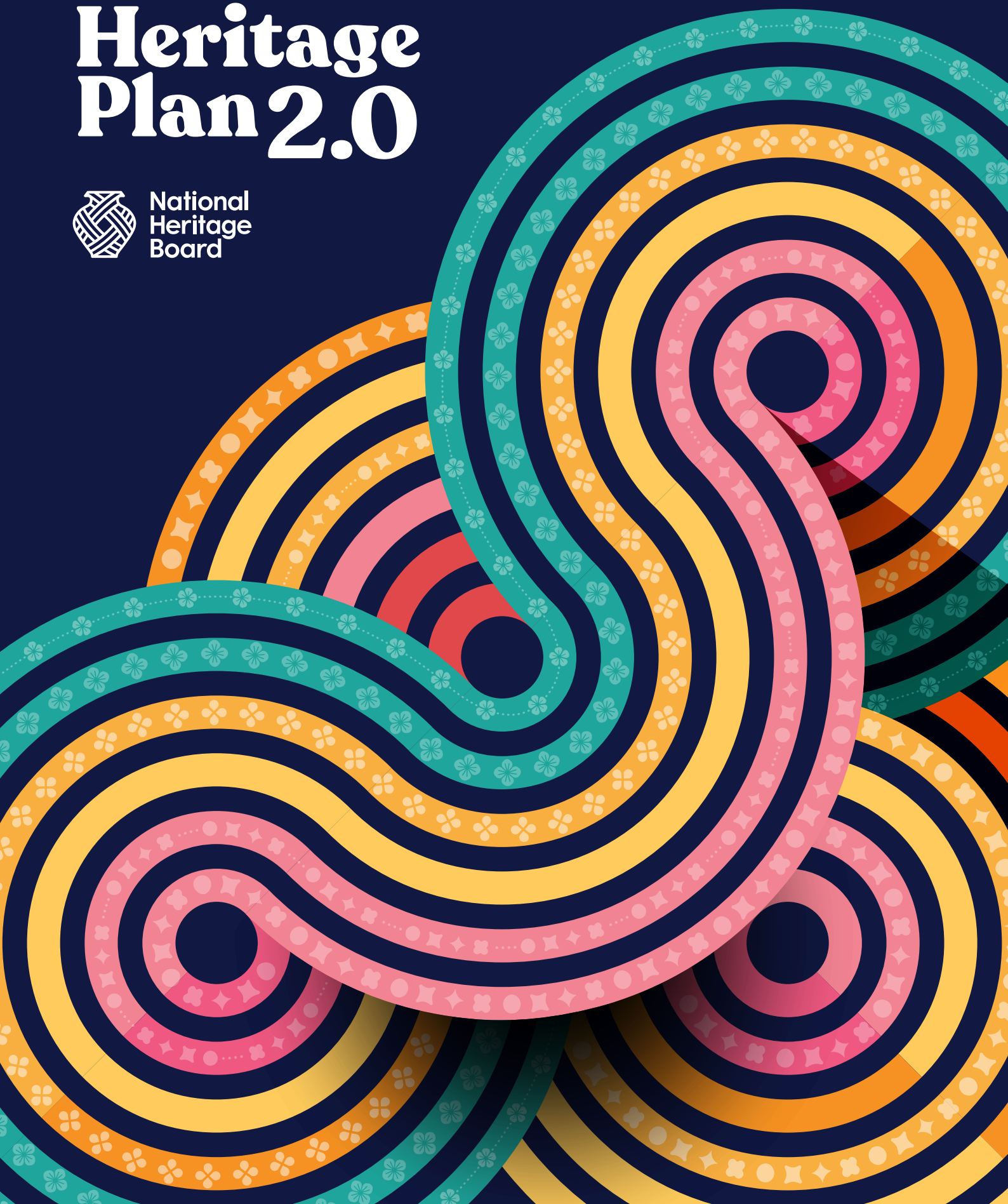


Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0



National
Heritage
Board





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Foreword

Singapore launched its first master plan for the heritage sector, Our SG Heritage Plan, in 2018. Co-developed with the community, it laid out a five-year strategic roadmap till 2022 to safeguard Singapore's heritage. Under the plan, we sought to foster a deeper understanding of our shared heritage amongst Singaporeans, and encouraged active participation in shaping our heritage landscape.

With the strong support of Singaporeans, we have accomplished much under the inaugural plan. In 2020, Singapore successfully inscribed Hawker Culture as our first element onto the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. We added community heritage galleries in Kreta Ayer and Geylang Serai, as well as eight new or refreshed heritage trails across the island, bringing the number of trails to 23 in total. NHB also revamped and refreshed our museums and heritage institutions to make them more accessible to Singaporeans from all walks of life.

Despite the challenges brought about by COVID-19, we saw how heritage can inspire and be a source of resilience for all Singaporeans. Our museums and their partners have found new ways to present and celebrate our heritage through digitalisation. Notable initiatives include DigiMuse and the virtual exhibition *An Old World: Digital Edition* by the National Museum of Singapore. Singaporeans enjoyed these programmes, and gained

a stronger appreciation of our heritage, from our traditional crafts and practices, to our much-loved food culture. The impact of these efforts can be seen in the positive results from the 2022 Heritage Awareness Survey, which reported that many Singaporeans today have a stronger recognition of the importance of heritage and how it strengthens our sense of national identity.

“Our diverse, multicultural heritage will remain the bedrock of our national identity. Heritage sites and cultural events provide common spaces for all Singaporeans to come together.”

The first master plan laid the foundations for the work ahead. As a small country with an open economy, our external environment has a huge impact on us. We will face pressures from geopolitical contestation, socio-cultural trends amplified by social media, and other macro-trends. At the same time, Singapore society has evolved over the years. It is important for Singapore to continue to foster social cohesion and harmony, and remain as one united people. Our diverse, multicultural heritage will remain the bedrock of our national identity. Heritage sites and cultural events provide common spaces for all Singaporeans to come together.

Our values, culture and practices offer shared experiences that build empathy and understanding among us. Our unique heritage can also provide economic opportunities to Singapore, through creating good jobs, boosting tourism, and encouraging creativity and innovation in society.

Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0 will chart out a more dynamic future for Singapore's heritage and museum sector. This plan will consolidate and build upon our gains from the past 5 years, while also unlocking new opportunities in the post-pandemic world. It was developed after consulting more than 650 stakeholders including museum professionals, academics, community groups, youths, and traditional craft practitioners. NHB also received over 72,000 ideas and suggestions online and at the physical booths. Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0 is a testimony to how much our shared heritage means to us Singaporeans, and a reflection of the aspirations of Singaporeans.

Let us continue to work together to celebrate our cultural heritage, and create a legacy that will inspire future generations.

Edwin Tong,
Minister for Culture, Community and Youth
Second Minister for Law

Executive Summary

We are excited to introduce **Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0** – the next chapter in Singapore’s heritage and museum landscape, which will guide us from 2023 to 2027 and beyond. Building upon the solid foundation of Our SG Heritage Plan, this new plan lays out our vision and strategies to shape the future of our heritage sector.

We firmly believe that heritage is more than just a connection to our past - it is an essential part of our identity, fostering a sense of belonging and optimism for the future. As our national identity evolves with social and economic changes, our heritage strategies must remain flexible, visionary, and adaptable.

As heritage is a shared asset, we are committed to engaging and empowering more Singaporeans to be active participants in preserving and promoting our heritage. With the help of technology, we aim to unlock new opportunities for innovation, creativity and collaboration. Together, we can build a more inclusive and resilient society that draws strength from our cultural roots.

We invite all Singaporeans to join us on this exciting journey towards a brighter tomorrow for our heritage! Let us work together to create a future where our cultural heritage thrives, where innovation and creativity flourish, and where everyone has the opportunity to contribute to our shared legacy.

Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0 aspires to:

- Envision a dynamic future for Singapore’s heritage and museum sector – one that celebrates our diverse cultural heritage, empowers the community to jointly present our shared history, and embraces innovation and technological advancements to ensure the sustainability of our industry.
- Navigate towards a lively, inclusive and forward-looking heritage sector for the next five years and beyond, with a keen eye on the evolving socio-economic trends and the needs of our society.
- Share our roadmap for the future, so that everyone is aware of the broad strategies and initiatives and can participate in shaping the future of our heritage.

Public Engagement

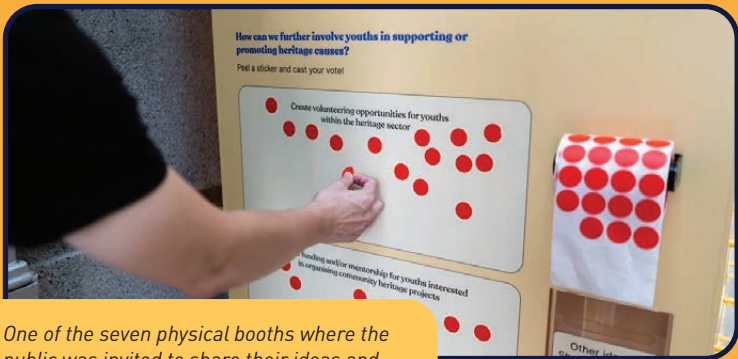
We believe that heritage is for everyone, and that is why we wanted to hear from both the public and heritage experts when designing Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0.

The public and stakeholder feedback has been crucial in creating a more inclusive and integrated master plan for the future of our heritage sector.

> 650
stakeholders

> 50
focus group
sessions

> 72,000
ideas and suggestions
received online and at
the physical booths



One of the seven physical booths where the public was invited to share their ideas and suggestions for the master plan.

The iconic dragon playground at Toa Payoh was lit up as part of the 2018 Singapore HeritageFest.



Our Vision

A greatly enriched heritage landscape which

- Celebrates a cohesive, multi-racial Singapore
- Connects us across time, space and cultures
- Creates space for many different voices to join in telling the Singapore Story

Four Building Blocks

Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0 is organised into four strategic areas of growth: **Identity**, **Community**, **Industry** and **Innovation**. Collectively, we believe that developing these areas will strengthen our national identity, bring Singaporeans closer together, unlock the economic potential of Singapore's museum and heritage sector, foster creativity and innovation, and strengthen the partnership between our public institutions and the wider society.

Identity

An inspired nation drawing strength from our multicultural heritage and diversity



Community

A connected people anchored in our shared heritage and invested in telling our collective story



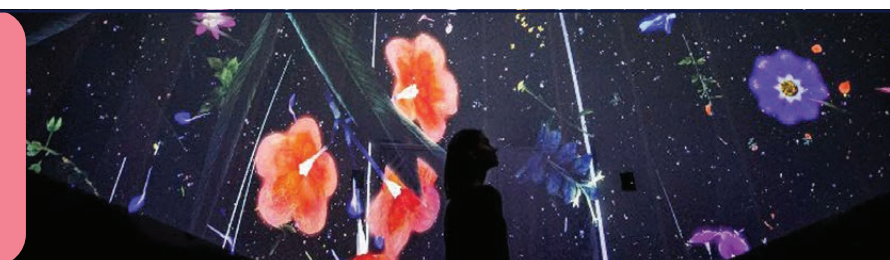
Industry

A vibrant heritage ecosystem that values people, connects with industry, and creates opportunities for Singaporeans



Innovation

A future-ready heritage sector powered by innovation and creativity





Visitors at the lawn of the National Museum of Singapore.

Pride in Our Past, Legacy for Our Future

Singapore's heritage is a treasure trove that holds the key to our nation's rich cultural wealth. It is not just a collection of ancient monuments and artefacts, but it is a living legacy that adds meaning and inspiration to our everyday lives. When we explore our hawker culture or visit our museums and historical landmarks, we are experiencing the beating heart of our country's identity.

Our cultural heritage is the foundation that sustains our sense of connection, belonging, and hope for the future. As the National Heritage Board (NHB), we take our role as stewards and advocates of Singapore's heritage seriously. Our mission is to ensure that our cultural legacy remains vibrant, relevant and in sync with the times. That is why we embarked on a journey in 2018 with a



Satay hawkers at East Coast Lagoon Food Village.

master plan called **Our SG Heritage Plan** (2018-2022), also known as HP1.

HP1 aimed to preserve and present Singapore's rich history and multicultural heritage, improve how museums engage with communities, and prioritise new areas such as intangible cultural heritage and archaeology. It helped to organise how we viewed heritage and reviewed our achievements in the sector by categorising heritage into four pillars: Our Places, Our Cultures, Our Treasures and Our Communities. This categorisation has been the foundation that continues to guide our thinking, even as we embark on a new master plan with fresh strategies.

Now, five years later, we are proud of the results. Our heritage sector has thrived and reached new heights thanks to the success of HP1. As we celebrate these achievements, we know that there is still work to be done. That is why we are excited to announce **Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0**, also known as HP2, which will shape the next chapter of Singapore's heritage sector from 2023 to 2027.

HP2 is organised into four strategic thrusts:

Identity, Community, Industry and Innovation.

