

OUR SG ARTS PLAN (2023 – 2027)

**National Arts Council
Singapore**

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Driving Forces and Impetus for Change
3. The Next Five Years
4. Our SG Arts Plan (2023 – 2027): What Success Looks Like
5. Our Strategic Thrusts
 - 5.1. Strategic Thrust 1: A Connected Society - where the arts bring together 3P (Public, People & Private) communities
 - 5.1.1. Sustain Audiences through Life
 - 5.1.2. Strengthen Communities through Shared Experiences
 - 5.1.3. Drive Advocacy to Grow Support
 - 5.2. Strategic Thrust 2: A Distinctive City – that is cultural, iconic and inspiring
 - 5.2.1. Diversify and Unlock Spaces
 - 5.2.2. Activate Places and Precincts
 - 5.2.3. Infuse Arts Everywhere
 - 5.3. Strategic Thrust 3: A Creative Economy – to drive competitiveness
 - 5.3.1. Forge New Business Models
 - 5.3.2. Grow Artistic Excellence
 - 5.3.3. Expand Internationalisation Opportunities
6. Our Strong Foundations: Partnerships, Technology and Innovation, Data and Insights
7. Building on Our Gains
8. Journeying Together: Milestones of Engagement Efforts Since 2021
9. Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

The arts play a vital role in defining what makes us Singaporean, contributing to a rich and multi-faceted sense of our unique national identity. Whether it is through music, dance, theatre, writing, sculpting, or painting, the arts have the power to connect us to our diverse cultural heritage and to foster shared experiences.

The arts have also transformed the places where we live, work and play. From street murals to stately art galleries, the arts can uplift our mood and strengthen the character of our neighbourhoods. A thriving arts scene will continue to make Singapore a distinctive city reflecting our unique multi-cultural identity.

Since its formation in 1991, the role of the National Arts Council (NAC) is to champion the arts. In the subsequent two decades, we responded to the challenges of the times with the Renaissance City Reports (2000, 2004, 2008). The Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) set out long-term directions for 2010 to 2025. With the ACSR, Our SG Arts Plan (2018 - 2022) has charted the strategic priorities of the last five years.

The next edition of Our SG Arts Plan (2023 - 2027) is the result of over a year of conversations with more than 1,000 people in Singapore and internationally, from within and outside the arts. We consulted artists, leaders of cultural organisations, public and private sector partners. We asked them how they experienced creativity and how the arts could play a part in everyday lives. Their inputs have been valuable in shaping the priorities in this plan.

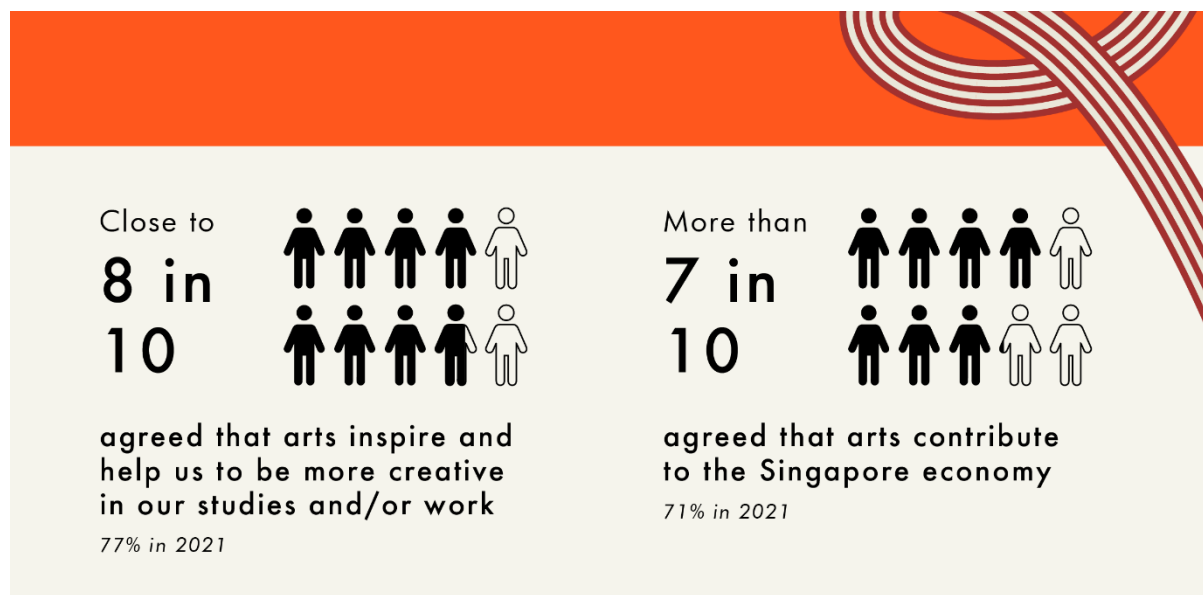
Also shaping this plan are the data and insights gleaned from our research. In crafting this plan, we have commissioned studies of future and technological trends that are likely to affect the arts and culture sector and examined studies about leadership in cultural organisations.

Our SG Arts Plan (2023 – 2027) is a strategic roadmap to guide arts and culture policies in bringing together collective efforts of the public, private and people sectors to respond to the opportunities and challenges in a changing world. The future is bright for Singapore arts and culture. We invite all of you to play a part in it, and to embark on the journey in together building an inclusive, diverse, and vibrant arts scene that is beloved at home and admired globally.

Driving Forces and Impetus for Change

In our conversations and consultation sessions, we asked participants what they thought were key driving forces locally and globally over the next 15 to 20 years that would affect our arts and culture sector. We also discussed the role and value of the arts, as well as the opportunities and challenges in the next five to 10 years. Several major trends that had the potential to shape the development of Singapore arts and culture were identified.

Growth of Creative Economy



Data taken from 2021 Population Survey on the Arts

Cross-pollination between different creative sectors now generates exciting content that crosses from one medium to another. An example would be local books adapted for the small or big screen or a painting that inspires product designs. There are increasing collaborations between the arts and its adjacent industries of lifestyle and entertainment, driving Singapore artworks to reach wider audiences locally and internationally. The resulting flow of ideas and talent between industries will benefit the greater creative economy as a whole.

Beyond adjacent creative sectors, the arts provide skill sets that are increasingly valued in other industries. There are potential applications of the arts in domains such as technology, healthcare, and environment. The arts can ignite creativity in other industries.

