

## OPERATIONALISATION OF COVID-19 GUIDELINES FOR MUSEUM STAKEHOLDERS

1. In view of the evolving Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) situation, the Ministry of Health (“MOH”) issued an advisory entitled “Additional Precautionary Measures to Prevent Further Importation and Spread of COVID-19 Cases” on 13 March 2020 and “Stricter Safe Distancing Measures to Prevent Further Spread of COVID-19 Cases” dated 20 March 2020.
2. The National Heritage Board of Singapore (NHB) has worked with our museums, as well as National Gallery Singapore (NGS) and Singapore Art Museum (SAM), to provide operational guidance on the safe distancing precautionary measures that museum stakeholders are required to comply with until further notice. These measures are aimed at reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission, by limiting large crowds gathering in close proximity over a prolonged duration.
3. You are receiving this operational guidance as a museum, heritage institution and/or gallery. Museum stakeholders include all members of the Museum Roundtable.
4. Between now and 30 June 2020, all events and gatherings with 250 or more participants in attendance at any one time must be suspended. This includes both ticketed and non-ticketed events and gatherings.
5. All museum stakeholders must suspend programmes and events targeted at senior citizens and other vulnerable groups for the time being.
6. Where a museum stakeholder has reduced the scale of the event to below 250 participants at any one time, the stakeholder may proceed to hold the event but is also required to implement the following precautionary measures. Any museum stakeholder that operates and wishes to keep a venue accessible to the public is also required to implement the following precautionary measures:
  - a) Implement visitor registration and contact tracing measures at the entrances/admission points to events/venues, such as obtaining the contact details of visitors/participants (name and phone number and/or email address). Museum stakeholders may request visitors/participants to download the TraceTogether app to facilitate this (<https://www.tracetogether.gov.sg>).
  - b) Put in place temperature screening measures as well as keep an eye out for persons who appear unwell. These visitors must then be turned away and encouraged to seek medical attention.
  - c) Obtain travel and health declarations of visitors/participants. Visitors/participants who have been overseas in last 14 days must be turned away.
  - d) Ensure adequate physical distance between visitors/participants by maintaining a minimum 1-meter distance between each visitor/participant. Some ways this may be done include:
    - i. Limiting the number of visitors (in accordance with the size of the venue/event space and such that minimally, the occupant load does not exceed 1 person per 3 m<sup>2</sup>) at any one time;
    - ii. Staggering visiting periods;

- iii. Limiting duration of visits; and
- iv. Spacing out visitors/participants through such measures as:
  - Using floor markers (or other forms of barricades) to guide visitors to maintain a distance of 1-meter from one another (for events and scenarios where visitors would normally stand in-place or move around, including queues for entrance to venues/events); and/or
  - Only allowing seating on alternate seats and on alternate rows, i.e. chequerboard seating (for seated events and dining establishments within venues). Likewise, the minimum distance separating visitors/participants should be 1-meter. Exceptions can be made for members of the same household, or couples (i.e. allow them to sit close to one another).
- e) Encourage visitors/participants not to visit in large groups (except where visitors/participants are from the same household). Museum stakeholders should also identify areas where visitors/participants are likely to congregate and put in place measures to disperse them (e.g. stationing staff at these areas to usher them along) to maintain a distance of at least one metre from each other. Visual cues are strongly encouraged. Again, exceptions can be made for members of the same household, or couples. To reduce the congregation of visitors/participants, pre/post event receptions, networking sessions, tea breaks etc. must also be cancelled and F&B should not be served at events although water may be served at discretion.
- f) For events and gatherings in other settings, the minimum of 1-m distance between participants also applies. Set up appropriate cordoning measures (e.g. barricades), especially for outdoor/open-air venues or events, to limit access of visitors/participants and/or having event emcees to remind visitors/participants to maintain adequate physical distance from each other. If it is not possible to limit the number of participants and ensure adequate spacing-out of participants, such events or programmes must be deferred or cancelled.
- g) Notwithstanding (d), (e) and (f), the scale of the venue/scale of event must not exceed 250 pax at any one point in time. If the event/venue is at full capacity, notices could be put up to inform individuals seeking entry and visitors/participants at that point in time, that they are encouraged to limit the duration of their visits, where possible, to allow others opportunity for admission.
- h) Introduce advance/pre-booking to facilitate safe distancing measures as above. For ticketed events, there may also be a need to put in place arrangements to facilitate refunds.
- i) Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfection of their premises, especially frequently touched surfaces and items, and remove all handling objects where possible. In addition, museum stakeholders should consider removing audio guides and closing off play areas, etc. if these items/areas cannot be sufficiently cleaned and disinfected.
- j) Provide hand sanitisers to staff (e.g. frontline officers who handle cash and other payment devices and are unable to wash their hands frequently).
- k) Place hand sanitisers in easily accessible locations, so that participants and staff may disinfect their hands (e.g. after touching door handles).

