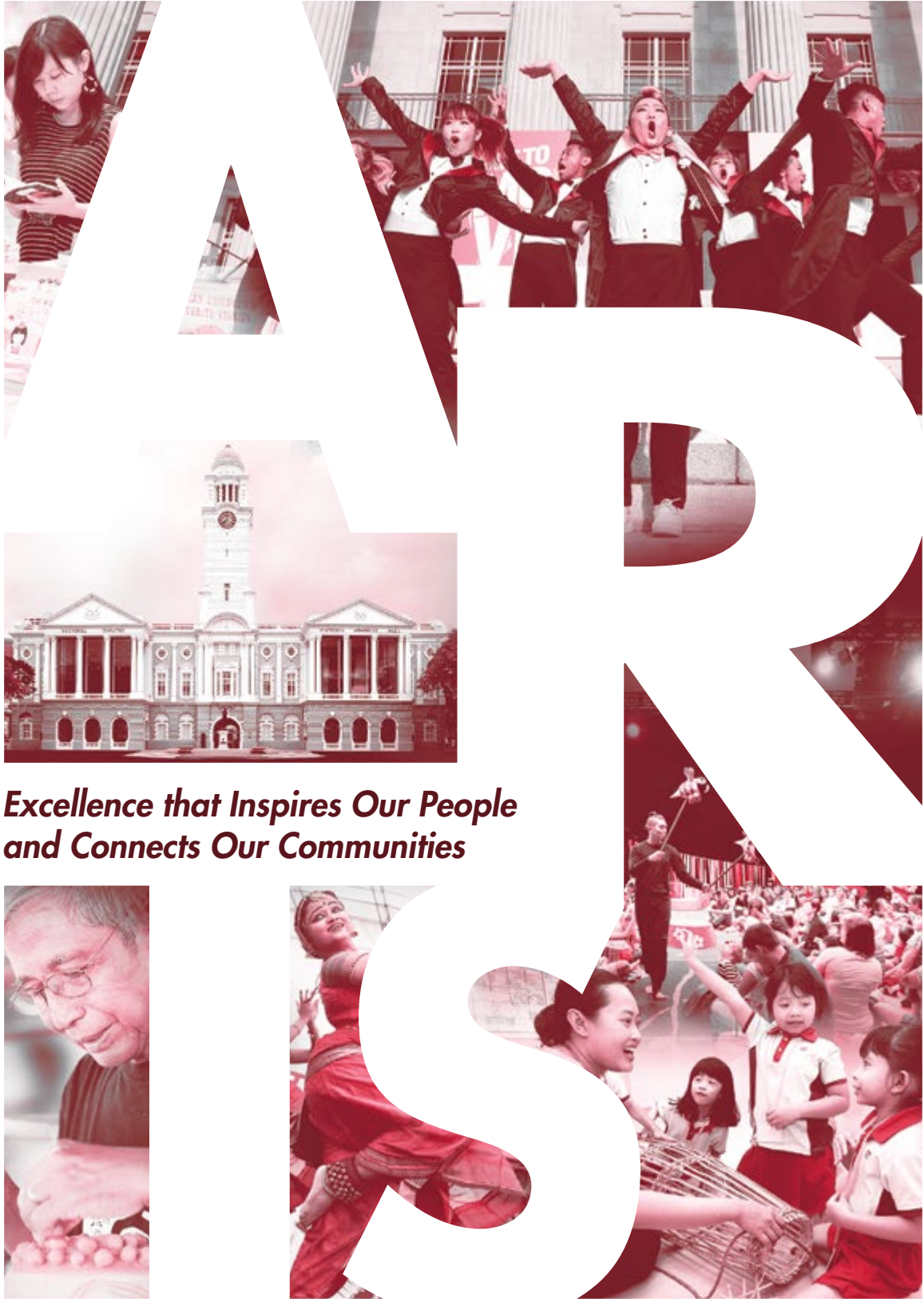


OUR SG



*Excellence that Inspires Our People
and Connects Our Communities*



NATIONAL
ARTS COUNCIL
SINGAPORE

PLAN
2018-2022

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On the cover (clockwise from top right):

- ▶ Opening Performance of Got to Move SPOTLIGHT 2017 – a collaboration by Frontier Danceland and O School
- ▶ *Hello Elly* directed by Ian Loy (Esplanade Theatre for Young Audiences Associate Artist), produced by Esplanade for *PLAYtime!* 2012. (Photo by Jack Yam. Courtesy of Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay.)
- ▶ Preschool students learning more about traditional Malay arts as part of NAC's Traditional Arts Taster Programme
- ▶ Indian dance performance by Apsaras Arts
- ▶ Master potter, Cultural Medallion 1988 recipient Iskandar Jalil (Photo by Lawrence Chong. Courtesy of National Gallery Singapore.)
- ▶ Façade of Victoria Theatre & Victoria Concert Hall (Photo courtesy of Arts House Limited.)
- ▶ #BuySingLit: Buy Local, Read Our World, an industry-led movement supported by NAC (Photo by Edmund Leong Motion & Stills. Courtesy of #BuySingLit.)

OUR SG ARTS PLAN (2018 – 2022)

*Excellence that Inspires Our People and
Connects Our Communities*

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[www.nac.gov.sg/
OurSGArtsPlan](http://www.nac.gov.sg/OurSGArtsPlan)

MESSAGE

Singapore's arts calendar is bursting with rich and diverse offerings year-round, reflective of our multicultural identity. Our talented artists and arts professionals are making their mark on the regional and international scene. Our communities also have ample access to exhibitions and performances, some of which happen right where we work, play and live.

This is the result of the untiring efforts of our arts and culture practitioners and supporters, buttressed by the strong foundations of Singapore's early cultural policies and the more recent Arts and Culture Strategic Review.

We have come a long way, but we are not going to rest on our laurels. To build on the good work so far, Our SG Arts Plan (2018–2022) was formulated to chart new directions for Singapore's literary, performing and visual arts over the next five years. It will be an important roadmap for the development of our future policies and initiatives to better support the needs and aspirations of our arts community.

In developing Our SG Arts Plan, the National Arts Council arranged a series of engagements with our arts community. A common thread running across these engagements was the shared understanding about the power of the arts. The arts uplift our spirit, connect us to the vulnerable among us, and tell us much about what we stand for as a people. It acts as a bridge for interaction and mutual understanding, bringing together families, friends, colleagues, and even strangers. It also showcases what Singaporeans can achieve on the world stage. The arts are for everyone, regardless of age, language or background.

This is why the arts play a critical role in building a more caring, cohesive and confident Singapore. I look forward to working closely with our arts community to make the arts an integral part of the lives of all Singaporeans.

“

The arts uplift our spirit, connect us to the vulnerable among us, and tell us much about what we stand for as a people.



Grace Fu

Minister for Culture, Community and Youth



FOREWORD

In the words of Chen Chong Swee, one of Singapore’s pioneer first-generation artists: *“Art is a part of life and cannot exist independently from real life [...] Art must be objective. If it fails to be accepted by another person, it loses its essence of universality and can no longer exist as art. If a work of art fails to embody truth, goodness and beauty, it cannot be regarded as a true work of art.”*

It is NAC’s hope that the arts will become a part of every Singaporean’s life, with more people appreciating the beauty that an experience with the arts can bring, and valuing how it contributes to our sense of who we are as a people, and as a society. Our past and living artists have all contributed towards shaping a distinctive arts scene in Singapore. Many have also made their mark on the world stage, and as a nation, we are proud of their work, as well as commitment and passion to the arts.

NAC is glad that the arts have contributed significantly to Singapore’s development over the years, both in terms of our physical landscape – enhancing the vibrancy and liveability of our city – and the hearts and minds of our people. Since the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) was launched in 2012, the arts sector has achieved several notable milestones.

In the same year, with the formation of the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, there has been a greater emphasis on how the arts can articulate who we are as a people, as well as its impact on areas such as community-building, healthcare and well-being.

Our SG Arts Plan (2018–2022), developed in close consultation with the arts community, will set the strategic directions over the next five years. The plan demonstrates our commitment to shaping the arts sector collectively, and will be guided by NAC’s three strategic thrusts of *Inspire Our People, Connect Our Communities* and *Position Singapore Globally*.

Chan Heng Chee

Chairman,
National Arts Council



Rosa Daniel

CEO,
National Arts Council

Our directions for the next five years will position us well towards the 2025 ACSR vision of “a nation of cultured and gracious people, at home with our heritage, proud of our Singaporean identity”. NAC will step up our efforts to work closely with our cultural institutions, government agencies and the arts community to achieve this ambition.

We will increase focus on audience development, and on building the diverse capabilities of the sector to achieve sustainable growth. This includes strengthening sector-wide support for freelance arts practitioners and professionals, as well as leveraging digital technology and data analytics to create new possibilities in art-making, outreach and research.

We are grateful to all who have come forward with views to make this a plan for Singapore, which we intend to review every five years. NAC will also continue our conversations with our arts community.

We hope you will join us on this journey as we continue to cultivate a vibrant arts landscape for Singapore.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Photo 1

“
We recognise the role of the arts in broadening our perspectives and enriching our lives. At the community level, the arts bring people of diverse backgrounds together, thus building strong social bonds. At the national level, it strengthens our national identity, and contributes to a more confident and resilient Singapore. This is why we are working hard to raise **arts excellence**, **grow audiences**, and ensure that **our arts offerings are accessible to all**.¹

Grace Fu

Minister for Culture, Community and Youth

Dancer from Singapore Chinese Dance Theatre engaging participants in a hands-on session at the Got to Move Islandwide Programme (Photo courtesy of Gerry Aguero.)

Singapore has come a long way in 53 years. Even as our economy developed and physical landscape transformed, our cultural policies kept pace, shaped by the aspirations of our people. While we should be proud of what our arts sector has achieved, our work is far from complete. We will continue the next phase of this journey together with our arts community and all Singaporeans. To serve as a guide, Our SG Arts Plan (2018–2022) maps the National Arts Council’s (NAC) priorities over the next five years to bring Singapore’s arts development to new heights.

The arts have always played an important role in defining our nation’s cultural identity and bringing

diverse communities together. The arts scene has thrived as artists chart professional careers and arts groups grow in strength. Strong foundations were laid by the 1989 Report of the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts (ACCA) which paved the way for the Renaissance City Plans² (2000–2011), culminating in the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) in 2012. The ACSR led to a substantial injection of \$300 million over the last five years into the culture sector.

The formation of the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) in November 2012 has increased focus on the ACSR vision of “a nation of cultured and gracious people, at home with our heritage, proud of our Singaporean identity”.

Under MCCY, there has been an added emphasis on the arts as a catalyst for building a civic culture of care, cohesion and confidence. We want to celebrate cultural diversity as a strength and support a values-based narrative that resonates with Singaporeans. The arts can play a vital role in deepening our national identity, and in promoting bonds of trust and respect between communities.

In the coming years, NAC will continue to champion the creation and appreciation of the arts as an integral part of people’s lives. This mission is aligned with MCCY’s desired outcomes and will lead us to NAC’s vision for Singapore:

VISION

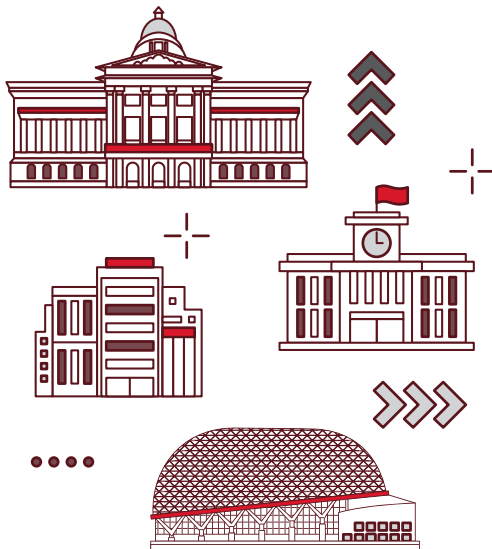
Home to diverse and distinctive arts that inspire our people, connect our communities and position Singapore globally

¹ Extracted from speech delivered at The School of the Arts Awards Day, 15 May 2017
² Renaissance City Plan I, II, III (introduced in years 2000, 2005, 2008 respectively)

The following outlines the current state of the arts in Singapore, and what we need to do together to realise NAC's vision for the future of the arts:

► Achieving Arts Excellence

Our arts community has achieved significant success with distinctive works that have resonated with audiences both locally and overseas. All Singaporeans can be proud of our artists and arts groups winning international awards and being featured at leading arts venues and festivals around the world. They have helped to articulate our Singapore story, and express who we are as a nation. NAC must continue to support our artists in achieving artistic excellence, so that they can inspire others to express themselves through the arts.

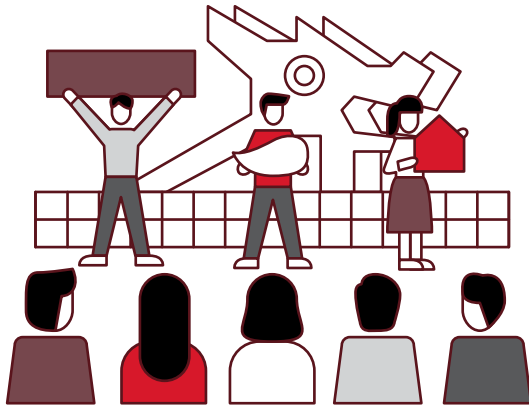


◀ Strong State Support and Public Institutions

Singapore's arts landscape has become more vibrant through the sustained commitment of government's support for the arts and culture over the past five decades. Our strong cultural institutions such as National Gallery Singapore and Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay have taken the lead in shaping a distinctive cultural landscape. Partnerships and collaborations with a large number of public agencies have enhanced the lives of our people and the liveability of our city through the arts. NAC will continue to work closely with our cultural institutions and partner agencies to support our artists and to grow audiences.

► Diversifying Support for the Arts

While the government will continue to invest in the arts, diversifying revenue sources will provide more funding options for artists and arts groups. It is important that deeper partnerships are forged with the private and people sectors, and for cultural institutions and arts companies to work more closely together.



◀ Enlarging Social Commons in Diversity

As society becomes more diverse, the arts can help deepen understanding and bridge differences across communities. Enjoying the arts together is also one way to celebrate and affirm the shared aspects of Singapore life that all citizens and residents cherish.

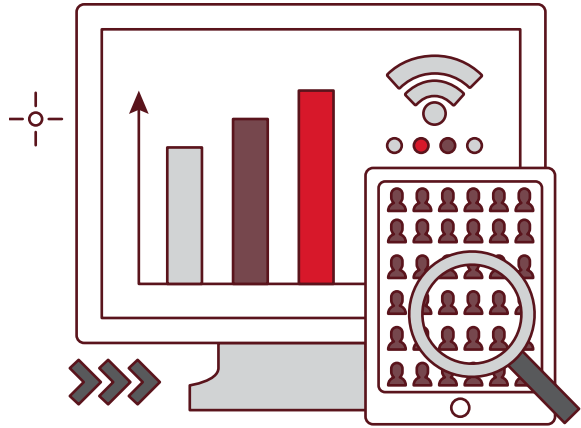
► Strengthening National Identity and Shared Heritage

The arts community can more fully realise the potential for intra- and inter-community connections in the context of Singapore's rich multicultural heritage. This is an opportunity to create unique arts experiences for local as well as global audiences that express who we are as a nation.



► Harnessing Technology

The effective use of technology requires the arts community to be equipped with skills and resources to access new tools and interpret important data, such as audience segmentation and consumption patterns. Technology will enable our artists and arts groups to cater to changes in audiences' needs and preferences, as well as enhance art-making.



◀ Growing Diverse Capabilities

Expertise is needed not only in art-making, but also in areas such as arts management, technical theatre, research and data analytics, community arts, audience development, facilitation of dialogues, and arts education. There is also a need to give freelance arts workers more support to enable them to do their best work and protect their interests, for example, in matters concerning contracts and financial planning.

► Providing Access and Opportunity

The arts can play a significant role in culture-building, community life and city planning. However, not all Singaporeans have equal access to the arts because of factors such as location, cost or language barriers. NAC will work with the cultural institutions and arts community to increase access for more Singaporeans to experience and participate in the arts.





◀ Growing Audiences

The arts face increasing competition for audience attention. It is important that our arts community be supported not only in growing supply through arts creation, but also in growing demand from existing and new audiences through greater appreciation and participation.

▶ Unlocking Arts Spaces

The Gross Floor Area dedicated to NAC's artists and arts companies has grown almost five-fold over the last 30 years, but demand continues to significantly outstrip supply. More needs to be done with the government agencies and corporate sector to sustain spaces, both physical and digital, to extend the reach of the arts. There is also need to ensure greater opportunity for new generations of artistic talents to benefit from available arts spaces.



So what does the future hold for the arts in Singapore?

The arts must energise and excite Singaporeans, bring people together and reflect what Singapore represents to a global community. NAC has identified three strategic thrusts:

▼ Inspire Our People

Outcome: Singaporeans are empowered to create, present and appreciate excellent art



Attendees at Singapore Writers Festival at the Festival Bookstore

▼ Connect Our Communities

Outcome: Diverse communities come together to enjoy and support the arts



Musicians entertaining audiences at Chong Pang market Amphitheatre as part of *Arts Imprints Around My Neighbourhood* by Quek Ling Kiong in March 2017

▼ Position Singapore Globally

Outcome: Arts and culture icons and works are appreciated by audiences and critics at home and abroad



Artist Zai Kuning represents Singapore at the 57th Venice Biennale with artwork *Dapunta Hyang: Transmission of Knowledge*

Guided by these three strategic thrusts, NAC has defined eight priorities that will guide future arts and culture initiatives.

1 Strengthening NAC's role in leading and championing the arts in Singapore

We will work with our cultural institutions and national companies to maximise resources and guide the development of the visual, performing and literary arts ecosystems across forms, languages and traditions. We will also continue to champion the diversity of arts practices and perspectives, including ground-up initiatives. Supporters from the government, people and private sectors must be engaged to increase contributions towards the arts, whether in terms of time, funds, or access to spaces.



▲ Artwork by Psyfool entitled *Traditional Trade of Little India*, as part of ARTWALK Little India in 2016

2 Increasing our focus on growing audiences

Strategies for sustained audience development must cater to the needs of varying demographics, including students and youth, families with young children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. Strategies to increase inclusivity and access need to be designed based on robust research and data analytics. This effort must also grow paying audiences to foster the sustainability of the arts sector.



- 1 Young children enjoying craft activities at The Artground
(Photo courtesy of The Artground.)
- 2 Seniors enjoying a sing-along session at a Silver Arts 2016 concert performed by young musicians from Orkestra Melayu Singapura (OMS) and OMS Belia

3 Building diverse capabilities in the arts sector

As we support capability development in art-making, we must strengthen the ecosystem as a whole by improving competencies in arts management, technical theatre, research and data analytics, community arts, audience development, facilitation of dialogues, arts education, working with technology, and place-making. NAC will also continue its efforts to help arts organisations grow their management and governance capabilities, be financially sound, and adopt good hiring practices.



Delegates participating in an inclusive workshop exercise led by Mr Alirio Zavarve (No Strings Attached, Australia) at the Arts & Disability International Conference 2018

4 Increasing sector-wide support for freelance arts professionals

Sector-wide support for individual practitioners and freelancers must be strengthened to ensure that they have access to the resources they need to thrive. NAC will establish a resource centre for

freelance arts professionals to enhance access to shared services and information, provide learning and development opportunities, and facilitate collaborations and networking. NAC will also tap on national schemes to strengthen support for freelancers.



Arts professionals sharing their views at one of NAC's engagement sessions on the development of a resource centre for arts freelancers in September 2017

5 Utilising digital technology to improve art-making and outreach efforts

NAC will support the arts community to be digitally confident and creative, so that they may use technology to create, distribute and market the arts effectively. This can be in the form

of targeted funding, training opportunities, and networking sessions involving both the arts and technology sectors. NAC will also work with the cultural institutions to explore how technology can enhance audience and visitor experiences, and create new entry points for audiences.

▼ Noise x GIF FEST exploring GIF as an engaging artistic medium



6 Strengthening research in the arts sector

There is a need to equip both NAC and the arts community with the capacity to gather and analyse data about audiences' needs and preferences, and consumption habits and patterns. The data will also enable us to be more effective in arts advocacy by helping us demonstrate the multi-dimensional value of the arts to society. We will improve the documentation of and research into the art form practice, helping our artists and arts groups to be more innovative in their creative process.



▲ NAC CEO, Mrs Rosa Daniel, delivering the Welcome Speech at the NAC Arts and Culture Research Symposium in 2017

7 **Strengthening programme design to maximise the impact of the arts on society**

NAC will work alongside the arts community and our various community and public sector partners to strengthen programme design and prioritise resources to help the sector meet the desired

outcomes of artistic excellence and audience development. We also hope to maximise the impact of the arts on society, to harness the potential of the arts for community building across cultures, generations and socio-economic backgrounds, and to bring the arts to under-reached segments of society.



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- 1 Veteran folk musician Art Fazil enthraling the audience at the Hear65 launch event in 2018
- 2 A volunteer from Youth Corps Singapore and a beneficiary from Montfort Care sharing a light-hearted moment while participating in an activity from the Befrienders Arts Toolkit
- 3 Pre-school students participating in NAC's Traditional Arts Taster Programme

8 Taking Singapore's arts beyond our shores

Singapore can play a greater role as a cultural focal point in Southeast Asia through strong partnerships with international festivals, presenters, other arts councils and institutions. NAC will profile the unique appeal of Singapore's rich and diverse art forms to reach regional and international markets.

Artists and arts companies will receive support for works presented at significant international markets and presentation platforms. We will also seek opportunities for our arts community to contribute their expertise on the global stage. International residencies and attachments, based here or overseas, provide another platform for our artists to share with, and learn from others.



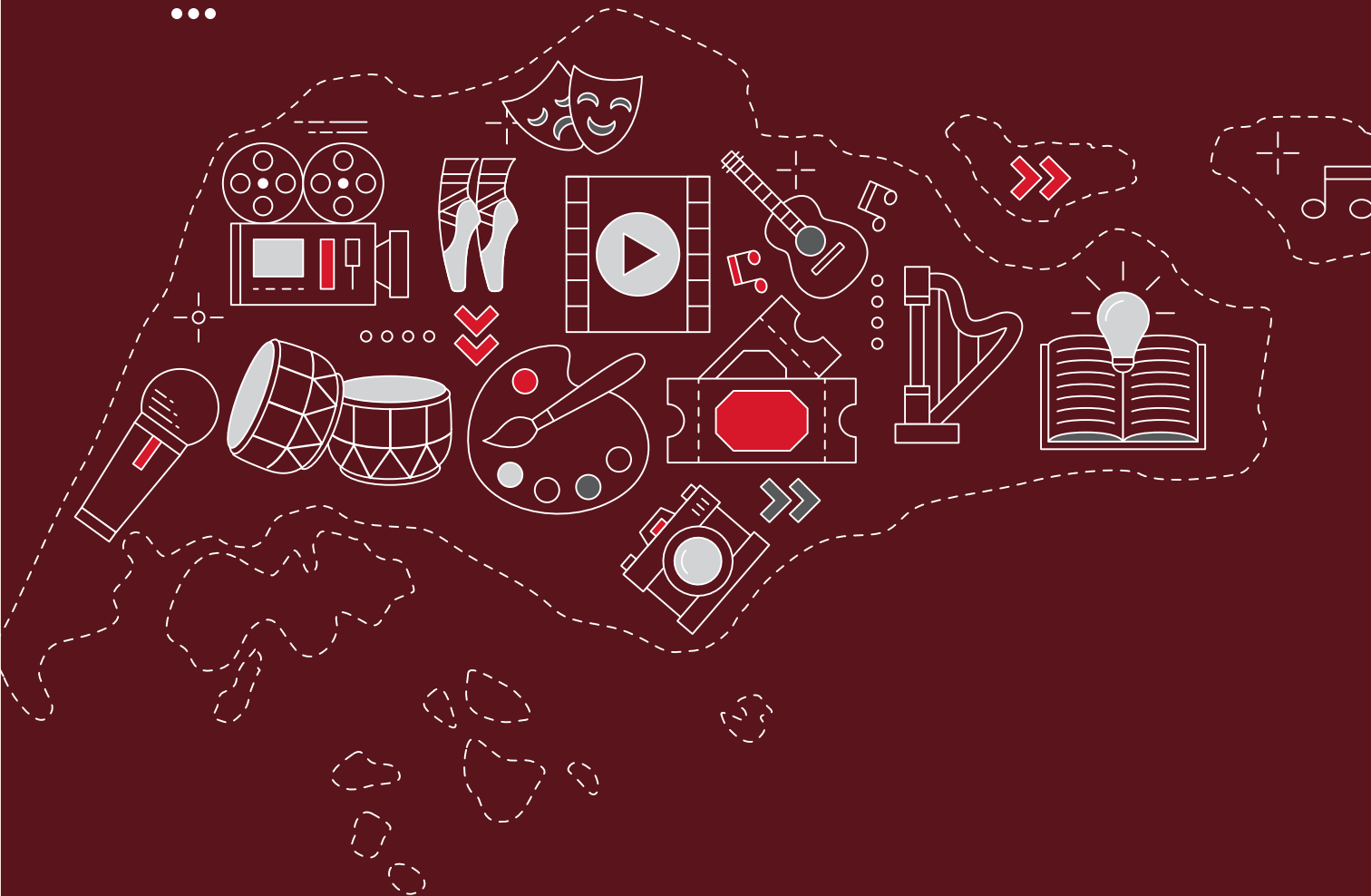
▲ A performance by Cake Theatrical Productions at the Australia Performing Arts Market (APAM) 2018

This plan to drive our literary, performing and visual arts sectors serves as a guide for NAC's work over the next five years. It will be continually reviewed as our arts landscape evolves, whether in the domestic or international context. As we work together with the arts community and stakeholders in the public, corporate and people sectors, we are confident that our arts scene will flourish and be a source of pride for all Singaporeans.

