Loving Singapore



Designing for Communities in Singapore



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Project Design

Quantum Consumer Solutions is an insights and design strategy agency specializing in culture and behavioural insights.

We partnered with the DesignSingapore Council in 2022-23 to explore a broad question:





How do we amplify loveable factors to strengthen our sense of attachment to Singapore?

Drawing on literature around the nation as an imagined community, we chose to focus on designing for love and attachment to build communities in Singapore.

This encompassed designing for shared language, shared rituals and shared spaces, while placing attachment, love, and joy at the heart of these experiences.

Our design process was rooted in a culture research context, encompassing:



Cultural Insights

- Secondary research around communities and urban spaces to dimensionalize aspects of social super glue, attachment, and loveability
- o Digital media scan of user generated content around relevant parameters in Singapore
- o Ethnographic interviews and journals with 6 individuals active in different types of communities in Singapore. We spoke with individuals from marginalized communities (single mothers, blended families, and the elderly) to understand their experiences, and help create universal design principles applicable for a broader audience.



Design Principle Framework

 We created a map of emerging principle spaces with dimensions under each, to feed back into future iterative testing and validation



Iteration and Refinement

- We conducted focus group discussions with 13 organizers of communities in Singapore, to better understand their perspectives and constraints as organizers, and elicit feedback on the relevance and feasibility of proposed design principles
- The design principle spaces were then fine-tuned and translated into into this culture design toolkit

Across the project, we had interviews with members and organizers from the following types of communities.

All interview respondents were Singapore citizens, born in Singapore.



Government Grassroots Communities

Resident's Network, Resident's Committee, Grassroots Organization (People's Association), Community Club Management Committee, Community Sports Club



Interest-based Communities

Hobby based communities (e.g. cycling, biking, gardening, hiking etc.) with an online and offline presence. These communities are typically prevalent across social media platforms, including Meetup.com, Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram.



Welfare Related Communities

Communities of volunteers who contribute towards specific social causes or culture associations, e.g. elderly befriending, philanthropy, fundraising etc.



Support-based Communities

Communities that provide support, a network, and resources for specific groups, e.g. single parents, blended families etc.

Across the year, we collaborated with an advisory board of design experts (**Kamya Ramachandran**, an architect and public space designer, and **Dr. Jason Lim**, a lecturer at SUTD and co-founder at YUME Architects).

Overarching Cultural Framework

This project builds on the Livable to Lovable Singapore study conducted in 2021, by Deloitte and the Design Singapore Council.

The authors identified fundamental human dimensions for building a lovable city:



Connection

Feeling close to and affection for others in the city i.e. opportunities to meet and socialize with others

Inclusion

Feeling included and accepted, and perceiving ourselves to be treated fairly in the city

i.e. inclusiveness, tolerance, and/or acceptance of diversity

Attachment

Feeling familiar with and rooted to the city

i.e. place attachment, character of the city, heritage and local culture

Stimulation

Feeling interested in and excited about what the city has to offer *i.e. place attractiveness, elements of discovery, variety of experiences*

Agency

Feeling that we are able to influence change in the city *i.e. capacities and opportunities to shape the city*

→ Freedom

Feeling free to express and be ourselves in the city *i.e. freedom and opportunities to pursue aspirations and interests; freedom of being and expression*

*From the Livable to Lovable Singapore report, 2021

Building on this, we identify core human needs related to communities, and contextual culture drivers in Singapore.

Core Human Needs

Connection and Love

Perhaps the most fundamental human need is to connect deeply with others, through shared experiences and a culture of care and love for one another

Variety

Experiencing vibrancy in life, with varied activities, social circles, new ideas, and interacting with a diverse group of people

Safety

Feeling physically, psychologically, and financially safe when interacting with other people

Contribution

Feeling like a valued member of society through contribution and personal growth at work, with social networks, and in the broader community

Stability

Assurance that basic needs are being met, and having a grounding physical and emotional space that remains constant as a safe harbour to return to



Cultural Drivers in Singapore

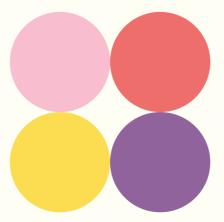
Understanding core cultural truths about Singapore that influence our understanding of communities and loveability for the country.

Aspect	Singapore in the Past	Emerging Shifts
Multicultural Society	Long history of immigration and cultural mixing in Singapore. Racial harmony has been a foundation of Singapore's public policies from the year of birth, situated in the context of building a new nation state.	Newer forms of multiculturalism are at play in present day Singapore, including a sizeable migrant worker population, as well as new waves of immigration in the affluent segment.
Class Hierarchies	Rapid wealth accumulation in the early years of Singapore's independence was driven by strong public policies, most notably building one of the world's best public housing programs.	Income inequality is a growing public policy concern. When combined with rising inflation, this has led to an increasing social divide within the country.
Physical Spaces	Singapore's early years saw a mix of different types of social spaces, which were gradually redeveloped (e.g. redeveloping kampungs and shifting residents to public housing)	Physical public spaces for leisure include malls and hawker centers. The large migrant population typically congregates in open air spaces around Little India and Geylang. Disappearing spaces include smaller coffeeshops, older HDB buildings, open air carparks, and more.
Demographic Changes	The movement from multigenerational to nuclear families was accelerated around independence, partly driven by housing policies, the rise of women in the workforce, and family planning communication.	The ageing population is perhaps one of most critical public policy challenges in Singapore today: often accompanied by loneliness, financial difficulties, lack of care from family members, and burdens on the public health system.

03

Design Principles: An Overview

Through the year, we iterated the core guiding question to encompass our view on the design principles. Based on emerging insights, our guiding question was:





How might we design for organic communities that are sustainable?



Organic

Encouraging active collaborative participation from community members, for example organizing offshoot events and relationships



Sustainable

Communities that can outlast their founders, evolving over time towards a decentralized leadership through a sense of community responsibility

We unpacked two key themes in the evolution of communities in Singapore:





An organic evolution towards offshoot groups.

Across communities, we saw pockets of informal organic connections created within communities; these were spaces for members to engage deeply with each other, strengthen social circles, and experience higher levels of love and attachment for their communities and Singapore as a whole.

For example, a yoga class with many attendees had a WhatsApp group created to connect members; from this group, some members had a shared interest in cooking and began cooking potluck meals to share in the evenings at each other's homes.



Smaller, Founded Communities

Typically founded by interested individuals, around specific support themes or interest hobbies.

