

**MCCY COS 2019 FACT SHEET**  
**Partnering Singaporeans to build a**  
**Caring, Cohesive and Confident Nation**

**Key Announcements**

**SG Cares - 7 Volunteer Centres to better address towns' needs**

SG Cares is a national movement to build a caring and inclusive home for all, where Singaporeans can show care and consideration to others. In 2018, we carried out pilots in Bedok and Jurong East to study how to grow more volunteers and better channel their efforts to areas where they can have greater impact in the neighbourhood. The pilots resulted in greater collaboration among local community groups, through SG Cares Community Network sessions<sup>1</sup>.

2 The pilots showed that a dedicated effort at the local-level to grow the volunteer pool, build their capabilities, and coordinate the demand and supply of volunteers, was important to make a sustained impact. Hence, MCCY will be partnering community groups to establish **Volunteer Centres (VC) for volunteer matching, deployment and training in the towns**. The VC will help:

- a. build volunteer management capabilities;
- b. broker sustained partnerships between volunteering groups; and,
- c. work with service providers to meet their needs for volunteers.

3 A VC would need to have strong networks, knowledge of ground needs, and capabilities to engage volunteers and build partnerships. The VC will also work with

---

<sup>1</sup> As part of the pilots, town-level networking sessions (i.e. SG Cares Community Network sessions) were also organised to bring together community stakeholders to identify residents' needs, co-create solutions, and to build partnerships. Through greater coordination among stakeholders, we observed that there were (i) more regular, sustained programmes to meet the needs on ground, (ii) increased stability for social service organisations' volunteer supply pool, and (iii) more positive experiences for volunteers, residents, organisations.

other community groups, including the grassroots, to harness the potential of neighbours to help one another, e.g. befriending seniors staying alone in the same block/ neighbourhood.

4 The Loving Heart Multi-Service Centre (Yuhua) is such a VC, serving residents in Jurong East. As the first VC, it started the “Neighbour Cares”<sup>2</sup> programme to bring together volunteers from multiple sources to meet needs in the neighbourhood. Jurong East’s Neighbour Cares pilot focused on activating neighbours as volunteers to keep a lookout for any visible signs of distress from vulnerable seniors in neighbouring units so that early intervention measures can be introduced. This initiative complements existing formal befriending services by social service organisations and appointed service providers by the Ministry of Health, by relying on neighbours to engage isolated seniors who are not receiving formal befriending. The VC recruited volunteers from the community, including residents, corporates, schools, religious organisations and grassroots members to the project.

5 The second VC will be in Bedok, and a total of **7 VCs will operate in different parts of Singapore by end of 2019**. The locations of the remaining five are being finalised, and will be shared when ready. The model for the VCs will be adapted for the locality, depending on needs, demographics, and community assets in the town.

### **New MCCY digitalisation initiatives for Singaporeans**

As part of the Smart Nation effort, MCCY has leveraged technology across our various sectors to better serve citizens, and create transformative experiences. By doing so, we hope to grow stronger bonds between people and communities, and build a strong Singapore society.

---

<sup>2</sup> The “Neighbour Cares” programme aims to build a culture of care, starting at home, to encourage citizens to take ownership of their neighbourhood, and to support each other.

**volunteer.sg – A digital concierge for public agency volunteer opportunities**

3 We want to provide a seamless experience for volunteers who are giving their time and effort to contribute to society. Hence we have developed **volunteer.sg – a one-stop portal that will make volunteering with public agencies a better experience, which in turn will encourage more sustained volunteerism.** For example, volunteers who volunteer their time with multiple public agencies can now manage their opportunities on a single platform. To make volunteerism even more seamless, MCCY also plans to integrate the volunteer.sg platform with the SG Cares app. With this, more can discover and sign up for volunteering opportunities from both government and non-government sectors using the same app.

4 Through this “digital volunteer concierge”, volunteers would be able to plan and manage their own volunteering journeys from start to end. Registered volunteers would be able to:

- a) Easily discover volunteering opportunities. The platform is able to surface upcoming opportunities based on the person’s profile and past volunteering experiences.
- b) Manage their volunteering experiences digitally. For example, the system allows volunteers to choose their preferred timings, to check-in when they are present at the opportunity, and to provide feedback to the organisers.
- c) Co-create & propose projects for causes they are passionate about. More experienced volunteers can use the platform to suggest ideas for volunteering projects and collaborate with other platform users to bring the projects to life. They can also use the platform to easily invite others to join them in their projects through social media.

5 With this digital solution, volunteer managers in our public agencies can also automate manual tasks and free up more time to spend on quality engagement with their volunteers. Volunteer managers can use this integrated system to easily set up, publicise, and track sign-ups and feedback from volunteering opportunities.

6 Since its soft-launch in November 2018, there are currently **6 public agencies using the portal to manage about 22,300 (unique count) volunteers**. Feedback from volunteers have been positive so far.

7 Future developments include native mobile-friendly features, location-based attendance tracking, e-Learning courses and Instant Messaging. More public agencies are expected to join the portal to organise and recruit volunteers for a wider range of opportunities. *(Demo video on volunteer.sg to understand what it offers to a volunteer, as well as an agency using the system: [bit.ly/vms3intro](http://bit.ly/vms3intro))*

### **Digital Initiatives for Culture Sector – Enhancing access to cultural offerings**

8 Digital initiatives in the culture sector will enhance access to our cultural offerings, and transform the way in which audiences engage and interact with the arts and culture.

9 We will continue to work closely with technology partners to enhance the experience of audiences at our cultural institutions.

10 Some projects are currently being developed to be rolled-out progressively from 2019 – 2022. These include:

- **Cultural Concierge**, a one-stop arts and culture platform that will provide users with easily-accessible information on cultural offerings, as well as arts and culture content. It will be integrated with other services like ticketing sites for a seamless experience.
- **Cultural Resource Ontology**, which will provide the public with an enhanced search capability powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI). Users will be able to discover and research Singapore’s rich cultural and heritage content through a more intuitive, efficient, and meaningful categorisation of recommended resources from our National Collection, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and performing arts. They will also be able to experience the

visualisation of these resources in the form of timelines, themes and relationships. This will be made available progressively from 2020, starting with NHB's [Roots.sg](#).