OUR SG ARTS PLAN

(2018–2022)

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SECTION
01THE
CHANGING
ROLE
OF ARTS
AND CULTURE

The role of arts and culture in Singapore has changed over the years, guided by policies that have evolved with the needs and aspirations of society.



Singapore's cultural policies have been shaped by the aspirations of our people, the arts community, audiences and the government. Through the 1950s and 60s, the arts contributed to our nation's cultural identity and drew diverse communities together. The following decades saw the growth of the arts scene as artists charted professional careers and many arts groups emerged. In 1989, Singapore's arts and heritage blueprints were laid out in the Report of the Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts (ACCA). These provided the foundations for Singapore's cultural development, with the ACCA report recommending improvements to infrastructure and facilities, organisational structures, the arts education landscape, and greater promotional efforts for the arts and culture. In 1991 and 1993 respectively, two institutions – the National Arts Council (NAC) and National Heritage Board (NHB) – were established, underscoring the government's commitment towards supporting our cultural landscape.

Cultural policies in the subsequent decades centred on growing the demand for Singapore's arts and cultural activities. The Renaissance City Plans, initiated in 2000, laid out a strategy to expand local and international interest for Singapore arts, and demonstrate the economic value of the arts to society as well as how the arts

could contribute to a more vibrant Singapore. These plans emphasised the need for original content, industry development and community outreach. As the government channelled more resources towards the arts, NAC focused on building a more sustainable arts ecosystem. This included investment in cultural infrastructure such as a national performing arts centre, visual arts institutions, museums, and a music conservatory, and initiatives to profile Singapore artists overseas.

The plans stemming from the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) in 2012 paved the way for Singapore's arts development with the vision of "a nation of cultured and gracious people, at home with our heritage, proud of our Singaporean identity". The ACSR brought about the injection of \$300 million into the culture sector from 2012 to 2016. When the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) was established in 2012, there was an added emphasis on the arts as an important catalyst for building a civic culture of care, cohesion and confidence. By celebrating cultural diversity as a strength and supporting a values-based narrative that would resonate with Singaporeans, the arts can play a vital role in deepening our national identity and promoting trust and respect between communities. This philosophy continues to guide NAC going forward.



1 *Cut Kafka!* by T.H.E Dance Company x Nine Years Theatre, an Esplanade Commission for *Huayi – Chinese Festival of Arts 2018*. (Photo by Crispian Chan. Courtesy of Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay.)

2 Era Dance Theatre presenting a traditional Malay dance showcase during the Mid-Autumn Festival celebrations in 2016

The introduction of the Cultural Matching Fund (CMF) in 2013 provided yet another boost for Singapore's arts scene.

From 2013–2017, the CMF has matched

\$172 million



in private cash donations from companies and individuals to

95 arts and heritage groups

Donations to arts and heritage causes have more than doubled from



\$29.7 million
in 2013

to



\$61.3 million
in 2016

Source: Commissioner of Charities Annual Report 2013 & 2016

About **72%**
of CMF
recipients



agree that the scheme has **enabled them to take their work to the next level.**

Source: CMF Secretariat conducted a CMF review survey in June 2017

Today, Singapore's cultural institutions have become landmarks in Singapore's skyline, and are acknowledged by Singaporeans and international visitors for their world-class exhibitions and stage productions and accessible arts programming. These include the National Gallery Singapore (the Gallery), Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, Victoria Theatre & Victoria Concert Hall, the Singapore Art Museum (SAM) and The Arts House, all of which are located in or near the historic Civic District. Across the island, there are also other arts spaces such as the Goodman and Aliwal arts centres, for companies to rehearse and produce theatre, music and dance performances, and for visual artists to create and present inspiring artworks. These spaces also present exciting place-making possibilities to engage diverse communities.

Investment in cultural infrastructure, curatorial expertise and community programming have provided the arts sector opportunities to build new audiences, and to focus on different audience segments such as seniors, youth, families and children. In 2017, 54% of Singaporeans said that they had attended at least one arts event in the past year, and 74%³ of Singaporeans agreed that the arts improve the quality of life for everyone – a seven percentage point increase from the same survey in 2013. Results of the 2017 Population Survey on the Arts also showed that 76% of Singaporeans agreed that the arts and culture are something that Singaporeans can be proud of.





- 1 M1DLIFE, an alumni of the Noise Music Mentorship programme, performing to a crowd at the Noise Invasion Festival 2017
- 2 *Dragonflies* by Pandemonium Theatre Company at Singapore International Festival of Arts 2017 (Photo by Crispian Chan. Courtesy of Arts House Limited.)

MCCY's vision for the arts is for Singaporeans to engage more deeply with arts experiences, and for the arts to foster a stronger sense of what it means to be Singaporean. Championing the creation and appreciation of the arts as an integral part of people's lives is NAC's mission today. This is aligned with MCCY's desired outcomes and NAC's vision for Singapore:

VISION

Home to diverse and distinctive arts that inspire our people, connect our communities and position Singapore globally

3 Source: Population Survey on the Arts 2017.

SECTION
02THE
ARTS SCENE
NOW

Singapore's thriving arts scene has matured since NAC was established in 1991. While the arts scene has seen numerous successes that are worth celebrating, more can be done to sustain the growth of the arts and culture sector in the long term.



24 Hours in Singapore (2015) by Baet Yeok Kuan

The following section outlines the current state of the arts in Singapore. Against the backdrop of an interconnected, globalised world with complex geopolitics, the arts and culture are intertwined with our nation's long-term destiny. The observations here offer insights into what we need to do together to realise NAC's vision for the future of the arts.

► **Achieving Arts Excellence**

Our arts community has achieved significant success with distinctive works that have resonated with audiences both locally and overseas. Our artists have touched many hearts through their performances, entertained audiences with their music and inspired

readers through the power of the written word. All Singaporeans can be proud of our cultural heroes who are winning various international awards and being lauded at international arts venues and festivals. They have also helped to articulate our Singapore story and express who we are as a nation.

Our arts sector has also seen a steady growth in the number of arts organisations, societies, and arts and cultural workers over the years, contributing to the diverse range of quality arts experiences that our people can enjoy. In 2016, there were 6,000 registered arts organisations and societies across the performing, visual and literary arts sectors, and the number of arts activities available to the public rose to over 100 arts activities a day.

In 2016, there were

6,000 arts groups

across the
**performing,
visual and
literary arts
sectors**



And arts activities
available to the
public rose to over

**100 a
day**



► Strong State Support and Public Institutions

Singapore's arts landscape has become more vibrant, due in part to the increased support for the arts from the government and private sector. The ACSR and CMF have been a boon for the arts sector. The 2013 Population Survey on the Arts showed that 64% of Singaporeans surveyed agreed that the local arts scene had become more vibrant over the last five years. By 2017, this figure had increased to 75%.

Cultural institutions, such as Esplanade, the Gallery, School of the Arts and Arts House Limited, have also been instrumental in developing Singapore's arts landscape. In addition, NAC works closely with partners, including government agencies such as the Ministry of Education (MOE), People's Association (PA) and the National Library Board (NLB). NAC also partners agencies beyond the arts, culture and social sectors, such as the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), Singapore Land Authority (SLA) and

The 2013 Population Survey results showed that 64% of Singaporeans surveyed agreed that the local arts scene had become more vibrant over the last five years.

By 2017, this figure had increased to 75%



Housing & Development Board (HDB). There has been strong and sustained funding support from partners like Tote Board and Temasek. They have enabled the arts to enhance the attractiveness and liveability of our city. They have also deepened support for the value of the arts and created more opportunities for Singaporeans to experience and appreciate the arts.



Façade projections at National Gallery Singapore during the Light to Night Festival 2018

► **Diversifying Support for the Arts**

With more Singaporeans interested in the arts, more youths making a career in the arts and more new companies being formed, there are expectations on the government to provide sustained support and funding for everyone. While the government remains committed to investing in the arts, diversifying income sources will provide more funding options for artists and arts groups. Arts charities are generally more dependent on government grants than charities in the social and welfare, education, health and religious sectors. Government grants accounted for 62.4% of arts and heritage charities’ annual receipts in 2016⁴ which underscores the need to grow philanthropy and broad-based support among Singaporeans. It also points to the importance of deeper partnerships, and of cultural institutions and arts companies working together.

► **Enlarging Social Commons in Diversity**

As society becomes more diverse, key stakeholders – including artists, audiences, funders, patrons and regulators – will have different expectations and concerns. It is important that diverse views do not cause fractures in society over time. Depending on how the work is presented, and how audiences and participants are involved, the arts can be the basis for constructive conversations on various topics, helping us to build a stronger and more engaged citizenry. Even where there are fundamentally divergent positions, enjoying the arts together can still bring people closer, and celebrate and affirm the shared aspects of Singapore life that everyone holds close to their hearts.



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- 1 Honouring supporters of the arts at the Patron of the Arts Awards 2018 ceremony
- 2 Students at *The Lesson*, a participatory theatre performance by Drama Box which provides a safe space for students to discuss and develop an appreciation of policy considerations and trade-offs (Photo courtesy of Drama Box.)

4 Commissioner of Charities Annual Report 2016

► **Strengthening National Identity and Shared Heritage**

Many of our artists and arts groups have made significant inroads abroad. However, more can be done to profile Singapore on the global stage. NAC's 2016 International Perception Study for Singapore Arts and Culture⁵ notes that efforts to profile Singapore artists and their work internationally could be stronger so as

to establish a distinctive Singaporean voice. The study also indicated that there is room for the arts community to more fully realise the potential for inter-cultural connections in the context of Singapore's rich multi-cultural heritage to create unique arts experiences for audiences both at home and overseas.

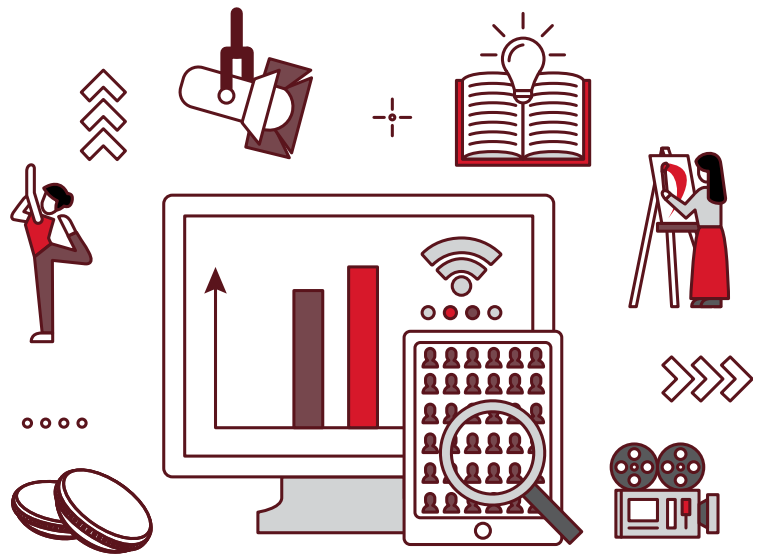
▼ A performance by Nawaz Mirajkar and the Singapore Chinese Orchestra (Photo courtesy of Singapore Chinese Orchestra.)



⁵ This was the first time such a survey was conducted to gauge the international perception of Singapore's arts and culture. The survey was commissioned in September 2016 and completed in July 2017.

► Harnessing Technology

Technology is a tool that can be used to create, distribute and market the arts – both locally and internationally. In Singapore, however, technology is relatively underutilised in the arts and culture sector, lagging behind global leaders such as Australia and the United Kingdom. The use of technology requires the arts community to be equipped with skills and resources for digital arts expression, as well as to access new tools to interpret important data, such as audience segmentation and consumption patterns. This will enable them to cater to changes in audiences’ needs and preferences, as well as enhance art-making.



► Growing Capabilities

A strong ecosystem is needed to help artists create their best work and reach audiences. More expertise in arts management, technical theatre, research and data analytics, community arts, audience development, facilitation of dialogues, and arts education, is needed. Management capabilities such as strategic planning, marketing, fundraising, corporate administration, intellectual property rights and project management need to be strengthened. This is particularly true for smaller arts organisations and traditional arts or vernacular organisations.

In 2016, NAC conducted an Arts and Culture Employment Survey to better understand employment conditions in the arts. The survey showed that about half of those who work mainly in the arts do so on a freelance basis. Freelance arts workers contribute significantly to the arts sector in myriad ways, and in the age of the gig economy, their numbers will grow. However, there is concern that freelance arts workers may not have sufficient support to protect their interests in matters concerning contracts, long-term financial planning, and so on.



▲ Participants of *Lead the Way II*, a professional development programme for executive leaders and arts managers, with facilitators from the UK (Photo courtesy of British Council, Singapore.)

► Providing Access and Opportunity

The arts can play a more significant role in culture-building, community life and city planning. More Singaporeans are now participating in arts-related events. More programmes are held in the HDB heartlands: town plazas, public libraries and neighbourhood parks. These events add to the community life of residents, complementing the programmes at our professional arts venues.

More can still be done to provide greater access to arts experiences so that the arts truly become a part of every Singaporean's life. While vernacular music, literature and theatre are declining in popularity, literary translation and surfitling performances into and between the official languages can keep works of historical, social and cultural significance accessible to

various audiences. This can help foster greater understanding between communities and a deeper appreciation for Singapore's shared heritage. NAC will also work with partners in the health, education and social sectors to bring the arts to under-reached communities in places such as hospitals and nursing homes.

Opportunities for Singaporeans to co-invest in the arts should be encouraged to grow the number of Singaporeans volunteering for arts-related causes and donating to arts companies. Audiences can also show their appreciation and support for the arts by attending and participating in arts events. When the arts become an integral part of our lives, purchasing tickets to home-grown productions, reading literature authored by Singaporeans, and collecting and displaying artwork by Singaporean artists will be everyday activities.



1

1 Mr Tan Choon Heng, 56, a participant of Singapore Association for Mental Health's (SAMH) Creative Services, with his artwork (Photo courtesy of SAMH.)



2

2 A child in the audience interacts with performers from The Theatre Practice, at a performance of *The Nursery Rhymes Project*, a programme of Arts in Your Neighbourhood, at Chong Pang Market Amphitheatre

► **Growing Audiences**

The arts face increasing competition for audience attention, especially from entertainment and lifestyle activities. More arts activities result in a more vibrant arts landscape, but that could cannibalise the same audiences if interest in the arts does not grow.

In the 2017 Population Survey on the Arts, while 74% of Singapore residents agreed that the arts and culture improved the quality of life for everyone, only 37% said that they were interested in the arts. The arts also continue to rank among the lowest priorities for Singaporeans, relative to issues such as job security and education.⁶ There is concern that Singaporeans will thus be less likely to pay for arts and cultural activities. Similarly, corporate donors lack interest or are unaware of arts organisations in need of funding. The result is that arts and culture are often not a pillar in their corporate social responsibility strategy. Corporates may also not prioritise arts organisations, believing that state support for the sector is adequate.

The arts community must therefore be supported in efforts to engage existing audiences, and to grow new audiences. These audiences should include those who value the arts through paid attendances.

► **Unlocking Arts Spaces**

Singapore’s limited land space could also curtail the growth of local arts infrastructure. While the Gross Floor Area (GFA) dedicated to NAC’s artists and arts companies has grown almost five-fold over the last 30 years, demand for such spaces remains strong. As our resources are limited, new approaches are necessary, both physical and digital, to increase access to the arts, maximise utilisation of highly subsidised arts spaces and support the next generation of artistic talents.

74% of Singaporeans

said that the arts and culture improved the quality of life for everyone



89% of Singaporeans

said that the arts and culture gave them a better understanding of people of different backgrounds and culture



54%



of Singaporeans had attended at least one arts event in the past year

37%



of Singaporeans said that they were interested in the arts

NAC’s supported arts spaces Gross Floor Area (GA) has grown almost five-fold

since 1985



⁶ Results taken from Our Singapore Conversation, 2013

SECTION
03WHAT
THE
FUTURE
HOLDS

The future of our arts scene is promising. The arts must inspire Singaporeans, serve as a platform to bring people together, and reflect what Singapore represents to a global community.

VISION FOR THE ARTS

Home to diverse and distinctive arts that inspire our people, connect our communities and position Singapore globally



Children engaged in a story-telling session at The Artground
(Photo courtesy of The Artground.)

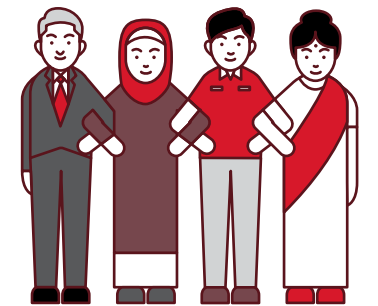
From NAC's vision for the arts, three strategic thrusts have been identified:

A Inspire Our People

Our arts practitioners are empowered to create and present excellent art that inspires the Singapore spirit, and expresses our national identity. Creative works will reflect, articulate and celebrate who we are as a society, including our shared history, aspirations and concerns. We want all Singaporeans to be proud of and inspired by the arts created and presented in Singapore. We recognise there are different types of audiences and arts presentations, and we want to help build deeper appreciation of the arts for all of them.

**B Connect Our Communities**

The arts will offer everyone access to arts experiences across forms, languages and traditions, as part of their everyday lives. Such experiences are essential to draw people together and enable them to forge connections in a cohesive society. Singaporeans will also support our arts practitioners by taking greater ownership of the arts, showing their appreciation and support by attending, experiencing and participating in the arts. This can also be done through volunteering for and contributing to arts-related causes.

**C Position Singapore Globally**

Our arts practitioners will be admired and appreciated by local and international critics and audiences. With access to innovative techniques and technology, our arts practitioners will be able to conceptualise, adapt and refresh their works to create quality content that enriches the body of Singapore-made work. Different physical and digital spaces will also enable the arts to extend their reach. As cultural institutions and partners collaborate to champion the value of the arts in city living and nation-building, Singapore will establish itself as a leading liveable city celebrated for its vibrant culture.



SECTION
04HOW
WE WILL
GET THERE

Guided by these three strategic thrusts, NAC has defined eight priorities that will guide future arts and culture initiatives.



NAC will work with our cultural institutions and the larger arts sector on these priorities:

A **Strengthening NAC's role in leading and championing the arts in Singapore**

NAC will work with our cultural institutions and national companies in partnership to optimise resources and guide the development of the visual, performing and literary arts ecosystems across forms, languages and traditions, while continuing to champion the diversity of arts practices and perspectives in each ecosystem. NAC will partner the institutions to establish robust benchmarks on artistic quality and utilise the arts sector's collective resources more effectively by collaborating to support the creation and presentation of new works. We will also

commission more research and documentation to profile Singaporean content and its creators to a wider audience base, encouraging greater appreciation and critical discourse.

Supporters for the arts from the government, people and private sectors must be engaged to increase contributions towards the arts, whether in terms of time, funds, or access to spaces. NAC will advocate the value of the arts to non-arts public agencies, and to both corporate and individual donors. We will map donor engagement strategies to deepen engagement with existing donors, while cultivating new partners and patrons to support the arts sector. More public spaces will also be freed up for the arts through partnerships with non-arts agencies, corporates and intermediaries. Through these partnerships, NAC can provide opportunities for the arts sector to showcase their artworks where Singaporeans live, work and play.



1 An engaged audience at the Singapore Writers Festival 2017

2 A happy visitor voting for her choice of Singapore's English contemporary classic hits to be reimagined by up-and-coming young musicians in *Pop-Up Noise: The Great Singapore Replay*, a project jointly organised by NAC and Temasek



B Increasing our focus on growing audiences

Strategies for sustained audience development must be developed to cater to the needs, preferences and lifestyles of varying demographics, including students and youths, families with young children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. These strategies will need to be developed based on robust research and data analytics, especially to cultivate ticket-paying audiences. Our efforts will have to consider not only accessibility and inclusivity, but also whether our programme content is relevant for the intended audience so that they will want to come back for more.

Arts for young audiences and arts education efforts will continue to be a priority as nurturing audiences of the future starts when they are young. We will continue to work with MOE and key partners such as preschool anchor operators, the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA), and the arts community to extend the reach of the arts to as many schools, teachers, parents and children as we can.



1

1 Pre-schoolers from Little Skool House participating in a drama activity

2 Seniors trying out traditional Malay percussion instruments at Bedok Town Square at an Arts in Your Neighbourhood programme



2

C Building diverse capabilities in the arts sector

Even as we continue supporting capability development in art-making, we must also strengthen the ecosystem as a whole by raising competencies in arts management, technical theatre, research and data analytics, community arts, audience development, facilitation of dialogues, arts education, working with technology, and place-making.

To support the industry's capability development needs, NAC will facilitate collaboration across Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) and other training providers to ensure the industry's needs for talent and resources are met. This includes building skillsets that enable arts professionals to sustain their careers (e.g. financial and career planning, fundraising) and to tap new opportunities (e.g. digital technology, engagement and facilitation skills), and to articulate career pathways and skills frameworks for priority areas such as arts education and arts programming. NAC will also sustain efforts to help arts organisations grow management and governance capabilities, be financially sound and adopt good hiring practices.





A boy interacting with artwork *Diventare Schiavo* by Ryder Ripps, Art After Dark x 5th Anniversary Celebrations at the Gillman Barracks

D Increasing sector-wide support for freelance arts professionals

Sector-wide support for individual practitioners and freelancers must be strengthened to offer access to resources that will enable them to do their best work. NAC will tap on national schemes to strengthen support for freelancers, including encouraging employers in the arts sector to adopt the Tripartite Standard on Contracting Self-employed Persons when engaging freelance workers.

NAC will also establish a resource centre for freelance arts professionals to enhance access to shared services and information about various issues including legal issues, financial planning, contract terms, and so on, provide learning and development opportunities, and facilitate collaborations to increase work opportunities.

E Utilising technology to improve art-making and outreach efforts

NAC will support the arts community to be digitally confident and creative, so that they may use technology as a tool to create, distribute and market the arts effectively. This can be in the form of targeted funding, training opportunities, and networking sessions to bring together both the arts and technology sectors. We will also work with public agencies such as the Info-communications Media Development Authority on these efforts.

NAC will also work with the cultural institutions in this area. The digitisation of artworks, such as those in the National Collection by the Gallery and SAM, will create new entry points for audiences. The museums and Esplanade will also explore how technology can enhance the audience and visitor experience.