Often has a smaller membership based and a narrowly defined set of activities.



Large, Organised Communities

Typically run from the top-down, often by the government or large NGOs. Examples include Resident's Network and Lions Befrienders.

Focus on quantity of members, usually linked with access to welfare and other benefits.



Offshoot Groups

Both types of communities often see organic offshoots emerging, led by community members. This could include informal socializing, or be activity based.

Typically started and managed by community members, this offers intimacy, a sense of ownership, and quality of social connections.

Sweet spot for organic growth and sustainability

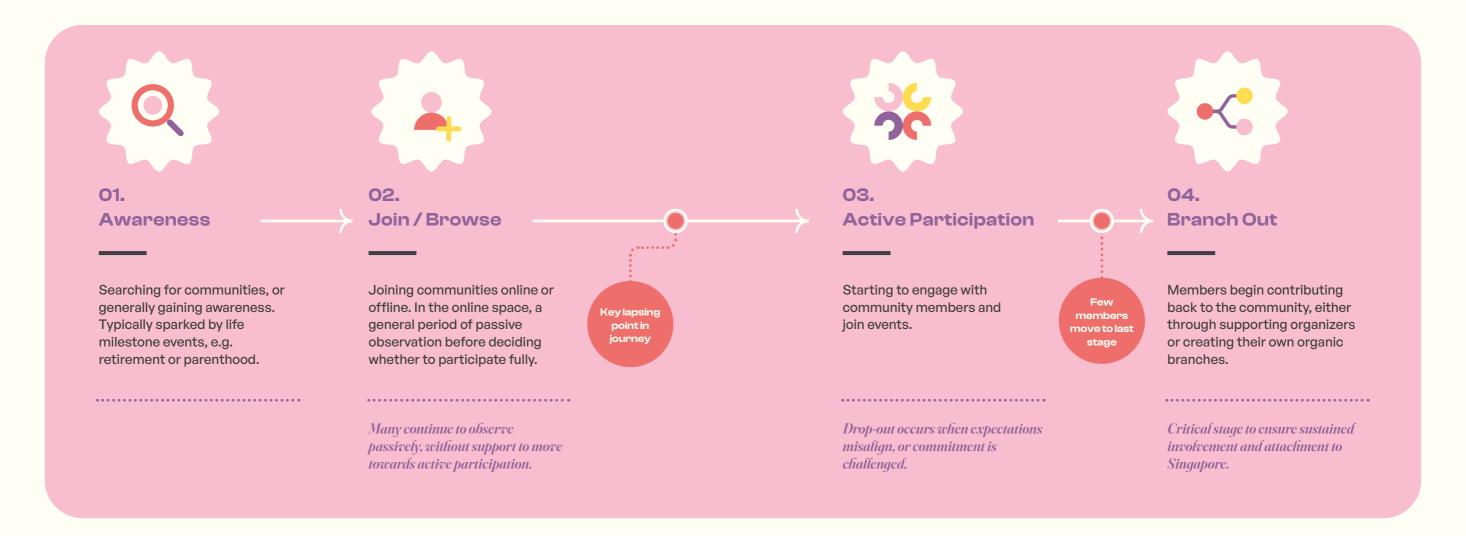


Journey of members through the community.

Members broadly move through similar journey paths, with two key drop off points: transitioning from lurking to active participation, and moving towards becoming an offshoot organizer.

The movement towards offshoot organizing can be driven by intrinsic enthusiasm to offer ideas and volunteer, or can be top-down with organizers approaching members with specific requests for assistance.





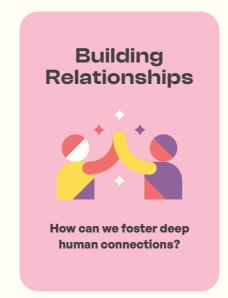


Playing Cards

Use these cards as an ASSESSMENT and IMPROVEMENT tool

- Think through a key goal you want to work towards as a community (e.g. 'Attract younger members'; 'Establish a hiking subgroup run by members')
- 2. Go through the 9 cards individually, and write down how you rank each card's importance (do not discuss this with others yet, write this down by yourself)
- 3. Discuss your rankings with each other and jointly identify the top 3 principle spaces that are most helpful to work towards your goal
- 4. Flip to that section of the handbook below and understand how best to address current gaps!





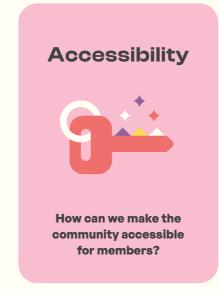














Printing Instructions:

Select this page and the next on your printer, and print on double-sided paper to cut out cards and use them

Accessibility Dimensions: Searchability Visibility Geographical access Financial access Main Organizers Community Members



Dimensions: Offshoot subgroups Offshoot events Feedback mechanism Celebrate achievements Shared vision Relevant for: Main Organizers Offshoot Organizers





Dimensions: Enable relationships Informal spaces Informal activities Hobbies Relevant for: Community Members



	Learning
Dir	mensions:
*	Events
*	Articulate value of engagement
_	
Re	levantfor:
×	Community Members

Dimensions:

♦ Safe space

Financial safetyWhistleblowingPrivacy guidelines

Relevant for:

Community Members

Organic Leadership in Resident Committees









The following **principles** are applied in this storyboard:

- Building relationships
- ★ Ownership
- Manageable structure
- Accessibility
- Partnership

Members Rejuvenating a Hobby Based Community









The following principles are applied in this storyboard:

Safety

Building relationships

Contribution

Ownership

Manageable Structure

Communication

Partnership

Principle 1: Learning

What can members learn from communities?

On the reward side of the spectrum, members often join communities if they are able to learn a new skill. Finding a new social circle is an added bonus to upskilling.



Organize events with learning outcomes

♦ Dimension 1.2

Articulate value of engagement for members



Organize events with learning outcomes



Story behind this dimension

Rob joins some communities purely for networking and expanding his horizons. He feels he needs to keep his brain sharp and interact with 'smart' people.

He has done this by joining Skills Future classes, actively making friends with classmates, and staying in touch with them as an informal group afterwards.





When do I use this dimension?

- Attract new members to the community
- Existing members to 'gain' something to join community events



Inspiration ideas

- Organize events, seminars, networking sessions
- Link with receiving a tangible reward, e.g. a certificate
- Link learning event specifically with community, e.g. a gardening interest group could have a hands-on learning session to understand a new technique of gardening
- Members can communicate learning desires to organizers, or proactively organize classes

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Articulate value of engagement for members



Story behind this dimension

Joyce adopts a 'wait and watch' approach on several of her community groups, lurking and following the chats but not going for any of the events.

