



MCCY'S RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE CITIZENS' WORKGROUP FOR THE SINGAPORE CITIZENSHIP JOURNEY

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 01 FOREWORD BY MINISTER EDWIN TONG | 2 |
| 02 ABOUT | |
| A The Singapore Citizenship Journey | 5 |
| B The Citizens' Workgroup | 7 |
| 03 DETAILED RESPONSE TO THE CWSCJ'S REPORT | 11 |
| A e-Journey | 12 |
| B Community Sharing Session | 16 |
| C Singapore Experiential Visit | 18 |
| D Introduction to Service to Community | 19 |
| E Handbook for Naturalised Citizens | 20 |
| 04 CONCLUSION | 21 |
| 05 ANNEXES | |
| A Digital Tools and Processes | 24 |
| B Participant Breakdown and Feedback | 25 |

01 Foreword



EDWIN TONG

MINISTER FOR CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND YOUTH
AND SECOND MINISTER FOR LAW

1. This project was first conceived in 2019, during the year of our Bicentennial commemorations that reflected on how Singapore – and Singaporeans – came to be. The Bicentennial Experience reminded us how much our island has transformed over the years, shaped by the passage of people from all across the globe to our shores. Although we lacked a shared history or even a common language at the start, we nonetheless forged a common national identity based on the strength of our convictions, our shared aspirations and values. It is an identity grounded in an appreciation of our diversity and what it means to be a Singaporean standing shoulder-to-shoulder as equal members of society.
2. I believe that every generation of citizens will have to ask this question of themselves and of one another. MCCY launched the Citizens' Workgroup for the Singapore Citizenship Journey (CWSCJ) early in 2020 to encourage more discourse. Its aim was to tap the collective wisdom of a diverse group of

citizens, including naturalised citizens, to crystallise our thinking about being in Singapore and being a Singaporean.

3. In November 2020, after seven months of dialogue and deliberation, the Workgroup released its report entitled “*Being at Home – A Welcome Letter from Singaporeans*”. The report struck me as heartfelt and personal – it was not only a message of welcome to newcomers to Singapore, but also a love letter to Singapore. The members also broke new ground when we had to shift the discussions to a digital format as a result of COVID-19. This is the first time that a citizens’ workgroup like this has been convened digitally in its entirety. That the members pivoted so quickly and readily, while dealing with all the changes and disruptions to daily life brought by COVID-19, is a testament to their resilience, commitment and heart. I thank the Workgroup for this gift to Singapore and Singaporeans.
4. I appreciate how the Workgroup has illustrated what it means to be a Singaporean in day-to-day life, and also how our multiculturalism is a uniquely Singaporean feature that requires care and attention by both institutions and communities to uphold. I agree with the Workgroup that integrating local-born citizens and newcomers is a two-way process. We all have a role to play in helping newcomers adapt to our more unique habits and norms, just as naturalised citizens make the effort to learn about Singapore and contribute to the development of our communities. Through regular interactions face-to-face and side-by-side with one another, we can foster a stronger and more robust identity based on trust and mutual respect.
5. This document sets out our formal response on how we will use the Workgroup’s report to guide the update and development of various components of the Singapore Citizenship Journey.

6. The Workgroup is a powerful example of citizen-to-citizen partnership. It exemplifies the ethos of the Singapore Together movement, in bringing diverse citizens together to listen to each other and deliberate on an issue that is close to the hearts of all Singaporeans.
7. The Workgroup's report, with its inclusive sense of 'us', has set a fine example for future conversations on this important issue of integrating newcomers. I welcome all Singaporeans, and those who are proud to call Singapore home, to join us in future projects by participating actively in partnership opportunities through the Singapore Together movement.
8. Let me end with a quote by one of our founding leaders:

As a Singaporean I have no difficulty in a single lifetime, forgetting in turn that I was a Ceylon Tamil and Sri Lankan even though I was born there. I had no difficulty forgetting that I was a British subject or the formative years as a Malayan... Being a Singaporean is not a matter of ancestry. It is conviction and choice...

