BRINGING ARTS CLOSER TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES:

OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPACTS ON COMMUNITY BONDING

ARTS AND CULTURE NODES IN THE HEARTLANDS OF SINGAPORE:
Exploring Strategies, Spatial Opportunities and Impacts (Phase 2)

Principal Investigator: Assist. Prof. Dr Zdravko Trivic, NUS
Co-PI: Senior Lecturer Dr Tan Beng Kiang, NUS
Researchers: Nina Mascarenhas | Duong Quyen
Collaborators: National Arts Council (NAC), Rita Padawangi (ARI, NUS)

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"to increase the range of **arts touch points in the heartlands**, where more Singaporeans can enjoy and engage with the arts regularly where they live and play" with the overall vision as

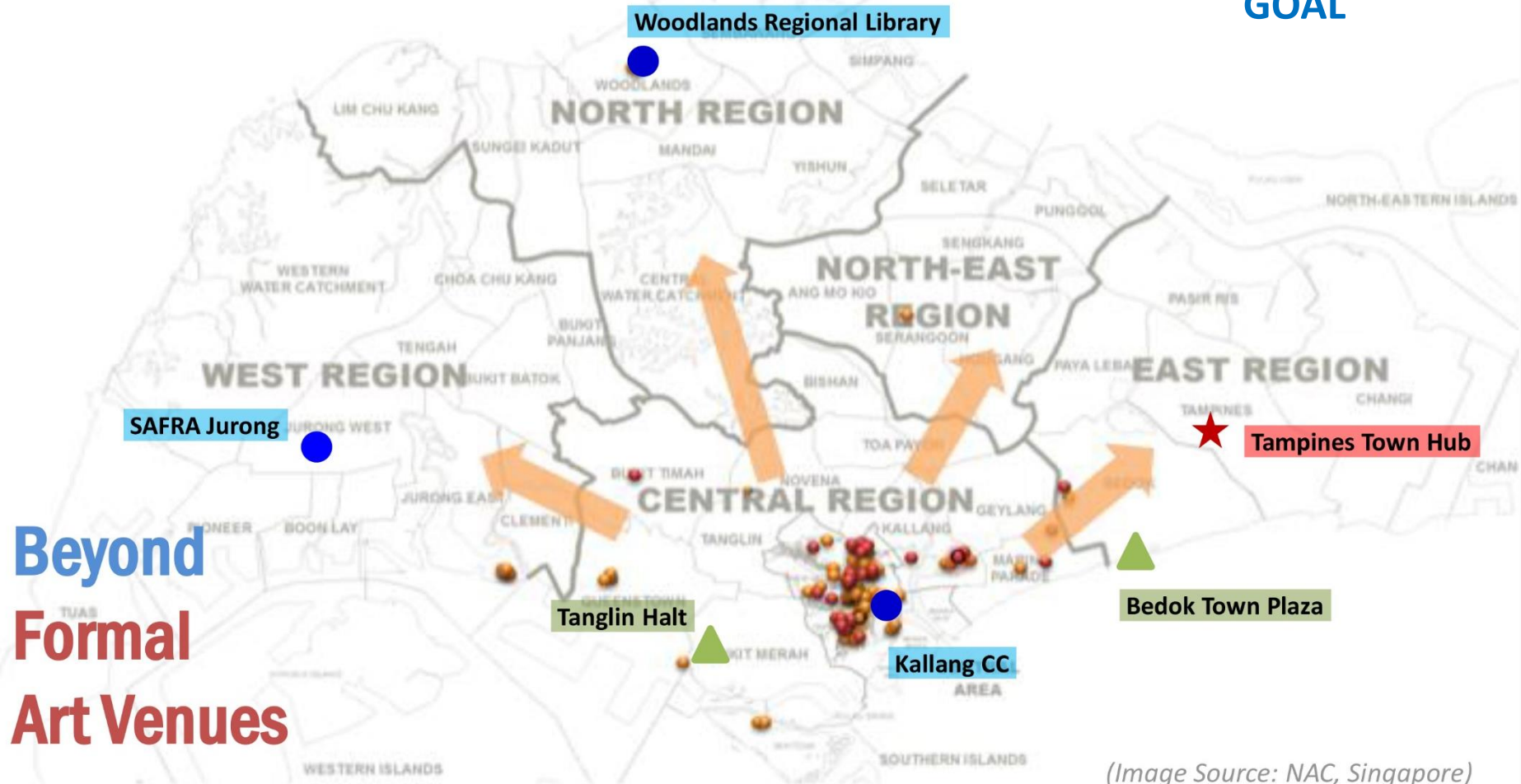"to develop an **island-wide network** of arts and cultural nodes in the heartlands."
(National Arts Council of Singapore, 2011)

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ARTS AND CULTURE NODES INITIATIVE