- l) Use non-contact/digital transactions where possible (e.g. online and mobile purchase of tickets to events/venues and adopting e-payments) to minimise the handling of cash and physical tickets.
  - m) Put up notices and posters in prominent places to remind patrons to comply with relevant prevention and control measures (e.g. avoid shaking hands with other event participants and practice good personal hygiene).
  - n) Remind all staff, performers and participants to practise social responsibility – to monitor their own health conditions and avoid attending events if they are unwell.
7. Action will be taken against any non-compliance with the government's safe distancing advisories that are observed or reported to the relevant regulatory authority. Museum stakeholders which do not implement or comply with the government's safe distancing advisories may be ineligible for government grants and assistance.
  8. NHB, NGS and SAM, will keep our venues open in line with paras 4-6 until further notice.
  9. This set of operational guidelines will be updated as the situation develops. Meanwhile, please visit MOH's website regularly for the latest updates arising from further review based on the global situation.
  10. The health and safety of Singaporeans, visitors and those who work in the museum sector are NHB's priority. We thank you for your continued support and understanding.

**Annex:** Photos of implementation of safe distancing measures in museums

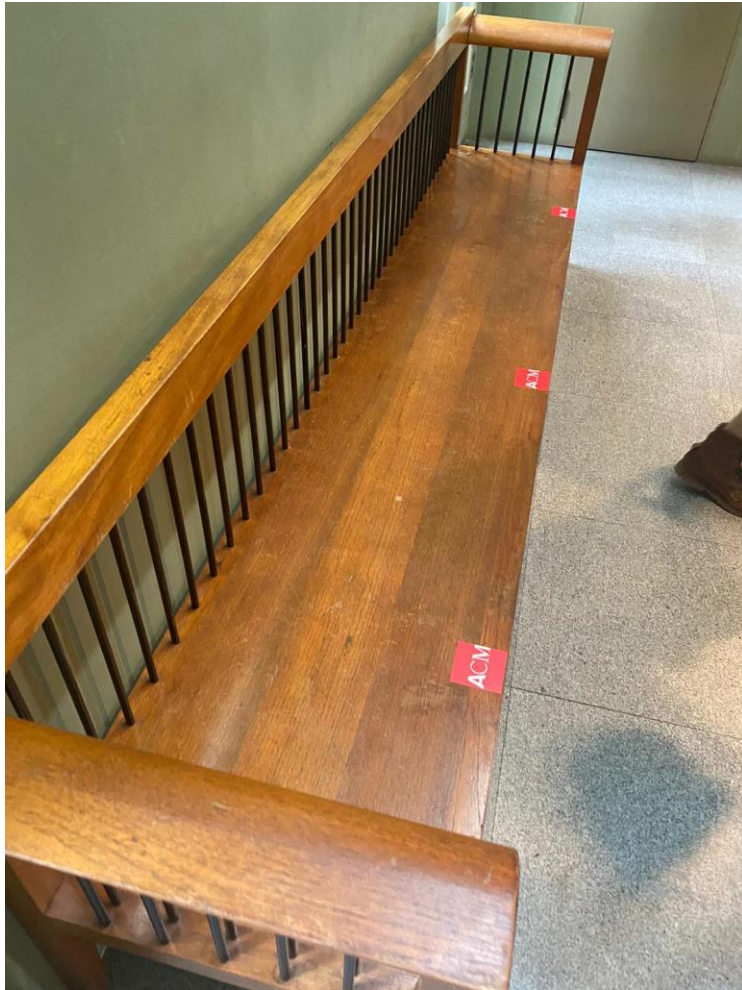
**Annex: Photos of implementation of safe distancing measures in museums**



Safe distancing for queues with queue markers at the National Museum of Singapore and Indian Heritage Centre



