



GUIDE DOGS
SINGAPORE
ENABLING THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

2022

ANNUAL REPORT

Paving The Way Forward

Guide Dogs Singapore Ltd (GDS)

Annual Report 2021/2022





GUIDE DOGS
SINGAPORE
ENABLING THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

GUIDE DOGS SINGAPORE PTE LTD

Annual Report From 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2022

Guide Dogs Singapore Ltd (“GDS”) was registered as a charity under the Charities Act in FY 2008 on 1 September 2008.

Unique Entity No. : 200302260G

Charity Registration : 002116

Registered Address : 50 South Bridge Road, CMO Building,
#03-00, Singapore 058682

Main Office : 20 Sin Ming Lane, Midview City,
#02-53, Singapore 573968



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ABOUT GUIDE DOGS SINGAPORE LTD (GDS)

Guide Dogs Singapore Ltd (GDS) is a social service organisation formed in 2006. We aim to enhance the quality of life and independence for the blind and vision-impaired community in Singapore through the following programmes and services:

- 🐾 Orientation & Mobility (O&M) Training
- 🐾 Independent Living Skills Training
- 🐾 Guide Dog Programme
- 🐾 Accessibility & Technology
- 🐾 Client-Centric Activities
- 🐾 Outreach & Advocacy

As of 30 November 2022, we have served 636 clients and have been responsible for successfully training and pairing 10 guide dog teams in our history, of which 5 are currently active. A steadily increasing number of potential clients have also joined our waiting list.

Registered as a full member of the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) and Institution of a Public Character (IPC) which provides 250% tax deduction for donations, GDS is also an applicant member with the International Guide Dog Federation, and working towards a full membership.



Vision

An inclusive society where every blind and vision-impaired person is empowered for independent living.

Mission

We are dedicated to help blind and vision-impaired people to achieve their fullest potential within society.

Goal

To build a world-class organisation providing excellent service quality and lifelong support to the blind and vision-impaired community.

OUR VALUES

Empowerment

To enable the blind and vision-impaired community to realise their potential and aspirations.

Dedication

To promote the interests of the blind and vision-impaired community through close and dedicated partnerships with our stakeholders.

Inclusiveness

To promote inclusiveness amongst the society towards the blind and vision-impaired community.

Accountability

To always act with accountability and transparency in the course of our work.



PATRON'S MESSAGE

In my message I wish to make three points.

First, I am extremely pleased with the progress which Guide Dogs Singapore has made. It is wonderful that we now have a member of the staff who is able to train guide dogs.

Second, based upon a recent incident involving a visually disabled person, with her guide dog, and a restaurant, I have come to the conclusion that we have to continue to educate the public about the role of guide dogs. They are not pet dogs. They are working dogs and serve as the eyes of the visually disabled person. Our laws and regulations allow guide dogs to accompany their owners into all premises in Singapore.

Third, public knowledge about vision impairment is limited and there are many misconceptions about blindness. We must also do our part to remove the ignorance and prejudice about visually disabled persons. We must continue to work for a future where visually disabled persons are treated as equals and are given the same opportunities, in education, employment and social life. Our vision is a Singapore which is compassionate and inclusive.

Tommy Koh
Ambassador-At-Large,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Patron,
Guide Dogs Singapore Ltd



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The pandemic and how we responded to it put a magnifying glass on the inequities that underserved communities have been facing for decades, including people with vision loss. It serves us well to initiate more inclusive approaches to ensure that our vision impaired (VI) friends are not left behind.

While some lifestyle changes triggered by the pandemic were temporary, there are others that have more staying power, such as the adoption of digital technologies. In response, GDS's IT trainers have designed comprehensive Accessibility and Technology programmes to equip our clients with the skills to remain relevant, keep updated and stay connected. We also retained hybrid formats in our outreach and advocacy efforts to engage various communities through different platforms and touchpoints.

2022 saw many firsts for us: we witnessed the passing of two beloved guide dogs, Jordie and Seretta, and the transition of our client, Alvin Ng, into working with his second guide dog, the newly-graduated Laurie, who came to us courtesy of Guide Dogs Australia.

With the ageing population, increased myopia in children and increased rate of diabetes, vision impairment is on the rise in Singapore.

In order for GDS to meet the needs of the VI community, we are committed to developing and increasing the organisation's professional capabilities, to further scale up our rehabilitation services to reach even more clients.



We have served a total of 636 clients since our inception in 2006, with a marked increase of 101 new clients in 2022 alone. We have hired a third Orientation & Mobility Specialist and will be training our second Guide Dog Mobility Instructor in the coming year.

We want to give a new lease of life to residents with vision impairment in Singapore, by empowering them to become independent, which helps them to re-integrate and continue to be contributing members of society. This is aligned with Singapore's Enabling Masterplan roadmap to have 40% of working-age People With Disabilities employed by 2030. We have also developed programmes leveraging on the expertise of professionals who volunteer their time to conduct HR Clinics for clients seeking employment.

As we navigate and find our footing again in this post-pandemic world, we are heartened by the support and generosity of Singaporeans. We raised \$397,620 through our fundraising campaigns, with more than 800 new donors in 2022.

On behalf of our VI friends, I wish to convey our appreciation and gratitude to all donors, sponsors, corporate partners, volunteers, board members and staff for playing an invaluable role which allows us to continue the important work that we do.

Our heartfelt thanks also go to our long-term donors like L87, Boehringer Ingelheim, TechnipFMC and grant makers like Singapore Totalisator Board. Our veterinarian partner, The Animal Clinic, continues to provide heavily subsidised care for our hardworking guide dogs, a feat they have generously sustained since 2016. We also want to express our deepest gratitude to our overseas partners, Guide Dogs Australia and Nippon Lighthouse Guide Dog Training Center. By providing us with their high calibre dogs, they are also placing their trust in us and granting more VI persons in Singapore the gift of independence and dignity.

The last few years gave GDS an opportunity to rethink our reality and learn to be future-ready. It showed us that we are stronger when we stand together. In Paving The Way Forward, we hope that you will continue to stay with us and support our efforts as we reimagine the future together.



Dr. Wong Hon Tym
Chairman,
Guide Dogs Singapore Ltd

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



A/Prof Wong Hon Tym

GDS Chairman (Jan 2017 - Current)
GDS Director (Jul 2013 - Jan 2017)

Medical Director
National Healthcare Group Eye Institute (NHGEI)

Clinical Director
Centre for Healthcare Innovation (CHI)

Senior Consultant
Dept of Ophthalmology, Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH)

ProTem Chief
Dept of Ophthalmology, Woodlands Health Campus (WHC)

Ms. Shirley Patricia Sutton (Lee)

GDS Deputy Chairwoman & Secretary (Jan 2017 - Current)
GDS Director (Aug 2012 - Jan 2017)

Director
Dynamic PR & Events



Mr. Bryan James O'Loughlan

GDS Director (Sep 2021 - Jan 2022) *Resigned in Jan 2022**
GDS Treasurer (Apr 2016 - Sep 2021)

Principal
CFO Associates Asia

Ms. Trina Tan Li Lian

GDS Treasurer (Sep 2021 - Current)
GDS Director (Feb 2017 - Sep 2021)

Senior Lecturer
Republic Polytechnic



*Mr Bryan James O'Loughlan was relocated out of Singapore.
His role as a Treasurer was succeeded by Trina Tan in Sep 2021, and he continued to serve as a Director till Jan 2022.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Lee Koon Ann Lennie

GDS Director (Veterinary Advisor) (Dec 2015 - Current)

Director & Senior Veterinarian
The Animal Clinic



Ms. Tan Hwei Lan

GDS Director (Apr 2007 - Current)

Senior Lecturer
Health & Social Sciences
Singapore Institute of Technology

Mr. Shum John Dominic Tze-Juen

GDS Director (Jan 2020 - Current)

Partner
King & Wood Mallesons Singapore



Advisor : Amos Miller (Ex-Chairman of GDS & a Guide Dog User),
Founder and CEO at Glidance Inc

Bank : DBS Bank Limited

Auditor : Tan, Chan & Partners

Company Secretary : Mr. Samuel Yuen Wei Loon
(Date appointed: 10 January 2014), Yuen Law LLC



STAFF MEMBERS



Vanessa Loh
General Manager
(Since 2014)



Eileen Koh
Manager,
Community Partnership



Wee Yan Hong
Executive,
Community Partnership



Melody Deng
Senior Orientation & Mobility
Specialist, Client Services
(Joined October 2022)



Simone Oh
Orientation & Mobility
Specialist, Client Services



Cheryl Yeo
Orientation & Mobility
Specialist, Client Services



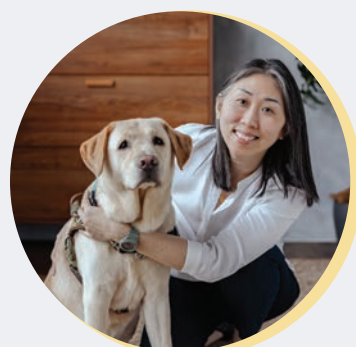
Christina Teng
Guide Dog Mobility
Instructor, Client Services



Chia Hong Sen
Trainer and Consultant,
Accessibility & Technology



Lim Chai Hwee
Admin & Programme
Executive, Client Services
(part-time)



Manda Lee
Admin & Accounts
Executive (part-time)



THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE

(People with vision loss)

ABOUT VISION IMPAIRMENT

Vision impairment refers to a loss of vision that cannot be corrected by glasses or contact lens and can range from partial to complete blindness. Lost vision is usually irreversible and likely to deteriorate over time.