- **Digital showcases and experiences at our museums and galleries.** These will include innovative projects and solutions from the National Heritage Board's DigiMuse, and National Gallery Singapore's Co:Lab X.
  - **Project Insight** was co-created by DigiMuse with local start-up HelloHolo, which enabled visitors to experience the behind-the-scenes work of artwork conservation using the HoloLens Mixed Reality platform.
  - Co:Lab X developed the Gallery Explorer app in collaboration with Accenture, which hosted digital exhibitions such as *unrealised* in dialogue with local artists Heman Chong, Ho Tzu Nyen and Erika Tan.

11 Digital technologies will also allow us to better derive insights on how we can improve our cultural offerings, to meet the interests and needs of our audiences.

#### **Drowning Detection System for a safer swimming experience**

12 SportSG will progressively implement the Computer Vision Drowning Detection System (CVDDS) at public swimming complexes across Singapore, in an effort to better enable Singaporeans to enjoy swimming safely.

13 We will roll this out to 11 pools by 2020. In the first phase, the system will be installed at four competition pools located at Hougang, Jurong West, Our Tampines Hub and Bukit Batok by the end of the second quarter of 2019. These will be followed by installation at seven more competition pools across Singapore by April 2020.

14 Using a network of unique overhead and infrared cameras, an alert system, and various types of software for detecting swimmers in distress, the CVDDS works on a detection response time of 15 seconds. This enhances the work of our lifeguards in the quicker detection of distressed swimmers.

15 Implementation of the software follows the successful completion of a year-long trial at Hougang Swimming Complex (December 2017 to December 2018). The system was assessed to have complied with international standards and shown good drowning detection performance with a low false alarm rate, and is able to complement the lifeguards in detection and saving lives.

16 Last August at the Hougang Swimming Complex, the CVDDS sounded an alert upon detecting that a 64-year-old man had sunk to the pool floor, unconscious. The lifeguard immediately rescued him from the pool and successfully administered CPR and AED to resuscitate him.

17 The CVDDS is not meant as a substitute for every swimmer taking their own precautions when swimming in our public pools, but it provides an additional layer of safeguard, supporting our lifeguards in their duties on the ground.

### **SGYouth Action Plan - Working together to realise youth's vision for Singapore**

MCCY engaged over 8,000 youths through Youth Conversations in 2018<sup>3</sup>. The sessions, run by the National Youth Council and other partner organisations, see youth participating actively in discussions on issues that matter to them. The youths were better informed on these issues, heard different perspectives from their peers who came from different backgrounds, and co-developed solutions.

**2 This year, MCCY will partner Singapore youths to move beyond conversation to action.** A panel comprising youth leaders and representatives from various sectors will engage other youth and the wider society to develop an SGYouth Action Plan. The Plan will crystallise a youth vision for Singapore in 2025 and lead to proposals and partnerships by youth to achieve this vision. The Plan will also identify areas to co-develop and co-deliver solutions among themselves, with society, and with government.

---

<sup>3</sup> Over 3,000 youths participated in 30 Conversations, with another 5,000 participating digitally on online polls and sharing of reflections on social media.

3 This Panel will be co-led by Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth Sim Ann, together with a youth leader with a strong track record of youth work. The panel will be formed in the 2nd quarter of 2019.

#### **Revamping Youth Belt at Somerset Youth**

4 One such partnership initiative is the transformation of the **Youth Belt at Somerset**, as part of the larger Orchard Road Rejuvenation Plan. The Somerset Youth Belt is set to be transformed into a vibrant and inclusive youth district that brings together youth organisations, businesses, and service providers to support youth aspirations, grow youth communities, and build youth civic capacity. This effort will be co-led by Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth Baey Yam Keng, together with a youth leader with passion and experience.

5 Youths will be invited to envision and co-create the Youth Belt in partnership with representatives from the private, public and people sectors through a participatory place-making exercise. This collaborative approach aims to give youths the opportunity to surface their ideas, and to take part in decision-making processes. It also aims to strengthen their sense of ownership of the Youth Belt, and sense of belonging to Singapore.

6 MCCY and the National Youth Council will kick off these engagements with youths in April 2019.

#### **7 The engagement exercise will run in three phases in 2019:**

- a) Youths will be invited to participate and share their views on what they would like to see at the Somerset Youth Belt, and how youth can play a part in rejuvenating the area.
- b) Youths' feedback and ideas will be consolidated, and the feasibility of these ideas will be studied by a panel, supported by technical experts.
- c) In the final phase, youths will be invited to have a say on the shortlisted proposals. MCCY will work with government agencies and other stakeholders subsequently for further development and implementation of the proposals.

**Youth Conversations - digital engagement platform**

8 As part of the SGYouth Action Plan, the Youth Conversations will continue this year, **reaching more youths via a digital platform.**

9 The platform will enable more youths to participate in Youth Conversations, reaching out to those who may be more comfortable engaging on the digital space. Users will be able to engage in discussions with fellow youths on issues that matter to them. In the process, we hope that more youth will gain an awareness and appreciation for diverse perspectives, while developing their skills and aptitude for civic discourse.

10 The platform will initially incorporate tools such as polling and discussion functions for youths to contribute and exchange views over issues. More tools will be added in subsequent phases. Possible enhancements would include tools to allow for participatory budgeting. In participatory budgeting, youths will be invited to put up proposals in response to calls for ideas, such as those under the National Youth Fund, and have other youth vote for the ideas and allocate virtual budgets to projects they think are deserving of support. This participative process allows youths to both initiate ideas and influence outcomes. It also allows youths to better appreciate the trade-offs involved in making decisions.

11 Through active civic participation, MCCY hopes that youths will feel more empowered to contribute back to society and to take greater ownership of Singapore.

12 MCCY and NYC are collaborating with NUS Enterprise to develop the platform, with a beta version slated for launch in April 2019.