★ Regional node

● Neighbourhood nodes

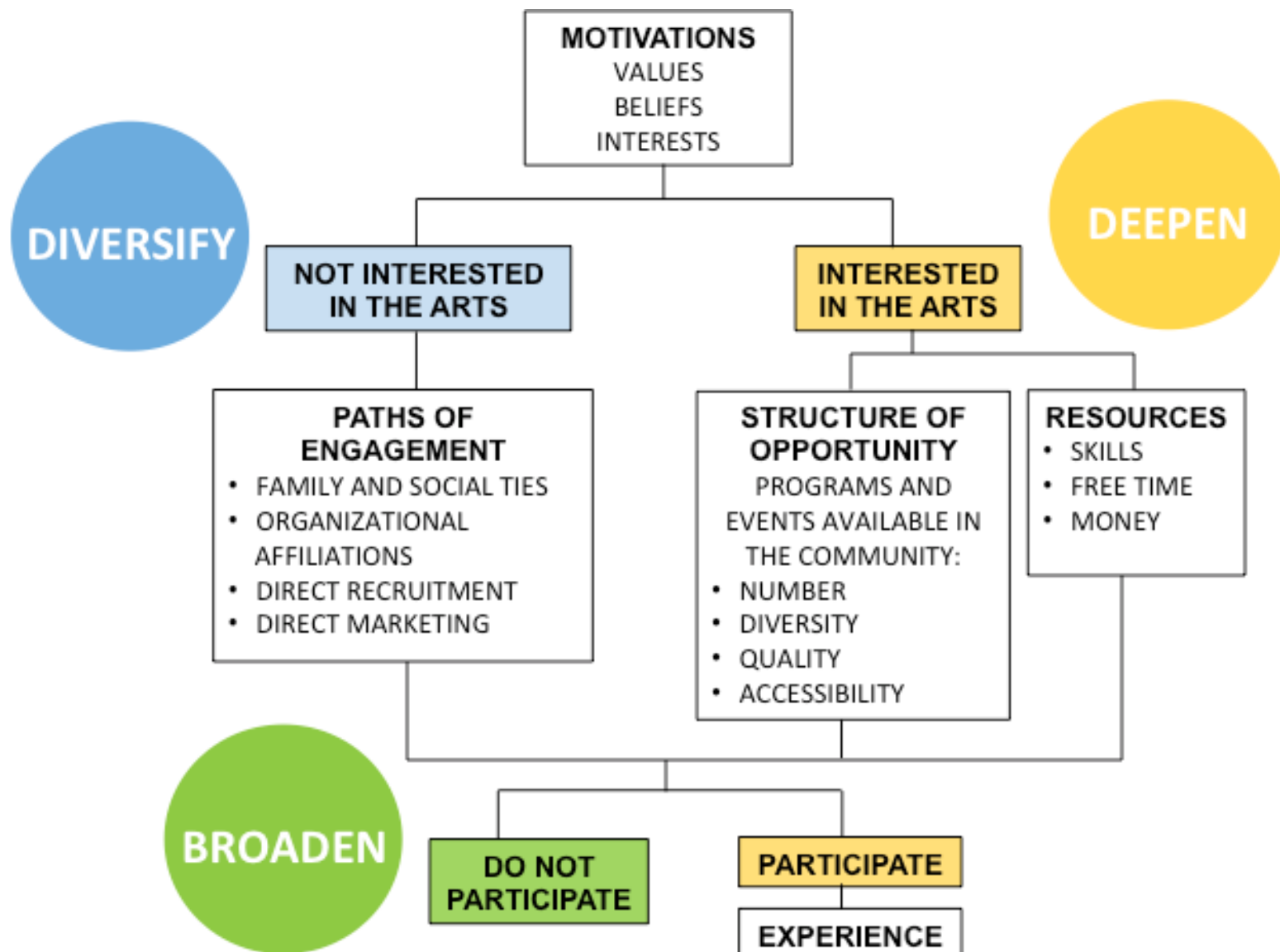▲ Street-level pocket nodes

TOTAL: 25 nodes (by 2025)
GOAL

Woodlands Regional Library

SAFRA Jurong

Tampines Town Hub

Beyond Formal Art Venues

Tanglin Halt

Bedok Town Plaza

Kallang CC

(Image Source: NAC, Singapore)

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INTEREST IN ARTS AND CULTURE - SINGAPORE

significantly increased

43% 46% 35% 36% 39% 41% INTERESTED

35% 29% 31% 27% 28% NOT INTERESTED 22%

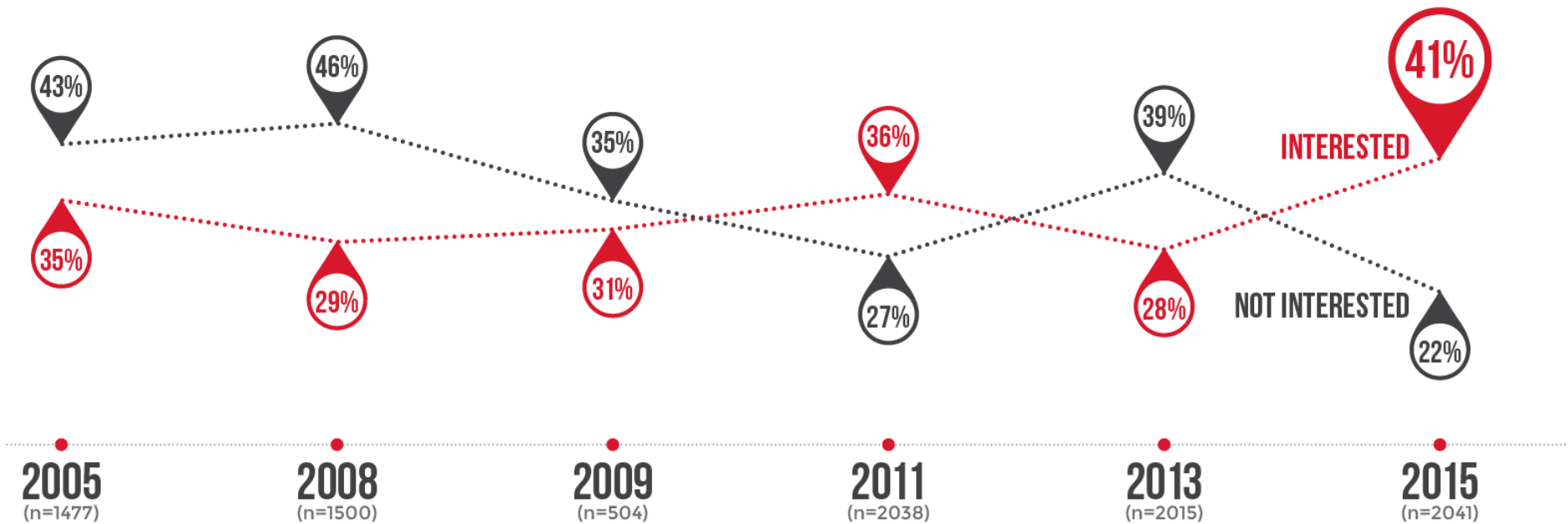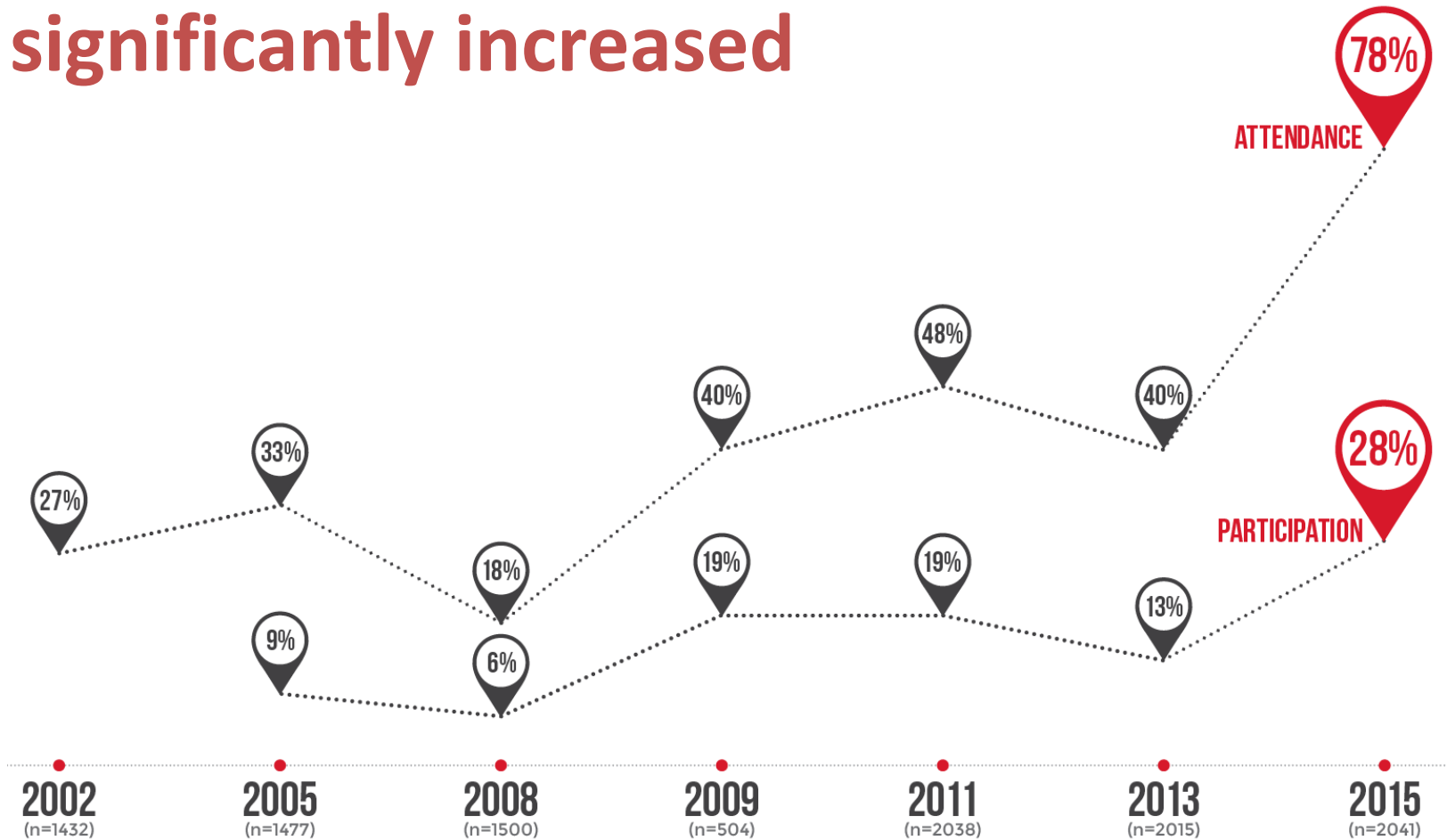| 2005 | 2008 | 2009 | 2011 | 2013 | 2015 |
| (n=1477) | (n=1500) | (n=504) | (n=2038) | (n=2015) | (n=2041) |