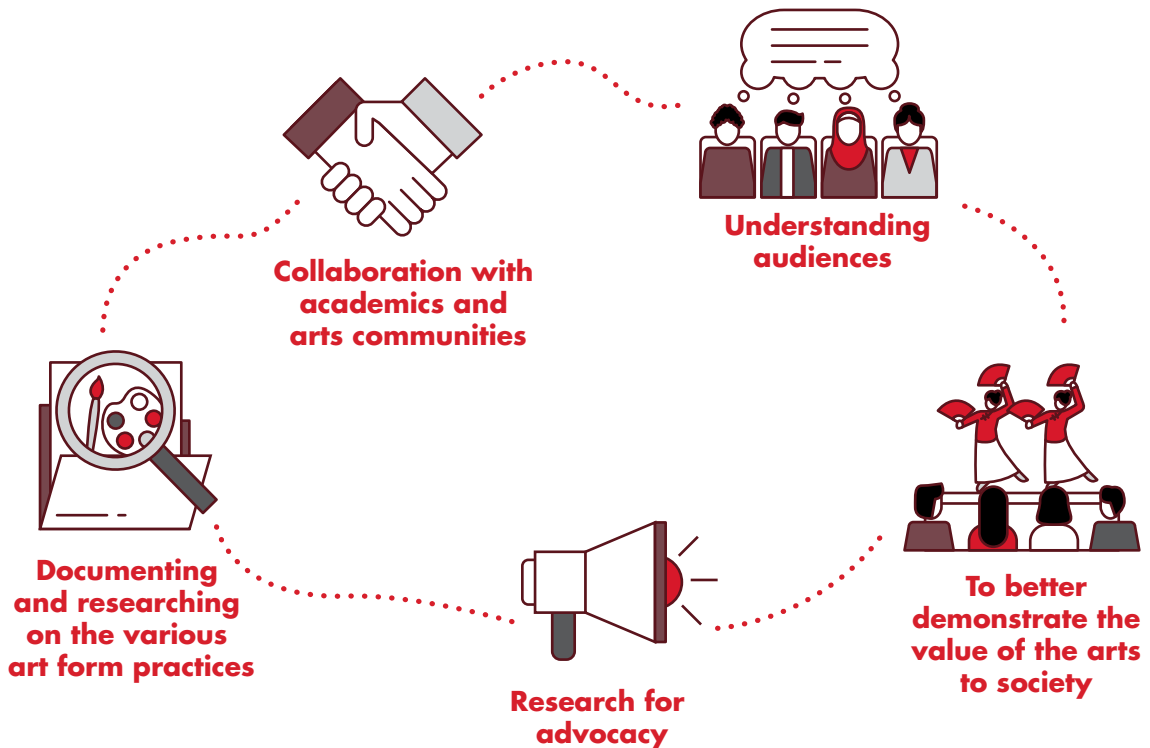
F **Strengthening research in the arts sector**

Both NAC and the arts community need greater capacity to gather and analyse data about audiences' needs and preferences, and consumption habits and patterns. This will enable artists and arts companies to engage with their audiences more effectively.

The data that we gather through research will also enable us to be more effective in arts advocacy as we will have the evidence to better demonstrate the multi-dimensional value of the arts to society. In addition, benchmarking NAC's work with that of other government agencies and our international arts council counterparts, will help us to better review our policies and programmes and determine best practices.

It is important for us to improve the documentation of and research into the art form practice of our own Singapore practitioners to encourage creativity and innovation. Research can also help us to better articulate the cultural identity of Singapore arts as we strive to develop distinctive content that fosters national pride, speaks to our national identity and establishes Singapore arts globally.

To enhance the quality and quantity of arts research, NAC will work with universities and research institutes on projects relevant to the arts sector. Collaborations between the academic and arts communities will be facilitated by NAC to bring together academic expertise and arts practice in action research.



G Strengthening programme design to maximise the impact of the arts on society

NAC will work alongside the arts community and our various community and public sector partners to strengthen programme design and prioritise resources to meet our desired outcomes of both artistic excellence and audience development. We hope to maximise the impact of the arts on society, especially by harnessing its potential for community building across cultures, generations and socio-economic backgrounds, and by engaging

the under-reached segments of society. An example is the work of the Singapore Writers Festival which celebrates the best of Singapore writing and international literature, and runs programmes to introduce people to works of different languages, traditions and cultures. The festival also considers how programmes can be accessible to all people, including those with disabilities.

H Taking Singapore's arts beyond our shores

Singapore can play a greater role as a cultural focal point in Southeast Asia through strong partnerships with international festivals, presenters, councils and institutions. NAC will tap on the unique appeal of Singapore's rich and diverse art forms to reach regional and international markets. Artists and arts companies will receive support for works presented at significant international markets and presentation platforms – such as the Venice Biennale, Internationale Tanzmesse, Art Basel (Hong Kong), and literary events such as international festivals and book fairs – that enable them to develop international networks. Key events, such as the Singapore International Festival of the Arts, Singapore Art Week, Singapore Biennale and the

Singapore Writers Festival which have already established themselves in the region, can also be further promoted via partnerships with other government agencies and the private sector.

We also believe that Singapore's cultural heroes should be given the platform to share their knowledge and skills with their international counterparts. NAC will seek out opportunities for our arts community to shine on the global stage and contribute to international networks. International residencies and attachments both in and out of Singapore will also enable our artists to share with, and learn from, others.

STRATEGIC THRUSTS

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**Position
Singapore Globally**

STRATEGIC
THRUST

01 INSPIRE OUR PEOPLE

Singaporeans are empowered to create, present and appreciate excellent art

The arts inspire and move the spirit. Creative works reflect, articulate and celebrate who we are as a people. Our artists inspire others through their artistic expressions. We support our professional artists while enabling different audiences to appreciate a range of artworks, and pursue their own artistic aspirations at whatever their level of interest.

Students interacting with public artwork *The Rising Moon* (2015) by Kum Chee Kiong and Han Sai Por, alongside Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu, during the guided tour of the Jubilee Walk Art Trail



► Supporting our artists to do their best work

Artists must be well-supported so that they can create and develop quality works of art that reflect Singapore’s rich diversity. To do this, we should focus our efforts beyond art-making alone. Important areas include:



Building Audiences



Research and Documentation



Freeing Up Spaces for the Making and Presentation of Arts



Helping our Arts Companies to Achieve Long-Term Sustainable Growth

Our strong support structures have enabled our arts practitioners to produce inspiring art. However, the path towards excellence is a journey – not a static end-point – which means NAC must continue to support and raise standards of artistic excellence for the whole sector, including areas such as community arts, research and arts education. We will do this in partnership with our key cultural institutions to ensure better use of resources.



***We will grow
intermediary support to
reach more audiences***

Audiences are becoming more sophisticated as a result of broad-based education, exposure to global culture through travel and mass media, and access to different art forms. This presents an opportunity for a wide range of artistic creations and presentations to flourish in Singapore.

While nurturing artistic creation remains important, NAC believes there is a need to grow more intermediaries, as well as companies which bridge audiences and the arts. This will enable groups to be more focussed in their plans to cultivate new audiences, professionalise the sector and/ or raise capabilities. These efforts will create more diversity in support structures within the arts scene, and collectively help to foster robust and sustained growth of the entire arts ecosystem.



Fiona Menzies, CEO of Creative Partnerships Australia, sharing the tips for successful arts fundraising at NAC's fundraising network series Art of Giving



***We will strengthen
the capabilities of
the arts sector***

Additional investment and support are needed to strengthen the capabilities of the arts sector as a whole. Investments that focus on understanding audience segmentation and audience development capabilities, for example, will help artists create works that resonate with today's audiences and arts consumers. To enable the sector's long-term growth, arts companies must also improve their fundraising capabilities and diversify their revenue sources beyond government funding.

We will facilitate closer coordination and collaboration across the IHLs, including LASALLE College of the Arts and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), training partners and intermediaries to further develop Pre-Employment Training

and Continuing Education and Training programmes, to meet the sector’s capability development needs. Core skills of arts organisations in areas such as management, administration and organisational leadership development will be strengthened to ensure a viable pipeline of new talents and demonstrate the viability of an arts career.

Support must also be given to individual practitioners and freelancers so that they have access to resources to do their work well. There is a need for systematic support for freelancers in the arts sector who face diverse employment conditions and will benefit from training to help them navigate the gig economy. More must be done to ensure that their rights will be protected, so that they can pursue meaningful careers as they contribute to Singapore’s arts and culture development.

NAC has adopted the Tripartite Standard for Contracting Self-Employed Persons, which fosters fair and progressive employment conditions for freelancers. We will also be working with key employers and other stakeholders in the arts sector to adopt these measures.

A new resource centre will be established in 2019, both in digital and physical forms, to support the needs of freelance arts professionals. Through this centre, we will enhance access to shared services and information, as well as provide learning and development opportunities.



Although freelance work is not a new concept, there should be a mindset change and adoption of best practices relating to the freelance culture in today’s modern work ecology.



Jeremiah Choy

Producer



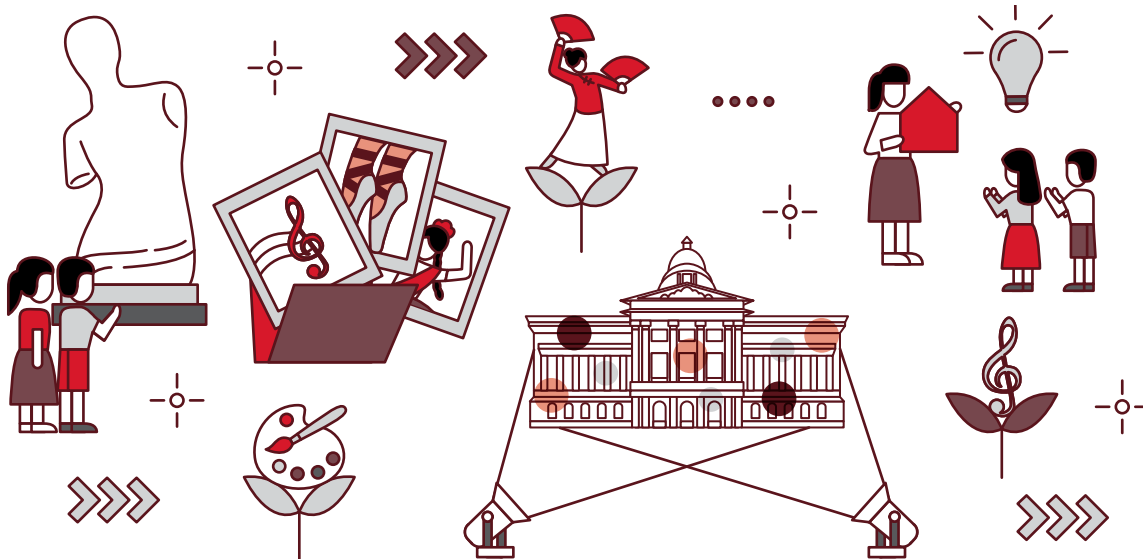
▲ Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Culture, Community and Youth Baey Yam Keng (fourth from right) with arts professionals after an engagement session on the development of a resource centre for arts freelancers in August 2018



We will invest in research and development

We will expand on existing ways of articulating the value of the arts through impact studies. These could include research on the role of the arts in education and development, as well as the benefits of arts exposure in the health and wellness sector. In addition, research to establish benchmarks of artistic excellence and success in the various art forms will help us better understand the most relevant indicators to the arts sector.

We will also support sectoral plans to develop a body of distinctive content that expresses and celebrates our unique national identity. We will identify Singapore content to document and archive, leveraging digital platforms to increase access. There will also be an emphasis on practice-based research. Such archival work and deep research are critical to inform and deepen the creative process, enabling artistic innovation in the sector. It will also affirm the important work of our Singapore artists, positioning them for the global recognition that they deserve. In addition, research can inform how technology can be best used to enhance art-making.



We will unlock more spaces for arts creation and presentation

Since 1985, the GFA for the arts administered by NAC has grown substantially from 18,170sqm to 85,862sqm in 2015. With Singapore's limited land space and NAC's finite space resources, we need to ensure that whatever space we have is well used for arts creation and presentation. Many of these spaces can also be platforms for place-making and community engagement, drawing from the local character and history of different Singaporean precincts to bring more people into our vibrant arts and culture scene.

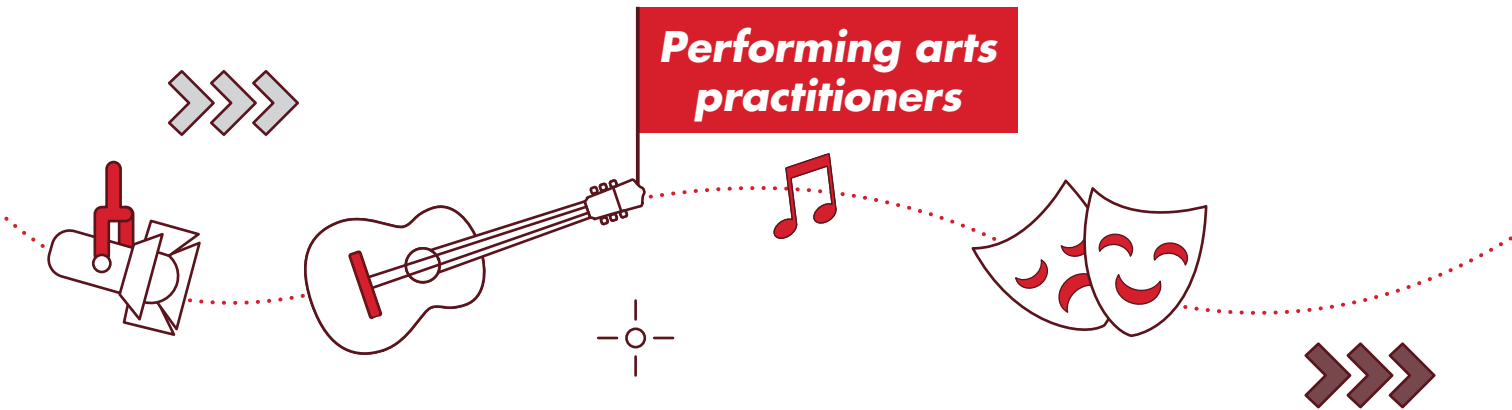
NAC will support arts groups through different approaches to space constraints. Given the consistent over-subscription of

subsidised arts spaces over the years, there is a need to ensure young emerging talents have equal access to spaces for art-making, rehearsals, programming and creative place-making. NAC will work with arts tenants towards long-term sustainability, including optimising the use of allowable commercial GFA for the larger tenancies. We will work on unlocking more spaces for the arts with the relevant government agencies such as HDB, Jurong Town Corporation (JTC), SLA and URA.

In addition, we will work with agencies that undertake cultural programming such as NHB, their museums and the Gallery, on studies to understand the role and effectiveness of place-making. These findings will inform NAC’s infrastructure plans for arts spaces and inform our conversations on urban planning and the geographical spread of arts activities island-wide.

- 1 The newly revamped Stamford Arts Centre to support the creative development and audience engagement of Traditional Arts
- 2 The completion of Blk O at the Goodman Arts Centre increases the pool of arts spaces available for hire





We will raise the visibility of the performing arts by working with the arts sector to create a national focal point in the existing cultural calendar

Building on the present day successes of the sector, and a vibrant year-long calendar of shows, we will work with cultural institutions and arts companies to create a focal point for the performing arts in the cultural calendar. NAC will leverage existing festivals and events, such as the Singapore International Festival of Arts and programmes by the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and Singapore Chinese Orchestra, to establish a stronger sense of anticipation among Singaporeans around this focal point. Working with various arts companies including Esplanade, we can support marketing efforts with a national campaign to attract new audiences and develop deeper understanding.

We will build capabilities in gap areas such as the use of technology and core organisational skills, bridging audiences and intermediary development, and support the development of critical writing in and about the arts

Together with our partners, we will help performing arts practitioners and organisations better understand and increase their use of technology. We will encourage the use of technology in arts creation and audience engagement by refining the existing grants framework, and by facilitating opportunities for artists to work with the technology sector and leaders in the field.

In addition to facilitating training programmes to strengthen the capabilities and know-how of practitioners in areas such as fundraising, marketing and arts management, we will also develop the practice of critical writing in the performing arts. We will support programmes by intermediaries that promote intellectually rigorous writing and encourage critical discourse in the performing arts sector.



Writers and literary arts practitioners

We will nurture a pool of talent with emphasis on grooming writers in Chinese, Malay and Tamil languages, genres and forms that appeal to diverse readers

We will nurture a talent pool committed to creating quality literary content across languages, genres and forms, as well as experiences that appeal to diverse readers, with strategies to address the specific challenges faced by the Chinese, Malay and Tamil language communities. In particular, we will seed or support talent-spotting programmes to identify the next generation of writers.

We will also look into targeted development opportunities for writers at different stages of their professional development, with the aim of providing a comprehensive developmental pathway for writers. This will include residency partnerships, manuscript critique and development opportunities.

Beyond nurturing talent – particularly for the Malay and Tamil literary scenes in Singapore – we will also focus efforts on growing readership for Singapore literature by working with key partners including academic institutions, NLB, Singapore’s media companies and literary arts intermediaries such as publishers and retailers.

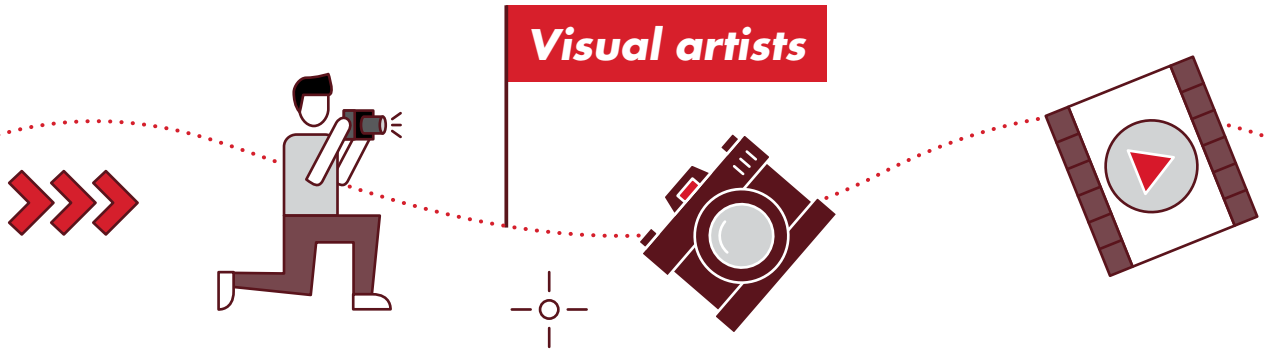


While it takes a village to raise a child, it may take a whole country to create a literature book, more so for the Malay community in Singapore. Writers and publishers constantly face upstream challenges. However, it is uplifting that the NAC is playing such a pivotal role via Our SG Arts Plan (2018–2022) by nurturing budding talents to grow, bloom and flourish.



Farihan Bahron

Co-Founder, Unggun Creative

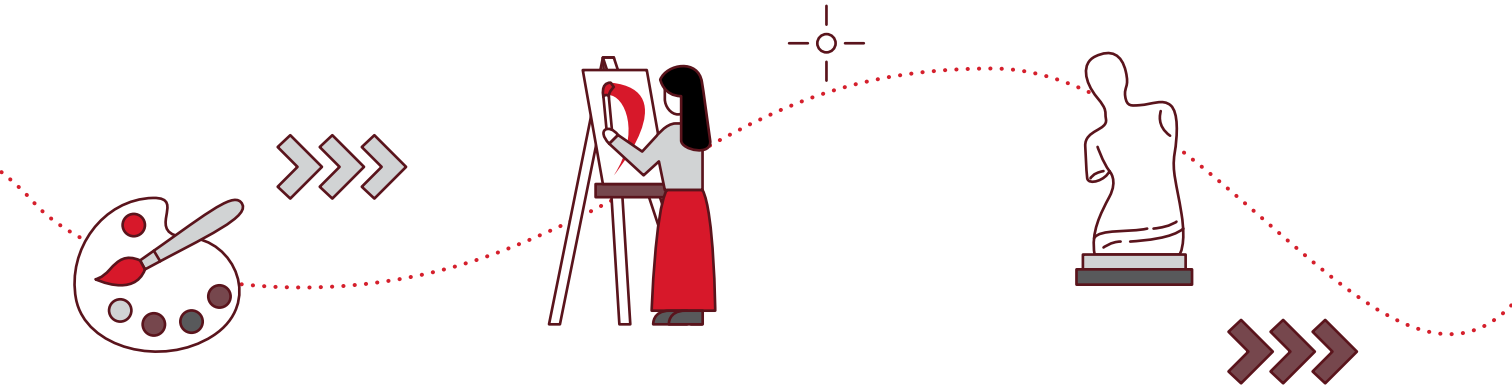


We will help our art institutions and intermediaries contribute significantly towards a sustainable ecosystem

Our art institutions and companies will create opportunities for our artists by developing training programmes to address gaps in the sector. These programmes will focus on capability development in the areas of curation, exhibition management and other roles. Promoting critical art writing will attract more art writers and generate insightful discourse on the visual arts in Singapore and the region. Art institutions and companies will be encouraged to expand residency programmes to groom our next generation of visual artists.

We will ensure that Singapore's National Collection will be held in good stead for current and future audiences

Together with NHB, which is the custodian for Singapore's National Collection, NAC will support our cultural institutions in building and enhancing the National Collection. Both the acquisition for and presentation of the Collection are key to strengthening Singapore's position as a thought leader in Southeast Asian art. The Gallery, SAM and STPI – Creative Workshop & Gallery will collectively achieve greater economies of scale. In the acquisition and conservation of artworks, for example, research of new methods for storage and conservation of art can be conducted. These institutions can advise on new infrastructure and improved processes to ensure that standards of artwork care are continuously refined.

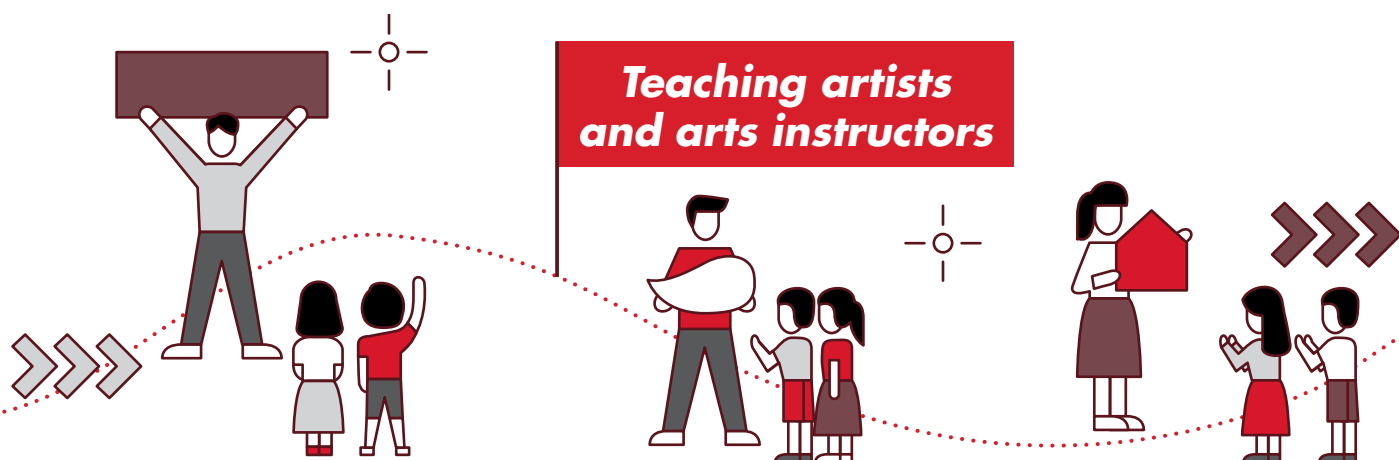


We will provide more support for the development of contemporary art

We will invest in and support our visual arts institutions which are growing contemporary art appreciation; as well as commission, acquire and document the present for a future visual arts narrative. While SAM is closed for upgrading works, we will support intensified education and community outreach efforts. With the expected completion of these works by 2021, we will have a valuable opportunity to champion contemporary art, bringing together art, design and technology, anchored on the artistic heritage of Singapore and Southeast Asia.

