



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

***For immediate release***

### **NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD'S *IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING SURVEY* FINDINGS REVEAL POSITIVE IMPACT ON REGULAR VOLUNTEERS' WELL-BEING**

**Singapore, 12 March 2024** – The National Heritage Board (NHB) launched its first ever *Impact of Volunteering Survey* in mid-2023 to ascertain the motivations for volunteering amongst regular volunteers, and to assess the impact of regular volunteering on the well-being of volunteers. The survey found that volunteering in the museum and heritage sector is driven by diverse motivations, and that it is a worthwhile endeavour that contributes to volunteers' well-being.

2 The top three motivations for volunteering are: “to gain new knowledge and skills” (80%); “for personal interest” (74%); and “to contribute to the museum and heritage sector” (58%). These are followed by “to meet and network with people with shared interests” (56%); and “to give back to society” (56%).

3 In terms of impact, the survey revealed that volunteering significantly affects personal fulfilment and well-being; learning, skills development and confidence; and community, social interaction and cultural awareness. The top five impacts are as follows: volunteering “allows me to meet and interact with people from different backgrounds and cultures” (97%); volunteering “equips me with new knowledge and skills” (96%); volunteering “makes me happy” (95%); volunteering “gives me a sense of purpose” (91%); and volunteering “provides me with a sense of community” (91%).

4 According to Garima Gemawat Lalwani, 57, an active member of Friends of the Museums (FOM) who recently received a 15-year long service award for her volunteering efforts at various museums including Asian Civilisations Museum and the Peranakan Museum, and who previously held the role of President of FOM from 2018 to 2021: “Since volunteering with NHB in 2008, I have been able to discover new facets of Singapore's history and heritage. Sharing these insights with visitors, both local and international, has been incredibly rewarding. The positive feedback I receive after leading tours also gives me a sense of achievement, and it motivates me to continue

to volunteer as a museum docent for years to come. Overall, I find volunteering to be nourishment for the mind, body, and soul."

5 A dedicated member of multiple docent groups with two decades of experience in guiding with NHB, Long Chin Peng, 55, serves as a Mandarin Guide at Asian Civilisations Museum, the Peranakan Museum and Indian Heritage Centre; a Mandarin Docent at National Museum of Singapore, Malay Heritage Centre and Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall, in addition to her role as a Museum Volunteer at Asian Civilisations Museum and the Peranakan Museum. Recounting her volunteering journey, during which she was conferred the Public Service Medal at the National Day Awards 2022 for her exemplary service as Mandarin Docent Coordinator at Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall, she shared: "I have dedicated 20 years of my life as a museum volunteer because I enjoy meeting and hosting visitors from different nationalities, races and cultures. Regular volunteering keeps me engaged and allows me to give back to my favourite museums and heritage institutions. There is a strong sense of camaraderie amongst our Mandarin guides and docents, and the warm welcome from museums and heritage institutions makes me feel deeply connected to the NHB community."

6 Mr Alvin Tan, Deputy Chief Executive (Policy & Community) at NHB, said: "The findings of the survey allow us to better understand our volunteers and confirm what we have long suspected – that volunteering at our museums and heritage institutions is time well-spent because it is enjoyable, makes a difference and leads to a range of well-being benefits. From the survey and its findings, NHB hopes to be able to better motivate our volunteers, customise our volunteering opportunities and work with our affiliated groups to increase their pools of volunteers."

7 Conducted from July to August 2023, the pilot survey garnered a total of 245 respondents (or 28% of NHB's pool of regular volunteers from NHB affiliated volunteer groups who volunteer their time at least four times a year). The survey comprises two parts: the first part examines the motivations for volunteering amongst NHB's regular volunteers; and the second part captures the impact of volunteering on the well-being of NHB's regular volunteers.



8 The *Impact of Volunteering Survey* is part of NHB's efforts to promote and boost volunteerism as well as to pioneer heritage-based interventions for health and well-being, under the recently launched *Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0*. For more information on NHB affiliated volunteer groups, please refer to **ANNEX A**. For information on NHB volunteering opportunities, please refer to [www.nhb.gov.sg/support-us/support/volunteering-with-nhb](http://www.nhb.gov.sg/support-us/support/volunteering-with-nhb).