Vision impairment can be caused by different factors such as eye diseases, genetics or health conditions. Some examples include age-related macular degeneration, cataract, diabetes, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, eye injuries, infections and birth defects.

Individuals who lose their vision since young and those who lose it later in life have different training and psychosocial needs.

When a person is unable to depend on their vision to perform daily functions safely, rehabilitation is critical to provide them with the skills to regain independence, and to have improved quality of life.

Sources for further reading about vision impairment:

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/blindness-and-visual-impairment>

Self-management programs for adults with low vision: Needs and challenges. Rees, G., Saw, C. L., Lamoureux, E. L., & Keeffe, J. E. (2007).

Making Eye Health a Population Health Imperative: Vision for Tomorrow. Teutsch, S. M., McCoy, M. A., Woodbury, R. B., & Welp, A. (2016).

COMMON TYPES OF VISION IMPAIRMENT

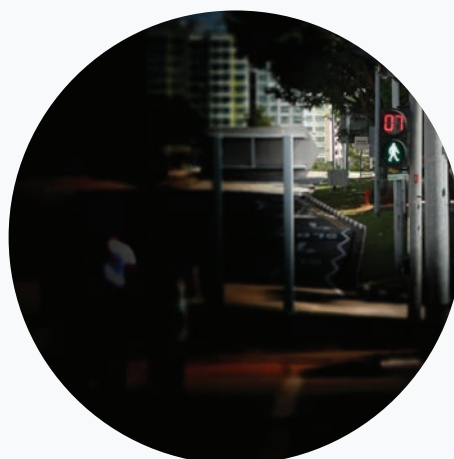


NORMAL VISION

**PERIPHERAL VISION LOSS
(TUNNEL VISION)**



GLAUCOMA,
EARLY STAGE



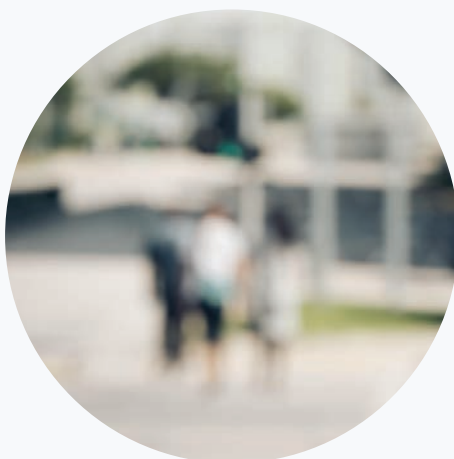
GLAUCOMA,
LATE STAGE

**FLOATERS/SPOTS/
DISTORTED VISION**



DIABETIC RETINOPATHY

CLOUDINESS



CATARACT

CENTRAL VISION LOSS



AGE-RELATED MACULAR
DEGENERATION, AMD

OUR PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES

At Guide Dogs Singapore Ltd (GDS), we believe that people with vision loss should not be limited by their disability. We aim to enhance their quality of life, and advocate for their equal participation in the community.

Our Specialists and Trainers provide a holistic rehabilitation programme that aims to empower our clients with the confidence and skills to live their lives independently and stay active in the community. Their independence in turn offers respite to their caregivers, knowing that they are safe and self-reliant.

Referral and Initial Assessment

Although most of our referrals are from hospitals and social service agencies, GDS also provides our services to individuals who contact us on their own. Our Specialists would visit the new clients for an initial assessment and discuss training needs and goals.

Research-based Programmes*

Our programmes are developed based on the needs of our clients and informed by scientific research. There is research evidence that shows how vision loss can lead to having a decreased quality of life with restrictions to participate in meaningful activities, making those with vision impairment more prone to depression with reduced activity and social isolation. Assistive devices and technology were also found to increase independence, community participation and their quality of life. Our rehabilitation programmes and services are designed to help them reintegrate into society, enabling our clients to lead a more fulfilling life.

*We designed our programmes based on findings from these sources
Preventive Service Utilization among People who Are Blind or Have Low Vision.
Bennett, K. J., McDermott, S., Mann, J. R., & Hardin, J. W. (2016).
Physical Activity Among Older Adults With Visual Impairment: A Scoping Review.
Griffin, M., Smith, B., Howe, P. D., & Phoenix, C. (2016).

Our Programmes & Services

Orientation & Mobility (O&M) Training



Orientation & Mobility (O&M) Training is a critical skill for people with vision loss to remain mobile and active through acquiring the skills and confidence to travel on their own. This is done through training on the use of a white cane to detect and avoid obstacles; and the use of remaining senses such as hearing and smelling; mental mapping and road crossing techniques, to name a few.

Some Examples of O&M Training Goals



Route from home to work or a social venue with the use of public transport such as train or bus and back.



Route from home to market and coffeeshops in their neighbourhood and back.



Indoor familiarisation of a new workplace that allows clients to access their workstation, reception, meeting room and pantry.



Familiarisation of a school layout for students to access their classrooms, canteens, toilets etc.

Orientation & Mobility (O&M) Training



I am more confident about travelling independently around Singapore.

“In just 3 sessions with the O&M Specialist, I learnt the proper way to use a white cane when navigating along pathways, stairs, bus stops, MRT stations, as well as learning how to cross major road junctions safely. The O&M specialist from GDS is patient and professional in their training programme. They always encouraged me to use my problem-solving skills and apply them to the cane skills. The biggest challenge for me was to overcome the initial fear and anxiety that I had. With encouragement from family, friends and GDS, I went out more using my white cane. The training has definitely helped me to regain my mobility and now, I am more confident about travelling independently around Singapore.”

Sebastian Quek, White Cane User

Our Programmes & Services

Independent Living Skills Training

Independent Living Skills enable people with vision loss to manage and organise their daily self-care unaided, for tasks such as grooming, domestic chores and the use of technology. Home modification is also introduced during training to make the home environment safer, more conducive and mobility friendly for clients to perform and manage these tasks effectively.

Home Modification and Skills Training



Source: IEEE Computer Society



Source: PRCVI

Home appliances with flat surfaces are affixed with tactile stickers for people with vision loss to operate.

Clients are taught food preparation techniques to prepare meals for themselves or their families.



Independent Living Skills Training



**Cooking helps me
feel more empowered and
less fearful of losing my vision.**

“I was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa, a rare degenerative eye disease that results in progressive vision loss. A few years back, I felt the need to spend less time on my phone and computer as my vision worsened. I began to spend more time in the kitchen as cooking helps me feel empowered and less fearful of losing my vision. My GDS trainer, Cheryl, has taught me various ways to adapt to carry out my daily chores including cooking and my family can enjoy simple home cooked meals. I am really thankful they are just a call away whenever I need help.”

Khoo En Nee, GDS Client

Our Programmes & Services

Guide Dog Programme

Guide dogs are a great mobility aid for vision impaired people with an active lifestyle. While most of our clients use the white cane, the demand to switch to guide dogs has increased. Guide dogs are proven to speed up and smoothen travel whilst offering a comforting companionship to their handlers.

We train and match suitable dogs with our clients, who are then trained on how to work their dogs and to look after them. Our Guide Dogs and their users receive continual training, assessments and aftercare support to ensure a safe and viable teamwork.

As of 30 November 2022, GDS has been responsible for successfully training and pairing ten guide dog teams in our history, of which five are currently active.



Hong Sen and Clare



Sophie and Orinda



Alvin and Laurie



Bessie and Jade



Thomas and Eve

Guide Dog Programme



Independence Continues With A Second Guide Dog.

“At 31 years old, I lost my eyesight suddenly due to complications caused by my coma. Living in a world of darkness, I was devastated and the loss of independence caused me to fall into depression. I was paired with my first guide dog Seretta in 2012 and for nine years, Seretta was my pair of eyes and faithful companion. She has made such a positive impact on my life, keeping me safe in my travel and helping me gain independence in my daily living. Seretta is a part of me and without her, I wouldn't be able to be where I am today.

GDS has paired me with another guide dog, Laurie, who is very smart, intelligent, and hardworking. With Laurie, I am able to continue the life-enhancing journey that Seretta has started and maintain my independence. Besides, I know that I will always have a trustworthy companion by my side.”

Alvin Ng, GDS Guide Dog User since 2012

Our Programmes & Services

Guide Dog Programme



New dog-in-training






We were delighted to welcome a new dog-in-training, Matt, from Guide Dogs Australia who arrived in Singapore in August 2022. He underwent 5 months of formal training with our Guide Dog Mobility Instructor and was subsequently trained with his new user as a team for an intensive few weeks.

The generosity and kindness we have received made it possible for Matt to be a part of Guide Dogs Singapore as we continue to train more guide dogs to support people with vision impairment, providing them hope, independence and enhancing their overall quality of life.





Accessibility & Technology

Technology has made communication and the management of daily activities easier for people with vision loss. It is also a critical skill to have in this day and age to be connected with the community.