We will discover more opportunities for Singapore artists to create and display their art

Bringing art to the public creates opportunities for artists to present their work, while enhancing the aesthetics of a city. Public art will remain a key feature in major events such as Singapore Art Week and Singapore Biennale. Unused public properties can be explored to house short-term production and presentation spaces, while available private sector spaces, such as those in vacant shophouses and commercial units in shopping malls could be used as new alternative arts spaces. Highly accessible public areas and community spaces, including the Rail Corridor, can also showcase the arts by encouraging place-making efforts that enhance the vibrancy and quality of life in Singapore.



We will improve the quality of instruction and facilitation by teaching artists and arts instructors

We will establish a professional development framework for industry artists (teaching artists and arts instructors) who offer programmes for both MOE schools and other educational contexts. This will require close collaboration with MOE as well as various national training institutions and international training partners. The framework includes the following:

- ▶ Developing a structured plan for professionalising the arts education sector, including mapping the sector’s manpower, skills and development needs;
- ▶ Ensuring availability of training opportunities in arts pedagogy – including at the pre-school and special education levels – through collaborations with international partners;
- ▶ Developing artists’ capabilities in audience engagement and their ability to work both in and outside of schools – in areas such as programme design and facilitation skills – and documenting successful engagement approaches.

We hope to provide training opportunities that help arts teachers in MOE, Special Education and preschool environments to deepen their own creative practices and pedagogical practice in and through the arts. This will require close collaboration with MOE and its various arms such as the Singapore Teachers’ Academy for the Arts and the National Institute of Early Childhood Development.

We envision a professional arts education sector with a sustainable base of artist-educators who have attained minimum qualifications in both their art form practice and pedagogy, and can effectively facilitate learning in and through the arts. There will also be a pool of master teaching artists who will provide leadership in arts education through research and providing mentorship and training. Arts teachers in school will also have the avenues to broaden and deepen their arts practice.



Community artists working with specific demographics



We will support community artists by ensuring that they have access to developmental opportunities

We will nurture a pool of community artists to engage various communities in different social settings, across demographics and abilities. They will be supported by arts volunteers and volunteer managers who are well-equipped and well-trained. These efforts will provide them a variety of ways to expand their practice and reach.

We will develop a capability development framework with opportunities in various modalities for community artists, community partners and volunteers to better support community engagement. This includes working with intermediaries and stakeholders to develop research-based resources such as toolkits for community engagement and impact evaluation.

STRATEGIC
THRUST

02 CONNECT OUR COMMUNITIES

—
People and communities come together to support the arts as their understanding of the value of the arts grows

The arts are a doorway to multicultural experiences across forms, languages and traditions. The arts bring people together, bridge differences, and forge connections. Singaporeans will also be encouraged to take greater ownership of the arts. We support homegrown artists by regularly attending and participating in arts activities, as well as volunteering and giving to the arts.

Audiences enjoying a musical treat by the Singapore Symphony Orchestra at the Singapore Botanic Gardens
(Photo by Chrisppics+, Courtesy of Singapore Symphony Group)



Engaged audiences are the cornerstone of a vibrant arts scene and ecosystem. We want all Singaporeans to engage and participate in the arts through programmes that spark curiosity, foster empathy and cultivate understanding of and pride in Singapore's cultural identity.

We believe the arts can bring people together, bridge diverse communities and strengthen social networks. We also recognise the power of the arts to bring vibrancy to spaces and foster a stronger sense of belonging among Singaporeans.



Strengthening audience research and leveraging digital technology will be key in our next chapter of engaging the public and making art a more integral part of their everyday lives.



Chong Siak Ching

*Head of Visual Arts Cluster and
CEO, National Gallery Singapore*



► Supporting audience development and engagement

As the arts scene becomes more vibrant with more arts offerings, it is important that we continue to grow new audiences and engage them.

We will strengthen research efforts to inform our audience development strategies

It is important to know our current and future audiences. Our understanding of different audience segments must be backed by data so that we can develop strategies that encourage more arts attendance and participation, and new entry points for audiences.

We will work closely with industry partners – including cultural institutions, arts organisations and practitioners, and universities – on research that will be segmented by art forms and audience demographics. Practical research insights will be shared with the arts community so that they can better understand consumption habits and patterns. This will guide the arts sector on how to encourage those who attend free arts events to become ticketed audiences.

Research on the impact of the arts on city living, health, education and community-building is also important as it will enable us to be more effective in arts advocacy, as well as helping policy-makers, funders and the public to better appreciate the multi-dimensional value of the arts to society. Possible areas of research include the impact of arts activities on identity, social trust and the integration of under-reached demographics, as well as individual well-being, personal fulfilment and creativity.

We will help arts groups harness technology to grow new audiences

We will grow new audiences through digital technology and spaces. By collaborating with academic institutions and technology companies, we will help arts groups use technology to design arts experiences, enhance audience engagement and increase accessibility to the arts. We will venture boldly into digital spaces, and work with public agencies to help our artists and arts organisations explore new possibilities. We will build on the A-List and develop a one-stop arts and culture event platform that aggregates content across the sector and provides useful consumer insights.

We will free up more spaces to showcase the arts, and to bring the arts closer to specific communities

We will collaborate with public agencies, and corporate and community organisations and intermediaries, to open up more spaces for artists. We will continue to work with partners like NLB and PA to strengthen distinctive identities for the various arts and culture nodes around Singapore and grow the number of such nodes in our network. Other government-managed spaces will also be used to showcase local artwork in the heartlands – for example, through our Public Art initiative. NAC will also support more public programming in the key cultural precincts of the Civic District and Gillman Barracks.

Arts in Your Neighbourhood, NAC’s bi-annual programming platform to bring different arts experiences to our neighbourhoods, will continue to run family-friendly programmes, inspired by and relating to specific neighbourhoods. Such commissioned works present new opportunities for our artists, and encourage Singaporeans to connect with and learn about the places that they live in. We will also partner with intermediaries and space owners to design experiences in unconventional pop-up spaces that cater to changing youth tastes, through initiatives such as Noise Singapore, and specially curate programmes to reach out to seniors through our Silver Arts initiative. In addition, NAC will facilitate programmes that encourage inter-generational bonding.

Audiences dancing under the stars at the Civic District
(Photo courtesy of National Gallery Singapore)



Artist Moses Sia and the beneficiaries of ECON Medicare Centre and Nursing Home proudly demonstrating their puppets created through a creative process of exchanging stories and art-making. The project was part of a joint pilot arts residency by the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) and NAC (Photo Courtesy of AIC.)



We will promote inclusivity and accessibility by reaching out to diverse demographics, including under-reached communities

NAC will continue to build partnerships with stakeholders within the social service and health sectors to demonstrate how the arts can help improve sense of wellness and social connectivity. Some of our partners in these areas have made artist-led programmes part of their core services and become advocates for the arts in their respective sectors. Key advocacy platforms, such as the annual Arts in Eldercare Seminar and Arts & Disability Forum, have brought stakeholders and the arts sector together to discuss how the arts can be further used to engage under-reached communities.



It is encouraging that Our SG Arts Plan (2018–2022) has taken into consideration the beneficiaries in the social service and health sectors as part of its diverse communities.

We will also support programming which is accessible and disability-friendly. For example, funding will be given to companies which provide surtitling, close-captioning and sign language services to enable all audiences to engage with the work. We will also work on self-help resources for our partners to evaluate their venues and programmes in terms of accessibility and inclusivity.

We will equip our community partners with the capability and capacity to expand their reach to diverse communities. This will include nurturing champion organisations in the various social service sectors and creating resources for partners to extend the reach of content across sectors and demographics. Plug-and-play content will also be developed to help the sector deliver arts programmes independently, fostering sustainable engagement with both broad-based and under-reached communities.



Theresa Lee

Deputy CEO,
Alzheimer's Disease Association



► Deepening engagement in specific art forms

Singaporeans can engage more with the arts on several levels. Apart from being audience members and participants, Singaporeans can also be volunteers and patrons. Those with deeper interest can take their hobbies further; they can perform, create visual artworks or pen a poem or story.

In the following section, we will take a closer look at the three art forms, and what we can do to deepen engagement between artists, arts professionals and the wider public:

1 Performing arts

For the performing arts, the most anticipated festival on the cultural calendar remains the Singapore International Festival of Arts, which promises to delight audiences with fresh commissions and thought-provoking works. As festival commissioner, NAC will continue to work closely with our subsidiary Arts House Limited on improving festival programming to inspire a broad range of audiences. We will also work with the various cultural agencies on their programmes. Esplanade, for example, runs cultural festivals across art forms and ethnic traditions throughout the year.

We will strengthen our understanding of audience segments and behaviours through research

To grow greater demand for the arts, we need to understand our existing and potential audience segments. In consultation and partnership with performing arts organisations and practitioners, NAC will commission various audience research studies, from quantitative research at the art form level about audience segments and consumption patterns to qualitative research to help us gain insights into audience behaviour.

Initiatives such as Got to Move and Hear65, which increase public awareness of, participation in, and support for dance and music respectively, will use data analytics to study trends in public opinion and help us to refine our strategies. In addition, the National Institute of Education will complete a study to understand the space-based experiences of audiences and needs within the Arts for Young Audiences field.



The Bird Who Was Afraid of Heights directed by Ian Loy (Esplanade Theatre for Young Audiences Associate Artist), produced by Esplanade for PLAYtime! 2018 (Photo by Crispian Chan. Courtesy of Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay.)

We will develop capabilities in areas such as audience engagement, facilitation, and content creation for specific audience segments

We will introduce initiatives to build capabilities in audience engagement. This includes a pilot programme providing training for artists, musicians, and marketing consultants with a focus on programme design and facilitation to reach new audiences – that is, people who do not regularly attend ticketed shows. To cater to diverse audiences, support will continue to be given to inclusivity practices, such as surtitling, close-captioning and sign language services.

Through programming at the Stamford Arts Centre such as residencies and public outreach programmes, we will develop upstream capabilities and encourage collaborations between contemporary and traditional arts practitioners to boost the efforts of cultural institutions in commissioning, co-producing, and presenting culturally specific and cross-cultural works.

In the Theatre for Young Audiences sector, organisations such as The Artground, Esplanade and arts companies with a focus on children, will champion experimentation and new design approaches for age-appropriate content. We will facilitate capability development opportunities for practitioners in this field to deepen their practice and collaborate with international artists. We will also continue to support the professional development of artists working in schools.

2 Literary arts

We will cultivate shared interest in and appreciation of Singapore’s literary works

Literature can promote greater understanding of Singapore’s diverse heritage and cultures. We recognise the importance and relevance of a diversity of languages in the arts, especially in their ability to connect communities. We will continue to encourage the translation of key Singapore literary works across all four official languages to help them reach more people. We will develop differentiated initiatives that appeal to different reader segments, and promote seminal works that may have been forgotten or which are no longer in print. This will promote the appreciation of Singapore’s literature across languages and cultures, and connect communities through shared stories.

We will nurture a love for literature and deepen public engagement of Singapore literature through platforms such as the Singapore Writers Festival and the development of a key literary centre

The Singapore Writers Festival is the pinnacle engagement platform in Singapore’s literary arts scene with programmes that cater to a wide range of readers’ interests. The festival will play a larger role in developing readers of Singapore literature, and prioritise deeper engagement with audiences through quality public programming featuring Singapore writers, socially-inclusive programmes and cross-disciplinary collaborations.

We will also develop literary intermediaries, including The Arts House as a literary centre, complementing NLB’s public programmes. In addition, The Arts House, as the cornerstone of Singapore’s literary scene, will play a bigger role in strengthening communities through the celebration of our Singapore stories.

Speakers at the Singapore Writers Festival 2017
Closing Debate ▼



3

Visual arts



Artist Chen-Sai Hua Kuan (seated, left) guides participants in a workshop to accompany his installation *Sound Like 19*, part of *Stop and Smell The Ang Mo Dan* series of neighbourhood-inspired public art works in Ang Mo Kio

We will reach broad-based audiences and under-reached communities through public art and accessible programming

Art will be brought to more Singaporeans through presentations and programmes near their homes. New public art trails will be created, and we will collaborate with public agencies to provide more spaces for community art displays. We will continue to support the Gallery, SAM and STPI in taking programming outdoors, while also working with partners like PA to involve the larger community in co-created projects. To reach more audiences, artists and art groups will be encouraged to leverage opportunities for commissioned work and presentation at lifestyle events. Event organisers will be encouraged to feature artworks as well.

We will encourage digitisation of research, knowledge and content to create new entry points

We will work with our institutions and arts companies as they increase their digital engagement efforts. The Gallery, SAM and STPI will be encouraged to digitise their content and key exhibitions, to create new audience entry points. Technology and new media can also be integrated into the art-making process through collaborations between the art and science sectors.

We will develop capabilities of art galleries and privately funded art intermediaries to cultivate patronage and grow new collectors

Viewing of exhibition “Journey of a Yellow Man. Selected Materials from the Independent Archive” (2018) at Gillman Barracks, a visual arts cluster that houses international and local art galleries, non-profit art organisations, and NTU Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) Singapore ▼

Cultural institutions such as STPI can work closely with the Art Galleries Association Singapore to support art businesses, attract new members, and represent the interests of galleries in working with public agencies, media and stakeholders. Through regular engagement, art galleries can adopt best practices to ensure that commercial dealings with artists and buyers are fair, and share ideas on how to meet the demand for more professional gallery managers. The growth of privately-funded intermediaries such as private museums and collector-led art spaces will also be encouraged. These intermediaries can help our artists develop patronage through programmes and initiatives such as collectors’ talks, workshops and presentations of private art collections.





► Strengthening arts education in our schools

We recognise that arts exposure at an early age impacts lifelong engagement in the arts, nurtures creative thinking and the imagination, helping to develop empathetic, articulate and confident children. Arts education can also help children appreciate Singapore’s cultural heritage and develop national pride while shaping the artists, audiences and arts-lovers of tomorrow.

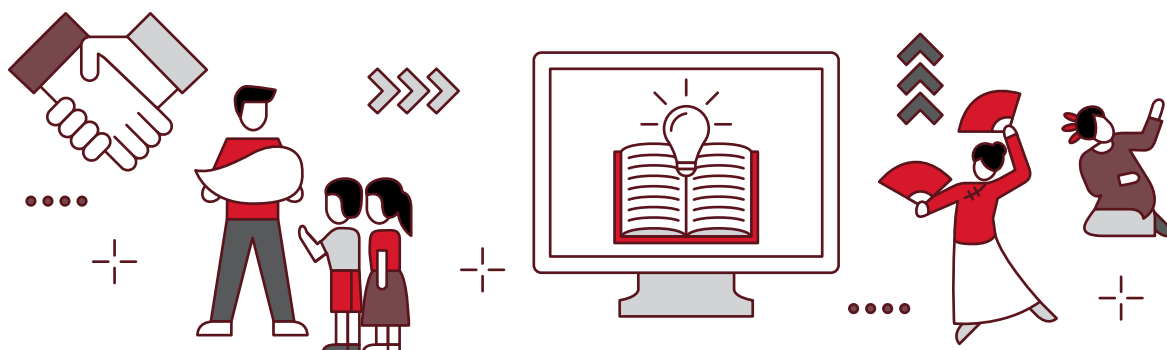
We will work closely with government agencies, such as MOE and ECDA, to augment the opportunities available for students to engage with the arts as part of their studies, co-curricular activities and enrichment programmes, especially to develop interest in the traditional arts from a young age.

We will strengthen strategic collaborations with MOE

To expose our students to more local works and artists, and develop an appreciation of our local cultures and national cultural icons, we will help to develop literary texts and teaching resources and curate learning content to heighten awareness and understanding of seminal works by Singapore artists and musicians in our curricula across levels. Schools will also participate in specially-designed programmes at museums and performing arts centres that offer students authentic experiences linked to their school curriculum.

To tap on MOE’s online platforms such as the Student Learning Space, NAC will support the development of digital content and approaches for the teaching and learning of Singapore content to build greater awareness of Singapore artists. We will work with MOE through key platforms such as the Singapore Youth Festival, to increase the reach of Singapore artists and content.

We will also continue our work with MOE to incorporate the arts into learning areas that extend beyond the main arts curricula, focusing especially on Character and Citizenship Education and deeper learning about our multi-cultural heritage. We will also explore how the arts can be further used to enhance the school experience for students with disabilities.



We will deepen school engagement and nurture distinctive schools in the arts

We will focus on deepening school engagement by facilitating strong artist-school partnerships and supporting schools with a niche area in the arts. This will nurture distinctive schools in the mainstream, special education and early childhood sectors that can serve as role-models for others.

We will work with key partners in the early childhood sector to expand the reach of best practices in the arts

We will work with key partners, such as ECDA, National Institute of Early Childhood Development, and other anchor operators and the arts community, to expand the reach of the arts into this sector. In collaboration with partners in the early childhood sector, NAC hopes to develop teaching resources to complement the Nurturing Early Learners Framework, share best practices of integrating the arts into early childhood learning with preschools through online resources, Communities of Practice, and learning journeys; look into facilitating exchanges between preschool teachers and artists; and address the training needs of artists who wish to conduct programmes in the early childhood sector.

Children learning about mosaic making with artist Jane Soh through NAC's Artist-in-School Scheme for preschools ▼





► Encouraging giving to the arts

While the government plays a critical role in supporting the arts, arts philanthropy and volunteerism remain vital. With patronage and support from the corporate sector and individual supporters, we want to forge a shared ownership of our arts to ensure a more self-sustaining arts sector.

We will advocate and accelerate giving to the arts

To build on the momentum of corporate and individual giving since the introduction of the CMF in 2013, we will work with cultural institutions and arts charities to encourage more donations. Our advocacy efforts will be strengthened by research investigating the role of the arts and the impact of the arts on communities.

We will cultivate and connect patrons

We will step up efforts to cultivate new patrons, in particular through privately-funded initiatives and visual art intermediaries. This requires a deeper understanding of causes which appeal to potential and existing patrons, effective advocacy and outreach, and sustained efforts to engage donors.

- 1 Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Grace Fu with Mrs Rosy Ho, receiving the Distinguished Patron of the Arts Award
- 2 Panel Discussion at the *Arts Philanthropy in Businesses Roundtable* to explore strategies for effective and sustainable corporate partnerships in the arts



1



2

We will grow a culture of arts volunteerism

Everyone can play a part in Singapore’s cultural development by contributing their time, talents and skills to the arts sector. We will facilitate arts volunteerism opportunities, enabling more people of different backgrounds to give back to the arts. In the long run, we will nurture a sustainable pool of arts volunteers and establish arts volunteerism as a meaningful form of arts support and participation. Arts volunteering can be an effective way to engage under-reached communities, providing opportunities for deeper conversations and interactions to enrich a befriending experience. Through research, we will better understand the motivation of arts volunteerism which will inform volunteer engagement, training and recognition.

Arts volunteer Lora Nghiem helps a young audience member with a craft activity at an Arts in Your Neighbourhood performance ▼



We will build fundraising and volunteer management capabilities within the arts sector

We will continue to build fundraising and volunteer management capabilities within the arts sector. This includes developing professional development courses and resources with our partners to better equip our arts community, as they raise funds and work with volunteers to realise their artistic vision.

STRATEGIC
THRUST

03 POSITION SINGAPORE GLOBALLY

—
Arts and culture icons and their works are appreciated by audiences and critics at home and abroad

As an influential cultural presence in the region, our leading arts practitioners are admired and appreciated by critics and audiences for their depth of practice and experience, fostering a sense of national pride among Singaporeans. With innovative techniques and mastery of technology, our artists create, adapt and refresh their works, enriching the canon of Singapore-made work while winning acclaim at home and globally.



Singapore Symphony Orchestra performing at the Prague Spring International Music Festival in 2016
(Photo courtesy of Singapore Symphony Group.)

► Putting Singapore art on the map

As a small country with an open economy, connectivity is central to Singapore's survival and prosperity. It is only through staying open to trade, people and ideas that Singapore can leverage global growth, and access new markets, adopt innovative technologies, and create good jobs.

Internationalisation has long been key to growth in the corporate world. There are similar opportunities for the arts. Going global means accessing new markets and audiences and transcending the limited market potential in Singapore. Benchmarking and understanding best practices become possible when artists engage in rich conversations with their international counterparts, as part of their capacity building. Artistic innovation and research also take on different dimensions with more international collaborations.



The efforts by the NAC and MCCY, the great amount of thought and foresight of artists, arts administrators and the government... will raise the position of Singapore as a global city for the arts and make Singapore even more attractive to visitors and investors. Singapore and Singaporeans will greatly benefit from this.



Jeremy Monteiro

Musician, Cultural Medallion Recipient 2002

(Photo by: Russel Wong)



▲ Singapore delegation with the Mayor of Dusseldorf (back row, fifth from right) and Dieter Jaenicke (back row, second from right) at NAC's booth at Tanzmesse 2018

As global economic weight shifts towards Asia, Singapore will also see numerous new opportunities. As a young nation, we have to play to our strengths to reach out to international markets and audiences and sustain a presence overseas.

An early study conducted by NAC⁷ found that perceptions of the Singapore arts scene mirrored positive global perceptions of Singapore: a professional workforce with strong technical skills and organisational abilities; well-resourced

and with good infrastructure. NAC seeks to take advantage of these strengths, establishing Singapore as an influential presence in the region.

Singapore's cultural diversity has also been a boon for the arts. Our distinctive Singaporean cultural offerings are contemporary while drawing on traditional elements, a mix of Eastern and Western sensibilities, speaking to our common humanity.

► Planning our approach

To meaningfully create and present quality art that speaks to our cultural identity, we need strategies to help artists understand and engage with international audiences more effectively. Research on Singapore’s international reputation, and metrics for the international benchmarking of artistic excellence, will inform our strategies for internationalisation.

We will also use digital media to market Singapore arts in an evolving and crowded marketplace, while encouraging experimentation with innovative technologies to create new types of content. One specific area we will look closely at is the role of the arts in enhancing the quality of life in a city. Held up as a model of effective city planning, Singapore has useful insights to offer in how the arts and culture add to a city’s international standing and vibrancy.

It is also important that we better understand Singapore’s cultural role in Southeast Asia to work with our neighbours. We will need to carry out research that allows us to build on existing cultural policy knowledge and innovation in arts practice, and the positioning of Singapore and Singapore arts in the region.

While impact studies such as the Population Survey on the Arts, Digital Engagement in the Arts and NAC event surveys have yielded useful information, other studies on more recent programmes and trends are needed for greater insight. We will need to work closely with other cultural institutions in specific areas such as the state of and development of intercultural practices; the effectiveness of signature arts pedagogy methods; the long-term impact of arts exposure in early childhood; and the impact of arts engagement on key population segments.

Broadly, Singapore can be positioned globally in these three ways:

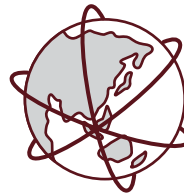
Establishing Singapore as a valuable collaborative partner for arts and culture in the region



Developing international residencies and capability building programmes



Extending an effective Singapore presence overseas





We will establish Singapore as a valuable collaborative partner for arts and culture, especially in the region

There is a need for Singapore to strengthen our international networks, especially with our Southeast Asian neighbours. We have much experience and expertise to share, and we should establish Singapore as a valuable collaborative partner in the development of the arts globally. We can contribute, for example, to efforts around the world in growing thought leadership, organisational capabilities, arts and technology, grant administration, and research. We can do this by supporting our arts professionals in presenting papers, seminars or workshops overseas, hosting conferences or summits here in Singapore, and ensuring Singapore representation on international boards.

There is also potential for us to invest in developing Singapore-led platforms for the sharing of best practices in artistic processes. Some possible areas include intercultural practice, dramaturgy, Southeast Asian art discourse and research, teaching artistry, arts in the social sector, and community arts.

Such platforms can also position Singapore as an access point for greater cultural understanding, especially of Southeast Asia. The Singapore Writers Festival is an example of such a platform, which will be enhanced to feature more Southeast Asian literature and talent. More exchanges between literary communities in Southeast Asia will also be encouraged.

▼ Dancers from Singapore performing alongside their Vietnamese counterparts in Hanoi, in commemoration of the 45th anniversary of Singapore-Vietnam Relations (Photo courtesy of Ministry of Foreign Affairs)



It is also important that Singapore continues to build fruitful long-term relationships through formal international networks. Singapore is already plugged into professional communities including the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies and the International Network of Contemporary Performing Arts. Singapore is in art practice-driven networks, such as the Asia Discovers Asia Meeting and the Open Network of Performing Arts Management. Where appropriate, NAC can lead Asian chapter meetings, profile speakers for events, or propose that meetings or summits be held in Singapore. NAC will also continue to unlock opportunities through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with other countries.