**Youth Conversations interim report to be published next month**

13 An interim report of the Youth Conversations will be published on the Youth Conversations website and NYC's social media platforms in late March 2019. The report will highlight views, insights and concerns discussed by youths in major topics, which include narratives of success, social inequality, lifelong learning, environmental sustainability, mental well-being, among others.



14 Through the course of the Conversations, youths also stepped forward to enact change by leading ground-up initiatives in areas that they are passionate about. For example, following a Youth Conversation on mental well-being, Lee Ying Ying and a fellow participant came together and co-founded the **School of Ability and Recovery (SOAR)**, which reaches out to the community through creating and conducting workshops on mental health.

## Arts and Heritage

### Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) resulted in a vibrant and accessible cultural landscape

The ACSR was a public, private and people sector partnership undertaken from 2010 – 2012. Its aim was to promote greater ownership and foster longer-term sustainability in the arts and culture sector.

2 Since the implementation of the ACSR recommendations in 2012, the government has worked closely with partners in the public, private, and people sectors – especially the arts and culture community - to enhance accessibility and develop audiences. We also focused on capability development, arts and culture education, and community engagement.

3 **We have made progress – more Singaporeans are now involved, see value, and take pride in our arts and culture:**

- i) The Population Survey on the Arts 2017 showed upward trends in attendance (54%; up from 40% in 2013) and participation (22%; up from 13% in 2013).
- ii) The Singapore Cultural Statistics 2018 also showed record highs in 2017 for:
  - a. attendance at non-ticketed arts and culture events (>11m);
  - b. visitorship to national museums and heritage institutions (>5.4m)
  - c. number of performing arts activities (>9,500).

4 **MCCY and our cultural agencies/ institutions will continue to focus on key ACSR thrusts** relevant to the development of a vibrant and sustainable cultural landscape which all Singaporeans have ownership of, and take pride in. At the same time, **we will update our strategies and approaches to better manage challenges and seize opportunities from developments since 2012. We will also sustain existing and develop new partnerships, and further strengthen our social fabric and unity** through our arts and culture.

5 **The Our SG Arts Plan and Our SG Heritage Plan will guide the next phase of growth for the sector.** They will support the development of vibrant arts and heritage ecosystems, grow audiences in a targeted way, and deepen engagement with our arts and culture to foster a caring, cohesive and confident nation.

### **Supporting artists and growing audiences through Our SG Arts Plan**

#### **Updates on support for arts freelancers**

One focus under Our SG Arts Plan is more support for arts freelancers.

2 NAC partnered industry professional Tay Tong to engage over 370 members of Singapore's arts community last year to understand the needs and aspirations of arts freelancers. **A report detailing the findings of the engagement sessions will be released by April 2019.**

3 An **online portal will be ready in 2H 2019.** It aims to offer shared resources and services such as insurance and job opportunities. Additional services and resources will be introduced progressively. In all this, NAC will work closely with partners who are experts in these respective areas.

#### **Strengthening research in the arts**

4 Another key priority of Our SG Arts Plan is to invest in research. Through research, we can enhance art-making and engagement of audiences, and help us better advocate for the value of the arts.

5 Over the course of 2019, NAC will focus its efforts on strengthening research in the arts, by:

- Conducting studies to deepen understanding of arts audiences and expand ways of articulating value of arts

**ALL INFORMATION TO BE EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER  
MCCY COS SPEECHES ARE DELIVERED IN PARLIAMENT**

- Organising a research symposium to bring researchers and artists together
- Publishing a monthly research newsletter to equip the arts community

### **Growing our artists and audiences through internationalisation**

When Singapore showcases our culture internationally, we present who we are and what we are proud of to the world. Our arts and culture practitioners and institutions also benefit from access to new markets and the development of stronger capabilities, which help them achieve their aspirations. Over the last five years, MCCY, NAC and NHB have supported **over 1,000 artists, arts groups and cultural professionals' participation in more than 300 international festivals, exhibitions, residencies and professional development programmes**. Similarly, we have also been bringing in arts practitioners from around the world to encourage artistic exchange and learning, as well as programming to brand Singapore as an arts hub to attract more regional and international visitors.

**2 We have facilitated this by building bilateral and international networks which position Singapore as a valuable partner in the arts and culture, and create long-term opportunities for our cultural practitioners.** Our Museums and their Directors are currently involved in pinnacle international platforms, such as the:

- International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art
- Association of Asia Pacific Performing Arts, and
- Asia-Europe Museum Network.

**3 We signed bilateral agreements with key international partners to create more opportunities for our cultural practitioners, and showcase our culture globally.** In 2018, MCCY, NAC, and NHB signed agreements with their respective counterparts in the People's Republic of China, and MCCY also signed a bilateral agreement with Indonesia. These agreements strengthen collaborations, provide capability development opportunities, and deepen and broaden cultural exchanges.

4 **We will continue to support the presentation of high-quality Singapore art and culture works at the top international platforms.** For example, we have supported Singapore artists' participation at the internationally-renowned Venice Biennale since 2002. In the 2019 edition, multidisciplinary artist Song-Ming Ang and curator Michelle Ho will present their work *Music for Everyone: Variations in Time*. **Our national companies will continue to fly our Singapore flag high, and be our cultural ambassadors to introduce Singapore to the world.** For example, Singapore Chinese Orchestra (SCO) will be touring Europe in cities like Berlin<sup>4</sup> (Germany) and Imola<sup>5</sup> (Italy), come September 2019. SCO will feature Singaporean artists, Singaporean works and repertoires that connect us to the world.

5 **We will emphasise the development of visual arts residences in Southeast Asia.** We want our arts practitioners to leverage the vibrancy of our region, and deepen their understanding of our shared heritage, in their work. We also seek to develop our curatorial understanding and deepen Singaporeans' connection with the region. Following NAC's 2018 Memorandum of Understanding with the Cemeti Institute of Art and Society in Yogyakarta, an open call for the 2019 residency is currently underway, and we expect our first Singaporean artist to be scheduled for residency from Sep to Nov 2019. In the year ahead, NAC will also explore other opportunities in the Philippines and Thailand.

