



新加坡艺术大学软实力价值大

本地第一所由政府支持的私立艺术大学——新加坡艺术大学（University of the Arts Singapore, UAS），将于2024年开课。这在新加坡教育史上具有里程碑意义，反映了建国至今，社会经济发展后，社会对美育的要求进一步提高。艺术大学采取独立学院制度，保留拉萨尔艺术学院和南洋艺术学院自主性。这个安排，展现了对这两所杰出成就和历史的艺术学院的尊重，也凸显了高等美术教育所应具备的灵活变通精神。

拉萨尔和南艺在艺术大学里仍是两个独立学院，享有独立的法律权益。拥有学位授予权的新中央机构UAS Ltd，将提供行政等方面的支持。拉萨尔和南艺会继续开办专业文凭和大学文凭课程，学生在武吉士一带原有的校园上课；UAS Ltd则设在这两所院校附近的国家设计中心。两所学院会合作为学生提供更多学习选项与机会，包括跨院修读学习单元、联办选修课如数码科技应用、亚洲美术等。

教育部指出，艺术大学能支持新加坡的未来经济，栽培多元人才，并支持新加坡发展为有创新能力的城市，在东南亚区及以外的创意艺术领域建立领先地位。就新加坡一贯的务实传统，经济效益考量向来是国家决策的重要参考。融合物理、数码和生物等领域科技的第四次工业革命，带动了智能经济的发展，从中又催生了对创意经济的重视。作为创意源泉的想象力，则来自于美术教育基础。优质的艺术教育将培养学生大胆探索、创新与质疑的能力，同时又让学生能够理解与处理颠覆与包容之间的紧张，在跨界与融合中不断推陈出新，并且培养对人类非物质需求的高度敏感性。这种艺术精神，与当前创新经济的生命内核其实不谋而合。

然而，功利考虑并非艺术大学成立的唯一推动力，也不是最主要动力。毕竟艺术乃至艺术教育的投入，并不能很快产出经济效益，百年树人的教育不是做生意，其中艺术教育的所谓投入产出比其他学科更难测量。艺术大学的设立，反映的是新加坡“仓廪实而知礼节，衣食足而知荣辱”的社会发展阶段，在满足物质生活上的需要后，开始重视精神层面的需要和心灵层面的饱满与富足。艺术大学所培养的人才，会极大丰富本地的文化艺术生活，能满足国人的文化需求，让新加坡社会上流动新鲜的创意、人民生活富有活力、国家富有魅力。

艺术大学的另一个重要意义，在于肯定多年来本地艺术工作者所取得的突出成就，为热爱艺术的青年一代提供更多更广的进修机会；颁发大学文凭，能让一些担心孩子出路的父母，放心让孩子追求自己的艺术理想。在提高本地美学教育的同时，艺术大学更有助于美育的普及，吸引家长在中小学阶段，就开始重视和鼓励孩子的艺术修养，让所有公民的各种才华，包括学术外的艺术禀赋都得到施展的空间。

不仅如此，艺术大学毕业生日后在各领域崭露头角，在整体上或能壮大本地的创新能力，特别是在文化艺术领域，让小红点在经济的硬实力之外，发展出与之匹配的软实力，实现教育部“在东南亚区及以外的创意艺术领域建立领先地位”的殷切期待。日本的工艺水准、当下的韩流、泰国的美食，都是这些亚洲国家国际吸引力的重要手段，新加坡若能发展出独具南洋特色的艺术产出，自然也有提升世界影响力的效果。

李显龙总理在今天的国庆群众大会上说，我们的先辈已经从落叶归根变成落地生根。跟历史知识一样，本土文学艺术有凝聚国家意识，强化集体身份认同和热爱所生所长的土地的作用。若艺术大学能培养出大批能创作深具本地色彩作品的毕业生，必然会产生更大的融合力，一方面让开放的新加坡更具备敞开胸怀的文化自信，另一方面也让新加坡焕发近者悦，远者来的吸引力。艺术大学任重而道远，一定不要辜负国人的期望。

The immense value of soft power in University of the Arts Singapore

The first local government-backed private arts university, the University of the Arts Singapore (UAS), will start classes in 2024. This is a milestone in the history of education in Singapore, reflecting that since the founding of the Republic, after having developed socio-economically, our society's requirement for arts education is further elevated. UAS adopts an independent college system, retaining the autonomy of LASALLE College of the Arts and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA). This arrangement shows respect for the two art colleges that have their own outstanding achievements and history and highlights the flexible spirit that higher education should have.