Diagram constructed by Top 2 and Bottom 2 scores.
Top 2 Boxes= "(5=Very Interested + 4= Quite Interested)"
Bottom 2 Boxes= "(1=Not Very Interested + 2= Not Quite Interested)"

Source: NAC National population survey on the arts 2015

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ARTS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION - SINGAPORE

significantly increased

78%
ATTENDANCE

28%
PARTICIPATION

48%

40%

40%

33%

27%

19%

19%

18%

13%

9%

6%

2002	2005	2008	2009	2011	2013	2015
(n=1432)	(n=1477)	(n=1500)	(n=504)	(n=2038)	(n=2015)	(n=2041)

Source: NAC National population survey on the arts 2015

MOTIVATION AND FOR ARTS ATTENDANCE - SINGAPORE

Arts are enjoyable

2013	2015
59%	54%

Time with others

2013	2015
50%	48%

Happen to pass by

2013	2015
24%	34%

Not interested

2013	2015
4%	34%

Family commitments

2013	2015
28%	26%

No one to go with

2013	2015
7%	16%

Source: NAC National population survey on the arts 2015

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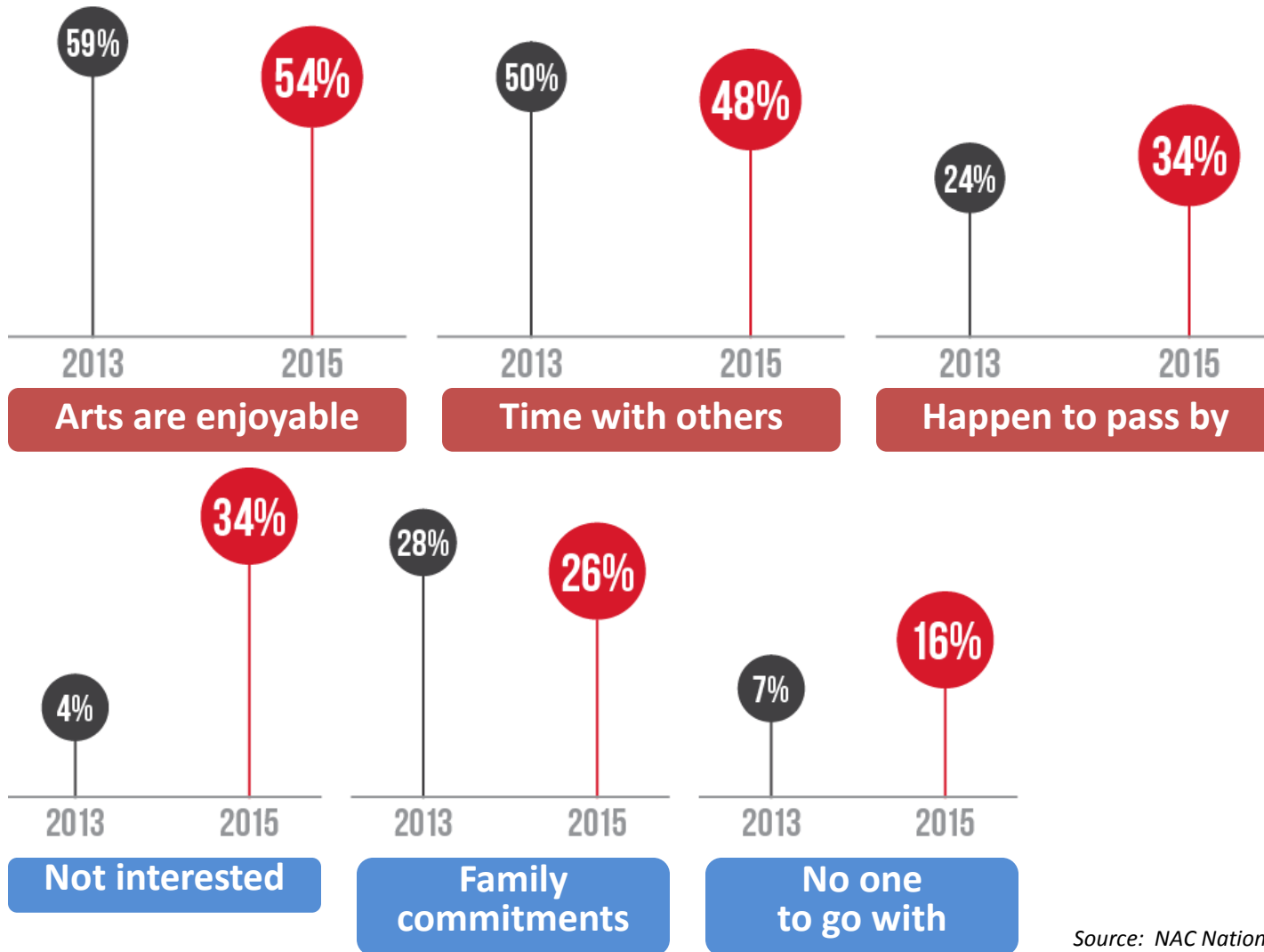
ARTS AND CULTURE FOCUSED COMMUNITY SPACES

and their role in Promoting Community Building, Social Interaction and Encouraging Arts Participation (Phase 1)

PI: Dr Cho Im Sik

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES:

- To create a self-assessment toolkit to enable community art nodes to monitor their progress in terms of engaging the local residents.
- To produce an evaluation toolkit for the NAC to assess the effectiveness of their support in the establishment and growth of these community nodes.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- How can the arts & culture spread beyond the city centre of Singapore to community spaces in the heartlands?
- How can "art & culture focused community spaces" in the heartlands promote community building, social interaction and arts participation?
- What type of spaces/places could promote arts and culture in the heartlands?