6 **We will also support our performing artists in ventures into new markets in the Asia-Pacific, such as Australia, China and Japan, as well as established markets such as France and the United Kingdom.** In close collaboration with Singapore's overseas mission in Paris, we recently funded the successful execution of Urban Art Singapore<sup>6</sup>, a 2.5-week exhibition in Paris that showcased the urban, contemporary and innovative aspects of Singapore's arts and culture scene. We have also funded our artists such as Shaza Ishak (Teater Ekamatra's General Manager and Company Director), to represent Singapore at platforms such as the Australian Performing Arts Market (APAM) in 2018. As a result of the connections made, Teater Ekamatra, DramaBox and pvi collective (Australia)

---

<sup>4</sup> Tour date: September 1, 2019

<sup>5</sup> Tour date: September 6, 2019

<sup>6</sup> 31 January to 17 February 2019 at The Republique Paris

are now developing TOPIA; an international residency exchange programme to explore experiential theatre-making.

7 **We will help our writers secure developmental opportunities in countries which have a strong tradition in our official languages.** This opens up avenues for our home-grown talents to hone their skills, and bring Singapore's literary art offerings abroad. For example, our writers will have the opportunity to participate in residencies offered by Lu Xun Academy of Literature (鲁迅文学院) later this year. Lu Xun is a top-rated academy based in Beijing which hosted notable Chinese writers like Mo Yan<sup>7</sup> (莫言) and Wang Anyi<sup>8</sup> (王安忆). The residency will provide further capability development and networking opportunities for Singapore writers.

#### **Strong community support for hawker culture nomination**

Singapore is ready to nominate Hawker Culture for the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. **The National Heritage Board (NHB), National Environment Agency (NEA), and Federation of Merchants Association (FMAS) will be jointly submitting the nomination dossier to UNESCO by end-March 2019.** The outcome is likely to be announced end-2020.

2 There has been strong community support for the nomination. As at 25 February 2019, there have been **around 550,000 pledges of support**<sup>9</sup> made online, through our travelling exhibition, and at mobile pledging stations. **More than 11,000 pledge cards have also been collected**, containing precious stories and memories of Singaporeans who have shared why Hawker Culture is important to them. Many hawkers and hawker associations, as well as community groups, have pledged their support too. A listing of these can be found at <https://www.oursgheritage.sg/pledge-organisation/>.

<sup>7</sup> Renowned Chinese novelist and short story writer, and awarded Nobel Prize in Literature in 2012

<sup>8</sup> Award winning female writer, who is currently President of the Shanghai Writers Association

<sup>9</sup> Latest figures available at <https://www.ourheritage.sg>

3 NHB, NEA and FMAS have also facilitated and supported ground-up efforts by the community to promote and document Hawker Culture, in support of our nomination. For example, NHB has engaged different groups, shared resources for their projects, and helped train students who have volunteered to help at its travelling exhibition.

4 Dick Yip and his Minstrels, an Ukulele interest group made up of seniors, cancer survivors and cancer patients, has pledged its support for the Hawker Culture nomination. The group holds its regular jam sessions and performances at hawker centres to add vibrancy to the community space, and to promote healthy living. They appreciate how hawker centres act as a meeting point where all Singaporeans, regardless of social status, age, race or religion, gather.

5 Pei Chun Public School and First Toa Payoh Primary School have worked on a *Fond Memories of Toa Payoh* project, where students from both schools came together to uncover the people and stories behind hawker food in Toa Payoh – a place they proudly call a “hawker food haven”.

6 The students and faculty of At-Sunrice GlobalChef Academy created a video showing the academy’s support for Hawker Culture. Each student visited a hawker centre to learn about the trade, the cooking techniques, and the variety of dishes served. Many of the Academy’s students and alumni, though qualified to work in restaurants, have chosen to join their parents and grandparents in operating their family-run hawker stalls.

7 The nomination has been supported by online and social media audiences through a #OurHawkerCulture Photo Contest, done in partnership with National Geographic. The Contest results will be announced later this month during Singapore Heritage Festival 2019, and winning photos will be considered by the nomination committee for submission to UNESCO.

## Enhancing accessibility and inclusivity to our heritage offerings

NHB is committed to ensuring that our Heritage Institutions and museums are increasingly accessible and inclusive to Singaporeans of all ages and backgrounds.

**2 NHB is rolling out an accessibility audit of NHB museums and institutions across 2019.** This will take stock of the existing facilities and services that are already in place, and identify areas of improvement across different aspects of access (e.g. infrastructure, exhibitions and programmes). The results of the audit will complement the incorporation of physical accessibility features – from wider passageways, installation of handrails and ramps, to accessible vehicle parking and lifts for wheelchair users<sup>10</sup> into the ongoing revamps of The Peranakan Museum (TPM), Singapore Philatelic Museum, Changi Chapel & Museum, and Reflections at Bukit Chandu.

**3 Our museums and institutions are also leveraging new tools and tailoring new programmes for more inclusive visitor experiences.** For example, the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) and TPM are developing travelling trunks which allow visually-impaired visitors to handle objects from the museums' handling collections and other replicas. This will be supplemented with an audio-descriptive tour, with detailed information of these objects. This experience will be piloted in 2H 2019, and rolled out by the end of the year.

**4** The National Museum of Singapore will be launching the Quiet Room in Q2 2019. This will provide a calm and relaxing environment for special needs children who may experience over-stimulation during their visit. This builds on the ongoing Quiet Mornings initiative, where the National Museum and ACM open an hour earlier on certain days, and prioritise senior and visitors with special needs for a quieter and more relaxing environment during this time.

---

<sup>10</sup> in accordance with BCA's Code on Barrier-Free-Accessibility and Universal Design guidelines.



