



# UNITY IN DIVERSITY



ANNUAL REPORT FY 2022/2023



# OUR MISSION

To nurture a harmonious society through cross-cultural education and further contribute to the success of multi-racial Singapore.





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# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

## Dear Friends

OPSG embarked on initiatives in the past financial year to further strengthen our cause and reach. The easing of Covid-19 measures enabled us to conduct our programmes and initiatives in person, reconnecting with our stakeholders, partners, volunteers and participants.

A critical step was to review our Constitution in light of emerging needs and concerns. The proposed changes have been approved by the Registrar of Societies. Through this, we have expanded our objectives to promote social harmony and cohesion. While our primary focus is racial harmony, the wider mandate enables OPSG to identify and tackle other issues that affect racial and religious fault lines, promote social cohesion, and identify the important interventions to ensure that we always remain One People in Singapore.

The constitutional review also provides for us to broaden our membership base by invitation, enabling four categories of members: Founding, Individual, Institutional, and Honorary membership. Apart from 3 appointed members, the management committee will be elected from the membership. This approach allows us to draw in a wider pool of individuals and organisations that are interested in our work, and contribute to it in a variety of ways.

OPSG introduced new initiatives during the year. A task force was set up to develop interventions to tackle racial discrimination in the workplace - a key finding from our joint studies with the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS). Our Community Leaders' Conference focussed on workplace diversity with the theme, "Keeping Harmony at Work". The conference, organised in partnership with IPS, involved HR practitioners, employers, academics, and community and civil society leaders to build inclusive workplaces and positive workplace cultures.

OPSG piloted the workplace diversity programme in partnership with better.sg. The session was well received by participants; particularly the use of gamification to tackle cultural and religious issues sensitively. We are currently extending several pilot sessions with new modes of engagement to further enhance our approach.

OPSG played a significant role in organising a series of community explorations and a community dialogue in conjunction with the second iteration of the International Conference on Cohesive Societies led by S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, and supported by Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY).

In this note I've highlighted our new initiatives and shifts, but all our ongoing work continues! This includes "HarmonyWorks!", "OnePeople.sg Model United Nations", partnerships with the Community Development Councils (CDCs) and Ministry of Education as well as MCCY, and the Racial and Religious Harmony Circles.

Looking ahead OPSG will apply our successful models used to tackle issues of race to evolving issues affecting social cohesion. We will expand our partnerships on workplace diversity and community engagement, including research studies with IPS.

Building trust is never-ending work. Every challenge presents us with an opportunity to strengthen cohesion. At the heart of our community relations is our multicultural way of life – it is our source of pride and strength; an asset we need to cherish for years to come.

I would like to thank fellow members of the Management Committee, staff, volunteers, partners, donors, stakeholders and well-wishers for their contributions and support.



**Dr Janil Puthucheary**  
Chairman  
OnePeople.sg







# **OUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

## CHAIRMAN

**Dr Janil Puthucheary**  
Senior Minister of State  
Ministry of Communications and Information  
Ministry of Health

## SECRETARY

**Mr S. Vivakanandan**  
Executive Chairman  
PSB Academy Pte Ltd

## MEMBERS

- **Mdm Rahayu Mahzam**  
Senior Parliamentary Secretary  
Ministry of Health  
Ministry of Law
- **Ms Crystal Teng Bee Kim**  
Director  
Membership & Partnership Division  
Partnership  
People's Association
- **Mr Tan Yap Kin**  
Executive Director  
Chinese Development Assistance Council  
(Appointed on 29 June 2022)
- **Mdm Zuraidah Abdullah**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Yayasan MENDAKI
- **Mr Anbarasu s/o Rajendran**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Singapore Indian Development Association
- **Mr Mohksin Bin Mohd Rashid**  
Executive Director  
Association of Muslim Professionals
- **Ms Yvonne Pereira**  
2nd Vice-President  
The Eurasian Association, Singapore
- **Mr Sarjit Singh s/o Sarmukh Singh, BBM(L)**  
District Councillor  
Central Singapore Community Development Council
- **Mr Azman Bin Mohd Ariffin**  
District Councillor  
North East Community Development Council

## ADVISER

**Mr Gerald Belandran Singham, BBM(L)**  
Global Vice-Chair & ASEAN CEO  
Dentons Rodyk & Davidson LLP

## TREASURER

**Mr Pok Cheng Chong**

- **Mr Goh Peng Hong, BBM**  
District Councillor  
North West Community Development Council
- **Mr Abbas Ali Mohamed Irshad**  
District Councillor  
South East Community Development Council
- **Mr Christopher Gordon**  
District Councillor  
South West Community Development Council
- **Ms Jennifer Yin Ling**
- **Mr Puvan Ariaratnam**  
Project Director  
Education and Career Guidance  
Ministry of Education
- **Dr Mathew Mathews**  
Head of Social Lab  
Principal Research Fellow  
Institute of Policy Studies  
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy  
National University of Singapore
- **Mr Mohamed Nasim s/o Abdul Rahim, PBM**  
Vice Principal  
Marsiling Secondary School
- **Ms Susanna Kulatissa**  
Creative Director  
So Drama! Entertainment
- **Ms Jennifer Lewis**  
Corporate Adviser  
Philanthropy and Advocacy  
Temasek Trust



# EMPOWERING YOUTH

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*In my years with OPSG, I have been able to make better sense of the environment that I live in through the honest conversations that I have with participants, volunteers and staff. These conversations cover the intersectionality of race, religion, gender roles and equality. They've helped broaden my perspective on life and given me insights on how to improve myself. Furthermore, in a world full of uncertainties, we cannot afford to lose our compassion and empathy towards others. With that in mind, I hope to contribute more to the conversations in my community and be an advocate for equality in Singapore.*

**– Muhamad Hidayat Bin Muhamad Akasah**

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# HarmonyWorks! Conference 2022

## Kampung 2.0: Weaving Multiple Identities, Forging Common Ground

HarmonyWorks! Conference is one of OPSG's signature programmes that provides a platform for post-secondary students to exchange personal experiences and discuss inter-racial and inter-religious issues in Singapore. The 17th edition of the conference, themed "Kampung 2.0: Weaving Multiple Identities, Forging Common Ground", took place at ITE College Central on 24 July 2022. A total of 159 participants from 41 educational institutions and community groups participated in the conference, which included breakout discussions as well as youth presentations and a dialogue session.

