

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

**CONTEMPORARY MEETS TRADITION AT NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD'S
INAUGURAL OPEN CALL FOR CRAFT X DESIGN 2021**

The open call invites local designers to submit proposals for the co-creation of contemporary products for the local market, in collaboration with traditional craft practitioners in Singapore



Singapore, 22 July 2021 – How would you put a modern spin on products produced by traditional crafts like *rangoli* making, *ketupat* weaving, Chinese lantern making or Peranakan beadwork and embroidery? That's a question that the National Heritage Board (NHB) is posing to local designers and design studios, through its inaugural *Craft X Design* open call. The open call invites designers to propose how products produced by local traditional craft practitioners can be reimagined into innovative and modern products while promoting awareness of Singapore's rich and diverse traditional crafts.

2 The *Craft X Design* open call is part of NHB's efforts under Our SG Heritage Plan to promote greater public awareness and appreciation of Singapore's intangible cultural heritage and to create platforms to showcase Singapore's traditional trades and crafts.

3 A total of four traditional craft practitioners will be participating in NHB's pilot *Craft X Design* open call, and more information on the practitioners can be found in **Annex A**.

Craft Practitioners	Traditional Craft
Mr Jimm Wong	Making of traditional Chinese lanterns
Ms Vijaya Mohan	<i>Rangoli</i>
Mdm Anita Tompang	<i>Ketupat</i> weaving
Mr Raymond Wong	Peranakan beadwork and embroidery

4 These veteran practitioners will be paired with four local designers or design studios after the 10-week open call, to co-create contemporary products based on his or her associated craft skills over a span of four to five months. The collaboration would culminate in a product prototype from each pair of practitioner and designer, which would be displayed at a public showcase at one of NHB institutions and on NHB's online platforms together with photographic and videographic documentation of the craft-making process.

5 For more information about NHB's *Craft X Design* open call, please refer to the table below:

Craft x Design	
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise public awareness and appreciation of local traditional crafts; and • Explore how traditional crafts can be revitalized to ensure their long-term sustainability and commercial viability.
For Whom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practising designers and design studios who/which are interested in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Drawing on local traditional crafts and the skills of veteran craft practitioners, to modernise traditional craft products through design innovations;

	<p>b) Collaborating with and learning directly from experienced local traditional craft practitioners; and</p> <p>c) Playing a part in promoting Singapore's heritage and traditional crafts.</p>
How to participate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The traditional craft practitioners will introduce their craft and share about their skills in a workshop held on 21 August 2021, where interested designers can learn more and see the craft in action, before submitting their proposals. To sign up for the workshop, please click here. • Interested designers can submit a proposal for the co-creation of contemporary products with one of the veteran craft practitioners and his or her associated craft skills. The deadline for the submission is 1 October 2021, 6pm.
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once selected, the proposed project in collaboration with the traditional craft practitioner will take place over a period of four (4) to five (5) months, and should result in a prototype of the product. • Each selected designer/design studio will be provided with an honorarium of \$6000. Each pair of practitioner and designer will also be provided with reimbursement of up to \$2000, for materials and other related costs for the creation of the product.

6 Mr Alvin Tan, Deputy Chief Executive (Policy & Community), NHB said: “Through the scheme, we hope to raise the profiles of our practitioners, provide a safe sandbox for the modernisation of traditional craft products, and help practitioners gain access to new markets. In doing so, we hope to contribute to their long-term sustainability and revitalise Singapore’s intangible cultural heritage industry.”

7 For more information, please refer to:

- **Webpage (go.gov.sg/craftxdesign2021):** Submission details and application form



- **Annex A:** Information on traditional craft practitioners
- **Annex B:** Eligibility and evaluation criteria
- **Annex C:** Timeline

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About the National Heritage Board

The National Heritage Board (NHB) was formed on 1 August 1993. As the custodian of Singapore's heritage, NHB is responsible for telling the Singapore story, sharing the Singaporean experience and imparting our Singapore spirit.

NHB's mission is to preserve and celebrate the shared heritage of our diverse communities, for the purpose of education, nation-building and cultural understanding. It manages the national museums and heritage institutions, and sets policies relating to heritage sites, monuments and the national collection. Through the national collection, NHB curates heritage programmes and presents exhibitions to connect the past, present and future generations of Singaporeans. NHB is a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. Please visit www.nhb.gov.sg for more information.