Some of the benefits of technology for people with vision loss include:

-  Connection with family and friends through text and social apps
-  Navigation to enhance independent travel
-  Remaining relevant in the work force
-  Shopping for essential items
-  Staying updated on current affairs and knowledge

In FY2022, we conducted a total of:

-  304 one-to-one training sessions
-  2 short courses
-  19 workshops
-  7 episodes of podcasts



Our Programmes & Services

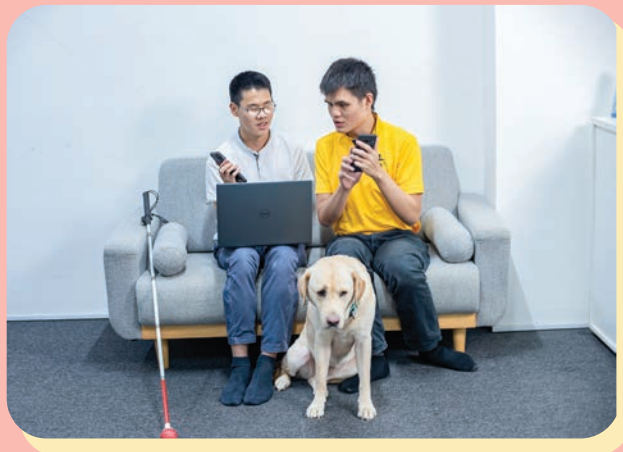
Accessibility & Technology

IT Courses & Workshops

Our trainers conduct a variety of IT courses and workshops covering a diverse range of topics to suit the needs of users with different knowledge levels of technology.

The short courses provided an introduction to computers and assistive technology, web browsing and social media on iOS. It allowed vision impaired (VI) participants who have the same interests and objectives to attend the training as a group and learn from fellow VIs.

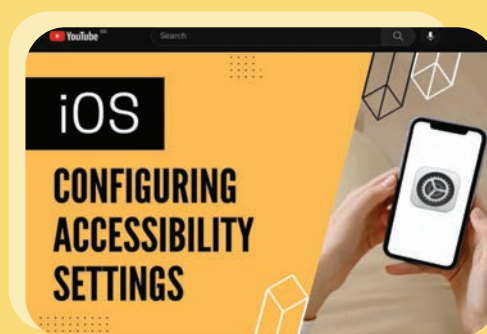
Virtual workshops were also conducted for various levels of learning. A course for Beginners, the Accessibility and Assistive Technology (A²T) workshops provide an introduction to new apps and services to our clients for those interested to learn more about technology.



At an intermediate level, the Vision Impaired Technology Experience (VITeX) workshop is designed for advanced users to share information and exchange resources with fellow VI users, with guidance from GDS IT trainers.

One-to-One Training Sessions

One-to-one training sessions are individual lessons customised to the needs of the learners. In such sessions, the trainers tailor the training and content to meet the unique needs and requirements of each learner, thereby ensuring that the course of training is relevant and effective in meeting their learning goals.



New Initiative in 2022: VITeX Podcasts (VICast)

We produced seven episodes of podcasts to generate more interest in assistive technology, and as a platform to discuss and demonstrate technology that is relevant to the VI community. The content of our podcasts is influenced by feedback and demand from our clients. While our workshops allow a more interactive learning space, podcasts make it convenient for listeners to learn at their own time and pace.

Tune in to our podcasts [here](#).

Accessibility & Technology



Managing Daily Activities with Assistive Technology.

“Two years ago, my eyesight started deteriorating due to Retinitis Pigmentosa and a friend recommended I take up training with GDS.

From my IT training sessions with GDS, I learned how to use assistive technology like screen readers to help me with using various applications, reading emails and shopping online. For example, I use the VoiceOver function to read messages sent by my friends in WhatsApp group chats, and use Zoom to attend remote training sessions.

In addition, I can continue using internet banking services and am able to shop on online platforms such as Shopee and NTUC FairPrice to make purchases. I have also learnt how to use GrabFood to order dinner for my parents, which helps me to save loads of time in my daily life.

Compared to before when I had to strain my eyes to try and use the computer, I now use assistive technology to perform the tasks instead. Thanks to GDS, I am more confident in using my phone and PC. I hope that other VI persons will be able to benefit from the organisation's O&M and IT training, as it has helped me with managing my daily activities greatly. ”

Yong Pei Yueng, GDS Client

Our Programmes & Services

Client-Centric Activities

We organise social events and skill-based workshops regularly for our clients. It gives them an avenue to make new friends, form communities of similar interests, and support one another through learning and social interaction. Such activities also encourage our clients to practice their mobility and independent living skills out of their homes, ultimately increasing their confidence and improving their skills through positive experiences.



Client-Centric Activities



Increasing Confidence Through Social Activities.

“The training and services that I received from GDS have turned me into a more confident person. The yoga fundraiser was the first activity that I joined with GDS and through that activity, I met many people with the same eye condition.

After taking the first step to move out of my comfort zone, I began to attend more activities organised by GDS, such as pottery, hiking at MacRitchie, baking class and even kayaking. I also enrolled myself in white cane training with Simone (Orientation & Mobility Specialist) to learn the proper skills and techniques of using my white cane and mental map to ensure safe travel. Now, I overcome the fear of travelling alone and have the ability and freedom to travel around Singapore independently and safely.”

Kelvin Lee, GDS Client

Our Programmes & Services

Outreach & Advocacy



People with vision impairment who have undergone rehabilitation programmes would thrive well in an inclusive society that sees beyond their disabilities and treat them as equal individuals capable of contributing to society. A strong advocate for inclusive employment, GDS trains and equips our clients with the skills to be gainfully employed so that they can lead a financially independent, socially integrated and engaged life.

Our outreach to companies, schools and government agencies include talks on the understanding of vision impairment and guide dogs with the aim to affect policies, inclusive hiring and education, as well as improve accessibility of guide dogs.

In 2022, we resumed conducting physical outreach talks and programmes with various schools and organisations which provided our partners more opportunities to engage with our vision impaired clients and guide dog teams.



GDS CLIENTS



636

total clients
in FY22



increase of

101

Was 535 in FY21

GENDER

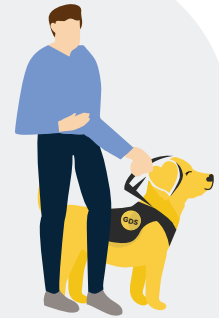


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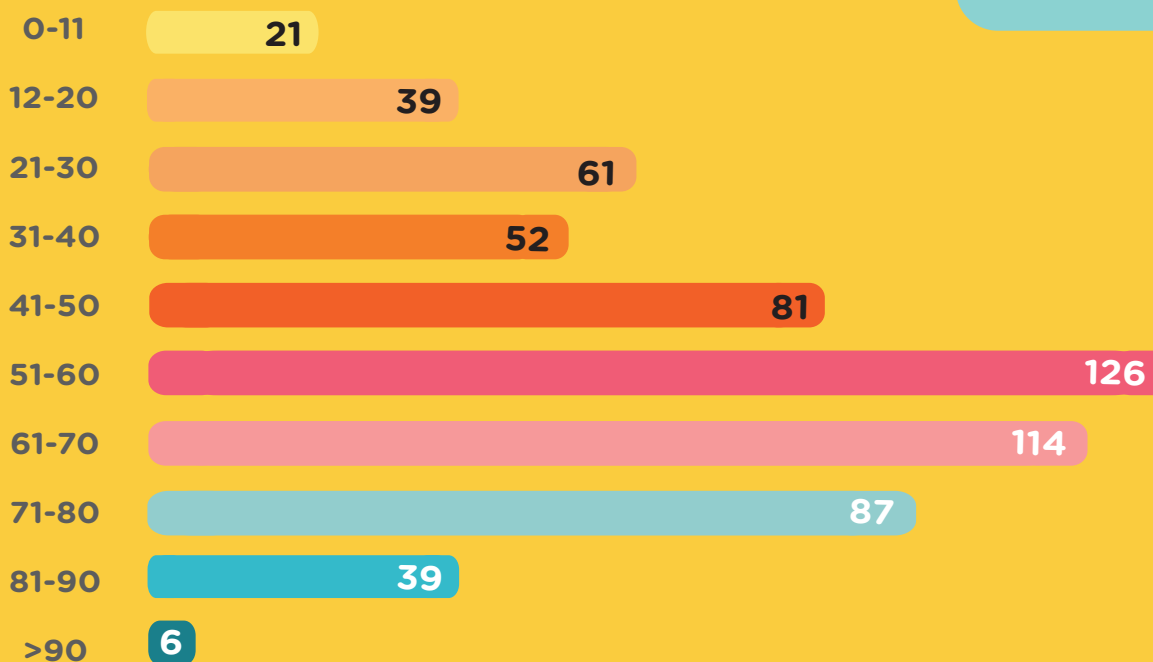
Female (44%)

358

Male (56%)



AGE



* Missing number is due to unknown date of birth.
Data is from 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2022



Paving The Way Forward

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

“My struggles have not yet been completely overcome. They still return from time to time. Having taken Orientation and Mobility (O&M) lessons with Guide Dogs Singapore, I’m much better now. Over the years, my O&M instructors have taught me skills which have **given me confidence to move about on my own**, take public transport, go to the minimart, and go to a mall to meet friends. Knowing how to orientate myself is the key.”



Sherriza Hareani Jalil, GDS Client



“To me, Jade is a precious gift. **She keeps me safe in my travel. Now, I no longer fear stepping out of the house.** At home, Jade’s antics and affection uplift my spirits. She is so much more than a guide dog to me.”

Bessie Lim, GDS Guide Dog User since 2022

“Eve has been my eyes and unwavering companion. With her by my side, **I’ve rediscovered the world with newfound confidence.** I trust that Eve can confidently navigate through obstacles and keep me safe during travel. **She has given me the gift of independence**, allowing me to embark on morning runs with ease and joy.”



