

**ENGAGING**  
MINDS

**EXCHANGING**  
IDEAS

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# ABOUT IPS

The Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) was established in 1988 as an independent think-tank to study and generate public policy ideas in Singapore. IPS became an autonomous research centre of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore in 2008. Today, IPS continues to analyse public policy, build bridges between thought leaders, and communicate its findings to a wide audience. The Institute examines issues of critical national interest across a variety of fields, and studies the attitudes and aspirations of Singaporeans through surveys of public perception. It adopts a multi-disciplinary approach in its analyses and takes the long-term view in its strategic deliberation and research. For more information about IPS, visit <http://lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/ips/>

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# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Polyphony: the combination of a number of parts in perfect harmony, each humming an individual melody yet harmonising with the other. It is the creation of a collective whole from disparate components. What does polyphony in Singapore sound like? How will we deal with increasing pluralism in society? Which form of governance will best accommodate these changes? These pertinent questions, among others, will continue to fuel discussions in an increasingly diverse Singapore.

The Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) plays a vital role in this aspect. Our five research clusters and the IPS Social Lab have developed competencies in recognisable areas over the years and completed major projects, many of which have pushed the envelope in social policy research. In the last two years, IPS has looked closely at how digital engagement can impact governance, the social and fiscal implications of an ageing population, the cost challenges facing SMEs, how Singaporeans and civil society can navigate new pluralisms and what policies we need to strengthen our Singapore identity and remain an inclusive society. During the General Election in 2015, we collected real-time data through surveys conducted before, during and after the election campaign, the first such electoral data collection. Subsequently, we convened a conference to present our analysis of the election, including the influence of media on voter behaviour. The IPS Social Lab continues with its Singapore Panel Study on Social Dynamics to make sense of our changing, multicultural population. In the following pages of this report, my colleagues will say more about the specific projects they are spearheading.

There have been other noteworthy events. By December 2016, we published 25 volumes of *Singapore Chronicles*, a 50-volume series to record, explain and offer insights into what makes Singapore, Singapore. *Singapore Chronicles* covers a wide range of subjects and has a civic purpose. The volumes target the intelligent lay reader, especially young Singaporeans, and tell the story of Singapore from a variety of angles. The titles include Constitution, Presidency, CPF, Environment, Theatre, Food, Education and Heritage and they are available in bookstores.

In July 2015, we organised the Singapore at 50: What Lies Ahead? (SG50+) conference where we discussed how Singaporeans could prepare themselves for a

more volatile and uncertain world. Notably, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong was interviewed by CNN's Fareed Zakaria on leadership succession — an issue that has since taken the spotlight with the passing of the nation's founding leaders.

At Singapore Perspectives 2016, I spoke about our National Pledge and how the "We" in our pledge took shape as the story of our island-nation unfolded. As we became more confident that a Singaporean national identity was not only possible but was beginning to take shape, the "We" became more substantial and the Pledge became a more powerful statement of our ideals.

In looking ahead to the future, it must always be possible to say "we, the citizens of Singapore"; that the elaboration of a "We" does not require the obliteration of differences — racial, religious or linguistic; that we accept our pluralities — political and social; that acquiring a deeper national identity shall always be a matter of becoming more than the sum of our parts, not less.

Singapore will undoubtedly face many challenges in its next 50 years — in politics, society and the economy. IPS will continue to put forth research on these issues so as to inform national policy conversations. We are privileged to have in our midst dedicated researchers and staff. The IPS community values the collective "We" as well — from its longest serving staff to the interns who pass through its doors — as featured in this report. We hope that we can continue to count on your friendship and support as we carry out our mission.



Janadas Devan  
Director  
Institute of Policy Studies

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# RESEARCH UPDATES AND ACTIVITIES

IPS is the only think-tank in Singapore dedicated to the research and analysis of domestic policy issues. The Institute's core areas of research are:

- Arts, Culture and Media
- Demography and Family
- Economics and Business
- Politics and Governance
- Society and Identity

In addition, IPS has a dedicated centre for social indicators research — the IPS Social Lab. The Institute also takes on special projects that seek to promote a better understanding of Singapore public policy and administers the S R Nathan Fellowship for the Study of Singapore.

# ARTS, CULTURE AND MEDIA



(L-R) Jason Chen, Director of Place Management at the Urban Redevelopment Authority; Tan Tarn How, IPS Senior Research Fellow; and Kok Heng Leun, Nominated Member of Parliament at the IPS-SAM Spotlight on Cultural Policy Series: Roundtable on Place Management and Placemaking in Singapore in November 2015



Findings from the Study on the General Election, Media and Internet 2015 were presented at the IPS Post-Election Conference 2015 (above) in November 2015 and at the IPS Symposium on Media and Internet Use during General Election 2015 in January 2016

The Arts, Culture and Media research cluster studies the state of the arts, cultural and media landscapes in Singapore and the policies instituted to develop and regulate these sectors.

In 2015 and 2016, the cluster worked with partners from the research community and the public sector. Through these collaborations, the cluster tapped outside expertise and skills to further its study and analysis of developments in Singapore's arts, cultural and media landscape. For the collaborators, such as Associate Professor Zhang Weiyu from the Department of Communications and New Media (CNM) at the National University of Singapore (NUS), working with IPS enhanced the real-life impact of their research and contributed to the understanding of Singapore policy issues.

Dr Carol Soon, IPS Senior Research Fellow and head of the research cluster, partnered with A/P Zhang on a project on deliberative governance. The study examined how online deliberation on three population issues (fertility, foreign workforce and new immigrants) affected people's opinions on the issues, the legitimacy of policymaking and how platform design affected the process of deliberation. The aim of the project is to ultimately develop a platform that will enable policymakers to incorporate citizen participation using digital technology.

The cluster also collaborated with the Living Analytics Research Centre (LARC) of the Singapore Management

University for the first seminar in the IPS Digital Frontiers Seminar Series. Held in February 2015, the seminar "[Assessing the Rationality of Political Online Space: Man and Machine](#)" was divided into two parts. The first part presented the findings from a study where human coders examined the rationality of over 200 blogs that contained political and social content. The second part focused on LARC's study to classify political content found in blogs using data analytics.

The second seminar in the series was held in September 2015. Academics and practitioners from the private sector co-presented at "[The Power of Self-Solving in the Singapore Digital Village: Sharing Economy as a Case Study](#)". The speakers were Dr Soon, who spoke about Singapore as a digital village; Dr Lai Choo Malone-Lee, Director of the Centre for Sustainable Asian Cities; Eugene Tay, President of the Sharing Economy Association; and Swito Yuber, Co-Founder of Rent Tycoons. Topics discussed at the seminar included emerging trends related to sharing economies and people's motivations to organise themselves to solve problems collectively.

IPS and LARC are continuing to study how to refine and develop a reliable methodology for assessing online sentiments on political and social issues in Singapore. Recently, the team collected data on the National Day Rally 2016 (NDR 2016). Besides examining public discourse on Facebook, Twitter, blogs, forums and mainstream media websites related to NDR 2016, the team also surveyed 2,000 Singaporeans to understand, among other things, which NDR 2016



Participants at the seminar, The Power of Self-Solving in the Singapore Digital Village: Sharing Economy as a Case Study in September 2015



Participants at the seminar, Assessing the Rationality of Political Online Space: Man and Machine in February 2015

issues they were interested in, and their attitudes and opinions on those issues. The purpose of doing so was to find out if online discourse matched what was being discussed on the ground. The findings will be presented at a seminar in early 2017.

Given the hype surrounding the potential impact of social media on the 2015 General Election, the cluster, along with researchers from NUS' CNM Department, the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information (Nanyang Technological University) and LARC embarked on the "Study on the General Election, Media and Internet 2015". An online survey with 2,000 voters was conducted after Polling Day to examine voters' use of media and the Internet, and its impact on political participation and voting behaviour. The findings were presented at the [IPS Post-Election Conference 2015](#) in November 2015 and the [IPS Symposium on Media and Internet Use during General Election 2015](#) in January 2016.

The year 2015 also saw a tie-up between the cluster and the Singapore Arts Museum (SAM). The IPS-SAM Spotlight on Cultural Policy Series was convened to provide a platform for the analysis and discussion of policies relating to the arts and culture sector. The first of the series, held in May 2015, was a roundtable on "[The State of Literature Education and its Implications](#)", followed by another roundtable on "[Place Management and Placemaking in Singapore](#)" in November 2015. These roundtables brought together members of the arts and creative community, policymakers, academics and other

stakeholders working across different fields. Each session provided opportunities for practitioners, policymakers and academics to have frank, robust and collegial discussions, and to offer recommendations for the future.

In 2017 and 2018, Dr Soon will continue with her work on "Singapore as a Digital Village" and Senior Research Fellow Tan Tarn How will continue exploring his concept of a "Flourishing Life". The former envisions a digital village, where people use technology to solve common problems collectively while the latter proposes a new conception of the meaning and purpose of life that goes beyond "happiness".

Looking ahead, Dr Soon said that the cluster will be "exploring new paradigms and methods" to further their research work. Among other things, the cluster is interested in contributing to the upcoming policy review of the Broadcasting Act, and will begin research in the areas of surveillance and digital inclusion.

STAFF
Dr Carol Soon, Senior Research Fellow
Tan Tarn How, Senior Research Fellow
Siti Nadzirah Binte Samsudin, Research Assistant

# DEMOGRAPHY AND FAMILY



Principal Research Fellow Dr Yap Mui Teng gave opening remarks at the closed-door discussion, Aged Care Service Models: Challenges, Trade-Offs and Policy Responses in April 2016



Senior Research Fellow Christopher Gee (centre) welcomed invited expert participants to a closed-door discussion on the financial considerations for a rapidly ageing population in April 2016

The Demography and Family research cluster spearheads research in the broad areas of population, family and migration trends. Examples of its studies include the causes and consequences of the low Total Fertility Rate (TFR) and policy responses; the characteristics of the ageing population; the needs and support systems required for older citizens and residents; immigration and labour mobility policies; and projection of future demographic scenarios for Singapore.

In September 2016, Senior Research Fellow Christopher Gee was appointed the head of the cluster. The cluster's former head, Dr Yap Mui Teng, remains IPS' Principal Research Fellow.

For most of 2015 and 2016, the cluster has focused on examining the social and fiscal implications of longevity on Singapore's public policy. In 2016, the cluster worked on Phase 1 of its Longevity Project, which examined key aspects of longevity and ageing in Singapore. These were 1) how long Singaporeans will live and how healthily they will age; 2) the financial "risks" of longer lives; 3) the infrastructure needed to support an ageing society; and 4) the social, cultural and political dimensions of an ageing society.

A series of closed-door discussions involving experts in the relevant fields and research papers was

organised, improving researchers' understanding of the above issues and also laying the groundwork for the second phase of the project. Phase 2 of the Longevity Project, which begins in 2017, will involve obtaining the public's views and concerns about living in a rapidly ageing society.

The cluster also collaborated with the National Population and Talent Division (NPTD) for research on introducing age into national accounts and transfers, and examining their impact on Singapore's generational economy. The cluster also studied the Active Ageing Index (AAI) in the Singaporean context through measuring key areas of active ageing as defined by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), namely, employment, participation in society, independent, healthy and secure living and the capacity and enabling environment for active ageing.

Planning ahead to manage housing and employment needs in light of Singapore's fast-ageing population continues to be an area of interest for the cluster. In April 2016, a delegation from Australia's second-largest aged care operator, Opal Aged Care, including its Chairman, Professor Peter Shergold, and Managing Director, Gary Barnier, participated in a closed-door discussion titled "[Aged Care Service Models: Challenges, Trade-Offs and Policy Responses](#)". This was held with invited experts from academia, healthcare and other relevant





Demography and Family researchers and invited participants, together with Senior Partner from Innovator SG, Jon Hoel (back row, extreme right) after a scenario-planning session for Action Plan Singapore



Demography and Family researchers and invited participants brainstormed ideas during the strategy-building phase of Action Plan Singapore

fields. The discussion yielded important insights for both Australia and Singapore in terms of improving the quality and cost-efficiency of nursing homes and other aged care services.

In August and September 2016, the cluster, together with other IPS researchers, embarked on Action Plan Singapore. Experts from relevant fields were brought together to find innovative solutions for the challenges Singapore is expected to face in terms of population ageing, disruptive technologies and re-skilling workers in preparation for the future economy. IPS collaborated with innovation consultancies Innovator SG and Padang & Co and engaged around 100 participants over a two-month period in scenario-planning and strategy-building workshops. This will culminate in new pathways and partnerships forged towards managing these challenges of the future.

Given that several Asian nations are facing similar challenges from their ageing population, IPS researchers continue to collaborate with regional academics and policy researchers on demographic issues. They are working with the OECD Korea Policy Centre to develop an Asian version of the OECD Family Database. Currently, the seven countries and cities involved in the project are China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The indicators cover four dimensions: the structure of

families; the labour market position of families; public policies for families and children; and child outcomes. The cluster also contributed chapters on the demography of ageing and old-age income security in East, Southeast and South Asia to a forthcoming book titled *Comparative Ageing Policies in Asia*, for which Dr Yap is a co-editor.

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Christopher Gee, Senior Research Fellow
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# ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS



(L-R) IPS Senior Research Fellow Dr Faizal Bin Yahya; Chairman of the Council of Presidential Advisers J Y Pillay; and Executive Deputy Chairman of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Ong Keng Yong at the book launch of *INTRACO: Blazing a Trail Overseas for Singapore?*



IPS Senior Research Fellow Dr Alex Tan Tai Loong at the 26th Singapore Economic Roundtable in November 2016

The Economics and Business research cluster studies the business and economic climates in Singapore and how they respond to cyclical headwinds and changes in public policy.

An increasingly volatile global economy is presenting many challenges and opportunities for Singapore. Singapore is directly affected by many international developments and events, such as underperformance from China and Europe, falling oil prices, the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, geopolitical risks from happenings in the Southeast Asian Region and persistent conflict in the Middle East. In Singapore, economic restructuring continues, with policies to encourage internationalisation, adopt new technologies and build more skills and capabilities.

In July 2016, IPS held [“New Frontiers: IPS-CFE Conference on the Future Economy of Singapore”](#) in collaboration with the Committee on the Future Economy (CFE). The two-day conference featured experts from academia, business associations and the private sector to discuss the emerging global trends in industries and markets as a result of technological advancements, and what strategies might help Singaporeans thrive in this new environment. An audience of 300 people from key stakeholder groups attended, and the conference concluded with a dialogue with CFE members, headed by Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry) S. Iswaran. Some of the conclusions from the conference included Singapore’s need to create a suitable ecosystem for businesses and enterprises to grow and collaborate, the importance of adopting and leveraging new technology (and thus,

the growing need for increased cybersecurity), and the benefits of making technical careers more attractive and respected. Moving into the post-SG50 future, this conference provided useful context and raised several considerations for policymakers.