Being Singaporean means forgetting all that stands in the way of one's Singaporean commitment, but without in any way diminishing one's curiosity about the triumphs and failures of our distant ancestors.

– *Sinnathamby Rajaratnam, 1990*

02 About

A. THE SINGAPORE CITIZENSHIP JOURNEY

1. Launched in February 2011, the Singapore Citizenship Journey (SCJ) is a mandatory induction programme for all would-be citizens between the ages of 16 and 60 who have been granted in-principle approval for Singapore citizenship by the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority of Singapore. The SCJ culminates in a citizenship ceremony to officially welcome naturalised citizens as full-fledged members of our Singaporean family.
2. The SCJ aims to enrich naturalised citizens' understanding of the key milestones in Singapore's history and development, deepen their appreciation of Singaporean norms and values, and provide opportunities for meaningful interaction with the local community. The citizenship journey experience comprises several components:
 - a. an online learning module and quiz known as the **e-Journey** that aims to help participants better understand the history and development of Singapore

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- b. a community interaction component known as the **Community Sharing Session**, organised by the People's Association to welcome them into their local communities and foster greater community involvement.
 - c. an experiential learning programme known as the **Singapore Experiential Visit** that takes naturalised citizens to key historical landmarks and national institutions; OR a half-day **Introduction to Service to Community** programme by National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre to introduce prospective citizens to community service.
 3. Applicants have up to two months to complete the online learning module, experiential learning, and community interaction components of the SCJ before they can conclude their citizenship formalities and receive their pink National Registration Identity Cards and citizenship certifications.
 4. The Singapore Citizenship Journey is a collaboration between the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, the National Integration Council, the People's Association, and the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority of Singapore.
 5. More information can be found here:
www.nationalintegrationcouncil.gov.sg/citizenship/singapore-citizenship-journey

B. THE CITIZENS' WORKGROUP FOR THE SCJ

Background

Launched a decade ago, the SCJ has been updated regularly over the years. However, MCCY wanted to tap on the wisdom and lived experiences of citizens themselves and hear their views on what every citizen – both native-born or naturalized – should know. We therefore invited a diverse and inclusive group of citizens to deliberate and discuss amongst themselves about what it means to be a Singaporean and how we can distill and share this knowledge with new citizens.

On 1 Aug 2019, the Ministry's plans to convene a citizens' workgroup, to explore the question on what it means to be a Singaporean, were formally announced at the National Integration Council's 10th anniversary convention.¹ The collective insights and ideas of this citizen-led workgroup, derived through a carefully facilitated participatory design process, would then guide the review and refresh of the SCJ content in 2021.

Recruitment

At MCCY's Year-in-Review on 16 Jan 2020, the Ministry issued an open call for volunteers to participate in the citizens' workgroup. Recruitment closed on 21 Feb 2020, attracting 245 interested applicants. An external recruitment agency was engaged to manage the volunteer recruitment and selection effort.

Selection

A total of 93 Singaporeans (including naturalised citizens) from this open call to all citizens and partner organisations were selected to join the workgroup.

¹ A broad timeline of the CWSCJ project, following this announcement, is reflected in the infographic on the next page (Image credit: [Challenge Magazine](#)).

Consideration was given to ensure that the participants were reflective of our society's demographics in terms of gender, age, race and socio-economic status. Of these, 27 participants were volunteers from organisations such as the NIC, PA, the National Youth Council, religious groups, and NGOs.

Planning and Organisation

The team had initially planned for 5 full-day physical sessions from Mar – Jul 2020.

However, due to the onset and escalation of the COVID-19 situation in Feb 2020, the face-to-face sessions had to be overhauled.

A decision was made to convert the 5 physical sessions to a purely digital format, and to introduce a second engagement phase with 4 more sessions.

This second phase took into account the shorter half-day digital sessions. Because of the extended duration of the project, members could choose if they wanted to continue with Phase 2 of the engagement.

In all, 9 half-day sessions were held across Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Ms Grace Fu, then-Minister for Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY), announces plans to form a citizens' workgroup to refresh SCJ content at the National Integration Council Convention.



