

1. Introduction

The IPS Oral History Project aims to compile a series of recorded audio interviews on the conceptualisation, establishment and development of IPS over three decades. The IPS team embarked on the project with advice and assistance from the National Archives of Singapore. The total number of interviewees is 29.

The interviewees are arranged by the following categories. (Please refer to the appendix for the full list.)

- i. Founding Patron – Emeritus Senior Minister Mr Goh Chok Tong
- ii. Leadership of IPS – Professor Tommy Koh, Mr Janadas Devan, and former IPS Directors (Professor Chan Heng Chee, Professor Jon Quah, Dr Lee Tsao Yuan, Mr Arun Mahizhnan, and Ambassador Ong Keng Yong)
- iii. Former and Current Staff – Dr Gillian Koh, Ms Irene Lim, Mr Manu Bhaskaran, Dr Yap Mui Teng, Mr Mazlan bin Mahmood, Ms Cynthia Lin, Ms Chang Li Lin, Ms Peggy Kek, Dr Yeo Lay Hwee, Dr Phua Kai Hong
- iv. Appointing Governors and Board Members – Mr Lim Siong Guan, Mr Lim Pin, Mr Kishore Mahbubani, Professor Wang Gungwu, Mr Lee Tzu Yang, Dr Teh Kok Peng, Mr Patrick Daniel, Mr Hsieh Tsun-yan, Mr Cheong Yip Seng
- v. Corporate Associates – Mr Rolf Gerber, Mr Tan Suee Chieh

2. Methodology

Oral history is a systematic collection of memories and knowledge of past events and periods. Interviewees with personal experience — in this case, of the Institute’s formation and evolution, or day-to-day operations and activities — are invited/approached to be interviewed. Interviewers who are trained in the oral history methodology interview the interviewees if the latter are willing and able to recall first-hand memories of the Institute and its developments.

A unique element of the oral history is the preliminary interview that is carried out before the actual interview. This captures the angle of each interview, which is rooted in each interviewee’s personal experiences with/at IPS. Hence, no two interviews are similar, resulting in rich and comprehensive insights.

Recorded interviews are preserved for posterity. Most of the interviews were conducted between July 2019 and January 2020, and made available for research purposes subject to interview access agreement. We selected a range of interviewees of varying seniority, involvement and length of service, in order to get a more complete picture of what it was like to be part of IPS, the perceptions of IPS, its achievements and challenges, and — for others affiliated with but not employed by IPS — how they saw their interactions with IPS.

3. IPS in its early years

IPS was first led by director Prof Chan Heng Chee, who recounted how she was approached to establish the Institute of Policy Studies amidst a changing but tense political backdrop, and how she and her deputy Prof Jon Quah had started the Institute from scratch. At the time, Deputy Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong had expressed it would be a good time for people in Singapore to discuss their ideas and thoughts, particularly on sensitive topics, through a neutral and safe platform, and he wanted Prof Chan to lead the Institute.

Starting the Institute included everything — from putting down on paper the objectives and mission of IPS and securing funding, to getting the office premises, tables, chairs and wastepaper baskets. There was also the question of staffing. Ms Cynthia Lin, who served as secretary to Prof Chan at IPS, was one of the first hires, together with Ms Mabel Chung and Mr Mazlan bin Mahmood. Another early staff member was Ms Tan Teng Lang, a former student of both Prof Chan and Prof Quah in the Political Science department at the National University of Singapore (NUS), who was hired as a research associate, and Dr Phua Kai Hong, a public health expert who was brought in as an adjunct.

Prof Chan and Prof Quah held closed-door discussions and a course on the history and politics of Singapore. The course on the history and politics of Singapore was meant for civil servants.¹ Later on, they also conducted courses for private sector executives. Prof Chan emphasised the importance of teaching the modern history of Singapore. It was one of the objectives she had set out for IPS' first year, because a strong appreciation of this history "is ballast to give us perspective on ... how to move forward, how to think about policies and how to come up with solid substantial policies."