The first two priorities have always been at the core of what NHB does. Under **Identity**, we want to make a greater effort to reflect a more layered and nuanced understanding of the Singapore identity. Under **Community**, we aspire to have more co-creation opportunities with Singaporeans to explore and celebrate Singapore's heritage. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that our cultural legacy remains vibrant and accessible to all.

We are excited to announce two emerging areas of priority, **Industry** and **Innovation**, which are areas where we will explore more targeted strategies and initiatives. Under **Industry**, we aim to give more support to the heritage industry to build a vibrant ecosystem with opportunities for all. Under **Innovation**, we want to provide better visitor experience and access to Singapore's heritage through digitalisation and technology. With these new areas of focus, we can work towards a heritage ecosystem that is dynamic, inclusive and sustainable, enriching the lives of all Singaporeans.



Seniors from SilverACE Bukit Merah participating in a HeritageCares programme.



Students from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts conducting a heritage trail of Little India for pre-schoolers.

Heritage is an unfolding story, a journey that we are all part of, and one that we have the power to shape.

It passes on values, stories, lived experiences and wisdom that can anchor and ground the next generation as they weather new challenges of their time. Together, let us create an exciting, vibrant, and buzzing future for our heritage scene – a future where our ever-evolving multicultural heritage is a source of strength and inspiration, and where it serves as a foundation for a more dynamic and resilient Singapore.



Cavenagh Bridge (pictured), Anderson Bridge and Elgin Bridge were collectively gazetted as a National Monument in 2019.

Reflecting on Our SG Heritage Plan (2018-2022)

Our SG Heritage Plan (2018-2022), also known as HP1, was the first master plan of its kind, and we developed it by working closely with the community and a diverse range of stakeholders. HP1 was organised around four pillars — Our Places, Our Cultures, Our Treasures and Our Communities — to reflect the breadth and depth of Singapore’s heritage.

Under HP1, NHB had been working tirelessly to promote and celebrate Singapore’s rich cultural heritage. We are proud to have achieved several significant milestones, particularly in safeguarding and promoting the intangible cultural heritage of Singapore. Our programmes recognised the contributions of local crafts and their practitioners, and our

grants helped heritage businesses adapt to the changing economic landscape, especially during the pandemic.

We believe that the community plays a crucial role in exploring and celebrating their heritage, so we offered co-creation opportunities across exhibitions, programmes, and festivals. Our continued development and engagement with the National Collection and museums, as well as research and archaeology, has revealed more about Singapore’s unique story.

We also made significant progress in preserving our built heritage, particularly in better safeguarding our National Monuments. This ensures that future generations will be able to appreciate

the storied history of Singapore’s spaces. Additionally, we applied digital technology to expand the reach and possibilities of Singapore’s heritage, making it more accessible to all.

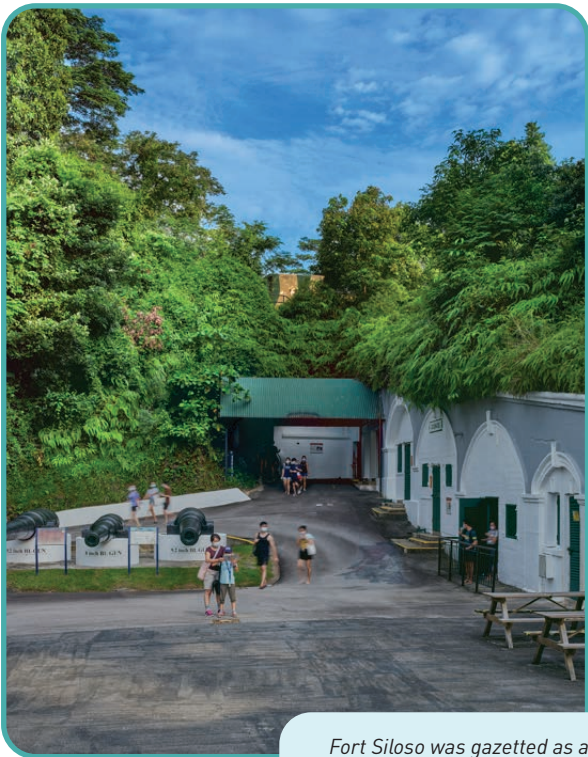


Key achievements under Our SG Heritage Plan

OUR PLACES

Our places where we live, work and play hold many shared memories, and we must care for them so that our stories can be passed on to future generations.

- Introduced amendments to the Preservation of Monuments Act.
- Gazetted three new National Monuments: Elgin, Cavenagh and Anderson Bridges, Fort Siloso and the Padang.
- Tightened our working relationship with planning agencies such as Urban Redevelopment Authority and Singapore Land Authority so that heritage considerations are incorporated early into decision-making processes.



Fort Siloso was gazetted as a National Monument in 2022.



Gunong Sayang Association was an award recipient of The Stewards of Intangible Cultural Heritage Award in 2022.

OUR CULTURES

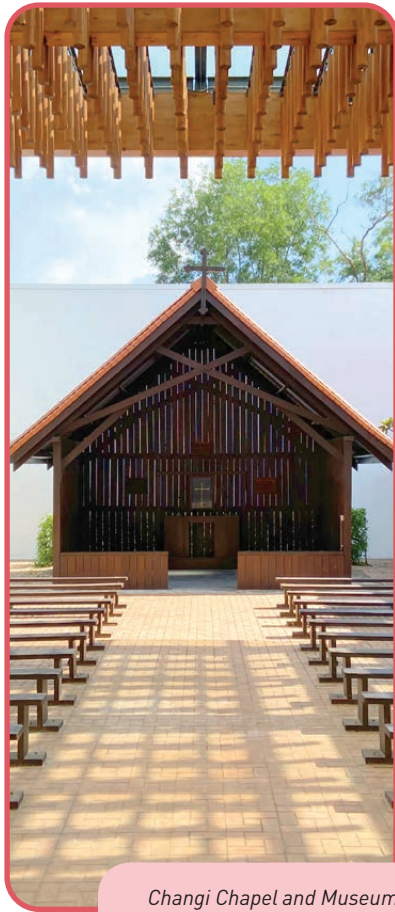
Our traditions and way of life are what make us a multicultural Singapore, and we must cherish these so that they will live on.

- Established an Intangible Cultural Heritage inventory.
- Recognised the people who keep our traditions alive through The Stewards of Intangible Cultural Heritage Award.
- Successfully inscribed Hawker Culture in Singapore to the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, a significant achievement for a young nation like Singapore.

OUR TREASURES

Our museums and their collections tell the story of Singapore, Asia and the world, and enable us to discover more about ourselves and the world we live in.

- Reopened Peranakan Museum and two war museums, Changi Chapel and Museum, and Reflections at Bukit Chandu, after extensive renovations to refresh museum infrastructure and enhance content and offerings.
- Co-developed the *Museum-Based Learning* programme with the Ministry of Education to provide more opportunities for students to experience Singapore’s heritage through our museums.
- Made heritage more accessible through digitising our content, and using digital tools, machine learning and AI to enhance user experience on Roots.gov.sg.
- Developed heritage programmes that reached out to lesser-served communities, created inclusive spaces within our museums and improved infrastructure accessibility so that everyone can visit our cultural institutions.



Changi Chapel and Museum reopened in 2021.



Second-generation owner Meena Gnanapandithan posing with the Street Corner Heritage Galleries display at Thandapani Co Pte Ltd in Little India.

OUR COMMUNITIES

Our heritage that binds us is the legacy we share, and we can each play a part in shaping it.

- Encouraged more people to volunteer in the heritage sector.
- Created more heritage touchpoints with the launch and refresh of eight Heritage Trails in our neighbourhoods, three Community Galleries and four *Street Corner Heritage Galleries* in our historic precincts. These heritage touchpoints would not have been possible without close partnership with the community, who contributed their stories, photographs and objects.

Safeguarding our built heritage: Amending the Preservation of Monuments Act

For over five decades, NHB has led efforts to preserve our national memory in the form of historic buildings, sites and structures. As Singapore continues to develop and mature as a nation, preservation policies will also evolve to meet new challenges.

The amendment of the Preservation of Monuments Act (PMA) is one such adaptation to further safeguard our built heritage for future generations of Singaporeans. Enacted in 1970, the PMA sets out the powers of the government to preserve and protect National Monuments. These include the powers to gazette National Monuments and to ensure that monument owners or occupiers carry out necessary preservation, maintenance or repair works.

After a period of review from 2018 to 2021, the Preservation of Monuments (Amendment) Bill was introduced in Parliament. The Bill proposed amendments to update the PMA in two key areas:

- a. An expanded definition of “monument” to allow the preservation of more potential sites of heritage value; and
- b. Strengthened provisions to protect the physical character and historical significance of National Monuments.



The Padang was gazetted as Singapore’s 75th National Monument in 2022.

These amendments allow for the preservation of sites with no remains, such as the Padang, as well as enhance the government’s enforcement powers to ensure that our National Monuments are adequately protected from unauthorised works that may affect their character and significance.



Children from AWWA Early Intervention Centre (Hougang) engaging in sensory play during a visit to the National Museum of Singapore in 2018.

Improving access in museums

As part of our efforts to make heritage accessible to everyone, HP1 introduced many improvements to make our museums and heritage institutions more inclusive. We have embarked on various initiatives that cater to diverse visitors, including seniors, youth and people with disabilities.

For instance, the National Museum of Singapore has started offering monthly senior-friendly tours. Using artefacts from the museum’s collection to illustrate the legacy and contributions of pioneering Singaporeans, the tours also enable seniors, as well as people with dementia and their carers, to share their own stories. In addition, the Asian Civilisations Museum has offered several programmes for people with vision and hearing impairment to engage with their collection.

In 2018, we started *HeritageCares*, which reaches out to lesser-served communities with a range of programmes at our museums, heritage institutions and heritage sites. Our target audience includes children and families-in-difficulty, persons with special needs, youths-at-risk and the elderly. Through on-site tours, workshops, and music and movement programmes, we encourage family and peer bonding, enhance social skills, facilitate educational learning, and promote active ageing.

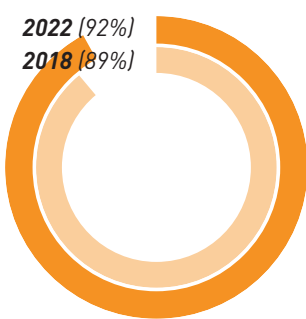
Since its inception, *HeritageCares* has reached out to more than 75,000 participants. We will continue to do the crucial work of engaging underserved communities so that our museums and heritage sites remain welcoming spaces for everyone.

Key findings from the Heritage Awareness Survey 2022

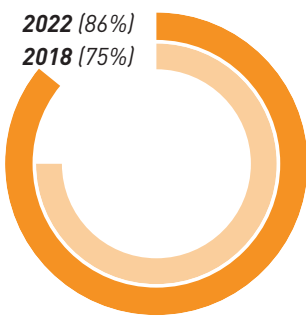
The Heritage Awareness Survey is a study conducted by NHB that assesses the level of interest, awareness, participation and attitudes towards heritage among local residents.

Findings from the **Heritage Awareness Survey 2022** revealed that public perceptions of heritage in Singapore have improved since 2018, and that there is a greater recognition of what heritage encompasses. The survey findings highlight the positive impact of Our SG Heritage Plan and will inform the formulation of Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0.

More recognised the importance of heritage and appreciate it on a personal and community level.

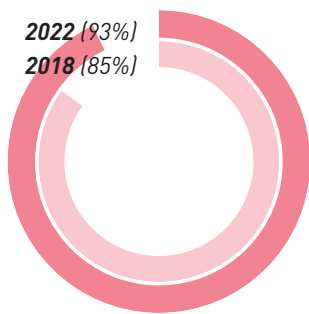


92%
of respondents agreed that it is important for all Singaporeans to know about our history and heritage.
▲ 3% increase from 2018

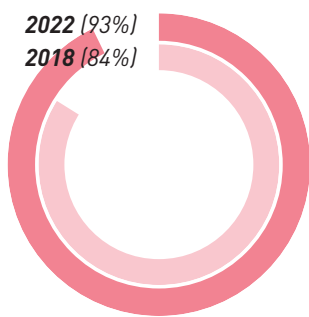


86%
of respondents agreed that a better understanding and appreciation of Singapore's heritage and culture would increase their sense of belonging to Singapore.
▲ 11% increase from 2018

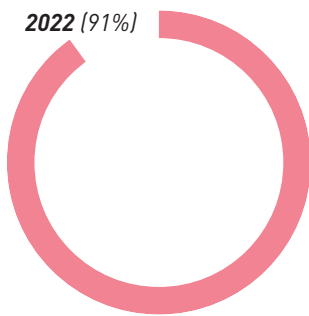
There was strong affirmation of museums' positive contributions.