28 advocates from OPSG stepped up to scope the conference theme and discussion topics. They were also involved in outreach efforts and facilitating discussions. OPSG held two capacity-building sessions for the advocates and facilitators to lead the breakout discussions. During the conference, advocates and facilitators engaged in thought

provoking conversations with participants on three topics: "Intergenerational perspectives", "Singaporean from the inside out", and "Balancing cultural sensitivities". Participants shared personal experiences and explored ways to address current gaps.

A key highlight of the conference was the engagement with Guest of Honour, Mr Lawrence Wong, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, on difficult and heartfelt issues. DPM Wong gave an opening speech and engaged in a dialogue with the youths. The candid session was moderated by Management Committee Member, Mdm Rahayu Mahzam.

Participants expressed that the conference provided a safe space to share their personal experiences, thoughts and concerns candidly. They also felt that they were able to challenge prejudicial views and be empathetic towards sensitivities relating to race and religion.





“

The event was eye-opening because it provided a safe space for sensitive topics such as culture, religion, generation gaps, stereotypes, and race to be discussed. Personal stories about our encounters with casual racism were also shared. I managed to network with people who have differing perspectives on the topic discussed, I look forward to participating in more events like this and broadening my horizons.

- **Ovwiyaah Sri**, Participant

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“

Sensitively discussing issues of race and religion is no mean feat but the facilitators and participants at this year's Conference managed to engage one another on issues varying from intergenerational perspectives on racism, to navigating cancel culture. Through the conference, our facilitators and participants jointly created not just safe spaces, but also brave spaces for conversation around these sensitive issues.

- **Terence Tan Wei Ting**, Chief Facilitator

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# Explorations in Ethnicity

## Basic Course

OPSG's Explorations in Ethnicity (EiE) Basic Course is designed to promote inter-ethnic relations and dispel misconceptions surrounding race, using experiential learning techniques. Through facilitated discussions and activities, participants engage in honest discourse on ethnicity in a multi-racial setting, while exploring the dynamics of cross-cultural relations.

In the past year, a total of 116 participants from various institutions, including Republic Polytechnic, Jurong-Pioneer Junior College, Victoria School, and youth groups from Alliance for Action and Yayasan MENDAKI, attended the EiE Basic Course. As part of their training, OPSG youth advocates who are involved in the OnePeople.sg Model United Nations (OPMUN) Conference also attended the programme. The conference conducted with our respective partners received positive feedback from participants, who appreciated the experiential conversations challenging racial stereotypes and prejudices.

“

*The course opened up my mind to the experiences of people from other races. I also learned about some of the stereotypes attached to different groups of people. Moving forward, I will correct my family members if they make some false remarks about certain races/religions.*

- **Chua Xin En**, Participant,  
Jurong Pioneer Junior College

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“

*I have learnt and understood better the concept of Racial Harmony in Singapore. I find that the course is meaningful and useful for youths as it allows me to share my experience and views on race relations and harmony in a safe space.*

- **Jessica Tan**, Participant,  
Alliance for Action Volunteer

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# Explorations in Ethnicity

## Facilitator Course

The Explorations in Ethnicity (EiE) Facilitator Course aims to equip participants with the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience to conduct difficult conversations on race relations. They also learn to create a safe space for learning about each other. The course follows a peer-to-peer engagement model, where graduates of our EiE Basic Course are trained as facilitators if they wish to contribute further.

Over the year, the course developed 135 new facilitators comprising youths from ITE College Central, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), and Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), as well as advocates of our OPSG Model United Nations (OPMUN) Conference, and working adults from diverse backgrounds. Following the engagements, some of the facilitators from SIT and NP led engagements with their peers. Some of our trained facilitators from ITE College Central also went on to facilitate the group discussions at HarmonyWorks! Conference 2022.

“

*I learnt how stories and experiences can be a pivoting point for dialogue. The facilitation framework covered during the course, which included questioning techniques, is also useful. After attending the course, I hope to be more conscious of my implicit biases moving forward*

**- Daryll Ng, Participant,**  
Singapore Institute of Technology

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*“The session taught me how to voice out my opinions. At the same time, it also taught me how to listen to others and affirm their inputs. Moving forward, I hope that I get opportunities to volunteer so that I am able to learn more from the experience.”*

**- Qashrina, Participant,**  
ITE College Central

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# OnePeople.sg Model United Nations Conference 2022



The OPSG Model United Nations (OPMUN) Conference is a unique youth-for-youth initiative that simulates UN Committees and explores policy issues related to race and religion in Singapore. The 8th edition of OPMUN, themed “Champions of Society,” took place from 8 to 11 December 2022 at Victoria School, involving 306 participants and 40 volunteers from 51 schools. The conference emphasised youth leadership along with the academic rigour of debating policy issues impacting race and religion.

Guest of Honour, Ms Indranee Rajah, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office and Second Minister for Finance and National Development, engaged participants in a dialogue on the key challenges confronting race relations and the role of youth in tackling racism and preserving racial harmony.



“  
*These are not the kinds of conversation you would have outside, so having the space for these questions and answers was good.*  
– **Anika Suganthuraj**, Participant,  
Jurong Pioneer Junior College  
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*I enjoyed the IRO dialogue as it was very nice to see different religious leaders having mutual/common beliefs and ideas.*

- **Muhammad Zaki Bin Rozaimi**, Participant,  
Tampines Meridian Junior College

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Leading up to the conference, youth volunteers were trained in facilitation skills and subsequently moderated discussions with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and religious leaders to broaden participants’ understanding of key tenets of diverse faiths in Singapore. The youth volunteers also championed five small-scale advocacy projects on inclusion, cross-cultural friendships, microaggressions and cultural heritage and practices, engaging fellow youths.

