

Corporate philanthropy in the singaporean workforce literature review example

[Politics](#), [Democracy](#)



Introduction

There are numerous ways how an organization, be it a for profit or a not for profit organization, can show to their stakeholders that they are not just concerned about organizational survival and revenue generation but also concerned how they can return the favors they have received, whatever they may be, back to the people and society. This is, in fact, the reason why most companies have started to integrate corporate social responsibility measures in their organization.

The same principle can be applied when it comes to the decision of adding a corporate philanthropy department in an organization. Corporate philanthropy is simply the counterpart of individual philanthropy. Instead of just a single individual, a group of individual, or in this case an organization, donates the time, funds, resources, or even talent to uphold any particular focused aspect of human welfare .

In essence, it is often done on a much larger scale compared to individual philanthropy; that is without expecting any form of rewards or compensation in return . The objective of this paper is to discuss a corporate philanthropy effort initiated by two organizations, the Yale University from the United States and the National University of Singapore to offer a global and holistic approach to research and education with a focus on Asian and Singaporean arts and perspectives. It is important to note at this point that these two educational institutions are independent of one another.

The Yale – NUS Collaboration and Liberal Arts Education in Singapore

The Yale – National University of Singapore (NUS) was established as the fruit of the collaboration between the Yale University from the U. S. and the National University of Singapore. The Yale NUS is an educational institution that is autonomous and or independent from the two said educational institutions. Geographically, however, the Yale NUS is situated within the NUS campus . Its autonomy mainly applies to the process of innovating and adopting new and existing policies, systems, practices, and curriculum. This means that they can exercise its authority to employ a different system from its parent educational institutions .

This can indeed come in handy because of Yale NUS' primary purpose. The primary rationale behind the establishment of the Yale NUS is to promote liberal arts education in Singapore and in other nearby Asian countries. This was, at first, seen as an opportunity to improve the integration of eastern and western culture and liberal arts. This also means that the Yale NUS is to be focused on liberal arts education only. Liberal arts education has been defined in the institution's website as a type of education that “ emphasizes broad-based, multidisciplinary learning as well as depth of study, and builds a common foundation among all students in the arts, humanities, social sciences, natural and physical sciences, and mathematics, while developing expertise in a student's chosen major” . This can indeed be a great boost to the past and current efforts of the Singaporean government to integrate liberal and other forms of art in their economy and other aspects of their country.

The question whether Singapore's culture can successfully adapt to liberal arts education, or in this case, the western-led liberal arts education still exists. This may be considered as the primary problem that the corporate philanthropists (i. e. the Yale University and NUS) was thinking of addressing when they came to the finalization of their deal to establish a jointly founded liberal arts institution within the existing NUS facility. The question is can the establishment of the Yale NUS solve that problem? There are numerous factors that should be considered to accurately answer the question. Firstly, considering that the Yale NUS is situated in Singapore, it would require the support of the Singaporean government in many aspects for the fruits of its efforts to materialize. For instance, can the current state of Singapore's economy promote and or support the future employment requirements of the current Yale NUS liberal arts students? If the question is no, then that can be considered as a significant deduction to the success rate of Singapore's culture to adapt to liberal arts education. Educating and liberating the ideas of the people about cultural and liberal arts is one thing but providing opportunities for them to practice what they learned is another.

Fortunately, the Singaporean government is one of the few wealthy governments in Asia that supports and even emphasizes the promotion of cultural harmony. Some of the evidences of this include but may not be limited to their initiation of programs and funds that are highly dedicated to liberal and cultural arts. A good example would be the Singapore Youth Festival, a cultural and or liberal arts program that has been initiated and is being continuously funded by the Singaporean government under the supervision and organization of the country's Ministry of Education .

Basically, cultural and liberal arts organizations that are planning and being encouraged to participate in the festival are entitled to receive grants and other forms of support from the government. This is, in fact, in line with the government's plans and efforts to include and incorporate arts as a commodity for its already wealthy economy. It may be safe to say that over the course of the few years, if things go smoothly, Singapore may be recognized as one of the vital cultural and liberal arts center in Asia, one of the goals behind the establishment of the Yale NSU. To further emphasize the seriousness of the Singaporean government to support the growth and development of liberal and cultural arts in the country, it currently allows liberal and cultural arts organizations and companies to apply for grants and funding via the National Arts Council . This means that the government does not limit the collaboration of art companies and organizations to the government funded arts festivals only because any arts company or organization that is planning to stage a production is entitled to a chance to receive funds and grants from the government.

Every few years, the National Arts Council, in collaboration with other ministries such as the Ministry of Education works to improve their system of allocating funding and grants to deserving cultural and liberal arts companies and organizations, as evidenced by the creation of the New Grants Framework in 2013 . In an effort to improve their current scheme and or system of awarding grants to applicants (i. e. the cultural and liberal arts companies and organizations), the National Arts Council introduced the inclusion of an extensive review process in the grant awarding process so that the budget allocated for the grant provision would be given to the most

deserving ones.

According to the National Arts Council, through the New Grants Framework, they would be able to shift from a one size fits all approach to a more flexible and at the same time, specific approach in awarding grants; and also improve the level of transparency and clarity of their grant provision program. Basically, all of these serves as hard evidences how committed the Singaporean government is to improve the current state of cultural and liberal arts in the country.

If things continue this way, then there should be no reason for Singapore not to become a cultural and liberal arts center or hub in the Asian region, something which coincides with the goals and reason for existence of Yale NUS.

Some of the additional factors that could be included in analyzing whether Singapore has what it takes (apart from the establishment of the Yale NUS in the country) to become a regional cultural and liberal arts hub include but may not be limited to the fact that some fifty percent of the country's total population are foreigners, which means that the country is culturally diverse, something which can prove to be useful not just in economic but also in cultural development; it has a hybrid culture mainly because of the fact that it has a history of British occupation and that its core culture is mostly composed of Asian subcultures (e. g. Tamil, Chinese, Indian, Malayan, among others).

At this point, a lot of things could work as an advantage for Singapore to realize its cultural and liberal arts-related goals. Now, with the establishment and continuous operations of the Yale NUS and the support that cultural and

liberal arts groups and companies are receiving, it can be safe to say that Singapore is in an advantageous position.

Social Finance Landscape in Singapore

In a purely social finance-landscaped environment, the businesses and organizations in that particular environment (i. e. country, Singapore) continue to reinvest in their craft or their core business. This is the main essence of being a social enterprise. Compared to a traditional business where all the revenues are stored as profits and to a traditional charity where all the revenues are allocated as grants or donations, social enterprises contribute to the government by continuously reinvesting gains on the core business and in Singapore's case, this model can be used to increase the social impact as well as the financial returns of investing in cultural and liberal arts. Unfortunately, as of today, only 4 percent of the total number of organizations in Singapore is based in the arts and recreation industry while a large chunk of it, some 41% are based in the service industry. This means that the cultural and arts industry in Singapore still has a lot of potential to grow although it would need continuous funding to achieve that . In that case, the social finance or enterprise landscape could prove to be the best model to follow.

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