93%
of respondents agreed that our local museums promote understanding of Singapore's history, heritage and culture.
▲ 8% increase from 2018

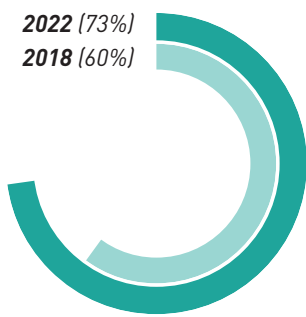


93%
of respondents also found that museums are welcoming spaces for people from all walks of life.
▲ 9% increase from 2018

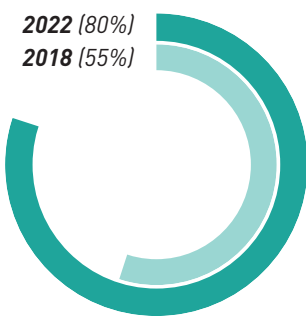


91%
said that museums help to develop a better understanding of Singapore, the region and the world, a new question for the 2022 edition of the survey.

More expressed interest in and willingness to actively support heritage-related causes in Singapore.



73%
of respondents are taking an active interest to understand the cultural practices of other ethnic or racial groups in Singapore.
▲ 13% increase from 2018



80%
would support practitioners of intangible cultural heritage.
▲ 25% increase from 2018

Learning points from Our SG Heritage Plan

We have made some incredible strides in the heritage sector since HP1, and it is heartening to see that Singaporeans are showing more appreciation and awareness of our unique multicultural heritage. However, we know that the world is constantly changing, and we need to stay proactive to keep up.



A kamcheng dating back to the Guangxu period (1875-1908), Qing dynasty. Collection of the Asian Civilisations Museum (1996-01025). Gift of Mrs Khoo Soo Beow in memory of her husband.



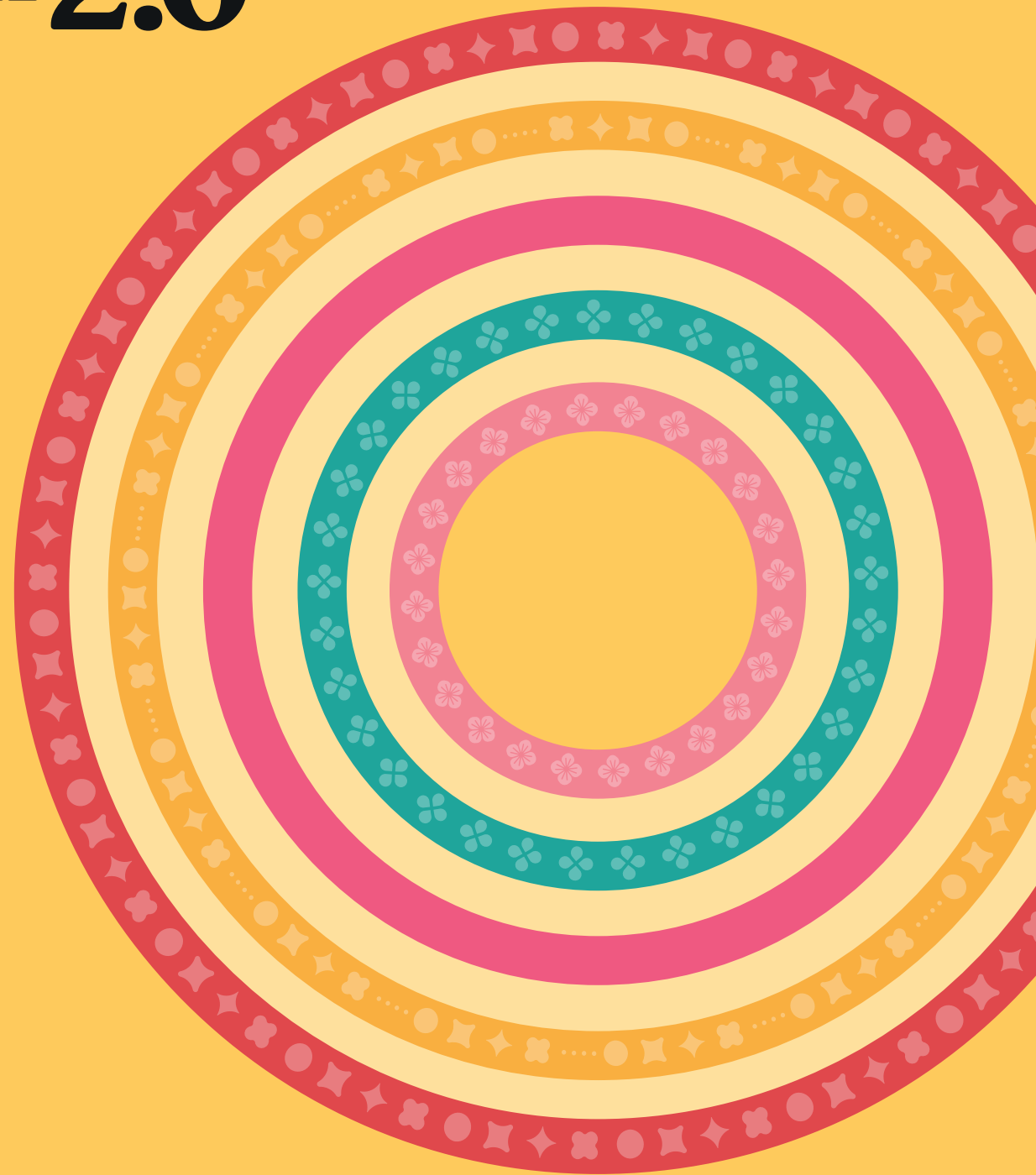
Children participating in the Indian Heritage Centre's Jewel Hunt, an experiential digital escape room game.

Here are some areas that we have identified as needing attention:

- 1 Singapore's heritage sector is diverse and comprises different interests and groups. We believe that there is great potential in fostering partnerships and promoting synergy to advance the sector together. This means partnering with and supporting initiatives that involve various government agencies, stakeholders and citizens to achieve shared outcomes.
- 2 As a young nation at the crossroads of different cultures and influences, our national identity is constantly evolving. It is essential to update and expand the National Collection to better reflect the Singapore Story and our connection with the world.
- 3 We believe that there is still so much untapped potential to showcase our heritage to regional and global audiences. Our cultural heritage can be an effective tool of soft power for Singapore.
- 4 We recognise that digital transformation is essential to growing the heritage sector and reaching new audiences. We must innovate to stay ahead of competing options for people's attention. This requires new strategies and partnerships with other private players to create attractive, memorable, and meaningful digital products and experiences for visitors.
- 5 The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us some important lessons about the need for diverse platforms for people to experience heritage. Our sense of community is built on strong relationships at various levels, and we must work together to ride through crises. It has also highlighted the need for us to be innovative and adaptable in how we approach heritage, and to find new ways for people to experience it.

With these insights and learning points in mind, HP2 will seize opportunities and chart the direction for Singapore's heritage sector for the next five years and beyond, to bring our heritage ecosystem to new heights.

Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0



Our Vision

A greatly enriched heritage landscape which celebrates a cohesive, multi-racial Singapore, connects us across time, space and cultures, and creates space for many different voices to join in telling the Singapore Story.

Four Building Blocks

Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0 is organised into four strategic areas of growth: **Identity**, **Community**, **Industry** and **Innovation**. We believe that developing these areas will strengthen our national identity, bring Singaporeans closer together, unlock the economic potential of Singapore's museum and heritage sector, foster creativity and innovation, and strengthen the partnership between our public institutions and the wider society.

Identity

An inspired nation drawing strength from our multicultural heritage and diversity

Community

A connected people anchored in our shared heritage and invested in telling our collective story

Industry

A vibrant heritage ecosystem that values people, connects with industry, and creates opportunities for Singaporeans

Innovation

A future-ready heritage sector powered by innovation and creativity



One of the seven physical booths where the public was invited to share their ideas and suggestions for HP2.

Public Engagement

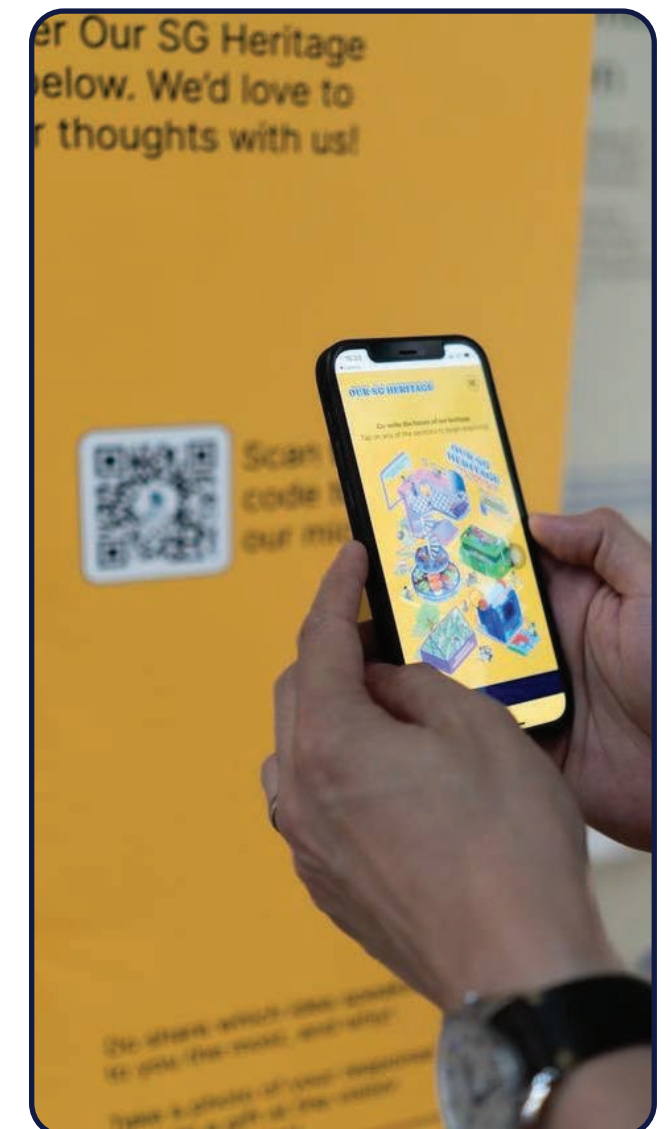
We believe that heritage is for everyone, and that is why we wanted to hear from both the public and heritage experts when designing HP2.

In the first phase of consultation, we met with over 650 museum professionals, academics, creatives, traditional craft practitioners, youths, and precinct stakeholders. We chatted about topics such as the future of museums, intangible cultural heritage, civic engagement and sustainability.



From all these conversations and through our own research, we identified four focus areas: **Identity**, **Community**, **Industry**, and **Innovation**.

In the second phase of consultation, we wanted to hear from a broader audience. Operating within the safe distancing measures brought on by the pandemic, we created a microsite and seven physical booths for visitors to share their thoughts. We asked a mix of multiple-choice and open-ended questions and invited visitors



to vote on specific issues. From August to November 2022, we received over 72,000 ideas and suggestions.

Thanks to everyone's contributions, we were able to shape the core strands of action in the plan, as well as specific initiatives that will have a significant impact on the heritage sector. The public and stakeholder feedback has been crucial in creating a more inclusive and integrated master plan for the future of our heritage scene.

Highlights of what we have heard:

There was strong support to reflect Singapore’s heritage and identity more comprehensively by expanding the collecting mandate of museums.

Members of the public wanted more opportunities to get involved in heritage activities; some were interested in volunteering.

“Museums are no longer a temple, but a forum.”

- Some of the suggestions include:
- Expanding our acquisition policy to include works of urban landscape, design and architecture.
 - Archiving and documenting contemporary events as they unfold to capture the zeitgeist.
 - Using collections to cultivate connections with people and communities.

Others suggested ways to sustain and promote our heritage businesses.

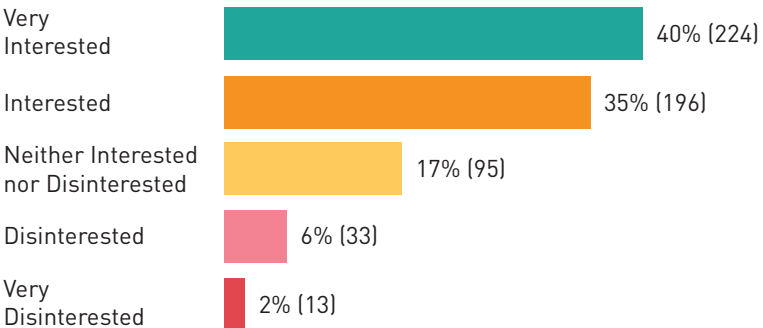
“There are amazing cultural products produced by craft practitioners that are not commonly seen in our malls. I think we should stimulate children’s interest and encourage them to learn about heritage crafts and businesses, and increase the profile of the heritage industry.”

“It is helpful to inject modernity into traditional crafts, perhaps by pairing designers with traditional craft practitioners to kickstart some projects.”

Many supported using technology to enhance heritage experiences.

“Technology can help museums enhance their accessibility. People can easily participate and contribute their stories and memories in the digital space, which can help connect communities – even those beyond our shores.”

Q: How interested are you in participating in activities that promote heritage in your neighbourhood?