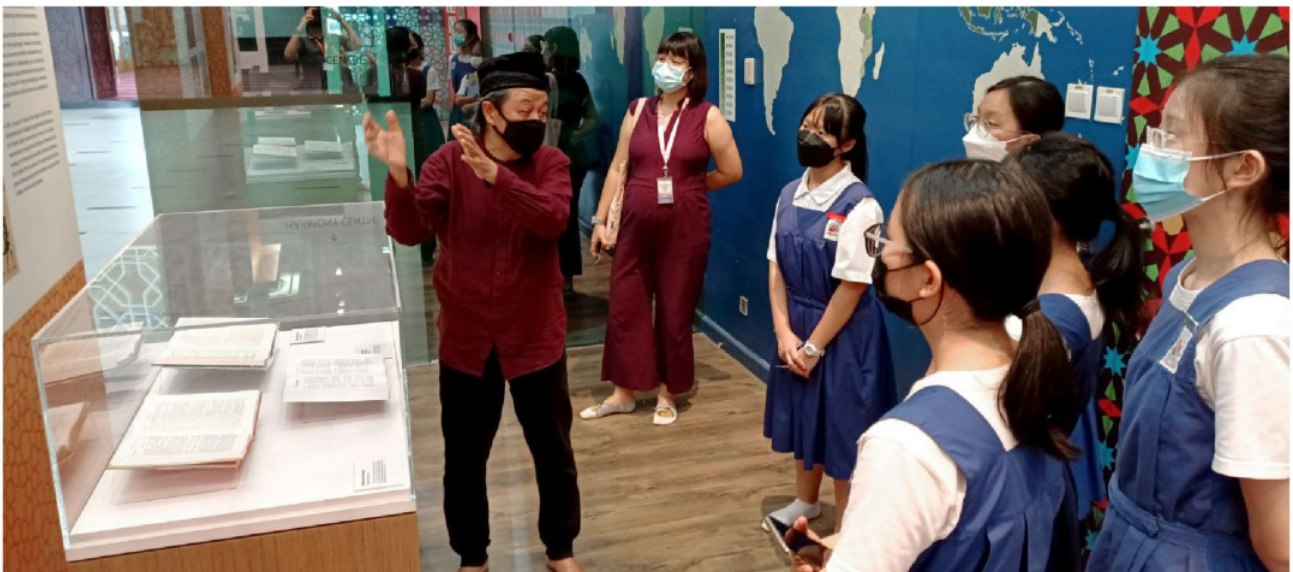
Participants found OPMUN to be an enriching experience, with some past participants joining the secretariat and chairing team for next year’s edition.



## CultureScope

CultureScope is a narrative-based learning journey that offers participants a safe setting to widen their understanding about Singapore’s diverse cultural and religious landscape. On 5 July 2022, OPSG organised a CultureScope session for CHIJ ST Nicholas Girls’ School. Led by the school’s Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) Department, the physical journey was attended by 92 CCE student representatives and CCA leaders who visited 5 religious organisations, comprising the Harmony Centre @ An-Nahdhah Mosque, Chesed El Synagogue, Gurdwara Sahib Yishun, Toa Payoh Seu Teck Sean Tong, and Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery.

The programme was well-received, with participants benefitting from hearing the experiences of others and gaining multiple perspectives. A Journey Map was created, featuring photos and quotes that illustrated aspects of the learning journey that resonated with the participants. This was used to reflect on their experiences. The map served as a record of all the touch points and accompanying emotions encountered during the journey.





# BUILDING BRIDGES

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*Volunteering with OPSG showed me how grassroots efforts can be made to create individual impact that can eventually snowball into a community movement. It gave me the opportunity to learn about new cultures and religions, and interact with like-minded people who want to strive for inter-racial harmony. As a student studying International Relations, it has been incredible to see all the theories I have learnt in class in action with the volunteers here. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to learn about different cultures with other like-minded individuals who want to do their part in promoting inter-racial harmony!*

**– Potdar Sakshi Sushrut**

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# Community Leaders' Conference 2022

## Keeping Harmony@Work

OPSG's biennial Community Leaders' Conference (CLC) aims to engage community leaders, academics and practitioners on current trends and developments pertaining to race relations in Singapore. Since its inception, the CLC has served as a key capacity-building platform to discuss as well as explore ideas, strategies and best practices on issues impacting our social fabric.

OPSG partnered with Institute of Policy Studies to address critical gaps concerning workplace diversity in recent years and extended CLC 2022 to employers and HR practitioners and agencies involved in workplace diversity. The theme for the conference, held on 28 May 2022, "Keeping Harmony@Work" featured a presentation on trends and survey findings on race relations, particularly tackling issues of workplace discrimination. The presentation was made by Dr Mathew Mathews, Head of Social Lab and Principal Research Fellow at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) and member of the OPSG Management Committee.

The conference kicked off with an address by OnePeople.sg Chairman, Dr Janil Puthuchery, followed by a panel discussion moderated by Christopher Gordon, OPSG Management Committee member. The panel members were Faith Li, General Manager for Tripartite Alliance for Fair & Progressive Employment Practices (TAFEP), Victor Mills, Chief Executive of the Singapore International Chamber of Commerce, and Shamil Zainudin, a Research Associate with IPS specialising in applied ethnography. The conference concluded with an enriching dialogue with Guest of Honour, Mr Koh Poh Koon, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment & Ministry of Manpower.

The conference attracted about 230 community leaders, employers, HR practitioners, policymakers, youth leaders as well as scholars, who engaged in discussions on workplace discrimination relating to race and religion. The discussions highlighted the need for education and engagement beyond proposed legislative measures to strengthen workplace harmony. The themes explored during the different segments included adopting fair HR practices based on merit, pursuing initiatives to enhance intercultural understanding, and fostering a positive workplace culture that advances values of equality, diversity and inclusion.



# Building Capabilities of Racial and Religious Harmony Circles

## Capacity Building Workshop on Mediation

The Mediation Workshop in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY), served to equip leaders and members of the Racial and Religious Harmony Circles (HC) with the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence to mediate inter-ethnic and inter-religious issues at the community level. During the workshop, participants were taught about the strategies and approaches to achieving peaceful dispute resolution and improving relationships within the community.

OPSG organised two sessions of the Mediation Workshop on 11 February and 4 March 2023. These sessions were held at the Supreme Court with 43 leaders and members of the HCs taking part. The workshops assessed their readiness and competence in resolving community-level conflicts using a capacity development framework jointly created by OPSG and the Singapore Mediation Centre. Participants gained valuable skills, enabling them to effectively fulfil their roles as mediators. By the end of the two workshops, the majority of participants had demonstrated proficiency in mediation techniques and were well-prepared to handle community disputes.



“

*I have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge for mediating disputes on the frontline through this course. The mediation model was particularly useful, as it can be applied to a variety of cases at the community level.*

**- Zuraimi Bin Abdul Basheer,**  
Bukit Batok East Harmony Circle

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## Capacity Building Workshop on Facilitation

OPSG, in collaboration with MCCY, organised the Facilitation Workshop to equip HC leaders and members with the knowhow to address sensitive issues surrounding race and religion at the community level. A total of 21 leaders and members attended the workshop on 25 February and 18 March 2023. The participants found the workshop to be effective and relevant. The HC members were evaluated at the end of the session based on a capacity building framework jointly conceptualised by OPSG and Facilitators Network Singapore.