Increasingly Complex Social Issues

Singapore's social diversity continues to grow, shaping an evolving national identity, which remains, at its core, multi-cultural. Singapore's cohesion as a multi-cultural and multi-religious nation will also be increasingly tested with our open economy and society.



agreed that the arts and culture give us a greater sense of belonging to Singapore

81% in 2021



agreed that the arts improve understanding of people of different backgrounds and culture

85% in 2021



agreed that arts foster dialogue and understanding between different generations

78% in 2021



agreed that arts help draw Singaporeans closer as a community

78% in 2021

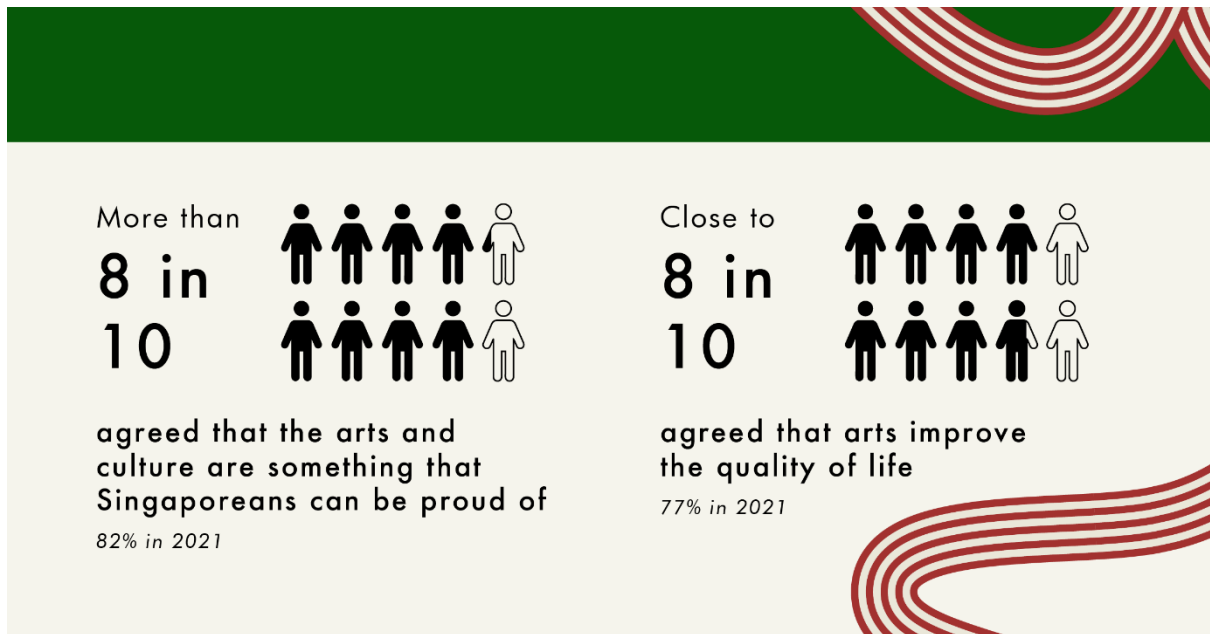
Data taken from 2021 Population Survey of the Arts

The arts can be a way to explore sensitive issues such as racism, inequalities and disparities, climate change and even end-of-life experiences, as our society continues to mature. Increasingly, the arts act as a “pressure valve” for society to confront difficult issues and emotions, which in turn contributes to the betterment of mental health and social well-being.

The arts speak to people across different stages of life, expressing the hopes, dreams, and fears of people of different ages. By engaging the heart and the mind, deep conversations on social issues facing these demographics can be facilitated in and through the arts.

Growing Emphasis on Liveability

Arts and culture offerings contribute to a city’s liveability and quality of life, adding dynamism and vibrancy to our urban surroundings and giving us exciting and diverse recreational options.



Data taken from 2021 Population Survey of the Arts

It also contributes to Singapore’s global competitiveness and elevates our international standing vis-à-vis other major cities. A distinctive city with a thriving arts scene makes Singapore a more endearing home and a more attractive destination.

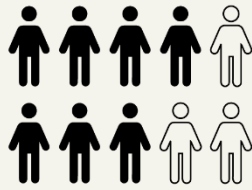
The liveability of a city is also measured by its sustainability and resilience – that is, how it is designed to provide for future generations and how quickly it can recover from shocks. These issues become more pertinent in an era of climate change, which pose more risks of extreme weather events and other disruptions. The arts are an important platform on which these issues can be explored. More artists explore “green” topics such as our interconnectedness with the natural environment and using cleaner energy sources, which are getting more urgent and relevant to contemporary society. Calls grow to ensure the arts scene develops sustainably, with minimum waste and efficient use of resources.

Acceleration of Digital Arts Consumption and Creation

Technology has changed the way audiences experience the arts, particularly after COVID-19 lockdowns worldwide. People can now access the arts from the comfort of their own homes, as performances are live-streamed, and galleries and museums mount virtual exhibitions. Audiences are also more exposed to arts which operate in both the virtual and physical worlds, with the growing use of Augmented Reality (AR) filters and hybridised performances incorporating digital elements.

**7 in
10**

visited arts
websites
or apps



70% in 2021

**8 in
10**

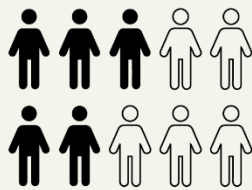
engaged
in arts
digitally



80% in 2021

**5 in
10**

Singapore
digital arts
audiences



have paid for online arts
content and would pay the
same or more for content
specifically created for
online consumption