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Exploring Strategies, Spatial Opportunities and Impacts (Phase 2)

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES:

- **PART 1: Arts and Space - Activating Spaces through Arts**
  - to review **art and culture strategies** to activate public space in local housing contexts
  - to investigate **spatial opportunities** of local neighbourhoods for bringing arts and culture activities into everyday life through **formal and informal venues**
- **PART 2: Impacts of Nodes Strategy**
  - to **trace and measure software/social and hardware/spatial impacts** of arts and culture initiatives
- **PART 3: Strengthening the Nodes Strategy**

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- How can spaces be activated through arts and culture? By what means, approaches and strategies?

- How can arts and culture be spread beyond the formal venues and integrated in different aspects of community living? What are the impacts and how are they measured?

- What indicates a successful arts and culture project/initiative in the heartlands?

BENEFITS OF ARTS

What Can Arts Do for Space?
What Can Space Do for Arts?
What Can Arts Do for Community?

Framework for Understanding the Benefits of the Arts

Instrumental benefits

Improved test scores	Improved self-efficacy, learning skills, health	Development of social capital
		Economic growth

Private value — *Private value with public spillover* — *Public value*

Captivation	Expanded capacity for empathy	Creation of social bonds
Pleasure	Cognitive growth	Expression of communal meaning

Intrinsic benefits

RAND *MG218-S.1*

- Community Pride
- Involvement & Access
- Increase Social Cohesion
- STRONG COMMUNITIES
- Development of Cultural Artforms
- Self–Esteem & Positive Self–Image
- CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING
- ARTS & CULTURE IMPACT AREAS
- EDUCATION & LEARNING
- Showcase Auckland Cultures
- Development of Children & Youth
- STRONG ECONOMY
- Attract Visitors
- Generate Employment Opportunities
- Support Business

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WHAT CAN ARTS DO FOR SPACE AND COMMUNITY? - PLACEMAKING

THE BENEFITS OF **GREAT PLACES**

+ Visually pleasing
+ Generally stimulating
+ Sense of belonging
+ Greater security
+ Better environmental quality
+ Feeling of freedom

+ More walkable
+ Safe for pedestrians and bicyclists
+ Compatible with public transit
+ Reduces need for cars and parking
+ More efficient use of time and money
+ Greater connections between uses

+ Greater community organization
+ Sense of pride and volunteerism
+ Perpetuation of integrity and values
+ Less need for municipal control
+ Self-managing

+ Small-scale entrepreneurship
+ Economic development
+ Higher real estate values
+ Local ownership, local value
+ More desirable jobs
+ Greater tax revenue
+ Less need for municipal services

+ Increased physical activity
+ Access to fresh food
+ Greater security
+ Greater social inclusion
+ Enhanced environmental health

+ Improves sociability
+ More cultural exposure, interaction
+ Draws a diverse population
+ More women, elderly, children
+ Greater ethnic/cultural pluralism
+ Encourages community creativity

PLACE

- PROMOTES SENSE OF COMFORT
- CREATES IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY
- NURTURES & DEFINES SENSE OF COMMUNITY
- BUILDS & SUPPORTS THE LOCAL ECONOMY
- PROMOTES HEALTH
- SOCIAL INTERACTION

PROJECT FOR **PUBLIC SPACES**

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WHAT CAN ARTS DO FOR SPACE AND COMMUNITY? - PLACEMAKING

RECEPTIVE   **PARTICIPATORY**

SPECTATING
Spectating is fundamentally an act of receiving a finished artistic product. It is therefore outside the realm of participatory arts practice.

ENHANCED ENGAGEMENT
Educational or "enrichment" programs may activate the creative mind, but for the most part do not involve creative expression on the part of the audience member.

CROWD SOURCING
Audience becomes activated in choosing or contributing towards an artistic product.

- Youth mosaics
- Photography contests
- An opera libretto comprised of Tweets
- Virtual choruses

CO-CREATION
Audience members contribute something to an artistic experience curated by a professional artist.

- Participatory theater
- Pro/Am concerts
- Storytelling events
- Participatory public art
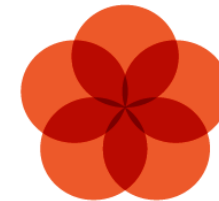
AUDIENCE-AS-ARTIST
Audience members substantially take control of the artistic experience; focus shifts from the product to the process of creation.

- Public dances
- Community drawing contests

(Source: Brown et al., 2011)

CONSUMPTION	INTERACTION WITH ART	CURATION OF CONTENT	CONTRIBUTION TO CONTENT	INITIATION OF CONTENT

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WHAT CAN SPACE DO FOR ARTS? – CULTURAL ECOLOGY

General Public
Community
Audience
Organisation
Artist
Art

- **informal art venues** and other supporting spaces
- **synergy** between art, space and everyday life activities

Performance & Exhibition	**+ Work & Training**
Transportation stops	Under-utilized & vacant places
Heritage buildings	
Cafes	Existing industrial premises
Bars	Etc.
Coffee shops	
Shops	
Markets	
Streets	
Plazas	
Parks	
Etc.	

Policymakers and funders need to conceptualise a neighbourhood's cultural ecology instead of focusing on one type of asset. (Stern and Pray, 2014)

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PILOT STUDY: SPATIAL OPPORTUNITIES

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT **HIGH** QUALITY

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT **LOW** QUALITY

NECESSARY ACTIVITIES

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

ART & CULTURE ACTIVITIES
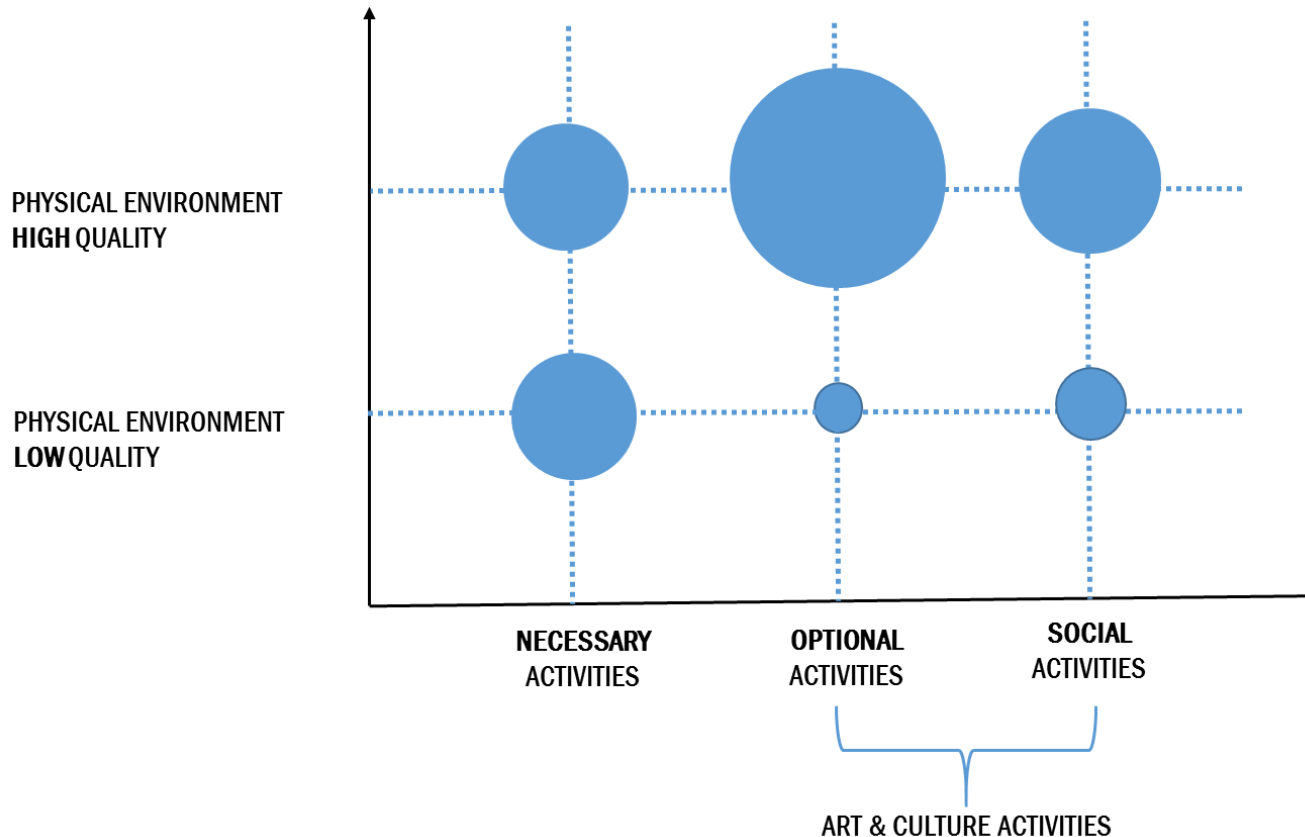
The intensity of activities highly depends on the design quality of physical environment.