The research cluster also organised four sessions of the bi-annual [Singapore Economic Roundtable \(SER\)](#), where policymakers, academics and economists gather to discuss issues pertaining to Singapore’s economy. Aside from macroeconomic issues and trends, the SERs in 2015 and 2016 focused on economic restructuring for a productivity-led economy, the future of Singapore’s economy, the expected impact of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and the data economy and the implications of the data economy on the future of business.

The cluster continued its work on the issues that Singapore’s Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) face. Upon the announcement of Budget 2016, several closed-door discussions were organised with members of the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (ASME), for them to share their concerns regarding changes in the budget, including cutbacks on the grants given out to SMEs. Some of the chief concerns among SMEs include rising rental rates and how many grants and schemes are not compatible with their needs of help and guidance. Dr Alex Tan, who joined IPS as a Senior Research Fellow in July 2016, has been, with assistance from Research Assistant Petrina Chew, studying how different SMEs perceive the Industry Transformation Schemes (using survey data from ASME). The findings have been presented to

government agencies ahead of Budget 2017, and will be published as an IPS Working Paper.

With SMEs comprising the main hirers in the economy, the cluster will continue to work with ASME in helping them establish a constructive working relationship with



IPS Research Assistant Wilfred Lau at a workshop for Action Plan Singapore, which took place in August and September 2016

policymakers. The cluster also conducted a closed-door discussion with the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS) to learn more about the IP-related obstacles and opportunities that SMEs have faced in their overseas expansion efforts.

In April 2015, [IPS launched \*INTRACO: Blazing a Trail Overseas for Singapore?\*, written by Senior Research Fellow Dr Faizal Bin Yahya](#). The book tracks the development of the International Trading Company (INTRACO), a former government-linked trading company, from its creation in 1968 during the early days of Singapore's independence to the time it was divested in 2003 by the Singapore government. Some of the focal points of the book include the initial function of INTRACO, global events that affected the trading company, and the factors that led to its eventual dissolution. The launch event was chaired by Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, where guests included former INTRACO staff. The Guest of Honour for the event, Mr J Y Pillay, Chairman of the Council of Presidential Advisers, congratulated Dr Faizal for producing an "interesting and informative" book. While not directly involved with INTRACO, Mr Pillay was among the generation of pioneer civil servants who built the Singapore economy after its separation from Malaysia. He recalled that among the three entities set up by the Singapore Government in 1968 — the Development Bank of Singapore, the Jurong Town Corporation and INTRACO — then-Finance Minister Dr Goh Keng Swee remarked that INTRACO had the toughest mandate to fulfill. Mr Pillay said INTRACO's journey turned out to be just as "complex, difficult and challenging" as Dr Goh had envisaged.

The cluster also published several reports for the IPS Exchange Series, a publication series by IPS that comprises final reports on research conducted by IPS and its associates. Aside from conference papers from the IPS-CFE conference, Adjunct Senior Research Fellow Manu Bhaskaran published [Rising Costs in](#)



Participants at a closed-door discussion on economic restructuring and the global auction of jobs in January 2016

[Singapore](#), which aimed to examine the nature of Singapore's rising cost of business and living. The head of the cluster, Dr Faizal Bin Yahya, published [Supporting a Dynamic SME Sector: Challenges Faced by SMEs in Singapore](#), which looked at SMEs locally, assessed their challenges in the current restructuring landscape, and made some policy proposals on how to handle the large, diverse pool of SMEs in Singapore.

The Economics and Business cluster also had a hand in [Action Plan Singapore](#), a multi-faceted scenario planning exercise addressing Singapore's socio-economic challenges in 2026. Participants from academia, the public sector and the private sector came together for several days to plan scenarios and devise strategies to address the associated challenges involved. These were based on three key areas of Singapore's future – longevity, skills and innovation – of which the cluster had the most to contribute in the latter two.

The cluster will be keeping a close eye on international developments in 2017. Along with the results of the US Presidential Election and what it means for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, researchers are also keeping tabs on the further development of the ASEAN Economic Community as a means of economic integration, and developments in China and oil prices. In Singapore, the cluster will continue to study the SME landscape closely, and assess the upcoming Budget 2017 and its implications for the Singapore economy in the coming years.

STAFF
Dr Faizal Bin Yahya, Senior Research Fellow
Dr Alex Tan Tai Loong, Senior Research Fellow
Manu Bhaskaran, Adjunct Senior Research Fellow
Wilfred Lau, Research Assistant
Petrina Chew, Research Assistant

# POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE



Journalist and author Fareed Zakaria interviewed Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong during IPS' SG50+ conference



Dr Johannis bin Abdul Aziz presented findings from the SG50 and Beyond: Protecting the Public Space in the New Era of Singaporean Pluralism project at the IPS Conference on Managing Diversity in Singapore in August 2016

The Politics and Governance cluster conducts research and commentary into Singapore's political culture as well as the formulation and implementation of government policy.

In 2015, the cluster's attention was dominated by two events — the commemoration of 50 years of Singapore's independence, and the 2015 General Election, as the nation took stock of the progress that had occurred since 1965. In 2016, the focus turned to Singapore's political and economic future, and the policies that would drive that forward.

In July 2015, IPS held its [“Singapore at 50: What lies ahead?” \(SG50+\) conference](#) to celebrate 50 years of Singaporean independence as well as the National University of Singapore's 110th anniversary. It covered four major topics that are pertinent to Singapore's future: geopolitics, the economy, governance, and Singapore's position as a city. Speakers included Singapore's current Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, his predecessor Goh Chok Tong, as well as former British Prime Minister Sir John Major.

In November 2015, the cluster held the [IPS Post-Election Conference 2015](#) to provide in-depth analysis of the general election that took place on 11 September 2015. IPS researchers presented and discussed findings from three surveys on different aspects of the GE2015. Of note for the cluster was the IPS Post-Election survey, which has been

conducted by the cluster since 2006 to provide key insights on the factors that shape voters' decisions. The conference also included a discussion involving representatives from four political parties in Singapore: the People's Action Party, the Singapore Democratic Party, the Singapore People's Party, and the National Solidarity Party.

Throughout 2015 and 2016, Research Fellow Dr Johannis bin Abdul Aziz spearheaded the [“SG50 and Beyond: Protecting the Public Space in the New Era of Singaporean Pluralism”](#) project. The project sought to identify the basic points of contention in Singaporean society at present, as well as the advocacy tactics that have been used in recent years. From there, the project hoped to tease out potential principles and practices of governance that may help maintain the civility of Singapore's shared political space, so they may be applied to future disagreements. This was done by engaging many prominent public advocates on both sides of contentious issues, such as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) rights and Sanctity of Life issues, in both closed-door focus groups as well as individual interviews. The findings from these interviews were published in an IPS Working Paper and were presented at the IPS Conference on Managing Diversity in Singapore in August 2016.

The cluster also participated in the review of specific aspects of the Elected Presidency. Writing in their private capacities, the head of the Politics and



Minister for Home Affairs and Law K. Shanmugam and Dean of the LKY School of Public Policy Kishore Mahbubani at IPS' Forum on the Reforms to the Elected Presidency System, October 2016



Dr Gillian Koh presented survey findings at the IPS Post-Election Conference 2015 held in November 2015

Governance cluster, Dr Gillian Koh, and Research Assistant Tan Min-Wei jointly wrote a submission to the Constitutional Commission, and were subsequently invited to give oral representations before the Commission. The cluster also held the [Forum on the Reforms to the Elected Presidency Systems on 21 October 2016](#) to provide views and analysis regarding the proposed reforms, as well as a discussion with the Minister for Home Affairs and Law K. Shanmugam.

Also of note was the cluster's participation in [Action Plan Singapore](#), a scenario planning exercise addressing the question: "What will Singapore's socio-economic landscape be in 2026?" Participants from academia, related industries or with expert knowledge came together to plan scenarios, draw up strategies to address the concerns of those scenarios in three key areas of Singapore's future — skills, innovation, and longevity — as well as taking part in a conference that brought all the participants together. The report is available on the IPS website.

In 2017, the cluster will continue working on a number of projects, such as a survey on emigration attitudes of young Singaporeans. A follow-up to a [2010 study](#), this survey takes a prospective approach to studying emigration attitudes of young Singaporeans living in Singapore. Research on emigration traditionally focuses on the experience of immigrants in the country of settlement, which inadvertently confines the empirical

investigations to those who have left the country. The survey aims to address the broader social dynamics and attitudes associated with outbound migration. The cluster is also continuing its data analysis for the fourth wave of the Asian Barometer Survey, which measures political attitudes.

STAFF
Dr Gillian Koh, Deputy Director (Research)
Dr Johannis Bin Abdul Aziz, Research Fellow (until February 2016)
Debbie Soon, Research Associate
Tan Min-Wei, Research Assistant

# SOCIETY AND IDENTITY



Dr Janil Puthuchery, Minister of State, Ministry of Communications and Information & Ministry of Education, and Dr Lai Ah Eng, Adjunct Senior Fellow at the University Scholars' Programme, NUS, at the Managing Diversity Conference in August 2016



IPS researchers Dr Mathew Mathews and Dr Teng Siao See, at a closed-door discussion on Parental School Choice in June 2016

Singapore is a diverse society and cosmopolitan city-state that features a multiplicity of identities. The way these identities are thought of and experienced changes as world views and values evolve. The Society and Identity cluster focuses on the perceptions, relationships, cohesion, social outcomes, intersectionalities and policies that surround these differences — with the main objective of better understanding how social inclusion of different groups is made possible. In 2015 and 2016, the Society and Identity cluster further consolidated its work on race and religious relations in Singapore, and its knowledge base in the areas of diversity management, the social services and education.

In the field of race and religion, the cluster collaborated with OnePeople.sg on a study seeking to advance the understanding of the state of inter-ethnic harmony and relations in Singapore. Thirty-two focus group discussions were held in late 2014 and early 2015.

In 2016, the cluster also collaborated with [Channel NewsAsia on a study](#) on race relations in Singapore. The study aimed to understand what the population deems as racist behaviour, and how prevalent Singaporeans believe racism is present in the community — areas that had not been comprehensively discussed before. Through a household survey of 2,000 respondents, the findings showed that there is strong support for meritocracy and multiculturalism, where success is often seen to be independent of race. Nonetheless, a significant proportion of respondents recognised that racism can and still happens. There were also in-group preferences among respondents for many facets of public and private life. The findings of the study were widely quoted in the debates on constitutional

amendments to the Elected Presidency that ensued later in the year.

Looking ahead, the cluster aims to provide an updated view on the state of racial and religious harmony, five years after the baseline [Indicators of Racial and Religious Harmony Study](#) was in 2013. There will be a more in-depth focus on specific demographics, such as young people.

The question of how to best ensure social inclusion is at the heart of the cluster's work, and in formulating policy suggestions for that, the cluster has closely examined the tensions posed by the management of diversity. The cluster commissioned several academics and policy practitioners to assess how different diversities in Singapore — language, race, religion, immigrant workforce, national service, media, urban landscape, social class and the family — have played out and are managed within society. This resulted in the publication of an edited volume in 2016, [Managing Diversity in Singapore: Policies and Practice](#). Subsequently in August that year, a [conference was held](#) to further explore other areas of diversity management such as new pluralism and how inclusion should look like for people with [disabilities](#).

Dr Marissa Lee, Executive Director of the Disabled People's Association, was among the 200 people who attended the conference. She said: "Too often such forums are about highlighting what progress we have made and only just touching superficially on the areas that need more work — or it goes the other way and descends into merely airing grievances without constructive feedback. At the Managing Diversity Conference, we were able to start looking at what are

the type of questions and conversations we should be having about diversity in Singapore.”

The cluster has also broadened its study of diversity



Attendees of the Social Service Research Network meeting in February 2016

management to newcomers to Singapore. An IPS Exchange Series, *Sentiments on Immigrant Integration and the Role of Immigrant Associations*, authored by IPS Senior Research Fellow and head of the cluster, Dr Mathew Mathews, was published in January 2016. The publication built on the outcomes of the IPS Community Leaders Integration Conference held in 2013.

In the field of disability, the cluster collaborated with SG Enable to study the inclusion of people with disabilities in employment. The findings contributed to the Enabling Masterplan — which charts the development of programmes and services in the disability sector — for 2017–2021, and will be used to steer further dialogue about inclusion of people with disabilities.

The cluster is also collaborating with the Disabled People’s Association to illustrate the range of potentially unknown or invisible forms of workplace discrimination that people with disabilities face. It utilises a mix of qualitative methodologies that include interviews, focus group discussions and journaling, and involves the disabled community closely. The study will be completed by February 2017.

Two Social Service Research Network (SSRN) meetings were held in 2015 and 2016. Co-organised by IPS and the National Council of Social Service, the SSRN brings together academics, practitioners and policymakers to bridge the gap between research and practices. The theme for 2015 was “Mobilising Community Assets to Meet Social Needs”, focusing on a series of questions which explored the present and potential asset classes that contribute to the community. “Transforming research into solutions”, held in 2016, moved from the potential assets and shifted attention to the means of

collaboration between academics and practitioners. An IPS Exchange Series report based on the first SSRN, titled *A Conducive Ecosystem for Social Service Research* was published in 2015.



(L-R): Eric Sandosham, Chairman of SAS User Group; Tan Poh Choo, Operations Director of SAS User Group; Dr Justin Lee, Research Fellow; and Associate Professor Michelle Cheong of SMU spoke at the SSRN meeting in February 2016

Moving forward, the cluster also seeks to better understand the landscape of social services by surveying the charity sector, to understand the perceived social needs and capabilities, as well as the nature and characteristics of voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs). There will also be a series of discussions with stakeholders on several strategic issues that impact the sector.

In recent decades, Singapore has witnessed an intensifying educational arms race. A significant amount of money and time is being spent on tuition, and this has increased stress on both parents and students. The cluster will continue to examine the educational scene through two studies. An ongoing project on parents’ perception of schooling seeks to capture parents’ aspirations for their children’s education and better understand what they believe constitutes a good school and educational system. The study also examines the experiences of parents in helping their children through their educational journey, and what is thought to be needed to ensure a right balance of competition, co-curricular activities, and leisure for the child.