AUG 2019



MCCY publicises the Citizens' Workgroup and begins public recruitment of 100 Singaporeans to form a diverse workgroup.

DORSCON level moves to orange. The new virus is named COVID-19. The CWSCJ organising team adjusts engagement plans according to new safe distancing measures.

JAN 2020

FEB 2020



The Multi-Ministry Taskforce on COVID-19 announces that all groups should not exceed 10 people. The CWSCJ organising team decides to overhaul the engagement design to make the engagement virtual, and shifts the launch date to April to accommodate the additional preparations. A decision was also made to proceed with the CWSCJ in two phases.



MAR 2020

First virtual session begins during Circuit Breaker. Phase 1 of the engagement seeks to build participants' familiarity on the engagement topics and with one another.

APR 2020



JULY 2020

End of Phase 1 engagement. Secretariat polls participants on interest to proceed with Phase 2 of the engagements.

Start of Phase 2 engagement with 69 remaining participants to create content on what future Singaporeans should know. Participants identify the topics they would like to develop content for. Sessions continue online in light of COVID-19.

AUG 2020



SEP-OCT 2020

Participants design a questionnaire to ask Singaporeans at large what they would like future Singaporeans to know and to be. The survey was carried out by a MCCY-commissioned research agency. 3,822 Singapore citizens participated in the online survey and telephone interviews.

NOV 2020



The Citizens' Workgroup concludes. Participants present a summary of the content they have developed to Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Edwin Tong and senior MCCY leadership, and submits the final Workgroup report to MCCY.



PHASE 1

WHAT MAKES US SINGAPOREAN?

- Get to know each other better
- Have a better understanding of the topics
- Explore the different perspectives



PHASE 2

WHAT DO WE WANT FUTURE SINGAPOREANS TO KNOW OR TO BE?

Further explore, discuss, and create content that will be used as reference material to enhance the Singapore Citizenship Journey

25 APR SESSION #1

Connecting with one another; onboarding of participants to online platforms

Context setting for the SCJ, voting on topics and forming of smaller topic groups for further discussion

9 MAY SESSION #2

Discussion on “Our Values and Norms” and the things we say or do that are ‘Singaporean’ or ‘Un-Singaporean’

16 MAY SESSION #3

Discussion on “Our Roles and Responsibilities”, its relation to values, and the things we ‘must’ or ‘should’ do as a member of the Singapore community

20 JUN SESSION #4

Group project sharing and discussion on “Integration” – on what an integrated society looks like in Singapore’s context

4 JUL SESSION #5

Review and reflection on the online engagement process; sharing of plans for Phase 2

Phase 1 – Connect, Discover and Ideate

The focus of Phase 1, which took place over 5 sessions from 25 Apr to 4 Jul 2020, was to get participants familiar with the process and one another, and to also explore the central question of “What makes us Singaporean?”

They did so by examining and discussing various sub-topics related to the central theme, such as on “values and norms”, “roles and responsibilities”, and “integration”. These topics were selected based on the highest number of votes received.

Participants also had the opportunity to hear from key stakeholders, access relevant information related to the topics at hand, and conduct their own informal polls with their friends and families.

For instance, one group managed to interview their Singaporean contacts who were based overseas to get their views too.

In all, the Workgroup members in Phase 1 managed to reach out to 978 individuals through surveys and interviews conducted over phone, email, and Zoom.

Phase 2 – Research and Deliberation

Building on these conversations, 69 participants continued into Phase 2, which took place virtually over 4 sessions from 15 Aug to 7 Nov 2020. Participants anchored their discussion and deliberations on this focal question: “What do we want future Singaporeans to know or to be?”

To achieve this, the Workgroup members consulted the wider public by developing questions for a mass survey to aggregate the knowledge and opinions of more than 3,000 Singaporeans outside the Workgroup. The survey respondents were representative of Singapore’s demographic. (The results of this mass survey are discussed and referenced in Chapter 3 and Appendix F of the Workgroup’s report respectively.)

