

IPS to roll out online tool as part of project to reimagine Singapore

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The year is 2030 and Singapore is in the throes of a new pandemic – should its people support greater investment in public health and a focus on safety measures, or prioritise minimising economic disruptions and ensuring “business as usual” during such times?

Such hypothetical future events, and decisions on how to approach them, will be part of an online interactive engagement tool to be rolled out by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) think-tank, as part of its two-year-long scenario-planning project called Reimagining Singapore 2030.

A beta version of the tool, dubbed Quest2030, will be available in January next year, with the aim of drawing at least 20,000 participants from the public, said IPS yesterday.

Users will be able to see how their choices on key issues in one area affect outcomes in others across seven themes to do with community, diversity, governance, economic development, livability, multilateralism and non-traditional security.

These inputs will be captured as anonymised data to inform policymakers of differing Singaporean archetypes and outlooks on the future, said IPS senior research fellow Gillian Koh.

All of which makes the tool a deeper and more dynamic experience compared with just commenting on social media, said Mr Wilson Chew, co-founder of user experience design firm Reassemble, which is part of the team building Quest2030.

From this December to June next year, public engagement through the tool, as well as focus group discussions, will make up the third of four phases in the Reimagining Singapore project.

The first phase kicked off with online forums such as the Young Singaporeans Conference in November last year and the Singapore Perspectives Conference in January. The second, to take place from September to December this year, will gather thought leaders and civic activists at workshops and one conference, to develop an official set of Reimagining Singapore scenarios.

In the final phase, from June to July next year, strategies, action plans and pilots will be developed based on the insights from previous phases, and incorporated at national and community levels.

“The driving question to this project is how will we achieve happiness, prosperity and progress for our nation in 2030 and beyond,” said Dr Koh, noting the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic and shifts in geopolitical and economic power.

“The IPS project aims to engage the public in re-perceiving our future given the effect of the pandemic, pre-existing trends, but more critically – emerging trends,” she added.

“The question is how will Singapore respond over the decade and through this period of radical uncertainty? How will this set us up for our long-term future?”

Singaporean domain experts who wish to share their views on emerging trends in the seven themes and members of the public who would like to test the online engagement tool from December onwards, are invited to write to IPS at ips@nus.edu.sg

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