Subsequently, when Prof Quah took over as Acting Director, he went on a study trip to the United States where he visited think tanks such as RAND Corporation, Brookings and the Heritage Foundation in order to learn about best practices from established think tanks. The visit culminated in a written report, titled "Think Tanks in the United States and their Relevance for the Institute of Policy Studies", which looked at the importance of "quality research" and "quality people", funding, and benchmarking. In his oral history interview, he observed that these considerations remained relevant today.

Both Prof Chan and Prof Quah spoke positively of their experiences with the Governing Board. In particular, Prof Quah highlighted a good working relationship with Prof Lim Pin, who was Governor of the IPS Board and Vice-Chancellor of NUS. In his experience, "Prof Lim was a very kind person, very easy to work with and very helpful." As IPS was located on the NUS campus but not part of the university, Prof Quah would seek permission from Prof Lim to use NUS facilities. Prof Quah also consulted Prof Lim on other matters: "When there were certain things that I wasn't sure whether it was okay for IPS to do, I [would] consult him because I [didn't] want to step outside the boundaries of, of what we are supposed to do."

¹ This was before the Civil Service College was established in 2001.

Prof Chan recounted that the high-powered board, comprising private and public sector leaders, was “very thoughtful” and met quite frequently. She described them as a “council of wise men”, and recounted that “it was a special privilege ... having them together to hear them deliberate.” She learnt how to build organisations from her interactions with them. Mr Yong Pung How, then a captain of industry,² was one individual who left a distinct impression on Prof Chan, because of his remarks about how “a good CEO always attends to the details.”

4. Life at IPS

Early directors and staff described how small IPS was at the start, especially in comparison to its current staff strength. As Prof Quah said, “basically it was just four of us running the show, so we were quite busy.” There were not enough staff to make up clusters or departments. Research was mainly driven by individuals and their respective expertise. Dr Yap Mui Teng, who joined IPS in December 1989 and eventually became Head of the Demography and Family Cluster, and Principal Research Fellow, shared,

“When I first joined IPS ... it was a small place and the researchers were each a specialist into their own areas. I was doing population, Giok Ling was doing housing, and things like that. So then we were actually ... doing the research by ourselves, yeah. And [we] didn’t have research assistants at that time.”

The close-knit, familial atmosphere of IPS was mentioned by several staff, including Ms Peggy Kek, Ms Chang Li Lin, and Dr Yeo Lay Hwee. Dr Yeo Lay Hwee, a researcher at IPS from 1995 to 1998, shared that even those who had left the organisation “continued to be part of the family” and “you never really left IPS in that sense”, as she recounted being invited to celebrations even after she was no longer with IPS.

Long-serving administrative staff such as Ms Cynthia Lin and Mr Mazlan bin Mahmood, also shared about the various relocations during their time with IPS. Both witnessed IPS’ move from the NUS Political Science Department to Hon Sui Sen Memorial Library, then Heng Mui Keng Terrace, and finally, to its current location at Cluny Road. Ms Lin spoke particularly fondly of IPS’ location at Heng Mui Keng Terrace, which overlooked the sea, though she had found each office “really, really nice places to work in.”

They both experienced changes in job scope as the Institute expanded. Ms Lin, who was a clerical officer, then secretary and personal assistant, found herself multitasking, switching between events organisation and human resources work at different periods of her time with IPS. Mr Mazlan, too, observed the changes in staff strength and his job scope, especially with the arrival

² Mr Yong Pung How was the chairman and chief executive officer of Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation (OCBC) from 1983 to 1989, before he was appointed Chief Justice of Singapore.

of Ms Irene Lim in 1999, who recruited more staff to assist with conference organisation and administration.

Something Ms Lin observed that had stayed the same throughout the years, though, was the pursuit of excellence at IPS. She attributed the emphasis on excellence and attention to detail to then Director Dr Lee Tsao Yuan, an ethos that administrative staff, led by Ms Irene Lim (then Administrative Manager, and now Deputy Director [Administration]) adopted over the years. Quoting Ms Lin,

“Not only the research deliverables or whatever the conference is all about, but even admin Full stop, comma, the way you present your document, it has to be perfect So, Lee Tsao Yuan ... she was the one who actually taught us what to do and what must be done. And for her, it’s always par excellence...”

