

Moving Forward: Playeum, The Movement

Photo Credit: Little Kids Photography



Playeum started its journey in 2008.

Since then, Playeum has influenced the development of community spaces and cultural centres in Singapore. It was 2015 when Playeum, the Children's Centre for Creativity was born to crystallise and ground our offerings.

The Centre at Gillman Barracks reached out to over 150,000 children and their adults over the last five years. It has served as a safe creative space for children to interact with artists' work and tap on the power of their imagination and create and express their own ideas, inspirations and innovations, through six exhibitions.

Children from all backgrounds and abilities have come to the Centre: from over 200 schools a year and visitors from all round Singapore, to children from marginalised backgrounds who attend our STEAM programme and children with disabilities for our artful play programme. The Children's Centre for Creativity served as a physical and psychological safe space for inspiration and a child's imagination to take flight.



The movement carries on...

Playeum is moving from a physical exhibition space-based model.

Through collaborative partnerships & outreach, we will focus deeper efforts in developing the capabilities of children and adults by:

- Working directly with children in schools and charities; going deeper with more specific groups of children & communities.
- Building capacity through the use of play and the arts in developing transformative life skills in children.
- Further developing our work with adults to shift mindsets.

We will be closing the physical Centre at Gillman Barracks. Read on for how we transform ourselves to increase our impact moving ahead.

Playeum is an IPC charity with a strong social mission:

To champion children of all backgrounds and abilities to be active citizens in their homes, neighbourhoods, schools and society at large, through play and the arts. For them to be active citizens, continued opportunities and platforms need to be created for them to develop transformative skills, 21st-century skills and as well as social emotional skills.

What are these skills & why are they important?



With COVID-19 as a recent example, these life skills become increasingly important for young people, and even adults, to nurture and build in order to navigate this VUCA* world.

The Ministry of Education in Singapore, OECD's 2030 Learning Compass and World Economic Forum Education 4.0 Framework, speaks exactly of these skills required for a better future Singapore & world; and the future starts now. We have seen firsthand how these skills are so vital for not only Global Leaders, but leaders at all levels. COVID-19 is not the only crisis we are dealing with; there are global issues in our midst that our children need to create solutions for: climate change, sustainability, inequality, discrimination, to name a few. Coming up with realistic ideas, innovations for solutions or agreements, or forging greater respect and empathy, all taps on these skills.

*VUCA: Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous

What is our end game?



Every child to have the opportunity, agency and safe space to be active citizens; contributing to the home, school, neighbourhood, society and world around them.

Children need an open environment to explore the development of crucial skills and active citizenship; Playeum provides support through direct work with children, using open-ended play and the arts, and as well as listening and co-developing with children.

Every adult recognises the role they can play in a child's life as creative facilitators of their growth.

Playeum supports this role empowerment through our work with educators, parents and other adults who work with children.

A future generation of creative collaborative communities.

Made up of collaborators such as social cultural leaders (The Thought Collective), arts groups (Gateway Theatre, Singapore Repertory Theatre & more), parents, artists, pedagogists, social workers, educators, school clusters, futurists, corporations, philanthropists, change makers, government representatives & agencies and more that have shared visions to creating a better Singapore and world.

What does working towards our end game look like?



Direct Intervention: Our work with children

Photo Credit: Mark Shi

We are taking Playeum to children and adults. Playeum is forging forward and currently putting plans in place to work directly with children in schools, charities and social spaces.

We are looking to go into schools for our high-touch programmes for children on financial assistance schemes, bringing artful play programmes to schools for children with special needs and working with community partners in various districts in Singapore to serve the community there.

Playeum has worked with several strong partners such as Our Tampines Hub, Mendaki, CDAC, SAFRA, Centre for Fathering, Families for LIFE, SAGE Foundation, ExxonMobil, Salesforce, South Central Community Family Service Centre, Beyond Social Social Services, Campus Impact & YMCA.

We will continue partnerships and work directly with children to provide safe creative spaces and opportunities to develop these life skills through our approach of open-ended play and the arts.

We will now move in stronger to engage different communities, to listen, create, co-create, scaffold and empower children.



Re-imagining the Role of the Adult: Shifting the needle in the system

Photo Credit: Law En Lerk

We see the role of an adult to be co-partners/allies in shifting power structures that empower children to have greater agency and voice in their contributions as active citizens.

Adults can be creative facilitators of children in developing their agency and power to be active citizens. What needs to shift is the role and relationship (power dynamics) between adult and child. This will lead to greater expression of children's voices and the development of 21st-century life skills that will prepare them for their future of work and living, and at the same time, empower adults to become creative facilitators and co-partners of the younger generation.

Playeum will work with adults to build awareness of their own possibilities of empowerment to transform young people and build capability.

- Building a network of collaborators to train educators to deliver curriculum that builds life skills and social emotional learning.
- Developing programmes for educators to understand how they can facilitate and create open-ended play opportunities.
- Creating a network of trainers to deliver parent workshops to help them be better equipped to nurture crucial skills in children.
- Tying in with strong strategic partnerships that amplify our efforts and impact.

Where will Playeum be?

Playeum will hub out of Common Ground @ Bedok.

The Common Ground Civic Centre bridges the public and private sector, and aims to facilitate social innovations that addresses pressing national concerns. Here, not only will Playeum be part of programmes and experiments to build capacity; it will also be the place where the Playeum team will be located at to work towards our impact going forward:



Community Service

Our high-touch and artful play programmes will carry on and run in schools and charities for children from low income/marginalised backgrounds and as well as children with varying disabilities. These programmes use open-ended play, arts and will involve artists to develop, create and run.

These are funded by donors and grant makers.



Outreach

This is where all children can access Playeum's artful play opportunities. All our activities* are open-ended and unstructured, using art and the pure essence of play to trigger the imagination and creative power.

- Free Weekly LIVE series Playeum at Home at 4:30pm every Friday on Facebook (facebook.com/playeum).
- Our Makers' Cart at Our Tampines hub - open to all.
- Interactive programmes & workshops for children; some involving collaboration with artists.
- On-going partnerships for public events.

*Check Playeum's website & social media for future updates.



Working with Adults

With a focus on adult empowerment, Playeum will further work with collaborators to develop adult workshops, talks and series to connect with adults, parents and teachers.

- Learning Through Play course – ECDA endorsed course for pre-school teachers (<https://www.playeum.com/training>).
- Creativity At Play course on SmartUP for parents – launching in 2020.
- Workshops on facilitating and creating open-ended play opportunities.
- In-situ training in schools for capability development of educators.
 - Classroom training, retreats & Creative Facilitation tools
- Space design
 - Re-imagining spaces in classrooms, schools and institutions to become creative safe spaces for learning & imagination

Children are creative contributors to our world, not empty vessels.

Playeum believes:

Every child is creative and competent, and can be an active citizen in our midst.

Every adult is creative and has the ability to be creative facilitators of children they work with and play an important role in nurturing transformative and essential life skills.

We invite those who share our beliefs and vision to join us in creative collaborations and build our future generation.



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