Organised into 8 sub-groups, participants worked towards a final report capturing the workgroup’s recommendations on what they hope that all future Singaporeans should know or practise.

PHASE 2

SESSION #1 15 AUG

Deciding on topics and formation of eight topic groups; drafting of scope of mass survey for the wider public

SESSION #2 29 AUG

Review of outline of each topic; drafting of mass survey questions

SESSION #3 10 OCT

Review of content for each topic; incorporating survey findings into report draft

SESSION #4 7 NOV

Presentation of final report; review and reflection on the engagement process



The facilitators and organising team ensured that each participant had a chance to speak, and expertly navigated through the session. They also constantly prompted us to think further and deeper about the issues being raised, rather than just a surface understanding."

—Workgroup participant

03 Response

TO THE CITIZENS' WORKGROUP'S REPORT

Introduction

Most citizen workgroups present their report as a document with various recommendations for consideration. In this case, the CWSCJ's report took the form of a heartfelt letter outlining what they hope new citizens will know and understand as they go through the SCJ before they officially receive their citizenship. The recommendations of the Citizens' Workgroup are woven into the various sections of this welcome letter to new citizens.

MCCY appreciates the novel presentation of the Workgroup's report, and would like to formally respond, through this document, by showing we will take guidance from the **i) tone, ii) structure, and iii) content of the CWSCJ's report** to enhance the e-Journey component of the SCJ. We will also share some preliminary ideas on how the other components of the citizenship journey will be enhanced, in the next section of this Chapter.

A. e-JOURNEY

The e-Journey is the online learning component of the SCJ that allows new citizens to acquire information that we expect citizens to know about Singapore, at their own pace and convenience. The current modules cover information on our history and development as a country, key national policies, Total Defence, as well as our efforts in building a cohesive and harmonious society.

HOW THE CURRENT E-JOURNEY WILL BE REFRESHED BASED ON THE CWSCJ'S REPORT

1. TONE

The report, presented as a “welcome gift from Singaporeans to all new citizens”, is written in the form of a letter addressed directly to “future Singaporeans”. The tone of this letter is heartfelt, personable, and invokes a sense of warmth.

For instance, the first chapter in the CWSCJ's report highlights how membership to the Singaporean family is not primarily defined by one's place of birth or language or ethnicity, but rather begins by espousing a set of shared principles or values recognised as core to the wider Singaporean community.

This point is not communicated didactically, but is conveyed with warmth and sincerity in the concluding paragraph of the first chapter:

“We welcome you to our Singapore family. Together, let's live out these 5 shared values, act on them, and honour them. Let's stick by Singapore and love Singapore no matter what happens.”

The revised e-Journey will strive to adopt a similar tone as reflected in the Workgroup's report, to create a sense of welcome and connection with the participant taking the e-Journey.



2. STRUCTURE

The Workgroup's report comprises eight distinct chapters on the following themes:

- i. Values and Norms
- ii. Roles and Responsibilities
- iii. Integration
- iv. Contributing to Society
- v. History and Milestones
- vi. Art, Culture and Traditions
- vii. National Systems and Institutions
- viii. Moving Ahead as a Nation

The current e-Journey is organised into four main chapters or modules, opening with a chronological account of Singapore's history. The other modules include content on key institutions and national policies, community efforts for social harmony and the five pillars of Total Defence.

MCCY agrees that the structure of the Workgroup's report provides a comprehensive frame to organise the key things that Singaporeans should know and appreciate about Singapore. We will reference the structure of the Workgroup's report closely in our review of the e-Journey.

3. CONTENT

The Workgroup produced an extensive report covering many topics related to various aspects of life and living in Singapore that they felt future citizens should know.

While some of the topics listed in the Workgroup's report is already covered in the scope of the existing e-Journey, there are new suggestions contained in the report.

The content of the e-Journey will be refreshed to incorporate some of the topics in the Workgroup's report that were not previously included.