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*The trainers were generous in their sharing and helped us to discover our blind spots. They provided realistic scenarios and role plays which helped us to crystallise our thoughts and apply what we learnt. With the skills that I picked up, I feel more confident now if I were to be called upon to facilitate difficult conversations over race and religion. The session exceeded all my expectations and the Saturday was truly well spent. I'm so glad I signed up.*

**- Nicholas Cheong,**  
Marine Parade Harmony Circle

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# Engaging People's Association

## Partnership with PA MESRA

OnePeople.sg and PA MESRA co-organised an Online CultureScope session on Saturday, 23 April 2022, with Maarof Mosque as the host. The Ramadan Edition of the session brought together 20 tertiary students who gained insights into Islamic religious beliefs, practices and values, with a focus on the Muslim holy fasting month.

The session featured quizzes that allowed the students to test their understanding of the topic, followed by a heartfelt conversation on the significance of fasting in Islam and how

Muslims observe it during Ramadan. The students had the opportunity to hear personal experiences of fasting both in Singapore and overseas.

In addition to the informative session, the students also participated in facilitated discussions that explored shared experiences and values. The session provided an enriching and interactive experience for the students, promoting intercultural understanding and appreciation.



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*I found the sharing by Masjid Maarof most engaging and informative as they were able to share three different viewpoints: Fasting overseas (in Jordan), fasting as a Singaporean, and experiences as a staff working in Masjid Maarof.*

**- Mushira Sharlin, Participant**

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# Partnering Community Development Councils

## Cultural Learning Journey

OPSG and the CDCs collaborated to organise customised narrative-based Cultural Learning Journeys in different districts, where participants visited various religious places of worship to gain a deeper understanding of Singapore's diverse ethnic and faith communities.

Two "HarmoNE" trails were organised by OPSG in collaboration with North East CDC (NE CDC) on 18 June and 20 August 2022, with a total of 84 participants from the district attending. The sessions were hosted by Sengkang Methodist Church and Fo Guang Shan Temple.

On 3 December 2022, OPSG partnered with South East CDC (SE CDC) to organise a Learning Journey to St Patrick's Chapel. This Learning Journey was attended by

39 of SE CDC's Youth Ambassadors as part of their annual Racial Harmony Youth Ambassador Programme and their "Celebration of Festivals" initiative.

On January 14, 2023, OPSG partnered with South West CDC (SW CDC) for an Experiential Learning Journey to the Baha'i Centre. The program was attended by 11 participants from the South West district who gained a better appreciation and understanding of the key tenets of the Baha'i faith.

The curated journeys were well-received by participants. Majority of the participants found the sessions insightful. They expressed that the sessions helped them appreciate commonalities and personal narratives shared by the respective faith leaders.



# Engaging Educators

## Regardless of Race Dialogues in Collaboration with MOE

In conjunction with Racial Harmony Month in July, OPSG held a series of engagements with educators from various institutions to deepen education and engagement on key issues impacting race relations.

About 1,000 educators from secondary and post-secondary institutions participated in the “Regardless of Race” dialogues over two sessions, jointly organised by OPSG and Ministry of Education (MOE). The session with secondary school educators took place on 1st July 2022 and was joined by

guest panel members Dr Mohamad Maliki, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office and Second Minister for Education & Foreign Affairs, and OPSG’s Management Committee Member, Mr Christopher Gordon. On 6 July 2022, Dr Janil Puthuchery, Chairman OPSG was the guest speaker for the webinar session with post-secondary educators at Pre-U and JC levels. The dialogues explored personal experiences, current trends as well as new challenges and ways to foster safe space conversations on contemporary issues.



## Engagement with Madrasah School Leaders

In partnership with the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS), OPSG also held an online dialogue with heads of the Madrasahs on 25 July with Dr Janil Puthucheary, Chairman OPSG anchoring the session. The conversation was robust with passionate views from the Madrasah educators and

leaders on issues such as developing empathy towards other races and religions. The session also brought forth potential avenues and collaborations to shape meaningful cross-cultural experiences for both youths and educators.

## CultureScope

On 1 November 2022, OPSG organised a CultureScope programme for educators from St. Patrick's School. The learning journey was led by the Staff Development and Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) Department of the school, and 71 educators took part. The educators visited five religious organisations comprising, Palelai Buddhist Temple, Sree Ramar Temple, St. Patrick Chapel, Masjid Kampong Siglap, and Tampines Chinese Temple.

Educators found the programme beneficial in gaining a better understanding of various faiths, beliefs, and practices. They particularly appreciated the reflection and group discussion sessions which they felt could apply to group conversations and activities in the classroom.



# Partnering Religious Organisations

## HarmonyWorks! Circle

OPSG launched a new initiative called HarmonyWorks! Circle to raise awareness about religious diversity among youths from tertiary institutions. The programme aims to provide a safe platform for youths to understand religious identities, address misconceptions and explore commonalities and shared values across religions. The pilot initiative was conducted in collaboration with the Inter-Religious Organisation (IRO) Youth Committee and NUS Interfaith, themed "Religion and Me" and held in conjunction with NUS "mOSAic 2023 Fest."

The pilot involved 24 NUS students from diverse backgrounds sharing their relationship with religion in breakout groups facilitated by IRO Youth Committee members, Mr Shukul Raaj Kumar (Chairperson) and members, Phra Goh, Mr Don Basil Kannangara, Ustaz Ashraf Anwar, Mr Parvitar Singh and Master Benjamin Tan. This was followed by a panel dialogue moderated by Mr Mohamed Nasim, OPSG Management Committee Member, with IRO Youth representatives as panellists. The participants appreciated the connection with students from diverse faiths and valued the candid exchange.

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*"The sharing was very insightful for me as a first time Interfaith event attendee. While Singapore, being a diverse country, does offer opportunities to have conversations with people of other faiths, most conversations tend to be of the superficial variety, with deeper topics not being covered due to fear of censure. My biggest takeaway from the event was to have uncomfortable conversations with my friends from other faiths as without these, there would be no way for us to learn more from each other and truly accept one another."*

**- Brahm Preet Kaur, Participant**

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# Capability Building for Volunteers

## Volunteer Networking & Development

To continually engage our volunteers through the year, OPSG conducted 5 networking sessions for them to get together while learning from one another. More than 100 volunteers, new and experienced, were engaged in the sessions which included gatherings for the festivities like Deepavali and Chinese New Year. These sessions were organised by the volunteers themselves who took ownership over educating their peers.

On 31 March 2023, OPSG collaborated with South East Community Development Council to organise the Volunteer's Learning Journey Programme, Ramadan@Al-Ansar Mosque", in conjunction with the CDC's "Celebration of Festivals" initiative. The aim of the programme was to celebrate the holy month of Ramadan with volunteers, connecting them with the

wider community. The event was attended by 20 volunteers who came together to support the mosque in preparing and distributing porridge to congregants.