(Source: Jan Gehl, 2006)

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PILOT STUDY: SPATIAL OPPORTUNITIES

3 key Urban Space Components:

HARDWARE – DESIGN VALUEs

SOFTWARE – USE & SOCIO-PERCEPTUAL VALUEs

ORGWARE – OPERATIONAL VALUEs
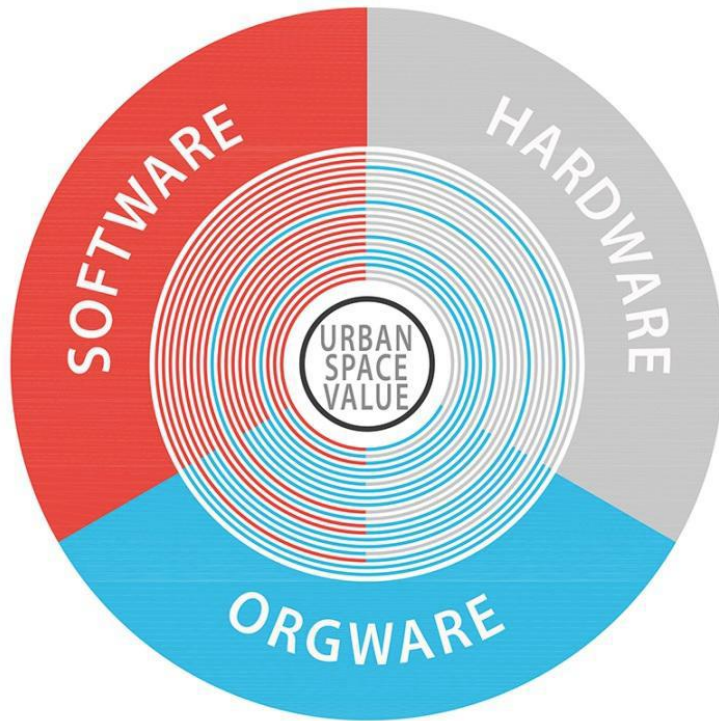
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Hardware • Software • Orgware	• Hardware • Software • Orgware
OPPORTUNITITES	THREATS
• Hardware • Software • Orgware	• Hardware • Software • Orgware

Image source: Cho, Heng & Trivic. (2016).
Re-Framing Urban Space: Urban Design for Emerging Hybrid and High-density Conditions

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PILOT STUDY: SPATIAL OPPORTUNITIES

3 neighbourhood nodes
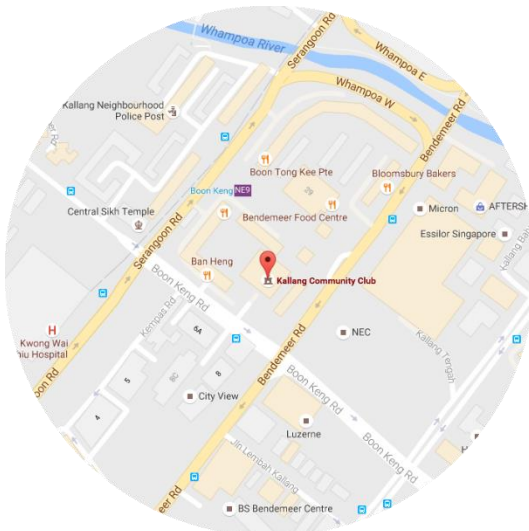
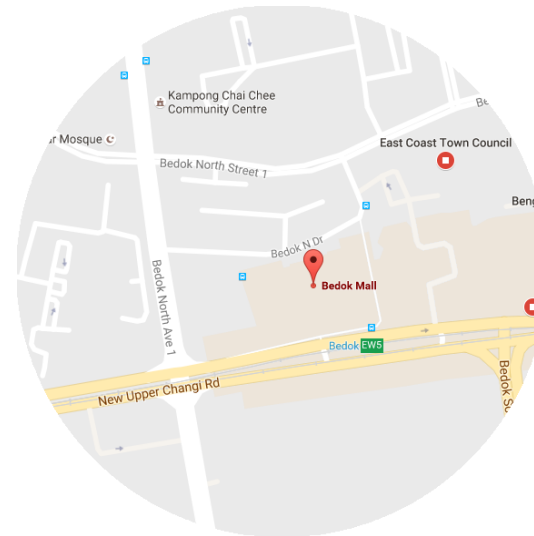**Kallang CC** **Woodlands Regional Library** **SAFRA Jurong**
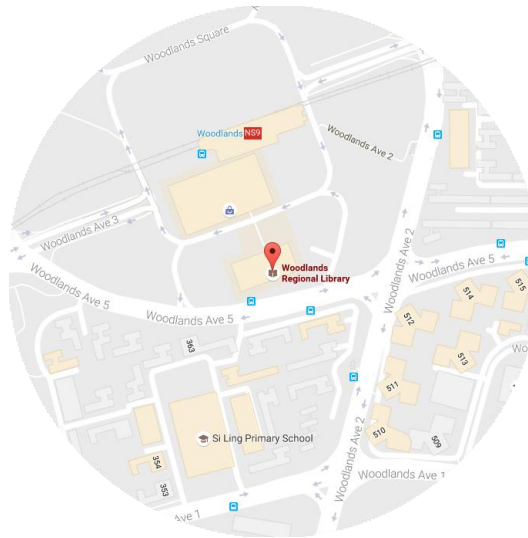
PILOT STUDY: SPATIAL OPPORTUNITIES