Thomas Chan, GDS Guide Dog User since 2022

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

“The training with Guide Dogs Singapore (GDS) has not only helped me to become more independent and active, but they also helped my family to understand my vision loss and how they can better provide assistance. The various training and client-centric activities with GDS have taught me that even with vision impairment, **I am still able to live the lifestyle that I want and this gave me hope in life.**”



Pauline Siow



“The Orientation and Mobility training with Guide Dogs Singapore gave me more freedom and independence and **I do not have to constantly depend on my family or friends for help.** I feel more confident to travel alone as well as learning how to be specific in asking questions to solicit help from the public.”

Neela Davi D/O Sarkunam

“After attending the IT lessons with Guide Dogs Singapore (GDS), I now have a better understanding of what assistive technology is available to me, and I have been able to incorporate it into my daily routine. **I am now able to stay connected with my family and friends, access online reading materials, and browse through social media platforms** like YouTube. Learning assistive technology with GDS has also helped me to work more efficiently as I can easily search for information from the Internet and keep up to date with online news articles.”

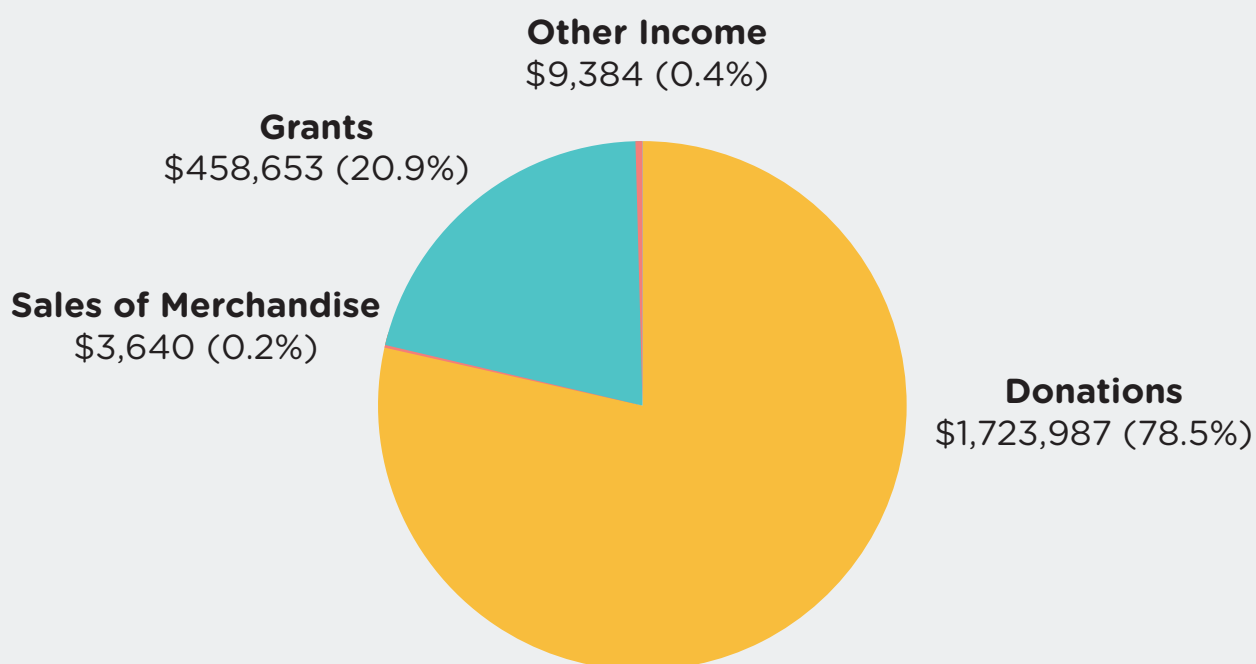


Elizabeth Lim

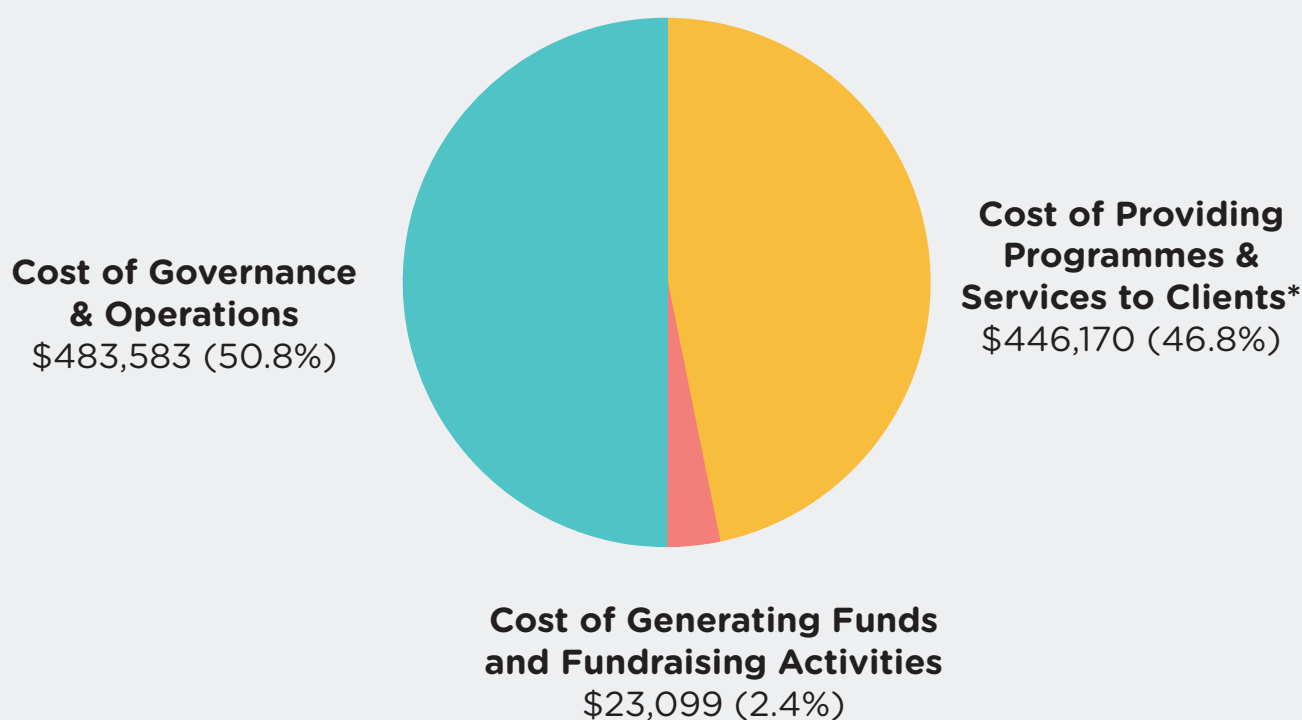
HOW FUNDS WERE USED

(Period: 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2022)

Sources of Income



How Funds Were Used

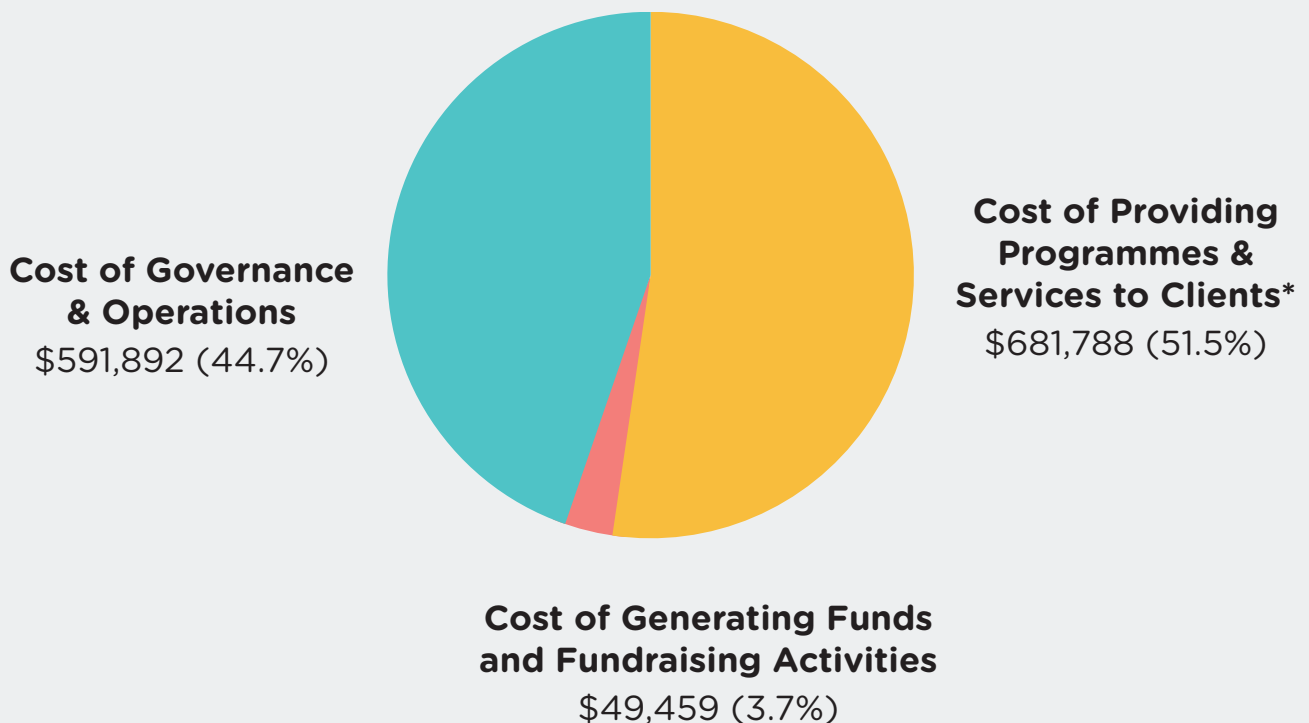


*Programmes and services mentioned from page 16 to 29 in this report

PROJECTED EXPENDITURE FOR FY2023

(Period: 1 December 2022 to 30 November 2023)