***We will develop
international residencies
and capability building
partnerships***

International residencies and capability building programmes play a significant role in encouraging cultural exchange between countries. They provide opportunities for government agencies or culture institutions to collaborate, and for artistic communities to network and build meaningful relationships. Capability building and residency programmes also allow for gaps in skills and knowledge to be plugged in the absence of suitable local programmes. Some programmes could be in practice-based areas, such as critical writing and creative producing, while others could be more broad-based such as arts and technology, market development and leadership development within the culture sector.

Over the years, NAC and Singapore artists have participated in a number of overseas residencies and capacity building programmes such as the Künstlerhaus Bethanien Residency, the Dena Foundation Residency and the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People (ASSITEJ) Korea International Summer Festival, Toji Cultural Centre Residency Programme, among others. We will continue to support Singapore artists' participation in these platforms and seek out more of such opportunities through partnerships with overseas arts councils or institutions. Such opportunities are particularly valuable for emerging leaders, who are in a position to inspire their peers, further their careers in the arts and grow in international stature.



We will extend an effective Singapore presence overseas

International platforms and programmes profile the best from every country and are occasions where cultural experts and opinion leaders converge. Such events are important platforms that help profile Singapore arts practitioners and their works on the global stage. Singapore's past showcases at these platforms have boosted the careers of artists by connecting them with international opportunities. The exposure allows our artists to understand the pulse of the global contemporary art practice and plugs them into larger conversations and networks.

We need to sustain a Singaporean presence at key international art events, such as the Venice Biennale. Our institutions will take Singapore exhibitions to international museums and galleries overseas, and present our artists at reputable art fair platforms. Our Cultural Medallion artists and their work will be celebrated to highlight Singapore's unique art history and narrative.

Trade platforms are also important for the Singapore arts scene, as they provide opportunities to promote Singaporean talent, build connections, and facilitate the trade of Singapore works. In recent years, NAC has supported Singapore showcases and artist delegations to many trade platforms, such as the International Society for Performing Arts (ISPA), Performing Arts Market in



Yokohama (TPAM), Australia Performing Arts Market (APAM), BIGSOUND, Internationale Tanzmesse NRW, Art Basel (Hong Kong), and international book fairs such as the London Book Fair and Beijing International Book Fair.

These showcases and artist delegations benefit Singapore artists, with more of them developing direct connections that eventually lead to the sale of work, or future projects and collaborations. NAC will evaluate the relevance of these platforms and look out for similar opportunities or platforms for other art forms.

NAC will provide seed funding to Singapore artists who are exploring new projects with overseas counterparts. NAC will also work closely and strategically with cultural institutions and national orchestras to support arts practitioners and arts groups that are ready for the international stage, and to facilitate international exchanges and collaborations.

In addition, NAC will continue to build a closer working relationship with public sector agencies that promote Singapore overseas, such as the Singapore Tourism Board (STB), Economic Development Board (EDB) and Overseas Singaporean Unit (OSU). This will ensure consistent international marketing and branding of Singapore's arts and culture sector, as well as greater coordination in areas such as international digital and social media marketing programmes, media outreach and familiarisation programmes.

There are also plans for more coordinated digital marketing campaigns in larger markets, such as Australia and China. NAC will work with STB through its global Passion Made Possible campaign, by providing content about Singapore's cultural scene to pique the interest of travellers and potential audiences. Together with STB, we will also identify key strengths and innovations in our cultural offerings to market internationally, tapping on STB's extensive network. We will celebrate our artists, whose passions have been realised in Singapore.

NAC will continue working closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on cultural diplomacy projects by recommending suitable artists for overseas audiences, working together to develop cultural projects, assessing proposed budgets and timelines, and facilitating funding requests.

In partnership with the OSU, NAC will engage overseas Singapore arts students and arts practitioners. Close relationships with these individuals will benefit the Singapore arts scene, as they help to broaden our international networks, and provide feedback on Singapore works from an international perspective. NAC will explore strategic opportunities to engage these individuals through platforms such as practice-related committees and advisory panels, events and Singapore showcases at international platforms.

- 1 WILD RICE's production *Hotel* at LASALLE College of the Arts' The Singapore Airlines Theatre in 2016, which was also presented at OzAsia Festival in Adelaide in 2017
- 2 Singaporean author Amanda Lee Koe discusses the German translation of her award-winning short story collection, *Ministry of Moral Panic*, at a panel discussion during the 2016 Frankfurt Book Fair
- 3 Singaporean musician Daniel Sassoon performing at BIGSOUND 2016, Brisbane Australia (Photo courtesy of BIGSOUND Festival)



CONCLUSION



Art of the Rehearsal, by Sarah Choo – an immersive video installation at the National Museum Singapore, featuring Singaporean traditional dancers practising along the back lanes of Singapore's cultural districts (Photo courtesy of Sarah Choo)



Over the years, Singapore has seen a gradual maturing of its arts scene. From its early years in helping a young nation define its cultural identity, the arts have grown from strength to strength, becoming more integral to many aspects of everyday life. There is much to celebrate: world-class cultural infrastructure based on strong institutions, excellent artworks that inspire audiences at home and abroad, well-designed programming that connects different communities, and an increasingly professional sector.

Still, much work remains to be done. Our SG Arts Plan (2018–2022) will guide NAC in championing the arts sector in alignment with our vision of making Singapore a home to diverse and distinctive arts which can inspire Singaporeans, connect communities, and position Singapore globally. This plan will be reviewed every five years to respond to the inevitable changes in our operating environment, both domestically and globally.

As outlined in preceding chapters, three strategic thrusts detail how we plan on achieving this vision:

Inspire Our People – We will work with the cultural institutions, other government agencies, and the private and people sectors to give our artists the support they need to do their best work that will inspire audiences and give expression to our Singapore stories.

Connect Our Communities – We will give more Singaporeans access to a wide range of arts experiences across forms, languages and traditions. We will support more quality performances, exhibitions and literary works, which can serve as meaningful community-building experiences.

Position Singapore Globally – We will support our arts practitioners in their efforts to go global by expanding NAC's existing networks and partnerships, and increasing access to significant international platforms, events and festivals.

- 1 Children fascinated by the puppet in *Storytelling: Grandmother's Tales* by Jasmine Xie and Chang Tingwei, an Esplanade Presents programme for Moonfest – A Mid-Autumn Celebration 2017. (Photo by Ken Cheong. Courtesy of Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay.)
- 2 Singaporean Charlie Lim and The Mothership at OzAsia Festival 2016 (Photo courtesy of CultureLink Singapore)



1



2

As we work towards our goals, we are thankful that we do not have to embark on this journey alone.

We are grateful for the opportunities we have had over the years, to work with our valued stakeholders, which include the arts community, public sector agencies, non-governmental organisations, private sector organisations, educators, volunteers and members of the public. They have been instrumental in growing the arts sector in Singapore, and we are excited to continue working together with these stakeholders to take Singapore's arts to new heights.

We also deeply appreciate the hundreds of stakeholders who have come forward with their input, feedback and encouragement, as we designed our strategic plans over the course of the last year.

With the government's strong commitment to the arts, and working hand in hand with all our stakeholders, we are optimistic. We have confidence that our nation's arts scene will flourish, and that our artists and their music, dance, theatre, visual arts and literary writings, will be a continued source of inspiration and pride. Where results are not immediately apparent, we will be patient because we know the success in the arts often takes time. What we are clear about, however, are the direction of our ambitions, and the place the arts have in the home we call Singapore.

ANNEXES

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LITERARY ARTS

Literature is more than words on a page. It captures our stories, experiences, aspirations, and cultures – in short, literature is an important expression of our Singaporean identity. To support the growth of the literary arts in Singapore, the government announced the first Literary Arts Plan in 2010 with an injection of \$24 million.

As part of the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR), funding has since been geared towards growing Singapore's literary arts scene. NAC's Creation Grant scheme has supported Singaporean writers to develop new works that have added to the diversity of Singapore literature, especially in long-form writing such as novels. Creative writing residency partnerships between NAC and local organisations such as Nanyang Technological University and National Parks Board, and foreign residency partners like the University of Iowa's International Writing Programme, have increased opportunities for writers to develop their creative practice. The Singapore Writers Festival (SWF) became an annual event in 2011 and is now a highlight of the Singapore arts calendar. Its 2017 edition attracted over 25,000 attendees.

► ANALYSIS OF CURRENT STATE

Strengths

More Singaporeans are reading literature, with 44%¹ of the population having read at least one literary book in 2015 as compared to 30%² in 2005. The inaugural National Literary Reading and Writing Survey in 2015 indicated that Singaporeans had positive attitudes towards reading. The literary scene has grown: there are now more writers; greater volume and diversity in

literary content; healthy growth in the number of intermediaries from English and Chinese literary publishers; and new non-profit organisations to address issues such as writer development and public engagement.

Weaknesses

Although the literary scene is now more vibrant, awareness and appreciation of Singapore literature is low – just one in 10 Singaporeans read Singapore literature³. We need more quality literary arts experiences to interest Singaporeans who are not familiar with Singapore literature. The decline in language proficiency in Chinese, Malay, and Tamil means there are fewer people who can read and write well in these languages. Opportunities for cross-cultural understanding will be diminished without quality Singapore literature written in Chinese, Malay, and Tamil.

Opportunities

Literature, with its ability to improve readers' capacity for empathy, can promote understanding of our heritage and culture. Several literary arts events exist in Singapore today, but few encourage cross-cultural interaction and community building. By translating Chinese, Malay, and Tamil works of historical and social significance into English, a wider reader base could gain a deeper appreciation of our heritage, along with greater understanding between language communities. New trends and developments in communication technology such as augmented reality, virtual reality, and audiobooks also provide opportunities to attract new readers and deepen engagement for existing readers.

Threats

As society becomes more diverse, cultural sensibilities are needed to manage increasing social complexities, and to build a more inclusive society. We need to work hard at articulating a Singaporean identity and to enlarge common spaces for diverse communities. With the advent of new technologies, traditional publishing companies must grasp the full impact of industry disruption brought about by the sharing and streaming economy, as well as other shifts in consumption patterns caused by technological trends.

► ENVISIONED STATE AND OUTCOMES

By 2022, NAC envisions a vibrant literary arts scene where Singapore literature provides shared experiences for people of diverse backgrounds. Literary arts practitioners have the support they need to produce quality literary content and experiences that Singaporeans can relate to, and are proud of. The literary arts draw people together, bridge differences and build connections in the community. Domestic and international readers and critics admire and appreciate Singapore literature for its distinctly Singaporean content that can appeal to readers.

From 2018 to 2022, NAC will build on the literary sector's many accomplishments to promote greater appreciation of Singapore literature, while raising qualitative standards over the next five years. NAC will:

- a Use a more targeted approach in literary engagement, with a priority on increasing appreciation for Singapore literature and fostering cross-cultural understanding by promoting interaction across language communities;
- b Run targeted developmental programmes for literary arts practitioners at different stages of development to hone their craft, and for intermediaries to professionalise with an emphasis on Chinese, Malay and Tamil literary writers and stakeholders; and
- c Develop a more diverse literary arts scene, with a focus on promoting literary exchanges within Southeast Asia and research and writing on Singapore literature.



Strategic Thrust 01: Inspire Our People

Nurture a pool of talent with emphasis on grooming talent writing in Chinese, Malay, and Tamil, and across genres and forms that would appeal to diverse readers

NAC will nurture talent who are committed to creating quality literary content, while developing strategies to address the challenges faced by the Chinese, Malay, and Tamil writing communities. NAC will also look into opportunities for writers at different stages of development to ensure they have access to skills and resources for continuous advancement of their creative practice. This will include residency partnerships and manuscript critiques to help writers hone their craft, and training in professional skills such as pitching and networking.

NAC will study issues across the whole value chain, including publishing, retail and readership, and work with key partners such as academic institutions, the National Library Board (NLB), media and literary arts intermediaries to address them.

1 2015, National Literary Reading and Writing Survey.
2 2005, Population Survey on the Arts.
3 2015, National Literary Reading and Writing Survey.





Strategic Thrust 02: Connect Our Communities

Cultivate shared interest in and appreciation of Singapore literature through engaging forms such as multidisciplinary adaptations and transmedia platforms

NAC will give priority to underappreciated or out-of-print seminal works. Greater emphasis will be placed on translation to promote shared appreciation of Singapore literature across our language communities, and to provide readers with an avenue to engage in meaningful conversations on cross-cultural issues and different perspectives. NAC will partner key organisations such as NLB, National Heritage Board, People's Association, and the language councils. To effectively reach out to the public, NAC will conduct research in reading, engagement, buying patterns and trends.

Nurture a love for literature and deepen public engagement of Singapore literature through pinnacle engagement platforms such as the Singapore Writers Festival and the development of a key literary centre

The Singapore Writers Festival (SWF) is the pinnacle engagement platform in Singapore's literary arts scene with programmes that cater to a wide range of readers' interests. Moving forward, SWF will play a larger role in developing readers of Singapore literature, and prioritising deeper engagement with interested attendees. It will also feature distinctive programmes and socially-inclusive programming. NAC will develop literary intermediaries, including positioning The Arts House as a literary centre, where literary activities can take place all year to support the SWF. This centre will complement NLB's literary events to cultivate a greater appreciation for Singapore literature, and evolve into a cornerstone

of Singapore's literary scene: one that supports the vitality of literary activities, builds communities around the sharing and appreciation of stories, and focuses public interest in Singapore literature.

Encourage early exposure to and sustained interest in Singapore literature, within the literature curriculum and beyond, amongst children and youth

Literary arts in education continues to be a priority to develop the next generation of writers and readers. Opportunities for children and young adults to encounter and engage with Singapore literature should start from home and in schools and extend beyond the literature curriculum. NAC will encourage early and sustained exposure to Singapore literature from young and in schools, working with the Ministry of Education to incorporate more Singapore literature into the curriculum with supplementary teaching and student resources. This includes developing literary texts and teaching resources in the four official languages, with new emphasis on online resources. NAC will also broaden schools' access to quality literary programming directly via the Arts Education Programme, Words Go Round, etc., and support literary organisations that offer school programmes.

Leverage technology to create, digitise or adapt Singapore literature for targeted demographics

As part of NAC's efforts to improve accessibility and awareness of Singapore literature, NAC will support the capability development of literary arts practitioners and intermediaries to equip them with skills needed to integrate technological developments with the literary arts. NAC will also support digital projects that use technology in the creation, digitisation or adaptation of literary works, focusing on art-making with technology (e.g. co-creations using technology) and the distribution of Singapore literature with technology (e.g. digitisation of Singapore literature texts, transmedia adaptations, etc.)



**Strategic Thrust 03:
Position Singapore Globally**

Establish Singapore as a key enabler of exchanges between the Southeast Asian literary communities

Southeast Asian literature provides Singapore an access point to cultivate greater cultural appreciation of the region’s complexities. Singapore has deep historical, social and economic ties with many communities in the region. Singaporeans can gain a better understanding of themselves by gaining insights into the region via literature. Singapore can do more to showcase the region’s culture and provide a new platform for the exchange of ideas in the following two ways:

a Positioning SWF as a presentation platform for Southeast Asian literature and discovering literary talents from the region

SWF will enhance its focus on Southeast Asian literature and talent, including those from Singapore. SWF also plans to include programmes that take on a developmental role to engage and educate the Singapore public on Singapore literature alongside Southeast Asian literature.

b Promoting exchanges between Southeast Asian literary communities to raise Singaporeans’ understanding of our neighbours

Discourse about Southeast Asian literature improves Singaporeans’ understanding of our neighbours. Possible collaborations with local and regional cultural institutions and think-tanks include the translation and publication of seminal Southeast Asian literature.

Encourage literary discourse on Singapore literature

A thriving literary arts sector is sustained by critical discourse on a country’s literature, its history and development, which deepens people’s understanding of Singapore literature. This will lead to more meaningful engagement between the literary community and the general reading public, and to the development of a more confident cultural identity. We will also encourage a wide spectrum of writing on Singapore literature, such as book reviews and academic essays, to start conversations on Singapore literature across diverse reading groups. NAC will work with partners to foster writing on Singapore literature, and to develop critical writing skills.

► SUMMARY

The sectoral plan will guide Singapore’s transformation into a city of readers who are proud of Singapore’s literary culture, and of writers whose stories continue to inspire Singaporeans. Through literature, Singaporeans will gain a better understanding across communities.

In summary, efforts in literary arts development will go towards:

- a** Making engagement programmes more targeted, with a priority to increase appreciation of Singapore literature and social cohesion by promoting interaction across language communities;
- b** More targeted support of developmental programmes for practitioners to hone their craft and a greater focus on professionalising leading intermediaries; and
- c** A more diverse literary arts scene with a focus on Southeast Asia and literary discourse and criticism.



PERFORMING ARTS

The performing arts sector has seen immense growth in the past two decades. The development of arts venues catalysed a burgeoning supply of arts programmes, in response to growing demand for the arts. The number of performing arts activities, and registered performing arts companies and societies, has increased steadily. In 2016, an average of 26 performing arts activities took place every day in Singapore.¹ The number of performing arts companies and societies continued to grow, increasing from 2,689 in 2013 to 3,162 in 2016.²

Despite the growth in the number of groups and activities, ticketed attendance for performing arts events declined in the past five years, from 2.06 million ticketed attendance in 2012 to 1.81 million in 2016³, although overall arts attendance levels (including free events) continued to rise⁴. The profile of these arts attendees tended to be single, aged 15–34, and tertiary educated.⁵ Theatre (especially musicals) and music (especially pop, rock, and indie) were popular art forms within this group.⁶ Dance enjoyed strong support from the Indian community and students aged 15–24, as well as those aged 35–44.⁷ Arts consumption in the digital space decreased, possibly due to competing entertainment options, but music continued to lead in digital engagement of audiences.⁸

In terms of artistic success, original works by Singaporean creators, particularly in theatre and dance, continue to be of high quality and are often selected by reputable local and international festivals and venues. Singaporean musicians have also set a high bar for themselves in recent years, winning accolades and prizes, and performing at some of the biggest festivals in the world. However, a review of writing and assessments by critics and peer practitioners suggested that there was still much room for improvement in the sector's general artistic standards.

► ANALYSIS OF CURRENT STATE

Strengths

Attendance and participation in the performing arts have improved since the last sectoral plan. Beyond the theatre and concert hall, the performing arts are also effective at achieving national outcomes⁹, such as national pride, arts participation¹⁰, and community building¹¹. Our contemporary musicians and national orchestras have had successful overseas tours and placements on global streaming charts, awards, and invitations to perform at major festivals and venues. National venues and platforms like Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay and the Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) have also built strong international networks to benefit other Singaporean artists.

Weaknesses

Critical writing about the arts is weak in Singapore and there is little research and documentation of the history and development of the performing arts here. Likewise, there is room for practitioners to improve how they engage and connect with new audiences with their work. The predominance of the English language over the Mother Tongue languages, along with uneven audience engagement efforts, have made it challenging for more people to connect with some art forms, especially those that require some language proficiency. In addition, artists working in the education sector require further support in developing their pedagogical repertoire in order to raise the quality of arts instruction. The level of professionalism in arts management and instruction, succession planning and support for freelance performing arts practitioners also needs to be strengthened. Lastly, the adoption of technology in the performing arts could be stronger.

Opportunities

To grow new audiences for the arts, non-arts considerations and interests could offer entry points for the uninitiated. Programming that cater to families with children, appeal to Singaporeans' interest in sports and exercise¹², as well as link common interests in music and food¹³, are potential growth areas for audience development. As youths increasingly express themselves online on social media, we can tap on this energy and develop their interest and ability to write critically. Global shifts in technology and music consumption patterns have also made it possible for emerging musicians to have international breakthroughs wherever they are based. The development of technologies for art-making, digital engagement, and marketing has made it possible for small but technologically-enabled countries like Singapore to be at the forefront of innovation.

Threats

While we celebrate the vibrancy and diversity of the performing arts, the increasingly crowded cultural calendar in Singapore has resulted in intense competition for audiences. Against the backdrop of population decline – and, consequently, shrinking school populations – opportunities to engage with the arts through co-curricular activities may decrease. This has implications on the longer-term career prospects of performing arts practitioners. The emotive power of the performing arts, while having great potential to unite communities and foster social cohesion, can also be socially divisive if they are politicised for particular causes. This could alienate supporters and funders, and erode public support for the arts.

► ENVISIONED STATE AND OUTCOMES

By 2022, NAC envisions a vibrant performing arts scene that is driven by an integrated ecosystem and embraced by audiences, with a growing pool of distinctive works. Our national orchestras inspire national pride among Singaporeans and are regarded as among the best in the world. At the same time, our performing arts practitioners receive local and international recognition and are embraced as role models by Singaporeans from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds.

Different segments of the population have myriad opportunities to engage with the performing arts through tailored programmes that spark curiosity, enable empathy, and cultivate a sense of national identity and pride. Internationally, Singapore's performing arts are recognised for their contemporary sensibilities and strong roots in the multiculturalism and diversity of this region. Our performing arts institutions and practitioners are recognised as up-and-coming leaders in using technology to make art and engage audiences.

●●● Strategic Thrust 01 Inspire Our People

Raise the public visibility of the performing arts by working with the sector to create a national focal point in the cultural calendar

Building on the vibrancy of the performing arts sector, NAC will work with cultural institutions and arts organisations to create a focal point for the performing arts in the cultural calendar. NAC could build on existing festivals and events, such as SIFA, Flipside, the M1 CONTACT Contemporary Dance Festival, and activities and

- 1, 2, 3 2017, Singapore Cultural Statistics.
- 4, 5 2017, Population Survey on the Arts.
- 6 2017, Population Survey on the Arts.
- 7 2017, Population Survey on the Arts.
- 8 2017, Population Survey on the Arts. Overall digital consumption rates dipped from 87% in 2015 to 61% in 2017, with 39% of the population reporting that they consumed digital music content.
- 9 2017, National Music Consumption Survey. Two in three Singaporeans said they were proud of Singapore's music and musicians.
- 10 2017, Singapore Cultural Statistics. The number of members in dance interest groups increased by 350% in a short span of six years (2011 to 2016).
- 11 2017, Population Survey on the Arts. 86% of dance and music attendees recognised that the arts help draw Singaporeans closer as a community.
- 12 2017, Population Survey on the Arts. "Sports and exercise" came out as the top activity that Singaporeans spent time on.
- 13 2017, Population Survey on the Arts. "Tasting different kinds of cuisines" was the second-most popular leisure activity among people who attended music events, especially PMEBS.



platforms organised by the national orchestras, arts education institutions, as well as other arts organisations to establish the branding of a national Performing Arts Festival in May or June every year. A national publicity campaign that celebrates the diverse forms and expressions of the performing arts could complement existing marketing efforts, appealing to new audiences in the process.

Build capabilities in gap areas such as the use of technology, arts education, fundraising, marketing, and arts management

To enable more use of technology to enhance the audience experience, NAC will work with partners such as Esplanade and Culture Academy to organise capability development programmes. NAC will also encourage the use of technology through the existing grants framework, and facilitate opportunities for artists to meet and work with the technology sector. In collaboration with our partners, NAC will continue to facilitate training opportunities to strengthen the sector's capabilities in fundraising, marketing, and arts management.

Improving the quality of arts education programmes in schools is especially important to inspire a new generation of arts lovers. NAC will provide more structured professional development opportunities for arts instructors and teaching artists in schools, and also work with the Ministry of Education to augment the opportunities available for students to engage with the arts as extensions of the school curriculum and to develop interest in the traditional arts from young.



**Strategic Thrust 02
Connect Our Communities**

Strengthen the sector's understanding of audience segments and behaviours through research, and support the development of critical writing in and about the performing arts

NAC will work with performing arts institutions to commission a range of audience research studies. This will include quantitative research at the art form level about audience segments and consumption patterns, and qualitative research to gain insights about audience behaviours. Initiatives such as Got to Move and Hear65, which raise public awareness of, participation in, and support for dance and music respectively, will also use data analytics to identify trends in public opinion, and to refine their strategies. In addition, the National Institute of Education will complete a study to identify and understand the space-based experiences of audiences and the needs within the Arts for Young Audiences (AYA) field.