In a separate study, the cluster will also examine the impact of academic stress on Singaporean families, particularly focusing on how parents translate perceptions of local education into expectations and aspirations for their children and how this affects family bonding and familial relations.

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Dr Teng Siao See, Research Fellow
Wong Fung Shing, Research Assistant
Shanthini Selvarajan, Research Assistant

# IPS SOCIAL LAB



The new home of IPS Social Lab at 20 Evans Road

The IPS Social Lab, a centre for social indicators research, marked its third anniversary in 2016 with a significant milestone. In April 2016, Social Lab moved to its new home, a historic building at 20 Evans Road. The move has allowed the centre to accommodate its growing team, staffed by members who have previously worked for established market research companies, bringing with them a wealth of knowledge in fieldwork, data collection and validation. A housewarming event was held where stakeholders and IPS colleagues were invited to view the newly-renovated working space.

In the same month, Senior Research Fellow Dr Leong Chan-Hoong was appointed Head of IPS Social Lab, taking over the leadership reins from Associate Professor Tan Ern Ser, who remains with the centre as Academic Adviser.

The centre's mandate is to conduct research on social perceptions, attitudes and behaviours in Singapore using the most robust standards in survey methodology and statistical analyses. Now that it has its own fieldwork team, it has "greater control over data integrity", said Dr Leong. For its flagship [Singapore Panel Study on Social Dynamics \(SPSSD\)](#) — a longitudinal study to measure family dynamics, societal values and attitudes relevant to national identity and social mobility — the centre was able to do a data audit on 70% of survey responses, compared to an industry average of about 20%. Said Dr Leong: "This has tremendous impact on the research that we do."

The SPSSD was launched in late 2014 and data collection for the first two waves of the study have



A participant posing a question at the Singapore Families: Risk and Protective Factors Workshop in January 2016

been completed. The third wave of data collection will begin in January 2017. The centre conducted its own fieldwork for the second wave of the study and was able to retain 91% of respondents from the first wave. At least 95% of respondents in the second wave of the study have agreed to be contacted for the next round of data collection.

Besides the SPSSD, the IPS Social Lab is currently involved in projects that investigate the perceptions and attitudes of overseas Singaporeans. It managed the fieldwork for an emigration study by the Politics and Governance research cluster. In the pipeline are two longitudinal survey projects involving Singaporean youth, one focusing on the key life stages in youth development while the other will look at the aspirations, education and career choices of youth.

At the [Singapore Perspectives 2015 conference](#), IPS Social Lab presented its survey findings on the perceptions of Singapore's history. The study found that people were most likely to recall recent events, though they were also aware of key political events that had happened in the 1960s. Citizens were also more likely to recall events that had made an impact on their ethnic community. The findings were extensively covered and debated in both the mainstream and social media.

IPS Social Lab researchers continued to discuss their research internationally. They presented academic papers in regional and international conferences held in cities like Bangkok, Phnom Penh, Shanghai, Nagoya and Amsterdam. The academic papers covered a wide range of topics relating to Singapore





IPS Social Lab team with the research team from the Hong Kong Panel Study of Social Dynamics



IPS Social Lab team (in orange polo shirts) with SPSSD Wave 2 interviewers

such as the built heritage conservation of Dakota Crescent, local historical narratives on well-being, gender differences in life satisfaction, attitudes towards immigrants and socio-economic security in predicting multiculturalism attitudes.

In the last two years, researchers also met with their counterparts from the China Family Panel Studies based in Beijing, the Hong Kong Panel Study of Social Dynamics and the Japan Household Panel Survey to exchange ideas and discuss solutions to research methodological issues faced by panel studies. IPS Social Lab also organised a visit to Singapore in early 2015 by Dr Frank Stafford, Professor of Economics at the University of Michigan and one of the co-investigators of the pioneering US-based Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID). He gave research advice on panel studies, met with civil servants from several ministries, and gave a talk showcasing studies using PSID data, highlighting the potential of SPSSD data to be used in a wide variety of research topics in the local context.

IPS Social Lab also co-organised its [third workshop with the Social Science and Policy cluster of the National University of Singapore](#) in 2016. A workshop highlighting issues faced by Singapore families, in particular changing family structures, youths-at-risk, caregiving, family violence and transnational families, was held in January 2016, with over 200 participants comprising academics, civil servants and social workers.

The IPS Social Lab will continue its endeavour to set high standards for survey research by utilising rigorous

data quality controls to ensure data reliability, using up-to-date research methodology, and training its researchers in the latest statistical techniques. In the next year, Social Lab hopes to expand its capabilities in geo-spatial data and introduce “smart data” through the integration of survey data with neighbourhood or community characteristics.

STAFF	
Dr Leong Chan Hoong, Senior Research Fellow	Associate Professor Tan Ern Ser, Academic Adviser
Freddy Hong, Adjunct Senior Research Fellow	Yang Wai Wai, Associate Director
Tan Gek Jee, Associate Director	Tang Hwee Noy, Manager
Henry Ho, Senior Research Analyst	Paveena Seah, Senior Research Analyst
Varian Lim, Research Analyst	Eugene Teng, Research Analyst
Er Kea Wee, Project Associate	Zulkarnaen bin Zainol, Project Associate
Michelle Teo, Specialist Associate	Oh Zi Qi, Management Assistant Officer

# SPECIAL PROJECTS

## SINGAPORE CHRONICLES



Authors of the first batch of *Singapore Chronicles* volumes posing for the media with their upsized covers



(L-R, back row, clockwise): Daniel Chua, Samuel Chan, Ho Shu Huang, Thio Li-ann, Alexius Pereira, Goh Yihan, S Gopinathan, Kevin Tan, Minister Heng Swee Keat, Janadas Devan, Vineeta Sinha and Kennie Ting at the December 2015 launch of the *Singapore Chronicles* volumes

Singapore witnessed a smorgasbord of projects and activities that commemorated the country's 50 years of Independence in 2015. One such project was IPS' 50-volume *Singapore Chronicles* series. To date, 25 volumes of the series have been launched and the remaining 25 will be released over the course of 2017.

As early as 2013, IPS Director Janadas Devan and IPS Special Research Adviser Arun Mahizhnan were in agreement that IPS should make a substantive intellectual contribution towards commemorating Singapore's golden jubilee. After much deliberation, Mr Devan decided on the idea of publishing 50 books to mark the special occasion.

The primary purpose of the *Singapore Chronicles* series is to record, explain and offer insights into what makes Singapore, Singapore. As primers, each volume is a general introduction to the subject, providing a historical overview, highlights of some critical issues, and a glimpse into the future. Mr Devan directed that each volume should strive to be "as objective as possible, while not pretending to be the last word on the subject". Mr Arun, who helms the project as the general editor of the series, added: "It will be the guiding hand for the sometimes murky waters of politics, economics and social development, and help deliver insights into what makes Singapore tick."

### Making the Cut

Arriving at the final list of 50 titles proved to be quite a

challenge, since so many issues seemed so important. An initial list of more than 70 subjects was suggested, based on inputs from IPS researchers, the *Singapore Chronicles* advisory panel (led by the Institute's Special Adviser, Professor Tommy Koh), and academics. The list was then winnowed down to 50. With the subjects confirmed, the next priority was to identify the authors for each of the 50 volumes. They had to meet the criterion of being domain experts.

Persuaded by the fact that such a series had never been produced before, most of the authors came on board readily. However, their biggest challenge continues to be in ensuring that their writing is authoritative yet accessible to the intelligent lay reader. As the series would have a long shelf life and is intended as a reference source, IPS had to put in place a rigorous editorial process. All manuscripts are reviewed anonymously by fellow domain experts for possible gaps and mistakes. In addition, the final drafts are run through copyeditors for their deft and delicate suggestions to make the books highly readable.

IPS conducted a tender to select the co-publisher, which would undertake copyediting, production and finally, the marketing and sales of the series. Straits Times Press (STP) won the contract and became the co-publisher of the series.

On 10 December 2015, the first 10 volumes of *Singapore Chronicles* were unveiled by Minister for

Finance Heng Swee Keat at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. Congratulating IPS on creating “this knowledge bank for us to gain a deeper understanding of our past and ourselves”, Minister Heng recalled in his speech that the *Singapore Chronicles* proposal was readily supported by the SG50 Steering Committee — which he chaired — as it is “a worthy and exciting project, unprecedented in scope and

challenging. STP and IPS undertook a number of activities to bring the books to the attention of the public as well as the book trade. These included media events, press reviews and book talks by authors. The series also enjoyed widespread coverage in the traditional and online media, including a full-page book review in *The Sunday Times*. There has been a second printing of the 10 books.

# Tracing Singapore's roots

**Singapore Chronicles** is a series of carefully balanced accounts of the island's history from its days as a staging post for traders to the global city it is today



**Cheong Suk-Wai**  
Senior Writer

**CHRONICLES THE BIG READ**  
**CONSTITUTION**  
**DEMOCRACY**  
**DISSENT**  
**DISCIPLINE**  
**DISORDER**  
**DISORDER**

**THE BIG READ**  
The author of the series gives an insight into the process of writing the books. He also discusses the challenges of writing a series of books that cover the island's history from its days as a staging post for traders to the global city it is today.



The Singapore Chronicles authors (from left) Arun Mahizhnan and Sim Jui Liang with their research assistant Jon Joo Tang.

**FIVE QUESTIONS THESE BOOKS ANSWER**

1. Why did the development of education in Singapore begin with the British?
2. Why did the Government encourage the middle class to invest in education?
3. How did the British government encourage the middle class to invest in education?
4. Why was there such a focus on education in Singapore?
5. How did the British government encourage the middle class to invest in education?

**Just a minute**

**THE GOOD**  
The series is a history of Singapore, not a history of the island. It is a history of the people who have lived on the island, and the way they have shaped the island.

**THE BAD**  
The series is a history of Singapore, not a history of the island. It is a history of the people who have lived on the island, and the way they have shaped the island.

**THE UGLY**  
The series is a history of Singapore, not a history of the island. It is a history of the people who have lived on the island, and the way they have shaped the island.



IPS Senior Research Adviser Arun Mahizhnan reading an excerpt of the *Singapore Chronicles* volume on *Constitution* during a Singapore Writers Festival 2015 panel discussion

In late December 2016, another 15 *Singapore Chronicles* titles were released. Among them are two volumes written by IPS researchers — *Civil Society* by IPS Deputy Director (Research) Dr Gillian Koh and Research Associate Debbie Soon; and *Demography* by IPS Principal Research Fellow Dr Yap Mui Teng and Senior Research Fellow Christopher Gee. The books, together with the previous 10 volumes, are available for sale on the STP website and in bookstores.

Mr Devan summed up the thrust of the series in his foreword to the books: “*Singapore Chronicles* is a reminder that Singapore is a human-made miracle. May it also serve as a reminder that Singapore is not defined by the accolades it receives, but by the constant striving of Singaporeans to always do better, to exceed themselves, to go beyond the achieved, the accomplished, the done. From the beginning, the story of Singapore has always been about the future.”

**Fact file**  
Five books became 50 volumes

The world's ownership has been in developing countries for a long time. The world's ownership has been in developing countries for a long time. The world's ownership has been in developing countries for a long time.

connecting the dots on April 27

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A review of the *Singapore Chronicles* series in *The Sunday Times* on 17 April 2016 stated that its “narratives are as much primers on sharp writing as they are on balanced thinking on history”

[with] a relevant approach.” He also observed that the Singapore spirit — as embodied by the qualities of resilience, ruggedness and resourcefulness — is reflected in the volumes; and that by reading these books, Singaporeans can build on their history and strengthen this spirit.

## Reaching out to the Public

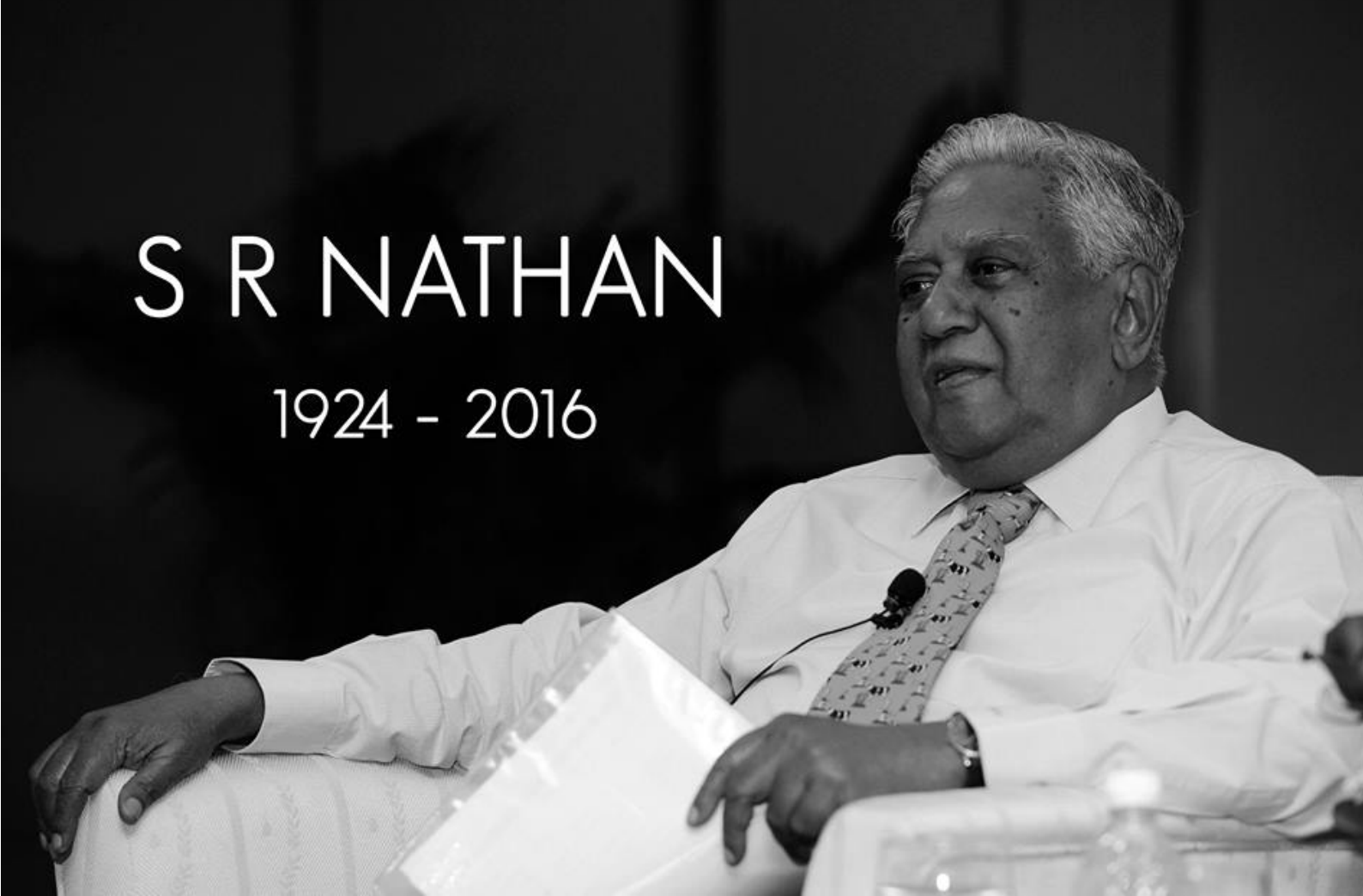
Given the plethora of commemorative publications inundating the market in 2015, the promotion of *Singapore Chronicles* to the public was particularly