50% in 2021

**8 in
10**

digital arts
consumers
surveyed



agreed that they would
continue online consumption
after the pandemic

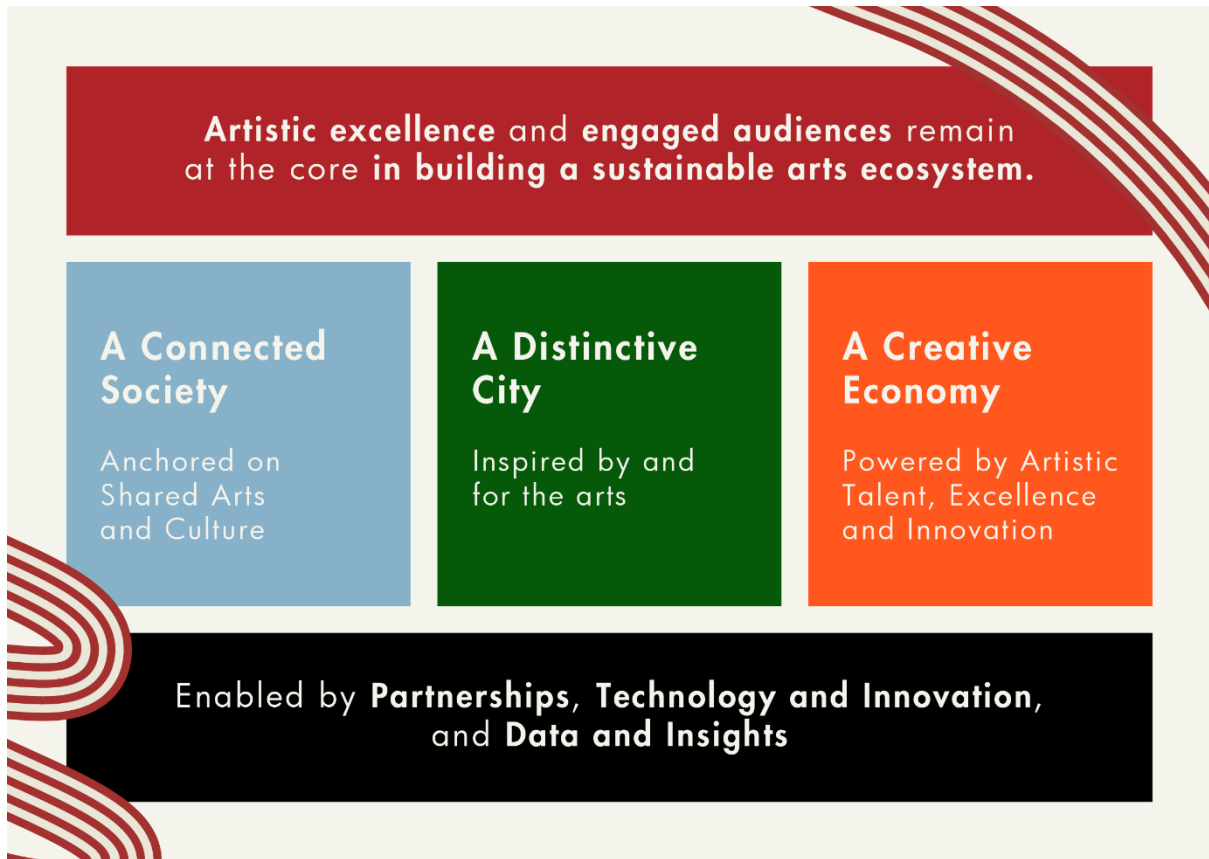
80% in 2021

Data taken from Arts in a Post-pandemic Normal - 5 Macro Trends to Watch (2021) and COVID-19 Arts Consumption Study (2020 -2021)

Technology presents immense opportunities for the arts. It offers artists more tools to make and present their works, and more platforms to reach new audiences and to make a living. Artworks using new technologies such as artificial intelligence and AR will be in greater demand in the metaverse. The advance in digital technologies also creates new opportunities for the arts community to use data intelligently, e.g., in understanding and reaching their audiences.

The convergence of arts and technology deepen and widen involvement of corporate partners. More technology companies have been working with artists to create experimental and thought-provoking works that expand our consciousness and perception of the world.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS



Our SG Arts Plan (2023 – 2027) aims to build Singapore as a distinctive city and creative economy anchored on a connected society. Our artists achieve new levels of artistic excellence and make a significant impact to the development of our economy and society. Our growing local and international audiences are deeply engaged in Singapore arts and culture.

We will focus on three strategic thrusts for Our SG Arts Plan (2023 – 2027)

- a **Connected Society**, in which our national identity is anchored on our unique arts and culture,
- a **Distinctive City**, where spaces are invigorated by the arts and contribute to making Singapore an endearing home and attractive destination,
- a **Creative Economy** with an arts sector defined by excellence, innovation, and close collaboration with the larger creative industry.

Artistic Excellence

Over the last five years, local artists have been growing from strength to strength. They have demonstrated resilience and innovation in weathering the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. As we emerge from this crisis of a generation, our dynamic and maturing arts scene, artists, and arts groups have responded by launching new works and resuming their artistic journeys locally and abroad.

In this next bound, we will continue to support artistic excellence while widening opportunities for diversified career pathways in the arts. More Singaporean artists will attain mastery in their artistic practice, and in doing so, inspire, gain recognition, and be valued both internationally and at home. We will work with diverse partners to enable arts practitioners to tap on more opportunities in pursuing a sustainable long-term career in the arts and creative industries. Emerging artists can be supported in their needs for skills upgrading and building of professional networks.

Engaged Audiences

The success of a sustainable arts ecosystem is determined not just by the quality of artists and their works, but also by whether they succeed in connecting with and growing their audiences, both at home and abroad.

Over the last five years, audiences have enjoyed new and different arts experiences. Due to the challenges posed by COVID-19, more audience members started accessing local and international arts programmes on digital platforms. They are open to new possibilities in multi-disciplinary art forms and participating in the arts in new ways.

In the next five years, we will grow our Singapore and international audiences by reaching out to them on physical and digital platforms. Our mission is to let the arts be a significant part of their lives, and through collective arts experiences and memories, audiences can connect with each other and feel a sense of belonging.

To enable everyone to experience high-quality arts regardless of socio-economic background, we will work with corporate and community partners, and the public sector, to widen and deepen access to the arts.

A Thriving and Sustainable Ecosystem

NAC is committed to sustaining a thriving arts ecosystem, with a strong and diverse network of people, organisations, and institutions. This ecosystem fosters a sense of pride and belonging to Singapore by bringing together contributions of artists, arts companies, arts administrators, arts councils, patrons, collectors, and audiences, as well as partners from outside the arts.

NAC recognises that we alone cannot provide the expertise and capabilities required to grow the arts and culture sector. Hence, we will work with diverse partners and sectors to raise our arts and culture to the next level of excellence, and to work on getting it even more rooted in everyday life, so that the value and impact of the arts continue to grow throughout the whole of society.

OUR SG ARTS PLAN (2023 – 2027)

what success looks like

Our SG Arts Plan (2023 – 2027) is Singapore’s roadmap for the arts for the next five years. **There are three key strategic thrusts:**

<h2>A Connected Society</h2> <p>Community anchored on shared arts and culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Arts for Life where every person has access to high quality arts experiences at every life stage and turns to the arts to enrich their lives+ Arts for Community where communities are strengthened through shared arts experiences+ Arts Together where the public, private and people sectors recognise the value and contribute to the arts together
<h2>A Distinctive City</h2> <p>Vibrant spaces inspired by and for the arts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ A Cultural City where we embrace and showcase both our unique and shared identities through the arts, and engender a sense of belonging+ An Iconic City where places, structures and streetscapes are transformed, reimagined and rejuvenated through creativity and innovation+ An Inspiring City and endearing home for everyone where public and private spaces are animated through arts and culture
<h2>A Creative Economy</h2> <p>Hub powered by artistic talent, excellence and innovation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ A thriving arts sector that is seamlessly integrated with other adjacent industries in the Creative Economy creating employment opportunities+ Manpower excellence across the arts with the creative industries valued, recognised and contributing positively to the economy+ The Singapore arts sector is globally renowned for its quality and innovation. Admired by the global arts industry and desired by international audiences where the arts build communities with 3Ps (Public, People and Private)

OUR STRATEGIC THRUSTS

A CONNECTED SOCIETY

where the arts bring together 3P (Public, People and Private) communities

The arts belong to all of us. For individuals, it can be empowering to see their experiences represented and reflected in the arts. Therefore, it is our aim that every Singaporean, regardless of background and circumstances, should have access to the arts, as creators, participants, or audiences.