NAC will seek partnerships with cultural institutions such as the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre to develop research that documents the development of the performing arts over time, including traditional practices and forms. Beyond that, NAC will develop the practice of critical writing in the performing arts by supporting intermediaries in developing the craft of writing among writers, and deepening critical discourse. Initiatives like Hear65 will also document contemporary music practices through articles, podcasts, and videos.

Develop capabilities in areas such as audience engagement, facilitation, and content creation for specific audience segments

NAC will also introduce initiatives with the aim of deepening connections with diverse communities in the creation and production of performing arts, such as a pilot programme involving teaching artists, communities and audiences, as well as cultural institutions such as Esplanade and arts education institutions like the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music. In catering to diverse audiences, support will continue to be given to inclusivity practices, such as surtitling, close-captioning, and sign language services to enable all audiences to appreciate and engage with the work.

Through programming at the Stamford Arts Centre, including residencies and public outreach programmes, NAC will develop upstream capabilities and foster collaborations between contemporary and traditional arts practitioners. This will support the cultural institutions' work of commissioning, co-producing, and presenting shows. In the AYA segment, organisations such as The Artground, Esplanade, and arts companies with a focus on children will champion and support experimentation and new design approaches for age-appropriate content. NAC will facilitate capability development opportunities for AYA practitioners to deepen their practice and collaborate with international artists. NAC will also continue to support the professional development of artists working in schools.

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**Strategic Thrust 03
Position Singapore Globally**

Strengthen the arts ecosystem through closer alignment with the performing arts institutions and strategic funding of initiatives and intermediaries

NAC will work closely and strategically with cultural institutions such as Esplanade, Arts House Limited, and the national orchestras to realise its vision for the performing arts. By working more closely with the major presenting venues, NAC will minimise the duplication of programmes with similar goals, and use our resources more effectively by supporting artists and arts groups that are ready for the international stage.

The national orchestras will also continue to support the presentation of Singaporean work, and connect visiting artists with Singapore's music practitioners through masterclasses and dialogues. NAC will work with arts companies and intermediaries like Dance Nucleus to provide stepped pathways for the creation of new work: from space and grant support to incubate works and facilitate international exchanges and collaborations, to workshops incorporating critical presenter and producer perspectives, leading to connections with international co-commissioners and presenters.



To nurture a robust performing arts ecosystem that supports the needs of arts companies and practitioners, including independent artists, producers, and arts managers, NAC will continue to support the growth of intermediaries that address key gaps in each sector. While the support for ground-up initiatives will continue to be a key feature of NAC's open grants framework, NAC will also channel resources towards strategic partnerships with intermediaries and arts companies to address sectoral needs, such as the establishment of a resource centre for arts freelancers.

► SUMMARY

This sectoral plan will strengthen Singapore's performing arts sector, which will be led by strong and sustainable institutions and companies that support a diverse range of practices and perspectives in a thriving ecosystem. This will enable the creation of a pool of distinctive works that will be well-received by audiences, which spark curiosity, enable empathy, and instill a sense of national identity and pride.

In summary, efforts in performing arts development will go towards:

- a Strengthening the sector's understanding of audience segments and behaviours, and supporting the development of critical writing in and about the performing arts;
- b Developing capabilities in the areas of audience engagement, arts education, technology, fundraising, marketing, and arts management; and
- c Raising the visibility of the performing arts by working with the sector to create a national focal point for the performing arts in the cultural calendar.

VISUAL ARTS

Singapore’s focus in the early years was to put in place infrastructure and establish cultural institutions – namely the Singapore Art Museum (SAM), STPI – Creative Workshop & Gallery and National Gallery Singapore (the Gallery) which were formed in 1996, 2002 and 2015 respectively. These institutions have been instrumental in bringing major exhibitions and artworks to Singapore, and expanding the National Collection into the world’s largest public collection of Southeast Asian art. The Nanyang Technological University Centre for Contemporary Art (NTU CCA) was launched in 2013, offering cutting-edge exhibitions, residencies and a space for research and critical discourse.

Public funding was extended to diploma programmes offered by LASALLE College of the Arts and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) in the early 2000s, making art education a more viable option for Singaporeans. NTU launched its Arts, Design and Media (ADM) faculty in 2005 offering Bachelor of Fine Art programmes to expand options for aspiring arts practitioners.

In an effort to profile our artistic talents, Singapore began showcasing our artists at the prestigious Venice Biennale in 2003. In addition to showcasing made-in-Singapore content internationally, major events such as the Singapore Biennale and Singapore Art Show were introduced in the mid-2000s to connect Singapore with the international art world, and to position Singapore as a go-to destination for contemporary art.

Public art schemes were introduced to add character to public spaces and to make art a part of everyday life. These include the Land Transport Authority’s Art in Transit Programme, Urban Redevelopment Authority’s (URA) Public Sculpture Masterplan, URA’s Art Incentive Scheme and National Heritage Board’s Tax Incentive Scheme.

To encourage artists to engage Singaporeans through public art, PAssionArts by People’s Association (PA) and the Public Art Trust by NAC have commissioned numerous public art projects for our neighbourhoods.

As a means to catalyse the art market and create a credible marketplace in Singapore, Art Stage Singapore was established in 2011, and Gillman Barracks was launched as a contemporary art cluster in 2012. Both initiatives were spearheaded by the Economic Development Board. Gillman Barracks offers quality programming and is an anchor venue for major arts and cultural events in Singapore. Singapore Art Week was launched in January 2013 by the Singapore Tourism Board, which has branded Singapore as a destination for visual arts, attracting more regional and international visitors.

► ANALYSIS OF CURRENT STATE

Strengths

Singapore has the largest art institutions in the region, acquiring more than 8,000 artworks making the National Collection the largest Southeast Asian art collection in the world. The collection is conserved, maintained and stored at the Heritage Conservation Centre, a world-class facility with exemplary standards in artwork conservation and storage. In addition, both arts colleges moved into new purpose-built facilities, and together with NTU ADM are training a steady stream of artists every year. Audience growth for the visual arts has increased since 2011¹, possibly due to the numerous visual arts programmes available all year long.

¹ 2017, Population Survey on the Arts.



To enable art practitioners to create and present new artworks, grant schemes provide flexibility for diverse artistic practices and programmes. This has helped develop the professional capabilities of our practitioners and increase audience engagement. Arts housing support is also available to artists and arts organisations, allowing many to benefit from affordable studio spaces despite high real estate costs.

Weaknesses

Most art cities around the world have organically-driven art scenes comprising non-profit spaces, artist-run collectives, residencies, art archives and research organisations. In Singapore, there are few ground-up and privately funded initiatives due to the lack of suitable spaces and high costs. Despite growing audiences, visual arts appeal less to the 'Married with Kids' and 'Seniors' segments². There is also a lack of research on the behavioural patterns of our current and non-art audiences. Artists, art galleries and art fairs also find it difficult to be more self-sustaining as the market for buyers of Singapore art is relatively small. The art market is still in a nascent state where trade represents only 1% of global art export and import. In addition to the lack of art buying, individual giving to the visual arts is not an established norm in Singapore with crowdsourcing only an emerging trend among Singapore companies and artists.

Space is an important resource for art practitioners to focus on art-making and programming. As affordable spaces are scarce, it poses a constraint for the sector as government-subsidised arts spaces are limited, resulting in a shortage of spaces for a growing number of artists. Presentation spaces are also limited, restricting arts groups such as art societies from presenting large-scale exhibitions. There are also few development platforms available to support art practitioners such as curators, art writers, gallery and exhibition professionals.

Opportunities

Working more effectively with key visual art institutions can contribute to growing new audiences, capability development, and positioning Singapore as a regional thought leader. Art gallery associations can enhance the capabilities of our art galleries by developing strategies for art businesses, cultivating collectors,

organising events and facilitating networking opportunities to share best practices. To grow new audiences particularly in under-represented segments, art can be made more accessible through educational and family-oriented programmes³. More research can also be done to understand different audience segments and non-audiences better. To nurture interest in Singapore art among the young, exposure to more Singapore art and artists in engaging ways can be introduced across levels within the classrooms, and through facilitated school visits to the museums.⁴

More publicly-owned spaces can be made available, and land planning agencies can be encouraged to consider public art as part of their land redevelopment plans. To create more spaces for artwork creation and presentation, unused public properties can be explored for interim art use like creation, production and presentation. Lifestyle events, especially those which include art in their offerings, can also serve as alternative presentation platforms for artists. With the global shift in focus towards digital transformation and engagement, Singapore has a mature environment that supports the growth of new media technologies and scientific infrastructure, and can be used to increase digital engagement, grow new audiences, and spark more collaborative new media art practices.

As more reputable foreign galleries are established, and arts precincts such as Gillman Barracks are created, Singapore is in a good position to develop a reputation as a key art centre in Southeast Asia and beyond. More curators and writers can be developed, to mediate and validate the qualities and values of artists and artworks and contribute to developing a national narrative on Singapore art that resonates with audiences. To strengthen Singapore's position as a visual arts city, it is important to raise Singapore's standing in art and enhance our global reputation. More can be done to showcase our artists at key international platforms, bringing our exhibitions to international museums and galleries, and presenting our artists and galleries at reputable art fairs. It is also important to consider the economic contributions of art from our commercial and art businesses, as they are integral to a sustainable art sector. More focus can be given towards developing the capabilities of these intermediaries in order for Singapore to develop a competitive art

market. Apart from their economic contributions, art galleries can also play an important role in identifying up and coming artists.

Threats

While audience numbers are growing steadily, getting people to attend visual arts events continues to be a challenge. There are many competing arts events in the cultural calendar, which make it challenging for the sector to grow new audiences. Although visual arts events provide a lower barrier of entry (generally non-ticketed), free programmes offer little to no cost recovery for their organisers. In the long run, this perpetuates an unwillingness to pay for visual arts events and affects the overall sustainability of the ecosystem.

Emerging art cities like Hong Kong, Jakarta and Bangkok are putting in place new infrastructure, institutions and high-signature platforms to brand themselves as art destinations. New regional contemporary art biennales are also emerging in Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok. These new developments will rival Singapore’s position of being the visual arts city of the region. In terms of art commerce, Singapore still lags behind more mature regional art markets like Beijing and Hong Kong, which continue to be dominant platforms in Asia.

► ENVISIONED STATE AND OUTCOMES

Singapore will be recognised as the visual arts city for Southeast Asian art globally. Local and foreign visitors enjoy visiting our art institutions and galleries and are excited about our year-round programming. Our ecosystem is robust, and we have an art industry that is supported by an appreciation for art and deep patronage among audiences, including Singaporeans. Our museums are key destinations for schools, and help us grow audiences. Attractive and meaningful public art can be found in many areas of our civic spaces, adding character to our visual landscape.



Strategic Thrust 01 Inspire Our People

Our art institutions and intermediaries will contribute significantly towards a sustainable ecosystem

Our art institutions and companies will play a key role in creating opportunities for our artists and helping us develop the professional capabilities of the sector. Our art institutions, which are the biggest and most well-resourced employers of artists, can develop training programmes that benefit the wider art sector. These programmes can focus on professional development in the areas of curation, exhibition management and other supporting roles. Growing critical art writing will be a key focus to nurture more art writers. To encourage more industry-led efforts in developing the sector, art companies will be encouraged to develop residency programmes which will be instrumental in grooming our next generation of prominent visual artists. This will support our artists in developing an oeuvre of artworks that will add to our distinctive art narrative.

- 2 2017, Population Survey on the Arts.
- 3 2017, Population Survey on the Arts. Main barriers of entry reported include family commitments, unfamiliarity with artists/performers and finding the arts difficult to understand.
- 4 MOE’s art curriculum from Primary 1 to Secondary 2 aims to develop visual literacy and art appreciation through three core objectives in seeing, expressing and appreciating, with Singapore art being taught at all levels.



Ensuring our National Collection stands in good stead for current and future audiences

To ensure that our National Collection continues to stand in good stead, an acquisition strategy must be developed to guide our National Institutions in building and enhancing the collection. This is important as both acquisition and presentation of the collection in exhibitions are key to strengthening Singapore's position as a thought leader in Southeast Asian art. The Gallery, SAM and STPI will collaborate to create shared services that can help them benefit from economies of scale. One area is in the acquisition and conservation of artworks, where research of new methods for the storage and conservation of art can be conducted. These institutions can then advise on possible new infrastructure, and enhance processes to ensure that standards of artwork care are continuously developed and upheld.

More support for development of contemporary art

Stronger support will be given to develop contemporary art. We need to invest more in helping SAM promote the appreciation of contemporary art, via commissioning, acquiring, and documenting the present for a future visual art narrative. SAM will also be given support to invest more into their education and outreach efforts. With the expected completion of SAM's new facility by 2021, the museum will be an important champion of contemporary art from Singapore and Southeast Asia.

More opportunities for artists to create and display their art

Bringing art to the public is an immediate and direct way of creating presentation opportunities

for artists and enhancing the visual aesthetics of a city. Public art will remain a key feature in major visual arts events such as Singapore Art Week and the Singapore Biennale. Along with public art, the interim use of unused public properties will be explored to create more short-term production and presentation spaces. Use of alternative presentation spaces – such as shophouses and vacant commercial units in malls – for art will also be encouraged.

●●● **Strategic Thrust 02 Connect Our Communities**

Grow research on visual arts audience segments and behaviours

More research will be commissioned to give the community a better understanding of our current visual arts audiences and non-audiences. It will be used to develop outreach initiatives to grow new audiences, and for arts groups and festival organisers to create meaningful programming and ensure that they reach their target segments.

Reach under-reached segments of audiences through public art and accessible programmes

Art will be brought to the people through art presentations and programmes near their homes. New public art trails will be created, and public agencies will work together to provide spaces for more community art displays. We will work with PA, tapping on their expertise in engaging the community to form meaningful engagements between artists and the wider public. To reach more audiences, artists and art groups will be encouraged to take up commissioning and presentation opportunities offered by lifestyle events in Singapore. Organisers of these events will also be encouraged to feature art as part of their offerings.

Heightening awareness of Singapore art in schools

As a longer-term strategy to nurture a more art-literate public, especially in Singapore art, NAC will work with Ministry of Education to heighten the awareness of key Singapore artists and artworks across all levels through engaging programmes, as well as teaching and learning resources, including digital resources. This will be in tandem with efforts to encourage all Singapore schools to participate in museum activities especially at the cohort level.

Encouraging digitisation of research, knowledge and content to create new entry points

Singapore's technology expertise can help to attract new audiences through digital engagement. For starters, the digitisation of our National Collection and key institution exhibitions will be completed, so as to create new entry points and increase accessibility. Technology and new media can also be used to encourage collaboration between artists and the technology sector.

Develop capabilities of art galleries and privately funded art intermediaries to cultivate patronage and grow new collectors

Cultural institutions such as STPI, which have established themselves as top-tier international galleries within the global art fair circuit, can work closely with art gallery associations to explore new ways of supporting art businesses, growing membership bases, and representing the interests of galleries in working with public agencies, media and stakeholders.

Through regular engagements, art galleries can be encouraged to adopt good business practices

to ensure that their commercial dealings are fair, and share ideas on how to meet the commercial sector's need for professionally-trained gallery managers. The growth of privately-funded intermediaries, such as private museums and collector-led art spaces will also be encouraged. These intermediaries can create opportunities for our artists and develop patronage through programmes and initiatives such as collectors' talks, workshops and presentations of private art collections.

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Strategic Thrust 03 Position Singapore Globally

Forge new partnerships to provide opportunities for Singapore artists to gain exposure and grow Singapore's reputation internationally

Partnerships with acclaimed international and regional residency platforms will be established to provide opportunities for more Singapore artists to gain international exposure. Our art companies will also receive support to organise conferences that will establish Singapore as a centre for visual arts discourse. Support for intermediaries such as art societies will be provided to help older artists create and present new artworks internationally.

Continue to increase Singapore's international standing in visual arts

Singapore will support our artists to present their work on international platforms. We are committed to showcasing Singapore artists at the Venice Biennale until its 2033 edition, and support will continue for artists who are invited to key Biennales and international contemporary art exhibitions. Our institutions will travel our exhibitions to international museums and galleries overseas, and art galleries will receive support to present Singapore artists



at reputable art fair platforms. To encourage greater appreciation for our cultural icons, our Cultural Medallion artists and notable artworks will be celebrated to highlight Singapore's unique art history and narrative. Our institutions will spearhead efforts to write, record and preserve our art historical narrative, to reinforce and share our identity and values globally.

► SUMMARY

This sectoral plan will guide efforts to position Singapore as a visual arts destination that has a vibrant art scene and market, one that is internationally recognised as a thought leader in Southeast Asian modern and contemporary art. Singaporeans and visitors will have opportunities to experience and be inspired by the visual arts in spaces where they work and live, produced by artists and art professionals who are supported to create quality art that engages and grows new audiences.

In summary, efforts to develop the visual arts sector will go towards:

- a Equipping our art institutions and companies to develop manpower capabilities for the sector;
- b Encouraging programming that increases the public's access to impactful art experiences; and
- c Creating meaningful opportunities to share our art and artists with international audiences.

CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT

With the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) Capability Development Fund of \$16.35 million, for 2012–2016, NAC expanded the scope of capability development initiatives which had, up to 2011, largely comprised scholarships and bursaries, training grants, music competitions and recognition platforms including the Cultural Medallion and Young Artist Awards. Previous capability development efforts had also focused primarily on art-making, i.e. artists and content creators (e.g. performers, directors).

New initiatives receiving support under ACSR sought to grow knowledge and skills beyond art-making, especially in areas where there were critical gaps (e.g. arts management, fund raising, technical production, arts education, curatorship). Both art-making and such management, production and ecosystem-development functions are necessary to enable the value chain of cultural content, from content creation, through to distribution and consumption. This ensures a thriving arts ecosystem.

At the time, the Pre-Employment Training (PET) landscape offered the most training at the diploma level. This was provided by the arts colleges – LASALLE College of the Arts and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts – and three polytechnics, with a few degree options offered in autonomous universities such as the National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and Singapore Management University (SMU). NAC worked to increase the number of Continuing Education and Training (CET) programmes and providers, in partnership with education institutions and arts organisations both in Singapore and overseas.

Such efforts were essential as Singapore’s arts and culture scene continued to mature. More training opportunities would ensure arts professionals had the resources to improve their skills, be equipped to move into related roles within the arts sector, or for others with non-arts-related skills to join the arts sector. In addition, funding support was reviewed to ensure that different ways of learning, initiated by both arts professionals and potential new entrants, could be supported. The new Capability Development Grant, launched in 2012 as part of the new grants framework, for example, also supports mentorship, apprenticeships and internships.

With ACSR support, the capability development work of NAC expanded to also include organisational capability development, leadership development for emerging and mid-career leaders, and manpower-related research. With ACSR support, there were 40 new CET programmes, attended by 10,000 people, between 2012 and 2016.

► ANALYSIS OF CURRENT STATE

Opportunities for education and training in the arts at both PET and CET levels in Singapore have increased since 2012. Examples include SMU’s Arts and Culture Management second major programme, new undergraduate programmes in arts education by Singapore University of Social Sciences, and a new Masters in Museum Studies and Curatorial Practices by NTU. With proactive facilitation from NAC and partnerships with international organisations, arts professionals also now have access to numerous opportunities for overseas exposure and exchanges in a variety



of areas (e.g. creative producing, leadership development¹, arts education, teaching artistry). Arts professionals have responded positively to the availability of such training platforms².

As freelancing is growing in Singapore and internationally, a tripartite workgroup comprising members from the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), National Trades Union Congress and the Singapore National Employers Federation was formed in 2017 to look into the needs of self-employed persons due to the growth of the gig or freelance economy across various sectors. There are now opportunities for the arts to ride on such a national movement to improve the employment conditions and retirement adequacy for arts workers. Guiding our work is NAC's Arts and Culture Employment Study (ACES) which has given us a better understanding of the employment conditions in the arts, paving the way for more proactive interventions by the government, arts companies and arts professionals. This is important work as ACES in 2016 estimated that 47% of those working in the arts work on a freelance basis, which presents various challenges.

Strengths

ACES in 2016 indicated that the arts workforce comprises highly educated people who are satisfied with their careers and passionate about contributing positively to society. Only 2% of arts workers surveyed intended to leave the sector in the next year, even though their median salaries are below the national median³. We have a strong pool of artists, many with international standing, and well-regarded cultural institutions. There is a base of Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) and training providers that provide training for skills at both pre-employment and continuing education levels.

Weaknesses

The skillsets required for a thriving arts ecosystem are diverse and wide-ranging. However, diversity (across art forms⁴ and occupational groups) in a comparatively small sector of approximately 20,425 people⁵ working in about 110 different occupations⁶, existing in a small market, poses significant challenges to the sustainability of PET and CET programmes. Opportunities for training across different areas can be uneven. While there are more training opportunities, the development pathways for some specific areas remain unclear

and pose challenges to the attraction, retention and development of talent.

With nearly half the sector comprising freelancers, there is a need to better equip and support them in sustaining a career in the gig economy, and to improve working conditions. In addition, the paucity of research on arts manpower generally poses challenges for policy- or programme-based interventions.

Opportunities

There is room for training institutions, cultural institutions and government bodies to work more closely. Emerging and mid-career leaders, such as recipients of NAC's scholarships, for example, should have opportunities to work with cultural institutions in advancing the Singapore arts scene and growing their careers. In addition, as freelancing becomes increasingly recognised as a legitimate mode of work, the arts sector can ride on the various initiatives launched at the national level, including the recommendations of the Tripartite Workgroup⁷, to develop more opportunities for arts professionals. As NAC's efforts to nurture and profile our arts leaders gradually gain traction, there are also opportunities to work towards positioning Singapore as a vital collaborative partner in arts and culture development and leadership both in the region and beyond.

Threats

Our society continues to face declining birth rates. Possible implications include falling enrolment that could result in the discontinuation of training programmes and fewer training opportunities. Another threat is technological disruption, which affects industries and jobs all over the world, including the arts sector.

A lack of empirical evidence and understanding of the value of an education in the arts limits the potential contribution of arts graduates to the wider economic sector, restricting employability. There is a lack of understanding around the transferability of skills across the arts and areas such as tourism, design and media, as well as how the arts nurture individuals with the right disposition and mind-set to cope in an increasingly complex world, and have the empathy and capabilities to manage and collaborate with people with diverse perspectives.

► ENVISIONED STATE AND OUTCOMES

The ACSR phase has enabled a more holistic framework for growing capabilities in the arts sector. In the long term, NAC hopes the arts landscape will be characterised by innovative and self-reliant individuals, and organisations that are resilient and resourceful in identifying and maximising growth opportunities in various situations.

By 2022, NAC envisions that the arts sector will grow in its ability to attract, retain and develop individuals who can contribute to the development of Singapore’s arts and culture. As the global environment and Singapore society change, arts workers will respond swiftly to these changes and to new opportunities through upskilling and exposure. NAC will ensure that there is a base of strong arts organisations that have good management and governance capabilities, are financially sound, and have good employment practices.

To achieve this, there needs to be a pipeline of talents who can champion artistic development and lead organisations. In addition, a robust body of research and empirical data will inform NAC’s work by deepening our understanding of labour issues in the arts, and inform our policies on curriculum and training. Such research will also enable NAC to advocate for the value of an education in the arts, including the value it brings to other sectors and domains in the form of transferable skillsets, and attributes to thrive in an increasingly uncertain world.

In support of NAC’s strategic thrusts and the desired outcomes above, we will focus on:

- a Establishing a better support framework for arts freelancers to improve their employment conditions, through initiatives such as a resource centre for arts freelancers;
- b Facilitating closer coordination and collaboration across PET and CET providers to:
 - i. Ensure the industry’s needs for talent and skillsets are met without duplication of resources;
 - ii. Build necessary skillsets that enable arts workers to sustain careers (e.g. financial and career planning, fundraising)

and tap on new opportunities (e.g. digital technology, engagement and facilitation skills);

- iii. Articulate development pathways and skills frameworks for priority areas;
- c Growing arts organisations which have strong management and governance capabilities, are financially sound and have good hiring practices;
- d Identifying opportunities for leaders to inspire their peers and galvanise the scene, to further their practice, grow in their international networks and exposure, and contribute to the larger Singapore arts and culture sector;
- e Developing a robust body of research in areas such as employment conditions, career outcomes and contributions of arts graduates, and sizing of priority sectors (e.g. artist-educators and arts instructors).