STAFF
Arun Mahizhnan, Special Research Adviser
Sim Jui Liang, Research Associate
Asad Latif, Consultant to the <i>Singapore Chronicles</i> project

First 25 Singapore Chronicles volumes	
Title	Author/s
Central Provident Fund	Chia Ngee Choon, economist
Civil Society	Gillian Koh, IPS Deputy Director (Research), and Debbie Soon, IPS Research Associate
Colonial Singapore	Nicholas Tarling, historian
Constitution	Kevin Tan, law professor
Defence	Ho Shu Huang and Samuel Chan, military studies scholars
Demography	Yap Mui Teng, IPS Principal Research Fellow, and Christopher Gee, IPS Senior Research Fellow
Diplomacy	Evelyn Goh, international relations expert, and Daniel Chua, military studies scholar
Education	S Gopinathan, education scholar
Emergency	Kumar Ramakrishna, historian
Energy	Tilak K Doshi, energy expert, and Lin Fangjun, former analyst at the Energy Studies Institute
Environment	Kenneth Er, Chief Executive Officer of National Parks Board; Leong Chee Chiew, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of National Parks Board; Khoo Teng Chye, Executive Director of the Centre for Liveable Cities; and Joseph Hui, principal consultant for the National Environment Agency
Eurasians	Alexius Pereira, sociologist
Food	Sylvia Tan, food writer
Gateways	David Ho, real estate professor, and Ho Mun Wai, infrastructure development analyst
Governance	Peter Ho, former Head of Singapore's civil service and co-authors from the Civil Service College Singapore – Anuradha Shroff, Lead Researcher, Institute of Governance and Policy; Codey Tan, Assistant Manager, Institute of Public Sector Leadership; Hazel See, Senior Manager, Strategic Planning and Development unit; and Lena Leong, Deputy Director and Principal Learning and Development Specialist
Heritage	Kennie Ting, senior staff at the National Heritage Board
Indians	Vineeta Sinha, sociology professor
Language	Eddie Kuo, sociology and communications scholar, and Brenda Chan, independent scholar
Law	Goh Yihan, law professor
Opposition	Zuraidah Ibrahim, journalist, and Andrea Ong, graduate law student
Presidency	Thio Li-ann, law professor
Social Services	Ho Chi Tim, historian, and Ann Wee, social work pioneer
Theatre	Robin Loon, theatre lecturer; Kok Heng Leun, theatre practitioner; Zizi Azah Binte Abdul Majid, theatre practitioner; and Vadivalagan Shanamuga, theatre practitioner
Transport	A P Gopinath Menon, transport engineering consultant
Water	Tan Gee Paw, chairman of PUB

# S R NATHAN

1924 - 2016



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## S R NATHAN FELLOWSHIP FOR THE STUDY OF SINGAPORE

In 2013, IPS announced the S R Nathan Fellowship for the Study of Singapore, to honour the many contributions of Singapore's sixth and longest-serving President. On 22 August 2016, it was with heavy hearts that we honoured Mr S R Nathan for giving a lifetime of service to Singapore.

Mr Nathan was born on 3 July 1924. He played a key role in building the Singapore we know today; he started out as a medical social worker, and served in the National Trades Union Congress, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence, among other appointments.

While he accomplished much in his long and full life, perhaps the most vivid memory that Singaporeans

have of him is as the country's President from September 1999 to August 2011. During his term, he founded the President's Challenge, raising \$135 million over 13 years for the less fortunate. Mr Nathan was distinguished and dignified, yet warm and friendly to all he met. All of us at IPS always looked forward to seeing him at the Institute's events. We miss him dearly.

"Like the bass line running through the twists and turns of a vast sprawling symphony, a few simple themes recur again and again in his life: Duty. Honour. Country. I can testify personally to this for I have known Mr Nathan since I was a child. Mr Nathan was among the small group — a tiny group actually — that established the National Trades



Ambassador-at-Large Bilahari Kausikan delivering his second IPS-Nathan Lecture on US-China relations in February 2016



Mr Ho speaking at the launch of *The Ocean in a Drop – Singapore: The Next Fifty Years*, October 2015

Union Congress (NTUC) in the early 1960s. They had their backs to the wall; they didn't think they would survive; they did. And this is something very important, especially for the young, to know about the people of Mr Nathan's vintage, our founding generation: They are survivors who didn't expect to survive."

— IPS Director Janadas Devan, in his tribute to Mr Nathan, which is on the IPS website.

Tributes from IPS Special Adviser Tommy Koh, and the 2014/15 and 2015/16 S R Nathan Fellows, Ho Kwon Ping and Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan, are also on the IPS website.

### The 2014/15 and 2015/16 IPS-Nathan Lectures

Since the establishment of the S R Nathan Fellowship for the Study of Singapore, there have been [two complete editions of the lecture series and a total of 10 lectures](#), covering a wide range of topics. In the 2014/15 academic year, Ho Kwon Ping, a businessman and the chairman of the Singapore Management University, reflected on the future of Singapore's politics, economy, society and identity in his lectures, broadly titled "Singapore: The Next Fifty Years". Some of the questions he posed included whether there should be a shift in the fundamentals of Singapore's

**"I think the two [lecture series] you have had — last year from Ho Kwon Ping and this year's from Bilahari — have set a very high bar. They've been of an exceptionally high standard — provocative, very thought provoking ... not quite what one would expect from official Singapore sources."**

— Simon Long, Finance Editor at *The Economist*

economic strategy, if female conscription and some form of national service for new male citizens would be a possible eventuality to strengthen our security, and how the Central Provident Fund scheme could be tweaked to ensure it is the cornerstone of Singapore's retirement system. With help from his children and his research assistant at IPS, Andrew Yeo, he organised chat sessions with younger Singaporeans to hear their thoughts and views, which he found "very invigorating and encouraging about the future of Singapore."

"Being the first Fellow was a bit daunting — there was no model to follow, but therefore I pretty much had a free hand and it was fun to have no constraints," said Mr Ho, when asked about the approach he took to the Fellowship.

Complementing the domestic focus of Mr Ho, the second S R Nathan Fellow, Ambassador-at-Large Bilahari Kausikan assessed the state of the international order through his lecture series, "Dealing with an Ambiguous World." In particular, he analysed the nature of US-China relations, the broad underlying factors in the South China Sea disputes and ASEAN's attempts to maintain order, and the role that human rights and democracy have played in international relations.

True to his reputation of being plain-spoken, Ambassador Kausikan, when asked for his thoughts on being an S R Nathan Fellow, said: "I was 'snookered' into doing it by Janadas Devan. Since I had no choice, I decided to make use of the opportunity to crystallise my thoughts on some foreign policy issues that I thought Singaporeans ought to know more about."

On a more serious note, Ambassador Kausikan said he took the Fellowship as an opportunity to cultivate an informed public, which he emphasised to be "a stabilising force as we navigate an increasingly complex external environment." Asked what he found most enjoyable about the Fellowship, he quipped: "The end!"



Approximately 560 people came to Mr Ho Kwon Ping's fifth lecture titled "Society and Identity", in April 2015



Donors to the S R Nathan Fellowship at the annual appreciation lunch hosted by IPS Special Adviser Tommy Koh in May 2016

### Venturing to the edge of accepted opinion

Both Mr Ho and Ambassador Kausikan's lecture series were received favourably and were covered widely in social media, blogs, and Singapore and international news media. Lecture excerpts were carried in *The Straits Times*. *The Economist* called Mr Ho's lectures a "stimulating lecture series" in an article published in its newspaper on 18 July 2015.

"I think the two [lecture series] you have had — last year from Ho Kwon Ping and this year's from Bilahari — have set a very high bar," said Simon Long of *The Economist* at the fifth lecture by Ambassador Kausikan. "They've been of an exceptionally high standard — provocative, very thought provoking ... not quite what one would expect from official Singapore sources. Your speakers seem to be given rein to give their own opinions, to venture to the edge of accepted opinion here, and I think that's very refreshing,"

An audience of between 220 and 560 turned up for each lecture, which was also filmed and [uploaded on YouTube](#). Each IPS-Nathan Lectures series — and the accompanying question-and-answer sessions — has been compiled into a book. According to the publisher World Scientific Publishing, Mr Ho's book, [The Ocean in a Drop — Singapore: The Next Fifty Years](#), which was launched on 30 October 2015, was the bestselling book at the Singapore Writers Festival 2015. It had sold over 2,100 copies as of November 2016. Similarly, Ambassador Kausikan's book, [Dealing with an Ambiguous World](#), was launched on 18 October 2016 to a warm reception. Within a month, 1,800 copies had been sold. Both Fellows also held book talks at the Books Kinokuniya store in Ngee Ann City.

Segments of the IPS-Nathan Lectures by Mr Ho and Ambassador Kausikan have been included in the syllabus for "Singapore Kaleidoscope", a new course that started in December 2016 for all Postgraduate

Diploma in Education student teachers at the National Institute of Education (NIE). The course aims to give student teachers a better understanding of the emerging trends, issues and challenges that will have an impact on Singapore society, its geopolitical landscape and its future prospects.

Said Dr Mark Baildon, the Head of Humanities and Social Science Education at NIE: "NIE is deeply appreciative of the opportunity to use the thought provoking IPS-Nathan Lectures by Mr Ho and Ambassador Kausikan. The lectures will enable us to meet key learning outcomes in the 'Singapore Kaleidoscope' course by helping our students understand key issues and perspectives related to Singapore's geopolitical realities."

### Creating a commons for public discourse

At the inaugural [IPS-Nathan Lecture by Mr Ho in October 2014](#), IPS Special Adviser Tommy Koh cited the growing culture of vibrant debate in Singapore and the role of the S R Nathan Fellow. "We want the S R Nathan Fellow's ideas to further stimulate such thoughtful discussions. I hope that younger

**"In school we were studying a few passages that Ambassador Kausikan had written, and I became hooked on his certain brand of humour and the stark realism of his dialogue and analysis, which are starkly different from the ideas put forth by other members of the higher echelons of Singapore society."**

— Nicole Yow, student at Raffles Junior College



The late Mr S R Nathan launched *The Ocean in a Drop – Singapore: The Next Fifty Years* in October 2015



Mr Wong Kan Seng (centre), Chairman, Ascendas-Singbridge, was the guest of honour at the launch of *Dealing with an Ambiguous World* in October 2016

Singaporeans, especially students, who are worried about their future, will find the series of IPS-Nathan Lectures relevant, thought-provoking and reassuring,” he said.

Indeed, the audience demographics are diverse, with members of Singapore’s public service, young professionals, retirees and even students attending the lectures. This was also noted by Mr Ho, who observed that the audience grew younger during his tenure, taking it as a sign that the Fellowship had achieved its mission to stimulate public discourse on Singapore affairs.

Stella Lee, a student from Serangoon Junior College, who attended [Ambassador Kausikan’s fifth lecture, titled “Can Singapore Cope?”](#) explained that the

**“I came for this lecture because of Bilahari himself — because of all the commentaries he has written in the past in *The Straits Times*, I was interested to come and find out what he has to say about various topics.”**

— Jason Chiam, Head of Student and Faculty Administration at UniSIM

topic was directly related to a debate she was due to participate in, compelling her to attend.

“I’m not really a big fan of reading a lot of articles,” she admitted. “But I felt it was my responsibility to find out more about the issue.”

To be sure, part of the draw of the lectures can also be attributed to the Fellows’ own reputation. Nicole Yow, a student at Raffles Junior College, said of Ambassador Kausikan: “In school we were studying a few passages that Ambassador Kausikan had written, and I became hooked on his brand of humour and the stark realism of his dialogue and analysis, which are starkly different from the ideas put forth by other members of the higher echelons of Singapore society.” She added that she had heard about his lectures on the IPS Commons Facebook page and after attending one, decided it was worthwhile to keep coming back.

With two editions of the IPS-Nathan Lectures having concluded successfully, we look forward to new insights from upcoming lectures and hope to reach out to more Singaporeans. The third S R Nathan Fellow, Mr Peter Ho, former head of the civil service and currently Senior Advisor to the Centre for Strategic Futures, is expected to begin his lectures in April 2017.

Said Mr Peter Ho: “I had the privilege of working with the late Mr Nathan, so it gave me an insight into his sterling contributions to Singapore, an understanding of why the Fellowship carries his name, and why it reflects his immense prestige as a great Singaporean. I am therefore really honoured to be the S R Nathan Fellow for 2016/2017, which is a poignant appointment too, because 2016 was the year that Mr Nathan passed away.”



**Our Generous Benefactors**  
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# OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT



IPS Social Lab Head Dr Leong Chan-Hoong briefed visiting Moldovan government officials looking at diaspora and migration issues in April 2016. He focused on Singapore's efforts to stay in touch with Overseas Singaporeans and encourage integration of migrants at home



IPS Special Research Adviser Arun Mahizhnan briefed a visiting delegation of Corps of Cadets from Texas A&M University on Singapore and its media landscape in May 2015. The Corps of Cadets is a military-style training programme, with a focus on training future leaders for the military, business and government



IPS Senior Research Fellow Carol Soon has been teaching a course on New Media and Politics at the University Scholars Programme (USP) at NUS for several years

IPS is committed to expanding the intellectual space in Singapore, increasing the quality of public engagement on national issues, and encouraging the emergence of better solutions to policy challenges. Beyond offering our research insights to the media and publishing our papers and commentaries on IPS' websites, IPS also:

- Holds flagship conferences, seminars and roundtable sessions to present and discuss our work on Singapore policy issues.
- Provides our expert opinion to policymakers, business leaders and students. Our researchers are members of various policy advisory boards and act as consultants to international journals. They deliver lectures on the trends and policy developments in their areas of research to various groups including civil servants, business leaders and civil society activists, and several teach undergraduate and graduate level courses at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and the National University of Singapore.
- Briefs foreign delegations who want to know more about Singapore's public policy experiences and the work of a policy research institution. We have briefed visitors from journalism, academia and government agencies from many regions and countries, including the European Union, Thailand, Moldova, and the United States.