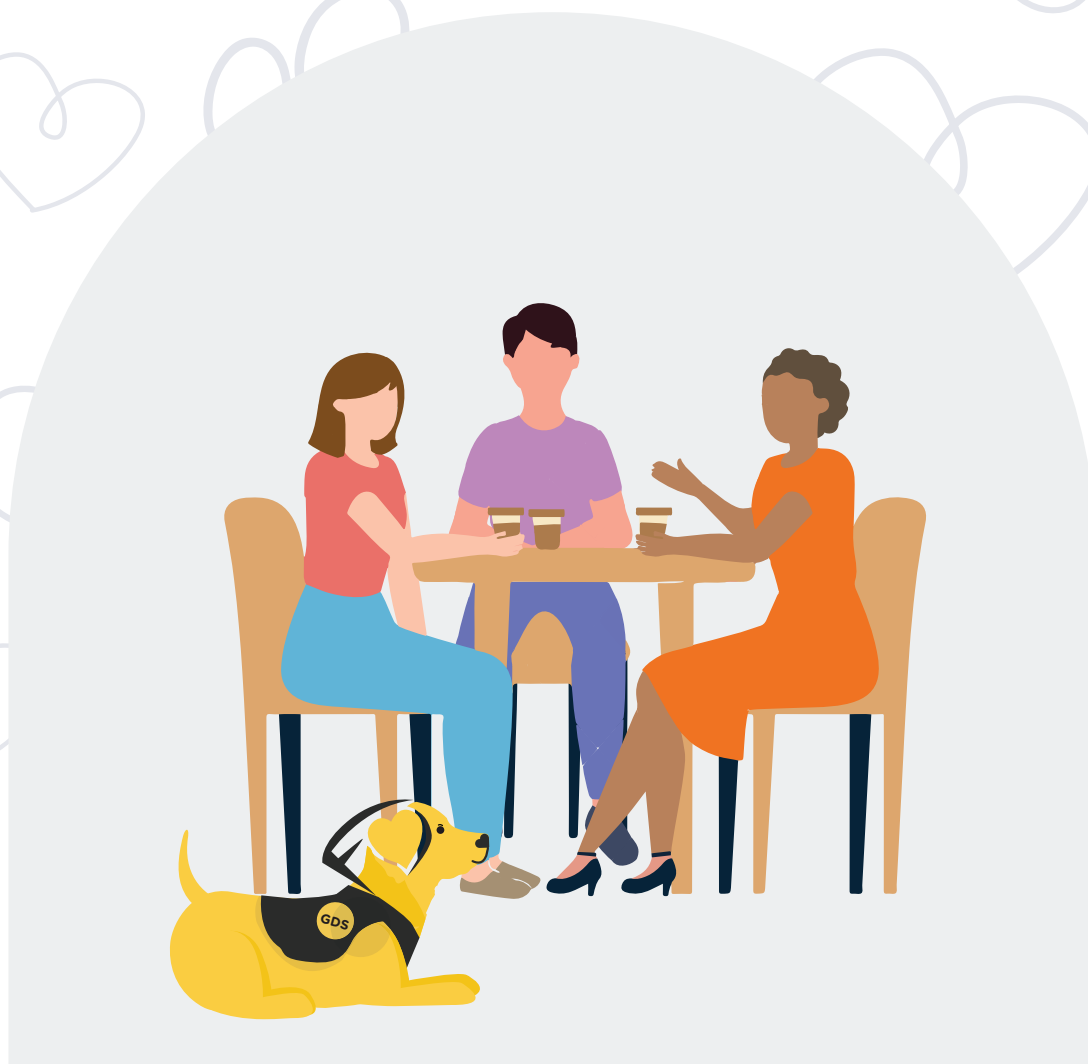
Fundraising and Expenditure Set Aside for Fiscal Year 2023



We will be investing in the development of staff capability and capacity in the following year to support the growing number of clients and demand for the use of guide dogs. We are also expanding our outreach and advocacy efforts to improve guide dog access, as well as information and physical infrastructure accessibility in Singapore for the vision impaired community.

There will also be additional expenditure on professionalising our Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) manual and digitalising our operations.

**Programmes and services mentioned from page 16 to 29 in this report*



HIGHLIGHTS & IMPACT

CLIENT WORK

Our impact with your support



636 Total clients
in fiscal year



1,490

Total number of
direct support hours



7

Podcasts

101

New clients
in fiscal year



23

Outreach &
advocacy talks,
training workshops



28 Client-centric
activities



92.5%

Clients attained
their training goals



21

Accessibility &
Technology workshops
& sharing sessions



ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED FOR CLIENTS

Social events offer our clients an opportunity to make new friends of similar interests, and support one another through learning and social interaction. Such activities are specially curated to make the experience rich for people with vision loss and encourage our clients to practice their mobility skills out of their homes, ultimately increasing their confidence through positive experiences.

GDS Engagement Sessions & Programmes

Welcome Tea for New GDS Clients



We organised a Welcome Tea session for newly registered clients, giving them an opportunity to connect with us and foster friendships with existing clients who have benefitted greatly from our training programmes. It allowed them to have a better understanding of our rehabilitation services as they heard from our Specialists, as well as from our GDS Chairman, Dr Wong Hon Tym, as he shared insights about vision impairment.

Such engagement sessions are important to help build confidence, provide reassurance and increase willingness amongst new clients and their caregivers to seek help and support through GDS's rehabilitation programmes and services.

Guide Dogs Information Session

GDS clients who were keen to apply for guide dogs attended the informative session held in September 2022 where they had their questions answered by Christina, our Guide Dog Mobility Instructor, and by Thomas, a new working guide dog user. Clients were briefed on the importance of the commitment involved, and the benefits and challenges of having a guide dog. They also experienced a simulated guide dog walk with good girl, Eve, who volunteered for the role during the session.

“GDS training has definitely made me more independent and confident in travelling alone. This gave me more freedom and I feel happier that I do not have to constantly depend on others for help. I went for GDS Guide Dogs Information Session, and I realised that a guide dog can make my travelling more efficient, in the sense that I will be able to travel safely and quickly, and also help me avoid obstacles. This is my motivation to continue improving and working on my orientation and mobility skills as I know that having strong orientation and mobility skills is required to get a guide dog.”

Neela Davi, GDS Client

GDS Engagement Sessions & Programmes

Parenting Sharing Session: The delicate balance between parental protection and autonomy

We conducted a sharing session for parents raising children with vision impairment as they discussed and shared their life stories on overcoming the challenges faced, and the delicate balance between parental protection and autonomy in order for their VI child to learn independence. This provides caregivers with a platform to connect with one another and offer their support to other caregivers with shared resources.

Human Resource (HR) Clinic

As part of our service to the vision impaired community, we develop programmes to provide employment support for VI clients to help them re-integrate into society. We leveraged on the expertise of professionals who volunteered their time to conduct a HR Clinic for clients seeking employment.

The learning objectives were to equip them with the skills, knowledge and mindset required to attend interviews with poise and confidence; techniques to handle difficult interview situations; practicing their interview skills, so that they develop the confidence to handle different types of interview questions through mock interviews.

For clients who attended the HR Clinic, a second session was conducted to follow up on the progress of their job search and development. We would like to extend our appreciation to the trainers from PP Consulting Asia Pte Ltd for their time and commitment.







GDS Engagement Sessions & Programmes

Assistive & Accessible Technology (A²T) Information Sessions

Our Assistive and Accessible Technology (A²T) Info and Q&A sessions provided our clients and their caregivers the opportunity to understand how they can use technology to enhance their quality of life and independence. During the sessions, our IT trainers demonstrated the accessibility options available on different operating systems across various devices such as mobiles, tablets and laptops. An extensive Q&A session followed to clarify any doubts attendees might have about the IT training and support GDS provides. Clients who are keen were then able to sign up for one-on-one lessons with our IT trainers.








List of topics covered:

-  Accessibility & Technology: Q&A and Feedback Session
-  Introduction to Accessibility and Assistive Technology for Students
-  Accessibility & Technology Short Course - Introduction to Technology and Computers
-  Accessible and Assistive Technology (A²T) Information Session (4 runs)

Vision Impaired Technology Experience (VITEx) Information and Sharing Sessions

VITEx is a series of sessions catered for clients with an advanced knowledge in technology to showcase different areas of technology. Each session focused on a unique topic, such as audio production, basics of web development and accessibility, entertainment and productivity. Participants were able to observe live demonstrations and get some hands-on experience with the technology, as well as to have a conversation through sharing and discussions with our IT trainers and consultants.

List of topics covered:

-  Audio Content Production (re-run)
-  Computer Buying Guide
-  Mobile Buying Guide
-  Mobile Productivity on iOS
-  Mobile Productivity on Android
-  Discussion on Cyber Security
-  Exploring Reading Resources and Apps
-  Optical Character Recognition and Object Recognition Solutions

Activities by Schools & Student-Led Initiatives

We are grateful to the following schools and student-led initiatives for organising these fun-filled activities for our clients to enjoy.