Even our meals, the list of people who [have] very special dietary requirements, there are many, especially coming from IPS, you know, the flagship conference. We have so many different types of people with dietary restrictions from kosher meal to vegetarian to halal, you know, to western or... with western, you cannot have this, or vegetarian ... And IPS is able to do that. And it is Irene who is so meticulous, who wants to go through all these things for the participants.”

Besides the emphasis on quality, a sense of belonging and loyalty to the organisation was a recurring theme in the interviews. Several interviewees shared about “alumni” who returned to staff conferences each year, even involving their friends and family members, who in turn became informally part of the IPS family. The sense of pride in the work of the Institute and their individual contribution was palpable for many, of all ranks and responsibilities.

5. IPS activities

In the early years, IPS conducted seminars and courses for senior civil servants and organised dialogue sessions with political leaders. When Prof Tommy Koh took over as Director in 1990, he worked with his deputy Dr Lee Tsao Yuan to organise the **Year in Review**, which would become the Institute’s annual flagship event. Prof Koh said,

“When I began my journey at IPS in 1990, IPS had no public visibility, you know, so I felt that I need to project IPS to the Singapore public. I wanted to do something that was of interest not only to a world of scholars, but to different stakeholders in Singapore. So my vision was that it will be like a mini town hall meeting of Singapore — that each year, I will convene a conference to review the important events and trends that took place in Singapore the year before. So I called it a year in review.”

In the beginning, people were still not confident about speaking their minds. So the Year in Review was entirely closed-door. But as Prof Koh recalled,

“Gradually I sensed that we had made progress. So I persuaded the speakers to agree that it will be partly open and partly closed-door, that the papers written for the conference will be in the public domain, the media can be part of it, but the discussion, the Q&A will be closed-door so that they could feel more confident expressing their views. So, it was a three-stage journey, you know, stage one, stage two partially closed or partially open. And then finally, I felt we were ready to have the whole thing open.”

In 2000, the Year in Review was renamed Perspectives (and later **Singapore Perspectives**) and the conference was reoriented towards the year ahead. To attract younger Singaporeans, IPS introduced the **Young Singaporeans Conference (YSC)** in 1993. Participants are usually the “rising stars” in various sectors across Singapore, and the YSC aimed get a sense of what their hopes and aspirations were, as well as their concerns on public policy issues. A handful had become prominent in politics later. While global thought leaders such as Fareed Zakaria and Francis Fukuyama were invited to share their views in the first few conferences, eventually it was felt that younger Singaporeans were becoming more self-confident and did not need such external prompting to get discussions going.

As an independent think tank and later as an autonomous unit of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP), IPS had to conduct extensive fundraising from donors and sponsors to conduct its activities. At the same time, it was felt that IPS needed to establish greater links with business leaders to inform policy research. As former Head of Public Affairs Peggy Kek recalled:

*“The reason behind establishing the **Corporate Associates (CA)** at the beginning was that IPS would engage business community more. There needed to be a stronger link between the two. Policy cannot be formulated; research cannot be done without input from the corporate world. So, that was the idea of bringing in the corporate associates So, one of the ambitions was that we would bring in a hundred corporate associates.”*

The target of 100 CAs was eventually achieved in 2003, after 11 years. Among the earliest participants was Mr Rolf Gerber, who was then head of the Swiss Bank Corporation (now UBS) and had participated in CA events since 1996. He found that IPS provided an expatriate like him with useful insights to Singapore’s social, political and economic environment.

“What is the relationship of the private sector with the IPS? IPS is a think tank. IPS produces interesting insights with surveys and research into different topics. And it is up to the private sector to decide what they make of this and how they utilise the insights which have been found and gained, and how they apply this in their business dealings ... and in their relations among staff and so on, and so on.”