1 NAC piloted programmes such as Lead the Way (with British Council), International Society for Performing Arts (ISPA) Fellowship and the NAC Cultural Fellowship (with LASALLE College of the Arts).
 2 2016, Arts and Culture Employment Study. 80% of the respondents intended to pursue training in the next 12 months.
 3 The media gross annual income for arts workers surveyed is \$42,000. This is below the national median gross annual income of \$47,388 (source: ACES in 2016 and MOM).
 4 Within each art form, there are genres and sub-genres that can have very different characteristics and needs. This is compounded by Singapore’s multicultural and multilingual make-up.
 5 2017, Singapore Cultural Statistics. This figure includes total employment for the Literary, Performing and Visual Arts only.
 6 Based on NAC’s scan of the occupations within the arts sector and does not account for specialisations within each occupation.
 7 <https://www.mom.gov.sg/~media/mom/documents/press-releases/2018/0222-tripartite-workgroup-report-on-self-employed-persons.pdf>





► **SUMMARY**

In summary, NAC's capability development efforts will go towards:

- a Establishing a better support framework for arts freelancers;
- b Facilitating closer coordination and collaboration across PET and CET providers to address industry's skill-needs across both practice and non-practice-based areas;
- c Growing arts organisations which are well managed and financially sustainable;
- d Leadership development; and
- e Building robust research on arts manpower.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The following section outlines NAC's Community Engagement Plan from 2018 to 2022 in connecting communities with shared experiences towards making the arts an integral part of Singaporeans' lives. We seek to deepen the social value of the arts in bridging Singapore's diverse communities, strengthening social networks and fostering positive relationships.

Under the Renaissance City Plans (RCP) in the 2000s, NAC's arts outreach took a broad-based approach in bringing the arts to the community. Priority was given to strengthening arts education in mainstream schools and community outreach programmes. For instance, District Arts Festivals were established islandwide, through partnerships with People's Association (PA) and the Community Development Councils¹.

As society evolved over time², a broad-based approach to community outreach was adopted in the final phase of RCP. RCP III saw a shift from a "one size fits all" approach to a demographic-specific approach, which included initiatives such as a Silver Arts Programme for seniors, and Youth Engagement through the Arts Programme.

With the formalising of the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) in 2012, community engagement was one of the pillars demonstrating the social value of the arts in raising the quality of life of Singaporeans, and that the arts can bring people together and forge a sense of cultural pride and identity. NAC, as the champion agency, undertook the task of "bringing the arts and culture

to everyone, everywhere, everyday", with five key strategies:

- a Empowering individuals for a culture of active arts participation in the community
- b Seeding key community nodes, spaces and multipliers
- c Deepening engagement and creating new demand for the arts as a lifestyle
- d Integrating the arts in the social sector
- e Building capacity of practitioners in community arts

¹ Renaissance City Plan III, p. 6

² NAC had taken into account findings from a MICA-commissioned study by Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) on "People, Private and Public Sectors" to increase Singaporeans' exposure to arts and culture by bringing it to the heartlands, leveraging existing facilities within community, and consider a more inclusive approach by enhancing arts access for those from low-income families and persons with special needs.



► ANALYSIS OF CURRENT STATE

2012–2017: Five Years of ACSR Implementation

In the five years since the initiation of ACSR, NAC has encouraged arts engagement and participation through the strategies outlined above and laid the foundation in two key ways: (i) by geographical spread and (ii) by demographic reach. These efforts have provided opportunities for communities such as families and children, youths, and seniors – including the under-reached communities within these demographic groups – to have shared experiences in the arts through sustained activities and events with mass outreach. This has encouraged a shift from passive attendance to active participation in the arts.

Since 2012, NAC has also collaborated with like-minded partners like PA and National Library Board (NLB), and within the social service sector, to work with arts practitioners and bring the arts to the wider community.

Strengths

Overall, there are more touchpoints island-wide to bring the arts and culture to diverse communities. NAC oversees place-making efforts through arts programming which take into account the cultural heritage, population demographics and business focus in key precincts. Efforts have to-date been concentrated in Kampong Glam and the Civic District. In the Civic District which is Singapore's premier cultural destination, collaborations are with key stakeholders including Esplanade, National Gallery Singapore, Asian Civilisations Museum and Arts House Limited, Urban Redevelopment Authority, and National Parks Board. Outdoor spaces have seen more footfall due to major events such as the Light to Night Festival, the Civic District Outdoor Festival, as well as regular arts and culture programming and precinct marketing year-round.

To date, NAC has also established 17 arts and culture nodes across the island, increasing the number of arts programmes year-round for Singaporeans to encounter the arts where they live and work. In addition, NAC has taken a targeted approach in engaging specific demographic segments. Besides the nodes and our Arts in Your Neighbourhood (AYN) series, the NAC also

organises national platforms such as Silver Arts for seniors and Noise Singapore for youth. NAC has also established strong partnerships with social service organisations. These partnerships have broadened NAC's reach in bringing the arts to diverse audiences in different social settings, and have provided artists access to new spaces and communities.

Over the past five years, NAC has carried out various studies on community spaces to learn how the inclusion of arts in these spaces can shape communities and foster stronger networks. For example, NAC completed the "Arts for Ageing Well" project, a two-year research study exploring arts engagement and holistic well-being among current and future seniors in Singapore. These studies have helped NAC refine its strategies and programmes to better serve the needs of specific demographics. Through such studies and NAC-initiated annual platforms such as the Arts in Eldercare Seminar and Arts & Disability Forum, there is an increased mindshare on the social value of the arts. More stakeholders from the arts and non-arts sectors are actively contributing to the arts in a meaningful way. NAC leverages these research and advocacy efforts to build regional and international networks, profiling and exchanging good practices in community arts and engagement.

Weaknesses

While we have observed that artists have increasingly chosen to work with more diverse communities, the community arts practice is still at a nascent stage and more Singaporean artists need to participate. There is also still room to develop the practice of facilitating creative expressions from within communities, and getting the community involved as co-creators and co-producers of programmes that forge a deeper sense of appreciation for the arts. We will continue building on capability development efforts, as well as supporting artists and ground-up organisations such as Superhero Me and ArtsWok Collaborative to develop capacity for the arts sector to engage and co-create with communities.

Opportunities

We note that Singapore's population is ageing rapidly, with 1 in 4 Singaporeans who will be 65 years and older by 2030 (up from 1 in 5

Singaporeans aged 65 and above in 2015)³. In addition, 2 in 5 attendees attending arts events are youths, indicating strong interest within the youth demographic⁴. There is room to continue building on the platforms for specific demographics to strengthen partnerships and innovate relevant content that will reach out to new audiences within these segments.

While land remains scarce in Singapore, space-owners have articulated their intent to ensure spaces are well-utilised by communities. NAC’s network of Arts and Culture Nodes and regular platforms such as AYN, for example, can consider the unique identity of each focus town area in the programming. NAC can strengthen our collaborations with community partners and volunteers within these various locations. This will help to instil a stronger sense of belonging and ownership to these spaces. More can also be done to increase accessibility, and engage under-reached communities as part of the mainstream more meaningfully.

Threats

In the past year, research has shown that more can be done to facilitate mixing among people of different social backgrounds⁵. Based on the study, there is a sense that a limited social network may restrict one’s experiences and create narrow perceptions in considering only one’s interests. The NAC recognises that the arts can be an inclusive social platform to bring diverse communities together. The arts provide opportunities to strengthen social capital by fostering interactions across social divides. The arts articulate our identity through space and time, and provides platforms for shared social experiences, and, in collaboration with the arts community, can mitigate some outcomes as a result of these social divides.

► ENVISIONED STATE OF COMMUNITY ARTS

By 2022, NAC envisions that:

- a** The community arts sector will enable shared experiences across diverse communities in and through the arts. With greater inclusivity, there will be broader and deeper engagement

with the arts and increased understanding across communities.

- b** The community arts sector will be a viable channel for artists to expand their practice beyond mainstream performance venues; instead, working in and alongside communities will create new opportunities for their artistic development, and employment..
- c** Singapore will contribute to thought leadership in the region by establishing benchmarks and a robust body of research in community arts practices. Leveraging existing annual platforms, NAC will aggregate national and regional practices to demonstrate best practices in working with specific demographics, communities and spaces.

► STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

NAC will focus on the following strategic thrusts to be implemented through new initiatives and enhancing existing schemes:

- a** **Develop capabilities of artists, intermediaries and community partners in engaging communities**

NAC has embarked on several capability development initiatives for artists and community stakeholders in the past five years, including a learning journey for node partners to better understand quality arts programming, and basic workshops for artists in engaging different communities. These include courses such as “Introduction to the Social Service Sector”, in partnership with Social Service Institute, to equip artists with fundamental knowledge of how the social service sector operates. NAC will

3 2017, National Council of Social Services’ Understanding the Quality of Life of Seniors
 4 2017. Population Survey on the Arts. Those between ages 15-24 made up 19% of arts attendees, and those between ages 24-34 made up 20% of arts attendees.
 5 NAC had taken into account findings from an Institute of Policy Studies study on “A Study on Social Capital in Singapore, supported by MCCY, that suggests that government agencies and community leaders can do more to create structure and programmes that encourage community building.



develop a capability development framework in consultation with practitioners and provide developmental opportunities for artists at various stages of their practice. This can be done through mentorships and residencies that provide practicum, time and space for practitioners to advance their practice in the community arts field; and modular workshops focused on skills for community engagement in the arts (e.g. facilitation, evaluation).

NAC will also cultivate community partners and stakeholders as intermediaries and equip them to support and collaborate with the arts sector to deliver quality arts programmes. While the needs for the spectrum of community partners are diverse, NAC will prioritise two areas of development: (i) planning and organising arts programmes with and for the identified community, and (ii) expanding art-form and sector knowledge. NAC will support community partners in specific areas that will catalyse their independence and increase their capacity to implement arts activities such as volunteer management, evaluation and networking. NAC will develop resources for stakeholders in the community arts landscape, to build an ecosystem of self-help and self-evaluation in the field of arts engagement.

b Strengthen advocacy platforms in community arts engagement and conduct studies to document the social impact of the arts

With the establishment of advocacy platforms such as the Arts in Eldercare Seminar and the Arts & Disability Forum, NAC has created a space for community partners and artists to gather, network and exchange ideas every year. These platforms have grown in popularity, with a year-on-year increase in attendance. In 2018, NAC partnered with Very Special Arts (Singapore) to co-organise the Arts & Disability International Conference, marking the first time NAC has partnered with a social service organisation to organise such a platform. This partnership reflects greater ground leadership and

commitment. NAC will strengthen these platforms, working with intermediaries and identifying thought leaders and inspirational speakers both locally and internationally to profile evidence-based programmes and good practices. In positioning and growing the role of these platforms to advance the conversations in Singapore and the region, the social value of the arts in bringing communities together will be elevated in and beyond Singapore.

c Sustain efforts in activating spaces to increase touchpoints for communities to encounter the arts

NAC has established 17 nodes across Singapore in partnership with PA, NLB, SAFRA and corporate partners. In the years ahead, NAC hopes to grow a network of 22 nodes. We will go beyond current efforts to sustain existing nodes by giving them support in creating distinct identities for each node space and implement inclusive arts programmes for their communities.

NAC will look beyond neighbourhoods to work with the National Youth Council (NYC) in identifying youth-centric touchpoints to activate more spaces via partnerships and programmes for youths. In the Civic District, NAC will continue to forge collaborations among various public and private sector stakeholders in enhancing the sense of place as well as connections between the people and shared spaces through a diversity of arts and cultural experiences.

d Develop programmes with relevant and accessible content that encourage more inclusive participation in the arts and build a sense of identity and belonging

Building on programmes such as AYN, Noise Singapore and Silver Arts, NAC will work alongside the arts sector to strengthen programming. For example, under AYN, NAC will highlight focus town areas in the two seasons more prominently, and actively commission artists and arts groups to develop

arts programmes that foster a sense of belonging and attachment. With its focus on family-friendly and interactive programming, AYN must will provide opportunities for diverse communities to gather and mingle, whether as arts audiences, participants or volunteers. NAC will also look at strengthening partnerships with space owners, community partners and local ground partners such as town councils and resident committees, to better inform programming needs and seed greater ownership in the longer term.

NAC will strengthen partnerships with the social service and healthcare sectors, to innovate and implement arts programmes that resonate with the identified demographics, e.g. seniors in community care settings, persons with disabilities and vulnerable children and youth. Programmes for these under-reached communities will focus on wellness and fostering social connections, and will complement broad-based engagement strategies that ensure communities with diverse backgrounds and abilities have access to the arts. These partnerships will be supported by research and documentation which capture useful insights into programme design. These insights will be substantiated by evidence, and shared among peers in the social service sector for relevant follow-up action.

► SUMMARY

The Community Engagement Plan leverages the value of the arts to connect our diverse communities, create vibrancy in shared spaces and cultivate social capital. For the individual, the arts can enable creative expression that reflects our identity, improve our sense of well-being and strengthen social connectivity. These plans will foster a more creative, inclusive and caring society.

Our plans in the next five years will focus on:

- a Developing capabilities of key players in the community arts landscape to better engage communities;
- b Strengthening advocacy around community arts engagement practices through research and documentation, and profiling of local and regional efforts in this field;
- c Sustaining existing efforts in activating more spaces as touchpoints for communities to encounter the arts; and
- d Developing relevant, accessible and inclusive programmes that build a sense of belonging to spaces and communities.



EDUCATION

The Pre-Tertiary Education Masterplan (2012) for arts and culture submitted under the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) was aimed at providing our young with opportunities for wider exposure to the arts through quality instruction in the core curriculum, co-curricular activities (CCAs) and enrichment programmes. These efforts complemented pre-existing initiatives, such as the longstanding NAC Arts Education Programme funded by Tote Board since 1993.

The following desired outcomes of arts education by 2025 under the ACSR were articulated:

- a** By the time they complete secondary school, every child will have:
 - i. Exposure to arts programmes across all five art forms (i.e. visual arts, literary arts, dance, theatre and music)
 - ii. Attended a performance or exhibition in a professional arts venue
 - iii. A learning experience in school with a Singapore artist or arts group
- b** To enable the delivery of quality arts education to every child:
 - i. Every teaching artist and arts instructor will be trained not only in the art form but the basics of teaching and learning
 - ii. Every arts educator (i.e. arts teacher in schools) will have the opportunity to collaborate with a Singapore artist, arts group or arts institution, to facilitate the exchange of ideas and practices across the education and arts sector

- iii. Every school will be committed to develop a holistic and integrated arts education programme

Research has found that early exposure to the arts is important as it has an impact on the development of all-rounded individuals. In addition, the Population Survey on the Arts indicates that childhood engagement with the arts leads to a positive impact on arts attendance, participation and interest levels in the arts in the future¹. The 2016 Arts and Culture Employment Survey also showed that 92% of arts workers were involved in arts activities before starting work in the arts and 69% were involved in an arts-related co-curricular or extracurricular activity in school.

Our Education Plan from 2018 to 2022 builds on the outcomes achieved during ACSR and responds to critical developments in the education and arts landscape as outlined below.

► ANALYSIS OF CURRENT STATE

Since 2012, there has been a greater awareness of the importance of the arts, and the need to improve the quality of arts experiences for students in the formal mainstream curriculum. To ensure a coordinated approach, the Ministry of Education (MOE) conducted a re-organisation to bring all curricula and co-curricular units in the Visual and Performing Art forms (Art, Music, Theatre, Dance) under the ambit of the Arts Education Branch in 2011. To support the professional development of Visual Art and Music teachers, the MOE-Singapore Teachers Academy for the Arts was set up in 2012 to support quality Art and Music instruction in the formal curriculum. In 2017, the Programme for Active Learning was

fully rolled out to all primary schools and the revised Visual Art syllabus was launched. Work in the Special Education (SPED) and preschool sectors has been gaining traction, with growing interest in how the arts can provide positive, inclusive experiences and enhance students' skills.

Strengths

Overall, there has been an increase in arts education programmes and NAC support provided to preschools, SPED and mainstream schools. This includes providing greater opportunities for partnerships with Singapore artists, and enabling students to have deeper engagement in and through the arts. NAC has also grown efforts to ensure quality of instruction through various tiered professional development initiatives for artists and arts instructors in partnership with key institutions². To date, about 85% of the artists in NAC's database³ have attained basic pedagogical qualifications through these courses. Beyond the formal school curriculum, there has been growth in regular family programmes that cater to children, such as those run by our key cultural institutions.

Weaknesses

There is limited local research on the impact of arts education and early exposure to the arts. Such research would enable better informed policy and programme design, and contribute to curriculum and pedagogy developments in the mainstream and tertiary sectors. At present, there is also no structured framework outlining a professional developmental pathway for arts instructors and teaching artists, and there is a shortage of trained artists to address the needs of the preschool and SPED sectors. There is also a limited number of master teaching artists who are able to provide leadership and mentorship for the broader sector, or engage in research and develop signature pedagogies. Teaching artists and arts instructors need to develop deeper knowledge and skills to design and implement programmes and curricula that achieve arts educational goals and outcomes within and out of schools.

Opportunities

With the increased focus on the preschool sector⁴, there is room to provide more early exposure to the arts by working with key partners. There

is, however, an immediate need to train artists and preschool educators to support this growth. Similarly, efforts in the SPED schools have been growing⁵ and there are opportunities to support platforms that encourage greater inclusivity. There is also room to integrate the arts into various learning areas⁶ and for NAC to strengthen collaborations with schools interested in growing their arts programmes through the Applied Learning Programme and Learning for Life Programme.

Threats

Several factors may impact the arts education ecosystem. The declining birth rate has resulted in the merger of schools with impending changes at the tertiary sector. Smaller student populations in schools could result in insufficient resources to support arts education programmes. Another challenge is that our schools are faced with increasingly crowded time-tables with many competing demands which could result in the arts being given less priority.

- 1 2017, Population Survey on the Arts. Those who took part in arts and cultural activities during their childhood had a higher level of attendance (59% vs 54%), participation (25% vs 22%) and interest (41% vs 37%) in the arts than those who did not.
- 2 Examples include NIE International, Seed Institute and Social Service Institute (SSI).
- 3 ~1200 of the ~1400 artists (across mainstream, SPED and preschool) in the NAC database have been trained.
- 4 At the 2017 National Day Rally, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced that 40,000 new preschool places would be added by 2022, and a new National Institute of Early Childhood Development (NIEC) would be set up.
- 5 For example, in 2018, SPED schools have been invited to participate in the Singapore Youth Festival (SYF) together with mainstream schools.
- 6 From 2013-2017, NAC piloted the Teaching through the Arts Programme (TTAP), working with primary school math and science teachers to use the arts as a pedagogical tool. The pilot phase has provided some insights on how such pedagogies could be further developed.



► ENVISIONED STATE AND OUTCOMES

Arts exposure at an early age is important. Equitable access to well-designed and facilitated arts education experiences supports the holistic development of children, seeds the development of future audiences and increases social commons. An education in and through the arts also helps students appreciate other cultures and develop a sense of national pride.

By 2022, NAC envisions that the arts education sector will be a professional sector, with a sustainable base of artist-educators who have attained minimum qualifications in both their art form practice and pedagogy. There will also be a pool of master teaching artists who will be able to provide leadership in arts education through conducting research and providing mentorship and training. Our cultural institutions, national companies and major companies will dedicate resources to providing engaging educational experiences in support of audience development. Arts educators within the formal school system will also have the avenues to deepen their practice in the various art forms.

NAC also believes that deeper research is needed so that we can develop more evidence-based policies in arts education. We will work with partners to explore the impact of early exposure to the arts and signature pedagogies in an arts-enhanced education to influence future programmes. This will also position us to contribute to global thought leadership.

Finally, to support the holistic development of the child while fostering an appreciation of other cultures and developing a sense of national pride, every child and school will have access to quality learning experiences with a Singapore artist or arts group.

To realise the vision for Arts Education and in support of our strategic priorities, there will be a focus on the following areas:

- a** Developing a professional sector to support quality instruction in and through the arts;
- b** Growing research and contributing to thought leadership;
- c** Seeking strategic intervention at the policy and curriculum level to increase access to quality experiences in and through the arts;

- d** Deepening engagement with schools and nurturing distinctive schools in the arts⁷; and
- e** Supporting positive first experiences in the early childhood sector.

a Developing a professional sector to support quality instruction in and through the arts

NAC will like to develop a more structured plan to professionalise the arts education sector (comprising teaching artists and arts instructors who work across different contexts and domains), which may include a skills or competency framework and articulation of a professional development pathway. This will require us to examine the sector's manpower needs closely, and conduct research on skills and development needs. Concurrently, NAC hopes to continue working with both local and overseas partners to provide training opportunities, and to also address the needs of specific areas, such as in the preschool and SPED sectors. There is also a need to develop the facilitation and audience engagement skills of artists (an example is the concept of Teaching Artistry⁸) and their ability to work both in schools and outside schools. One example is in the design and implementation of programmes, and documenting successful audience development approaches.

Finally, efforts to support quality arts instruction must continue to include support for arts educators within schools to deepen their own creative practices. NAC will strengthen existing collaborations with MOE and work with new partners such as the newly formed National Institute of Early Childhood Development (NIEC) to support the professional development, especially of preschool teachers in the arts through Pre-Employment Training and Continuing Education and Training efforts.

b Growing research and contributing to thought leadership

NAC will embark on research and documentation projects with partners to better

understand the impact of early experiences in the arts on children, and document the pedagogies of an aesthetic education⁹ in the Singapore context. To augment this effort, NAC will convene a roundtable for arts education that could include MOE, educational institutions such as School of the Arts, the education arms of key cultural institutions and master teaching artists. The roundtable will support future advocacy efforts for the arts, develop signature pedagogies, conduct research, and support the development of thought leaders in arts pedagogy, both locally and internationally. The roundtable could also contribute to or lead efforts to articulate a professional development plan.

c Seeking strategic intervention at the policy/curriculum level to increase access to quality experiences in and through the arts

NAC will continue to work closely with MOE to augment the opportunities available for students to engage with the arts as part of their studies, co-curricular activities and enrichment programmes, and to develop interest in the traditional arts from a young age. A more holistic and aligned approach will be taken in providing all students with access to quality experiences in and through the arts. NAC and MOE are already collaborating with key cultural institutions to provide schools the opportunity to participate in specially-designed programmes at museums and performing arts centres that offer students authentic experiences linked to their school curriculum.

We will also continue our work with MOE to incorporate the arts into learning areas that extend the main arts curricula, looking especially at Character and Citizenship Education and deeper learning about our multicultural heritage. There is also potential to explore how the arts can be further used to enhance the school experience for students with disabilities.

Another area for close collaboration is arts programming for key arts education platforms such as Singapore Youth Festival and the biennial Arts Education Conference to increase the reach of Singapore arts content and artists.

NAC will also support the development of digital resources that can be made available on MOE’s online platforms, such as the Student Learning Space. This will help build greater awareness of Singapore artists.

d Deepening engagement with schools and nurturing distinctive schools in the arts

While there are many schemes from NAC that support arts programmes in schools today, the programmes are largely ad-hoc and may not be part of a longer-term vision for how the arts can play a more integral role in schools. NAC will deepen engagement by brokering strong and sustained artist-school partnerships. In line with this, customised support will also be provided to schools that have indicated a niche area in the arts so that they can serve as role-models for others across the mainstream, special education and early childhood sectors. NAC envisions that these distinctive schools are characterised by a holistic and integrated approach to incorporating the arts across curricular and co-curricular domains, or by distinctive arts programmes that deepen student engagement in and through the arts.

7 Schools that have a holistic and integrated approach to incorporating the arts across curricular/co-curricular domains, and may offer distinctive arts programmes that deepen student engagement in and through the arts.