There are two key barriers for her: feeling insecure about joining new events, and deciding whether the event is worth her time.



When do I use this dimension?

• For communities that have a large inactive membership base



Inspiration ideas

- Clearly articulate community value on two levels:
 - Community mission and vision
 - Value to members for joining events
- Organize an introductory session for new members to disseminate the same
- Receive inputs for community value articulation from involved members

How could you apply this dimension to your community?

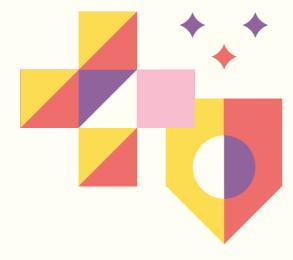




Principle 2: Safety

How can we design spaces and communities where members are not held back from active participation?

Community members indicate that physical, psychological, and financial safety is critical to enable active participation in communities.



♦ Dimension 2.1

Design safe spaces for personal sharing (Psychological safety)

♦ Dimension 2.2

Guard against financial scams (Financial safety)

♦ Dimension 2.3

Create whistleblowing mechanisms (Physical safety)

◆ Dimension 2.4 Build privacy guidelines

Design safe spaces for personal sharing (Psychological safety)



Story behind this dimension

Amy, a single mother, tends to gravitate towards single parent groups even for unrelated activities like badminton.

She feels it automatically creates a safe space where others do not judge her single mother status, and she is able to share her life circumstances and learn from others more freely. She has joined a regular climbing group but feels like an outsider when other women casually reference their husbands.



C

When do I use this dimension?

- For communities with a large, diverse membership base
- Create an intimate, supportive community where members feel enabled to share life stories



Inspiration ideas

- Create and disseminate clear guidelines around group behaviour, and kick out members who violate these with zero tolerance
- Begin and end in-person sharing sessions with reminders that this is a safe and confidential space, with what is shared within the space not allowed to be shared with others outside the group
- Set up a mechanism and culture where members can come forward if they feel unsafe

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Guard against financial scams (Financial safety)



Story behind this dimension

Roger is a retiree and has been aware of many financial scams taking place in Singapore.

He is worried about being taken advantage of in an online community, either with organizers stealing his financial data or members scamming him. He feels that only official government groups (e.g., RC/RN) are trustworthy.



L

When do I use this dimension?

- In large groups with an online presence, community members may adopt a 'wait and watch' mentality for joining events if they are worried about financial scams on the group
- Most prevalent for events that cost money, for larger groups where they worry about other members in the group intending to take advantage of them



Inspiration ideas

- Set safety guidelines, communicating them clearly. Display commitment for a safe community through zero tolerance for sales, scams, investments within the community
- Ensure safe payment protocols from members for community related payments, e.g. providing cash payment option

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Create whistleblowing mechanisms (Physical safety)



Story behind this dimension

Julie, a single mum, values her community of single parents that have helped her and created many deep friendships. However, another male member has been making Julie and several other female members feel uncomfortable with unwanted advances. They feel awkward about how to handle the situation, and do not know what to do.



C

When do I use this dimension?

 Create a culture of care where members know they can approach several people in the community when they feel unsafe



Inspiration ideas

- Set up clear guidelines with at least 3 people to approach for 'whistleblowing'. These 3 people should be diverse as far as possible, e.g., in terms of gender, race, and sexuality. Include members' input in the creation of guidelines
- Make it clear any member/organizer can be reported for actions that violate guidelines
- Members can collaborate in setting up whistleblowing mechanisms. Look out for each other, approach others for confidential conversations to offer support if something is amiss

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Build privacy guidelines



Story behind this dimension

Anna is a part of several online communities but does not want her interaction with communities to be known among her personal friends. She has left some public Facebook groups after she realized her posts and comments could be seen by her wider friend network on Facebook.

She now only interacts on closed WhatsApp groups and private Facebook groups.



C

When do I use this dimension?

 For communities where members may want a clearer separation between personal and community lives



Inspiration ideas

- Establish guidelines on what is appropriate to share outside the community
- For in-person meetings, have a protocol around 'what is shared in the group remains within the group. For online spaces, ensure members know it is inappropriate to share posts beyond the group
- Consider making online groups members-only, with no public view enabled

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Principle 3: Building Relationships

Designing to meet the core human need for deep connections

A key motivation to join and remain engaged in communities is the friendships fostered with other community members, which often blossoms beyond community-led events and spaces.



♦ Dimension 3.1

Enable deep relationships between members

♦ Dimension 3.2

Build informal spaces that can spark organic connections

♦ Dimension 3.3

Facilitate informal activities that sustain deep connections

♦ Dimension 3.4

Create spaces to support hobbies and interests

Enable deep relationships between members



Stories behind this dimension

Josh lurks on several community chat groups. He would like to join an event but feels intimidated because he does not know anyone there.

Jenny has gone for a few organized events, but still feels like an outsider. She has noticed smaller groups peeling off after the event for their own social plans, but they have never invited her to join these plans. Her engagement with the community dips over time.



When do I use this dimension?

 Engage members currently passive within the community



Inspiration ideas

- Reach out to new members to welcome their participation and integrate them into current group activities
- To engage in an event: Assign volunteers to reach out to 4-5 new members, personally invite them for an event, and meet and guide them through the event
- Organic subgroups: Ensure that the informal organic subgroups are open to all, e.g. issuing an informal invitation for all to join the dinner after the event

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Build informal spaces that can spark organic connections



Story behind this dimension

Lata, as part of her RC, has created a garden in the HDB estate. This has attracted a small group of gardening lovers. This space is open to all for enjoyment and has created stronger friendships between HDB residents.



When do I use this dimension?

 Physical spaces are critical to foster organic connections, providing spaces for communities to have informal connections and spark ideas for future events and plans



Inspiration ideas

- Create welcoming drop-in spaces open to members (e.g., study corners for students which also double in function as newspaper reading corners for the elderly, an open floor space for various interest groups to utilize)
- Leverage existing RC/CC halls and spaces. Outreach to local communities and interest groups with offers to share physical spaces
- A few NGOs also run and staff similar spaces, e.g. spaces for migrant workers to drop in, seek support, interact with each other etc

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Facilitate informal activities that sustain deep connections



Stories behind this dimension

Tom joined his community post retirement when he realized he had let friendships fall by the wayside and needed to find a circle of intimate friendships. Jane's motivations are similar, triggered by her divorce some years ago. Both joined hobby-based communities, hoping to forge friendships within the community.