IPS' flagship events include:

**Singapore Perspectives (SP)** — An annual conference in January that brings together some 900 members of the people, public and private sectors to contemplate issues of national interest. Both SP2015 and SP2016 continued in the tradition of the 2013 and 2014 conferences with one-word themes.

The theme for [Singapore Perspectives 2015](#), which took place on 26 January, was "Choices". IPS researchers Dr Carol Soon and Dr Hoe Su Fern led the organisation of the conference. As it was the year that Singapore celebrated its 50th year of independence, speakers

**“The Singapore Perspectives conferences over the past years have brought forth issues and challenges which are very much close to the heart for most Singaporeans, as we navigate the realities of an increasingly diverse social landscape. I’ve found the conferences particularly useful in furthering my understanding of new norms concerning social harmony. I like the way IPS puts across difficult issues in rather simple themes and narratives; bridging hard survey data with heartfelt perspectives. This has become a hallmark of the Singapore Perspectives conferences in recent years.”**

— Ramesh Ganeson, Director, OnePeople.sg

considered the defining features of what it means to be Singaporean and the key choices that have been made in the areas of politics, the economy and society. At the conference, a two-part video presentation on findings from the [IPS Study on Perceptions of Singapore's History](#) was screened. The study was done by the IPS Social Lab and led by Dr Leong Chan-Hoong, with five final-year students from Nanyang Polytechnic helping to develop the video presentation. The conference ended with an “inter-generational” ministerial dialogue with Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean and Minister (Prime Minister’s Office) and labour chief Chan Chun Sing.

The theme of [Singapore Perspectives 2016](#) on 18 January was “We” — the first word in the Singapore national pledge. Having celebrated SG50 after decades of nation-building, the conference, organised by IPS researchers Dr Teng Siao See and Dr Justin Lee, asked how Singaporeans should reimagine “We”. How should the country move forward, and what aspirations and ideals should evolve or remain constant? There were four panels each featuring one of Singapore’s fourth-generation leaders and Cabinet Ministers — Mr Heng Swee Keat, Mr Chan Chun Sing, Mr Ng Chee Meng and Mr Ong Ye Kung. The topics of discussion were governance, diversity, growth and the future of “We”.

**Young Singaporeans Conference (YSC)** — A biennial conference for young Singaporeans to have frank and free exchanges on public policy, politics and society in Singapore, YSC2016 took place on 21 September with a different format. Instead of having panels of speakers who would interact with participants, the [Young Singaporeans \(Un\)Conference](#) asked participants to propose and engage in a range of free and open discussions around whatever issues they were interested in, under the umbrella theme “What’s good?”. Around 80 up-and-coming Singaporeans below the age of 35 who work in the public service and private sector, and who are active in civil society and community initiatives, took part in the (Un)conference.

The space at the event venue, The Pavilion at Far East Square, was purposefully developed with a programme grid where participants could post

details of their discussions, a resource table with the necessary materials for breakout sessions and eight areas around the event venue where small groups could gather and talk. The programme grid filled up quickly, with a total of 18 sessions taking place during



At SP2016, Ministers Chan Chun Sing and Ng Chee Meng were among the four fourth-generation leaders who spoke at the conference. Among the audience members was social work pioneer Mrs Ann Wee



the day, including a dance improvisation session, theatre games on the power of labels and a workshop session that used design to discuss what it means to share spaces and resources in a future Singapore. Some of the sessions included:

- **How can businesses be a force for good?** by Jessica Cheam, editor and founder of Eco-Business. Her session discussed the impact of businesses on society, the models of sustainable development and the challenges faced by social enterprises in Singapore in their bid to do good.
- **Making that thing from the future** by Veerappan Swaminathan and Aaron Maniam, social entrepreneur and civil servant, respectively. This session explored possible futures through creating objects to represent them. One key insight from the session was that when it came to questions of uncertainty, people would make plans for the future by thinking about what actions they could take today.

**“During my time at YSC2016, I was surprised and thrilled that the other participants were people from all walks of life - from both the public and private sector, and even students. What was particularly memorable for me was how open people were to engaging with the content and each other. Especially to take part in the physical workshop [organised by a participant, Mun Wai], which was markedly different from the other breakaway sessions that were more cerebral in nature. I think many people walked out that day with new friends and plans.”**

— Nur Sabrina Bte Dzulkifli, Playwright

- **Inter-religious relations: Dealing with differences** by Mohamed Imran Mohamed Taib, a senior executive at the Harmony Centre. His session questioned the state of inter-religious relations in Singapore, and how society has dealt with the challenges of increasing cultural complexity. The discussion also touched on diversity within seemingly monolithic religious groups.

With so many different sessions going on at the same time, not one participant left the (Un)conference with the same experience. Of the 53 people who gave their feedback, 79% felt that they had gained new insights and perspectives, 70% felt they got the opportunity to explore and discuss topics that were of interest to them, while 57% said they would follow up on what had been discussed during the day. A number of participants also said some structure and sub-themes would be helpful, including having set goals for each session. Many commented that the format was a refreshing change from the usual conference format.

Adjunct Research Fellow Dr Hoe Su Fern, who led the planning team, said the purpose of an Un(conference) format was to “challenge participants to unlearn, rethink and recondition ways in which we traditionally do things, such as conventional ways of attending conferences, and open themselves up to new ways of interacting, defining problems, sharing ideas, and starting in-depth conversations on topics that matter to them”.

The team ensured that there was a good mix of participants from different backgrounds. They also had a few pre-scheduled sessions at the event, led by “featured participants”, as this would get the ball rolling for others to suggest their own sessions.



(L-R): LKYSPS Dean Kishore Mahbubani and Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong at the SG50+ Conference

(a water dispenser was provided and participants were told to bring their own drinking containers). Said Dr Hoe of the (Un)conference theme: “It is also a response to the growing complexity in our environment today. Because how we respond to difference and what we value today and how we value things differently as well has become more relevant than ever before.”

**Singapore Economic Roundtable (SER)** — This [bi-annual meeting](#) to discuss Singapore’s macro-economic outlook and longer term structural issues is run by the Economics and Business research cluster. More details are available on page 10.



Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam (foreground) spoke at a lunch dialogue moderated by CNN host Fareed Zakaria

**SG50+ Conference** — To commemorate Singapore’s 50th year of independence in 2015, IPS and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) organised the [Singapore at 50: What Lies Ahead? \(SG50+\) conference](#) on 2 and 3 July 2015 to discuss the major drivers of Singapore’s future and how Singaporeans can prepare themselves for a more volatile and uncertain world.

The conference, conceptualised by IPS’ Dr Gillian Koh and LKYSPP’s Associate Dean (Research and Executive Education) Donald Low featured distinguished international and Singapore speakers discussing the broad themes of geopolitics, the economy, the city and governance. Among them were Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam, who spoke in wide-ranging dialogue sessions chaired by CNN host Fareed Zakaria. Former UK Prime Minister John Major and Singapore’s Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong were co-panellists in a session on new challenges to governance, where they highlighted the impact of changing societal expectations and the widespread use of social media. Around 670 people, many of whom were public sector, business, community and student leaders, attended the two-day event.



(L-R): Outgoing NUS Chairman Wong Ngit Liong and NUS President Tan Chorh Chuan

The event received significant coverage by Singapore and foreign print, broadcast and online media. In his closing remarks on the second day of the conference, LKYSPP Dean Kishore Mahbubani billed the event as a “festival of ideas” that had brought together leading global minds to reflect on how Singapore has advanced in the 50 years since Independence, and how the nation can continue to thrive. While there are no definitive answers to the questions of our time, we need to keep asking the right questions, said Dean Mahbubani. The conference was made possible by Lee Foundation, LKYSPP, NUS and the SG50 Committee. All excess funds raised went towards student financial aid and other educational initiatives at NUS.



Students were among the 670 conference participants

The (Un)conference was also a sustainable one — snacks and coffee were provided by social enterprises, a healthier menu was chosen, no conference materials were printed, and there were no plastic water bottles

# PUBLICATIONS

## 2015 – BOOKS

### [Not Born In Singapore: Fifty Personalities who Shaped the Nation](#)

By Tng Ying Hui

This book, by former IPS Research Assistant Tng Ying Hui, profiles 50 individuals who were not born in Singapore and who have made their mark in the fields of the economy, science and medicine, education and society, the arts and sports. Their efforts have helped to place the country on the global map of success, building Singapore into the nation we know it to be today.



governance and key institutions can evolve to ensure the sustainable continuation of Singapore — the “improbable nation”. This book illuminates Ho’s vision of a cohesively diverse Singapore lasting beyond the lifespan of his generation, and aims to get the young to ponder and discuss the kind of home, and future, they wish for.

### [Battle for Hearts and Minds: New Media and Elections in Singapore](#)

Edited by Tan Tarn How, Arun Mahizhnan and Ang Peng Hwa



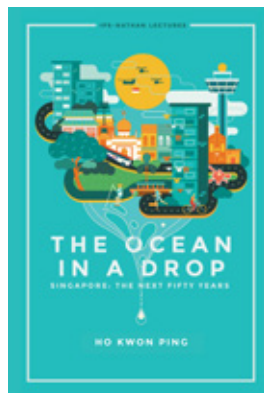
The Singapore 2011 General Election was dubbed by some as the first “Internet” election. How far is this true and to what extent did old and new media influence voting behaviour and political participation? What was the role of Facebook, Twitter, party political websites, political discussion and the alternative and conflicting information offered online? What theoretical insights can be gleaned about media and its use by voters?

This edited volume provides an in-depth analysis of these questions through a first-ever survey of media use, political traits, political participation and attitudes towards media, and through experiments, content analysis and interviews. This landmark collection of essays also lays the groundwork for understanding future elections. It also serves as a valuable record of the state of affairs on the ground in Singapore’s rapidly changing political landscape.

### [The Ocean in a Drop – Singapore: The Next Fifty Years](#)

By Ho Kwon Ping

This book contains the five IPS-Nathan Lectures that Ho Kwon Ping gave between October 2014 and April 2015, as well as highlights of the accompanying dialogue with the audience.



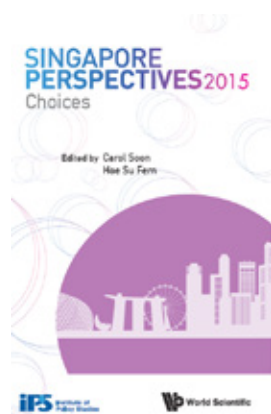
The IPS-Nathan Lectures series was launched by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) in 2014. It is part of the S R Nathan Fellowship for the Study of Singapore. The Fellowship was set up to fund further research into public policy, with the S R Nathan Fellow, who is appointed annually, delivering between four and six lectures each year. These lectures aim to advance public understanding and discussion of issues of critical national interest. Ho Kwon Ping was the 2014/15 S R Nathan Fellow for the Study of Singapore.

In his lectures, Ho looks forward to the next 50 years, offering innovative ideas and robust views on how

## Singapore Perspectives 2015: Choices

*Edited by Carol Soon and Hoe Su Fern*

This book records the proceedings of Singapore Perspectives 2015, a flagship conference series by IPS, including a dialogue session with Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean and Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Labour Chief Chan Chun Sing, findings from an IPS study on Perceptions of Singapore's History, and the text of presentations and discussions by:

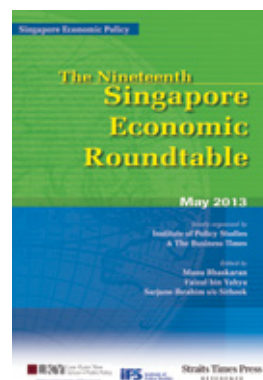


- Janadas Devan, Director, Institute of Policy Studies;
- Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan of the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Professor Evelyn Goh, Shedden Professor of Strategic Policy Studies, The Australian National University;
- Professor Tan Kong Yam, School of Humanities and Social Sciences at NTU and Co-Director Asia Competitiveness Institute, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, NUS;
- Professor Linda Lim, Professor of Strategy, Stephen M. Ross School of Business University of Michigan;
- Debra Soon, Head, News Segment MediaCorp Pte Ltd;
- Professor Kishore Mahbubani, Dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, NUS;
- Tong Yee, Director, The Thought Collective;
- Vikram Khanna, Associate Editor, *The Business Times*, Singapore Press Holdings Ltd;
- Associate Professor Eugene Tan, School of Law & Co-Director SMU Centre for Scholars' Development, SMU

## The Nineteenth Singapore Economic Roundtable

*Edited by Manu Bhaskaran, Faizal Bin Yahya and Sarjune Ibrahim s/o Sitheek*

The Nineteenth Singapore Economic Roundtable was held in May 2013 and looked at the Singapore finance sector, as well as the macro-economic outlook for Singapore and implications for policy. The book contains the text of presentations and commentary by:



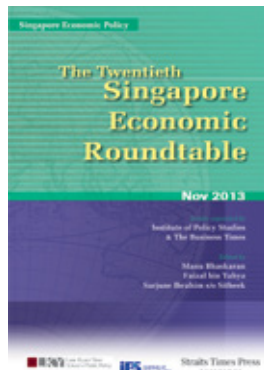
- Jasmine Koh, Economist, Economic Surveillance and Forecasting Department, Monetary Authority of Singapore;
- Dr Venkatraman Anantha Nageswaran, Senior Economist, Asianomics Limited;
- Michael Wan, Analyst, Economic Research, Investment Banking, Credit Suisse AG;
- Jessica Tan, Group Chief Information Officer, Ping An Group, China;
- Mr H V Vinayak, Partner, Capital Markets and Investment Banking, Asia, McKinsey & Company;
- Tan Chin Hwee CFA CPA, Founding Partner, Apollo Management (S) Pte Ltd.;
- Victor Tay, Chief Operating Officer, Singapore Business Federation.

