

NEXTGEN STEWARD LEADERS SUMMIT: BRIDGING VALUES FOR TOMORROW
22 MARCH 2025, 8.45AM – 12.30PM, SUNTEC CITY CONVENTION CENTRE

On 22 March 2025, 234 youths from diverse backgrounds including youths from Secondary Schools, International Schools, Institutes of Higher Learning, and Universities gathered for the NextGen Steward Leaders Summit: Bridging Values for Tomorrow engagement co-organised by Stewardship Asia Centre (SAC) and the National Youth Council (NYC).

The session covered the following topics: (i) Introduction to steward leadership, (ii) Building a culture of shared values among fellow youths, and (iii) Creative resilience as a key value to drive continued success.

Segment: Welcome Address by Mr Rajeev Peshawaria, CEO, SAC

- Mr Peshawaria said that Artificial Intelligence (AI) had a growing impact on youths, with both positive and negative implications, through the handout below.

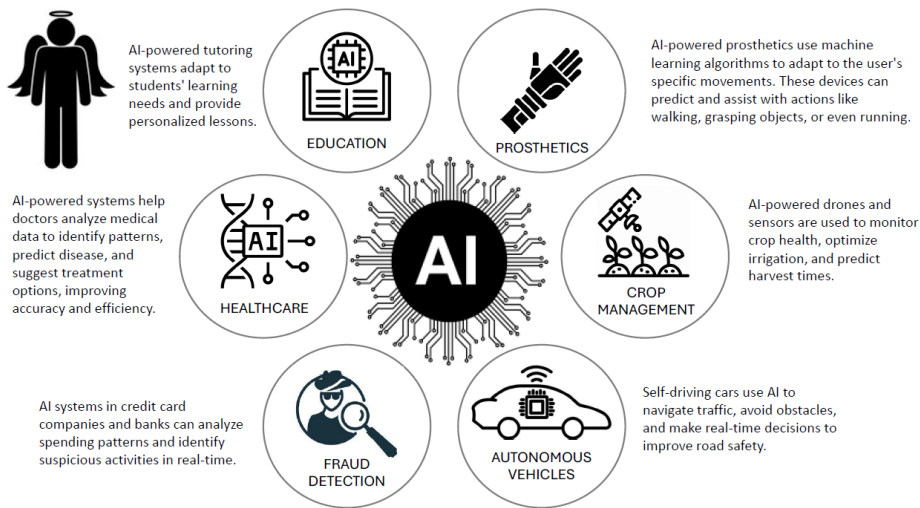


Image 1: Positive Implications of AI

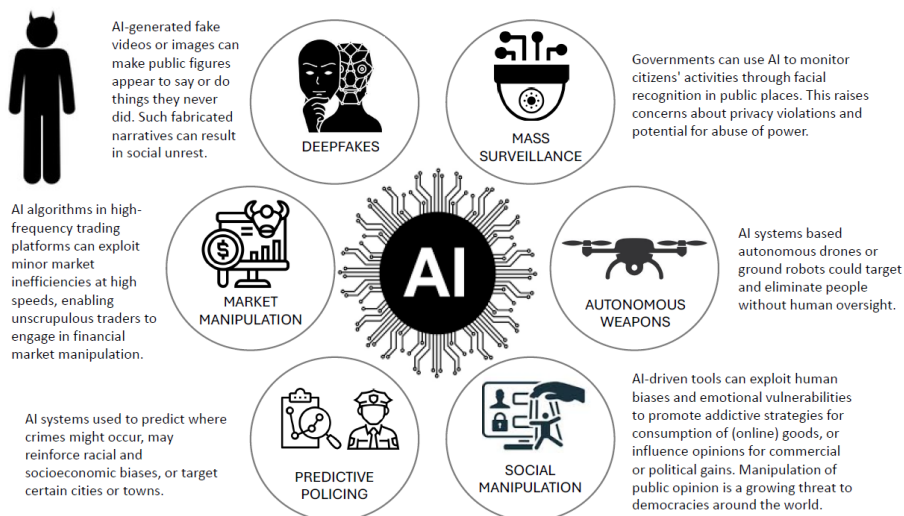


Image 2: Negative Implications of AI

- Mr Peshawaria said that AI was a double-edged sword, and its impact depended on how users chose to use such technology, and laws alone could not ensure the responsible use of AI.
- Mr Peshawaria encouraged youths to adopt a stewardship mindset which focuses on serving society and creating a better future. He shared six key traits of steward leaders: (i) commitment to creating a collective better future, (ii) understanding the interdependence of the world, (iii) focusing on long-term perspectives, (iv) taking ownership of existential challenges, (v) perseverance to innovate, and (vi) practice of ethical integrity.
- Mr Peshawaria shared the concept of the Integrity Ladder, which shows how individuals progress from acting without principles, to following basic rules, and finally to making ethical decisions that benefit others. He defined ethical integrity as the practice of using power with a steward leadership mindset.