In her decade as a committee member in a non-profit organisation, Hui Qing has seen many friendships blossom organically by repeated interactions through a variety of activities. She thinks that for social connections to form, time is important but also the frequency of contact to build up familiarity is crucial.

Dan is an organiser of a cycling club. In his experience, members join the club to connect with other cyclists and experience big group and international cycling trips that they cannot experience by themselves.



C V

When do I use this dimension?

- To actively craft deep connections between community members
- Use this when members are unfamiliar with one another and have not yet developed organic, easygoing connections with each other.
 E.g. when there is an influx of new members



Inspiration ideas

- Structure meetings and online forums to facilitate organic friendships forming
- Online: an open WhatsApp group on which members can chat more informally (within safety guidelines)
- Offline: Encourage an element of socializing post group activities, e.g. meals post the community event
- Dedicate regular meet up sessions for members to get to know each other – e.g. food, games, activities.
 Set aside time at the beginning with ice breaker games, introductions to each other etc

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Create spaces to support hobbies and interests



Stories behind this dimension

Keryna is part of her neighbourhood RC, which told members they could have funds allocated towards an activity of their choosing. A smaller group of members chose to start a gardening corner, which facilitated deeper friendships.

Nurul is the head of the resident's committee. A group of Qi Gong enthusiasts have approached her in hopes of getting a practice venue. Nurul found a practice space for them at the community centre and arranged a volunteer trainer to lead the practice sessions. They are now registered as an interest group under the committee and 15 – 20 people regularly meet on the rooftop for their sessions.

Jamie, a chairperson at a local Community Club, has allowed club spaces to be used by interest groups. The Chenda (drum) group approached her to take up this offer, and in turn now perform at CC events.



When do I use this dimension?

- Create higher engagement within the group by encouraging members to pursue hobbies within the community context
- Potential trigger to help move members from lurking towards active participation



Inspiration ideas

- Consult members about the kinds of experiences they want and plan accordingly. Provide support and resources to kickstart interest groups (e.g., funds, guiding group on how to navigate some regulations)
- Involve members in the planning stage and ensure that they feel wellsupported to execute their initiatives
- Conduct an informal survey to understand members' expectations and objective in joining the community.
 For example, in a bird-watching group, members may want to go to parks to bird-watch weekly, and attend informative talks at NLB together

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Principle 4: Contribution

Giving back to society meaningfully

A key driver for engaging with communities is to spend time meaningfully, giving back to society within the community or through the community to external parties.





Dimension 4.1

Provide meaningful volunteer opportunities

Provide meaningful volunteer opportunities



Stories behind this dimension

Amy has had rough patches in her life as a single mother, and has occasionally received help from support groups, NGOs, and government agencies. Now she volunteers through communities to give back whenever she can; she believes it is a way for her to connect with others, realize how fortunate she is, and learn from the circumstances of others.

Raj runs a cycling interest group, with the main mission of the group being to raise funds for needy elderly people within his ethnic community.

Members join for longer cycling events, posting online to raise funds for their charity drive.





When do I use this dimension?

 Create spaces for members who wish to serve their communities meaningfully



Inspiration ideas

- Create ways for the community to come together and volunteer externally as a bonding activity, e.g. river/park clean ups
- Create pathways for contributions within the existing community,
 e.g., welfare checks within the RC/RN network
- Communities and charities can liaise for time volunteered, or fundraising activities

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Principle 5: Ownership

Beginning the journey towards being an active member

Some community members are motivated to engage more deeply within the community, moving towards facilitating organic spaces and events. Some are driven by an intrinsic motivation and come forward to pitch ideas to the core organizers; others are approached by organizers and asked if they would like to volunteer for specific tasks.



♦ Dimension 5.1

Create opportunities for members to own informal offshoot subgroups

♦ Dimension 5.2

Create opportunities for members to own offshoot events within the community

♦ Dimension 5.3

Design a feedback mechanism to learn from members

♦ Dimension 5.4

Practice a culture of celebration and appreciation within the community

♦ Dimension 5.5

Have a shared core vision and goal as a group

Create opportunities for members to own informal offshoot subgroups



Story behind this dimension

Reena has been part of a yoga group in her CC for some months now. Over time, some of the members began to include her in their smaller WhatsApp groups. This organic offshoot now meets for meals post yoga classes, and sometimes organize power walking sessions around the neighbourhood in the morning. Reena feels she has forged a much stronger sense of community and wellbeing through the offshoots.



D V

When do I use this dimension?

- When community organizers begin thinking about the long term sustainability of the community
- When we need to create an organic spark for communities to thrive
- Particularly relevant for large communities that need space for organic intimacy



Inspiration ideas

- Facilitate a culture where interested members can volunteer and create offshoots open to all
- Organizers to smoothen friction points to create offshoots, e.g. support with paperwork if needed
- Offshoot subgroups can be informal bonding activities, such as food, exercise, outings etc
- Keep barriers to entry is low, e.g. organic volunteers are able to structure their involvement and nature of offshoots

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Create opportunities for members to own offshoot events within the community



Stories behind this dimension

Tracy is the head of the Women Executive

Committee. One of the community members is an

HR professional. Tapping on her expertise, she

organised a workshop that teaches women how to
best prepare for a job interview.

Jason is the Head of Programmes at an elderly befriender organisation. He finds that his job is easier when he can tap on the strengths of the members to take charge of different activities. For example, members with a singing background organize karaoke sessions; an artistic member organizes a painting activity.



C W

When do I use this dimension?

 For an organisation to evolve towards a more member-driven community



Inspiration ideas

- Communicate to members that creating, running, and participating in offshoot events are encouraged
- Organizer to have an 'open door' and encourage members to come to them with ideas for offshoots
- Organizer to help communicate offshoots to the main communities to sustain member awareness and engagement

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Design a feedback mechanism to learn from members



Stories behind this dimension

Jerry, a community organizer, feels the community is progressing smoothly and members are engaged. Our conversation with Louisa, a member, provides a different side to the story: as a single mum on a single parenthood group, she faces unwanted romantic attention from single fathers, and feels increasingly unsafe in the group. She has noticed that the group administrators either do not notice this, or do not care about this culture. She has spoken about it to several female members, and they have decided to leave and create their own female-only community.