NTU Welfare Services Club (WSC) Regular Service Project Vision of Hope (RSPVH)

Christmas Terrarium Workshop

To set a festive mood, the students organised their annual Christmas event with a terrarium making workshop for GDS clients to engage in handicrafts for the jolly season. The activity was conducted through Zoom where everyone joined in and connected online, with NTU student volunteers facilitating the workshop at our clients' homes.



Outing to ComCrop Rooftop Farm

Our GDS clients enjoyed a fun-filled day at ComCrop, Singapore's only commercial rooftop farming complex. They explored how urban farming is done in Singapore and enjoyed lunch prepared by a group of chefs who are vision impaired themselves, from non-profit organisation, Etch Empathy.



Activities by Schools & Student-Led Initiatives



Hiking at MacRitchie Reservoir

An active and light-hearted hiking trip at MacRitchie Reservoir where our GDS clients enjoyed the fresh air and companionship of the student volunteers.

Pottery Workshop at Thow Kwang Pottery Jungle

Together with the students from NTU, GDS clients tried their hand in pottery making at Thow Kwang Pottery Jungle, Singapore's oldest surviving dragon kiln built in the 1940s. They made some lovely pottery creations which they got to take home for keepsakes.



Halloween Spooky Bakes

A baking workshop led by Chef Lester Lee, our GDS clients had a blast whipping up some Halloween-themed cookies with the help of the student volunteers and enjoyed the sweet treats made.

Activities by Schools & Student-Led Initiatives

Republic Polytechnic (RP) Diploma in Outdoor and Adventure Learning



Kayaking at Kallang Basin

Celebrating Singapore's 57th National Day, the students from RP held an inclusive kayaking session for our clients at Kallang Basin. They were paired with students who possess a SCF 2 Star Award in kayaking, and paddled together on a double Sit-On-Top kayak as they enjoyed the outdoors.



One-day Adventure Camp

Our clients were treated to a day of fun-filled adventure organised by the students from RP. They participated in activities which included a nature walk at Admiralty Park, having a go at outdoor cooking, traversing through high and low elements obstacle courses and played team bonding games!



Activities by Schools & Student-Led Initiatives

National University of Singapore (NUS) Students' Community Service Club (CSC)

Project R.A.I.S.E. x Guide Dogs Singapore Chinese New Year Beneficiary Outing

In its 18th iteration, Project R.A.I.S.E. collaborated with GDS to organise outings for our clients and fundraising drives to support the vision impaired community.

The students from NUS took our clients out to Chinatown for a shopping trip to get Chinese New Year goodies for the festive season. They also conducted a handicraft session where our clients made CNY decorations out of red envelope packets which were sold to raise funds for GDS.



Community Initiatives

Yoga for Clients

We encourage and promote an active lifestyle amongst our vision impaired clients. In partnership with SP+ Pilates | Yoga Studio, GDS is able to offer subsidised yoga classes for them. We express our appreciation to the team, with special thanks to Instructor Dee for her patience and dedication in guiding our VI clients during these sessions.

Invitation From Singapore Repertory Theatre

The Singapore Repertory Theatre (SRT) supports various social service agencies and we are grateful for the invitations extended to our VI clients to audio-described plays and touch tours for them to experience the performing arts. Here are some of the accessible productions our clients got to enjoy:

-  Girls Like That
-  Gretel and Hansel
-  Miss Julie
-  The Almighty Sometimes
-  The LKY Musical



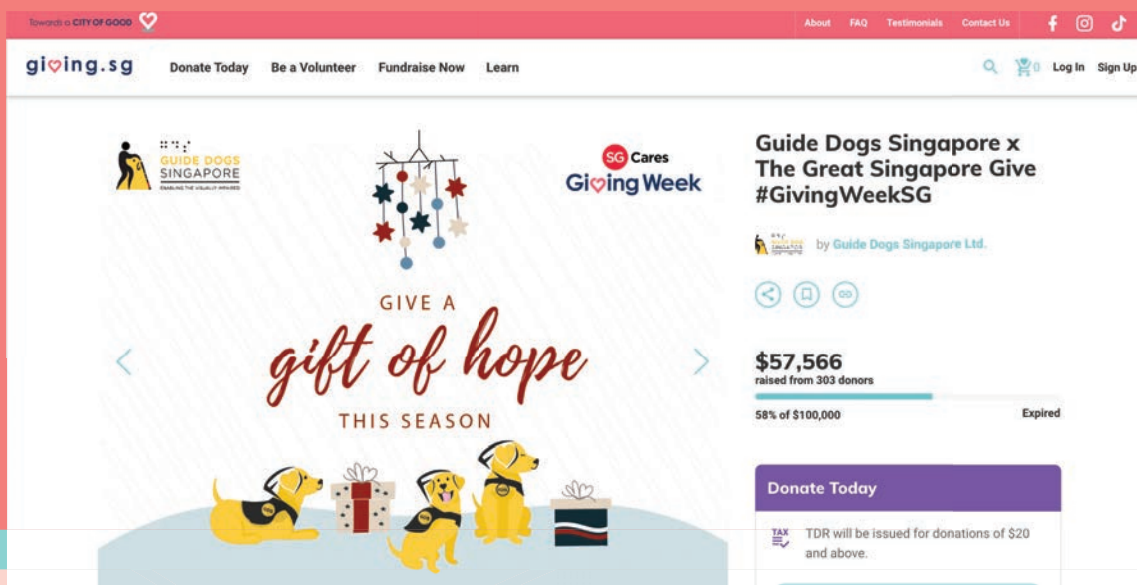
GDS FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS

Season of Giving

1 December 2021 to 31 January 2022



The year-end festive season is a good time for us to give back and be thoughtful of the needs of those with vision impairment (VI) around us. In conjunction with SGCares Giving Week, we held a fundraising initiative to empower the VI community to regain their mobility and enjoy the holiday season just like everyone else. We **raised a total of \$159,486** through various sources for this campaign.

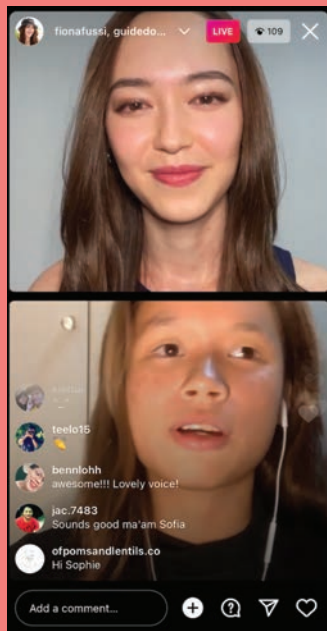


<https://www.giving.sg/gds/sog2021>

GDS Fundraising Campaigns

Season of Giving

1 December 2021 to 31 January 2022



Late Night Thoughts With Fiona Fussi & Sophie Soon 2 December 2021

In partnership with GDS supporter and media personality, Fiona Fussi, we co-hosted our first Instagram LIVE together with GDS client and guide dog user, Sophie Soon. They discussed about Sophie's unique bond with her guide dog Orinda, and guide dog accessibility in Singapore, as Sophie shared her personal stories and challenges they have faced as a pair.

Let's Talk About Vision Loss

6 December 2021

With limited opportunities to engage our community of supporters through physical events, we organised a Facebook LIVE moderated by renowned host, Anita Kapoor, to help raise awareness and destigmatise vision loss. Two of our clients, Hong Sen and Halimi, were invited to address various topics of vision impairment, such as common misconceptions about the VI community and accessibility for them in Singapore. Our Chairman, Dr Wong Hon Tym, was also present to share his insight on GDS's future goals and commitments to support those we serve.

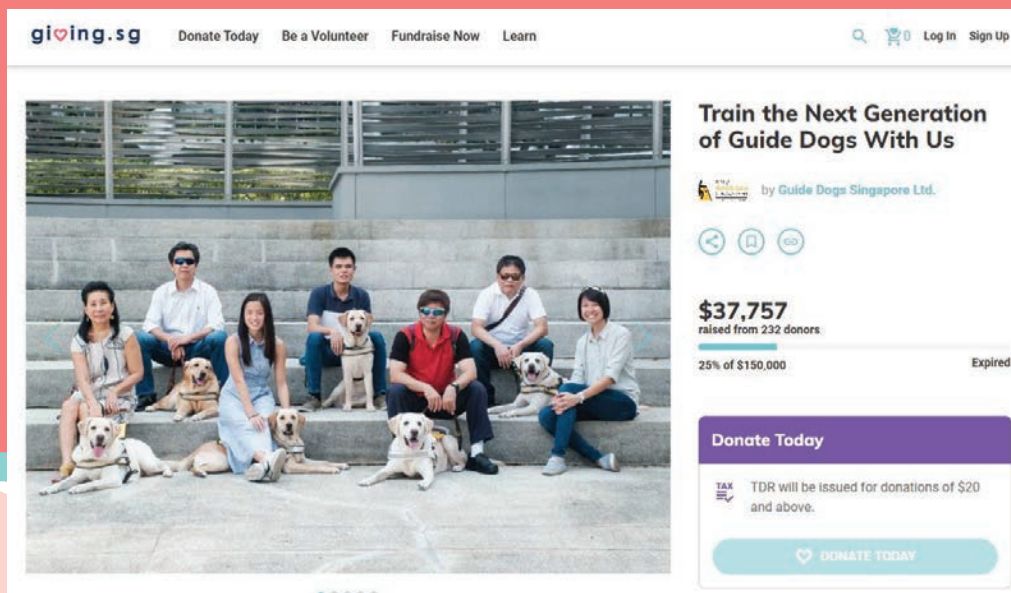


Training the Next Generation of Guide Dogs

1 February to 31 March 2022



In 2020, we welcomed three new dogs-in-training, Eve, Jade and Laurie. Three clients were successfully trained and paired with the dogs. As the demand for guide dogs continued to grow, we conducted a fundraiser in 2022 to bring in and train the next batch of guide dogs for clients who were waiting to be matched. We are very thankful for all the support received and **raised a total of \$159,104.88**. The donations received will be used to provide continued support and assessment for our guide dog users and guide dogs throughout their working life. Without your kind contributions, we would not be able to continue doing the work that we do!