Singapore's multi-cultural and multi-religious society is our strength. The arts have the power to connect diverse communities by helping people understand different perspectives. By celebrating our differences and commonalities, arts provide Singaporeans with a sense of shared cultural heritage and promote a sense of belonging.

These are the key priorities of action:

A. Sustain Audiences through Life – Embed arts experiences in key life areas such as education, work, leisure, and well-being across ages

B. Strengthen Communities through Shared Experiences – Expand touchpoints with strategic partners and develop programmes to grow strong ties within and across diverse communities

C. Drive Advocacy to Grow Support – Foster an appreciation on the social impact of the arts across the People, Public and Private sectors. Encourage contributions to the arts from a diversified and growing pool of patrons.

The Impetus for Change

Ensuring Equal Access

Not everyone has access to the arts in Singapore, and many still have various misconceptions of arts and culture as being alien, elitist or irrelevant. By removing barriers to entry, every Singaporean should have access to experience the transformative power of arts and participate in Singapore's cultural vibrancy.

Social Value of the Arts

The arts play a strong role in nation-building through strengthening national identity, fostering a sense of belonging, promoting social cohesion, and developing bonds in the community. It can be a powerful reminder to a fast-paced and evolving society that different cultures and sub-identities can and will continue to co-exist harmoniously in Singapore, because our diversity is also our strength.

HOW WE WILL GET THERE

Key Priorities

Sustain Audiences Through Life



Students discussing Liu Kang's Life by the River with a facilitator during their on-site tour. Credit: National Gallery Singapore

We will nurture lifelong arts lovers from a young age. We aim to deepen engagements with schools, such as by introducing art history modules in the curriculum or facilitating more group access to our art galleries and spaces. For example, in 2023, NAC will expand our partnership with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to launch a new cohort learning journey to expose students to music performances in professional arts venues. The aim is to deepen appreciation for the life and work of professional musicians in Singapore and inspire in them the love of music. Called Performing Arts-Based Learning (PABL), the programme is slated as a core learning experience for Lower Secondary students in the revised Music Syllabus.

We recognise that different segments of society have different preferred modes of access to the arts. For example, the young might enjoy viewing arts online, while the elderly find it easier to experience arts physically and in their vicinity. Working in tandem with other cultural institutions, we will tailor our outreach efforts to different demographics.

To support our efforts to increase the societal outreach of arts, we will undertake research to get data-driven insights into potential areas in which arts can make a difference. An example would be supporting art therapy in hospitals, which improves the mental health of patients. In designing our programmes, we hope to draw from the expertise of diverse fields such as behavioural sciences, social geography, and education.

Strengthen Communities through Shared Experiences

Every arts experience is an opportunity for people to make connections. We want to improve the penetration of arts into every aspect of life and create more occasions where people can share experiences and perspectives, as well as deepen meaningful exchanges. For example, more arts activities will be offered in civic areas such as parks, retail malls and lifestyle spaces through partnerships with government and private sector partners. We also aim to showcase more local arts in current and new digital spaces, such as on the LED screens in the common areas of HDB blocks.



Youth participants working on their final exhibition in response to the theme of mental well-being for ArtsXplore 2.0. Credit: ArtsXplore 2.0

We will invest in artists with the goal to develop skills and capabilities relevant to participatory artforms that benefit the community. These socially minded artists can also work with other organisations to create new platforms for people to access arts. One such example would be the fifth edition of the Arts and Disability Forum (ADF) 2023 which will be jointly organised by NAC and the arts community. The ADF provides a space for learning and reflection on best practices in arts access, and encourages collaborations among arts practitioners, social sector professionals and public agencies. The Forum also brings together international speakers to share their diverse experiences.

Drive Advocacy to Grow Support

The work of supporting the arts is a responsibility that belongs to all of us. By inspiring more public and private partners to come on board to champion arts and culture, the benefits of our sector can reach more segments of society. In the years ahead, we will cultivate and groom more partners in the corporate sector, public agencies, and voluntary organisations, to leverage third party advocates and facilitate ground-up initiatives to generate an organic groundswell of support. Together, we will advocate for the value of the arts and its ability to address social challenges.

A DISTINCTIVE CITY

that is cultural, iconic, and inspiring

Our arts infrastructure are the spaces in which the arts are experienced and created. They include arts venues such as concert halls, galleries and theatres and artist workspaces such as studios and workshops. Besides being the hardware of our arts ecosystem, such spaces have been used to enhance the government's placemaking efforts over the past 10 years.

Vibrant spaces enlivened and inspired by the arts can help transform Singapore into a Distinctive City. Our arts infrastructure will continue to be dynamic, exciting spaces for potentially life-changing encounters with arts, and spaces will be available to house and nurture artists and arts groups at different stages of their development.

These are the key priorities of action:

- A. Diversify and Unlock Spaces – Increase and deepen access to affordable public and private spaces
- B. Activate Places and Precincts – Work with public and private sector to co-create innovative and unique arts places and precincts for artists, local and global audiences
- C. Infuse Arts Everywhere – Create an immersive city of creativity filled with art – in real life, in augmented reality and in the metaverse

The Impetus for Change

Sustainable Solutions to Address Supply and Demand

Singapore's arts landscape has evolved tremendously with more arts professionals and activities contributing to a vibrant scene. NAC's Framework for Arts Spaces, which encompasses three schemes – Incubation Scheme, Scheme for Developing Artists and Arts Groups, and the Arts Centre Scheme – support a wide range of artists and arts groups, each with their own unique development needs.

We will continue to support our artists and audiences in unlocking new and diverse spaces for arts creation and presentation. We seek to integrate the arts into spaces and places where our people live, work and play.