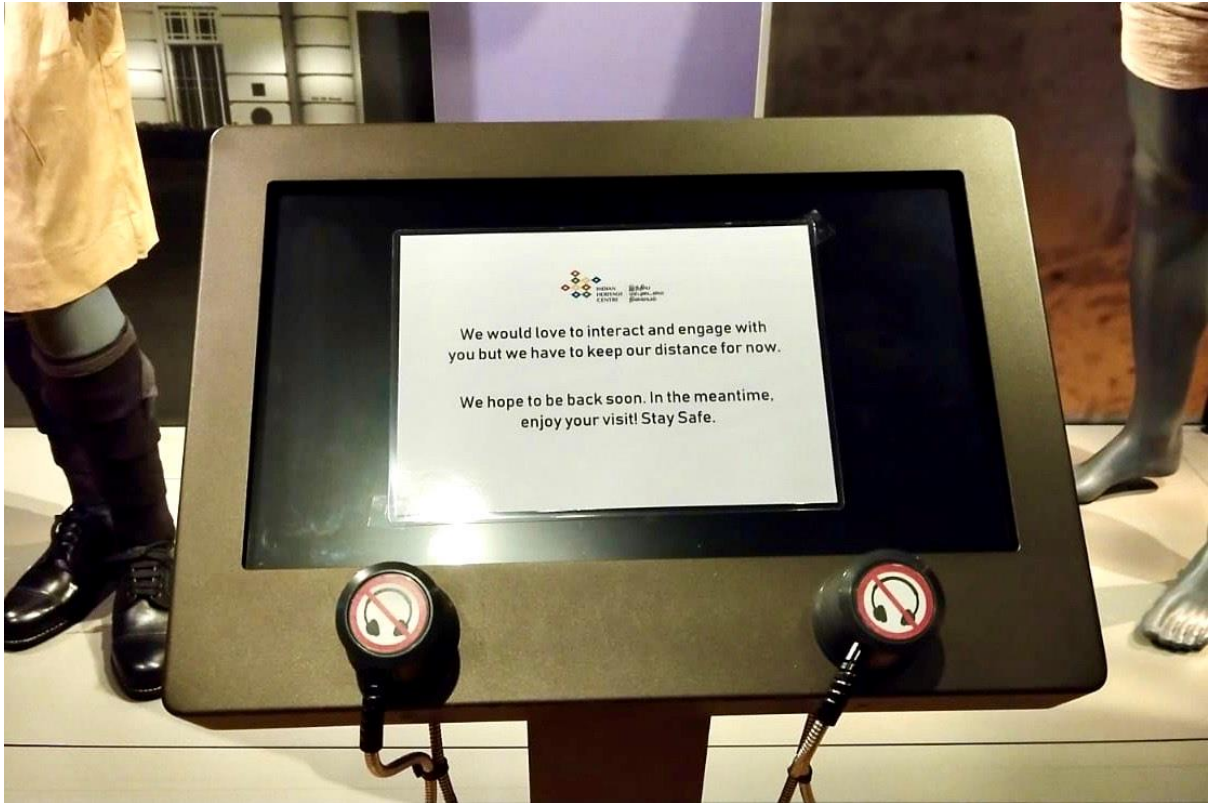
Display of safe distancing notices at Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall



Spaced out seating at the resting area of Asian Civilisations Museum



Spaced out seating within galleries of National Museum of Singapore



Audio interactives closed temporarily at the Indian Heritage Centre



Stepped up frequency of cleaning and sanitisation in NHB museums and institutions

## **Useful Resources**

### Government Health-Related News Sources

[Ministry of Health updates on COVID-19](#) local situation – daily updates

[Advisories from MOH and various sectors](#)

WHO [Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19](#) (3 Mar 2020)

[WHO COVID-19 Situation Reports](#) – daily updates

### Museums / Arts & Culture / Leisure & Entertainment

<https://www.aam-us.org/2020/03/05/information-for-the-museum-field-on-the-covid-19-coronavirus/>

<https://www.nac.gov.sg/whatwedo/support/sustaining-the-arts-during-covid-19.html>

<https://www.sportsingapore.gov.sg/newsroom/media-releases/2020/considering-its-patrons%E2%80%99-safety-and-wellbeing,-sportsg-enhances-precautionary-measures>

Museum of Science, Boston's [Epidemic Disease and Pandemic Response Policy](#) (updated Mar 2020)

### Digital Engagement Resources

<https://www.aam-us.org/programs/resource-library/using-digital-platforms-to-remain-connected-to-audiences-during-quarantines/>

<http://mcn.edu/a-guide-to-virtual-museum-resources/>

<http://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/covid-19-pushes-museums-to-embrace-the-virtual-world>