For example, the revamped e-Journey will have **a new module on our arts and heritage**, adapted from Chapter 6 of the Workgroup's report that highlights the following:

- **Overview of our arts and cultural development** – the report reflects on how “Singapore's arts scene [has grown] over the years” signifying our strong commitment to the arts, and the role of the arts in exploring and examining “Singapore's values and norms”
- **Key cultural venues and institutions** – the report references iconic and world-class arts venues like the Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay that have inspired pride amongst Singaporeans
- **Pioneer and award-winning artists** – the report also highlights that “a number of Cultural Medallion recipients are new citizens”

MCCY also notes that the Workgroup emphasised **both the uniqueness and importance of Singapore's brand of multiculturalism and multiracialism in almost all of the chapters in their report.**

For example, the metaphor of ‘Rojak’, a popular local dish, was deployed in three different chapters to describe how Singaporeans “recognise and respect each other's cultural heritage and identity while living harmoniously with each

other" (Chapter 1); how Singapore is "a diverse society where different groups participate wholly in community building yet retain their heritage and culture" (Chapter 3); and how our arts and cultural scene, as well as our food heritage, "reflects Singapore's eclecticism, diversity and inclusion at its best" (Chapter 6).

This is underpinned by a recognition that Singapore's racial and religious harmony is hard won, given the racial animosity and violence Singapore experienced in the 1950s and 1960s, as described in some detail by different co-authors of the Workgroup in Chapters 1, 2, and 5 of the report.

The report underscores the importance of individuals, communities, and institutions to uphold multiculturalism and multiracialism in Singapore.

For instance, the Workgroup highlighted its findings from a representative survey of the wider public that although "many Singaporeans today are concerned about tensions between locals and foreigners", they also believe that "racial and religious harmony are key enablers for Singapore" (Chapter 8).

The Workgroup also indicated that they would like new Singaporeans to know more about the "several specific laws and institutions [that] were promulgated and formed to further entrench and provide for racial and religious harmony" (Chapter 9).

This emphasis on the uniqueness and importance of upholding multiculturalism and religious harmony in Singapore will be prioritised in the content of the e-Journey.

Although the Workgroup noted that its role was "to review and create fresh and relevant content for the e-Journey and finetune its desired outcomes", **MCCY finds value in using the report as a reference to guide the update and development of the other components of the SCJ, including the Community Sharing Session, the Singapore Experiential Visit, and a pilot volunteering component known as the Introduction to Service to Community programme.**

OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE SCJ



WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY SHARING SESSION?

The Community Sharing Session (CSS) is one of the components of the SCJ where naturalised citizens get to meet fellow residents and Grassroots Leaders from their own constituency. During the session, participants share their hopes and aspirations for Singapore and also learn more about how they can participate in building community together.

HOW WILL THE CSS BE ENHANCED BASED ON THE CWSCJ'S REPORT?

B. COMMUNITY SHARING SESSIONS

The community sharing sessions are conducted at the municipal level and aims to introduce the naturalised citizens with key members of the local community.

Chapter 3 of the Workgroup's report cites these sessions as a positive example of activities that "support two-way communication and cultural exchange" between local-born Singaporeans and naturalised citizens.

The report further suggested that naturalised citizens could consider inviting their “neighbours or other local-born Singaporeans” along for the CSS or other similar programmes.

- **MCCY believes that providing opportunities for social interaction is important to build cohesion and harmony, and will consider how to incorporate the Workgroup’s suggestion into the CSS.**

Through their research, the Workgroup also found that the most local-born Singaporeans “were not clear about the naturalisation process” because they had “‘rarely’ or only ‘sometimes’ interacted with new citizens”. The Workgroup mentioned that this could be due to the reserved nature of local-born Singaporeans, and suggested that naturalised citizens take the first step and “make a concerted effort to initiate contact”.

- **MCCY believes that this point could be explored as part of the facilitated discussion with GRLs and residents during the CSS.**
- **In general, MCCY agrees that having more opportunities for social interactions will increase familiarity and knowledge of others, leading to greater trust amongst different members in the community. Many of such efforts are already supported by the Community Integration Fund and we welcome more project proposals from citizens.²**

² www.nationalintegrationcouncil.gov.sg/funding/community-integration-fund

WHAT IS THE SINGAPORE EXPERIENTIAL VISIT?