As part of our capacity building training for volunteers and youth leaders, OPSG also organised an Advocacy and Project Planning training session on 11 March 2023. The session was attended by 30 youth leaders from OPSG and students from Republic Polytechnic involved in OPSG's Youth Advocacy project. The training provided participants with an understanding of what advocacy means and equipped them with strategies and guidance to conceptualise, plan, and develop proposals to enhance race relations at school and community levels.



## Facilitator Development

OPSG provides our existing volunteer facilitators with further training opportunities, aiming to build their confidence to take on the role of lead facilitators for future events, further strengthening our capacity to serve the community.

Some of our facilitators attended a facilitation training on the use of a toolkit co-developed by the National Youth Council, The Whitehatters, and Bold at Work on 25 February 2023. They underwent a full day training which covered facilitation skills such as stacking and summarising, among others. The session also explained how the toolkit would be used to facilitate conversations on race and religion in Singapore.

On March 2023, OPSG organised a Facilitator Development Training as part of our ongoing efforts to enhance the capabilities of our volunteer facilitators. The training session aimed to equip participants with advanced skills, frameworks, techniques, and trigger activities that are essential for effective lead facilitators. Participants found both engagements particularly useful in their advocacy work.



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*The session was valuable and informative. I also really enjoyed the dynamics of the participants. I feel like this workshop has added some very positive momentum to what I try to accomplish as a competent facilitator. I would recommend this workshop to everyone who wants to help themselves or others as facilitators.*

- Hanisnah Kasmuri, Participant

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# BEYOND BORDERS

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*I became a facilitator through OPSG's Explorations in Ethnicity Programme. Since then, I have facilitated at schools, information sessions, as well as the HarmonyWorks! Conference. My experience volunteering with OPSG has helped me branch out and facilitate in interfaith events for initiatives across Singapore. I believe that when stories can be told and listened to, story tellers feel cathartic, and listeners understand and respect. Building these necessary foundations to discuss difficult issues and build social harmony gives me a sense of impact.*

**– Miguel Vera-Cruz**

”



# International Conference on Cohesive Societies (ICCS)

The second iteration of the International Conference on Cohesive Societies (ICCS) was held from 6 to 8 September 2022. This signature event was organised by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) and supported by MCCY. The conference brought together local and international thought leaders across academia, government, religious groups and the civic sector to share experiences and ideas as well as collaborate in rallying communities to enhance social cohesion.

To broaden engagement with the community, OPSG in partnership with RSIS and MCCY, for the second year running, organised a series of heartland engagements in line with the themes of the ICCS. OPSG leveraged on the three key thrusts of the ICCS; Faith, Identity and Cohesion to develop the post-conference public engagement tracks which included a Community Exploration Series and Community Dialogue. These engagements nurtured cross-sector collaborations, robust discourse and rich community reflections.



## Community Explorations

OPSG organised 19 Community Explorations from 3 September to 19 November 2022 as part of ICCS 2022, with the aim of deepening intercultural and interreligious understanding among delegates from the main conference and the general public. The programme had a total of 468 participants attending various Community Explorations at faith institutions gaining insights into key tenets, values and perspectives of faith communities and interfaith experiences through ground-up exchanges with community groups and faith representatives.

During the series, OPSG collaborated with 15 religious organisations and 8 new community groups who hosted or participated in the series. The programme allowed OPSG to build new relationships and strengthen existing ones with these organisations.

### Hosting/Supporting Partners

- Bahai Centre
- Buddha Tooth Relic Temple and Museum
- Cathedral of the Good Shepherd
- Eunos Constituency Office
- Geylang Serai Harmony Circle
- Harmony Centre @ An-Nahdhah Mosque
- Kampong Glam Constituency Office
- Keat Hong Harmony Circle
- Kembangan Chai-Chee Harmony Circle
- Koothanallur Association
- Lorong Koo Chye Sheng Hong Temple Association
- Maghain Aboth Synagogue
- Marine Parade Harmony Circle
- Nagore Dargah
- Palelai Buddhist Temple
- Sengkang East Constituency Office
- Silat Road Sikh Temple
- Singapore Jain Religious Society
- Soon Thian Keing (Tua Kongsi) Ltd
- Sri Sivan Temple
- Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple
- Sultan Mosque
- Zion Bishan Bible-Presbyterian Church

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*I have always known that different religions have different practices and beliefs but I had never taken the steps to find out more. I wanted to learn more about the Christian faith, like what they do during their Sunday Prayers. My greatest takeaway is that even within a religion, there may be subgroups that follow different practices. We need to be respectful of their ideologies and beliefs. I have come to realise and embrace that there are similarities between my own religion which is Islam, and Christianity.”*

**- Saarah Hidayah,**  
Participant at Zion Bishan Bible-Presbyterian Church

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“

*I wanted to learn about this group in society of which I knew almost nothing about. One thing I took away was the fact that diversity across ethnicity and religion doesn't end with the people but it interfaces with historical artefacts, architecture and even language. The different cultures influence one another in a bidirectional fashion; giving birth to a new culture, with its own practices and rituals.*

**- Jan Paolo Macapinlac Balagtas,**  
Participant at Nagore Dargah

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## Community Dialogue

OPSG organised a Community Dialogue on 5 September 2022, in conjunction with the ICCS. Chairman OPSG, Dr Janil Puthuchery gave the opening remarks for this session themed “Building Bonds of Trust: Strategies, Narratives & Interventions”. The guest speakers - Dr Julian Hargreaves, Director of Research at The Woolf Institute, and Ms See Guat Kwee who is an author, facilitator, and board member of the Centre for Interfaith Understanding (CIFU) were joined by our moderator, Dr Mathew Mathews, Principal Research Fellow and the Head of the Social Lab at the Institute of Policy Studies, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore, and OPSG Management Committee Member.

More than 90 participants from around the globe joined us for this dialogue, spurring an exciting session. Dr Julian Hargreaves shared research findings on perceptions of diversity in the UK and a toolkit for impact measurement of programmes on racial harmony. From a personal perspective, Ms See Guat Kwee shared insights from her experience facilitating interfaith dialogues. The exchange during the dialogue ranged from the role of social media in pursuing racial harmony, the importance of interfaith dialogues with non-religious groups to potential ways to draw more youth into efforts on racial and interfaith harmony.

Participants found the dialogue to be beneficial, particularly the balanced perspectives shared by the guest speakers.

OPSG played a significant role in the post ICCS engagement in bringing together partners, activists and community and religious organisations to steer public discourse and deepen engagement on critical issues impacting social cohesion. The experience had also allowed OPSG to interface with local and international subject matter experts bringing across diverse views and connections.