**The Twentieth Singapore Economic Roundtable**

*Edited by Manu Bhaskaran, Faizal Bin Yahya and Sarjune Ibrahim s/o Sitheek*

The Twentieth Singapore Economic Roundtable was held in November 2013 and looked at Singapore's integration with the region from Malaysian perspective as well as recent economic developments and policy implications for the Singapore economy. The book contains the text of presentations and commentary by:

- Dr Nungsari Ahmad Radhi, Managing Director, Prokhas Sdn Bhd;
- Dr Sharon Siddique, Managing Director, Sreekumar.Siddique & Co Pte Ltd;
- Adeline Yeo, Senior Economist, Domestic Economy Division, Economic Surveillance & Forecasting Department, Monetary Authority of Singapore;
- Kit Wei Zheng, Director, Asia Pacific Economic and Market Analysis, Citigroup Global Markets Asia Limited;
- Joey Chew, Economist, Barclays PLC



study is a starting point for research on non-English blogs in Singapore.

**IPS Exchange Series No. 4**

[Class and Social Orientations: Key Findings From the Social Stratification Survey 2011](#)

*By Tan Ern Ser*

This report uses data from the 2011 Social Stratification Survey to capture the class structure in Singapore. It also examines the relationship between class and social orientations relating to a broad range of issues of theoretical and policy importance: welfare, financial adequacy, inequality, success, social mobility, national identity and social relations (local-foreigner, inter-ethnic and inter-class).



**IPS Exchange Series No. 5**

[A Conducive Ecosystem for Social Service Research](#)

*By Justin Lee and Mathew Mathews*

This report in the IPS Exchange Series documents the proceedings, contributions and discussions of the Social Service Research Network (SSRN) that was held on 31 March 2014 at the Civil Service College. The general aim of the SSRN is to bring together academics, practitioners and policymakers with interest in the non-profit sector, to bridge the gap between research and practice so that evidence generated can be translated to actionable insights for policy and practice



**2015 – REPORTS**

**IPS Exchange Series No. 3**

[Study on Chinese, Malay and Tamil Blogospheres in Singapore](#)

*By Carol Soon, Arun Mahizhnan, Shamsuri Juhari, Nanditha Das, Sim Jui Liang and Nur Atikah Amalina*

This report provides an empirical snapshot of Chinese, Malay and Tamil language blogs in Singapore. The





**IPS Exchange Series  
No. 6**

[The Rationality of the Political Online Space](#)

*By Carol Soon and Tan Tarn How*

This report explores the nature of the political online space in Singapore. The cyberspace has often been depicted unfavourably as a Wild Wild West. Thus, this report questions the rationality of the voices online and what makes them rational or irrational.



[Dealing With an Ambiguous World](#)

*By Bilahari Kausikan*

One of Singapore's top diplomats, Bilahari Kausikan, was IPS' 2015/16 S R Nathan Fellow for the Study of Singapore. This book contains edited versions of the five public IPS-Nathan Lectures that he gave between January and May 2016, and highlights of his dialogue with the audience. Kausikan gives a frank and dispassionate assessment of the international environment in the post-Cold War era and the geopolitical uncertainties that have emerged. In particular, he analyses the nature of US-China relations, the broad underlying factors in the South China Sea disputes and ASEAN's attempts to maintain order, and the role that human rights and democracy have played in international relations. He concludes by suggesting what Singapore needs to do to cope with the complexities that lie ahead, in this age without definition.

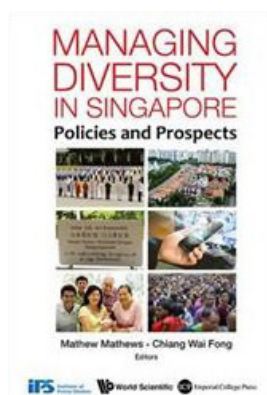


**2016 – BOOKS**

[Managing Diversity in Singapore: Policies and Prospects](#)

*By Mathew Mathews and Chiang Wai Fong*

Singapore society is increasingly becoming diverse. During the first few decades of nation building, policies were designed to homogenise aspects of Singaporean society while enshrining principles to allow restricted amounts of diversity. Fast forward to the present, the number of areas where diversity is profoundly apparent remains copious and its manifestations more varied.



[Singapore Perspectives 2016: We](#)

*Edited by Teng Siao See and Justin Lee*

This book documents the conference proceedings of Singapore Perspectives 2016, where the fourth generation of government Ministers presented their thoughts on the social, economic and political future of Singapore and engaged in dialogues with panellists and audience members on the directions the country should take. It includes the text of presentations and discussions by:



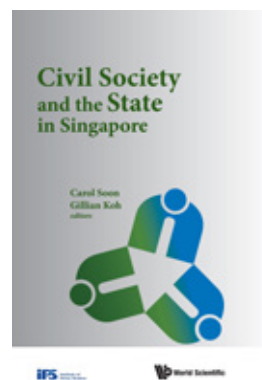
- Janadas Devan, Director, Institute of Policy Studies;
- Warren Fernandez, Editor, *The Straits Times*, Singapore Press Holdings Ltd.;
- Chan Chun Sing, Secretary-General, National Trades Union Congress;

- Lee Huay Leng, Editor, *Lianhe Wanbao*, & Senior Vice President (New Growth) *Lianhe Zaobao*, Singapore Press Holdings Ltd.;
- Associate Professor Eugene Tan, School of Law, SMU;
- Kok Heng Leun, Artistic Director, Drama Box Ltd.;
- Walter Fernandez, Editor-in-Chief, MediaCorp Pte Ltd.;
- Ng Chee Meng, Acting Minister for Education (Schools);
- Professor David Chan, Lee Kuan Yew Fellow & Director, Behavioural Sciences Institute, SMU;
- Associate Professor Elaine Ho, Department of Geography, National University of Singapore;
- Hassan Ahmad, Technical Adviser & Executive Director, Corporate Citizen Foundation;
- Vikram Khanna, Associate Editor, *The Business Times*, Singapore Press Holdings Ltd.;
- Ong Ye Kung, Acting Minister for Education (Higher Education and Skills);
- Yeoh Lam Keong, Adjunct Professor, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy;
- Dr Chua Hak Bin, Head of ASEAN Economics, Bank of America Merrill Lynch;
- Professor Tan Kong Yam, Co-Director Asia Competitiveness Institute, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy;
- Debra Soon, Head, Family (English) and Premier Segment, MediaCorp TV Pte Ltd.;
- Heng Swee Keat, Minister for Finance;
- Ho Kwon Ping, Chairman, Board of Trustees, SMU;
- Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan, 2015/16 S R Nathan Fellow for the Study of Singapore, Institute of Policy Studies;
- Ambassador Chan Heng Chee, Chairman, Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities, SUTD

### **Civil Society and the State in Singapore**

*Edited by Carol Soon and Gillian Koh*

This book is a collection of papers presented by practitioners, public thought leaders and academics at the second Civil Society Conference convened by IPS in November 2013. It looks at the complexities and nuances of civil society as a space of contestation and a contested space, discusses the game changers and developments in Singapore's political and social landscapes from the late 1990s, and proposes an agenda for the future development of civil society.

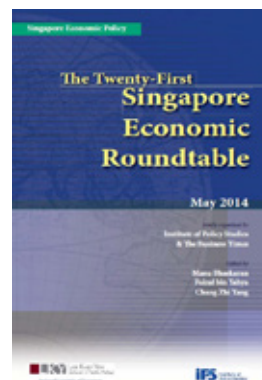


### **The Twenty-First Singapore Economic Roundtable**

*Edited by Manu Bhaskaran, Faizal Bin Yahya and Chang Zhi Yang*

The Twenty-First Singapore Economic Roundtable was held in May 2014 and looked at innovation policy in Singapore as well as recent economic developments and policy implications for the Singapore economy. The book contains the text of presentations and commentary by:

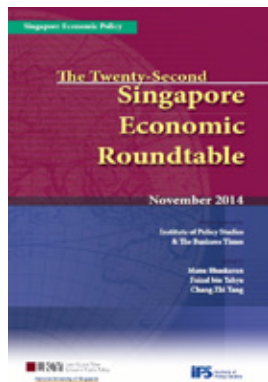
- Deborah Tan, Senior Economist, Economic Surveillance and Forecasting Department, Monetary Authority of Singapore;
- Glenn Maguire, Chief Economist, Asia-Pacific, Economics Research, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited;
- Dr Arup Raha, Chief Economist, CIMB;
- Dr Kuok Meng-Han, Founder and Executive Director, Camtech Management;
- Edwin Chow, Executive Director, Innovation & Start-Ups Group and SPRING Investments Pte Ltd, SPRING Singapore



- Prof. Desai Narasimhalu, Director of the Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and Practice Professor, School of Information Systems, Singapore Management University

### The Twenty-Second Singapore Economic Roundtable

*Edited by Manu Bhaskaran, Faizal Bin Yahya and Chang Zhi Yang*

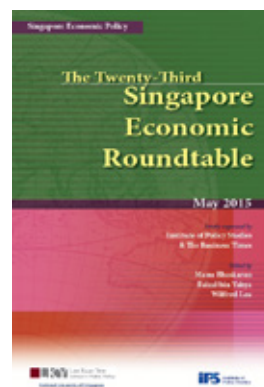


The Twenty-Second Singapore Economic Roundtable was held in November 2014 and looked at sustainable models for public goods delivery, as well as recent economic developments and policy implications for the Singapore economy. The book contains the text of presentations and commentary by:

- Ng Tze Wei, Lead Economist, Domestic Economy Division, Economic Surveillance and Forecasting Department, Monetary Authority of Singapore;
- Dr Geoffrey Heenan, Resident Representative Singapore, International Monetary Fund;
- Dr Venkatraman Anantha Nageswaran, Independent Consultant, Vansight Private Limited;
- Prof. M Ramesh, Professor, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy;
- Gopinath Menon, Adjunct Associate Professor, Division of Infrastructure Systems and Maritime Studies, School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Nanyang Technological University;
- Satyanarayan Ramamurthy, Partner, KPMG

### The Twenty-Third Singapore Economic Roundtable

*Edited by Manu Bhaskaran, Faizal Bin Yahya and Wilfred Lau*



The Twenty-Third Singapore Economic Roundtable was held in May 2015 and looked at Singapore's economic restructuring for productivity-led growth, as well as recent economic developments and policy implications for the Singapore economy. The book contains the text of presentations and commentary by:

- Ng Tze Wei, Lead Economist, Domestic Economy Division, Economic Surveillance & Forecasting Department, Monetary Authority of Singapore;
- Dr Arup Raha, Chief Economist, CIMB;
- Ray Farris, Managing Director & Head of Global Emerging Markets Fixed Income Strategy, Credit Suisse AG;
- Associate Professor Shandre Thangavelu, Regional Director (Southeast Asia), Centre for International Economic Studies, Institute for International Trade, The University of Adelaide, Australia;
- Associate Professor Randolph Tan, Director, Centre for Applied Research, SIM University;
- Tom Sonnen, Managing Director – Singapore, Partners in Performance

## 2016 – REPORTS

### IPS Working Papers No. 25

[SG50 and Beyond:  
Protecting the Public  
Space in the New Era of  
Singaporean Pluralism](#)

*By Johannis Bin Abdul  
Aziz, Gillian Koh,  
Mathew Mathews and  
Tan Min-Wei*

This paper reports the findings of several closed-door focus group discussions with prominent public advocates on all sides of the LGBT rights and Sanctity of Life movements in Singapore. In the context of increasing public lobbying over moral and cultural issues, this report observes the lack of pre-established principles and norms for dealing with this value plurality in a civil and productive way. The authors found face-to-face meetings in neutral settings to be an effective way of cooling the contentions that exist online.



### IPS Exchange Series No. 7

[Sentiments on  
Immigrant Integration &  
the Role of Immigrant  
Associations](#)

*By Mathew Mathews  
and Zhang Jiayi*

As Singapore's migrant background becomes increasingly diverse, there needs to be a concerted effort by all players to foster cohesion. This IPS Exchange Series report showcases the efforts of community leadership in discussing the issues of immigrant integration in Singapore as well as their efforts to do so in the sites of immigrant associations.



### IPS Exchange Series No. 8

[Supporting a Dynamic  
SME Sector: Challenges  
Faced by SMEs in  
Singapore](#)

*By Faizal Bin Yahya,  
Chang Zhi Yang, Ng Yan  
Hao and Tan Meng Wah*

This report aims to provide an updated overview of the SME landscape in Singapore and around the world, laying the groundwork for future research on SME development. Seven closed-door discussions were held by IPS from end 2013 to early 2015 to generate insights on the SME sector in Singapore. These sessions were attended by senior representatives from various sectors including academia, the private sector and the public sector.



### IPS Exchange Series No. 9

[Rising Costs in  
Singapore](#)

*By Manu Bhaskaran,  
Ng Yan Hao and Hansel  
Teo*

One of the key challenges facing Singapore has been that of rising costs. This IPS Exchange Series report defines the problem and examines the root cause of the issue. According to the researchers, inflation from 2006 and 2012 was driven mainly by accelerating population growth and rising land-use costs caused by global liquidity, supply-demand imbalances and institutional shifts in ownership and management of key resources. The following areas of concern for further discussion were raised: the optimal level of public ownership of commercial spaces; the role of economies of scale and market structure in firm mark-ups; and the use of cost-function analysis to assess the dynamics of input substitution in relation to changing business cost structures.



**IPS Exchange Series  
No. 10**

[Conference Papers of  
New Frontiers: IPS-  
CFE Conference on  
the Future Economy of  
Singapore](#)

*Edited by Manu  
Bhaskaran, Faizal Bin  
Yahya and Ng Yan Hao*

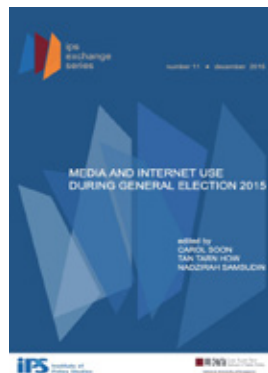


The conference “New Frontiers: IPS-CFE Conference on the Future Economy of Singapore” was held over one-and-a-half days from 12–13 July 2016. Around 300 people from the public and private sectors, trade associations, unions and academia attended the conference. This IPS Exchange Series report summarises the papers presented at the conference. The conference featured six panels: (1) Industries of the Future; (2) Ecosystem of the Future Economy; (3) Future Work; (4) Productivity and Innovation; (5) Regionalisation and Globalisation; and (6) Responding Together.