INFORMATION ON PARTICIPATING TRADITIONAL CRAFT PRACTITIONERS**Mr Jimm Wong***Making of traditional Chinese lanterns*

Mr Jimm Wong is one of the last traditional Chinese lantern makers in Singapore and specialises in making Foochow lanterns. As a Chinese heritage enthusiast, he became deeply interested in traditional Chinese lanterns in 2006 and has been practicing the craft since 2007. He has also been continuously innovating, by incorporating modern technologies such as 3D printing into his lantern-making process, as well as using different materials such as aluminum rods (rather than the traditional bamboo ribs) to make the lantern structure. He has also adapted to include local and contemporary influences in the design of his lanterns, such as experimenting with using batik dye and or painting motifs such as orchids.

Mr Raymond Wong*Peranakan beadwork and embroidery*

Mr Raymond Wong has been practicing Peranakan beadwork and embroidery for more than 16 years and is one of the last few Peranakan *kebaya* makers in Singapore. He is the co-owner of boutique shop Rumah Kim Choo, where he also conducts classes to teach and promote Peranakan beadwork. In addition, he has been a part-time lecturer at the Fashion Textile Faculty in LASALLE since 2013. His works have been extensively featured in various museum exhibitions and fashion shows, both in Singapore and internationally, including in Malaysia, China, Korea, Japan, Russia, Czech Republic and Uzbekistan.

Ms Vijaya Mohan*Rangoli*

Ms Vijaya Mohan has been practicing *rangoli* since the age of 5 and now has over 55 years of experience in the craft. She has created more than 8000 *rangolis* in Singapore, and she currently holds the Guinness World Record for the largest *rangoli* pattern ever created. She has actively experimented with using new materials and contemporary designs for her *rangoli*



works, such as the 2016 *Rangoli Radiance* exhibition at Gardens by the Bay, where she incorporated glitter and over 15,000 glass marbles. Besides promoting *rangoli* through arts classes and workshops in local schools, she is also a trained art therapist, and works regularly with welfare organisations to conduct *rangoli* programmes for underserved communities, including seniors, children with special needs, and those facing mental health challenges.

Mdm Anita Tompang

Ketupat weaving

Mdm Anita Tompang started learning the skills of *ketupat* weaving at the age of 9, and now has nearly 50 years of experience with it. She was recently featured in *Berita Harian* for her commitment to this tradition, having woven ketupats by hand every Hari Raya for over 20 years. Although ketupat weaving has become a less common activity, she has persisted in her own efforts to keep this craft alive in Singapore, including teaching and involving her own children in *ketupat* weaving.

DETAILS ON CRAFT X DESIGN

Eligibility

Designers and/or design studios must fulfil the following criteria to be eligible for the open call:

- Practising designers with three years of working experience or more at the time of application, or;
- Design studios that have been incorporated for three years or more at the time of application; and
- Lead applicant must be a Singapore Citizen or Permanent Resident.

Evaluation Criteria

Design proposals will be evaluated based on the following:

Strength of Proposal

- Depth of understanding and demonstration of traditional craft skills and techniques;
- Level of collaboration with and involvement of traditional craft practitioner (i.e. high level of collaboration in the process of prototyping and producing the product);
- Originality and artistic/aesthetic merit (e.g. proposal displays creativity and the distinct artistic voice or aesthetic vision of the designer); and
- Feasibility of proposal within the stipulated timeline.

Impact of Proposed Prototype

- Alignment to the programme's overall objectives, including:
 - Whether the proposal has the ability to appeal to current consumer trends; and
 - Whether the proposal will enhance the craft practitioners' and designers' value proposition.

Track Record

- Track record demonstrating a strong portfolio of work within the last 3 years.

Designers of shortlisted proposals may be invited for an interview.

TIMELINE

S/N	Item	Timeline
i.	<p>Open Call Engagement & Sharing Session</p> <p>NHB to share more details about CXD, and craft practitioners to conduct a workshop, presenting an overview of their traditional craft as well as a brief demonstration of their craft skills and techniques for interested designers.</p>	21 August 2021
ii.	<p>Submission of Project Proposals</p> <p>Designers to submit proposals to NHB for products to be prototyped in collaboration with any of the practitioners.</p>	22 July – 1 October 2021
iii.	<p>Evaluation of Project Proposals</p>	October 2021
iv.	<p>Pairing of Practitioner with Designer</p> <p>Based on the proposals submitted, NHB, practitioners and selected designers to agree on and finalise the pairings.</p>	November 2021
v.	<p>Learning of Craft Method, Collaboration Process and Prototyping of Product</p> <p>Regular sessions to be scheduled where designers will learn the craft techniques from craft mentors, and collaborate to co-create the product.</p> <p>The collaborative/creative process will be documented through photography and videography, arranged by NHB.</p>	November 2021 – March 2022
vi.	<p>Announcement of Completed Prototype</p>	March 2022



S/N	Item	Timeline
vii.	Public Showcase The works to be showcased to the public at NHB spaces or online platforms together with videos/photos of the craft-making process.	April 2022