

26 February 2026

For Immediate Release

Appointment of the 18th S R Nathan Fellow for the Study of Singapore

The **Institute of Policy Studies (IPS)** is pleased to announce the appointment of **Dr Shawn Lum, Senior Lecturer, The Asian School of the Environment, Nanyang Technological University (NTU)**, as the 18th S R Nathan Fellow for the Study of Singapore.

From January to May 2026, Dr Lum will be pursuing research into why biodiversity matters even in an urban city like Singapore, why nature matters to people and society, and how Singapore can punch above its weight in protecting the natural world. He will deliver his series of lectures at the National University of Singapore (NUS). Thereafter, their lectures will be compiled and published as books.

The IPS-Nathan Lectures are free and open to all. Held at NUS, they enrich the vibrant intellectual and cultural life on campus, and advance understanding and discourse on issues of national interest among the general public. Details of Dr Lum's lectures will be published on the IPS website in due course.

A biographical note on Dr Lum is provided herewith.

About the S R Nathan Fellowship for the Study of Singapore

The S R Nathan Fellowship was announced in 2013 at IPS' 25th anniversary gala dinner. IPS wanted to recognise the unique contributions of Mr S R Nathan — Singapore's sixth and longest-serving President — to public service and the development of Singapore. With generous support from individual and corporate donors, the Institute raised around S\$5.9 million (including a matching government grant) to endow the fellowship.

The S R Nathan Fellowship for the Study of Singapore serves to further IPS' core mission: to research and analyse policy issues and challenges, build bridges between key thought leaders, and communicate the Institute's work to a wider audience.

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Shawn LUM is a Senior Lecturer at the NTU Asian School of Environment. Trained as a botanist and ecologist, he has spent most of his academic career studying the resilience and long-term viability of fragmented and disturbed forest remnants. He has also been active in the local and regional nature conservation community, primarily as a member of the Nature Society Singapore, which he served for two decades as Vice-President and President. Shawn is a throwback to the time when university faculty were routinely active in nature-related civil society. He has collaborated over his career with colleagues in academic institutions, government agencies, NGOs and the Singapore school system. He serves in an advisory capacity to various agencies, institutions and civil society groups in the area of biodiversity and environmental management. Born in Japan, raised in Hawaii and having spent his entire working career in Singapore, Shawn's life has an unshakeable affinity for islands.

About the Institute of Policy Studies

The [Institute of Policy Studies \(IPS\)](#) was established in 1988 as an independent think-tank to study and generate public policy ideas in Singapore. Today, IPS is an autonomous research centre of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore. The Institute continues to advance its core mission: to analyse public policy; build bridges between thought leaders; and communicate research findings to a wide audience. IPS examines domestic policy challenges across a variety of fields and studies the attitudes of Singaporeans through surveys of public perception. It adopts a multi-disciplinary approach in its analysis and takes the long-term view in its strategic deliberation and research.

For media queries

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