Mr Gerber particularly enjoyed the discussion on sensitive issues such as inequality and race relations. With IPS having close ties to the government, the participation of civil servants and political leaders in IPS activities elevated the usefulness of these sessions, which also drew a “high-calibre” audience. As a finance professional, Mr Gerber was a regular participant in the **Singapore Economic Roundtable** that was co-organised by IPS and the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) since 2003.

Under the leadership of Prof Koh, IPS became a prominent partner in organising internationally focused events. Among them included serving as secretariat for the APEC Business Advisory Council, co-organising the Japan-Singapore Symposium, and working with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) on conferences relating to the Strait of Malacca and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which Prof Koh was involved in drafting. Prof Koh also proudly recalled his experience working with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in 2006.

“When we were going to host the annual IMF World Bank meeting in 2006, the Ministry of Finance contacted me to say ... that the tradition is that alongside the official meeting, there will be a so-called programme of seminars, which brings together basically thought leaders, you know, to talk about the world economy, monetary policy, to discuss issues relevant to both the Bank and the Fund. And the Ministry of Finance asked, can IPS take on the responsibility of organising the programme of seminars with IMF and the World Bank? So we said okay, national duty, national service now.”

Prof Koh and his deputy Mr Arun Mahizhnan insisted that at least 50 per cent of the thought leaders should be Asian, something that had not been done before, and managed to achieve it for the ones IPS organised. He did concede that as an internationally recognised diplomat, he attracted plenty of such collaborations and that during his directorship, IPS deviated from its original mandate of providing a platform for Singaporeans to debate domestic issues. Since IPS became part of LKYSPP in 2008, its research focus has gradually shifted back to domestic issues.

6. Policy leadership

The current and past directors of IPS generally agreed that IPS provided a critical platform for airing views that might have otherwise not been documented. This was an important function from the very beginning. As founding director Prof Chan Heng Chee remembered,

“... the objective of IPS was to create a place where people would come, thinking people, people who wanted, who had ideas to share, who had a point of view to share, could share with the group and discuss issues that were important for Singapore. And this would be the place where ideas would, you know, it's not a marketplace of ideas but where ideas will be put on the table, challenged, and hopefully we come up with some conclusion and recommendations that could be useful to government.”

Prof Koh and Mr Mahizhnan maintained this approach in policy analysis and discussion, characterising IPS as facilitating the frank and robust discussion of “loving critics”. While Singapore has a competent civil service to ponder the policy questions of the day, what IPS had to offer was something specific. Mr Mahizhnan characterised it as the following:

“... there are things that academics know, that civil servants are not likely to know, because the academics spend the whole day reading books of, you know, 10 different countries and the civil servant does not have that time. It’s not that he or she can’t read it; they don’t have the time. We have the luxury of specialising in a very narrow area and we have the luxury of spending, three, four months, sometimes even a year, investigating that phenomenon and then presenting to the government.”

The support of Singapore’s political leadership was seen as especially important in enabling IPS to carry out its programmes and attract high-calibre speakers and participants interested in intellectually stimulating discussions. Although Mr Goh Chok Tong remained as IPS’ patron, younger office holders regularly participated in IPS events to offer their perspectives on the rapidly changing Singapore electorate and strategic environment. Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, who assumed the role of IPS Director in 2008, argued that while some might have criticised the close links between IPS and the establishment, there was substantial effort to ensure that alternative views were conveyed in a constructive manner to policymakers.

“... the Institute tries its best to understand the issues, yeah and when we respond to the people who provide us this kind of feedback, there is an assurance that we would not just put it in our drawer and forget about it, but we would try to put it in the context of our other research work and we put a proposal or a summary to the relevant department, the relevant minister. And the recipient of this kind of feedback would also not feel challenged by emotional or one-dimensional kind of criticism.”

However, most interviewees conceded that it was difficult to measure the actual impact of IPS on national policymaking. For adjunct researcher Mr Manu Bhaskaran, who was closely involved in organising the Singapore Economic Roundtables, the attendance of political and civil service leaders showed that they saw a valuable role for IPS in policy discussion. Former board member Mr Cheong Yip Seng observed that IPS played its role best when tackling what he described as “existential issues”, which other parties might be wary of.