**IPS Exchange Series  
No. 11**

[Media and Internet Use  
During General Election  
2015](#)

*Edited by Carol Soon,  
Tan Tarn How and  
Nadzirah Samsudin*



This report presents findings from a nationwide online survey on Singaporeans’ media and Internet use during the General Election (GE) in September 2015. This study, a follow-up from one conducted after the General Election in May 2011, focuses on three areas: Social media’s role in the GE and its relationship with voter demographics, political traits and political participation; how political parties used social media; and the heterogeneity of social media.

# MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



IPS researchers regularly provide their [perspectives on Singapore policy developments](#) to Singapore and international media. Their comments have been featured in print, online, broadcast and newswire stories in different languages. They contribute between [two and three op-eds](#) each month to Singapore media, such as *The Straits Times*, *Today*, *The Business Times*, and *Lianhe Zaobao*.

In 2015, researchers gave their views on voter attitudes and media use during the big political event of the year – the 2015 General Election. They also spoke about other significant policy-related developments, including the impact of government initiatives to boost fertility, the increase in social spending on the elderly and those in the middle class, and the implications of changing family structures. In 2016, they commented on changes to the political system and the review to the Elected Presidency scheme to safeguard minority representation, and reflected on national efforts at promoting multiculturalism and social cohesion. Other topics they spoke about included government schemes to ensure housing affordability, ways to encourage inclusion in the workplace and suggestions to tweak the returns from and usage of the CPF.

Some 200 essays by IPS researchers, Singaporean graduate students studying here and abroad and public intellectuals were published on the IPS Commons website in 2015 and 2016. IPS Commons was set up to promote and showcase rational



discussion of public policy ideas in Singapore and in recent times, it has made extra effort to feature younger voices. The Young Singaporeans Series of essays, where Singaporeans below the age of 40 were asked to look ahead to Singapore's 100th year of independence in 2065 and pen down their aspirations for their passion projects and pet



# IPS CORPORATE ASSOCIATES PROGRAMME



Corporate Associates Lunch with Mr Eddie Teo, Chairman of the Public Service Commission, in April 2015



(L-R) Dr Gillian Koh, Deputy Director (Research) with Ms Indraneel Rajah, Senior Minister of State for Law and Finance at a Corporate Associates Breakfast on Budget 2016, in March 2016

In 2015 and 2016, IPS made several changes to its [Corporate Associates \(CA\) Programme](#) — to strengthen the programme and enhance the benefits that members receive as part of their association with IPS. CAs are among our staunchest supporters, contributing generously both financially as well as intellectually to our work, and we wanted to better acknowledge their support.

Key enhancements to the programme included:

- Increasing the number of representatives from each CA organisation from one (originally the Principal Representative) to eight, so that more may benefit from the programme. All eight representatives now receive invitations to IPS events and our reports.
- Creating the role of CA Facilitators within CA organisations, so that they can disseminate IPS event invitations and reports to those who may find them relevant, effectively driving the privileges of the programme beyond that of the eight representatives. We hope that this will make the CA programme relevant to more individuals in the organisation.
- Briefings to each Facilitator on the work that IPS does, the programme and its privileges so that they may better tap on its benefits.

- Organising more one-table dinners for members on a regular basis with distinguished political leaders, public intellectuals and top policymakers.
- Launching IPS *•INSIGHTS*, a bullet-point brief of key takeaways from selected IPS events and research projects, that is emailed to members.
- Launching the IPS New Vistas Series of exclusive events for members.

We closed 2016 with close to [60 CAs](#) comprising a good mix of statutory boards, GLCs, MNCs and SMEs from diverse industries such as banking, financial consulting, manufacturing, property development, technology, telecommunications, tourism, transportation and shipping, to name a few. Our plan is to grow the membership to an even more multi-faceted base to ensure that IPS, along with our CAs, benefits from the diverse views and extensive networks of the business community in Singapore.

In 2016, we organised 11 exclusive CA [events](#) featuring distinguished speakers, ranging from renowned global economists to prominent topic experts to senior political leaders and agency heads, covering a wide range of topics. Seah Moon Ming, Chairman of IE Singapore, spoke about globalisation, its importance to Singapore's continued relevance and new areas of opportunity; Peter Ong, Head of the Civil Service





(L-R) Professor John Kay Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics, with Mr Manu Bhaskaran, IPS Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at a Corporate Associates Breakfast in January 2016. Professor Kay spoke about his book, *Other People's Money*



(L-R) Ms Ng Bee Kim, Chief Negotiator for Singapore for the Trans-Pacific Partnership and Director General, Trade Division, Ministry of Trade and Industry; Professor Tommy Koh, IPS Special Adviser; and Mr Daren Tang, Chairperson for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, Intellectual Property Negotiations and Chief Executive of the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore, at a Corporate Associates Lunch on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, in March 2016

and the Strategy Group in the Prime Minister's Office, discussed whole-of-government priorities and the government's strategic focus in the next decade; Dr Raj. Thampuran, Managing Director of A\*STAR, focused on how the agency is driving innovation in science and technology to create greater economic value; and Ng Bee Kim, Director General at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and Chief Negotiator for Singapore for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), gave insights into the TPP discussions and what the agreement would mean for our region and our country.

In 2016, we launched our one-page, bullet-point format newsletter series •INSIGHTS so that CA representatives can benefit from bite-sized snippets of takeaways from IPS publications, conferences, research projects, CA events, closed-door discussions and roundtables. Those who are unable to attend our events or read our research publications in full, for example, will still get a concise and easily digestible report on the key points.

### Fundraising

IPS raised \$490,000 in support of its work and its efforts to present two conferences in 2016 — \$395,000 through [Singapore Perspectives 2016](#) and \$95,000 through [New Frontiers: The IPS-CFE Conference on the Future Economy of Singapore](#).

The team also laid the groundwork and gift structure for the upcoming drive to raise \$15 million for the IPS Development Fund. The new tiers of giving distinguish between annual gifts through the Friends of IPS tier, and larger scale “lifetime” gifts via three tiers — Lifetime Friends, Benefactors and Patrons of IPS. Lifetime-tier donors automatically become members of the IPS CA Programme for life. The tiers are as follows:



(L-R) Mr Peter Ong, Head of the Civil Service and Ms Goh Swee Chen, Chairman of Shell Companies in Singapore at a Corporate Associates One-Table Dinner on the role of the Strategy Group (Prime Minister's Office), in July 2016

- Friend of IPS (annual gifts of ≥ \$10,000)
- Lifetime Friend of IPS (gifts ≥ \$100,000)
- Lifetime Benefactor of IPS (gifts ≥ \$500,000)
- Lifetime Patron of IPS (gifts ≥ \$1,000,000)

To date, we count M1 Limited, NTUC Enterprise Co-operative Limited and Shell Companies in Singapore as Lifetime Friends of IPS. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them, along with all our other Friends and donors for their generous support, without whom our work would not be possible.

*IPS Associate Director Low Han-tzen oversees the IPS Corporate Associates programme. To learn more about the programme, please contact him at [low.hantzen@nus.edu.sg](mailto:low.hantzen@nus.edu.sg).*

# OUR DONORS

We would like to acknowledge with gratitude the individuals and organisations who have sustained us through the years with their financial and intellectual support.

## Lifetime Friends of IPS

M1 Limited
NTUC Enterprise Co-operative Limited
Shell Companies in Singapore

## Friends of IPS

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Lum Chang Investments Pte Ltd	World Gold Council

**Individual Donors to IPS 2015/2016**

Alain Vandenborre

Wong Meng Meng

Wong Ngit Liong

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Singapore Management University

Singapore Polytechnic

Singapore Telecommunications Limited

Singapore University of Technology and Design

Temasek Polytechnic

**Donors to New Frontiers: IPS-CFE  
Conference on the Future Economy  
of Singapore**

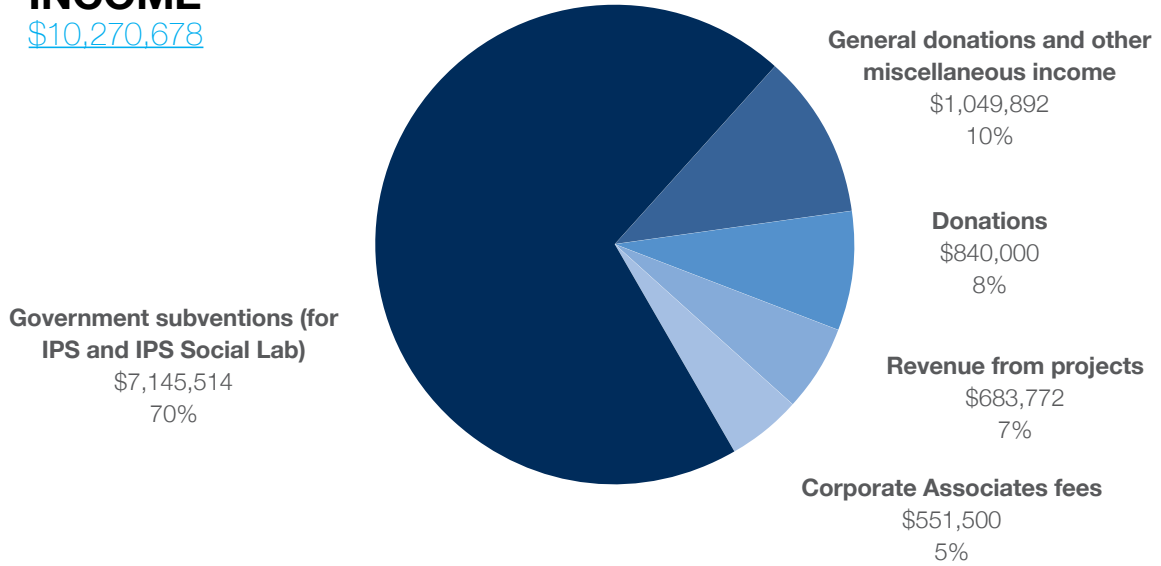
Singapore Technologies Engineering Ltd

Mapletree Investments Pte Ltd

# FINANCIALS (FY15/16)

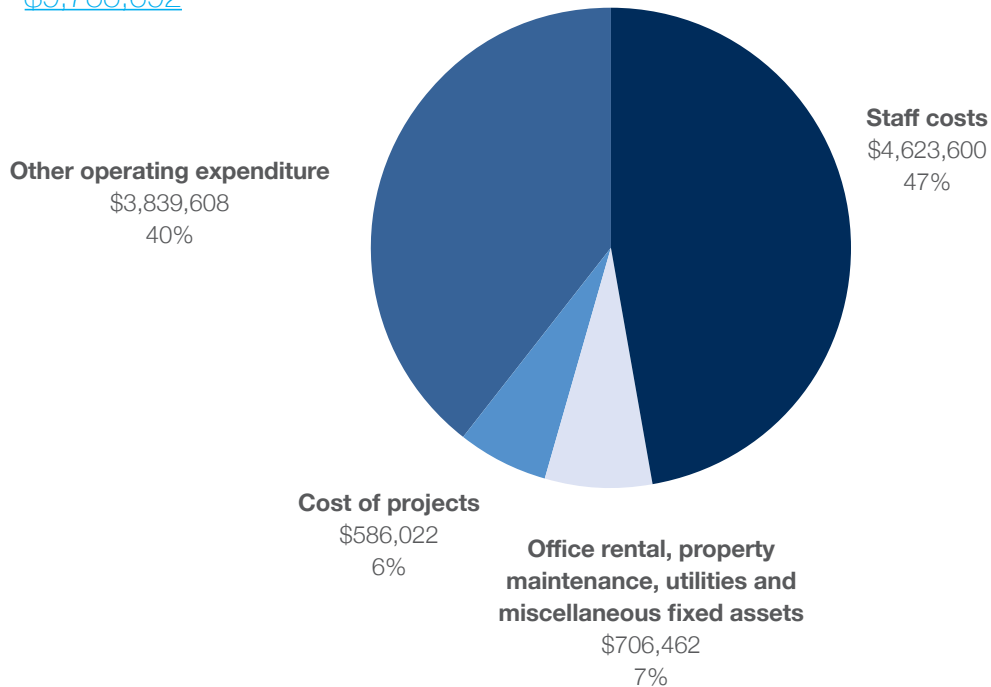
## INCOME

\$10,270,678



## EXPENDITURE

\$9,755,692



**Surplus/ (deficit) \$514,986**

*As of November 2016*

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# OUR PEOPLE

## IPS FOUNDING PATRON



Goh Chok Tong  
Emeritus Senior Minister

## IPS ACADEMIC PANEL

(2 Mar 2015 to 28  
Feb 2018)



Professor Tommy Koh  
Special Adviser, IPS



Dr Teh Kok Peng



Hsieh Tsun-Yan



Associate Professor Kwok  
Kian Woon (till 30 Nov  
2015)



Lee Tzu Yang

## IPS STAFF



Janadas Devan  
Director



Arun Mahizhnan  
Special Research Adviser



Irene Lim  
Deputy Director  
(Administration)



Dr Gillian Koh  
Deputy Director (Research)



Associate Professor Tan  
Ern Ser  
Academic Adviser, IPS  
Social Lab



Dr Yap Mui Teng  
Principal Research Fellow



Dr Faizal Bin Yahya  
Senior Research Fellow



Christopher Gee  
Senior Research Fellow



Dr Leong Chan-Hoong  
Senior Research Fellow



Dr Mathew Mathews  
Senior Research Fellow



Dr Carol Soon  
Senior Research Fellow



Dr Alex Tan Tai Loong  
Senior Research Fellow



Tan Tarn How  
Senior Research Fellow



Dr Justin Lee  
Research Fellow



Dr Teng Siao See  
Research Fellow



Henry Ho  
Senior Research Analyst



Paveena Seah  
Senior Research Analyst



Sim Jui Liang  
Research Associate



Debbie Soon  
Research Associate



Yvonne Arivalagan  
Research Assistant



Petrina Chew  
Research Assistant



Wilfred Lau  
Research Assistant



Varian Lim  
Research Analyst



Shanthini Selvarajan  
Research Assistant



Siti Nadzirah Binte  
Samsudin  
Research Assistant



Tan Min-Wei  
Research Assistant



Eugene Teng  
Research Analyst



Wong Fung Shing  
Research Assistant



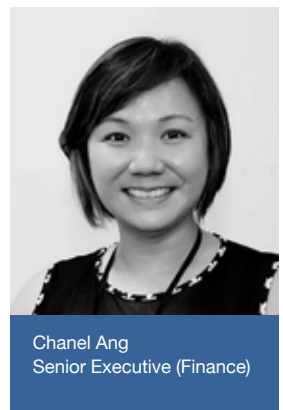
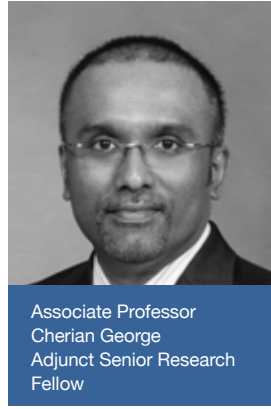
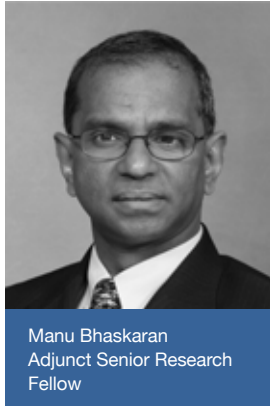
Fern Yu  
Research Assistant  
(Special Projects)