Optimisation to Support Diverse Needs

We have grown spaces for arts and culture use by more than five times since 1985, from around 18,000 sqm to over 88,000 sqm. These spaces include multi-tenanted arts centres and spaces with shared facilities such as multi-purpose studios, project studios and black boxes. Examples of such spaces include Goodman Arts Centre, Aliwal Arts Centre, Stamford Arts Centre and the recently renovated 42 Waterloo Street (42WS). With Singapore's evolving arts landscape, it is important to ensure that our arts spaces benefit the wider community. This consideration underpins our efforts

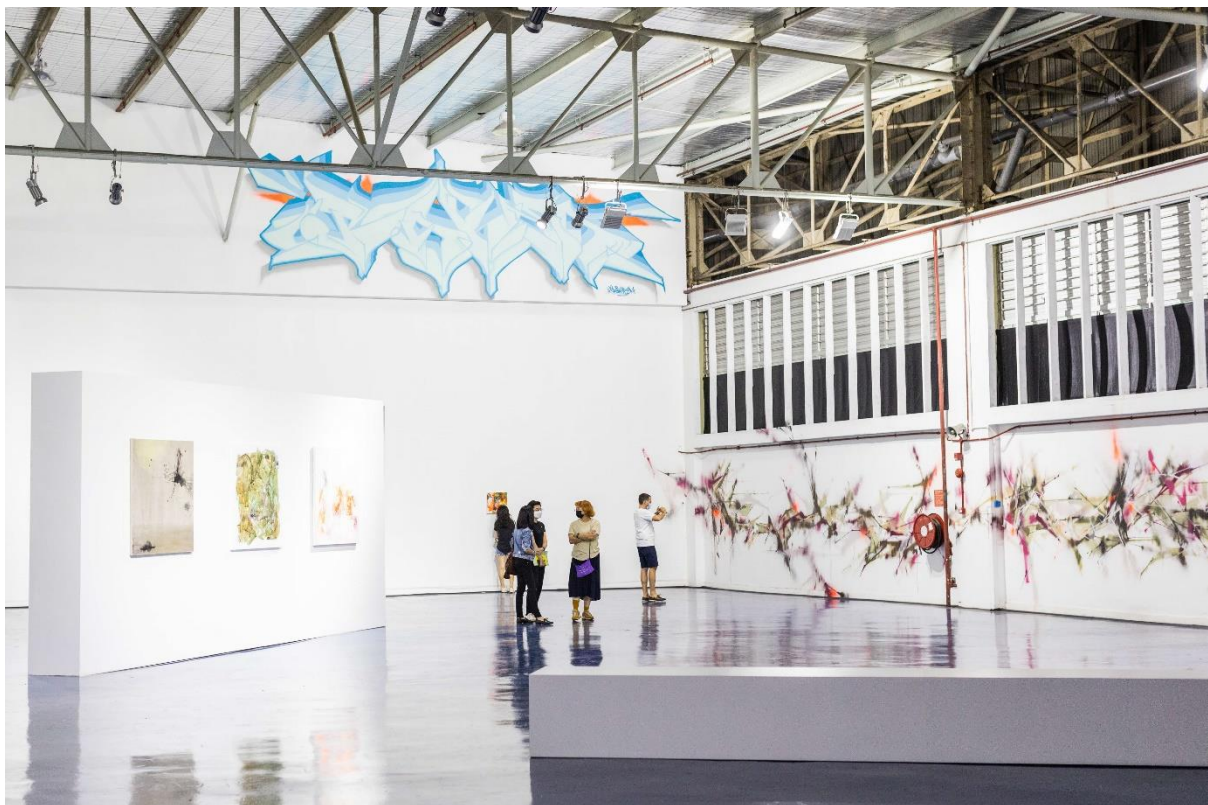
to build a pipeline of diversified spaces to allow more practitioners to utilise multi-tenanted spaces for art making, capability development and audience engagement.

HOW WE WILL GET THERE

Key Priorities

Diversify and Unlock Spaces

Arts spaces are crucial in the arts ecosystem: they are used to make and present arts, for artists to be nurtured, and for audiences to be cultivated and developed. We will work more with other government agencies to create new places where the arts can be presented and encountered by new audiences. These spaces include the Gillman Barracks under the Singapore Land Authority, art installations in public parks under NParks, and MRT stations under the Land Transport Authority.



Visitors of A N T I N O D E S, interdisciplinary exhibition at Tanjong Pagar Distripark, during SAW 2022

We also recognise that there is a spectrum of needs arising from the diverse and cross-disciplinary practices of artists. In particular, there is a need for incubation and experimental spaces like Tanjong Pagar Distripark, 45 Armenian Street and Kampong Java, where emerging arts groups can be located, and new artworks can be presented.

We also plan to repurpose and optimise our limited existing spaces to accommodate more users. Sub-optimal spaces will be upgraded to better suit the needs of tenants and benefit the wider arts community.

In allocation of highly subsidised spaces, we will continue to support existing arts activities while balancing this priority with ensuring fair access, particularly for emerging artists and arts groups. To ensure fairness, we will continue to conduct competitive open calls for arts spaces, where the availability, eligibility and assessment criteria are indicated upfront. We will also support existing arts tenants in unlocking more affordable public and private spaces.

Activate Places and Precincts

Successful placemaking efforts shape a district to make it distinctive and vibrant. For example, busking acts enlivening and energising spaces where Singaporeans live, work and play. Requiring the collective work of multiple parties, placemaking integrates urban planning, cultural policy, and community engagement. Private stakeholders such as malls and business owners also need to be on board.



Audiences young and old enjoying a performance by the Singapore Chinese Orchestra at the Botanic Garden's Shaw Foundation Symphony Stage. Credit: Singapore Chinese Orchestra

We aim to make strategic use of arts spaces, public artworks, and exhibitions to invigorate neighbourhoods and contribute to their unique identities. By doing this, we provide opportunities to artists to present their work and deepen their abilities to engage with environments meaningfully and impactfully.

More can be done collectively for quality artworks to be made available in civic and public places. The Public Spaces for Art scheme, developed in 2018 will be refreshed through getting more partners in public and private agencies to showcase art. We will work with the Singapore Art Museum in drawing up a comprehensive Public Art Masterplan. We will also streamline and standardise processes in commissioning

public art by different public agencies, so that the commissioning frameworks are consistent across the whole of government.

Infuse Arts Everywhere

Placemaking is a collaborative effort. Going forward, we will conduct research with other stakeholders – such as urban planners and architects – to figure out how best we can work together to transform Singapore into a place saturated with arts and culture. We plan to investigate these questions about the placemaking potential of the arts: How can the arts build a global city with world-renowned architecture, and yet anchor our people with a sense of belonging? How can the arts enhance green spaces and building designs? How can our arts spaces be more environmentally sustainable?

A CREATIVE ECONOMY

to drive competitiveness

Besides generating public value in the form of meaningful experiences, the creative talents of artists also have tangible and measurable outcomes: they generate income and create jobs in the economy. We want the arts to flourish economically and provide viable careers for practitioners. To do so, we will continue to help artists professionalise, as well as upgrade and broaden their skill sets. Finally, we continue to support Singaporean artists to shine on the world stage.

These are the key priorities of action:

- A. Forge New Business Models – Increase visibility for the arts and adjacent industries to create more employment opportunities
- B. Grow Artistic Excellence – Build capabilities and development pathways for long-term employability
- C. Expand Internationalisation Opportunities – Develop globally connected sector and Singapore’s reputation as a global creative centre and grow international demand and markets for local arts

The Impetus for Change

Sustainability of Arts Careers

In 2019, before the COVID-19 health crisis, Singapore’s arts calendar hit a record high with over 9,000 activities.