5 Heritage Institutions have also developed a range of signature programmes for seniors as part of their Silver Hubs initiative. These aim to promote active ageing, empower seniors, and help them connect with others. One programme is the Reminiscence Walks facilitated and attended by seniors. A pool of senior volunteers has been trained to give guided tours of heritage trails and our Heritage Institutions to participants<sup>11</sup>. The first edition of the programme was launched in Balestier in December 2018, where seniors visited the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall and shop houses/ traditional shops in the vicinity. Since then, 12 Reminiscence Walks Ambassadors (senior volunteer guides) have been trained and 72 participants have taken part in the monthly guided tours. **Reminiscence Walks will soon be introduced to the Kampong Gelam and Little India precincts.**

6 **NHB will introduce the House of Memories programme developed by the National Museums Liverpool by April 2019.** This is a museum-led dementia outreach and engagement programme which seeks to improve the care experience for persons with dementia as well as their caregivers, through online access to our National Collection. NHB will partner others to roll out the programme, including Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, the Agency for Integrated Care, and the Geriatric Education and Research Institute.

---

<sup>11</sup> Observed age range of senior participants so far is between 50s – 80s, while the observed age range for senior volunteers so far is between 40s – 70s.

## Community

### Rallying communities to foster social cohesion and interfaith harmony

The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), with the support of MCCY, will be organising an international conference on cohesive societies, focusing on religious harmony in June 2019. This conference will **bring together local and international thought leaders across academia, government, religious groups and the civic sector** to share experiences, discuss ideas and develop collaborations for building cohesive societies. As part of the conference, a **Young Leaders' Programme (YLP) will also be held** to connect youth leaders, as well as encourage and equip them to play a more active role in community building.

2 The rise of religious extremism and terrorism has threatened the safety and security of countries around the world. With globalisation and greater connectivity, fault-lines and divisive forces have also become more salient. We are seeing a rise in identity politics the world over, where societies are fracturing along the lines of race, religion, class and nationality, and where communities are trying to heal from discord and strife. More than before, there is now an urgent need for the government and community to work together to address these challenges.

3 The conference therefore aims to:

- a. bring together prominent thought-leaders, practitioners and policy-makers to share experiences, discuss ideas and develop collaborations for building cohesive societies; and
- b. rally all communities to commit to taking action to foster social cohesion and interfaith harmony.

4 This will be done through exploring:

- a. the impact of inter-religious relations on social harmony;
- b. how we can promote cohesion across racially/religiously-diverse communities; and
- c. how countries and societies can forge a common identity across different groups.

5 The plenary sessions and workshops will be helmed by well-regarded and experienced international, regional/ASEAN, and local panellists and facilitators. The programme will also include learning journeys and an exhibition.

6 The Young Leaders' Programme will provide a platform for youths to learn from their local peers, as well as the opportunity to interact and share their experiences, discuss ideas and develop collaborations for building cohesive societies with their peers from other countries. Promising local and overseas youth leaders from a broad spectrum of community and religious organisations, academia as well as civic sector and public sector organisations will be invited.

**New crisis preparedness accreditation scheme to help religious organisations be crisis-ready, and build a more resilient Singapore**

MCCY will be launching the SGSecure Community Network (SGCN) **Crisis Preparedness Accreditation Scheme for Religious Organisations (ROs) in 4Q 2019**. Through this scheme, we aim to make Singapore society more resilient to crisis by strengthening ROs' awareness of emergency preparedness, support ROs in developing crisis response plans and provide training for RO members in crisis response skills. This scheme also recognises the efforts by ROs who have taken active steps to better prepare themselves to handle crises with a racial and/or religious dimension.

2 The SGCN Crisis Preparedness Accreditation Scheme will require ROs to undertake the following:

- a. *Self-Assessment* – completing and analysing a self-assessment toolkit to assess their emergency preparedness. This assessment will cover emergency response, crisis communication, security infrastructure and training of members in emergency preparedness.
- b. *Capability building* – training members with emergency response skills, such as improvised first aid and use of Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

**ALL INFORMATION TO BE EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER  
MCCY COS SPEECHES ARE DELIVERED IN PARLIAMENT**

- c. *Crisis-response exercises* – conducting regular table top exercises and other forms of crisis-response exercises so as to validate their plans and ensure that its members are well-prepared.

3 The scheme is a follow-up effort in preparing places of worship to be crisis-ready. To date, MCCY, in partnership with Home Team Agencies, has helped prepare more than 800 religious and community leaders from more than 300 ROs to build their capacity in crisis response, through efforts such as:

- a. *Counter Terrorism Seminars* that provide relevant security frameworks for places of worship to develop their own crisis response plans;
- b. *Disseminating crisis preparedness information* to ROs – e.g. MCCY recently launched a Security Advisory booklet specially tailored for religious and community organisations, which will be distributed by 1Q-2019;
- c. *Organising crisis preparedness exercises* for religious organisations' participation – all 89 Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circles (IRCCs) have conducted table top exercises, involving representatives from community and religious organisations in their respective constituencies.
- d. *Crisis Responses Exercises* organised at GRC-level will commence from mid-2019 onwards.

4 MCCY would encourage all ROs to go through the assessment, and will support them in skills training as well as the development of their crisis management plans. MCCY will be consulting community and religious organisations in developing this scheme.

## Sports

### 1,500 people engaged as part of Vision 2030 Review

Vision 2030 – our national blueprint for sport - was launched in 2012 with the objective of leveraging sport to inspire Singaporeans to lead more active lives and strengthen community bonds. Since its inception, Singaporeans have benefited from having more opportunities to participate in sport through several of its key initiatives, including ActiveSG, SportCares, Team Nila, the Disability Sports Master Plan (DSMP) and the Sports Facilities Master Plan (SFMP).

2 As part of the review for Vision 2030 – the national blueprint for sport – **Sport Singapore (SportSG) has engaged over 1,500 people through around 60 engagement sessions.** It will publish a report of the recommendations and upcoming initiatives in the second quarter of 2019.

3 These engagement sessions were conducting from July to December 2018, with a wide range of stakeholders, including public agencies, National Sports Associations (NSA), coaches, Team Singapore athletes, corporate partners, schools, VWOs serving vulnerable groups, as well as members of the public. Insights from these sessions are being used to inform and refine the recommendations to be released in the report.