The Singapore Experiential Visit is a half-day learning journey that takes new citizens to key historical landmarks and national institutions where they learn more about our history and how we overcame national challenges in the different domains of the urban planning, transport, water resources, as well as security and defence.

HOW WILL THE VISIT BE ENHANCED BASED ON THE CWSCJ'S REPORT?

C. SINGAPORE EXPERIENTIAL VISIT

Chapters 5 – 7 of the Workgroup's report references how historical landmarks and key institutions i) showcase the development of Singapore and also ii) serve as a physical reminder of what "previous generations of Singaporeans have built".

For example, the Workgroup wrote that the opening of The Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay signified, in a tangible way, how "Singapore's arts scene [has grown] over the years."

- **MCCY notes the Workgroup's list of key places of interest in Table 2 (p16) of their report, and will explore expanding the current learning journey to include some of the locations as suggested.**

Expanding the range of volunteering opportunities



WHAT IS THE INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE TO COMMUNITY?

The Introduction to Service to Community is a pilot half-day volunteering component of the SCJ that introduces participants to community service and volunteerism in Singapore and aims to encourage active citizenry and strengthen participants' understanding and appreciation of being part of a diverse and inclusive society.

HOW WILL THE ISC BE ENHANCED BASED ON THE CWSCJ'S REPORT?

D. INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE TO COMMUNITY

In **Chapter 4** of its report, the Workgroup reported that 85% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the statement “that it is important for new citizens to contribute to society” and that it would “be better if one’s contribution to society... take a more visible form.”

- **MCCY agrees that volunteering helps to strengthen validation and recognition of naturalised citizens and their contributions in their respective communities and neighbourhoods, and that service to the community “brings us deep meaning and gives us significance” (Chapter 3, CWSCJ’s report).**
- **To facilitate this, we will expand the range of volunteering opportunities in the programme, so that naturalised citizens can “serve meaningfully on causes close to [their] heart[s]” (Chapter 4, CWSCJ’s report).**
- **In line with our intention to encourage more social interaction between locals and naturalised citizens, MCCY will also consider how to involve more local-born Singaporeans in this programme, and together with our new compatriots demonstrate that we are a nation that cares.**

WHAT IS THE HANDBOOK FOR NATURALISED CITIZENS?

While the e-Journey is currently accessible only to individuals who have been granted in-principle approval for Singapore citizenship, the Handbook for naturalised citizens is a publicly available resource³ to help newcomers learn more about Singapore's unique history, personalities, as well as our national values.

HOW WILL THE CURRENT HANDBOOK BE REVISED BASED ON THE CWSCJ'S REPORT?

E. HANDBOOK FOR NATURALISED CITIZENS

- **Similar to the e-Journey above, the planned update to the Handbook for naturalised citizens will strive to incorporate the tone, structure, and content from the Workgroup's report where appropriate.**

i) Tone

The Handbook is currently written as a factual guide for naturalised citizens to learn more about various aspects of life and living in Singapore. **MCCY is of the view that the tone of the Handbook can be more personable and friendly, and will aim to reflect the same emotional tenor as the Workgroup's report in our review of the Handbook.**

ii) Structure

Similar to the existing e-Journey, the current Handbook opens chronologically with a chapter on Singapore's history. **MCCY will reference the structure and key themes of the Workgroup's report in the next update of the Handbook.**

iii) Content

The current Handbook is comprehensive, covering 6 chapters across 36 pages. However, MCCY notes that Workgroup's report explores additional topics, such as the chapter on "Arts, Culture, and Tradition" that highlights pioneer artists in Singapore and Cultural Medallion recipients. **MCCY will update the content of the Handbook with the relevant topics from the CWSCJ report.**

³ www.nationalintegrationcouncil.gov.sg/resources/handbooks-and-publications

04 Conclusion

In responding to the report produced by the Citizens' Workgroup, the Ministry acknowledges the contribution of time, commitment and effort that participants have displayed throughout the seven-month process of dialogue and deliberation.