# Community Dialogues in Collaboration with Partners

Together with 11 community partners, OPSG organised nine community dialogues between July 2022 and March 2023. These dialogues provided a platform for constructive discussions on sensitive issues and helped gather diverse perspectives on our ideals and aspirations.

OPSG Chairman, Dr Janil Puthuchery, and members of the OPSG Management Committee were key speakers for the dialogue sessions. Mdm Rahayu Mahzam, Mr Mohamed Irshad, Mr Christopher Gordon, Dr Mathew Mathews, and Mr Mohamed Nasim, were involved in individual engagements as Guest of Honour. In total, the dialogue series engaged 500 participants.

The dialogues covered a range of topics including racial classification, intergenerational perspectives, identity, majority privilege, local-migrant integration, and workplace discrimination. The sessions also involved a healthy exchange of ground experiences and considerations in policy making, as well as the role of meritocracy in Singapore's race relations.

The dialogues also explored personal experiences, new challenges and collective action to foster safe space for

conversations on contemporary issues to bridge gaps. Feedback from the sessions was overwhelmingly positive, with participants finding the dialogues relevant and purposeful. The personal experiences shared by the speakers were particularly relatable to the participants. These dialogues also provided OPSG with an opportunity to engage participants in future initiatives and develop facilitators.

## Community Partners

- Eurasian Association
- hash.peace
- Humanist Society Singapore
- ITE College West
- NUS College
- NUS Ridge View Residential College
- Republic Polytechnic
- Roses of Peace
- Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations
- Singapore Indian Development Association
- Sikh Advisory Board





“

Through the dialogue, I learnt that it is important for every Singaporean, regardless of their background, to play our role in strengthening racial inclusivity and understanding as we move forward as a nation. I have also learnt more about some government policies which are in place to encourage racial diversity and strengthen racial harmony in Singapore.

- **Taro Toh Yu Hao**, Participant

“

The dialogue provided insightful discussion about various topics. The discussion on race relations in Singapore was particularly engaging and informative. The session was well-facilitated, and there was something for everyone.

- **Saatvik**, Participant

”



# Diversity at the Workplace

## Piloting the Workplace Diversity Programme

OPSG's joint studies with the Institute of Policy Studies in 2013 and 2018 revealed a rise in perception of workplace discrimination, particularly by minority races in areas such as job applications and job promotions. Given these findings and trending issues concerning workplace discrimination, a taskforce was set up to develop strategic interventions, advised by Chairman OPSG, Dr Janil Puthuchery and chaired by Management Committee Members, Mr Christopher Gordon and Ms Jennifer Lewis.

A series of consultations were held with Ministry of Manpower, TAFEP, Singapore Human Resource Institute, Institute of Human Resource Professionals, Singapore International Chamber of Commerce, Institute of Policy Studies, better.sg and training providers to better understand the landscape surrounding workplace diversity and gaps that need to be addressed. OPSG launched the Workplace Diversity Programme (WDP) pilot on November 25, 2022. It was attended by 25 HR executives and managers from 12 different organisations. OPSG collaborated with better.sg and speakers from four different faiths to tackle cultural and religious sensitivities at the workplace.

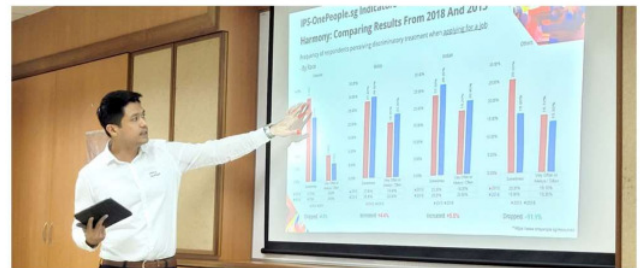
Divided into two segments, a gamification component facilitated by founder of better.sg, Mr Gaurav Keerthi and an interfaith dialogue, the session received positive feedback from participants who found the game play to be a fun and engaging way to introduce concerns and difficult issues of ethnic and religious diversity at the workplace and the need for empathy.

Participants also valued the sharing by moderator, Mr Christopher Gordon, OPSG Management Committee Member and guest speakers from diverse faiths, Rev Dr Alby Yip, Master Benjamin Tan, Mr Parwinder Singh, and Mr Faris Ridzuan for their candid and relatable examples in tackling issues relating to religious insensitivity. Following the pilot, OPSG will be looking to conduct focus groups discussions with organisations who are keen to further develop the programme and broaden its reach.

## Townhall Dialogue @ BHP

OPSG partnered with BHP Singapore to hold a townhall dialogue in conjunction with their inaugural launch of the Employees Beyond Race (EmBRace) initiative; a newly established Employee Resource Group by BHP that seeks to enhance equality, diversity and inclusion at the workplace.

The townhall dialogue that took place on 21 March 2023 was a hybrid session where Guest Speaker Dr Mathew Mathews, Head of Social Lab, Principal Research Fellow Institute of Policy Studies, and Management Committee Member of OnePeople.sg, shared key findings from his research on issues revolving around cultural diversity and workplace discrimination. He further touched on unconscious bias, personal anecdotes and strategies to build an inclusive workplace culture citing leadership from the top, listening posts and sensitivity training as key constructs. The lively dialogue engaged 100 employees from diverse ethnic groups and nationalities setting the stage for BHP's EmBRace advocates to further their cause.

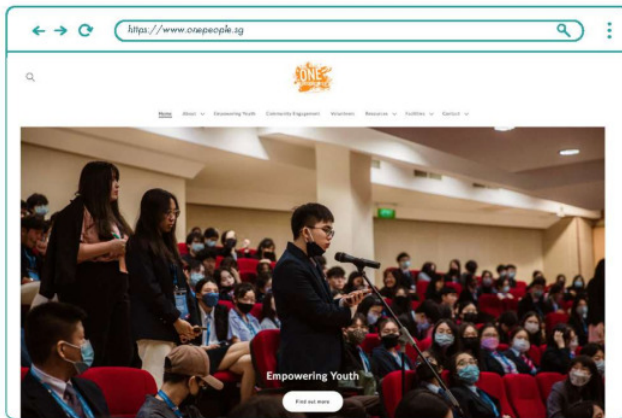




# Social Media Engagement

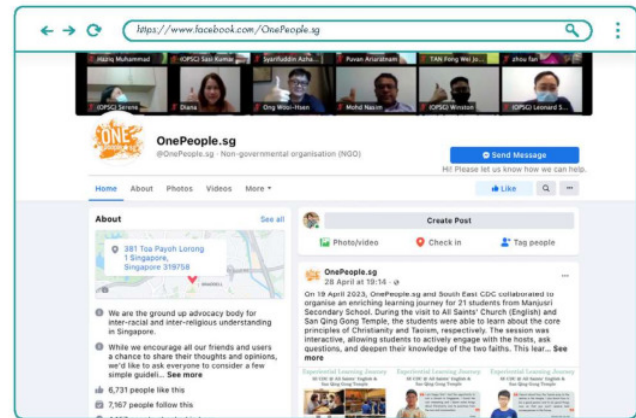
## OPSG Website

In addition to providing information on our programmes, our newly refurbished website also features useful race-related resources, such as the Singapore Ethnic Mosaic Education Series, as well as avenues for volunteer recruitment and engagement. Our booking platform allows individuals in search of a venue for meetings and training courses to rent our facilities at affordable rates.