<https://www.giving.sg/gds/nggd2022>

Training the Next Generation of Guide Dogs

1 February to 31 March 2022



A Day in the Life of Our Guide Dog Teams

We ventured into the daily lives of our guide dog teams in a three-part series, where we followed our guide dogs, Clare, Jordie and Orinda. We learnt how they improve the lives of their vision impaired users, enabling them to lead an active lifestyle.

We also interviewed GDS guide dog user, Alvin, on the retirement of his first guide dog, Seretta, and his training journey with his second guide dog, Laurie, which demonstrates the organisation's continual support for our VI clients and guide dog users.



Meet & Greet With Friends of GDS

To engage our community of influential supporters, we hosted a face-to-face session with key opinion leaders and friends of GDS. They had the opportunity to meet our guide dog users and experience first-hand what it is like to move around without sight. While blindfolded, they navigated a mini obstacle course using a white cane and a guide dog.



Virtual Flag Day

23 April to 31 May 2022

Every year, we commemorate International Guide Dog Day (IGDD) by celebrating the hard work of our guide dogs and the dedicated professionals behind every successful guide dog team. We launched a Virtual Flag Day fundraising campaign as we were unable to organise a physical Flag Day in 2022 due to Safe Management Measures. Through this initiative, we invited individuals and partners to pledge their support for our guide dog heroes and **raised a total of \$29,187.54**. We rely mostly on donations to fund our work and bring us closer to our goals which would not be possible without the generosity of our donors.



Meet & Greet With Guide Dog Teams

7 May 2022

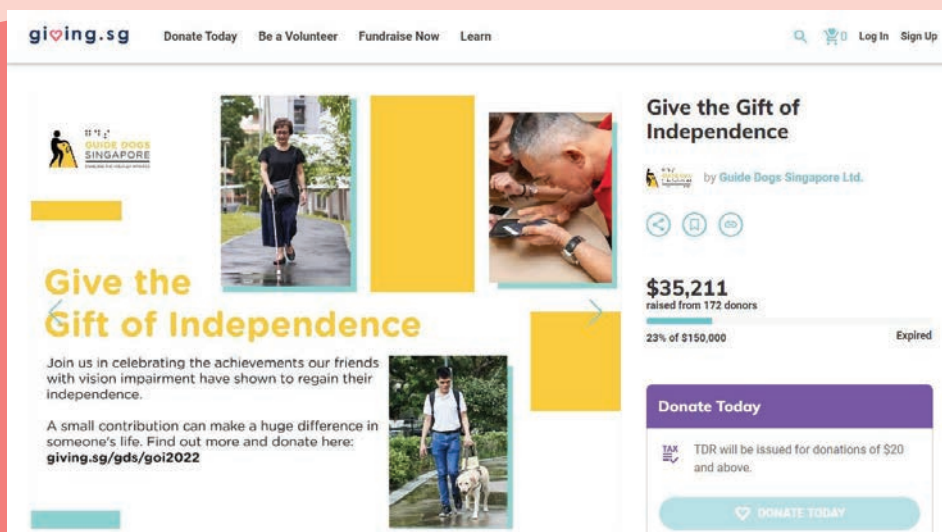
For the first time after 2 years, we hosted a physical Meet & Greet session with our Guide Dog Teams in celebration of International Guide Dog Day. We invited supporters of GDS to join us on a Saturday morning to learn more about the vision impaired community and meet with our guide dog users. They had the opportunity to chat with our clients and found out more about how they work together with their trusty guide dogs.

Give the Gift of Independence

1 August to 31 October 2022

White Cane Day falls on 15 October which celebrates the achievements of people with vision impairment (VI), and the freedom and independence that the white cane brings along. With the assistance of this mobility aid, people with VI can travel independently, regain their confidence and step out of their comfort zone.

Behind every individual with VI lies a dedicated caregiver, providing much-needed care and support. We published a series on #SupportingCaregivers on social media to shed light on the struggles of caregivers and how they manage to support their loved ones with the help of resources provided by GDS. We **raised a total of \$49,931** during this fundraiser.



The screenshot shows the fundraising page for 'Give the Gift of Independence' on the giving.sg platform. The page features a header with navigation links: 'Donate Today', 'Be a Volunteer', 'Fundraise Now', and 'Learn'. The main content area includes a large yellow banner with the title 'Give the Gift of Independence' and a description: 'Join us in celebrating the achievements our friends with vision impairment have shown to regain their independence. A small contribution can make a huge difference in someone's life. Find out more and donate here: giving.sg/gds/goi2022'. There are three small images: a woman walking with a cane, a man using a cane, and a woman walking a dog. On the right, a progress bar shows '\$35,211 raised from 172 donors' out of a goal of '\$150,000', with a progress of '23%'. A 'Donate Today' button is visible at the bottom right.



Give the Gift of Independence

1 August to 31 October 2022

Guide Dogs Graduation Ceremony

24 September 2022

To celebrate the graduation of our three newly paired guide dog teams, we held a Guide Dogs Graduation Ceremony and invited family, friends, and supporters of GDS to join us in this special occasion. The event hosted by Paul Foster consisted of a panel discussion, experiential activity booths, sharing by the newly paired guide dog teams, an appreciation ceremony for our donors and volunteers, and a buffet lunch catered for all our guests.

Our sincere appreciation goes out to everyone who has supported these amazing guide dogs on their journey to graduation. It would not have been possible without your support and generosity.

Congratulations to our graduated guide dog teams. You may watch their journey together [here](#).



RESEARCH & INNOVATION

TOTS – A set of feeding toys designed for vision impaired children

<https://cnalifestyle.channelnewsasia.com/women/inclusive-product-design-visually-impaired-children-eating-lim-jin-ying-338076>

The lack in inclusivity design spurred 22-year-old product designer, Lim Jin Ying, to create TOTS, a set of feeding toys for vision impaired toddlers and children, as part of her LASALLE College of the Arts final-year project.

The thoughtfully designed feeding set incorporates tactile and auditory feedback for babies with total vision loss, as well as bright colours for those with partial vision loss. These features are meant to help engage different senses to make eating a fun experience for vision impaired children and encourage self-feeding.

As part of her in-depth research, the young designer sought the advice of various individuals from the vision impaired community, including GDS clients Chia Hong Sen and Lionel Tan, who provided consultancy and feedback during product testing.



Product designer Lim Jin Ying with GDS clients Lionel Tan (left) and Chia Hong Sen (right) who are testing the product (Photo: Lim Jin Ying)



TOTS, a set of four feeding toys consists of a bowl, smasher, stirrer and spoon

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

(As of 30 Nov 2022)

12,855

+486 from 2021



Facebook
Followers



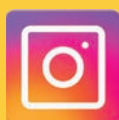
Facebook Likes

8,049

+383 from 2021

3,563

+581 from 2021

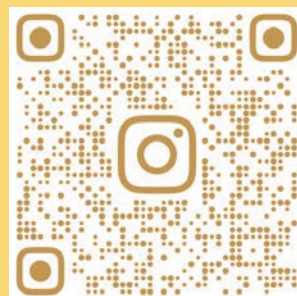


Instagram
Followers

Follow us on our social media pages for the latest updates:



@GuideDogsSingapore



@guidedogs_sg

#GDS

#GuideDogsSingapore

#GuideDogsSG

The Straits Times, 28 December 2021

Orinda & Me: How guide dogs help the visually impaired in S'pore navigate pandemic challenges

<https://www.straitstimes.com/life/orinda-me-how-guide-dogs-help-the-visually-impaired-in-spore-navigate-pandemic-challenges>

Due to social distancing measures and changes in public spaces, guide dogs have been crucial in helping their vision impaired handlers adapt to the new normal. Guide dogs not only assist with navigation but also provide companionship and emotional support during the challenging times.

Caring Commuters, 9 March 2022

3 Nuggets About Guide Dog Teams For Commuters Who Want To Help

<https://www.caringcommuters.gov.sg/in-the-spotlight/3-nuggets-about-guide-dog-teams-for-commuters-who-want-to-help>

Here are three interesting facts about guide dog teams in Singapore. Firstly, not all dogs can become guide dogs as they are specially selected and bred. Secondly, the guide dog team is a collaborative relationship. While guide dogs are intelligent, they still rely on their handler to provide instructions along the way. Lastly, there are limitations as to what a guide dog can help its handler with, so guide dog users do appreciate help from fellow commuters.

Infocomm Media Development Authority, 20 May 2022

Closing the digital divide for persons with visual impairment

<https://www.imda.gov.sg/Content-and-News/Content-Hub/Content-Hub-Articles/2022/05/Closing-the-digital-divide-for-persons-with-visual-impairment>

Initiatives like the Digital Inclusion Programmes, introduced by IMDA, aim to provide affordable digital tools and promote digital literacy for the vision impaired community. By harnessing experience-based co-design, the Singapore Institute of Technology and Guide Dogs Singapore work to develop an accessible toolkit that help persons with vision impairment better navigate digital devices.