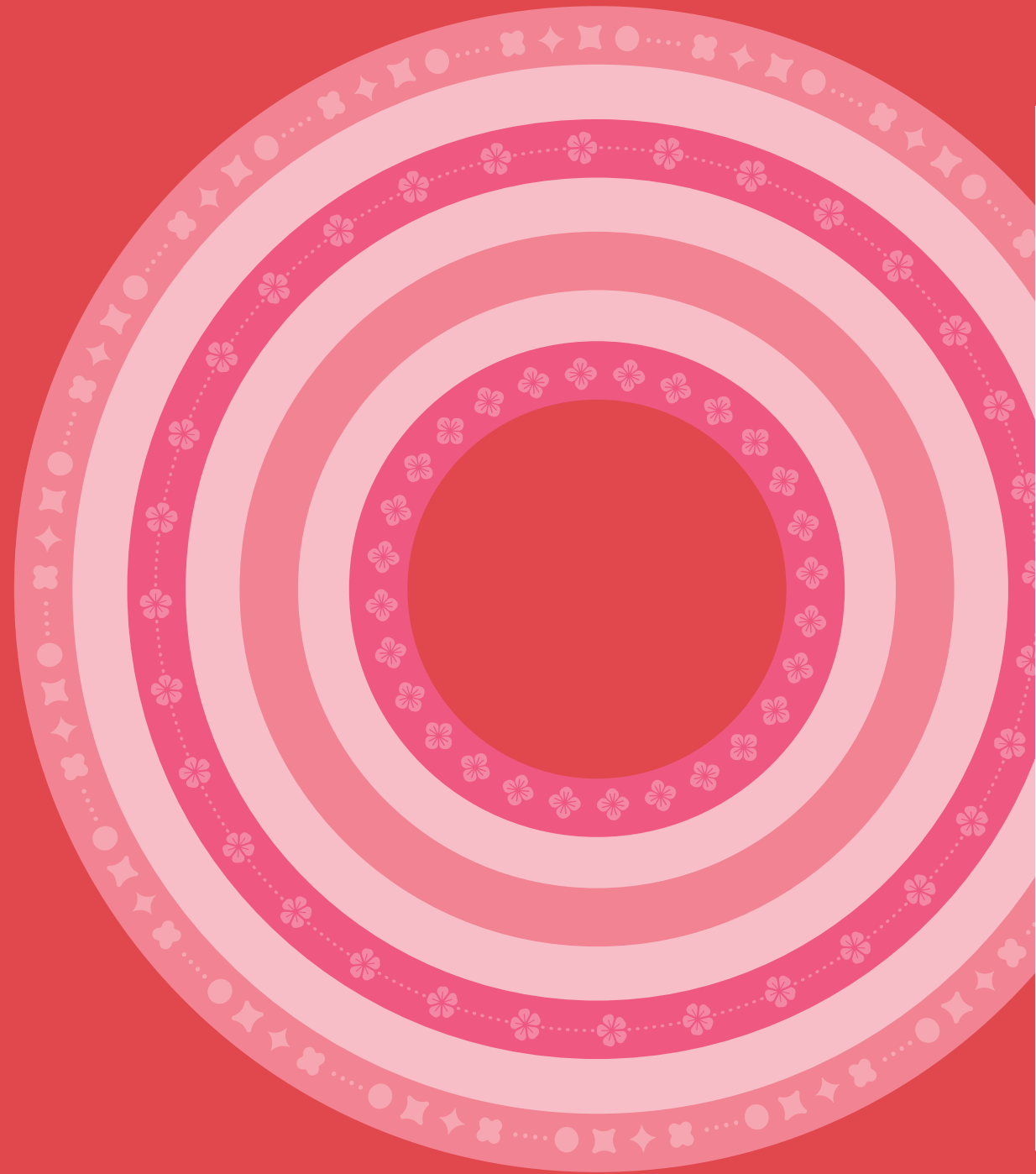
Q: Would you be keen to volunteer for museum and heritage-related activities?



Onto the Next Chapter

Learning from the lessons of HP1, listening to the inputs of the public and identifying future opportunities, NHB worked hard to develop the next heritage master plan. As we move forward, we are committed to working closely with communities and partners across Singapore to build a vibrant and dynamic heritage sector. Together, we can unlock the full potential of our shared heritage. In the following chapters, we will map out our strategies and plans for heritage in the next five years.

Heritage x Identity



Our expressions of heritage are a powerful reflection of both our individual and collective identities, illuminating the rich diversity of our communities. Through the preservation of our material culture, historic sites, and intangible cultural heritage, we can weave a strong social fabric that connects us all.

Cultivating and strengthening our national identity is a core and longstanding priority of NHB. Even as we embark on the new chapter of heritage development in Singapore, we remain committed to telling captivating stories that resonate with all Singaporeans and strengthening our sense of national pride. In Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0, we hope to encourage a more layered understanding of the Singaporean identity and our connection to the region and the world. We will also work to ensure that the experiences of Singaporeans are represented and celebrated, in our vision to create a truly inclusive space for all. Additionally, we will work hard at safeguarding our archaeological treasures for future generations to enjoy.

As we continue to grow and evolve as a nation, NHB remains dedicated to building a brighter future for Singapore and all its people. Together, the strategies and initiatives under Heritage x Identity will strengthen our shared identity as Singaporeans and contribute to a more resilient and united multicultural society.

Children viewing a Lego miniature model of the National Museum of Singapore as part of the travelling exhibition, Building History: Monuments in Bricks and Blocks.



An inspired nation drawing strength from our multicultural heritage and diversity

1. Research and conserve Singapore's maritime heritage.
2. Develop a design collection.
3. Expand Singapore's representation on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
4. Promote and care for our archaeological treasures.
5. Enhance the National Museum of Singapore's *Collecting Contemporary Singapore* initiative.
6. Drive the development of the Founders' Memorial and its public engagement.



A diver recovering artefacts from a historical shipwreck found within Singapore's waters.

Credit: ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute

Conserving Singapore's Maritime Heritage

Singapore's cultural diversity is rooted in its strategic location at the heart of historic maritime trade routes. Throughout the centuries, the movement of people, goods and ideas has shaped our nation's identity, making us the global citizens we are today. We believe that by exploring our maritime roots, we can better understand the forces behind our national identity, and our relationships with our neighbours in the region.

Our passion for uncovering our maritime heritage was ignited with the recovery of the first two historic shipwrecks in Singapore waters – the mid-14th century *Temasek Wreck* and the 1796 *Shah Muncher*. Between 2016 and 2021, objects of archaeological interest have been

recovered from these sites, including Yuan dynasty blue-and-white porcelain and numerous ceramic ware. These staggering discoveries will deepen our understanding of Singapore's pre-colonial maritime history and give us insights into the lives of those who came before us. With the support of ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute, we will continue to conduct post-excavation works on these valuable artefacts.

As we move forward, we will increase our capacity and capabilities in maritime conservation and provide more opportunities for the public to appreciate and enjoy the rich stories of Singapore's maritime past.

Developing a Design Collection

Singapore's National Collection is a treasure trove of over 250,000 artefacts and objects that tell the story of our past and present. To keep the collection reflective of the nation's story, we take pride in preserving and updating it.

Recently, we have been highlighting the cultural significance of design through exhibitions and programmes in our museums. Design is a powerful tool for inspiration and innovation that can shape our society positively.

With this in mind, NHB, together with the Singapore Art Museum, Urban Redevelopment Authority, National

Library Board, and DesignSingapore Council, are developing a design collection. The collection will cover a range of design disciplines and focus on contemporary Singaporean designers and architects. We will also reach out to local collectors of design objects and collect works from the Southeast Asian and Asian regions.

By creating a design collection, we hope to bolster the National Collection's representation of contemporary objects and creative expression, while fostering collaborations with the design community and industry. We also hope that the collection will inspire young practitioners to experiment with heritage-inspired creations.



Held in 2019, the National Museum of Singapore's exhibition, *Packaging Matters: Singapore's Food Packaging Story from the Early 20th Century*, showcased the design identities of local food brands.

Inspired by design

In recent years, NHB had successfully piloted various design-related exhibitions and projects. These shows have not only been well-received by the public, but also deepened our appreciation of Singapore and Asia's aesthetic and material culture, while opening up new opportunities to collaborate with the local design industry.

One such exhibition was *Guo Pei: Chinese Art and Couture*, held in 2019 at the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM). It showcased embroidered masterpieces by China's foremost couturiere alongside objects from the museum's collection. The exhibition was the museum's first foray into the contemporary domain, marking a significant expansion of its programming.

Following this, the ACM presented *#SGFASHIONNOW* in 2021, its first showcase of contemporary Singaporean fashion. The exhibition was co-created with the wider community, with students from LASALLE BA (Hons) Fashion Media and Industries programme curating

and designing the show as part of their Graduation Project module. The exhibition also featured the involvement of Singapore Fashion Council, which organised Singapore Stories, a national fashion design competition. The winning design was featured in the exhibition.

Design-related exhibitions were not limited to fashion. In 2019, the National Museum of Singapore presented *Packaging Matters: Singapore's Food Packaging Story from the Early 20th Century*, showcasing food packaging in Singapore and the design identities of local food brands from a historical perspective.

From haute couture to everyday packaging, these exhibitions showcased our material culture and the role of design in shaping our daily lives. They also demonstrated our museums' innovative approaches to engaging with their collections and celebrating Asian craftsmanship and aesthetics as a continuous dialogue between past and present.

Expanding Singapore's Representation on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

In 2020, the successful inscription of Hawker Culture in Singapore to the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (ICH) was a proud and unifying moment for Singapore. This experience rallied Singaporeans together to discuss and reflect on the elements that shape our national identity. In fact, our passion and love for our multicultural food heritage played a significant role in UNESCO's decision.

Building on this success, NHB is now identifying new ICH elements for Singapore's future nominations to the UNESCO Representative List of ICH. Our quest to identify new elements is not just about gaining global recognition but also about preserving and celebrating the intangible cultural heritage that forms an important part of who we are as Singaporeans.

With the support of our fellow Singaporeans, we are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead and the opportunities to showcase Singapore's rich cultural heritage to the world. We believe that this process will spark important conversations and foster a deeper appreciation of our shared heritage.



Members of the public looking at a diorama of a typical hawker centre, which was featured in the travelling exhibition aimed at garnering support for the inscription of Hawker Culture in Singapore on UNESCO's Representative List of ICH.



Guo Pei: Chinese Art and Couture, held in 2019 at the Asian Civilisations Museum.



An archaeological dig conducted in 2018 at the former St Joseph's Institution.

Credit: MCCY

Promoting and Caring for Our Archaeological Treasures

A country's archaeological heritage sheds light about the societies that came before us and provides a window into our shared past. The fascinating and sizable collection of artefacts recovered from Fort Canning Hill, for example, reveal Singapore's rich history as a bustling port during the 14th century. Some of these artefacts are currently on proud display at the Singapore History Gallery in the National Museum of Singapore.

Thanks to the dedicated efforts under HP1, we have laid out frameworks to govern our nation's archaeological resources. We will continue the review of

existing legislation to better protect our archaeological heritage and to uplift the conduct of archaeological activities in Singapore. Our partnership with academic institutions will also continue to support archaeological digs and studies, further expanding our knowledge and understanding of the past.

Moving ahead, we will focus on raising public awareness and fostering appreciation for archaeology as a field of study through museum exhibitions and outreach efforts. We are also committed to developing local capabilities in archaeological research and activities to support our ongoing mission.



A selection of objects contributed by museum staff and volunteers on display at Picturing the Pandemic: A Visual Record of COVID-19 at the National Museum of Singapore in 2021.

Collecting History as It Happens

Singapore is constantly evolving, and the stories of our present will become the heritage of tomorrow. That is why the National Museum of Singapore piloted *Collecting Contemporary Singapore*, an initiative to capture history as it happens. Through this programme, we aim to collect and preserve the stories, objects and photographs that collectively reflect the lived experiences of Singaporeans today, ensuring that they are not lost to future generations.

With HP2, the National Museum is excited to explore new ways of presenting our contemporary artefacts and getting Singaporeans involved in

telling our stories. We believe that everyone can contribute to the multi-faceted and unfolding history of our dynamic nation.

Some of our pilot programmes have already borne fruit. We began crowdsourcing donations of artefacts, documents and stories centring on various themes. In 2022, for example, under the theme of Technology, we invited the public to submit objects and related memories to a website. We will continue to experiment with novel methods of public engagement so that our museum becomes a dynamic institution that engages and learns from our audiences.

Collecting Contemporary Singapore

Picturing the Pandemic: A Visual Record of COVID-19 in Singapore was the pilot exhibition resulting from the *Collecting Contemporary Singapore* initiative by the National Museum of Singapore. Held in 2021, it showcased the response of Singaporeans to the COVID-19 crisis and featured works by local photographers and filmmakers, as well as personal artefacts donated by members of the public. Highlights included the first vial of the COVID-19 vaccine that was administered in Singapore as well as sketch journals and handicraft that Singaporeans created during the circuit breaker. Together, these objects and artworks document our collective experience of this unprecedented time in Singapore's history.