Amirah is a volunteer at SAFRA Club and plans events for NS men and their families. She actively solicits feedback after events, particularly for aspects that worked well. This helps her plan future events to retain members, and gives her leverage to negotiate for more budget from upper management.



When do I use this dimension?

- To create a culture of shared ownership of communities
- To address any dissatisfaction, low engagement, or low retention



Inspiration ideas

- Collect feedback on two levels:
 - Event specific feedback: Send out short surveys with openended questions post events, and include space for recommendations for types of future events
 - Overall community feedback: Have informal open-ended conversation, noting and implementing suggestions
- Opt for mechanisms catered to the community's profile (e.g., face-toface, anonymous online forms etc.) Address feedback consistently for members to feel that their feedback is valued and heard

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Practice a culture of celebration and appreciation



Stories behind this dimension

George is a member of a hiking community and enjoys occasional outings with the group. However, he does not feel a sense of group pride, and views the group as a series of unrelated events.

Sandy is a member of her Residential Committee (RC), and she takes great pride in planning events for residents. She was selected as a representative to meet the MP and felt great pride in being recognized. This later enhanced her contributions, which recently culminated in being elected vice chairman of her RC.

Jia Yi is in one of the sub-teams of a large local volunteer organisation. Her organisation hosts an award ceremony during their annual gala dinner in which they commemorate and celebrate individuals' milestones and contributions such as the '5 Year Service Award' and 'Volunteer of the Year'. Volunteers look forward to these events as they feel appreciated for their efforts, enhancing their motivation to contribute to the group.





When do I use this dimension?

- Foster a greater sense of belonging within the group and encourage shared sense of pride for group
- For members to feel valued as an individual in the community group and thus, more grounded in the group



Inspiration ideas

- Keep track of the group's key milestones (e.g. anniversaries, number of members, events etc), share with members and attribute achievement to the work of the group
- Consider newsletters or posting on community social media accounts for public appreciation
- Celebrate individual members through messages on groups, annual appreciation dinners etc

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Have a shared core vision and goal as a group



Stories behind this dimension

Aileen is in a farming group. Every Saturday, the members gather early in the morning to farm at a school plot in Geylang. Their motivation is strongly driven by the shared vision of spreading the word of self-subsistence in Singapore.

Dennis believes that in a core team, it is easy to have disagreements about the direction the group should take. While they were finding sponsors for a particular event the group was organising, the team was split into two sides. After much debate, they were able to align by reminding each other of the community's core shared vision.



When do I use this dimension?

- Have a strong fundamental motivation that connects members
- Avoid unnecessary conflicts about the direction of the group by encouraging the group to jointly revisit core mission at certain points of time



Inspiration ideas

- Have a clear written community mission and vision statement, jointly articulated by members and organizers. Revisit the mission at specific points of the community's journey
- Articulate how the events and activities organised by the community links to the community's mission (e.g., if team's objective is to fundraise for low-income families, planned activities can have a fundraising outcome)
- A majority of activities should provide members with opportunities to meet the community's shared vision

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Principle 6: Manageable Structures

Designing for decentralized communities

Many communities in Singapore are run through a central committee (or equivalent), with volunteer committee organizers shouldering the burden of the day to day running. However, this may not be sustainable in the long run, and may miss on incorporating organic member involvement.



♦ Dimension 6.1

Create a decentralised organisation structure

♦ Dimension 6.2

Streamlining bureaucratic processes

♦ Dimension 6.3

Design a filtering mechanism for quality members

Create a decentralised organisation structure



Stories behind this dimension

Keith started an informal dinner club meet up group online that became very large very fast. He was burnt out from constantly managing events and brought on a few longer-term members to co-create events on a rotating schedule. This has inadvertently made the community more eclectic and organic, as each event organizer brings in their own flair.

Sandy is the vice-chairperson of group that fosters racial and religious harmony. A core committee organises most of the events but each event is helmed by a different committee member to spread out the work and to give everyone a chance to lead. Junior members are encouraged to step up while the senior members remain pillars of support.

Kilian is part of a non-profit organization that runs elderly befriending services. The chairperson has noticed Kilian's professional background in communications and approached him to lead the communication committee.





When do I use this dimension?

- For communities that are too large for a single person or committee to manage
- For communities where the core committee is getting burnt out, or has other competing life priorities



Inspiration ideas

- Create an informal network of event organizers, with loose management e.g., rotate through 5 people for a monthly event
- For communities currently run only by individual founders, set up a more organized committee of people with specific functions to help run the community
- Look out for the strengths and unique expertise each member brings and empower them to use those skills in the community. Create an environment where members can showcase their skills through the year, enabling an allocation of tasks further down the line

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Streamlining bureaucratic processes



Story behind this dimension

Wendy is an administrator at a non-profit organization. She laments that it takes too long to get approval to set up interest groups; by the time approval is in place, interest has fizzled out. For instance, this happened with a proposed arts and theatre interest group.





When do I use this dimension?

- When partnering with a more formal organization for planning a specific event/activity
- For communities with a more formal structure, with reporting mechanisms in place



Inspiration ideas

- Evaluate existing paperwork and determine which is absolutely necessary for a smooth operation
- Shorten decision-making chain by empowering members
- Support members in organic initiatives with guidance around how to navigate processes, or have organizers support with fulfilling process requirements

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Design a filtering mechanism for quality members



Stories behind this dimension

Roy is a member of several communities, but dislikes extremely large communities. The group chats in large communities are overwhelming, he does not know people individually, and he is hesitant to join organized group events because of safety worries

Janice is an organizer at a Resident Network. She explains that government-related communities offer benefits to members, e.g. priority parking or preference for school registration. She dislikes people joining the community just to enjoy these perks while contributing nothing. She finds it hard to screen these people out as she cannot check for their motivations for joining.



C

When do I use this dimension?

 For organizers who wish to avoid a very large group size to foster a more intimate community. With intimacy as the priority, the focus is on ensuring that those who join the group are the right fit



Inspiration ideas

- Create a mechanism to ensure that (a) the group can be found by interested members (b) short screening criteria e.g. referral, or a short questionaire
- Digital: Create a filtering mechanism on platforms like Facebook, where group names can be searched but content is inaccessible. Interested members need to answer a few questions to see if they are a right fit, and join after admin approval
- Offline: Have new members join only on referral from current members
- For organisations with extrinsic rewards, have a trial period before confirmation to ensure members have the right motivation in joining

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Principle 7: Accessibility

Designing communities that can be accessed by all

Remove physical, financial, and geographical barriers to deepen members' engagement in communities.



