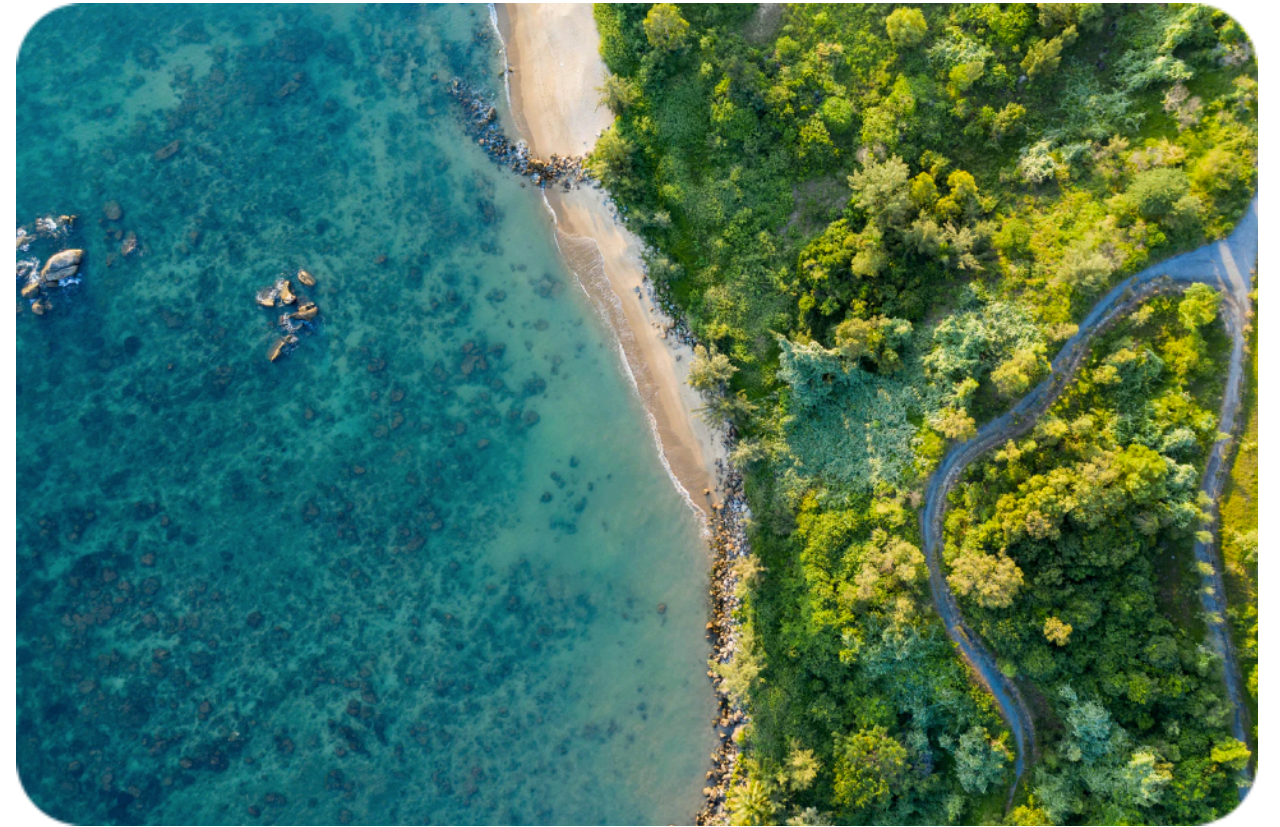
PROMOTING THE MCKONG
DEVELOPMENT

City, Viet

Southeast Asian Corners

Da Nang, Vietnam

Da Nang City is a coastal city in central Vietnam known as “The Most Livable City in Vietnam”. Because of its advantageous location, Da Nang is not only famous for beautiful beaches, one of which was voted one of six most beautiful beaches in the world, but also famous for majestic mountains, Son Tra Peninsula and Hai Van Pass.



At night, Da Nang City is often compared to Singapore, with buildings surrounded by subtle and magical lights, rooftop bars offering expansive views of the Han and Dragon rivers. In addition, every Saturday and Sunday at 9:00 pm, you can witness fire breathing, which is a stand out attraction as well as a symbol of a flourishing city.



My YSEALI friends, I hope you can go to Da Nang very soon to enjoy all the sceneries and food in my hometown!