8 According to a definition from USA-based Dr Eric Booth (eminent teaching artist, scholar, actor), a Teaching Artist is a practicing professional artist with the complementary skills, curiosities, and habits of mind of an educator, who can effectively engage a wide range of people in learning experiences in, through and about the arts. See <http://ericbooth.net/the-history-of-teaching-artistry/>

9 The term ‘aesthetic education’ is borrowed from the late Maxine Greene, eminent philosopher at Teachers College, Columbia University, who espoused that aesthetic literacy (developing the capacity to perceive and attend) and robust imagining are keys to the flourishing of learning and democracy.



e Supporting positive first experiences in the early childhood sector

Working with partners in the early childhood sector, we will develop teaching resources to complement the Nurturing Early Learners Framework, share best practices of integrating the arts into early childhood learning with preschools through online resources, Communities of Practice, and learning journeys; look into facilitating the exchange of ideas and practices between preschool teachers and artists; and support the training and development of artists who wish to conduct programmes in the early childhood sector.

► SUMMARY

In summary, the Education Plan will focus on:

- a** Developing a professional sector to improve the quality of instruction;
- b** Building a robust body of research in the area of arts education, with a long-term view to position Singapore as a thought leader in the region;
- c** Strategic intervention at the systems and policy level to increase access to quality arts experiences;
- d** Deepening engagement by nurturing distinctive schools in the arts through sustained artist-school partnerships; and
- e** Working with key partners in the early childhood sector to expand the reach of best practices in the arts.

RESEARCH

Research studies are critical to provide robust empirical evidence regarding Singapore’s arts and cultural landscape for policy and programme development. To facilitate the use of these findings, the NAC Research unit also contributes to building research and data analytics capabilities for the Council and the arts and culture sector. The potential exists for us to further optimise big data, and expand research and documentation in artistic practices and processes, as well as in the social impact of the arts.

► ANALYSIS OF CURRENT STATE

Strengths

NAC seeks to ensure empirical evidence supports the development of our policies and strategies. Industry data from ticketing agents, performing arts centres and other sources, for example, are regularly compiled to glean insights. Existing studies, including the Population Survey on the Arts, Singapore Cultural Statistics and the Arts and Culture Employment Study (ACES), enable us to evaluate the impact the arts have on Singaporeans, and the state of the sector.

Weaknesses

Assessment of a sector’s health and outlook depends on the availability of data. While there is data on the arts and cultural sector, the scope of this information may cover professionals, programmes and activities which have little to do with the primary concerns of the arts sector because of how broadly the arts can be defined. In addition, due to the small size of the

sector and the diversity within it, insights may not be as useful to the individual artist or company as they are not representative of their specific interests. The effective application of research findings also requires stronger capabilities in data analytics and data visualisation on the part of the arts community and policy officers.

Opportunities

There are opportunities for NAC to collaborate with the cultural institutions and national companies – Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay, Arts House Limited, the Singapore Symphonia Company Limited and the Singapore Chinese Orchestra – to undertake audience research. There is also growing interest, both locally and internationally, in the wealth of knowledge and experience in artistic practice and processes held by our Singapore artists. Much of this has yet to be documented comprehensively. This is important work to recognise the achievements of our Singapore artists, as well as to provide the basis for further artistic growth and innovation. In addition, new areas of arts and culture research around social impact and how technology can be integrated into art-making provide added impetus for non-arts agencies and institutions to explore collaborations with our sector.

Threats

Due to quickly evolving consumption habits and trends, the time lag between the start of research studies and the production of findings may affect the relevance of insights and NAC’s ability to respond effectively.



► ENVISIONED STATE AND OUTCOMES

By 2022, NAC envisions a research landscape that produces robust data and international benchmarks to inform policy-making and programme review, as well as demonstrate the impact of the arts. Research interests will be furthered by partnerships that feed into a larger research network enabling the sharing of data and insights. Arts research will expand from quantitative data collection to new areas comprising qualitative and behavioural studies. The arts sector will have adequate statistical knowledge to appreciate and interpret data, and to conduct their own research and documentation projects. Links between academics and practitioners, and between NAC and other public agencies, will be strengthened towards producing research that is relevant to the cultural sector and across government.

Such efforts should result in the availability of more evidence-based resources to inform programme review, audience development strategies, capability development initiatives and how we evaluate success in the arts sector, as well as support arts advocacy when engaging potential funders and partners, and the wider public. Documentation of the work of our Singapore artists will also be a source of national pride, as the research is shared internationally, and positions our Singapore practitioners on the global stage. In addition, such research material will also help our artists to more deeply reflect on their own practice, potentially advancing innovation in the creation of uniquely Singapore content or new practices in arts education and community arts.

To grow the quantity, quality and relevance of research, these following shifts will be made:

Working Closer with Industry Partners to Drive a National Arts Research Agenda

To strengthen the research ecosystem for arts and culture, NAC will work more closely with the cultural institutions, universities, and arts colleges on research projects relevant to the sector. These include research into artistic processes, how the arts can contribute to well-being, health and

personal development, as well as behavioural insights to how different profiles of audiences engage with the arts. Another area of interest is how technology can contribute to the creation, presentation and promotion of the arts. Potential partnerships with agencies beyond the arts sector will be explored as well.

Strengthening Capabilities and Collaborations Within the Arts Research Ecosystem

Enlarging the body of arts and cultural research will require NAC to cultivate deeper interest in research among academics and practitioners, and foster collaboration. NAC intends to build on its current research portal, for example, to increase awareness of and access to existing research studies and research resources both in Singapore and from around the world. NAC will also expand its arts and culture research symposium launched in 2017, to enable researchers from a range of disciplines and arts practitioners to network, generate new research ideas, and explore new methods of documenting and studying arts and culture practices. We will also take the lead in commissioning academic-practitioner research projects to tap the specific knowledge and skills of both groups. In addition, NAC will actively engage arts companies with deep expertise in specific art form practices, to embark on documentation and research, either independently if they have the capability, or in partnership with external research specialists. Over time, we envision the emergence of arts intermediaries dedicated to arts and culture research and strategy consulting as their core practice or work.

Translating Research to Digestible and Actionable Items

As part of engaging the wider arts community and advocating arts and culture research, NAC will work towards producing reports, infographics and dashboards that are accessible to all. This will help the industry apply research findings more effectively. To encourage more data-driven strategies

being developed by the sector, NAC will customise available data for different stakeholders, and tap on specific platforms which allow researchers/academics and artists/arts groups to share ideas, so that research output can be better translated into action. We will also explore how more granular data can be provided to the arts community and interested members of the public to improve research resources.

Articulating Priority Areas

The following considerations were used to identify NAC's research priorities for the next five years in alignment with our strategic thrusts:

- a Measuring the impact of the arts
- b Understanding what excellence means in the arts sector
- c Assessing the adequacy of infrastructural, human and organisational assets needed to drive the development of our arts scene

Strategic Thrust 01 Inspire Our People

NAC will expand on existing ways of articulating the value of the arts through a deeper understanding of measurements of success. This will cover art form-specific attributes of excellence, alternative indicators for funding, effectiveness of arts education and community arts efforts, and the impact and value of arts exposure.

Sectoral plans to develop a body of distinctive content that resonates with Singaporeans will require artistic content and practice to be properly documented and archived, digitally or otherwise. Practice-based research is also needed to inform understanding and encourage further innovation. In a crowded international market of arts and culture offerings, it is essential for Singapore to be able to articulate who we are in a way that celebrates our multiculturalism and diversity as a unique value proposition to both local and

international audiences. Research can also inform how technology can be optimised for art-making.

Research should also build on ACES to help NAC better understand labour supply in the sector, capability gaps, career opportunities, and the needs and aspirations of the arts ecosystem. This will support NAC's Capability Development Plan for the training of arts professionals, especially in terms of developing the skills required to meet future challenges, and ensuring the financial sustainability of key arts organisations, businesses and the overall industry.

NAC will work with partners such as the National Heritage Board, the cultural institutions and land agencies, as well as community organisations to understand the role and effectiveness of place-making. These findings will inform NAC's community engagement and infrastructure planning, including our framework for arts spaces.

Strategic Thrust 02 Connect Our Communities

Strategies need to be developed to cultivate new audiences. This will be guided by data on the evolving needs and interest of specific audience segments. New data sources such as big data and in-depth ethnographic studies to understand new consumption patterns, drivers and impact will provide deeper understanding for audience development plans in each art form. Increasingly, engagement strategies for the arts need to also consider new research questions, such as how digital methods of arts engagement complement the live experience, as well as volunteerism in the arts. Findings from these research areas are key for NAC's art form sectoral plans, Capability Development Plan, as well as the Community Engagement Plan which calls for research on how the arts sector can better tap on volunteers as another resource to not only supplement the manpower needs of the sector, but also groom new advocates and supporters of the arts.

The role of the arts in community bonding will be better understood through studies on the impact of arts activities on identity, social trust, integration of disadvantaged segments, and other whole-



of-government outcomes. At the individual level, studies on how the arts impact individuals in terms of wellness and personal fulfilment, personal attributes such as confidence, creativity, etc. will also inform our efforts in arts advocacy.



Strategic Thrust 03 Position Singapore Globally

Research into our Singapore voice and identity in the field of the arts needs to continue, especially around intercultural practice. We will also conduct research on international perceptions of Singapore arts and artists to inform our approach to internationalisation, such as the type of content to promote to different markets. In addition, understanding the role that the arts play in the lives of cities is important. There is potential for Singapore to establish itself as a leading liveable city celebrated for its vibrant culture.

Singapore's geographical position presents opportunities for us to work with our neighbours on cultural exchanges as part of relationship-building. Research to better understand and articulate Singapore's role in Southeast Asia will be beneficial.

► SUMMARY

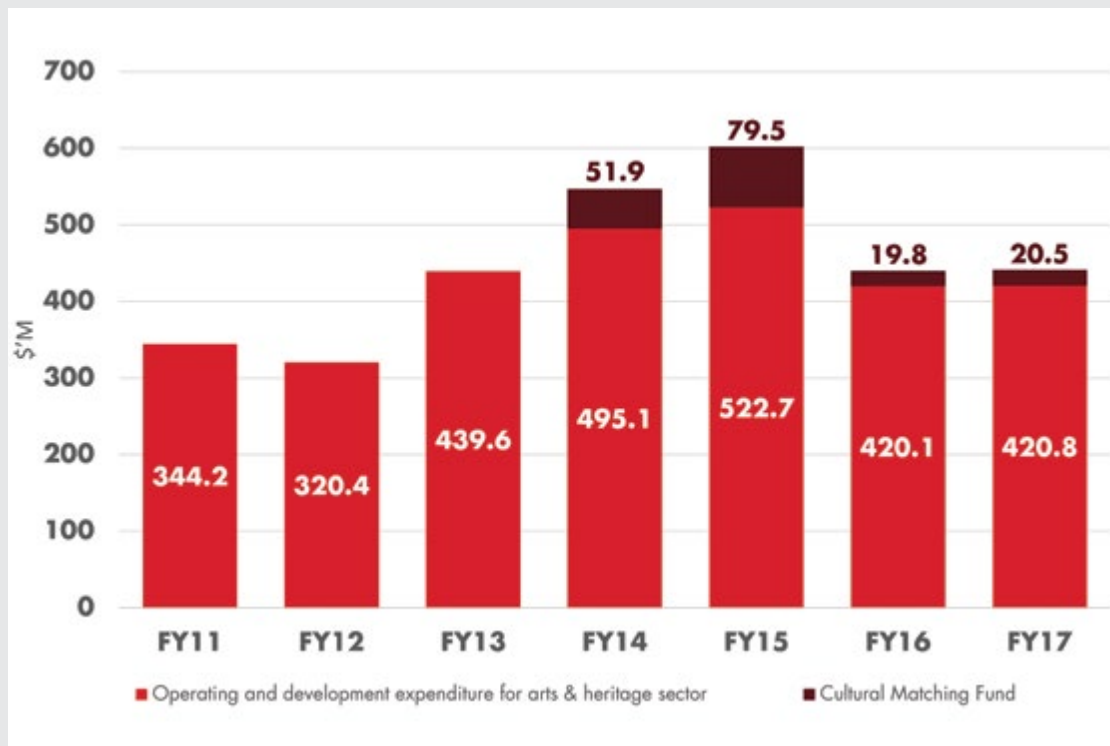
Effective policy-making and programme development depends on timely and insightful analysis of data. The Research plan will:

- a Support more evidence-based evaluation of policies and programmes,
- b Broaden the circle of academics and practitioners interested in arts research, and
- c Cultivate a data- and research-savvy arts community.

These will reinforce the foundations of an arts community that will inspire and connect Singaporeans, and place Singapore on the international stage.

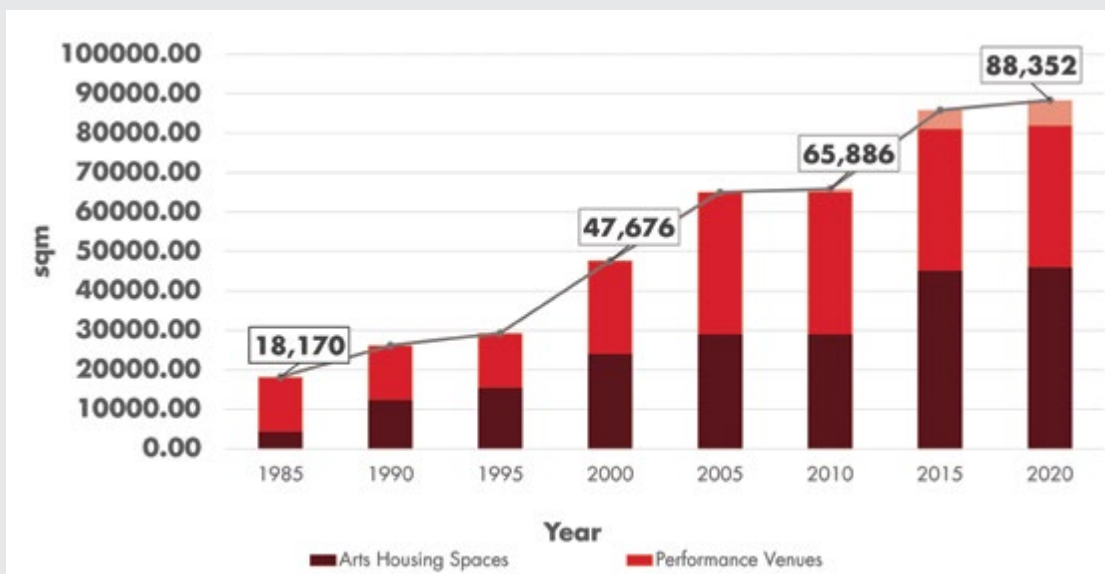
KEY DATA TRENDS

1 Government funding to the arts & heritage has increased with ACSR from 2013



Note: The government funding from FY14-15 was higher as it included spend on several key development projects, such as the refurbishment of the Victoria Theatre & Victoria Concert Hall, Asian Civilisations Museum, National Museum Singapore, Esplanade's Annexe Studio and PIP'S PLAYbox. These have since been completed.

② Overall growth in NAC's Supported Arts Spaces Gross Floor Area is almost 5 times since 1985



* Diversified Spaces include spaces that are co-located either with government agencies (mainly People's Association) in civic centres or in commercial malls.

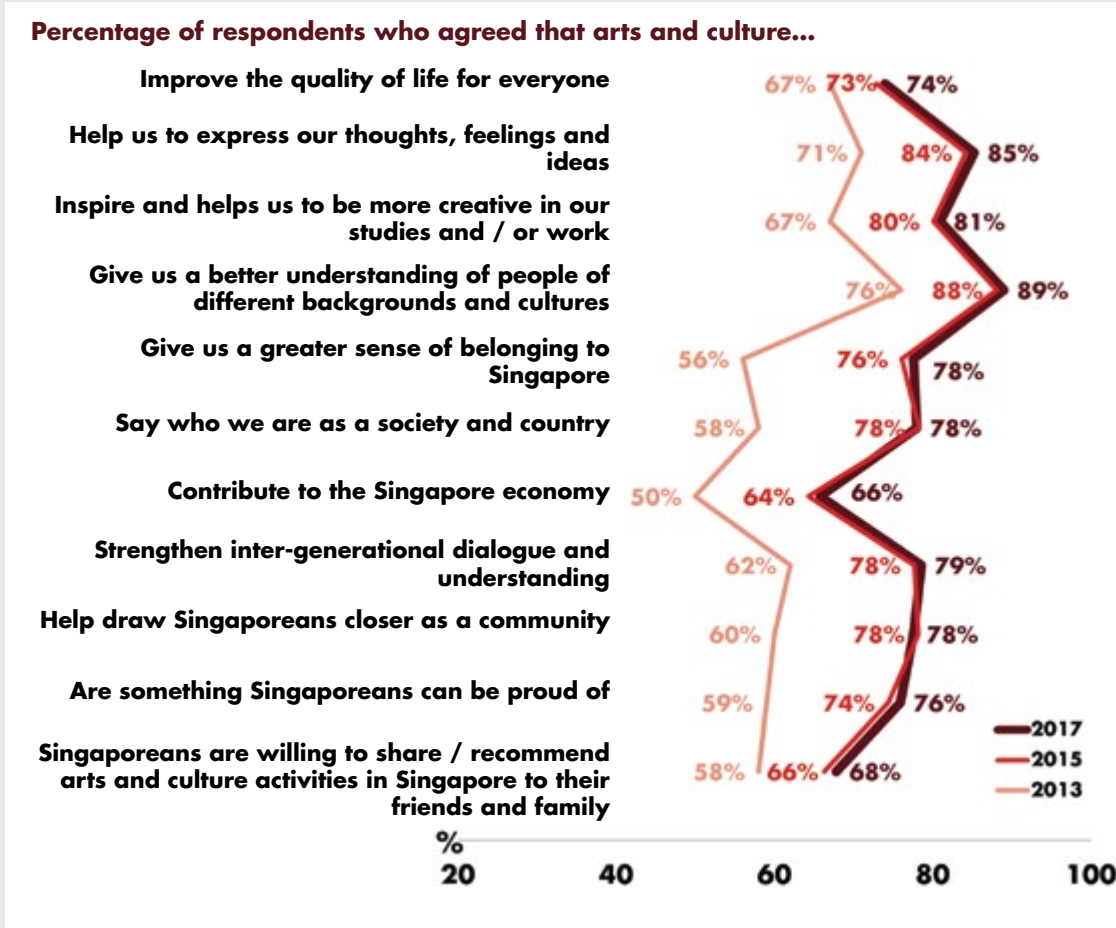
③ Population Survey on the Arts – Key Figures

Statements	2011	2013	2015	2017
1 Singaporeans who had attended at least one arts event in the past year	48%	40%	78%	54%
2 Singaporeans who had participated in at least one arts event in the past year	19%	13%	28%	22%
3 Singaporeans who said they were interested in the arts	36%	28%	41%	37%
4 The arts improved the quality of life for everyone	62%	67%	73%	74%
5 The arts and culture are something that Singaporeans can be proud of	N.A.*	59%	74%	76%
6 The local arts scene had become more vibrant over the last five years	N.A.*	64%	79%	75%
7 The arts give us a better understanding of people of different backgrounds and culture	68%	76%	88%	89%
8 Articulates who we are as a society and country	49%	58%	78%	78%

* N.A.: new indicators tracked from 2013 onwards

+ Figures from the Population Survey on the Arts 2015 were the exception, as there was a surge of arts events to celebrate Singapore's Jubilee year (SG50).

4 Positive shifts from 2013 to 2017



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The National Arts Council would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to all who have supported us over the years and contributed their time and ideas to Our SG Arts Plan (2018–2022) including:

*SCAPE Co. Ltd	Chinese Dance Artistes' Association
ACT 3 Theatrics	Chinese Theatre Circle
Agency for Integrated Care	Choral Association (Singapore)
Aging Youth	Chowk Productions Ltd
AK Theatre	Community Cultural Development (Singapore)
Alzheimer's Disease Association	Composers Society of Singapore
Apsaras Arts	Crimson Earth
Art Galleries Association Singapore	Cross Ratio Entertainment
Art Outreach	CultureLink Singapore
Art2 Gallery	Early Childhood Development Agency
ArtScience Museum	Dance Nucleus
ArtsEquator	Daniel Teo & Associates
ArtsWok Collaborative	David Tao Academy of Musicology
Arts House Limited	DECK
Arts Management Associates	Ding Yi Music Company
Arts Management Collective	Drama Box
Arts Theatre of Singapore	Economic Development Board
Association of Singapore Tamil Writers	Epigram Books
Bandwagon	Era Dance Theatre
Band Directors' Association (Singapore)	Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay
Beyond Social Services	Ethos Books
Bhaskar's Arts Academy	Federation of Art Societies Singapore
Bhumi Collective	Flamenco Sin Fronteras
BooksActually	FOST Gallery
Bubbly Books	Foundation Music
Cake Theatrical Productions	Funkie Monkeys Productions
Centre 42	Gajah Gallery
Chan + Hori Contemporary	Goethe-Institut Singapore
Checkpoint Theatre	Grassroots Book Room
Chinese Calligraphy Society of Singapore	

House of Music
Housing & Development Board
Info-communications Media
Development Authority
Institute of Policy Studies
Institute of Technical Education
Intercultural Theatre Institute
Invasion Singapore
iPreciation Gallery
ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute
Jazz Association (Singapore)
JoyArts
Jurong Town Corporation
L'arietta Productions
Landmark Books
LASALLE College of the Arts
Lee Wei Song School of Music
Lingzi Media
M1 Limited
May Poetry Society
Maya Dance Theatre
MediaCorp Pte Ltd
Metropolitan Festival Orchestra
Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth
Ministry of Education
Ministry of Finance
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Social and Family
Development
Modern Art Society Singapore
More Than Music
Musicians Guild of Singapore
Nadi Singapura
Nam Hwa Opera
Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts
Nanyang Technological University
National Gallery Singapore
National Heritage Board
National Institute of Education
National Library Board
National University of Singapore
New Opera Singapore
Ngee Ann Polytechnic
Nine Years Theatre
NTU Centre for Contemporary Art
NUS Centre for the Arts
NUS Museum
Objectifs
OH! Open House
OneHeartBeat Percussions
Ownself Records
P7:1SMA
Paper Monkey Theatre
People's Association
Poetry Festival Singapore
Pustaka Nasional
Republic Polytechnic
Raffles Singers
RAW Moves
Resound Collective
SAtheCollective
School of the Arts
SGMUSO
Shabir Music Academy of
Contemporary Music
Shantha Ratii Initiatives
Siaw-Tao Chinese Seal-Carving
Calligraphy & Painting Society
Siglap South Community Club Indian
Activity Executive Committee
Sigma Contemporary Dance
Sing Lit Station
Singapore Art Museum
Singapore Arts Club
Singapore Association for Mental Health
Singapore Association of Writers

Singapore Ballet Academy
Singapore Book Council
Singapore Book Publishers Association
Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre
Singapore Chinese Orchestra
Singapore Dance Theatre
Singapore Drama Educators Association
Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society
Singapore Land Authority
Singapore Literature Society
Singapore Lyric Opera
Singapore Management University
Singapore Polytechnic
Singapore Press Holdings
Singapore Repertory Theatre
Singapore Symphony Group
Singapore Tourism Board
Singapore University of Technology and Design
Singapore Watercolour Society
Singapore Youth Choir
Siong Leng Musical Association
SkillsFuture Singapore
Societe Generale
Society of Literature Writing
Sony Music Singapore
SourceWerkz
Sri Warisan Som Said Performing Arts
Sri Mahligai
SRIWANA
STPI
Straits Times Press
Sundaram Tagore Gallery
Superhero Me
Tapestry Playback Theatre
Teater Ekamatra
Teh Joo Heng Architects
Temasek
Temple of Fine Arts Singapore
T.H.E Dance Company
The Arts Fission
The Culture Story
The Finger Players
The Ground Co Ltd
The Linch Agency
The Music Circle
The Necessary Stage
The Observatory
The Philharmonic Winds
The RICE Company Limited
The Ryan Foundation
The Storytelling Centre Limited
The Substation
The Theatre Practice
The Vocal Consort
TheatreWorks
THEO Art Professionals
Tian Yun Beijing Opera Society
Tote Board
Traditional Arts Centre (Singapore)
Unggun Creative
Urban Redevelopment Authority
Very Special Arts Singapore
Warner Music Singapore
West Winds
WILD RICE
Wind Band Association (Singapore)
Word Forward
Xin Yi Dance Company
Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music
Young People's Performing Arts Ensemble
Zarch Collaboratives

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