With the pandemic affecting attendance and participation in the arts, the arts community responded by building new capabilities and experimenting with new strategies, such as digital presentation, merchandising and exploring new audience segments. We need to build on these gains and continue these diversification efforts that improve the sustainability of the sector.

Relevance of Artists’ Skills

Artists provide skill sets that are valuable across a host of industries beyond adjacent ones such as design and architecture. Their knowledge, insights and methodologies can be applied in other sectors such as technology, health, and business. By expanding the relevance of the arts to different fields, we broaden its impact and improve prospects for arts practitioners. Hence, we aim to diversify the ecosystem with the intention to ensure more pathways to success and find new ways in which the arts can be applied to the creative industries.

One strategy is by connecting the arts industry with government and commercial partners. New collaborations and business models, catalysed by the cross-pollination of ideas and talent, can help revitalise the entire creative sector.

HOW WE WILL GET THERE

Key Priorities

Forge New Business Models

We will work with partners to bridge artists with other creatives. Our aim is to create a highly networked creative sector that provides a wide range of opportunities to arts professionals. We will co-design programmes with relevant government agencies, or tap existing schemes, to support such collaboration projects. For example, we are looking to collaborate with industry partners on a scripting lab to adapt Singapore literature to film.

To protect the assets of artists, we will design a concerted intellectual property (IP) strategy for the arts and culture sector so that they can professionalise and monetise their offerings with new business models.

Technology can also facilitate the implementation of new business models. Where possible, we aim to support the arts sector by creating industry-wide technology infrastructure. An example is building a one-stop digital platform that aggregates arts and culture events in Singapore. Audiences can see what is on at a glance, search and filter through events, and book tickets. To be launched in 2023, the site will also have data analytics and data mining capabilities that allow a deeper understanding of local arts consumption. These insights can help us better understand, engage, and grow our audiences.



Tusitala Book's prototype of a digital experience of an illustrated book using immersive technologies at the inaugural Arts x Tech Lab 2021 showcase

Finally, we will also further our work with partners to help the arts community transform and innovate. In June 2022, we introduced the Sector Transformation Fund, which supports arts companies in creating new income streams, arts experiences and measures that improve efficiency. In the pipeline are innovation labs, in which experts and partners are brought in to help artists incubate new ideas. Good concepts will be identified, and prototypes scaled for wider adoption.

Grow Artistic Excellence

As in other professions, artists need to update their skills and knowledge to adapt to a changing world. We will collaborate with institutes of higher learning (IHL) and continuing education and training (CET) centres to provide pathways for career progression, skills development, and acquisition, as well as career mobility.

We will ensure that digital skills are embedded in Pre-Employment Training (PET) and continue working with arts IHL to ensure digitally equipped arts graduates. We will also address digital training gaps within the existing arts workforce via CET programmes such as training courses and workshops.

There are also plans to curate a suite of shared resources containing technology solutions that support organisation operations and processes. In addition, we will grow the network of technology experts, consultants, and service providers to guide the arts sector to keep up with the pace of digitalisation.

Expand Internationalisation Opportunities



Shubigi Rao, Pulp III: A Short Biography of the Banished Book, 2022. Installation view, Singapore Pavilion, Biennale Arte 2022 in Venice. Photograph by Alessandro Brasile.

Internalisation can help our artists reach wider audiences and gain broader recognition from beyond our shores. By researching target overseas markets, we hope to help local artists and arts companies unlock their opportunities.

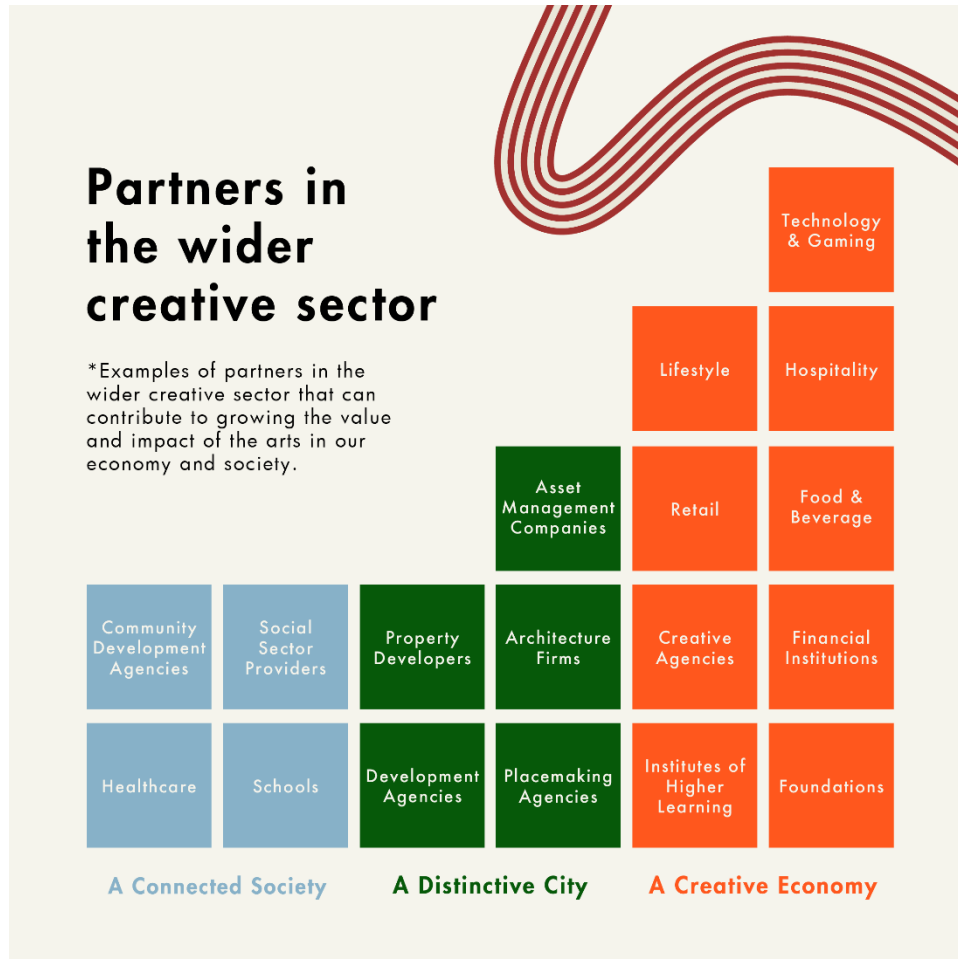
Besides seeking new markets abroad, we seek to attract the best art exhibitions, performances, and events to Singapore by positioning ourselves as a key cultural city and hub in the region. More thought leadership platforms such as conferences and fairs will be identified and established, to strengthen Singapore's position as a key arts and culture node in Asia.