- Dimension 7.1
 Give the community a clear,
 compelling name
- ♦ Dimension 7.2
 Increase visibility of the community
- Dimension 7.3
 Design events across geographies in Singapore
- Dimension 7.4

 Make events financially accessible to all

Give the community a clear, compelling name



Story behind this dimension

Tim is a recent retiree, and now has a lot of time on his hands. With the change in life circumstances, he is now looking for new communities and hobbies. He actively searches for and browses communities on Meetup.com and Facebook. However, he is only able to find communities that are large, public, and named well; he would like to find smaller, intimate communities.





When do I use this dimension?

- Make the community easily accessible and publicly searchable
- Increase number of members and online followers



Inspiration ideas

- Map out target audience for new joiners and key activities for the community
- Create relevant keywords that are useful when the public searches, e.g. 'cycling', 'over 40', 'road bicycle group' etc
- Community organizer to decide if they
 want to be a public community, or a
 smaller by-invite community. If the
 former, devise a basic marketing
 strategy, use keywords, and list
 communities on public forums like
 Meetup.com and Facebook. (Note that
 this may require admin time to
 manage joining requests)

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Increase visibility of the community



Stories behind this dimension

Shanti is a member of several communities, with varying degrees of involvement in each. She often joins new communities based on recommendations from someone in another community. For example, someone in her yoga community found out she likes to cook, and told her about a cooking community at a CC which she later joined and became very involved in.

Sheryl is the secretary of a non-profit volunteering group. In order to engage more people to join them as volunteers, they have implemented a tradition where members bring new friends to join them for an activity like a flag day or a home visit every month. This increases the community's exposure and helps with recruitment.

Hazeem is in the organising committee of a multi-racial organisation. Although not directly related to the objective of the group, his committee organised a chess competition which attracted a lot of youths and their parents. The community was able to enjoy more visibility and awareness from that event.





When do I use this dimension?

- When there is a need to enhance visibility of the community, attracting new members or sparking connections with other communities in Singapore
- May be particularly relevant for communities that actively seek to find new members from different demographics, e.g. engaging with youth members



Inspiration ideas

- Create a short 'advertisement' for the community with key information
- Tap into formal and informal networks to spread the word – e.g. cross postings on other related communities, like gardening communities posting on retiree communities
- Keep some group activities open to the general public or friends of members
- Target desired demographics, e.g. the youth, by creating open events relevant for them, and articulating the value of community for them

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Design events across geographies in Singapore



Story behind this dimension

Amy is a single mother, and would like to join more community events but is stressed about time and money. She only joins events within her neighbourhood for this reason, but feels she is missing out on connecting with others from different backgrounds/localities in Singapore. She wishes there were opportunities for her to meet people across the island



C

When do I use this dimension?

 Increase accessibility of offline events, especially if events in different localities see different rates of attendance over time



Inspiration ideas

- Create geographical flexibility, e.g. rotating events across different parts of Singapore
- Choose central locations for events with larger attendance
- Partner with other communities to do synchronized events across geographies
- For larger events, consider transportation packages for groups.
 If many attendees are coming from a particular neighbourhood, consider transport bundles e.g. a coach bus to Gardens by the Bay

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Make events financially accessible to all



Stories behind this dimension

Mary is a single mother and struggles to manage her finances through the month. She would like to attend more community events, but constantly weighs opportunity costs in her mind for cost of events vs. outings she could do with her family. She is reluctant to ask for financial help from community organizers to attend events, as she fears this will come with strings attached.

Jonathan is a volunteer in a community that serves the elderly. The community often hosts high teas and gala dinners to celebrate their successes and fundraise. However, he has rarely participated in these events as he did not feel included; other event participants are usually middle-aged business owners.





When do I use this dimension?

 Be sensitive to the financial circumstances of community members, making some or all events financially accessible



Inspiration ideas

- Ensure that events across the year include a mix of low cost and voluntary payment activities
- Voluntary donation drive from all members to cover cost of events through the year
- For a specific higher cost event, consider making it pay as much as you can or reserving a few slots with payment covered

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Principle 8: Communication

Design appropriate communication mechanisms

Critical to design communication mechanisms that are nuanced towards specific needs of members and organizers. This helps to build long term sustainability, and provides opportunities for organic participation of members.



♦ Dimension 8.1

Identify optimal channels of communication within the community

♦ Dimension 8.2

Design communication platforms for external stakeholders

Identify optimal channels of communication internally



Stories behind this dimension

Matt, a community organizer for the past decade, has realized that communication with members needs to be tweaked through the years as the community grows and the membership base changes. For example, moving from informal word of mouth messages to WhatsApp groups and newsletters.

Dawn follows the MP in her constituency during his weekly block visits and brings along an excel form for residents to sign up for activities and to opt in to be added to a WhatsApp group. Currently, the chat has 200+ members and she is able to better disseminate information about upcoming events.

Jenny has experimented with multiple digital platforms to bring her community together and has realized that Facebook works best for her community. Members enjoy interacting with each other informally on the FB page and appreciate being able to view and comment on event photos.





When do I use this dimension?

 To review current channels of communication to members when creating or refining a community's vision



Inspiration ideas

- Experiment with different communication platforms (WhatsApp, Telegram, Discord, Facebook, emails etc.) and find out what works best
- Monitor size of community and profile of membership base to understand which communication platform is most familiar

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Design communication platforms for external stakeholders



Story behind this dimension

John is an organizer for a big cycling charity group.

Cyclists are able to raise funds from the public by pledging to cycle for a certain distance. As members go on cycling trips to picturesque destinations like Mount Faber and post videos about it on their own social media accounts such as on TikTok, the group is able to organically enjoy publicity.





When do I use this dimension?

 For communities who would like to attract other potential members and gain broader visibility



Inspiration ideas

- Post frequently about group's activities on social media platforms
- Encourage members to post their own group-related content on their social media (with consent from other people involved in these posts)
- Younger members in the community can guide and introduce some social media features to older members of the team

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Principle 9: Partnership

Contribute to a vibrant ecosystem of communities

Design for communities that collaborate with external stakeholders and other communities, contributing towards a loveable nation.



Establish connections with other communities in Singapore

♦ Dimension 9.2

Explore partnerships with government and private organisations



Establish connections with other communities in Singapore



Stories behind this dimension

Joyce was part of a top rope climbing community in Singapore, but over time felt like she grew out of the sport. She was interested in exploring bouldering, and the community organizer from her original group put her in touch with the bouldering group. She is now an active member of the bouldering group and keeps in touch with her old friends as well.