Bilahari Kausikan  
S R Nathan Fellow for  
the Study of Singapore  
(Academic Year 2015/16)



Peter Ho  
S R Nathan Fellow for  
the Study of Singapore  
(Academic Year 2016/17)







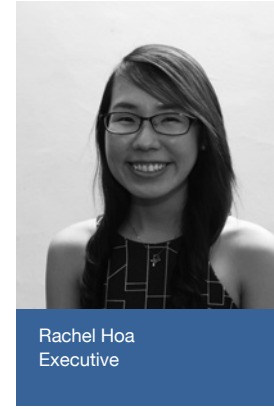
Choo Kia Ming  
Senior Executive



Tamil Vani D/O Gunasilan  
Senior Executive



Nur Zahidah Binti Mohd  
Nasir  
Senior Executive



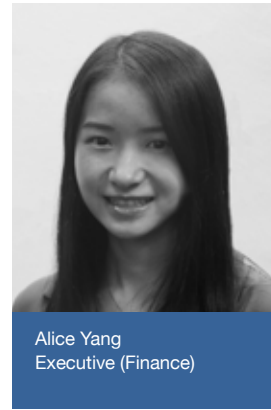
Rachel Hoa  
Executive



Tan Chween Tah  
Executive (IT)



Cheryl Wong  
Executive (Human  
Resources)



Alice Yang  
Executive (Finance)



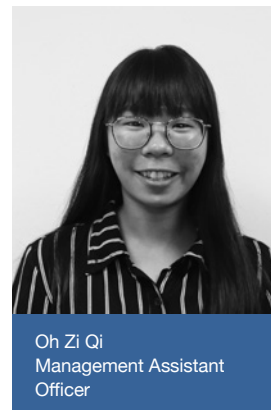
Yap Wei Ting  
Executive



Er Kea Wee  
Project Associate



Mazlan Bin Mahmood  
Operations Associate



Oh Zi Qi  
Management Assistant  
Officer



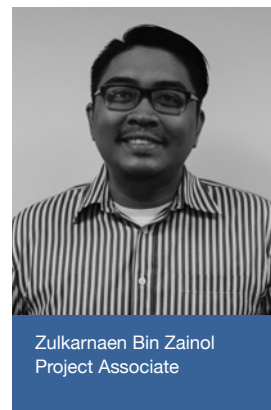
Eileen Tan  
Personal Assistant to  
Special Adviser and  
Director



Michelle Teo  
Specialist Associate (IT)



Sherry Teo  
Management Assistant  
Officer



Zulkarnaen Bin Zainol  
Project Associate

# THE IPS EXPERIENCE

## A LONG-SERVICE STAR

*IPS' administrative and events team is crucial in helping the Institute achieve its mission of communicating its research to the wider public. Research Assistant (Special Projects) Fern Yu speaks to the Institute's longest-serving administrative staff member to find out why he's stayed on through the years.*



Mazlan (back row, fourth from right) at IPS' Fifth Anniversary Dinner in 1992



Mazlan has been with IPS since 1988

IPS will celebrate its 30th birthday in 2018. During these three decades, the Institute has had the privilege of having many a brilliant mind to steward our projects. Indeed, when speaking about IPS, the work that showcases IPS' intellectual quest of "Engaging minds, Exchanging ideas" is often brought up. And we have the team supporting this quest to thank.

Mazlan Bin Mahmood, 49, is part of that team. He is the only staff member on the administrative team who has remained at the Institute from its inception in 1988. Among research colleagues, Dr Yap Mui Teng and Arun Mahizhnan have been with the Institute from 1989 and 1991 respectively; Gwee Wee Chen, now the Head of Information and Systems at IPS, started out as a Research Officer in 1991.

Mazlan is an Operations Associate — playing a key role in event logistics, providing dispatch services and managing the Institute's inventory of office and pantry supplies. He works with every member of the Institute, proffering a shy smile and slight nod of the head as he moves quietly through the refurbished colonial building that houses IPS.

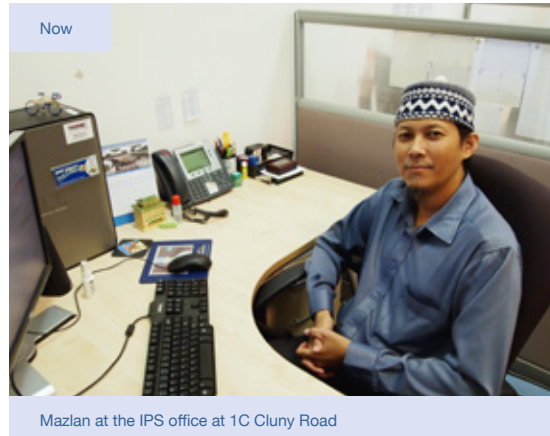
"Everything here is linked to me!" Mazlan said with a smile, with more of a sense of responsibility than any semblance of overt pride.

Mazlan still recalls the day he joined IPS. "15 April 1988," he stated without hesitation when asked. Then 21, he had just completed his National Service, and his uncle, who worked at the National University of Singapore's (NUS) Political Science Department, told him of an opening at IPS for an office attendant and dispatch rider, so Mazlan decided to apply. The office was temporarily housed within NUS's Political Science Department, and it was then that he met IPS' Founding Director, Professor Chan Heng Chee.

The interview process, consisting of a few questions, was simple enough. A week later, Mazlan became employee number five at IPS. Today, there are over 50 staff members of IPS and the IPS Social Lab.

Back then, IPS published around three books, and held approximately five lectures and conferences each year. As it was a smaller Institute, there were fewer responsibilities for Mazlan to manage. Two years into the job, he began to feel restless and secured another job, which was in Sentosa. But the thought of the long commute from his home in the northwest of Singapore put him off, so he chose to stay. He has not thought of leaving ever since, possibly because every day is now a busy day.

Asked to describe the main difference between IPS of the past and the present, he said with a laugh:



“Now, compared to last time, IPS is so popular!” He cited the many conferences, forums, seminars, workshops, public lectures and discussions that IPS now holds regularly. In 2016, for instance, the Institute held over 35 of these events, with around 10 to 900 participants attending each time. These conferences also give Mazlan a chance to catch up with old friends, as IPS often invites former staff to attend its flagship events, such as the annual Singapore Perspectives conference.

Mazlan stressed that it is a sense of comfort and belonging that keeps him working at IPS. “I have a lot of experience here. I know how to settle all the things around here,” Mazlan explained. “But in a new place, things may not be so clear and I won’t know how they handle everything.” All the same though, Mazlan is still keen to improve on his current skills. He said that he has plans to take a SkillsFuture course and will seek advice from Yayasan Mendaki on what courses are suitable for him.

In many ways, Mazlan has grown together with the Institute. With all the changes in his life, from being single to getting married to starting a family (he has four children between the ages of 11 and 18), IPS is the one constant that has remained. It is apt then that the highlight of his time here was a moment that



celebrated his many years of service to IPS. At IPS’ 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner held in November 2013, Mazlan was awarded a token of appreciation by IPS Special Adviser Professor Tommy Koh. It was a gesture that surprised and touched him, he said.

“What makes IPS unique is the people,” said Prof. Koh at the dinner. “We have a remarkable family of colleagues who are loyal, who work harmoniously with one other and have created a unique *esprit de corps*.” If perchance Mazlan may stay on at IPS until retirement as he wishes, we will always know how this IPS spirit has evolved over the years through his story.

# THE IPS EXPERIENCE

## FRESH FACES, FRESH PERSPECTIVES

*IPS has always reached out to diverse groups of people through its conferences and seminars on Singapore policy issues. These days, it is seeing an increasing number of young Singaporeans with varied career interests seeking a stint in public policy research. Former intern Valerie Yeo speaks to others who have spent time at IPS and asks them to recount their experiences.*



(L-R): Former interns Shawn Goh, Clarence Lim, Lim Wan Yi, Dinasha Haridas, Lu Si Yinn, Ramakrishnan Karthigayan at the IPS Forum on CPF and Retirement Adequacy, July 2014

IPS' primary goal is to conduct research that can inform public policy and promote good governance. Teaching is not the main duty of IPS researchers, although several researchers do teach undergraduate and graduate courses at NUS. But the Institute has always been keen to reach out to young minds and its internship programme, which has been around for 20 years, has been a useful way of doing this.

Application numbers from Singaporean students studying locally and abroad have increased in recent years, said Deputy Director (Administration) Irene Lim. In general, IPS interns are between the ages of 19 and 24. At the Institute, they are mentored by a senior researcher and involved in the projects of their respective research clusters. Over the course of their internship, they can expect to gain a deeper understanding of the issues that impact policymaking across different areas. Interns are paid an hourly rate of \$8 or more.

### Supporting IPS researchers

Lin Jia Hui, a student in International Affairs at George Washington University, spent three months at IPS in the middle of 2016. She began following the IPS Commons page on Facebook, which shares articles written by IPS researchers, prior to her internship at the

Demography and Family research cluster. She said she wanted to “understand policies from a demographic and population-wide standpoint” and also work with datasets from IPS surveys, which she might not get to do in another workplace.

Interns like Jia Hui provide crucial additional support to the members of IPS research clusters. The tasks assigned to interns include literature reviews, data analysis of survey results, recording and transcribing notes at focus group discussions, occasional administrative tasks like photocopying book chapters and providing event support during IPS conferences and seminars. In attending these research events, interns gain new knowledge and insights, but also offer perspectives that contribute to research analyses and policy recommendations.

### A Stepping Stone for the Future

Interns get to attend personal and professional development talks and workshops under the Research Assistant (RA) Orientation and Mentorship Programme. The programme, launched in 2015 and headed by IPS Senior Research Fellow Carol Soon, consists of talks and workshops that aim to give the RAs additional life lessons and skills, and inform their career choices. In the past two years, there have been sessions on how to conduct and write policy analyses in the public and private sectors, the key tenets of clear writing, the basics of financial planning and how to network confidently.

For many of the interns, the learning experience at IPS has proven to be valuable for their future careers. Faris Mokhtar, now a journalist with the TODAY newspaper, said he cherished the lively environment that stimulated discussion and critical thinking.

“As a journalist, it is essential not just to be sharp but analytical as well. Part of my job also involves writing analysis and commentaries about issues. To do this,

one needs to have depth and breadth of thought. I can gladly say that I achieved those goals during my stint at IPS. Guidance and input from the Research Fellows informed and broadened my perspectives too,” said Faris, who interned at IPS in 2012.

Valerie Koh, Senior Associate of the Programmes Directorate at the Ministry of Finance, who interned at IPS in 2013, echoed this. “At IPS, my exposure to ideas and arguments about how to organise society and policies piqued my interest in policy work. It influenced my decision to join the civil service,” she said.



Former intern Lee Xian Min, Assistant Director at the Eco-City Project Office at Ministry of National Development

Similarly, Lee Xian Min said that having the opportunity to attend IPS conferences laid a good foundation for her job. During her time in IPS from June to August 2015, she attended the SG50+ Conference in July 2015, where she was a rapporteur for Dr Liu Thai Ker’s panel session on urban planning and the environment in Singapore.

“At my job interview with the Ministry of National Development (MND), I was required to write about the challenges and opportunities Singapore faced in its greening efforts. I included what I remembered from the session,” she said. Xian Min is now an Assistant Director at the Eco-City Project Office at MND.

Having the opportunity to spearhead and be involved in research projects felt like a rarity in an internship, noted Tan Min-Wei. This convinced him to stay on in IPS after his internship ended in March 2014. Currently a Research Assistant in the Politics and Governance research cluster, he said: “I was given a lot more latitude in IPS as compared to my peers in other internships. The sense of accomplishment and ownership I felt after completing a working paper on Danish and Finnish welfare states in February 2014 was rewarding.”

Muhammad Syakir Kamal, an Aeronautical Engineering student at Imperial College London, interned at IPS in July and August 2015. He said: “I was interested in

policy research because policies affect and alter our lives to a large extent. My time in IPS allowed me to understand Singapore’s ageing population in depth. I also looked at how technology could help in assisting elderly caregiving in the future. As an engineering student, I could bring certain quantitative skills to the table like problem solving and analytical thinking to see if my opinions differed from others.”

### A Two-Way Learning Experience

As a former intern, I experienced this convivial community first hand. If there is one thing that is in



Faris Mokhtar (centre) on assignment during his stint as a broadcast journalist with Channel NewsAsia

abundance in IPS, it would be the generosity in the sharing of ideas. Even when there were conflicting opinions, diversity was respected and discourse encouraged. Another message that interns got was this: In working life, building relationships with one’s colleagues matter. Xian Min said, “Seeing how senior personnel treat interns with respect and humility gave me an example to emulate for life.”

IPS Deputy Director (Research) Gillian Koh said that it is in IPS’ interest to develop young Singaporeans’ understanding of public policy in Singapore. She noted that invariably, those who spend time at IPS either go on to post-graduate studies relating to Singapore, or take on jobs in the public service.

“It turns out that we learn quite a lot from our interns as well. They provide us insights into young Singaporeans’ concerns and keep us excited about our own work that we hope contributes in some way to building a better future here,” she said.

*Visit the “Jobs at IPS” section of the IPS website for more information about the IPS Internship programme*

The IPS Biennial Report 2015/2016 was compiled by:  
Fern Yu, Tan Chween Tah and Lynn Lee

Layout and Artwork by:  
Chris Koh

Information in this report is correct as of 15 December 2016

If you would like more information about IPS and its various programmes,  
please visit the IPS website at <http://lkyspp.nus.edu.sg/ips/> or contact  
[ips.publicaffairs@nus.edu.sg](mailto:ips.publicaffairs@nus.edu.sg)