4 One recommendation that is being developed is the SportCares' Communities of Care (CoC) initiative, which aims to scale up efforts to increase access to sport for vulnerable groups, such as at-risk youth, persons with disabilities and senior citizens. Amongst other ideas, SportCares will look to establish a network of partner organisations to catalyse more ground-up initiatives that promote the use of sport for social good.

## More Active Health programmes in 2019

The Active Health social movement was launched by SportSG in July 2017 to encourage Singaporeans to take ownership of their health and well-being - by promoting positive habits in physical activity, nutrition, reducing screen time and sleep, as well as sustaining such habits with the support of one's family and friends. By end-March this year, there will be **six** Active Health Labs in operation, at the Bedok, Bishan, Jurong East, Sengkang, Tampines and Woodlands ActiveSG centres. To date, more than 10,000 individuals have been on-boarded through assessments and workshops. Active Health roadshows have also reached out to over 80,000 people.

**2 Singaporeans can look forward to two more Active Health Sport-in-Precinct (SIP) programmes this year.** Active Health programmes will be introduced at the SIP facilities at Bukit Batok and Taman Jurong, in addition to the SIP facility in Jurong Spring. Residents can look forward to programmes led by interest groups, Active Health partner organisations, and group exercise activities.

**3 The second Active Health space housed at a partner facility will be launched at Admiralty Medical Centre in May 2019.** The first was launched in January this year as part of Decathlon's flagship store in Kallang, called the Decathlon Singapore Lab. Like our six Active Health Labs housed at ActiveSG centres, members of the public can undergo a free health and fitness assessment at these spaces.

Active Health Labs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Tampines Hub</li> <li>• Heartbeat@Bedok</li> <li>• Sengkang ActiveSG Sports Centre*</li> <li>• Bishan ActiveSG Sports Centre*</li> <li>• Jurong East ActiveSG Sports Centre*</li> <li>• Woodlands ActiveSG Sports Centre*</li> </ul>
Active Health spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decathlon Singapore Lab</li> <li>• Admiralty Medical Centre (<i>by end-May 2019</i>)</li> </ul>

**ALL INFORMATION TO BE EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER  
MCCY COS SPEECHES ARE DELIVERED IN PARLIAMENT**

Active Health programmes at SIP Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jurong Spring</li><li>• Bukit Batok (<i>to be launched in Q2 2019</i>)</li><li>• Taman Jurong (<i>to be launched Q2 2019</i>)</li></ul>
--	---

\*Opening in Mar 2019

### **Two more ActiveSG Academies and Clubs**

**Two more ActiveSG Academies and Clubs – in Canoeing and Gymnastics – will be introduced this year.** This will bring the number of Academies and Clubs to 18<sup>12</sup>, with programmes and activities for both young and old.

2 The ActiveSG Academies and Clubs provide structured programmes for members to learn and develop skills in the sport, and acquire values such as teamwork, discipline and resilience.

3 Since its launch in 2016, the ActiveSG Clubs and Academies have registered more than 45,000 participants of different ages, races and backgrounds (up from 25,000 as of 2017).

### **New and improved sporting spaces under Sports Facilities Master Plan**

To meet the changing needs and demands of residents for increase access to sporting activities, SportSG will roll out a series of new and improved facilities under the Sports Facilities Master Plan (SFMP).

2 This year, Singaporeans can look forward to:

- **2 new Play Fields: Jurong Town and Yan Kit;**
- **2 new Sport-in-Precinct facilities: Bukit Batok and Taman Jurong;**

---

<sup>12</sup> There are existing ActiveSG Academies and Clubs for Aquatics, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Floorball, Flying Disc, Football, Hockey, Martial Arts, Table Tennis, Tennis and Volleyball. There are also ActiveSG clubs catering to those over 40 and youths, as well as in activities such as dance and outdoor adventure.

- **52 new indoor sports halls and 32 new free-to-play school fields under the Dual-Use Scheme**

3 **Existing ActiveSG facilities are being rejuvenated with new and innovative features**; designed to align with each town's identity, heritage and overall liveability plans. The aim is to create common spaces where residents can get together to play sport, socialise and forge meaningful relationships.

4 Through engagement sessions conducted by SportSG, residents' inputs have been taken into account in the design of these community sporting spaces. One example is the **Choa Chu Kang Sport Centre** (artist impression available), where SportSG received over 700 responses from residents on what they would like to see at the centre. Residents can look forward to a renovated swimming complex with sheltered training pool, new water play equipment and water slides in 2020. An air-conditioned sports hall, larger gym and dance studio, a new Active Health Lab, as well as enhanced connectivity to the Park Connector Network which will be ready in the following year, allowing for more outdoor activities such as cycling and jogging.

5 Rejuvenation works are also currently ongoing at the Boon Lay Hockey Village (former Boon Lay Swimming Complex), Delta Sport Centre, Bishan Stadium, Jalan Besar Stadium, Jurong East Stadium, and Kallang Practice Track.

### **More opportunities for persons with disabilities to take part in sport through Disability Sports Master Plan (DSMP)**

There will be more opportunities for persons with disabilities (PwDs) to take part in sports, with the expansions of the Play Inclusive event and the Play-Ability programme. Through such shared sporting experiences, SportSG aims to make Singapore a more inclusive nation.



2 **Play Inclusive<sup>13</sup>, Singapore's largest unified sport competition, will be extended to two days** (up from one day in 2018). It will also see more organisations invited to participate, with plans to link special education schools and adult disability centres with neighbouring schools to form more unified teams. An additional sport, Inclusive Goalball, will be introduced, bringing the total number of sports to five (the other sports being badminton, basketball, floorball and football).

3 This year's **Play-Ability, a recreational sports programme supported by Temasek Foundation Cares, will be expanded to reach out to more homes and day activity centres which serve PwDs**. Launched last year, the programme has benefitted adult centres such as the Thye Hua Kwan Home for the Disabled and TOUCH Independent Living Centre.