LASALLE and NAFA are still two independent colleges within UAS, enjoying independent legal rights. UAS Ltd, a new central entity with degree-granting powers, will provide administrative and other support. LASALLE and NAFA will continue to offer professional diploma and university degree programmes, with students taking classes at the original campuses in the Bugis area; UAS Ltd is based at the National Design Centre near the two institutions. The two colleges will collaborate to provide students with more learning options and opportunities, including cross-college modules, and joint electives such as digital technology applications, Asian fine arts, etc.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) pointed out that UAS can support Singapore's future economy by grooming diverse talents, supporting Singapore's development as a city of innovation and establishing leadership in the creative arts in Southeast Asia and beyond. In Singapore's pragmatic tradition, economic considerations have always been important in national decision-making. The Fourth Industrial Revolution, which integrates technologies in the fields of physics, digital technology, and biology, has led to the development of the smart economy, which in turn has given rise to an emphasis on the creative economy. Imagination, the source of creativity, comes from a foundation of arts education. High-quality arts education will nurture students' ability to boldly explore, innovate and question, and at the same time enable students to understand and deal with the tension between subversion and tolerance, constantly innovate across disciplines as well as integrate various disciplines, and cultivate a high degree of

sensitivity to humankind's non-material needs. This artistic spirit coincides with the vital core of the current innovation economy.

However, utilitarian considerations were not the only driving force behind the establishment of UAS, nor was it the main driving force. After all, investment in arts and arts education cannot quickly produce economic benefits. Education that nurtures people over a long term is not a business, and the so-called return on investment of arts education is harder to measure than other disciplines. The establishment of UAS reflects the stage of social development in Singapore, where "people observe etiquette and know honour and shame after they are well-fed and clothed." After meeting the material needs of life, one begins to pay attention to spiritual needs, fullness and abundance. Talents groomed by UAS will greatly enrich local cultural and artistic life, meet the cultural needs of the nation, enable Singapore society to flow with fresh creativity and enhance people's lives with vitality as well as elevate the charm of the country.

Another important significance of UAS is to recognise the outstanding achievements made by local art workers over the years and to provide more extensive study opportunities for art-loving youths. The issuance of a university degree can allow parents who are worried about their children's prospects rest assured and let their children pursue their art dreams. While improving local arts education, UAS also helps the popularisation of arts education, attracting parents to pay attention to and encourage their children's artistic accomplishment at the primary and secondary levels, so that the various talents of all citizens, including artistic endowments beyond academic achievements, can have space to shine.

Moreover, when UAS graduates emerge in various fields in the future, it may strengthen the local innovation capability on the whole, especially in the field of culture and arts, so that our little red dot can develop a soft power that matches the hard power of the economy, and realise the earnest expectation of the MOE to establish a leading position in the field of creative arts in Southeast Asia and beyond. Japan's artisanship, the current Hallyu and Thai cuisine are all important means of enhancing international appeal for these Asian countries. If Singapore can develop artistic output with rich Southeast Asian characteristics, it will naturally enhance its global influence.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said at this year's National Day Rally that our ancestors have gone from being like leaves that would return to their roots (immigrants eventually returning to their home countries), to being like seeds that would take root where they landed. Like historical knowledge, local literature and arts have the function of cohering national consciousness, strengthening collective identity and love for the land in which one is born in. If UAS can nurture a large number of graduates who can create works of local flavours, it will inevitably generate greater integration. On the one hand, it makes an open Singapore more culturally confident with an open mind, and on the other hand, it also makes Singapore more attractive to talents near and far. UAS has a long way to go and it must live up to the expectations of the nation.