In 2022, the National Museum continued its efforts to capture everyday experiences by presenting the second

edition of *Collecting Contemporary Singapore*, titled *OFF/ON: Everyday Technology That Changed Our Lives, 1970s-2000s*. The exhibition was an immersive experience that explored how technology has transformed the lives of Singaporeans over the past few decades. The exhibit showcased items like typewriters, payphones, and pagers in familiar settings such as homes and workplaces, against the backdrop of Singapore's industrialisation and rapid transformation.

In its continuing efforts to engage the public, the National Museum also ran an open call for *OFF/ON* for contributions of everyday technological items from the 2000s onwards. So far, the museum has received submissions such as the Walkman and Apple computer, which are currently being assessed for inclusion in the National Collection.



Visitors interacting with the exhibits at OFF/ON at the National Museum of Singapore.

Establishing the Founders' Memorial

The Founders' Memorial will be built at the heart of the Bay East Garden and serves as a tribute to the incredible journey that led Singapore to its independence. Not only does the Memorial honour our past, it also aims to inspire Singaporeans to work together towards a brighter future. The Memorial's design reflects the values and ideals of Singapore's first-generation leaders, including the founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew and other key personalities who played important roles in the early years of our nation-building.

From the start, public engagement has been crucial in the development of the Memorial, and it continues to be a vital part of our journey towards completion. Since 2015, we have been working closely with the community to establish the Memorial's vision and location, guide its architectural design and visitor experience, and develop its narrative and storytelling.

As we build the Memorial, we are dedicated to involving Singaporeans in creating dynamic exhibitions and programmes to make it a "living" tribute that everyone can connect with and take pride in.



A rendering of the Founders' Memorial.

Conserving our National Monuments

Our National Monuments are physical reminders of our history and culture, helping to convey a sense of place and identity in our various historic precincts. As part of continued efforts to safeguard our built heritage, various National Monuments will be undergoing restoration works from 2023 to preserve the buildings for posterity.

Among them are three museums managed by NHB – the National Museum of Singapore, Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall, and the Former Istana Kampong Gelam (housing Malay Heritage

Centre). The restoration will ensure that these museums can continue to provide fresh experiences about Singapore's history with well-maintained facilities.

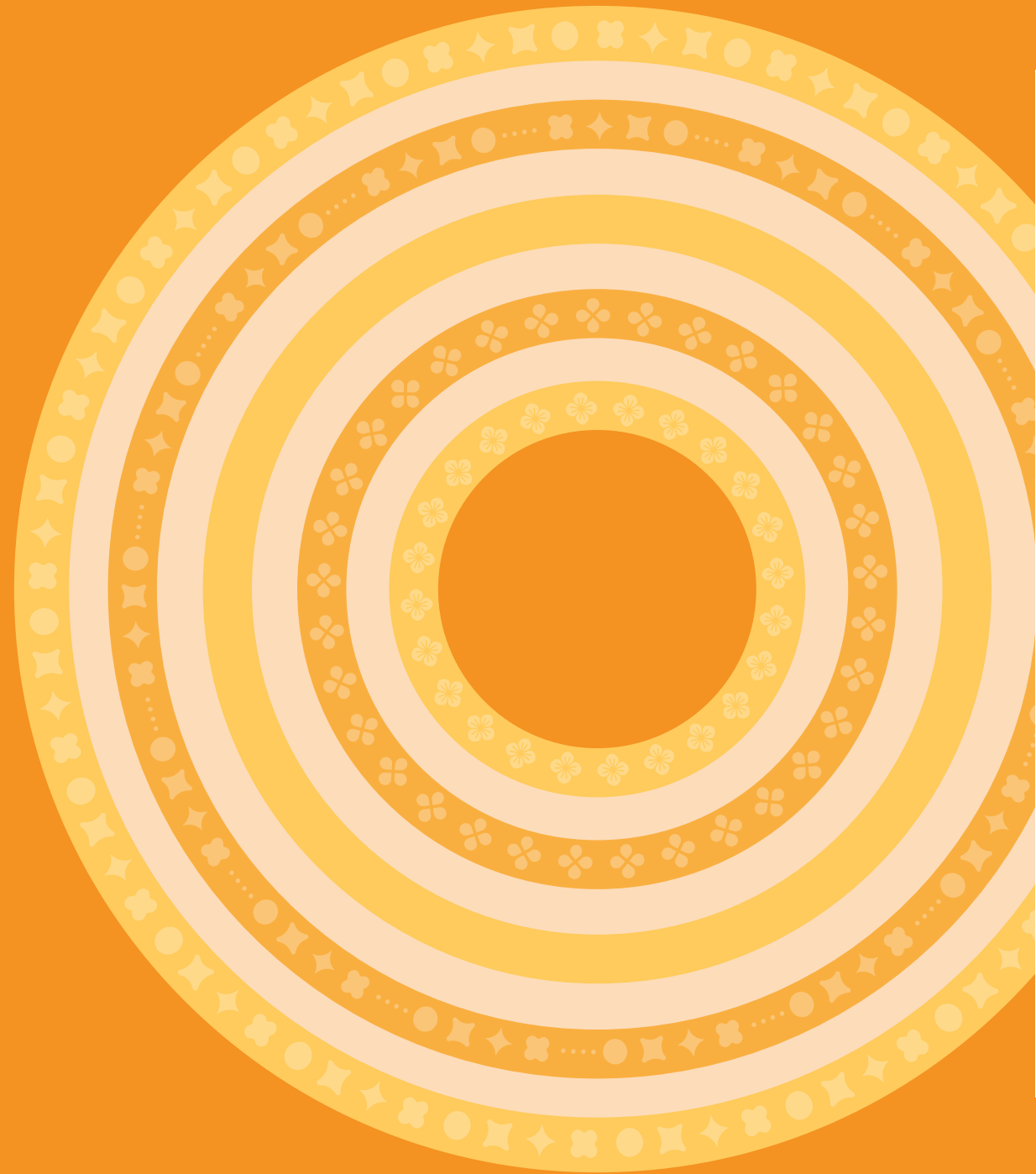
The Istana will also undergo major restoration works from 2024 to preserve its infrastructure and serve as a venue for state events and community functions. Our aim is that these cultural assets can continue to stand the test of time as landmarks of Singapore's historical legacy and to enrich the lives of future generations of Singaporeans.

“Our expressions of heritage are a powerful reflection of both our individual and collective identities, illuminating the rich diversity of our communities. Through the preservation of our material culture, historic sites, and intangible cultural heritage, we can weave a strong social fabric that connects us all.”



Celestial Bodies, a lawn installation displayed at the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall in 2022.

Heritage x Community



Heritage is a powerful tool that can unite communities, create a sense of belonging and strengthen social bonds. By embracing the practices, beliefs and histories of diverse communities in Singapore, we can appreciate their distinctiveness while celebrating our shared humanity.

Using heritage to develop common ground across communities has always been part of our core mission. By engaging people in heritage-related activities and discussions, we can promote empathy and mutual respect within and across communities, particularly in a time when differences can lead to hostility and intolerance. In this next phase, we aim to create even greater access to heritage across the island and enable it to form bridges between Singaporeans from all walks of life.

Going forward, we want to further equip Singaporeans from diverse backgrounds to jointly create heritage-related content and projects. We believe that heritage belongs to everyone, and we want to empower and engage Singaporeans to tell our stories and advocate for our rich multicultural identities. With greater co-ownership of our heritage, Singaporeans will feel more invested in promoting and celebrating our histories, and we as a society can be collectively enriched by a richer well of experiences and insights, and build a better future together.

Xavier Lee (seventh from left), the current owner of Loong Fatt Tau Sar Piah, with his family and staff. The display case showing the business's heritage is part of NHB's Street Corner Heritage Galleries programme.



A connected people anchored in our shared heritage and invested in telling our collective story

1. Establish Heritage Activation Nodes with the community to enliven our heartlands and increase access to heritage.
2. Deepen engagement with youth to encourage them to participate in and advocate for heritage.
3. Pioneer heritage-based interventions for health and well-being.
4. Promote and boost volunteerism.
5. Strengthen community capabilities in heritage.

Enlivening Our Heartlands through Heritage

Our heritage is an important part of what makes Singapore unique, and we believe that everyone should have the chance to learn, experience and enjoy our heritage. Hence, NHB will work closely with the community to create more places where people can experience and participate in heritage across Singapore.

In the first heritage master plan, we successfully launched Community Galleries in Kreta Ayer and Geylang Serai. In this next phase, we aspire to go beyond the historic precincts and seed Heritage Activation Nodes in neighbourhoods across the island. We will partner

interested stakeholders to activate these spaces through programmes such as street festivals, guided heritage walking tours, and pop-up installations and exhibitions. We also plan to extend and enhance our existing heritage assets, including our *Street Corner Heritage Galleries* programme and Heritage Trails, to cover new areas.

Finally, our aim is also to grow the pool of heritage champions, equipping them with skills and involving them in the co-curation of spaces at the selected nodes. By empowering communities to participate in the creation and delivery of heritage activities, we can increase our sense of ownership and pride in our shared history, and build a stronger, more resilient and cohesive Singapore.



Visitors watching a Chinese puppetry performance at the Kreta Ayer Heritage Gallery, the first community gallery of its kind dedicated to intangible cultural heritage.

Collaborating with community to create heritage experiences

Engaging with the community to co-create heritage experiences is a powerful way to capture the social memories of different places in Singapore. By sharing our stories and lived experiences, we contribute to the rich tapestry of our multicultural, multi-racial identity.

At the heart of our community outreach projects are the *Street Corner Heritage Galleries*, Heritage Trails, and Community Galleries. Through these initiatives, we partner with past and present residents, community institutions and heritage businesses to showcase the unique history and culture of various neighbourhoods. The community's contributions of stories, photographs and artefacts enrich our knowledge of these places and the people who lived there.

The benefits of these collaborations extend beyond documenting and sharing our cultural heritage – they also strengthen our bonds with our neighbours and fellow Singaporeans. For example, the *Street Corner Heritage Galleries* at Kampong Gelam not only showcased the histories of various heritage trades in the area, but also boosted a sense of community pride among long-time business owners. The initiative also had a significant impact on local business owners. For some, the project reinforced their commitment to safeguard their traditions and pass it down to future generations.¹

We believe that Singapore's heritage belongs to every Singaporean, and we hope our communities will continue to play a vital role in the preservation and promotion of our culture and traditions.

¹ 'Faces and Places: Street Corner Heritage Galleries'. MUSE SG No. 45. Volume 15, Issue 2 (July 2022): 36



Fauziah Rani of VSS Varusai Mohamed & Sons (centre), who runs a 88-year-old business in Kampong Gelam selling accessories for the Haj pilgrimage with her siblings, said that participating in the Street Corner Heritage Galleries programme had strengthened her resolve to safeguard the heritage of her shop.



Students from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts conducting a heritage trail of the Malay Heritage Centre and Kampong Gelam for pre-schoolers.

Inspiring Youth and Harnessing Youthful Energy

We want to cultivate lifelong heritage enthusiasts from a young age who will appreciate and value the significance of our cultural practices and traditions. As such, our heritage offerings have always taken into account our young audiences, whether it is in designing education packs or conducting school tours.

Under HP2, we will deepen our engagement with youths and create more opportunities for young people to contribute to heritage-related causes. Our goal is to provide more platforms for youths to share their perspectives and insights, such as through the creation of the first Youth Heritage Blueprint. Driven by the NHB Youth Panel, the blueprint will offer

guidance on how to strengthen and sustain youth interest and involvement in museums and heritage – as recommended by youths themselves.

To empower young people to take an active role in preserving Singapore's heritage, we will increase youth participation through exciting and new ways, such as by exploring youth takeovers of our social media platforms. We will also establish a grant to provide funding to youths who are keen to kickstart projects that promote heritage to their peers. Through these efforts, we hope to inspire, nurture and build the capabilities of the next generation of heritage enthusiasts who will provide fresh perspectives, drive change and become advocates of Singapore's rich cultural heritage.

Connecting youth to Singapore's heritage

Heritage is more than just a relic of the past; it is a torch that illuminates our present and guides us towards our future. We believe that the youth are the key to preserving our cultural heritage for generations to come. That is why we have been actively engaging with young people and integrating their voices into the heritage scene through various initiatives.

Our partnerships with schools have allowed us to provide opportunities for youths to deepen their skills and showcase their talents. For example, we have trained student interviewers in oral history techniques through the National Museum of Singapore's Student Archivist Project and worked with ITE College students to create 3D models of historical objects using their digital skills.

We are also proud to have collaborated with Youth Corps Singapore to train young volunteers and give back to our society through *HeritageCares* programmes that benefit underserved communities.

To take our efforts even further, we established a NHB Youth Panel in 2021. This gives young people a platform to share their thoughts on our initiatives and offer valuable insights on how we can make heritage even more relevant to them. By getting young people involved today, we hope to cultivate a sense of ownership and stewardship for our cultural heritage in the generations to come.



The NHB Youth Panel visiting The Doraemon Exhibition Singapore 2022 at the National Museum of Singapore.