“These are issues that weigh very heavily on us, my generation, or some of my friends who are in this. Have we peaked? Is decline the only path forward? How can we sustain the same level of performance? These are issues that I think [are] worthy of discussion. Of course, controversial issues like how we manage our reserves, our political system, I think a deeper examination into these pressing issues will be of interest.”

7. Merger with LKYSPP

From its founding in 1988, IPS had been an independent Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG). By the early 2000s, it was no longer the only think tank in Singapore. The government had concerns about the continued viability of IPS as a standalone institution and began reviewing options. In 2006, a proposal was floated to IPS board members for the Institute to be formally merged with LKYSPP, while remaining an autonomous operation.

There were concerns about what this meant for the independence of IPS and the work it produced. With the merger implemented at the beginning of 2008, there was also a change in leadership, with Ambassador Ong Keng Yong taking charge of IPS from Acting Director Mr Arun Mahizhnan, who had steered the institution through the uncertain four years. According to Ambassador Ong, there was little interaction between the LKYSPP staff and IPS researchers in the early years, but IPS benefited in two key ways. First, IPS would be able to tap the stature of the well-known LKYSPP brand name to reassure sponsors and donors to continue contributing to the Institute. Second, being part of a bigger and more prominent institution ensured its survival in the long run.

Another consequence of the merger was the dissolution of the IPS Board of Governors. With LKYSPP already having a board, Ambassador Ong proceeded to retire the Institute's board which had existed since its inception in 1988. In its place, Prof Koh was made the convenor of a new Academic Panel, which some former board members joined as well.

8. Perceptions of and reflections on IPS

Generally, most interviewees saw IPS as having done fairly well over the years, having grown in visibility and built up its reputation due to its surveys and conferences that had received media attention and been discussed publicly.

IPS was spoken of as being close to, but not part of government. At other times, it was associated with key personalities, such as its special adviser and former director Professor Tommy Koh, whom former IPS colleagues and board members spoke fondly of, with several beginning their association with IPS because of Prof Koh (e.g., Mr Arun Mahizhnan, Mr Rolf Gerber, Mr Hsieh Tsun-yan, Ms Peggy Kek, Prof Wang Gungwu).

One view was that IPS, being "government-sponsored", enabled it to facilitate discussions and secure influential speakers from different sectors. As Corporate Associate Mr Rolf Gerber described,

"In my experience, I always felt IPS has done the job despite the fact of being a government-sponsored think tank. But one of the advantages it clearly has is that

it can draw high-calibre people to the table and to a discussion, which maybe others cannot.”

The ability of IPS to bring together people from different sectors to discuss policy issues, and then channel these inputs to government, was a point also raised by Phua Kai Hong (Adjunct Senior Fellow, 1988–2000).

In a similar vein, Ambassador Ong Keng Yong (Director, 2008–2011) observed that IPS had support from across people, private and public sector leadership, and had been able to engage the community, as people knew that they would be heeded at IPS platforms, even if their views were not eventually accepted.

Speaking from their experiences in media and government, Mr Cheong Yip Seng, Mr Patrick Daniel and Mr Lim Siong Guan shared about the impact that IPS had on policy. For Mr Cheong (Board Member, 1987–1997), IPS did not attract negative public reception, but it did not have a great impact on the media at the time of his involvement with IPS either. However, IPS had since grown in credibility, and contributed to public discussion. Mr Daniel (Board Member, 2002–2007) expressed uncertainty about IPS’ influence on policy, partly because there had been no external review done to evaluate this. That said, he had found IPS discussions useful. As for Mr Lim, he was of the opinion that IPS had fulfilled the objective of raising government’s awareness through data production, but not the objective of aiding long-term policy development.