Segment: Introduction to SG Youth Plan by Mr David Tay, Deputy Director, Youth Leadership & Engagement, NYC

- Mr Tay said that SG60 was an opportune time for Singaporeans to reflect on the nation's journey, aspire towards SG100 and take action to shape Singapore's future.
- Mr Tay said that NYC and its partners were embarking on a year-long series of engagements, one of which was the NextGen Steward Leaders Summit, with youths and stakeholders to develop the SG Youth Plan. He shared that the SG Youth Plan is an inclusive action blueprint to capture the hopes and aspirations of young Singaporeans, to build the future of Singapore they want to see by catalysing more opportunities, platforms and resources for collective action.
- Mr Tay added that steward leadership was crucial in developing Singapore's "Hardware"¹, and "Software"², that formed the basis for its current success. He encouraged youths to actively participate in available platforms to gain valuable experiences, broaden their perspectives, and connect with resources and other like-minded individuals.

Segment: Fireside Chat on "Stewarding Future Leaders with Shared Values" with Mr Eric Chua, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, & Ministry of Social and Family Development moderated by Ms Joanna Soh, Chief Operating Officer, SAC

The moderator asked how the Government could help uphold the values of communalism over individualism.

- Mr Chua said that Singapore prioritised community needs before individual interests, and decisions were made by considering and respecting the collective viewpoint, while maintaining important social values.

The moderator observed that one in three youths faced mental health challenges and asked how issues like mental health and AI affected them, as well as the qualities and strengths of today's youths.

¹ "Hardware" refers to the country's infrastructure, such as, education, healthcare, security systems, the Singapore's economy and sustainability.

² "Software" refers to the country's social cohesion, the social fabric, the social compact, and the sense of hope and confidence that binds the nation together.

- Mr Chua said that youths today were well-informed of global issues affecting them. He said that youths were passionate about causes like climate change and social inequality and were taking active steps to create positive change in their communities.
- Mr Chua asked participants to consider current challenges and future opportunities, and balance optimism with realism while looking for ways to contribute meaningfully.
- A participants acknowledged that while AI would eliminate some jobs, it would also create new job opportunities such as prompt engineering. He also said that human skills would remain essential, especially in sectors like healthcare.
- Mr Chua encouraged youths to manage their mental wellbeing by focusing on their values, managing expectations, and learning to handle what they can control while adapting to what they cannot.

The moderator asked how the Government could better support individual aspirations to build a caring society.

- Mr Chua said that the Government constantly evaluated issues and strived for constructive conversations with citizens. He urged youths to stay engaged and maintain healthy scepticism rather than cynicism when participating in national conversations about Singapore's future.

Segment: Youth Perspectives: Core Values Shaping Actions and Behaviours by SAC

- Ms Cherine Ang and Mr Chow Jau Loong presented findings from an SAC survey of 1,000 Singapore youths, examining the values that shape their actions and behaviours across four key areas: “Who We Are,” “How We Act,” “Why We Act,” and “Where We Are Headed.”
 - Who We Are: Youths associate trustworthiness, kindness, honesty, empathy, and integrity among their top five core values. Younger individuals tended to place greater importance on empathy and integrity, with these values becoming less significant as youths aged. Additionally, 94% of youths believed their values encouraged them to engage in pro-social behaviour.
 - Why We Act: Youths were primarily motivated by intrinsic factors such as personal fulfilment, core beliefs, and the desire to make societal impact. However, barriers to action included personal priorities, peer pressure, and resource constraints. It was reflected that support from family, friends and teachers were essential in overcoming these challenges.
 - How We Act: When faced with situations that conflict with their values, 22% of youths believe their peers would strongly uphold their values and express their concerns; 48% would find a compromise that upheld their values while resolving the situation; 16% would maintain the status quo; and 10% would adapt their responses to follow the situation, even if it conflicted with their values. Positive peer influence was evident as 86% of youths believed their peers’ action aligned with their core values, and 78% felt their peers would act with courage in the face of resistance.
 - Where We Are Headed: The top concerns for youths included mental and physical well-being, digitalisation, social inclusion, and climate change. Youths identified

the following challenges that Singapore would face in the future: climate change, pollution, and lack of economic opportunity and advocated for a more equitable society, lifelong learning, and ethical business practices and responsible consumption as solutions.

Segment: Panel Discussion: Building Creative Resilience for Long-Term Impact with Ms Tamara Gondo, CEO and Founder, Liberty Society, Ms Shelia Manokaran, Co-Founder, River Valley Irregulars, and Mr Josh Lee Kok Thong, Managing Director (APAC), Future of Privacy Forum, moderated by Ms Annisah Smith, Senior Strategic Partnerships Manager, SAC

The moderator introduced the topic of building creative resilience for long-term impact and asked the panellists how they embraced creative resilience in their personal and professional lives.

- Panellists shared that the key to practising creative resilience was converting adversity into opportunity. They highlighted that creative resilience, like AI, was a tool that could be used effectively depending on how individuals chose to apply it.

The moderator polled participants to identify the biggest challenges when pursuing an unconventional career path.

- The top challenges highlighted by participants were financial instability, the risk of failure and lack of safety nets, and the absence of resources, support systems, or mentors. Panellists advised youths to develop action-oriented mindsets, focus on problem-solving, seize opportunities, and pursue achievements that align with core values in order to overcome these challenges.

Segment: Closing Address by Mr Tan Lin Teck, Deputy Chief Executive, NYC and Senior Director, Youth Division, MCCY

- Mr Tan said that stewardship meant thinking beyond personal success, and considering how one's action would affect others. He said that steward leadership could create a "Butterfly Effect," and encouraged youths to reflect on their roles within the larger ecosystem and recognise that small actions such as helping a friend through a difficult time or assisting them in their academics, could create meaningful impact.