

## Young Singaporeans Conference 2014: Game-Changers

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The Young Singaporeans Conference (YSC) is one of the Institute of Policy Studies' (IPS) flagship events. Held every two years, the conference brings together prominent Singaporeans between the ages of 25 to 35 to discuss issues of national interest and stimulate debates at the strategic level of public policy and politics in Singapore.

The theme for this year's YSC is "Game-Changers". The conference, which will be held on 22 September 2014, will identify and discuss current trends that indicate how life in Singapore could change by 2040, when the country marks its 75th anniversary of independence.

On 30 June and 1 July, IPS held two workshops where participants were asked to envision future directions and scenarios for Singapore based on current trends and projections. At each workshop session, 20 individuals from the public and private sectors were given an overview of possible game-changing trends that might affect life in Singapore over the next 25 years. The workshop participants — selected for their interest in policy issues — had backgrounds in entrepreneurship, business, urban planning and the arts, among others.

Under the guidance of experienced futures facilitator Dawn Yip, the participants were asked to single out particular trends that they agreed or disagreed with, as well as to expand existing trends or propose their own trends based on personal knowledge and experience.

Both pre-conference workshops yielded rich and wide-ranging discussions with many valuable and cross-cutting insights. Issues included uses of space in future Singapore; identity and belonging; future geopolitics; the changing nature of economy and work; demographic issues and their impact; and the impact of new technologies.

Some participants wondered, for example, if the coming "silver tsunami" and declining birth rates should be cause for national concern, given that technological advancements could increase productivity and ensure that people remain healthy longer. Others pointed out the importance of conserving heritage and community spaces in land-scarce Singapore. The sustainability and necessity of continued economic growth was also questioned, in the context of growing inequality in Singapore and the potential negative environmental impact of development.

Another thread of discussion touched upon the Chinese-Malay-Indians-Others (CMIO) classification model, and its relevance now and in the future. Finally, the future of Singapore

politics was also brought up, with some wondering about the possibility of a coalition government and whether young people would be able to step up to the plate and take up leadership roles.

The above insights will be incorporated in an updated primer on game-changing trends that will be provided to participants before the conference.

### ***Call for Participants and Nominations***

IPS is on the lookout for participants interested in attending YSC 2014. This year's conference will involve an envisioning exercise. Questions that will be posed include: What kind of home do we want to live in, as Singapore moves on to her next chapter? What opportunities and challenges will arise from the changing world, and how will we survive and thrive in such an environment? And finally, what aspirations do we have, and what steps will we take in order to achieve these goals?

The closed-door conference will also feature speakers such as former Foreign Minister, George Yeo and Ambassador-at-Large, Bilahari Kausikan. It will end with a dinner and dialogue session with Indranee Rajah, Senior Minister of State for Law and Education.

Singaporeans between the ages of 25 to 35 — who have an interest in public policy issues, have demonstrated leadership potential or are accomplished in their respective fields — are welcome to apply. Nominations are also welcome. For more information, visit the [IPS website](#) or contact Ms Chan Yi Ying at [chan.yiying@nus.edu.sg](mailto:chan.yiying@nus.edu.sg) or 6156 8389.

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