While not all interviewees believed that IPS had lived up to its vision, most did think that IPS had been useful to society and stakeholders such as the government in the research it had done and the events it had held over the years. Mr Lee Tzu Yang (Board Member, 2002–2007; Academic Panel, 2012–2018), was one who regarded IPS as a pioneering platform for sensitive discussions; and Prof Lim Pin (Appointing Governor, 1987–2002), too, saw IPS as an “important asset” that was non-partisan and non-confrontational. Others, such as Prof Wang Gungwu, also gave examples of particular areas, such as arts and culture, that IPS had embarked on before other institutions deemed them important, illustrating the range of work that IPS had done since its establishment.

9. Looking ahead to the future

Various interviewees commented that IPS should build on its status as the only think tank in Singapore focused on domestic policy. Mr Lee Tzu Yang was one board member who had earlier urged IPS to return to its focus on Singapore issues, in particular, domestic social, political and business issues. Arun Mahizhnan, around the year 2000, had made the decision to narrow IPS’ focus and return to the original mission of IPS, that is, analysing domestic policy. Several interviewees saw IPS’ focus on domestic policy and work of relevance to the government grow significantly under current director Mr Janadas Devan, and they thought that IPS should continue to focus on Singapore issues moving forward.

A driving force for IPS' expansion during Mr Devan's tenure was the creation of **IPS Social Lab** in 2013. IPS had already been collecting and publishing data, but Mr Devan thought that IPS could fill a gap in the local data collection landscape, by collecting data in a more focused, professionalised and structured manner. As such, he set up what he called a "Centre of Excellence for the collection of sentiment data", and a "unit in the university ... capable of collecting data itself".

Since then, Mr Devan has led IPS in its **reorganisation**, to promote greater collaboration and more cross-cutting research work in IPS. Its previous five research clusters were replaced with four research programmes in 2017, and researchers now belonged to one of three research departments.³ Mr Devan said this of the reorganisation,

"It is partly to keep ourselves relevant that we reorganised IPS and decided that there are a certain number of things that we're going to take a look at, and focus on a certain number of questions, research questions that we're going to build out and build our capacity and focus on so as to channel our work."

Mr Lim Siong Guan, former IPS appointing governor and head of the civil service in Singapore, had hoped that IPS would want "to help in the development of policy and making clear the opportunities and the needs of the future." He added, "IPS is in a unique space, I don't think there is any other think tank that is in that space in Singapore. And Singapore will be that bit poorer if IPS doesn't get into the space of wanting to influence or create policy." He also thought it important to have a patron who could support policy research with a long-term view.

Some also believed IPS could work more closely with the LKYSPP. Dr Teh Kok Peng (Board Member, 2005–2007; Member of Academic Panel, 2015–2018), for example, saw potential for synergies and information sharing between IPS and LKYSPP. Prof Jon Quah was also of the opinion that more collaboration and teaching could be done.

Issues that interviewees thought should be discussed and tackled by IPS in the future ranged from politics and technology, to climate change, income and health security and ageing. For instance, Mr Cheong Yip Seng hoped that IPS would tackle issues that had grown increasingly complex, and focus on "existential issues", such as race and religion. Mr Hsieh Tsun-yan encouraged IPS to analyse "softer issues" like inclusion and social sentiments.

Founding patron ESM Goh Chok Tong felt that IPS should bring back its political history of Singapore course because only with a firm understanding of its history, could Singaporeans collectively "design the future of Singapore." Moving forward, he hoped that IPS would play a bigger role in generating more thinking and discussions about the future of governance of Singapore,

³ The reorganisation of IPS is detailed in the IPS 30th Anniversary Report, titled "Better" (p. 63). IPS' previous research clusters were i) Arts, Culture and Media, ii) Economics and Business, iii) Demography and Family, iv) Governance and Politics, and v) Society and Identity. Following the reorganisation, the three departments were i) Governance and Economy ii) Society and Culture iii) IPS Social Lab.

“Where do we go from here? Where does our politics go from here? Do we need to modify? Do we need to amend? Do we need to add more what I call stabilisers to the system? But at the end of this, it’s to work out something which is good for Singapore — not good for the ruling party, but good for Singapore. So I would like that part to be more debated by IPS.”