During the Pongal celebrations at the Community
Centre, the committee set up many booths and
invited other communities to set up their own
booths, allocating a small budget for the same. This
brought in a more diverse crowd and connected
multiple communities.



When do I use this dimension?

- Enhance overall engagement with communities
- Facilitate cross community sharing
- Create space for members to move across each other's communities



Inspiration ideas

- Find other communities with related objectives and organise crossbonding activities
- Encourage members to come for cross-group activities to expand their knowledge, get to know more people and find other fun activities to do or causes to serve

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





Explore partnerships with government and private organisations



Story behind this dimension

Devin is part of a non-profit hospice care community.

A few years ago, the group partnered up with

Outram Community Hospital and jointly organised
activities for the patients and provided better
palliative care. He hopes to achieve more
collaborative success with other healthcare
organisations or private organisations to engage
their employees for fundraising.



When do I use this dimension?

 To help facilitate ambitions to grow communities at scale, liaise for resources, or support members in their offshoot activities



Inspiration ideas

- Identify a common goal between community and partner organizations
- Articulate benefits of collaboration for the partner organisation
- Involve key stakeholders from both organisations in the discussion

How could you apply this dimension to your community?





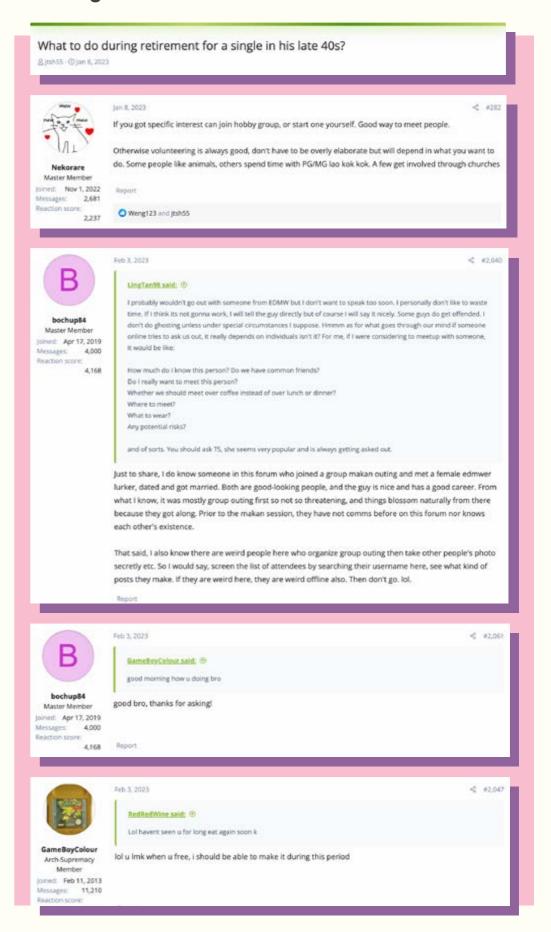
Social Media Data

Quantum's digital listening platform (WeDig) sourced social media metadata in Singapore to unpack key themes the broader public discussed relevant to the principles in this handbook.

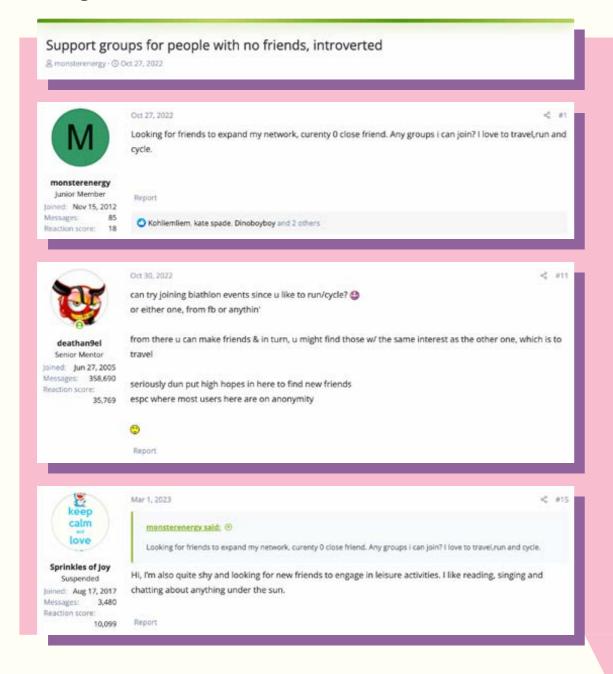
A few examples are below for reference. Through these, we see fundamental connects with desires to build safety, stability, variety, and connections within communities in Singapore.