We will step up on partnerships with the right international partners to strengthen capabilities in the areas of artmaking, arts and technology and research. We aim to collaborate with international stakeholders such as UNESCO, International Council of Museums (ICOM), and International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA), to establish thought leadership and help build knowledge and expertise in the region.

OUR STRONG FOUNDATIONS

Our extensive consultations with stakeholders within and outside the arts yielded many insights. There was broad consensus to affirm our emphasis on the key enablers of **Partnerships, Technology and Innovation, and Data and Insights.**

Partnerships



We will further broaden our network of support for the culture sector. We aim to forge more partnerships with organisations from the business, social and community sectors, to gain more diverse perspectives and strategies to help the arts scene thrive. We will work more closely with:

- i. Public agencies so that there is greater alignment between the arts sector and nationwide masterplans such as the Singapore Green Plan 2030, Ministry of Social and Family Development's Enabling Masterplan 2030 and the Urban Redevelopment Authority's Master Plan.
- ii. Partners in the wider creative sector to discover new connections, synergies, and cross-pollination of ideas on how the arts can add more value. These partners include businesses that can help artists develop new income streams and tech companies that can help artists make boundary-pushing new digital works.

Technology and Innovation



Audiences at ROUTES: A Multi-perspective Exploration of Traditional Dance in Singapore, at the Black Box, Stamford Arts Centre

Technology has increasingly influenced artistic practice, audience engagement, delivery of arts programmes and services, and how the arts sector operates. External factors such as COVID-19 have also hastened the arts sector's pivot towards digitalisation and new ways of audience engagement. We must lock in these gains while continuing to explore what technology can do for us.

Over the next five years, NAC will continue to support the exploration and adoption of technology, enable new opportunities to be harnessed and encourage continuous innovation, learning and collaboration between the arts and technology sectors. We will also build on the interest in and success of our Arts x Tech Lab 1.0 to provide more space for technology experimentation in the sector.

To ensure our arts sector contributes to the challenges of environmental sustainability, we will also encourage innovations to optimise resources in art creation and presentation. We will also do more to incentivise the arts community on adoption of sustainable practices.

Data and Insights

Data and empirical evidence can provide critical insights for the arts so that our plans and policies are shaped by real-world insights and can be designed to be more effective and impactful. For example, data can help us understand the public's perception of the arts, audience preferences and international markets. Data can also

help us be better advocates for the arts. Data on the impact of the arts on city living, health, education and community-building can be powerful arguments for the public value of the arts. It would also help policymakers, funders, and the public better appreciate the multi-dimensional contributions of the arts to society.

Over the past four years, NAC has invested more than \$6 million to commission studies such as the Population Survey on the Arts and the Arts and Culture Employment Study (ACES). These studies complement the Singapore Cultural Statistics and enable us to evaluate the impact the arts have on Singaporeans, and the state of the sector. There are plans to further invest in research and infrastructure to yield valuable data insights, which we aim to share with the arts community.

Over the next five years, more funds will be committed to drive research that furthers our work in the three strategic thrusts.

BUILDING ON OUR GAINS

As we work towards the strategies detailed in Our SG Arts Plan (2023 – 2027), NAC will continue to build on the gains of the first Arts Plan that we launched in 2018.



Our SG Arts Plan (2018-2022) Stocktake

The Plan maps the journey the National Arts Council (NAC) has embarked on together with our arts community and all Singaporeans and serves as a guide to the development of the arts scene.

Guided by 3 strategic thrusts

Inspire Our People Singaporeans are empowered to create, present and appreciate excellent art	Connect Our Communities Diverse communities come together to enjoy and support the arts	Position Singapore Globally Arts and culture icons and works are appreciated by audiences and critics at home and abroad
---	---	--

8 strategic priorities

1 Strengthen NAC's role in leading & championing arts in SG	5 Utilise technology to improve art-making and outreach efforts
2 Increase focus on growing audiences	6 Strengthen research in the arts sector
3 Build diverse capabilities in the arts sector	7 Strengthen programme design to maximise impact of the arts on society
4 Increase sector-wide support for freelance arts professionals	8 Take Singapore's art beyond our shores

We have made progress in all these areas:

1. Strengthening NAC's Role in Leading and Championing the Arts in Singapore

- Grew arts patronage through the Sustain the Arts (stART) Fund to encourage giving to small arts organisations
- Arts infrastructure support through providing subsidies, affordable shared spaces and facilitated the co-location of arts organisations in retail spaces
- Worked with artists, cultural institutions and agencies including Singapore Tourism Board (STB), People's Association (PA) and NParks to organise pinnacle platforms like Singapore Art Week and Singapore Writers Festival

- Launched Our Cultural Medallion Story – a dedicated showcase at The Arts House to honour all Cultural Medallion recipients and celebrate their achievements

2. Increasing Our Focus on Growing Audiences

- Supported a diverse range of physical, digital and hybrid programmes through grants and initiatives, as well as commissioned public artworks in partnership with artists and agencies
- Worked with Ministry of Education (MOE) and key institutions to introduce museum and performing arts-based learning programmes for young audiences in schools
- Redeveloped arts spaces such as the Stamford Arts Centre to support the growth of traditional arts and broaden its outreach and audience base in Singapore
- Delivered tailored programmes including Arts in Your Neighbourhood and Silver Arts to better cater to different audience segments, taking a citizen-centric approach

3. Building Diverse Capabilities in the Arts

- Supported local and international residencies and introduced training for key areas such as digital technology, entrepreneurship, and audience development
- Continued partnership with National Institute of Education (NIE) to equip arts educators with digital skills, and audience development
- Enabled intermediaries to take on diverse roles including programming, for example, Arts House Limited as organiser of the Singapore International Festival of Arts and Singapore Writers Festival
- Raised capabilities of arts education providers in schools to deepen early immersion across art forms to enhance appreciation and understanding of the arts

4. Increasing Sector Wide Support for Freelance Arts Professionals

- Set up the Arts Resource Hub (ARH) to provide arts Self-Employed Persons (SEPs) with resources such as a jobs portal, training directory, and access to co-working spaces for a sustainable practice
- Engaged over 1,400 SEPs and organised talks and workshops on legal and financial advice, while building intermediary capacity and leadership within the SEP community
- Partnered NTUC e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) and co-organised a virtual career fair for the arts and culture sector, with over 200 job opportunities available
- Commissioned a diverse spectrum of SEPs in projects to develop their capabilities and sustain their practice

5. Utilising Technology to Improve Artmaking and Outreach Efforts

- Partnered key institutions to deepen industry capabilities and expertise in various digital tools

- An e-service portal was launched for buskers to present arts experiences to audiences across more locations
- Incubated 10 projects over eight months for the inaugural Arts x Tech Lab 2021, which reimagined future artistic practices and generated creative solutions for audience engagement
- Developed a one-stop digital platform for audiences to access arts and heritage events