### Others

[https://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/-/media/esg/files/media-centre/media-releases/2020/feb-2020/guide-on-business-continuity-planning-for-covid-19\\_2nd-edition\\_170220\\_final.pdf?la=en](https://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/-/media/esg/files/media-centre/media-releases/2020/feb-2020/guide-on-business-continuity-planning-for-covid-19_2nd-edition_170220_final.pdf?la=en)

[Risk communication and community engagement \(RCCE\) readiness and response to the 2019-nCoV](#) – Interim guidance v.2 (WHO, 26 Jan 2020); Final [Report](#) (16 Mar 2020)

[Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations During COVID-19 Outbreak](#) (WHO, 12 Mar 2020)

## **Additional Guidelines**

### Additional Cleaning and Disinfection Procedures

1. Museum stakeholders should keep areas near objects on display clean with products that are safe to use around these objects. Museum stakeholders may want to refer to their institutional collections management policy and procedures for guidance as to how this may be done safely. Stakeholders may also refer to the Heritage Conservation Centre's basic collections care advice by accessing this link: <https://www.nhb.gov.sg/what-we-do/our-work/preserve-our-stories-treasures-and-places/the-national-collection/heritage-conservation-centre/collections-care>.
2. Museum stakeholders should replace the AHU (air-handling unit) filters regularly (if one is in place).
3. Every museum stakeholder is encouraged to participate in the SG Clean programme to have its establishment certified. For more details on the programme, please refer to [www.sgclean.gov.sg](http://www.sgclean.gov.sg).

### Digital and Virtual Access to Museum and Heritage Offerings

4. During this period, museum stakeholders may wish to explore using digital/online platforms (e.g. digital/virtual tours and access to collections and content and social media entries) to reach and remain connected with audiences in order to continue educating, inspiring and uplifting spirits.
5. The ongoing social media campaign (with its hashtags #CultureCarriesOn and #DoseOfCulture) by NHB and the Museum Roundtable seeks to facilitate continued access and enjoyment of arts, heritage and culture, even from home. Museum stakeholders are encouraged to be part of the campaign and join in with their contributions. Examples of contributions by museum stakeholders can be accessed here: [https:// facebook.com/IloveMuseums/](https://facebook.com/IloveMuseums/).

### Communications to Visitors/Participants and Other Partners

6. All museum stakeholders should communicate their respective measures and responses to COVID-19 to visitors, participants, partners etc. through the following ways:
  - a) Proactively sharing the precautions your museum has in place in terms of safe distancing, visitor registration and temperature screening, etc. Museum stakeholders may also want to pre-empt and/or manage the expectations of visitors/participants/partners that
    - Personal details may be required in order to facilitate contact tracing;
    - There may be delays and other inconveniences as a result of visitor registration and contact tracing measures;
    - Persons who seemed unwell may be turned away and that audience members may not be allowed admission due to event/venue capacity-related considerations; and
    - Events may be cancelled/postponed, or the venue closed, possibly at short notice.
  - b) Appealing to your visitors, participants and partners to cooperate by practising good hygiene, monitoring their health and staying away from venues/events should they feel unwell (and see a doctor as soon as possible) and finally, maintaining a physical distance of 1-meter from one another.



- c) Encouraging your visitors, participants and partners to acquaint themselves with the facts of the outbreak and its spread and share them with the community as well as to avoid COVID 19-related stigmatisation or discrimination.

#### Staff Communications and Policies

- 7. For employees, museum stakeholders should put in place the following measures:
  - a) Encouraging good hygiene and socially responsible behaviour including
    - Promoting regular and thorough hand-washing;
    - Donning of face-mask for those who develop symptoms at work;
    - Ensuring hygienic disposal of used tissues; and
    - Staying home if they should have a fever or any other respiratory symptoms
  - b) Making sure work surfaces (e.g. desks and tables) and objects (e.g. telephones, keyboards) are cleaned with disinfectant regularly.
  - c) Advising employees to consult national travel advice and defer all overseas travel, whether for official reasons or leisure. Upon their return, they should be reminded to follow the Government's latest advice on health clearance requirements for entry to Singapore in view of COVID-19 situation.
  - d) Minimising physical meetings and replacing them with teleconferencing or online sessions. If face-to-face meetings are still deemed necessary, organisations should limit the number required to attend and practise safe distancing measures as outlined in paragraph 6.
- 8. Relevant portions in this section would apply also to vendors, contractors, suppliers and other partners that museum stakeholders may have dealings with.