2 pocket nodes

Tanglin Halt (Blk 88)
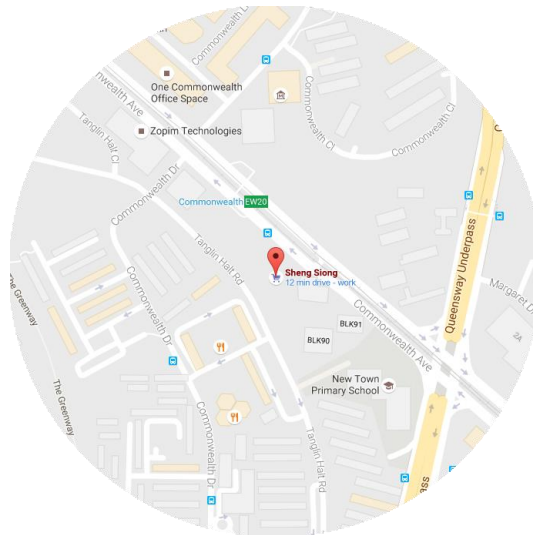
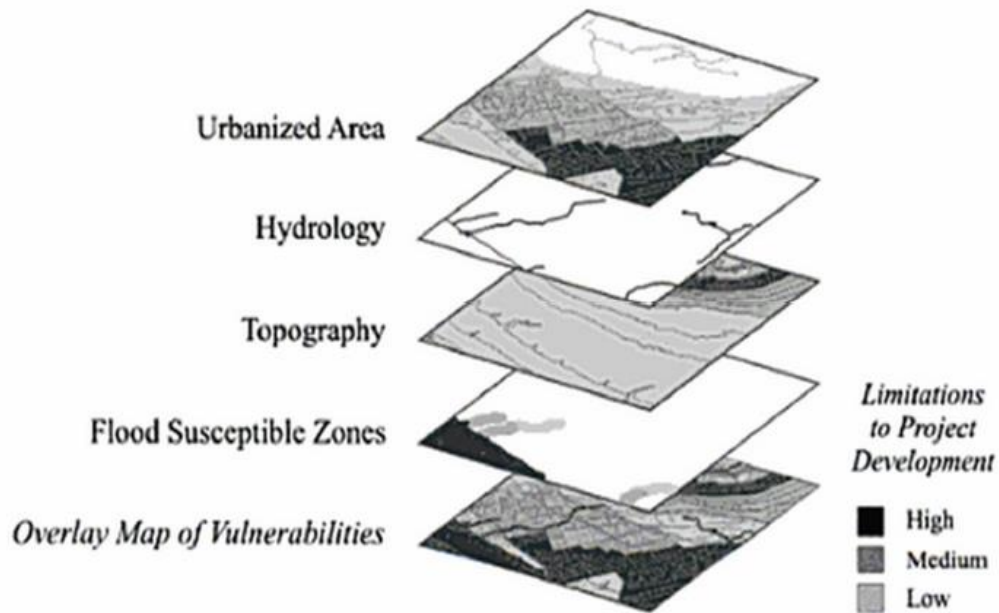### Bedok Town Square

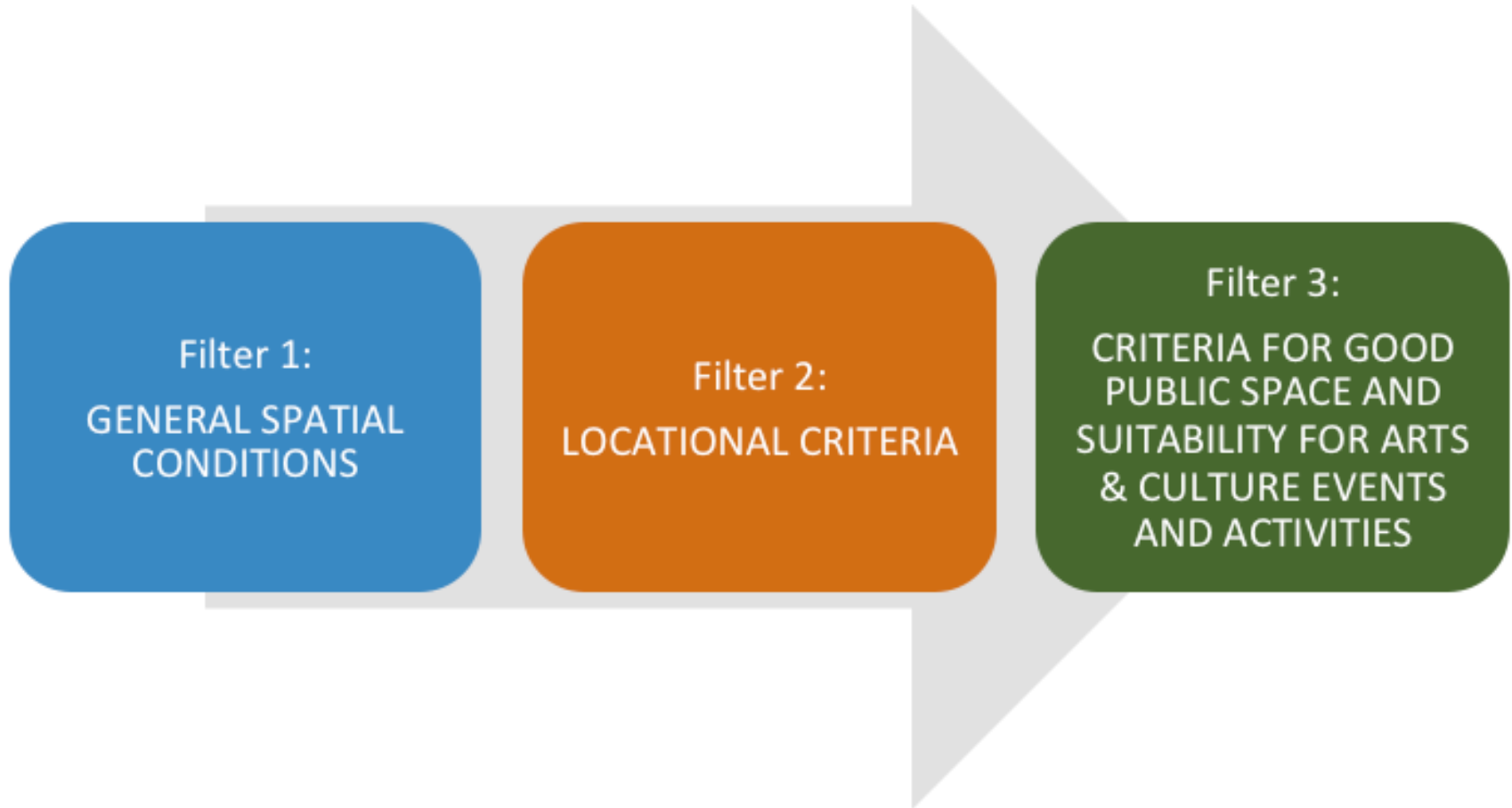## PILOT STUDY: SPATIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Map Overlay

suitability analysis based on key strengths and weaknesses of neighbourhood spaces

Illustration of Ian McHarg's map overlay method, 1969 (Source: André et al., 2004, p. 263)

PILOT STUDY: SPATIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Map Overlay

Filter 1:
GENERAL SPATIAL CONDITIONS

Filter 2:
LOCATIONAL CRITERIA

Filter 3:
CRITERIA FOR GOOD PUBLIC SPACE AND SUITABILITY FOR ARTS & CULTURE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