This effort is made more remarkable given the disruptions that COVID-19 posed to people's lives. That the Workgroup members persevered with their discussions over the better part of 2020 – coming together to engage critically and build consensus on a complex topic – is a fine example of civic engagement and participation.

Another positive outcome of this project is that there have been various citizen-led spin-offs following the release of the CWSCJ's welcome letter in November. For instance, some members of the Workgroup have stepped up to form a team to lead the translation of the CWSCJ's work into the vernacular languages. Other members have also expressed interest to share their learning and insights in a video series for the wider public.

WHAT MAKES US SINGAPOREAN?



05 Annexes

Ours is not a melting pot society, with every race shorn of its distinctiveness. Instead, we encourage each race to preserve its unique culture and traditions, while fostering mutual appreciation and respect among all of them. Being Singaporean has never been a matter of subtraction, but of addition; not of becoming less, but more; not of limitation and contraction, but of openness and expansion.

— Lee Hsien Loong, 2017



"The online format was great! I enjoyed it, probably more so if it were face-to-face meeting as it allows flexibility to view and hear from others without much distractions."
—Workgroup participant

"I would have loved to meet everyone face to face."
—Workgroup participant

Digital Tools and Processes

COVID-19 presented a unique opportunity to conduct digitally a process that has traditionally been rooted in observing and responding to the dynamics of peer-to-peer interaction in a shared physical space.

To prepare for a fully digital engagement exercise, step-by-step guides were created to facilitate users' navigation of the apps, and a hotline was set-up to for participants facing any technical issues during each session.

Some of the digital tools that enabled the team to facilitate both the planning and the proceedings of the virtual engagement sessions are highlighted below.

Discussion and Deliberation

- Videoconferencing tools like **Zoom** helped to approximate synchronous face-to-face communications. **Small group breakout sessions** were scheduled to promote in-depth discussion on each topic, and large group sharing and presentations were limited to 20 minutes to prevent fatigue.
- Conference feedback tools and game-based learning platforms like **Mentimeter** and **Kahoot** were useful to poll workgroup members and promote audience interaction. **Padlet** also served as a digital whiteboard for participants to share, brainstorm and organise their thoughts in real-time.



Organising, Note-taking and Report Writing

- Online collaborative word-processing platforms like **Google Docs** allowed for concurrent writing and editing by multiple authors. **Closed Facebook groups** also served as a private space for group members to exchange ideas and reflect on the discussions after each session. Communication tools like **WhatsApp** and **Telegram** kept the conversations going in between each session.

A balance had to be made between using these platforms to augment the discussions and ensuring that they remained accessible to all. Care was taken to ensure that these digital tools would not distract from the larger importance of creating a space for the Workgroup to deliberate and discuss the core question on what it means to be a Singaporean.

Participant Breakdown and Feedback

| | Phase 1 | Phase 2 |
|---|--|---|
| Total Sign-ups | 245 | NA |
| Number of Participants | 93 | 69 |
| Number of Facilitators <i>[volunteers from various Government agencies]</i> | 33 | 11 |
| Male / Females | Male: 59% Female: 41% | Male: 62% Female: 38% |
| Occupation Diversity | In both Phase 1 and 2, participants came from a wide range of occupational backgrounds including PMETs, frontline/clerical workers, public servants, homemakers, students and retirees | |
| Racial Diversity | Chinese – 69% Indian – 14% Malay – 12% Others – 5% | Chinese – 64% Indian – 16% Malay – 15% Others – 5% |
| Number of Naturalised Citizens | 14 (15%) | 11 (16%) |
| Oldest / Youngest Workgroup members | 73 years old 17 years old <i>for both phases</i> | |
| Timeline / Time Spent | Over 15 hours* across 5 sessions | Over 12 hours* across 4 sessions |
| | <i>* Hours stated are based on actual engagement sessions over Zoom. Group members put in additional hours for further discussions and report writing</i> | |
| Average response from Workgroup on the engagement sessions | 82% agree session was good/ very good | |