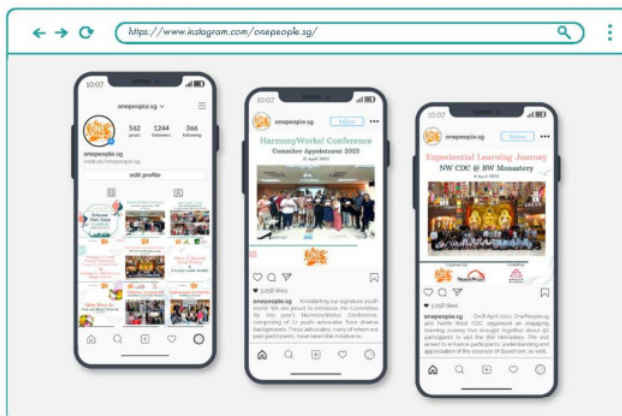
## OPSG Facebook

Facebook is one of OPSG's main platforms to engage the public on our latest updates with about 7,000 followers. In addition, Facebook provides a useful platform to post our responses to race-related issues and share inspiring stories from our very own advocates.



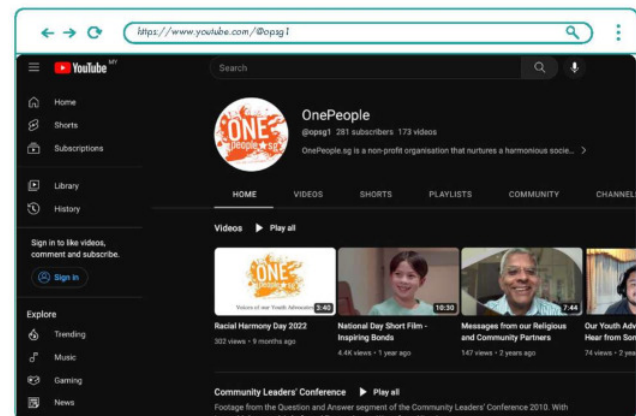
## OPSG Instagram

OPSG also uses Instagram to connect with younger audiences through regular updates on programmes, events, and cultural-related facts. Our Instagram account has gained over 1,200 followers, including potential partners with a similar mission. This platform allows for more direct connections through eye-catching images, polls, and short video clips.



## OPSG YouTube Channel

OPSG's YouTube channel features a wide selection of videos related to race relations in Singapore, including dialogues, interviews, and short films. The channel also serves as a resource video library for educational purposes.



# Media Highlights

“

*During my journey to try out and explore various volunteering opportunities, I found OPSG most aligned to my love for heritage, culture and history. Together with my passion for sharing and nurturing younger generations, volunteering with OPSG gives me the opportunity to be with myself in my most natural form. OPSG has many development opportunities for its own volunteers on top of its beneficiaries and I hope to grow with them together into the future - upskilling myself, challenging my own assumptions (including capabilities and knowledge) as well as helping others through the same journey.*

**- Claire Khek**

”



每年平均接379起 TAFEP：职场歧视投诉报多与国籍年龄性别有关

陈欣 / 综合报道
文 / 王耀
发布日期: 2022年9月25日 5:00 AM



卫生部部长高文谦(左)与人力部副部长李俊承(右)在讨论职场歧视投诉。

近年针对种族和宗教的职场歧视案已不常见，但种族和宗教关系的调查也显示，许多民众仍担忧

卫生部部长高文谦(左)与人力部副部长李俊承(右)在讨论职场歧视投诉，但多数和重

他昨天在种族和谐资源中心 (OnePeople.sg) 与来自少数族裔的职场人士在论坛上交流，包括



人力部副部长李俊承(左)与卫生部部长高文谦(右)在讨论职场歧视投诉。

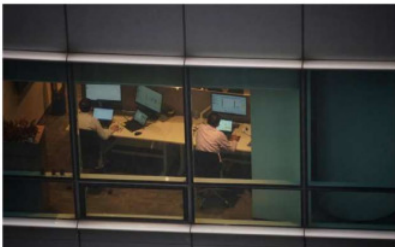
人力部副部长李俊承(左)与卫生部部长高文谦(右)在讨论职场歧视投诉。

Singapore must protect its common spaces, says DPM Wong

Wong said that common spaces are essential for social cohesion and that the government must ensure these spaces are protected and accessible to all citizens.

THE STRAITS TIMES

Formalising HR practices can fight workplace racism: Panellists at race forum



Singapore has been making progress in tackling workplace discrimination, says DPM Wong.

SINGAPORE - Companies should have human resource processes in place to correct people's subconscious ethnic biases which can result in racist and discriminatory hiring practices.

黄循财：我国须维护共同空间 保持多元社会凝聚力

黄循财在演讲中强调，共同空间对于维护多元社会的凝聚力至关重要。他呼吁政府和企业共同努力，确保这些空间对所有公民开放。

黄循财指出，随着社会的发展，人们的生活方式也在不断变化。政府需要关注到不同群体的需求，特别是在公共空间的使用上。

黄循财还提到，共同空间的维护不仅仅是物理空间的问题，更是文化和社会认同的问题。通过共同空间的建设和使用，可以增强不同族裔之间的理解和尊重。

Have balanced conversations on social media, no need to shut down opposing views: Indraneel

Indraneel Rajak 在论坛上表示，在社交媒体上进行平衡的对话非常重要，不需要关闭反对意见。他认为这有助于建立更加包容和理性的网络环境。

Indraneel 还指出，社交媒体平台应该承担起更多的社会责任，通过算法调整等方式，为用户提供更多元化的观点，避免信息茧房的形成。

The floor was open to participants after both the panel discussions were raised, including that there may be more...

diversity and inclusive practices are good for business and young people are not going to put up with...