STEP 1: IDENTIFY AND DESCRIBE ALL PUBLICLY AVAILBALE SPACES

FILTER 1

- **SCALE**
- **SHAPE**
- **LEVEL OF ENCLOSURE**
- **GROUND SURFACE**

Tanglin Halt - My Community

SPATIAL OPPORTUNIITY SCALE

LESS   MORE

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STEP 2. TRACE OUT MOVEMENT PATTERNS AND IDENTIFY GATHERING SPACES
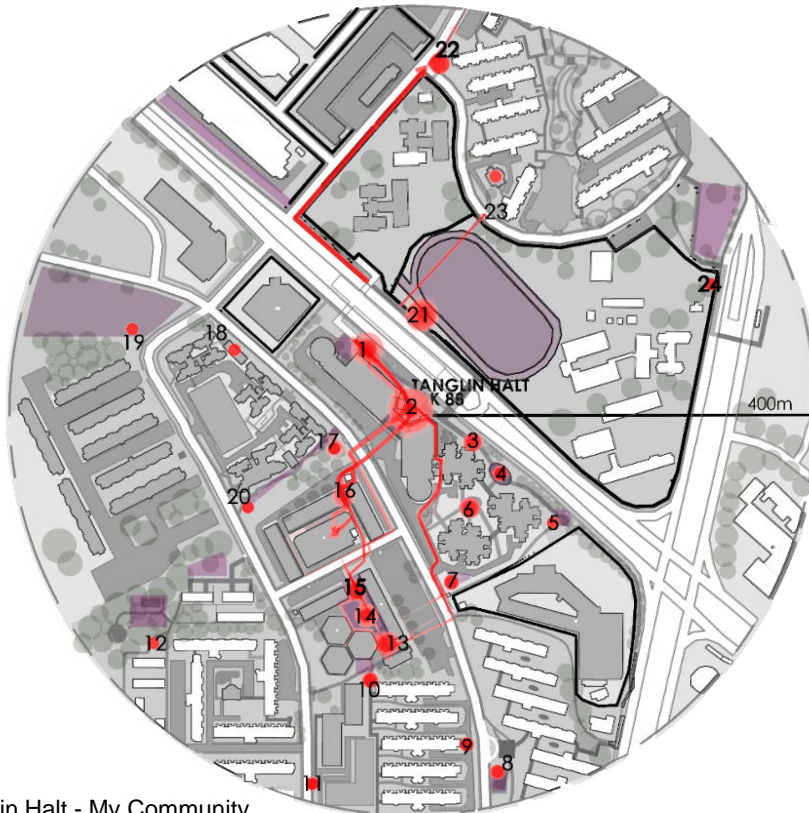
FILTER 2

- **MOVEMENT PATHS**
  time of the day
- **GATHERING SPACES**
  time of the day
  age groups

Tanglin Halt - My Community

CATEGORY A: Spaces near movement paths and stationary activity

CHARACTERISTICS: Close to MRT stations and amenities, like food courts and shopping centres
STRATEGY: **Broadening and diversifying** arts audience

CATEGORY B: Spaces near movement paths without stationary activity

CHARACTERISTICS: Spaces like some void decks, pavilions which residents pass by but are not next to amenities
STRATEGY: Art events can provide the software to encourage residents to pause and engage with the space - **broadening**

CATEGORY C: Spaces away from major movement paths but have stationary activity

CHARACTERISTICS: Community gathering spaces such as schools, CCs, basketball courts and playgrounds
STRATEGY: Art activity can be introduced to facilitate social bonding between users and **deepen** arts engagement

CATEGORY D: Spaces away from movement patterns and underutilized

CHARACTERISTICS: Spaces such amphitheaters and roofs of car parks
STRATEGY: Art events can activate **"white elephants"** by providing software needed to bring more users into the space
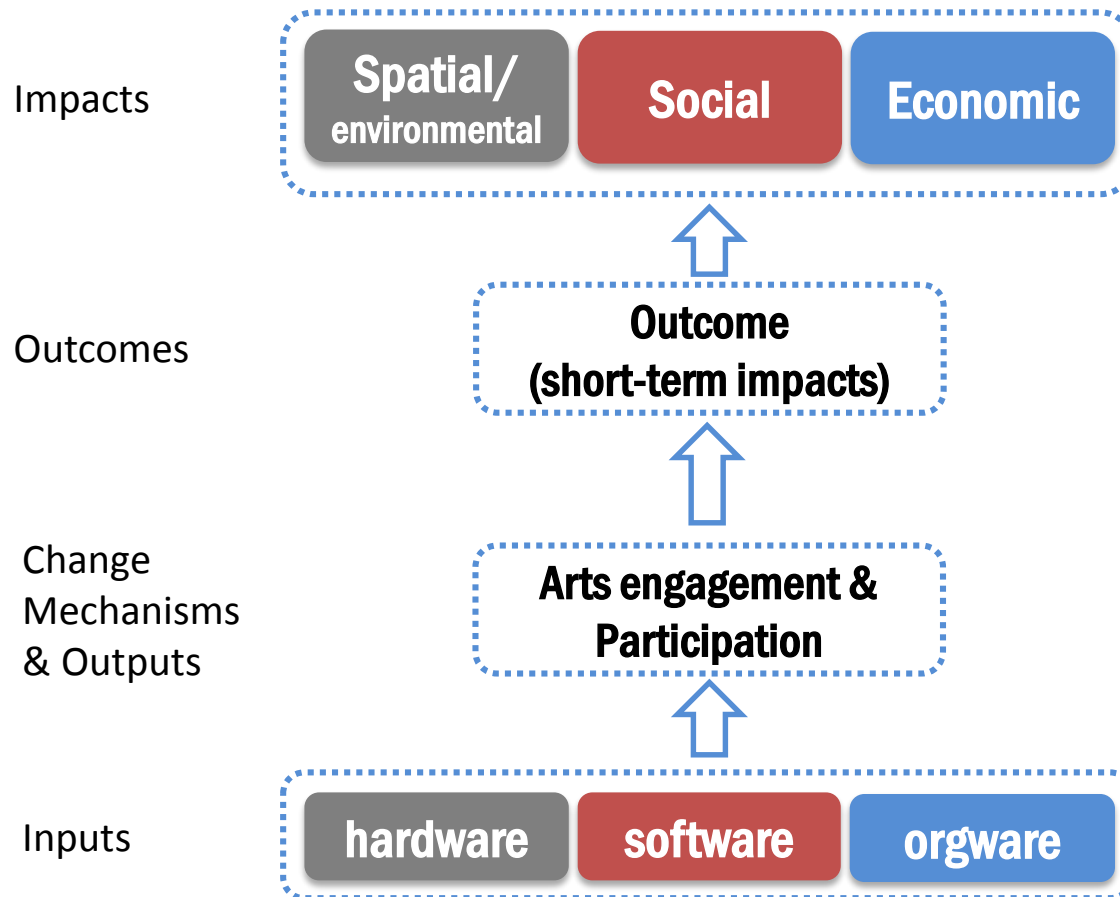
STEP 3. CRITERIA FOR GOOD PUBLIC SPACE AND SUITABILITY FOR ARTS AND CULTURE EVENTS

FILTER 3

- **ACCESSIBILITY**
- **SOCIABILITY**
- **SUITABILITY FOR THE ARTS**
- **FLEXIBILITY**
- **COMFORT & NOISE LEVEL**
- **MULTI-FUNCTIONALITY**
- **PRIMARY USES**
- **ACTIVITIES**

NEIGHBOURHOOD ARTS AND CULTURE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Impacts

| Spatial/environmental | Social | Economic |

⬆

Outcomes

Outcome
(short-term impacts)

⬆

Change Mechanisms & Outputs

Arts engagement & Participation

⬆

Inputs

| hardware | software | orgware |

- **What impacts?**
- **Impacts on whom?**
- **How to capture and measure?**
- **Short term vs long term impacts**

- review/collect
- analyse
- shortlist
- refine
- validate
- finalise

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PRELIMINARY NACIA FRAMEWORK

NEIGHBOURHOOD ARTS AND CULTURE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

What?

