

IMAGINE

Singapore

APPRECIATE WHAT IS

IMAGINE WHAT CAN BE

CREATE WHAT WILL BE

IMAGINE Singapore is about creating hope and possibilities through conversations that matter. It is an effort to bring people from all walks of life together to discover the true essence of our strengths, qualities, and spirit that have stood the test of time. It is also about the discovery of our communities' hopes and aspirations, verbalised through active dialogue and engagement. Through simultaneous interviews and the sharing of high-point stories, Imagine Singapore aims to unleash the collective capacities of our nation.

Simply put, we imagine a nation in conversation.

Imagine Singapore deploys a simple and accessible methodology called **Appreciative Inquiry** – a positive oriented approach towards change. Singaporeans from all walks of life will be equipped through workshops to conduct interviews that will help in the expression of the hopes of our families, friends and neighbours.

Over and over again, we have experienced the ability of this simple approach to bring about positive changes - the mere act of being asked these questions serve to deepen the quality of connection between people and strengthens the individuals' sense of hope for the future.

**“Human systems grow in the direction of questions we most frequently ask ourselves.
Positive images precede positive action.”**

Why this project is central to the mission of the Sustainability Institute

Sustainability Institute aims to build sustainable organisations through our WISE framework - great Workplaces, Innovations for sustainability, Societal and community engagement and Environmental conscience. The mission of Si is to create **lasting positive impact**. Our programmes are aimed at development of strong and sustainable individuals, organizations and communities. Through Inquiry into the best of (practices, hopes, dreams and ideas) in our human systems - whether families, business or communities – we hope to further recognize and propagate self-directed positive innovations amongst Singaporeans. Imagine Singapore is the first societal engagement project embarked on by the Institute. Our interest is also on downstream research on positivity (hope and optimism), community-engagement and outcomes of shared vision processes.

SYNOPSIS OF IMAGINE SINGAPORE – UPTURNING THE DOWNTURN – COLLABORATION WITH AJC & THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

❖ IMAGINE Singapore through Appreciative Inquiry – UPTURN THE DOWNTURN Anderson Junior College (AJC) with National Trade Union Congress (NTUC), Singapore

Sustainability Institute (Si) started the project of Imagine Singapore from April 2009 where students of AJC interviewed workers who were facing a critical period in their lives attributed to the changing global scenario in the year 2009 – economic crises that has hit world-wide from the United States of America to Europe and Asia.

UPTURN THE DOWNTURN was the key topic theme for the first wave of IMAGINE SINGAPORE interviews, wherein 20 students armed with skills of interviewing after a workshop experience on the process of Appreciative Inquiry interviewed 20 workers and contributed their experiences in words and pictures to Si and the NTUC U-Portal.

The students were then in turn interviewed by Media Corps to draw out their experiences further and **hence began a conversation** of hopes, remembering and savouring the past, realizing and re-affirming one's strengths, sharing experiences with the future of the country – the young enthusiasts and pioneers of the Imagine Singapore movement.

Longer Term Collaboration & Involvement of AJC Students:

After this positive experience, we have expanded our collaboration with AJC through a mutual commitment to provide ongoing training of AJC students as volunteer interviewers (up to 100 JC1 students per year). The current Principal of AJC, Ms Susan Leong, saw that this will help to reinforce AJC's Service Learning and National Education efforts, as well as strengthen students' General Paper capabilities.

Expanding the Inquiry to Involve more Youths

Going forward, Imagine Singapore hopes to reach out to more youths and young adults to host conversations and participate in the inquiry on topics that are relevant to Singapore.