职场歧视投诉 每年平均379起

劳资政公平与良好雇佣联盟从2014年至去年上半年，平均每年接获379起涉及职场歧视的投诉，但多数和雇员国籍、年龄和性别有关，因个人残疾、种族和宗教信仰的歧视较少。

资源中心与新加坡政策研究所联办的社区领袖大会上致辞时说，知道有少数族裔持续感受本身在职场上遭差别对待，包括雇主倾向聘请特定种族，因此有必要建立一个强有力的机制，来维护职场公平，并解决长期可能出现的问题。



人力部副部长李俊承(左)与卫生部部长高文谦(右)在讨论职场歧视投诉。

IPS research from 2013 and 2019 showed that about one third of minority race respondents, including Malays and Indians, felt discriminated against at work, said IPS principal research fellow Mathew Mathews, who opened the conference with a presentation on IPS' research into trends on race and perceptions of discrimination in Singapore.

These perceptions extend to the areas of hiring and promotion.

A14 SINGAPORE

S'poreans must learn to have balanced conversations online: Indraneel

Indraneel Rajak said that online conversations should be balanced and respectful. He emphasized the importance of listening to different perspectives and avoiding inflammatory language.

Indraneel also mentioned that social media platforms play a significant role in shaping public opinion. He called for greater transparency and accountability from these platforms.

Indraneel concluded his speech by encouraging everyone to engage in constructive dialogue. He believed that this is the key to resolving social issues and building a more harmonious society.

THE STRAITS TIMES

Have balanced conversations on social media, no need to shut down opposing views: Indraneel

Indraneel Rajak 在论坛上表示，在社交媒体上进行平衡的对话非常重要，不需要关闭反对意见。他认为这有助于建立更加包容和理性的网络环境。

Exchanging views on social media has become the norm, with people frequently being exposed to different, unfiltered and polarising views, which are perpetuated by algorithms that create echo chambers, she added on Thursday.

# Our Partners & Supporters

**Thank you for your partnership.  
We value your contributions and support.**

## FOUNDING MEMBERS

- Chinese Development Assistance Council
- Yayasan MENDAKI
- Singapore Indian Development Association
- The Eurasian Association
- Association of Muslim Professionals
- People's Association
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- North East Community Development Council
- North West Community Development Council
- South East Community Development Council
- South West Community Development Council

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- BW Monastery
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- Catholic Junior College
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- Central Sikh Temple
- Centre for Interfaith Understanding
- Channel NewsAsia
- Chesed-EL Synagogue
- Church of Divine Mercy
- Church of the True Light
- Covenant Evangelical Free Church
- Eunoia Junior College
- Federation of Indian Muslims
- Free Community Church
- Fo Guang Shan Temple
- Harmony Centre
- hash.peace
- Harmony in Diversity Gallery
- Heart of God Church
- Hindu Advisory Board
- Hindu Endowments Board
- Hong San See Temple
- Humanist Society of Singapore
- Institute of Human Resource Professionals
- Institute of Policy Studies (IPS)
- Institute of Technical Education College Central
- Institute of Technical Education College East
- Institute of Technical Education College West
- Interfaith Youth Circle, Singapore




- Inter-Religious Organisation, Singapore (IRO)
- Inter-Religious Organisation, Singapore (IRO) Youth Committee
- Jamiyah Singapore
- Jewish Welfare Board
- Jurong Pioneer Junior College
- Kampong Kapor Methodist Church
- Kampong Lorong Buangkok
- Katong Sikh Temple
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- Madrasah Irsyad Zuhri Al-Islamiah
- Madrasah Wak Tanjong Al-Islamiah
- Maghain Aboth Synagogue
- Majlis Pusat Singapura
- Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura
- Malay Heritage Centre
- Malay Youth Literary Association
- Masjid Al-Ansar
- Masjid Al-Ba'alwie
- Masjid En-Naeem
- Masjid Al-Islah
- Masjid Al-Istighfar
- Masjid Al-Khadijah
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- Masjid Jamae
- Masjid Kampong Siglap
- Masjid Khadijah
- Masjid Maarof
- Masjid Muhajirin
- Masjid Sultan
- Masjid Yusof Ishak
- Mendaki Club
- Millennia Institute
- Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Home Affairs
- Ministry of Manpower
- Modern Montessori International Group
- Mothership.sg
- Muslim Collective (MCO)
- Muslim Converts' Association Singapore
- Muslim Youth Forum
- My Saviour's Church
- Nagore Dargah Indian Muslim Heritage Centre
- Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts
- Nanyang Polytechnic
- Nanyang Technological University
- National Council of Churches of Singapore
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- SINDA Youth Club
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- Singapore Buddhist Fellowship
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- Singapore Ceylon Tamils' Association
- Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre
- Singapore Discovery Centre
- Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations


- Singapore Gujarati Society
- Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan
- Singapore Institute of Management
- Singapore Institute of Technology
- Singapore Jain Religious Society
- Singapore Khalsa Association
- Singapore Kindness Movement
- Singapore Malayalee Association
- Singapore Management University
- Singapore Mediation Centre
- Singapore Polytechnic
- Singapore Sports School
- Singapore Taoist Federation
- Singapore University of Technology and Design
- Singapore Yu Huang Gong (Taoist Mission)
- SMU Apolitical Society
- Soka Gakkai Singapore
- Soon Thian Keing (Tua Kongsi)
- Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Singapore
- Sree Maha Mariamman Temple
- Sree Narayana Mission (Singapore)
- Sri Krishnan Temple
- Sri Senpaga Vinayagar Temple
- Sri Siva Krishna Temple
- Sri Sivan Temple
- Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple
- Sri Thendayuthapani Temple
- Sri Vairavimada Kaliyamman Temple
- St Andrew's Cathedral
- St Andrew's Junior College
- St Joseph's Church
- St Patrick's Chapel
- St Patrick's School
- Tamil Language Council
- Tamils Representative Council
- Temasek Junior College
- Temasek Polytechnic
- Thekchen Choling Tibetan Buddhist Temple
- The Hidden Good
- The Intan
- The Straits Times
- The WhiteHatters
- Thian Hock Keng Temple
- Thye Hua Kwan Moral Society
- Toa Payoh Seu Teck Sean Tong
- Toteboard
- Tripartite Alliance for Fair & Progressive Employment Practices
- United Temple
- Victoria Junior College
- We Are Majulah
- Yishun Innova Junior College
- Young Sikh Association
- Youth Corps Singapore
- Youth of Darul Arqam
- Zion Bishan Bible-Presbyterian Church








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