Pioneering Heritage-based Interventions for Health & Well-being

Experiencing heritage in its various forms, such as admiring the beautiful artefacts in a museum or enjoying street opera and traditional music, can excite our senses and stimulate our minds and bodies. Participating in heritage activities, like visiting historic sites, learning traditional crafts or volunteering for heritage causes, can make us feel more confident, hopeful and connected to others.

With this in mind, we want to use our heritage resources to improve the personal well-being of Singaporeans.

We will develop more heritage-based intervention programmes to support well-being. For example, we will work with hospitals and social care partners to introduce heritage programmes that promote social bonding and physical well-being for people in their care.

To better understand the benefits of heritage, NHB will also commission research into how heritage participation translates into positive health outcomes, and how such learnings could be applied to develop heritage programmes and activities as social prescription that can support the well-being of Singaporeans. These efforts will also contribute to Healthier SG initiatives and aid in cultivating a caring society for all.

Young audiences participating in Kid's Day Out, a HeritageCares programme at the Asian Civilisations Museum.



A volunteer guide leading a group of participants on a Monumental Walking Tour in Kampong Gelam.

Engendering Volunteerism

Volunteers are important ambassadors for heritage. Whether they act as guides, interpreters or advocates, volunteers work hard to keep history alive and share their heritage experiences with others. Over the years, NHB's family of volunteers has continued to grow from strength to strength, counting amongst them museum docents, as well as individuals who are simply passionate about Singapore's history and heritage.

Because volunteers are such key advocates, we want to further grow and diversify our volunteer pool and volunteer opportunities — so that we can reach out to as many demographics as possible on different platforms. This includes exploring digital volunteering opportunities to reach out to people who consume heritage content online.

We will also train interested volunteers to become Inclusivity Champions who are skilled in working with persons with disabilities. These Champions will assist museums and heritage institutions in creating programmes that are more inclusive and accommodating for visitors with special needs. With their support, we can break down barriers to access to heritage, so that everyone in society can enjoy the benefits of experiencing and participating in our shared heritage.

Strengthening Community Capabilities

Our community is more than just an audience for heritage content. We have talented and dedicated individuals who can take on roles such as advocates, researchers, writers, curators and project leaders. NHB wants to empower more people to not only participate in heritage programmes, but also create their own heritage projects for other Singaporeans to enjoy. As more people contribute their unique perspectives and efforts, our heritage scene will become more dynamic, vibrant and exciting.

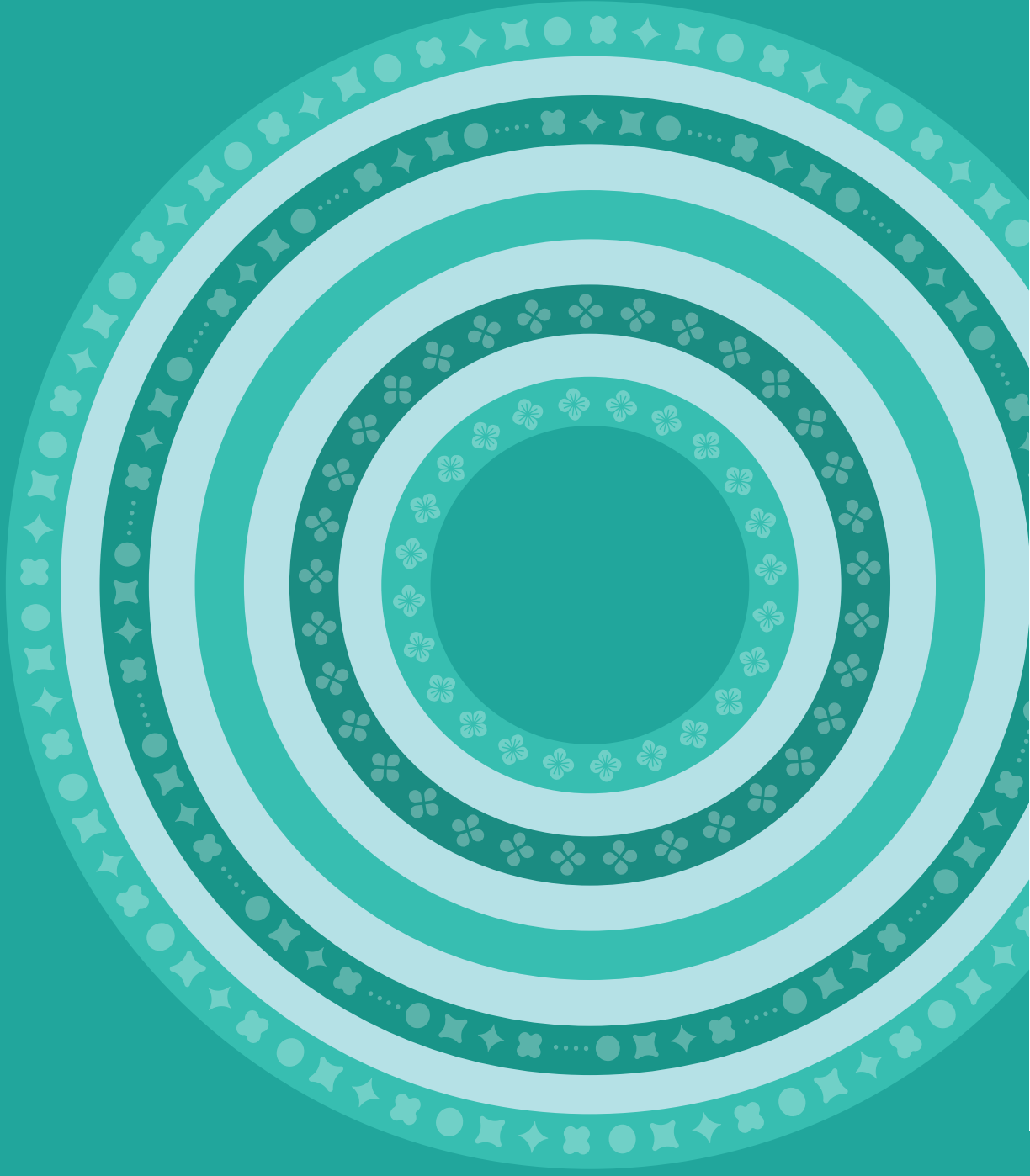
To support and strengthen community capabilities, we will create more opportunities to bring together grassroots organisations, community groups and volunteers to share heritage information and develop networks for new ideas. NHB will also provide guidance on how to scope, start and sustain heritage projects, providing a practical resource for anyone interested in starting a heritage project. Our goal is to encourage more people to kick start their own heritage initiatives and contribute to a vibrant and thriving heritage scene.

“Heritage is a powerful tool that can unite communities, create a sense of belonging and strengthen social bonds. By embracing the practices, beliefs and histories of diverse communities in Singapore, we can appreciate their distinctiveness while celebrating our shared humanity.”



Community stakeholders attending a Heritage Grants Clinic to network and share their experiences in carrying out heritage projects.

Heritage x Industry

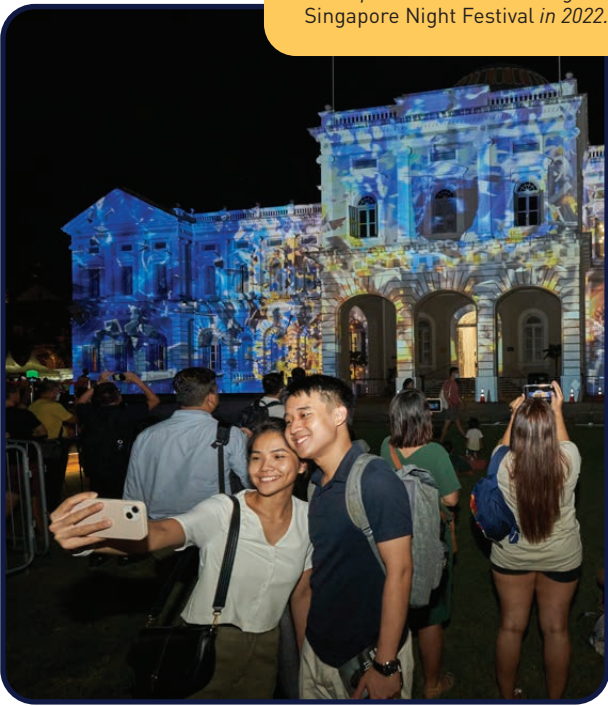


Heritage and museums are a crucial part of Singapore’s creative and cultural sector. They inspire artists and designers, contribute to the vibrancy of our cultural calendar, and give Singapore a unique identity that sets us apart from other destinations.

NHB recognises the economic potential of heritage and aims to use it to invigorate Singapore’s cultural industries and boost our cultural capital both at home and abroad. We want to cultivate a vibrant heritage ecosystem that provides opportunities for everyone, from state-funded museums to private businesses, community groups, and intangible cultural heritage practitioners, as well as to those in related industries.

This is an emerging area of work, as opposed to our core and perennial priorities in Identity and Community. We understand that different players require different forms of support, and we aspire to bring everyone together towards the common goal of safeguarding and promoting our heritage. Given the many opportunities ahead, we are eager to forge new paths in making heritage penetrate and benefit different sectors, and to improve the sustainability of heritage businesses and careers. We are excited to unlock the economic potential of the heritage sector, tap into new opportunities, and take it to new heights.

A couple takes a selfie during the Singapore Night Festival in 2022.



A vibrant heritage ecosystem that values people, connects with industry and creates opportunities for Singaporeans

- 1. Support the sustainability of heritage businesses and the transmission of traditional skills.
- 2. Transform Armenian Street into a precinct for craft and creativity.
- 3. Showcase our collections and stories overseas to enhance the Singapore brand.
- 4. Strengthen the capabilities of heritage professionals within the heritage and museum sector.

Supporting Heritage Businesses

Heritage businesses are the heart and soul of Singapore’s rich cultural heritage. They are the keepers of traditional crafts and practices, providing us with a glimpse into our unique identity and history. However, these businesses are not immune to the challenges of changing times. With shifting consumer patterns and evolving social customs, some of them may be struggling to stay afloat or find successors to carry on their legacy.

We understand the importance of supporting these businesses in their journey towards sustainability. We believe

that innovation is key to ensuring their continued success. Hence, we have piloted the Organisation Transformation Grant in 2021 to help heritage businesses transform their operations and develop creative solutions for business continuity. For instance, they could use the grant to revamp their website or rebrand a line of products, making them more appealing to new customers.

We are committed to continuing our efforts to support heritage businesses under HP2. By providing them with opportunities and assistance to innovate, we hope to help these businesses thrive and continue to enrich our cultural landscape for generations to come.



Steamed soy beans being removed from the boiler at Nanyang Sauce’s factory. Nanyang Sauce was a recipient of the inaugural Organisation Transformation Grant in 2021.

Innovating to tap on new opportunities

Based in Neil Road, Say Tian Hng Buddha Shop is a 100-year-old heritage business that makes wooden effigies of traditional Taoist and Buddhist deities. As demand for such effigies is on the decline, its fourth-generation owner, Ng Tze Yong, faced the challenge of reinventing the family business so that it could adapt to changing consumer patterns while retaining its core cultural values.

Ng tapped on NHB’s Organisation Transformation Grant to develop a series of educational workshops based on traditional Chinese myths and fables, such as *Journey to the West* and *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. Initially, these programmes, which were developed in tandem with education and arts

practitioners, were meant to be an experiment in diversifying the shop’s offerings. Over time, the programmes have evolved into a new business arm called Academy of Classical Culture, which offers workshops tailored to different ages. These experiential workshops are themed around a virtue, such as Loyalty or Filial Piety, and use games, props, storytelling, music and movement, to illustrate a story.

Say Tian Hng Buddha Shop’s new venture is just one example of the limitless possibilities and ideas that heritage businesses can develop to transform their business, while staying true to the core values that connect them to their history and identity.



Ng Tze Yong sharing with visitors on the different Chinese effigies that Say Tian Hng Buddha Shop produces.

Melding traditional craft with contemporary design

In 2021, NHB piloted the *Craft x Design* scheme with the aim of elevating the status of local traditional crafts and providing traditional craft practitioners access to new networks. Through an open call for design proposals, we paired four traditional craft practitioners with four local designers and studios. Together, they explored how traditional crafts can be transformed into innovative and modern products that embody Singapore’s diverse cultural heritage.

Over six months of collaboration, the craft practitioners and designers worked hand in hand to create product prototypes. These ranged from furniture to fashion to metalware, showcasing the

intersections of craft and design, culture and creativity, and tradition and modernity. We proudly presented the completed prototypes to the public in a travelling showcase from July 2022 to April 2023. Alongside the showcase, we organised public talks and workshops on craft and design to promote greater appreciation of traditional crafts.

Drawing on the success of *Craft x Design*, we are excited to create new opportunities and platforms to showcase our traditional craft and foster new collaborations that will bring together traditional craft, design, and other creative disciplines and industries.



As part of the pilot Craft x Design programme, ketupat weaver Anita Tompong (pictured) and designer Andrew Loh jointly designed contemporary modular furniture inspired by the ketupat raya, a distinctive symbol signifying the shared traditions and rituals of the Malay-Muslim community.

