



28 July 2023

Media Release

New Civic Conversation Toolkit on Local-Foreign Relations to be ready by end-2023

Over 3,000 students in ITE, polytechnics, and universities expected to use NYC's Civic Conversation Toolkits by 2025

The National Youth Council (NYC) will be developing a new civic conversation toolkit to deepen understanding amongst local and foreign youths and dispel commonly held misconceptions. The new toolkit, the second in a series of three Civic Conversation resources, will be complemented by facilitation workshops with youths from youth organisations and educational institutions to equip them with the skillsets to hold constructive conversations on local-foreign relations.

2 Senior Parliamentary Secretary (SPS), Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth & Ministry of Social and Family Development Mr Eric Chua shared about the new toolkit on the side-lines of a dialogue¹ with over 70 Institutes of Technical Education (ITE) students. The session also included a workshop using NYC's first Civic Conversations toolkit, *Beneath the Surface*², to initiate discussions and reflections on race and religion issues as part of Racial Harmony Month. Over 1,000 polytechnic students have learnt how to confidently engage in constructive conversations on race and religion issues since its launch in November 2022. In the next two years, 2,000 more youths are expected to use NYC's civic conversation toolkits³ through workshops and dialogues and acquire the necessary skillsets to discuss sensitive issues.

What Local and Foreign Youths Think of One Another

3 In a poll with 700 Singaporean and non-Singaporean youths, over 8 in 10 youths agreed that while local and foreign youths may have different perceptions of one another, there was at least one common area, primarily life experiences and challenges, which both Singaporean and non-Singaporean youths shared.

4 The workplace was the main source of interaction between local and foreign youths, where 6 in 10 had engaged in some form of conversation. Getting to know locals through close friends was the second source of interaction for foreign youths. For local youths, the neighbourhood was their second source of interaction with foreigners. More than half of both local and foreign youths polled nonetheless agreed that more interactions with one another would improve awareness of each other's challenges and deepen community bonds and understanding.

¹ *Beyond Differences: A Conversation on Race and Religion* is jointly organised with the three ITE colleges, SINDA Youth Division and MCI Reach.

² *Beneath The Surface* was developed in collaboration with Bold at Work and The Whitehatters.

³ Including the new Civic Conversation Toolkit on Local-Foreign relations.

Local Youth Sentiments on Foreigners' contributions to Singapore

5 Even though half of local youths thought foreigners tended to stick to their own circles and expressed concerns over competition for career and educational opportunities, they agreed that foreigners add to Singapore's overall cultural richness and economic competitiveness. Singaporean youths have also grown more open towards other nationalities working or studying in Singapore. Close to 7 in 10 youths agreed that Singapore should encourage people of other nationalities to work and study in here, an increase from 2019 when 6 out of 10 Singapore youths shared this sentiment.

6 Mr David Chua, Chief Executive Officer, NYC said "Our survey data shows that youths who have foreigner friends or more interaction opportunities with foreigners adopt a positive attitude towards local-foreigner relations and integration issues. The Civic Conversation toolkit is an additional resource for both local and foreign youths to meaningfully engage one another in their desire to move beyond tolerance and deepen mutual appreciation and acceptance."

Please refer to ANNEX A and B for the programme details and profiles for media interviews.

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About the National Youth Council

At NYC, we believe in a world where young people are respected and heard and have the ability to influence and make a difference in the world. Together with our partners, we develop future-ready youth who are committed to Singapore by instilling in them a heart for service, resilience, and an enterprising spirit. We acknowledge the diverse needs and aspirations of young Singaporeans and ensure our youth have opportunities to develop self-awareness, deepen community spirit, and be future-ready. We hear youth, we empower youth and are **HERE FOR YOUTH.**

Beyond Differences: A Conversation on Race and Religion

Date: Friday 28 July 2023

Time: 1pm to 4pm

Venue: **ITE College Central, Event Hall**
2 Ang Mo Kio Drive
Singapore 567720

**Media registration will be from 1.30pm at the Event Hall*

Time	Activity
2.00pm	Introduction and Context Setting
2.10pm	Opening remarks by SPS Eric Chua
2.15pm	Facilitated breakout discussions using NYC's Civic Conversations Toolkit on Race and Religion
3.00pm	Panel dialogue moderated by Haresh Tilani involving: - SPS Eric Chua - Mr Thambyrajah T
3.55pm	Wrap up by emcee

Youth profiles available for interview

<u>Details</u>	<u>Profile Description</u>
Queenie Leong Wei Ni Age: 22 Gender: Female Languages: English, Mandarin	Queenie is an accounting student at ITE Central College. She is also the vice-president for the peer support leaders
Rizki Naufal Bin Azhar Age: 19 Gender: Male Languages: English, Malay	Rizki is pursuing Visual Communications at ITE Central College. He is the vice-president for the peer support leaders
Riddhi Rajesh Rashiwala, Age: 17 Gender: Female Languages: English, Hindi and Gujarati	Rishi is pursuing Civil and Structural Engineering Design in ITE College East. She is the also part of the SINDA Youth Division.