SOFTWARE: Social Impacts	HARDWARE: Spatial Impacts

How?

Spatial Analysis

8 events	5 pop-ups	242 pilot surveys	5 FGDs with residents	1 FGD with node partners	3 Interviews with Key Community Members

+ Interviews with Artists

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POST-EVENT DISCUSSIONS WITH RESIDENTS: INITIAL FINDINGS

"(...) it was actually the **music that attracted me to this place** (...) maybe doing it before certain festivals or every month kinda makes it quite interesting and makes the whole place more lively, I feel." [Kallang FGD, 21 Jan '17]

IDENTITY
ATTACHMENT
VIBRANCY

- ACTIVATION OF SPACE
- SOCIAL BONDING BETWEEN NEIGHBOURS
- ENCOURAGING STRONGER INTEREST and ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ARTS
- INTEREST IN DEEPER PARTICIPATION AND INTERACTIVITY

"**In a formal space** (...) **you don't take note of who sits near you** (...) but if it's informal you're like 'who's as busybody as me'." [Kallang FGD, 21 Jan '17]

FRIENDSHIP
VOLUNTEERING
CONFIDENCE
SKILLS
UNDERSTANDING

"It **gives the children more of an eye-opening chance** (...) I So yesterday kind of like a small concert they got to see strings, they got to see keyboards and then they will start to say 'Hey Mum, I want to play that'." [Tanglin Halt FGD, 25 Feb '17]
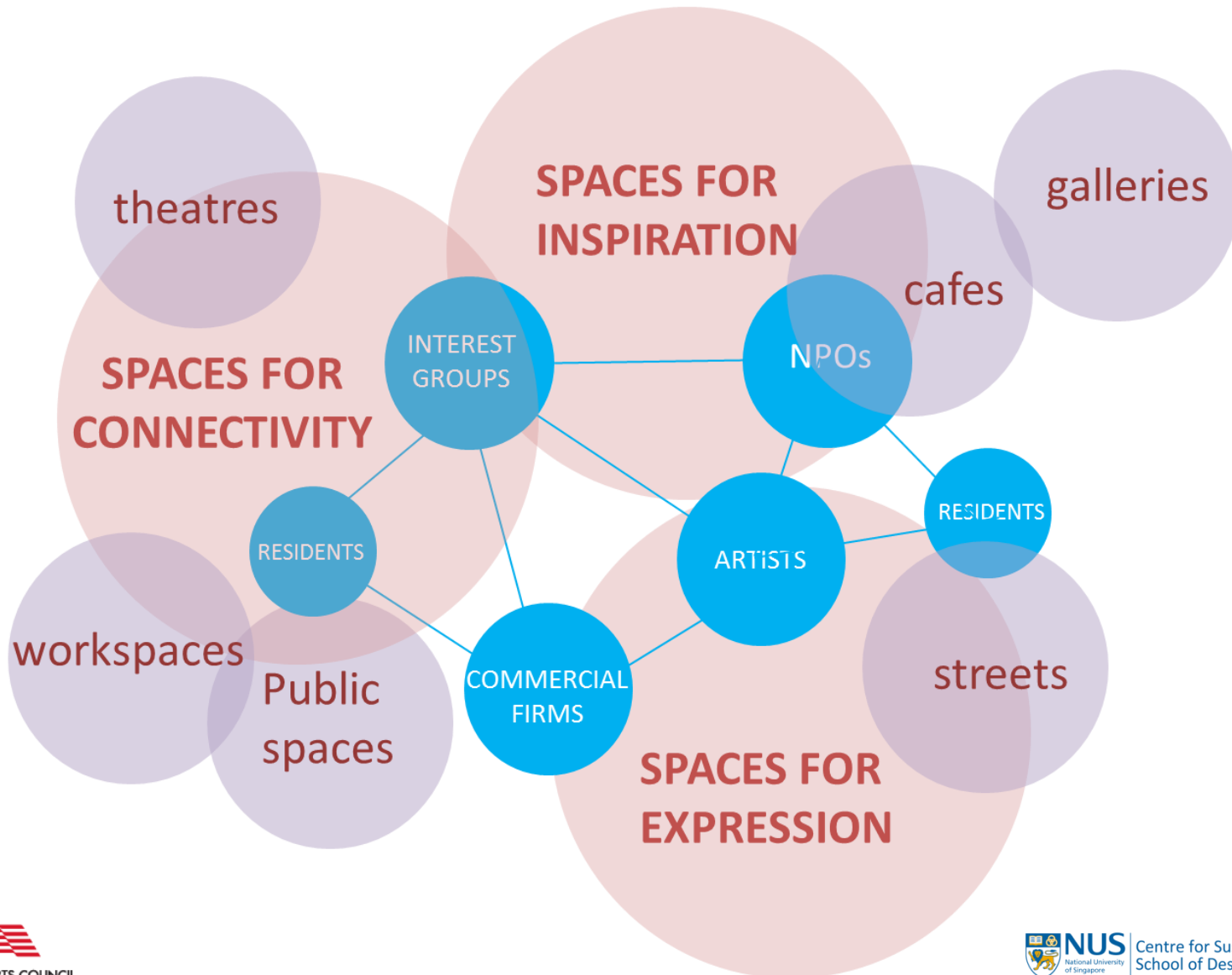
ON IMPACTS AND RESILIENCE:
NEIGHBOURHOOD CULTURAL ECOLOGY = SOFT INFRASTRUCTURE + HARD INFRASTRUCTURE

ON IMPACTS AND RESILIENCE:
NEIGHBOURHOOD CULTURAL ECOLOGY = SOFT INFRASTRUCTURE + HARD INFRASTRUCTURE

Hawker's centers

plazas

INTEREST GROUPS

NAC

RESIDENTS

RESIDENTS

CCs

ARTISTS

COMMERCIAL FIRMS

RCs

RESIDENTS

Void decks

RESIDENTS

Amphitheatres

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ON IMPACTS AND RESILIENCE

- Community resilience requires **neighbour to neighbour reliance and strong network**
- Community art, public space and cultural facilities together help in building community cohesion

  - **Understanding:** Community assets mapping – resources and skills
  - **Infrastructure & vibrant neighbourhoods:** formal and informal arts and culture venues
  - **Action & Initiative:** Community engagement and volunteerism
  - **Collective vision** and partner network

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THANK YOU!

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