Transforming Armenian Street into a Creative and Craft Precinct

Armenian Street is in the heart of Singapore’s Bras Basah Bugis precinct, surrounded by some of our most cherished cultural institutions. With such an esteemed location, we envision it as a vibrant creative and craft hub that showcases the unique character of this special precinct.

We believe that by collaborating with businesses, artisans, and the arts community, we can develop Armenian Street into a hub that offers a range of lifestyle options. These could include pop-up shops selling merchandise inspired by Singapore’s crafts and traditions, as well as live events and

performances that celebrate our diverse people. As a venue for popular festivals such as the *Singapore Night Festival* and the *Armenian Street Party*, we also aim to work with creatives and craft practitioners to further enliven the area with exciting cultural experiences.

We aim to create a bustling environment where creative energies can collide, and visitors can experience the many facets of our cultural and heritage scene in one space. By cultivating Armenian Street as a hub for creative and cultural activity, we hope to promote a greater appreciation of Singapore’s rich heritage and identity, and inspire a new generation of artists, artisans, and entrepreneurs.



A performance by Jazz Pizzazz at Peranakan Museum along Armenian Street during the 2019 Singapore Night Festival.

Getting the whole precinct involved in placemaking

NHB's signature festivals, the *Singapore Night Festival* and *Singapore HeritageFest*, have become cultural staples that celebrate the multicultural heritage of Singapore. The festivals have grown stronger over the years and now involve a variety of precinct stakeholders, including museums, businesses, arts companies and creatives.

The *Singapore Night Festival*, which began in 2008, has transformed from an event featuring local and international artists' works into a celebration of the precinct's heritage identity, complete with façade projections, light installations, and dance and music performances. The festival serves as a platform for discovery and interaction, bringing together different actors in the local community to energise the Bras Basah.Bugis precinct and boost its unique, vibrant identity.

The *Singapore HeritageFest*, which began in 2004, has become a highly anticipated annual celebration of Singapore's rich and diverse multicultural heritage. The festival is community-driven, with events and programmes co-curated and jointly presented with public and private agencies, heritage associations, educational institutions, and passionate individuals working on heritage projects.

In 2021, the festival had its first hybrid format and charted a new path for a brand identity based around a theme rather than the heritage of specific neighbourhoods and precincts. As the festival celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2023, it will continue to enlist the participation of diverse stakeholders to co-create content that makes heritage relatable and relevant to all Singaporeans.



Heritage enthusiast Jerome Lim conducting a guided tour of the Bras Basah.Bugis precinct for Singapore HeritageFest in 2019.



Treasures from the Asian Civilisations Museum's Tang Shipwreck collection being displayed at the Shanghai Museum from September 2020 to January 2021.

Internationalising Our Collection and Stories

With our rich culture, highly developed heritage ecology and stellar infrastructure, Singapore is strongly poised to be a regional leader in heritage and museum management. To further bolster our global standing in this area, we are excited to embark on an Internationalisation Strategy to share Singapore's dynamic and storied heritage with the world.

We aim to partner with like-minded organisations to co-present and travel Singapore content and materials abroad, including exhibitions, programmes and products inspired by our heritage. By

promoting our cultural heritage abroad, we hope to attract new audiences for our institutions and new markets for our designers and producers.

Ultimately, we hope that our distinctive heritage and heritage-inspired designs, as well as the professional expertise of our museums and the heritage sector, will become a cultural asset that is globally admired and widely sought after. This can in turn create exciting new economic opportunities that will lift our cultural sector to new heights and ultimately benefit our entire heritage ecosystem.

Cultivating Heritage Professionals

Heritage professionals are the backbone of the heritage field, working tirelessly to preserve and share our cultural heritage with the world. From curators to conservators and researchers, they all play an essential role in ensuring that our history remains alive and relevant for generations to come.

We believe that working in this sector should be a fulfilling and rewarding career choice. Hence, we are excited to partner with institutes of higher learning to co-develop and implement innovative

heritage projects that give young people the opportunity to professionalise and form early networks. From mentorships and work placements to research projects and workshops, we are committed to providing valuable learning opportunities for the heritage professionals of tomorrow.

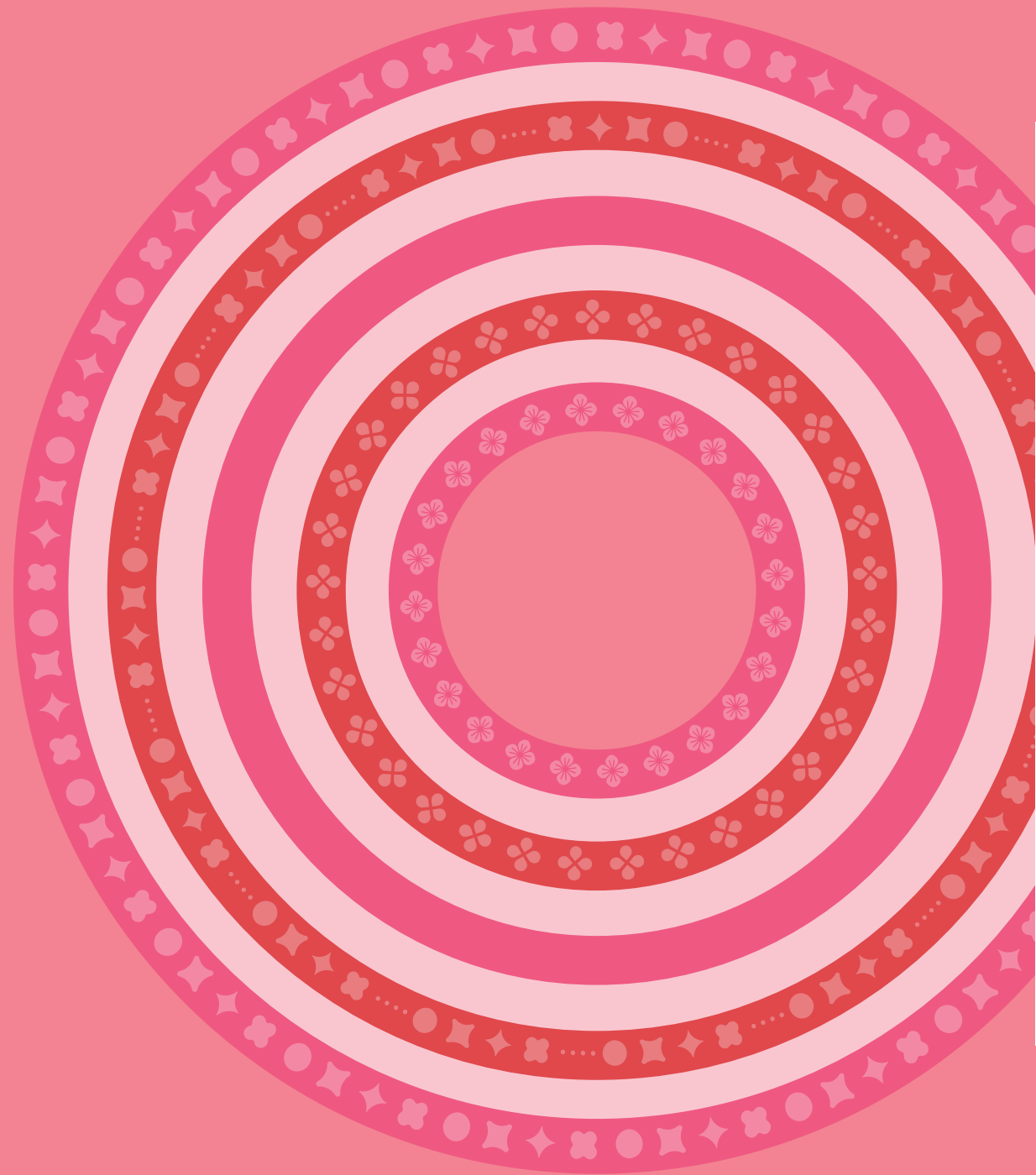
Through these initiatives, we hope to inspire and empower the next generation of heritage practitioners to carry the torch forward. By nurturing and cultivating their passion for heritage, we can ensure that our cultural legacy remains vibrant and continues to enrich the lives of all those who come after us.



Students from Singapore Management University pose for a group photo after completing an SMU-X module with NHB. During the module, they brainstormed and developed recommendations on making heritage more accessible and engaging to the youth.

“Heritage and museums are a crucial part of Singapore’s creative and cultural sector. They inspire artists and designers, contribute to the vibrancy of our cultural calendar, and give Singapore a unique identity that sets us apart from other destinations.”

Heritage x Innovation



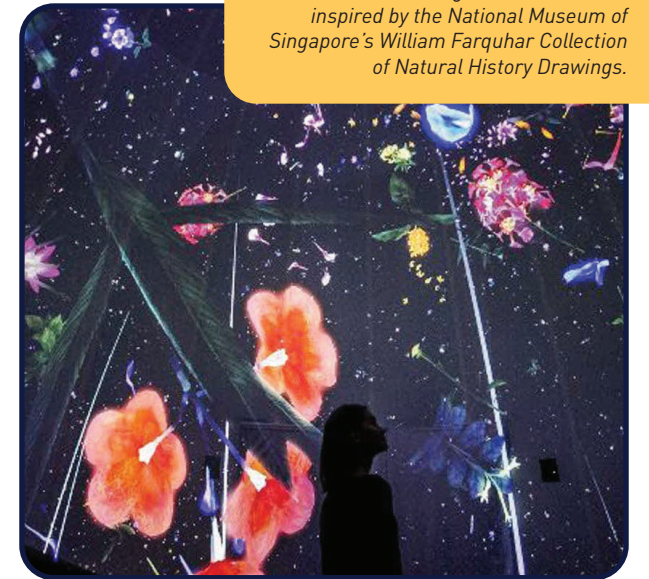
The digital revolution is transforming the way we live, and the heritage sector is no exception. To make our multicultural history more accessible and engaging for everyone, we must adapt to the changing habits and expectations of a more connected public.

Digitisation opens up new possibilities for sharing heritage content with audiences all over the world. By creating digital archives and virtual exhibitions, we can reach people who may never have had the chance to visit our physical spaces. It also allows us to create exciting and immersive experiences that can be enjoyed both online and offline.

We have already made great strides in this area during the pandemic, and we aim to continue innovating and finding new ways to enhance the public's interactions with heritage. As we move forward, we are also committed to making our museums more sustainable and driving new research in conservation and collection care.

An emerging but important area of work, we believe that innovation is key to staying relevant and exciting to audiences. Over the next five years, we aim to drive innovation across multiple levels of the heritage sector and model best practices. Our goal is to build a museum and heritage scene that is infused with the spirit of creativity and innovation, and ready to meet the future head-on.

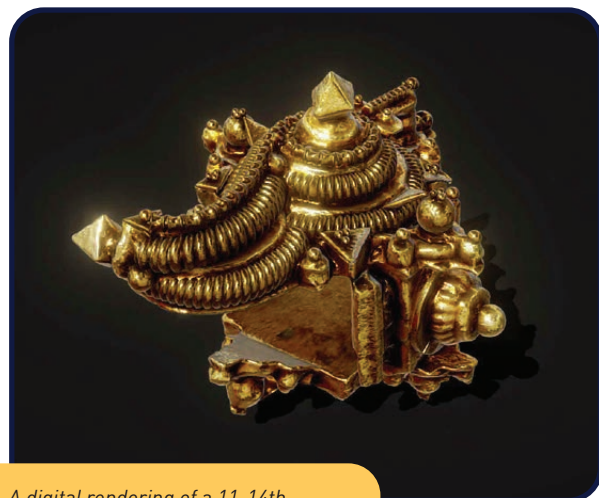
A visitor looking at Story of the Forest, an immersive digital art installation inspired by the National Museum of Singapore's William Farquhar Collection of Natural History Drawings.



A future-ready heritage sector powered by innovation and creativity

1. Enhance heritage interactions through cutting-edge technology.
2. Use smart robotics and AI to support museum functions and enrich visitor experiences.
3. Deepen engagement with heritage through delivering personalised content and recommendations.
4. Foster a sustainability-minded heritage and museum sector for a climate-resilient future.
5. Driving new research in conservation science and collection care at the Heritage Conservation Centre.

Fresh Ways to Appreciate Heritage



A digital rendering of a 11-14th century conch shell-shaped ear pendant from the Asian Civilisations Museum collection (1997-03805). The tiny object, which measures no more than 2cm, can be studied in detail in its 3D form.

With the rise of the metaverse and immersive online experiences, NHB is excited to harness these cutting-edge developments to transform the way people interact with heritage. Under HP2, we are committed to staying at the forefront of these exciting developments and creating even more opportunities for people to engage with our rich cultural heritage.

To position ourselves for this exciting new era, we are exploring the development of a 3D digital assets repository that showcases our important objects and buildings in vivid detail. This online catalogue will include 3D models of important monuments and sites, as well as artefacts from our National Collection. We believe that these 3D models will be invaluable resources for teachers, researchers, and heritage lovers of all kinds.