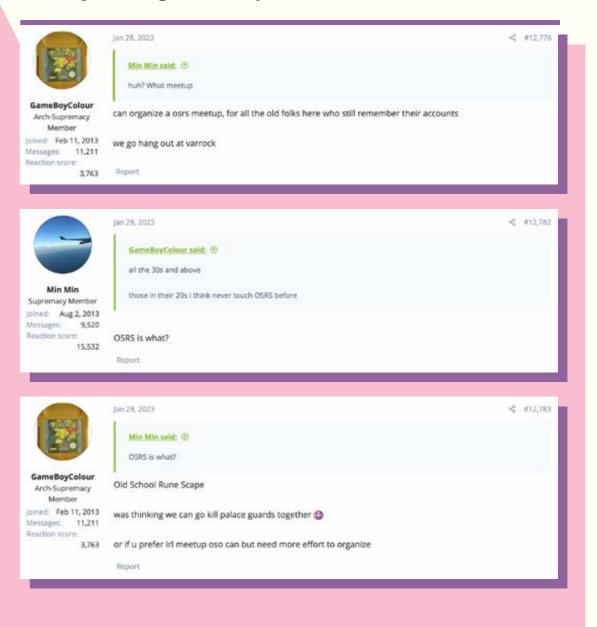
Finding Connections



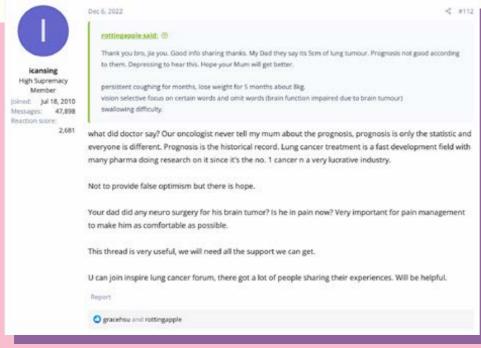
Finding Connections



Variety Through New Experiences



Safety and Stability Through Support







Dec 7, 2022

songboh9696, gracehsu, yellowkit and 6 others

Hi all, my mom was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer de novo in 2017. Because it had already spread to bones and lungs, surgery was not an option as it would cause her more pain. So my mom has been on chemo since then. She will always be on some sort of treatment, be it chemo or hormone therapy. She is a patient in NCC and does not have any private insurance. She only has a basic NTUC insurance, which is better than nothing. It covers some cost for chemo and radiation up to a limit of \$3000 per month, if I am not wrong. She was lucky to be chosen for a Phase 3 clinical trial back in 2018 / 2019 and it has worked well for more than a year. It also meant more than a year of free treatment. Back then, when you are signed up for a clinical trial, you get reimbursed for transport of \$50 per trip. I don't know if it is the same rate now. To my knowledge, if you are a patient in a public hospital, there are some IV or oral chemo drugs which the pharmaceutical firm will give further grants to cover the cost, which is very substantial. The grant is not given to patients who seek treatment in the private hospital. Only when your loved one needs this drug, the doctor will explain and walk you through the paperwork and registration to be enrolled in this grant. I tried googling also and you can't find anything on it. My mom is on this IV drug which she gets once every 3 weeks. This drug alone cost \$6-7K each time which is not affordable at all. For the grant to kick in, you must have medisave though. They will deduct \$1.2K each time from medisave, as well as whatever that the basic insurance covers. The rest of the amount will be picked up by the pharmaceutical firm. That is what we are going through right now. I keep monitoring my mom's medisave amount and top up to make sure there is sufficient amount. I'm sharing what I can because I think there are many people who doesn't know about the special grant program, since it is not even searchable on the web, and you may be stressed with the financial burden. I seldom share on this forum, but if any of you would like to find support or go to NCC on wednesdays, can contact me. Stay strong everyone.

Variety Through Interests

The Stories Behind: The TikTok sensation who ditched offers from universities to become a bus driver like his godmother

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If the stories Behind: The TikTok sensation who ditched offers from universities to be stories and the stories and the stories and the stories and the stories when he started "paying more attention to his surroundings" and found that the sheer variety of bus designs was interesting.

If we would frequently draw buses in his free time and the first one he sketched was a public bus that stopped near his home.

If he in 2010, when he was 11, a newspaper article Mr Tay chanced upon led him to his community — other fellow "bus enthusiasts" who would go for weekly bus spotting sessions and talk about buses on their Facebook group, which had amassed about one to two hundred followers at the time.

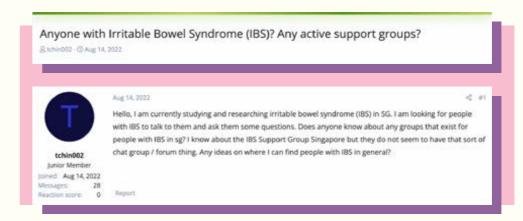
If realised it's not only me that likes buses, there is a group of people that likes buses too, so why not just join this Facebook group," he said.

"And when I joined, I made lots of friends and we went out to take photos of buses together. And from there,

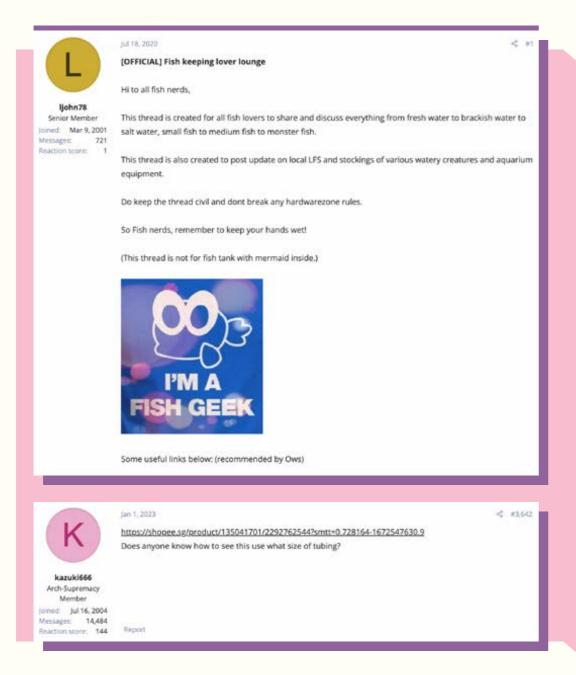
the passion evolved from just taking photos to eventually driving buses together." He added that within his

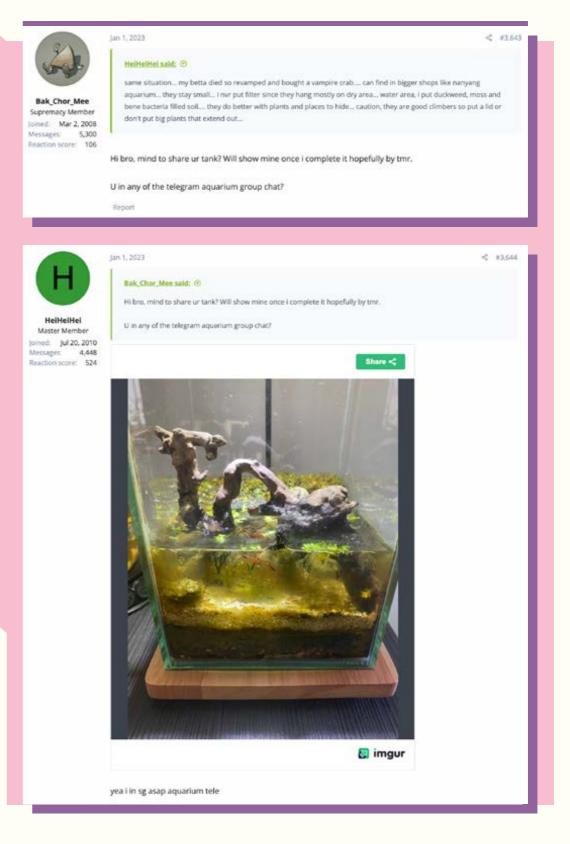
close group of five, three of them are now driving buses.

Safety and Stability Through Support



Contribution Through Information Sharing





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What We Do



Quantum Consumer Solutions is a global insight, strategy and innovation consultancy with clients across major industry verticals.

We address complex business and policy problems by putting human understanding at the core of our solutions through extensive use of culture, insights, strategy and analytics.

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