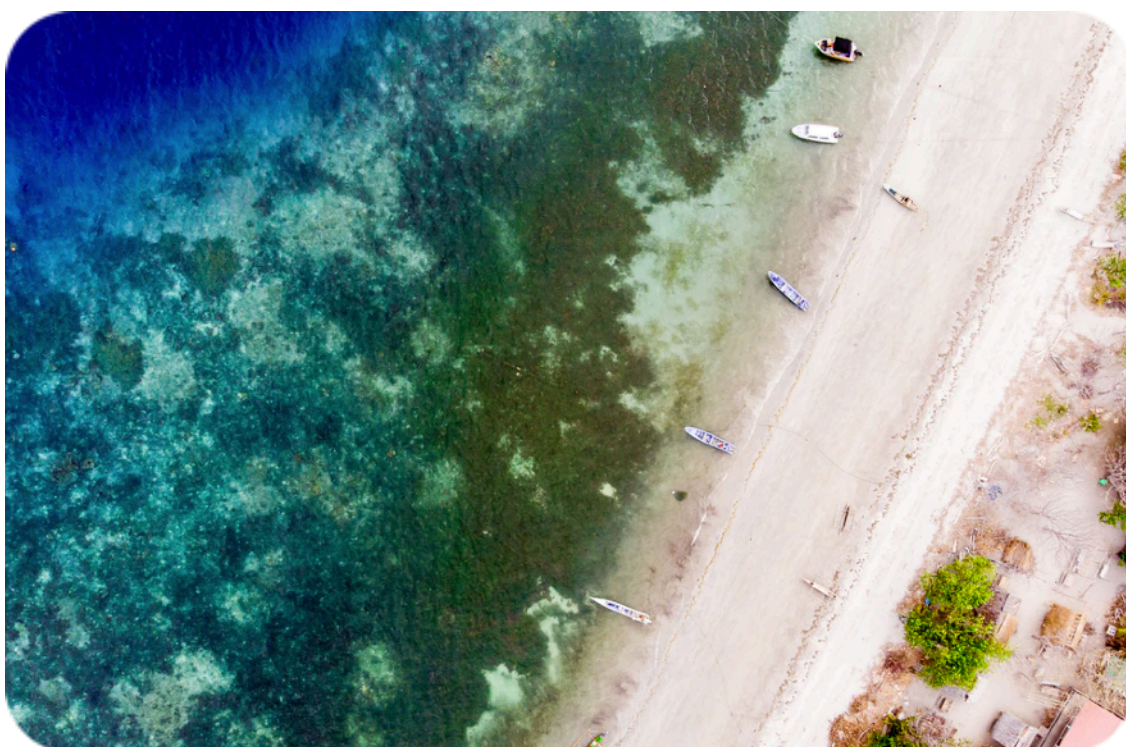
Le Xuan Khoa, Alumnus of 2021 Energy Economics and Policy Seminar & **Le Xuan Hieu**.





Timor-Leste became the first new sovereign state of the 21st century in May 2002, joined the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese Language Countries.

Today, with a population of 1.3 million people, Timor-Leste is a peaceful, democrat nation with the official languages Portuguese and Tetum. In addition, English and Indonesian are designated by the constitution as working languages.



Timor-Leste is located in the East of the Indonesian archipelago, and to the North-West of Australia. Timor-Leste is also commonly known as East Timor. It is one of only two predominantly Christian nations in Southeast Asia, and also as the only country of Asia to be located completely in the Southern Hemisphere.



Timor-Leste has a typical climate of maritime South East Asia: hot and humid. The country is considered as an “island paradise” with spectacular scenery, which provide wonderful opportunity for exploring and hiking. You should keep your camera close at hand when coming to Timor-Leste!

Margarida Alves, Alumna of 2021 Energy Economics and Policy Seminar.

APPLICATION OPEN!

Apply by **September 24, 2021**

**Seminar Series at YSEALI Academy
at Fulbright University Vietnam**

NAVIGATING THE STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

Online seminar from
November 29 - December 10, 2021

.....
<https://yseali.fulbright.edu.vn/apply/>

Join our information sessions!

Webinar 1 on September 14, 2021

Webinar 2 on September 22, 2021

Livestream on [YSEALI Academy](#) and [YSEALI Facebook](#)



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