We are also eager to tap into the latest innovations and developments in the metaverse platforms and work with creators in this fast-growing field to create digital assets that truly engage and excite heritage enthusiasts and technophiles alike. Our goal is to create ambitious and experiential digital experiences that showcase the depth and richness of our cultural heritage like never before.

Opening up new heritage experiences: Virtual Kampong Gelam

Transforming heritage experiences with digitisation can create new ways of engaging with our cultural past, and *Virtual Kampong Gelam* is a shining example of this. In collaboration with a tech company, NHB created an interactive digital replica of the Malay Heritage Centre and Kampong Gelam area. Complete with 3D scans of the Sultan Mosque's golden dome and other features, users can explore, learn, play games, take quizzes, and earn rewards.

The digital twin, named *Virtual Kampong Gelam*, was just the beginning of NHB's efforts to use digital technology to ignite curiosity and interest in heritage places and practices. After the pandemic situation improved in 2022, we hosted *Heritage Hunter*, a treasure hunt that

straddled the virtual and physical worlds, on *Virtual Kampong Gelam*. We believe that digital experiences can complement, not replace, the physical experience of heritage. That is why our game required players to visit the historic precinct to search for clues.

Looking ahead, we are developing six exciting digital projects that draw on Kampong Gelam's artistic and historical identity. These include a retro-futuristic art trail, a culinary-themed microsite with games and a chatbot, and a web-hosted 3D virtual escape room game set in the precinct. Moving forward, we will continue to innovate and explore new possibilities to create meaningful and immersive heritage experiences for all.



Virtual Kampong Gelam provides users with an augmented exploration of the historic Kampong Gelam precinct using digital replicas.

Getting Smart With Technology

From behind-the-scenes operations to visitor experience, NHB has been on an ongoing journey to use technology and data analytics to improve our museums across the spectrum. For instance, we introduced TEMI, a friendly robot that leads tours at Changi Chapel and Museum. In HP2, we will continue to explore the use of smart robotics to make museums more interactive and engaging.

We also know that AI and data-driven technologies can streamline our operations and improve decision-making. With tools like chatbots, analytics, and security systems, we can create more personalised and efficient experiences for our visitors. By embracing the latest innovations, we will unlock exciting new possibilities and continue to push the boundaries of what is possible.

The fully autonomous robot, TEMI, conducts tours for visitors at Changi Chapel and Museum.



Enhancing Engagement

We believe that our museums and heritage institutions are unique and valuable treasures that deserve to be enjoyed and cherished by all. With so many options available to people today, we understand the importance of creating engaging and meaningful experiences that capture the imagination and interest of our visitors.

To achieve this, we are constantly exploring new ways to connect with our audiences and keep them engaged with heritage. By harnessing the power of technology, we aim to better

understand our visitors and tailor our content and recommendations to their interests and preferences. Through machine learning and other innovative tools, we can provide personalised experiences that leave a lasting impression.

Our ultimate goal is to ignite a passion for heritage in everyone we reach, and we believe that technology can play a key role in achieving this. By staying on the cutting edge of new developments and finding creative ways to leverage technology, we can continue to inspire and delight our audiences for years to come.



Young visitors playing with A Harbour of History by 360VR Asia, a prototype project under the 2018 DigiMuse programme.

Innovating with smart robotics and 3D digital assets

Looking to the future, NHB is excited to explore new technologies and partnerships to drive innovation in the heritage sector. By leveraging robotics and the Internet of Things (IoT), which involves sensors that take in real-time data from the environment, we can create adaptable and personalised museum experiences for visitors. At the Changi Chapel and Museum, we have already introduced an IoT-powered robot guide, TEMI, that can navigate its surroundings, communicate in multiple languages, and adjust its volume depending on ambient noise.

In addition, 3D scanning and mapping technologies offer exciting possibilities for preserving and sharing our heritage.

For example, we have created a 3D model of the Changi Murals, which allows people to explore the original site virtually, even if it is now in a restricted area. We are also scanning and documenting our National Monuments, historic sites, buildings, and artefacts from the National Collection. These 3D assets can be used for interactive and gamified experiences, such as Augmented Reality applications, or for archival, education, and research purposes.

We are even exploring how 3D printing can provide accurate and detailed replicas of artefacts. By embracing these technologies, we can create new opportunities for accessibility, education, and merchandising.



A 3D model of the Changi Murals, which allows people to explore the original site virtually.

A More Sustainable Museum Sector

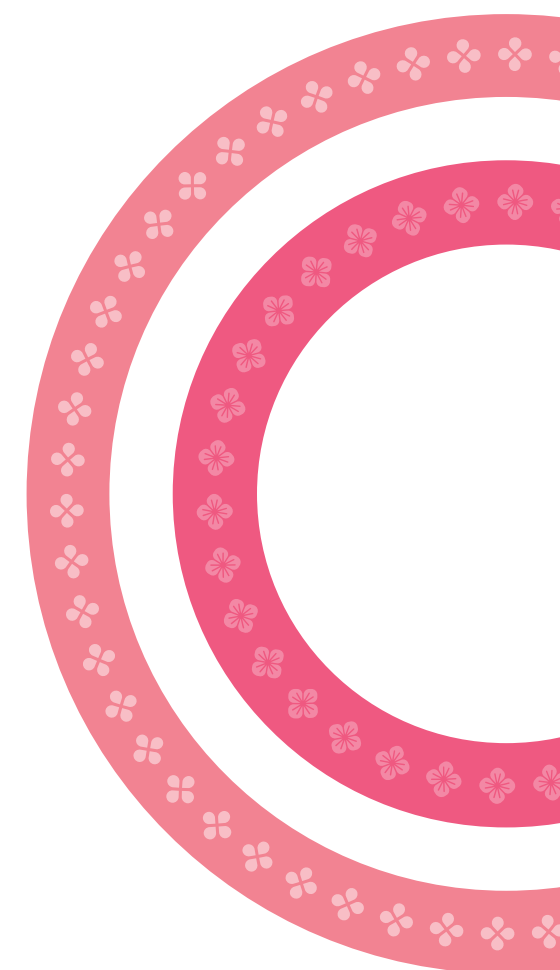
As countries all around the world are recognising the urgency of the climate crisis and museums globally are playing a more proactive role in reducing their environmental impact, NHB will also explore new initiatives to promote environmentally sustainable practices and adopt best practices in the museum and heritage sector.

Through HP2, we aim to position our museums as leaders in environmental awareness for the heritage sector and pave the way for a sustainable and resilient future. We will organise knowledge-sharing platforms such as conferences, seminars and forums to raise awareness of environmental sustainability in the heritage sector. Additionally, we will promote public awareness through our exhibitions, programmes and festivals, ensuring that everyone can play a part in building a greener future.

All of our museums and heritage institutions are already Green Mark-certified, and we are always looking for new ways to incorporate sustainable energy measures and features in new developments like the Founders' Memorial. To further our efforts, NHB will commission research studies on environmental sustainability in the areas of built heritage and conservation science, as well as promote sustainable practices in the heritage sector. With these efforts, we hope to contribute to the Singapore Green Plan and help build a more sustainable future for all.



Solar panels installed at the Heritage Conservation Centre.



New Frontiers for Heritage Conservation

Since its opening in 2000, the Heritage Conservation Centre (HCC) has been preserving and safeguarding the National Collection of more than 250,000 artefacts and artworks. In our next phase, we aim to spread innovative thinking and practices throughout the HCC so that we can more sustainably care for our collection and share our professional expertise with the world.

We are actively exploring the most effective use of new and traditional technologies to care for our expanding collection, including objects of contemporary design and maritime archaeology. Ultimately, our goal is to safeguard our treasures sustainably, to ensure that our current and future generations of Singaporeans can continue to enjoy, learn and draw inspirations from them.

Secondly, we aspire to contribute to thought leadership in conservation. HCC is actively seeking partnerships with institutions and relevant stakeholders to collaborate on research projects, with a special emphasis on collection care in a tropical climate such as ours. We will share our knowledge and expertise through workshops and conferences for local, regional and international collection stewards.

Finally, we are continuing to build the professional capabilities of our conservators. By consolidating existing expertise in conservation science and deepening our capabilities in new types of objects, such as time-based media art or design, we are ensuring we are best equipped with the latest know-how to care for our National Collection. Our goal is to uplift the skills and knowledge across the conservation department, so we are always at the forefront of professional knowledge in the field.



Senior Conservator (Paper)
Phyllis Koh examines the surface
of a drawing using a microscope.

“The digital revolution is transforming the way we live, and the heritage sector is no exception. To make our multicultural history more accessible and engaging for everyone, we must adapt to the changing habits and expectations of a more connected public.”

Audiences enjoying a traditional drum performance as part of the Singapore HeritageFest at Bukit Pasoh.



Conclusion

Heritage can enliven our national conversations about what it means to be Singaporean, and strengthen our sense of community and the roots of our belonging. It can build bridges within and across communities, promoting mutual respect and understanding. That is why our core priorities, Identity and Community, have been there since our inception and remain relevant today. We will strive to continually deepen our efforts towards building a sense of national identity and community, by preserving and celebrating our rich multicultural heritage.

Heritage is a collective responsibility and is enriched by the participation of everyone in society. Going forward, we envision the future of Singapore's heritage to be even more participatory. We want the voices, efforts and actions of all Singaporeans to be included into our heritage programmes, events, content and plans, so that we can tap on our diverse, multifaceted experiences and talents.

Heritage can also be new, exciting and inspiring. It can stimulate new ideas, novel ways of connecting to each other and even creative new products. It can provide fresh avenues of exploration, knowledge and applications. Although it is rooted in the past, heritage can revitalise our present and future.

Our two new strategic directions, Industry and Innovation, engage with heritage in more innovative ways to rejuvenate the

sector and to unlock more of its possibilities. The future will be a landscape increasingly enmeshed with technology, the virtual realms and interactive platforms. Using the latest digital tools, we want to reach out to new audiences and enhance their experiences with heritage. We also want to tap on opportunities to create a thriving heritage ecosystem that benefits all.

At the end of the next five years, we hope to bring the heritage scene to new heights. We want to further deepen our insights and understanding of the Singapore identity; create more heritage content with Singaporeans to strengthen our social cohesion; cultivate a vibrant heritage ecosystem with opportunities for all; and improve access to our heritage through technology.

We believe that the future of Singapore's heritage sector remains bright so long as it retains our collective commitment and involvement. We invite you to come onboard this journey as we celebrate our shared history and forge a new, exhilarating future for Singapore's heritage scene that benefits us for generations to come.

Credits

The National Heritage Board would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all who have journeyed with us in developing Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0.



The NHB Board, Advisory Boards and Panels

- A

ADM Gallery, NTU School of Art, Design & Media
ArtScience Museum
Association of Singapore Attractions
ATinyMaker
- B

Bynd Artisan
- C

Canberra Community Club
Centre for Liveable Cities
Chinatown Business Association
Citizen Adventures
Common Ground
Culture Curious Singapore Tours
CYC Made to Measure
- D

DesignSingapore Council
DP Architects
- E

Eastfield Ceramics
Economic Development Board
Engineering Good
Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay
- F

Faire Leather
Friends of the Museum
- G

Gan Heritage Centre
Gin Lee Studios
GovTech Singapore
Green Nudge
Grey Projects
- H

Happiness Initiative
Harmony Centre
Harmony in Diversity Gallery
Health Promotion Board
Healthserve
- I

ICOMOS SG
IfThenHow
Interracial Family Singapore
Inter-Religious Organisation Singapore
ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute
ITE College Central

- K

Khoo Teck Puat Hospital
Klook
- L

Lanzavecchia + Wai Designers
LASALLE College of the Arts
Lien Foundation
Little India Shopkeepers & Heritage Association
- M

Mandarin Docents
Mandarin Guides
Mercury Marketing and Communications
Ministry of Education
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Health
MINT Museum of Toys
MUIS
Museum Hosts
Museum Volunteers
My Community
- N

Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts
Nanyang Technological University
National Arts Council
National Council of Churches of Singapore
National Environment Agency
National Gallery Singapore
National Institute of Education
National Library Board
National Parks Board
National University of Singapore
National Youth Council
NUS Baba House
- O

Objectifs
Olivia Lee Associates
One Kampong Gelam
OnePeople.sg
Our Grandfather Story
- P

People’s Association
- R

Republic Polytechnic
- S

Science Centre Singapore
Sikh Advisory Board
SINDA
Singapore Art Museum
Singapore Discovery Centre
Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations
Singapore Heritage Society
Singapore Kindness Movement
Singapore Land Authority
Singapore Management University
Singapore Memories
Singapore Polytechnic
Singapore Tourism Board
Singapore University of Social Sciences
SmolTok
St Joseph’s Institution
Stroke Support Station
Superhero Me
- T

Tan Tock Seng Hospital
Temasek
Temasek Polytechnic
The Cinnamon Room
The Emporium Group
The Majurity Trust
Total Heritage
- U

Urban Redevelopment Authority
- W

Wearable Crafts
Wing Tai Holdings

go.gov.sg/hp2-website



Scan the QR code to visit
Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0 website