4 **SportSG will also develop capabilities in disability sports among teachers and staff**. Plans are underway to tap into the expertise of sport coaches to work with teachers and staff at special education schools and disability organisations in conducting sporting activities. The aim is for teachers, staff and sport coaches to co-create sport programmes which are customised to participants' needs. Such collaboration enables sport coaches to develop skillsets in coaching PwDs, as well as equips teachers and staff to develop capabilities in conducting sporting activities independently in the future.

5 The Disability Sports Master Plan was launched in April 2016 with three main thrusts:

- to expand access and opportunities for participation in sports among persons with disabilities (PwDs),
- to develop organisational and professional capabilities, and
- to build awareness of disability sports.

In 2018, two new inclusive gyms were opened in Toa Payoh and Jurong West Sport Centres, bringing the total number of inclusive gyms to five.

---

<sup>13</sup> Play-Ability was launched last year by SportSG and Special Olympics Singapore, with the support of the Ministry of Education. Over 450 athletes and partners took part in the event held at the OCBC Arena.

### More opportunities for Team Nila volunteers to lead the community

This year, Team Nila volunteers can expect more opportunities to lead the community through five platforms – SportCares, ActiveSG Academies & Clubs, ActiveSG Centres, Active Health, and sporting events.

2 Through these five platforms, like-minded Team Nila volunteers can give back in their area of interest. They will also be opportunities for them to start ground-up initiatives. For example, working with the ActiveSG Sport Centres, Team Nila volunteers can propose and organise weekly sport try-outs to engage the residents in active living.

3 SportSG will continue to provide new opportunities for Team Nila volunteers, and equip them with the skills to deliver with impact. Special focus will be placed on senior volunteers to encourage them to lead active lives and contribute to the community. For instance, there are plans to allow some seniors who meet certain criteria to be trained in pool guardian roles, and to assist in operations at ActiveSG Sport Centres.

### Support for High Performance Sports

**SportSG is setting aside \$3 million in 2019, to provide extended campaign support of up to two years, for Team Singapore athletes preparing for major games.** This strengthens the support given to our games-bound athletes, and encourages them to start early on a full training load in preparation for upcoming major games.

2 This translates into an additional layer of customised high performance sports (HPS) support for athletes, in the form of: (i) enhanced programme support tailored to their training needs (overseas training & competition, coaching, sports science), and (ii) higher quantum of spexGrants (e.g. spexTAG and spexGLOW) during their major games preparation campaigns.

3 The Team Singapore athletes are in the midst of preparations for the 2019 Southeast Asian Games, 2020 ASEAN Para Games, 2020 Olympic Games and 2020 Paralympic Games.

4 MCCY currently invests about \$70 million annually in the HPS system. We will continue to work with key stakeholders such as the Singapore National Olympic Council, Singapore National Paralympic Council and the National Sports Associations, to ensure that the HPS system nurtures our athletes toward greater heights and maximise their potential.

## SG Cares

### Growing corporate volunteerism in Singapore

#### NVPC as the “go-to” for Corporate Giving

NVPC will be the **“go-to” agency for corporate giving, to make it easier for companies to start or strengthen their giving journey.** Building on its Company of Good (COG) programme<sup>14</sup>, the NVPC will work with stakeholders who provide volunteering opportunities, such as the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) and the Community Development Councils (CDCs)<sup>15</sup>, to consolidate resources, toolkits, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) best practices. Companies can approach NVPC who will facilitate the matching of companies to areas of need, according to the organisation’s volunteering interests and requirements.

2 NVPC will adopt an account management approach to work with strategic corporate partners. Based on its knowledge of the giving landscape, NVPC will identify areas of growth and strategic corporate partners with the relevant resources, networks, expertise and client base. NVPC will help the company to align business objectives and its vision for giving. It will also provide information, open up networks, and access to resources. The service will be rolled out later this year. More details will be announced when ready.

3 For the social service sector, the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) will continue to be the touchpoint for corporate partners and at the same time, strengthen the capabilities of social service organisations. One of the new initiatives is the AI-enabled Social Broker ‘CARA’ (Caring and Resourceful Assistant). The

---

<sup>14</sup> The Company of Good (COG) programme was launched in June 2016, and aims to help businesses give better and more holistically. Companies can use a self-diagnostic tool to understand their giving profile, access a pool of resources to build their capability, and join the COG Network to partner other companies to champion corporate giving in Singapore. To date, there are over 1,200 companies onboard the COG programme.

<sup>15</sup> NCSS works with companies to support and manage sustained giving of social service needs. The CDCs also connect interested companies with giving opportunities at a district level.

CARA Prototype 2.0 is a chatbot being developed by NCSS to improve the user experience (efficiency and accuracy), in matching corporates to social service organisations offering regular volunteer opportunities. It will be integrated into the SG Cares app, and giving.sg. NCSS is also in discussions with social service organisations to integrate CARA into their respective websites.

**Enhancing the Business and IPC Scheme (BIPS) to encourage more corporates to give back**

4 We will enhance BIPS to encourage employee volunteerism through businesses. Introduced in 2016, BIPS enables businesses to enjoy a 250% tax deduction on qualifying expenditures. This includes basic wages and related expenses, which are incurred when their employees volunteer or provide services to IPCs.

5 To make it easier for companies to apply, **we will simplify the claim process, providing an option to claim tax deductions on wages based on a fixed man-hour rate. We will also step up efforts to proactively engage businesses and IPCs on BIPS**, along with other support for corporate giving, so that more businesses, especially the small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and IPCs can benefit from the scheme.

**Public Service Cares**

6 In Jan 2019, the Public Service Division launched the **Public Service Cares (PS Cares) movement to role model a culture of care and contribution for fellow Singaporeans**. Through PS Cares, public officers will also better understand ground sentiments, develop citizen engagement capabilities and design better policies and programmes.

7 Many public officers have been volunteering, either in their personal capacity or as part of their agency's CSR initiative. **To encourage more officers to volunteer, the SG Cares Office is working with Public Service Division (PSD)**

**to curate and match meaningful and regular volunteering opportunities for public officers to contribute to the community.**

8 Examples of these opportunities include befriending seniors through home visits to help them with healthcare and social needs with the Silver Generation Office; providing one-on-one assistance for members of public on using their smartphones at IMDA's digital clinics; and interacting with public to get their sensing on policy issues of the day with REACH.