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**About National Heritage Board**

The National Heritage Board (NHB) was formed on 1 August 1993. As the custodian of Singapore's heritage, NHB is responsible for telling the Singapore story, sharing the Singaporean experience and imparting our Singapore spirit.

NHB's mission is to preserve and celebrate the shared heritage of our diverse communities, for the purpose of education, nation-building and cultural understanding. It manages the national museums and heritage institutions, safeguards and promotes intangible cultural heritage, and sets policies relating to heritage sites, monuments and the National Collection. Through the National Collection, NHB curates heritage programmes and presents exhibitions to connect the past, present and future generations of Singaporeans. NHB is a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. Please visit [www.nhb.gov.sg](http://www.nhb.gov.sg) for more information.

## **ANNEX A – INFORMATION ON NHB AFFILIATED VOLUNTEER GROUPS**

### **Friends of the Museums**

Formed in 1978, Friends of the Museums (FOM) comprises both Singaporeans and foreign members living in Singapore. FOM provides weekday volunteer guiding services across all museums and institutions for museum visitors. Besides offering English guided tours on weekdays, FOM also provides regular Japanese, Korean, Spanish and French language guided tours at selected museums and heritage institutions.

### **Museum Volunteers**

Formed in 2004, Museum Volunteers (MV) consist of a team of trained volunteer guides with a passion for sharing about the rich cultural heritage of Singapore and the region. The group currently has over 200 members from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, with mostly full-time working professionals offering English guided tours on weekends and public holidays. MV also organises training for new volunteer guides and assists regularly at various NHB events and programmes.

### **Mandarin Docents**

Formed in 2005, Mandarin Docents (MD) comprise over 50 Mandarin-speaking professionals providing guided tours in Chinese. MDs also organise small research groups that provide support for museum programmes and special projects, including a series of Chinese lectures. The group currently provides Mandarin guided tours at the National Museum of Singapore, Indian Heritage Centre, Malay Heritage Centre and Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall.

### **Mandarin Guides**

Formed in 2004, Mandarin Guides (MG) provide guided tours in Mandarin and dialects on weekends, as well as tours on a special request basis for corporate groups, and community and grassroots associations. The group also supports museum student docent training programmes and the organisation of seminars and training programmes to enhance skills on knowledge and guiding.



### **Japanese Docents**

Japanese Docents (JD) are part of FOM but managed independently. Providing Japanese language guided tours on weekdays and selected Saturdays, JD aims to build a friendly bridge between Singapore and Japan through the introduction of the history, culture and art of Singapore to Japanese visitors. The tours help to enhance the visitors' understanding and enjoyment across museums.

### **Museum Hosts**

The Museum Hosts (MH) scheme for the National Museum of Singapore and Asian Civilisations Museum was launched in 2017 and 2022 respectively. MH is a group of volunteers who provide valuable services and contributions to the museums in many ways. MHs add a personal touch to the visitor experience and have a good understanding of both the operational aspects of the museums and the content within the galleries. The roles of MHs range from front-desk assistance, to supporting the museums' programmes and festivals, acting as ambassadors of the museums and helping to enhance the visitor experience through meaningful interaction.

### **Care Facilitators**

Formed in 2019, Care Facilitators (CF) is a dedicated pool of volunteers recruited by the National Museum of Singapore to support the museum's care initiatives and programmes. The roles of CFs range from guiding seniors (including persons living with dementia) and caregivers on conversational gallery tours to supporting and facilitating some of the National Museum's programmes at its Reunion social space.

### **Heritage Conservation Centre Guides**

With a passion for heritage, these volunteers at the Heritage Conservation Centre (HCC) lead guided tours on a fixed route at HCC. They bring visitors on an informative journey to learn how Singapore's National Collection is managed and cared for via preventive and interventive means of conservation.