Ultimately, Director Mr Janadas Devan expressed his hope that IPS would “do public policy”. He envisioned IPS as,

“not only [providing] opportunities for people to reflect on research and talk about public policy [but as a] a policy unit that helps [the] government and the public sector in general do public policy and thereby improve public policy. If you are able to craft experiments, craft pilots that either result in providing the government better data with what works and what doesn't, or even to give ... the public sector ideas of what new levers we might use, I think that would be a big step in the right direction.”

This thinking has driven the establishment of **IPS Policy Lab** during his tenure. At the time of writing (June 2020), IPS Policy Lab — a new programme that would incubate strong social change ideas, and partner with policymakers and civil society — was being set up.

Appendix

No.	Interviewee	Current Occupation	Association with IPS	Date of Interview
1	Mazlan bin Mahmood	Operations Associate, IPS		9 Jul 2019
2	Yap Mui Teng	Principal Research Fellow, IPS		9 Jul 2019
3	Gillian Koh	Deputy Director (Research) and Senior Research Fellow, IPS		9 Jul 2019
4	Irene Lim	Deputy Director (Administration), IPS		10 Jul 2019
5	Cynthia Lin	Secretary, LKYSPP		10 Jul 2019
6	Phua Kai Hong	Associate Professor, LKYSPP	Adjunct Senior Research Fellow	2 Aug 2019
7	Tommy Koh	Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Special Advisor, IPS	Director	28 Aug 2019
8	Yeo Lay Hwee	Director, European Union Centre in Singapore	Research Fellow	9 Sep 2019
9	Peggy Kek	Head, Development & Partnerships, Singapore Symphony Orchestra	Head of Public Affairs	11 Sep 2019
10	Manu Bhaskaran	Director, Centennial Group; Adjunct Senior Research Fellow, IPS		11 Sep 2019
11	Chang Li Lin	Press Secretary to Prime Minister	Head of Public Affairs	12 Sep 2019
12	Lee Tsao Yuan	Coaching Solutions Advisor and Non-executive Director, Capelle Consulting	Director	13 Sep 2019
13	Lim Siong Guan	Professor in Practice, LKYSPP	Board Member	11 Nov 2019

14	Wang Gungwu	University Professor, NUS	Board Member	12 Nov 2019
15	Rolf Gerber	Semi-retired; Non-Executive Director, Board of LGT Bank (Singapore)	Corporate Associate	12 Nov 2019
16	Kishore Mahbubani	Distinguished Fellow, Asia Research Institute (ARI), NUS	Board Member	15 Nov 2019
17	Lim Pin	University Professor, NUS; Professor of Medicine, Department of Medicine, NUS; Senior Consultant, NUH	Appointing Governor	18 Nov 2019
18	Janadas Devan	Director, IPS; Chief of Government Communications; Deputy Secretary, Prime Minister's Office		8 Jan 2020
19	Cheong Yip Seng	Editorial Adviser, SCMP Publishers	Board Member	9 Jan 2020
20	Tan Suee Chieh	Former Group Chief Executive, NTUC Enterprise	Corporate Associate	9 Jan 2020
21	Ong Keng Yong	Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS; Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Director	9 Jan 2020
22	Teh Kok Peng	Senior Adviser, China International Capital Corporation Limited; Former President, GIC Special Investments	Board Member	13 Jan 2020
23	Jon Quah	Anti-Corruption Consultant; Retired Professor of Political Science, NUS	Acting Director	16 Jan 2020

24	Lee Tzu Yang	Chairman, Public Service Commission	Board Member	17 Jan 2020
25	Hsieh Tsun-yan	Chairman and Lead Counselor, LinHart Group	Board Member	21 Jan 2020
26	Chan Heng Chee	Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Director	29 Jan 2020
27	Patrick Daniel	Former Editor-in-Chief (English, Malay, Tamil Media Group) at Singapore Press Holdings (SPH)	Board Member	2 Mar 2020
28	Arun Mahizhnan	Special Research Adviser, IPS	Former Acting Director	2 Mar 2020
29	Goh Chok Tong	Emeritus Senior Minister	Founding Patron	7 Aug 2020