9 All public agencies are encouraged to adopt a cause or a charity and promote sustained volunteerism as part of CSR. A community of practice for CSR practitioners has been established for agencies to exchange best practices and share resources. Besides promoting volunteering internally, public agencies will also enhance their partnerships with citizens, by creating more volunteering opportunities for the general public to get involved in shaping and delivering programmes for fellow citizens.

### **Seniors as a force for good - Growing Senior Volunteerism in Singapore**

MCCY is **working with community partners, such as RSVP Singapore and the Centre for Seniors (CFS) to encourage seniors to volunteer by engaging older employees at the workplace.** Targeting the baby boomers, the engagements (e.g. lunchtime talks and roadshows) will focus on engendering a positive mind-set towards ageing. Seniors can be matched to volunteering opportunities where they can apply their experience, knowledge and talent in a meaningful way.

2 **MCCY will also work with RSVP Singapore to scale up the “Retire with a Purpose” (RWAP), a structured volunteerism programme to reach more companies and seniors.** RWAP was launched by RSVP Singapore in September 2017 to encourage companies to champion active aging and cultivate a culture of serving and sharing through volunteering.

3 The programme targets employees who are above 40 years old, and introduces them to a structured volunteering journey based on their interests, time commitment and goals. For those already volunteering, the programme also aims to sustain their interest and involvement. This includes exposing them to various volunteer opportunities, and providing training for them to be more effective volunteers. Even when an employee retires, the volunteer networks formed through RSVP Singapore can continue to connect the employee to an active and purposeful community.

4 Since the launch of the RWAP programme<sup>16</sup>, RSVP Singapore has partnered 15 organisations<sup>17</sup> to involve their employees in meaningful volunteering activities to help those in need. As of end-2018, 400 corporate volunteers had participated in 20 volunteering activities reaching out to over 1,000 beneficiaries. We will be working with RSVP Singapore to involve 10 - 20 more organisations in the programme by end-2019.

---

<sup>16</sup> Some of the ways in which the engagement was done was through awareness talks and volunteer recruitment booths at the respective organisations' functions.

<sup>17</sup> 13 private companies and 2 public agencies

## Youth

### Youth Corps Singapore to partner Institutes of Higher Learning to provide community service training for youth leaders

Youth Corps Singapore (YCS) will establish a partnership with the Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) to provide training for IHL community service leaders and members. This will enable them to contribute more effectively to society. Youths will go through a camp, where they will meet like-minded and passionate people, and receive community leadership and skills-based training.

2 The partnership will initially involve polytechnics, ITE and selected Autonomous Universities, with the first run of the programme starting in 2019. The partnership will be progressively expanded to include all Autonomous Universities and selected Private Education Institutes in the near future.

3 **The programme aims to sustain and grow the social participation and volunteerism of youths when they enter IHLs and the workforce.** While two out of five youths consider helping the less fortunate and contributing to society as very important life goals<sup>18</sup>, the youth volunteerism rate was only 34%<sup>19</sup>. Studies have also shown that many do not take up or stay on with volunteerism due to lack of awareness of opportunities, unattractive opportunities, and the lack of a focal point after they have graduated<sup>20</sup>. **The programme will address these barriers by ensuring the newly trained youth leaders are connected to a community of like-minded peers that they can pursue volunteering opportunities with, even after they enter the workforce.**

4 Through the partnership, IHL youth leaders are able to access YCS' networks, resources and other training, volunteerism and leadership opportunities. By being plugged into the YCS ecosystem, these youths can be connected with other community and sector partners, and in the process, be inspired to continue their volunteering journey. In time, MCCY hopes to build amongst Singapore youths, a culture of volunteerism as a way of life.

---

<sup>19</sup> Individual Giving Survey 2016 by NVPC

<sup>20</sup> Shifts in Youth Volunteerism in Singapore 2017 by NVPC



## Charities

### Easing regulatory reporting for smaller charities

Some charities, especially smaller ones, face resource constraints in meeting regulatory reporting requirements. **The Commissioner of Charities (COC) has, and will do more to streamline and simplify reporting requirements, in particular for smaller charities.**

2 The COC will do this by reducing the information that charities are required to fill in for regulatory submissions and minimising the duplicate submission of information. The COC is working with other agencies to facilitate data sharing so that charities need not submit information that has already been collected by other agencies. The COC will also be reducing reporting requirements for smaller non-IPC charities and whose gross annual income or total expenditure do not exceed \$500,000. Going forward, the Online Financial Summary submission requirement will not apply to these smaller charities.

3 The COC will complement this effort by providing clearer guidance to charities via the Charity Portal ([www.charities.gov.sg](http://www.charities.gov.sg)) and through various outreach initiatives such as shared services and training sessions, so that smaller charities will find it easier to comply. For example, the COC will provide templates and guides, such as the *Annual Report template*, to make preparation of annual submissions easier.

4 These initiatives to streamline reporting requirements and improve the ease of regulatory submissions will be **progressively rolled out from 2019.**

5 With simpler reporting requirements and the various forms of support provided, we enable charities to channel their efforts towards serving the public more efficiently.

6 The COC has implemented various ongoing initiatives to support charities in regulatory compliance. These include:

- Learning programmes

These range from programmes such as the annual Charity Governance Conference as well as sector-specific training sessions on the Code of Governance to development of toolkits for use by the charities.

- Grants

Under the VWOs-Charities Capability Fund (VCF), charities can obtain funding support of up to 80% to attend training courses and engage external consultants to improve key governance and management areas. Charities are also able to utilise the VCF for Info-Communication Technology needs, and for outsourcing of payroll, finance and accounting functions to third-party service providers.

- Shared Services

In 2018, the COC partnered 4 organisations to provide shared services to help charities improve their governance and compliance efforts, including in regulatory reporting. Training sessions and walk-in clinics on governance and technical know-how on regulatory submissions were conducted by our shared services partners. More than 200 representatives from over 100 charities benefitted from this.