6. Strengthening Research in the Arts Sector

- Commissioned various artform-specific research to deepen our understanding of audiences and their consumption patterns
- Organised arts and culture research symposiums for researchers and artists to network and build a community of practice
- Published monthly research newsletters and worked with Culture Academy (Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth) to continue equipping the arts community with useful information to support their practice
- Strengthened research and documentation efforts through the Singapore Online Repository of Arts (SOAR) to capture information and history of Singapore's arts scene and profile notable artists and their contributions

7. Strengthening Programme Design to Maximise the Impact of the Arts on Society

- Established new Arts and Culture Nodes and strengthened partnerships to engage the wider community across demographics, cultures and backgrounds including under-reached communities, e.g., through WeCare Arts experiences
- Completed the review of the NAC – Arts Education Programme (NAC-AEP) to better integrate the arts in primary and secondary level education
- Published community engagement case studies, the Befrienders Arts Toolkit, and other resources featuring best practices from the arts community
- Extended and deepened partnerships with volunteer and community networks to access under-reached communities and enrich their lives through arts experiences

8. Taking Singapore Arts Beyond our Shores

- Supported and presented artists and arts organisations at international showcases and activities, including the Singapore Pavilion Presentation at the Venice Biennale
- Facilitated cultural exchanges between artists through international partnerships and MOUs with the Australia Council for the Arts, British Council, Arts Council Korea, and Embassy of France in Singapore
- Showcased Singapore's thought leadership in cultural policy at platforms organised by the Edinburgh International Culture Summit, UNESCO and at International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies' World Summit on Arts & Culture
- Supported artists through residencies to deepen their practice and grow their networks in top cultural cities in Southeast Asia and Europe.

Support for the Arts and Culture Sector During COVID-19

Throughout the pandemic in 2020 and 2021, the arts have played an essential role in inspiring and comforting people. In addition to NAC's ongoing efforts, a total of \$75 million was committed to support the arts and heritage sectors through the enhanced Arts and Culture Resilience Package (ACRP). These efforts include:

- Sustaining livelihoods, retaining talents, and defraying operating costs through the ACRP Operating Grant, venue hire subsidy, and rental waiver
- Upskilling and equipping artists with relevant skills for the new normal through the Capabilities Development Scheme for the Arts.
- Supporting and enhancing digitalisation efforts through the Digital Presentation Grant for the Arts, commissions, and partnerships, so that audiences can continue enjoying arts and culture from anywhere
- Positioning the sector for a post-COVID recovery through the Organisation Transformation Grant and the Self-Employed Person Grant

Through support of the ACRP,

- Over 240 organisations across the arts, heritage and creative sector were beneficiaries of the ACRP Operating Grant
- More than 18,000 job and training opportunities were created for artists and arts groups from capability development, digitalisation efforts, SEP-initiated projects, and NAC commissions
- Over 2,300 projects have been supported through the Digitalisation Fund, Digital Presentation Grant, Capability Development Scheme of the Arts, Self-Employed Person Grant, and Organisation Transformation Grant
- More than 44 million views were reached through the launch of #SGCultureAnywhere to spotlight new digital arts programmes created by artists and cultural institutions. As part of the campaign, we worked with 15 key partners to commission and host content

Journeying Together

Milestones of Engagement Efforts Since 2021



NAC’s engagement efforts for Our SG Arts Plan (2023 – 2027) started in June 2021 and the last phase of public engagement will close in February 2023. Our consultative approach draws from the Forward Singapore exercise announced by DPM Lawrence Wong in June 2022, in which the government will partner and connect with Singaporeans to shape the next phase of our country’s development.

The engagement sessions took place in these phases:

Phase 1: Blue skies

We reached a wide diversity of arts and non-arts stakeholders to gain insights across sectors – Society, Technology, Economy, Environment and Political – to ensure the Arts Plan is relevant to the priorities in these key areas.

From July to December 2021, we reached out to more than 200 stakeholders in focus group discussions to gain further insights into what their vision of an ideal arts and culture sector would look like in the domains of (a) Audience, (b) Arts Spaces, (c) Manpower, Creative Economy, (d) Ecosystem and Funding, (e) Supporting Infrastructure, (f) Operating Models and (g) Role in Society.

Phase 2: Deep dives

After distilling these insights, three key strategic thrusts and nine corresponding priorities were drawn up.

From January to July 2022, close to 20 mid-sized group engagements with some 800 stakeholders were conducted virtually and physically to unpack these priorities. During these sessions, there were opportunities for the participants – comprising arts and non-arts stakeholders across the people, public and private sectors – to exchange views. The exchanges sparked new ideas and potential partnerships to help make the arts a more central part of our lives.

Phase 3: New Experiences

We also infused experiential elements into our engagement efforts to offer greater touchpoints for our stakeholders. In Phase 3 of our engagements from August to September 2022, over 300 key stakeholders and partners from the arts community experienced an interactive audio walking tour titled *It Begins with TAP*.

Designed by NAC alongside the arts and creative community, this two-hour showcase along the Waterloo Arts Belt featured perspectives on the future of Singapore's arts scene. These contributions spanned the visual, literary, and performing arts, and took the form of artworks and anecdotes. The content was drawn from about 1,000 contributors, including those from within the arts community and non-arts individuals from the public, private and people sector. *It Begins with TAP* explored how Singapore's arts sector can build a connected society, create a distinctive city, and drive the creative economy over the next five years.

Phase 4: Public Engagement

From late 2022 to early 2023, NAC invites the public to explore, participate, and share feedback on the current draft plan [here](#). Find out more about our journey on [the NAC website](#).

Conclusion

The arts belong to all of us. Whether we are audiences or participants, practitioners, patrons, or partners, we contribute to the arts scene, adding to its vibrancy and energy. The arts also give back to us. It touches and inspires us, roots us in our individual and communal identities, uplifts our everyday surroundings and helps make our city iconic and distinctive. We seek to celebrate and preserve our arts and culture, so that current generations are enriched in their life journeys, and we grow a future generation of arts lovers and patrons.

An arts scene becomes richer and more diverse when there is greater collective ownership of it. That is why we aim to encourage even wider participation in and support for the arts, and to broaden its impact throughout the whole of society.

Our SG Arts Plan (2023-2027) has benefitted from the wide-ranging perspectives of more than 1,000 people in Singapore and internationally from within and outside the arts. There is a strong foundation to forge stronger that we hope to make in the next five years.

Our SG Arts Plan provides a roadmap for the development of the arts in the next five years. Its three strategic thrusts shape our priorities in policy, programmes, and partnerships towards the outcomes of arts excellence and audience engagement.

As we work towards the objectives of Our SG Arts Plan, we invite all of you to come on board to develop the goal we have for a distinctive city and creative economy anchored on a connected society. Developing the arts in Singapore takes collective action, partnerships, and collaboration, and we will all reap the benefits.

END