The Straits Times, 31 May 2022

SMRT rolls out app to help visually impaired commuters at Woodlands transport hub

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/transport/smrt-rolls-out-app-to-help-visually-impaired-commuters-at-woodlands-transport-hub>

Singapore's SMRT introduced the NaviLens app to help commuters with vision impairment navigate Woodlands Integrated Transport Hub. The app utilises audio cues and colour-coded tags to guide users. The system is designed to be user-friendly and requires no special hardware, making it more accessible for vision impaired individuals.

8world, 30 June 2022

狮城有约 | 退休动物：工作犬

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddpcOlKgWh4>

Guide dog Seretta officially retired at the age of 11 years old and has found a forever home with her handler, Alvin, who could not bear the thought of parting ways with his loyal companion. Alvin has made sure to provide Seretta with a comfortable and loving environment where she can enjoy her well-deserved retirement. Their heartwarming relationship serves as a testament to the powerful connection that can exist between humans and their guide dogs, even after the dog's working days have come to an end.

Today Online, 17 July 2022

Kitchenware for Vision Impaired Hits the Shelves

<https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/youths-invent-sign-language-learning-app-family-friends-those-hearing-loss-1945791>

Folks Kitchenware by designer Kevin Chiam was launched for sale in March by collectibles retailer Mighty Jaxx, with proceeds channelled to Guide Dogs Singapore. The Folks Kitchenware helps to ensure that people with vision impairment are able to cook more safely and efficiently in the kitchen, with their specially designed knife and chopping board.

Change Agency, 5 September 2022

Supporting charities that do good: Working with Guide Dogs Singapore

<https://www.changeagency.sg/post/supporting-charities-that-do-good-working-with-guide-dogs-singapore>

The Change Agency has worked with GDS for three campaigns over the past year. Change Agency helped GDS develop fundraising strategies, create content, and establish partnerships. These collaborations aim to raise awareness about guide dogs, enhance the lives of the vision impaired, and foster a more inclusive society in Singapore.

CNA Insider, 25 September 2022

Still a pup but taking her human to places – as the first guide dog fully trained in Singapore

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/cna-insider/eve-first-guide-dog-fully-trained-singapore-visually-impaired-2960171>

CNA Insider, 2 October 2022

Goldador puppy learning to be a guide dog

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zeIKdggMPhY>

Meet Eve, the first guide dog to be fully trained in Singapore. Eve is part of Guide Dogs Singapore's plan to shorten a new client's wait time for a dog, from a minimum of two years to a minimum of 6 months instead. Training the dogs in a local environment from the start of their training journey helps them to be better acclimatised to the hustle and bustle of Singapore neighbourhoods.

CNA Insider followed Eve's training from Day 1, to see her go from being distracted by the common mynah, to calmly taking her handler aboard trains and buses. It is a months-long process to train a dog to become a trusted aide and public acceptance of guide dogs is an important factor in the success of the programme.

CNA Lifestyle, 4 October 2022

‘The bond between us is indescribable’: Paralympic swimmer Sophie Soon on her relationship with her guide dog

<https://cnalifestyle.channelnewsasia.com/women/sophie-soon-guide-dog-singapore-orinda-330666>

Paralympic swimmer Sophie Soon shares the highs and lows of dealing with vision impairment, and how her guide dog Orinda has become her eyes. Orinda not only helps Sophie navigate obstacles and move safely through their environment, but she is also her invaluable companion. The bond between them goes beyond physical assistance, providing emotional support, companionship and confidence.

Youthopia, 30 November 2022

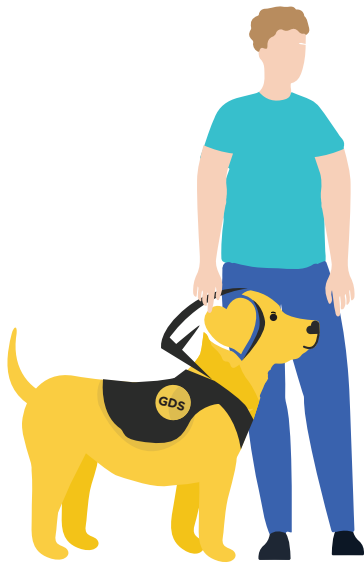
YOUTH should know: 7 things about Guide Dogs

<https://youthopia.sg/read/youth-should-know-7-things-about-guide-dogs>

This article emphasises the importance of guide dogs for people with vision impairment, highlighting their role in providing independence, mobility, and emotional support. With up to two years of specialised training, guide dogs assist their handlers in navigating their surroundings safely and efficiently. It is crucial not to distract guide dogs while they work as this may be dangerous for both the dog and the handler. Guide dogs significantly improve the quality of life for people with vision impairment, fostering confidence and opportunities for social integration.

OUR OVERSEAS PARTNERS

Guide Dogs.
Australia



Guide Dogs Australia

Our longstanding partner – Guide Dogs Australia (GDA) has been supplying us dogs since 2013, and also trained Singapore's and our first Guide Dog Mobility Instructor. It has also seconded their Orientation and Mobility Specialists to Singapore to help train our clients in independent travel skills. GDA's friendship and support have been invaluable in our early years of formation until now. Their contribution to the blind and low vision community in Singapore brings us closer to becoming an inclusive and Guide Dog accessible society.



Nippon Lighthouse Guide Dog Training Center

A pioneer in Asia, Nippon Lighthouse is a well established welfare centre for the blind based in Osaka, Japan, with its deep rooted history in supporting the vision impaired community.

Faced with the challenge in importing dogs during the pandemic, we were happy to be able to gain the partnership of Nippon Lighthouse and welcomed our first training dog from their leading Guide Dog Training Center in 2021.



GUIDE DOG ACCESS IN SINGAPORE



In Singapore, there has been improvement in public awareness and understanding of guide dog access rights over the years. Nonetheless, guide dog users may still occasionally face challenges at F&B establishments or with private hire rides. Some businesses and drivers may be hesitant due to misconceptions or a lack of knowledge regarding the rights and roles of guide dogs.

It is heartening to see a growing number of individuals and organisations advocating for and supporting guide dog handlers in Singapore. These allies are instrumental in fostering a more inclusive society, spreading awareness, and educating the public about the invaluable contributions guide dogs make to the lives of their handlers. Their support ensures that guide dog users can continue to enjoy greater independence and accessibility, helping to break down barriers and create a more equitable environment for all.

Guide Dogs Singapore provides complimentary “Guide Dog Friendly Business” decals for businesses who wish to indicate their inclusive policy. Contact us if you wish to display such a decal/sticker for your business.

Say **YES** to
Guide Dogs



GUIDE DOGS
SINGAPORE
ADVANCING THE WORLD OF ACCESS

<http://www.guidedogs.org.sg>

Supported by:



Land Transport
Authority



For enquiries, call 6339 7900 or email admin@guidedogs.org.sg

MORE BUSINESSES DISPLAY GUIDE DOG FRIENDLY SIGNAGES

We are thrilled to express our sincere appreciation for the significant increase in businesses displaying guide dog friendly signages. This positive development not only highlights our community's growing awareness and understanding of the essential role that guide dogs play in the lives of those with vision impairment, but also fosters an inclusive and accessible environment for all. By displaying these signages, businesses are showcasing their commitment to inclusivity, which resonates deeply with both their customers and the wider community.


Places with guide dog friendly signages



Establishments that are Guide Dog Friendly and have adopted our donation box.




Photo credit: Creamier

A circular inset photograph showing a dog figurine on a yellow donation box at a counter. The counter has a sign for 'NBCB' and a QR code. A hand is visible behind the counter.

“As an F&B establishment in Singapore, we have the social responsibility to be inclusive to all members of society. People with vision loss are members of society who may not have the luxury to depend on their sight, like the rest of us. That is where guide dogs play a massive role in their daily lives to help them live independently. We are committed to welcoming guide dogs and their users to our premises at Nothing But Cheeseburgers (NBCB). We hope to educate the public and normalise the presence of guide dogs in our society as not just a mobility aid, but an extension of our vision impaired friends, as well as to understand the importance and significance of the guide dogs' contribution to a person's life.”

Tommy Wong, Founder, Nothing But Cheeseburgers (NBCB)

An illustration of a hand holding a pink heart, with two gold coins featuring heart symbols below it.

Visit our website for a list of Guide Dog Friendly Establishments. The list is not exhaustive as there are many more businesses that have since welcomed guide dogs.

<https://guidedogs.org.sg/get-involved/guide-dog-friendly-establishments/>

If you own a business or know someone who does, contact us at admin@guidedogs.org.sg for a complimentary guide dog friendly decal to indicate your inclusive policy or for staff training.

WELFARE FOR OUR DOGS

Guide dogs are precious companions and “eyes” to their vision impaired users. Guide dog users are the main caregivers, and are trained to look after their dogs’ needs such as daily brushing, regular showering, toileting and controlled feeding to ensure a healthy weight. When the dogs are not at work, they get plenty of play and rest.

GDS guide dogs are maintained in positive emotional, mental and physical health to optimise their working life and to ensure they are happy at work. Our job is to ensure that every dog stays healthy and fit to safely guide their users.



Official Veterinary Partner: The Animal Clinic

With the support from our Official Veterinary Partner, The Animal Clinic (TAC), our dogs are provided with half-yearly checks by vets (more frequent for the older dogs); annual vaccination and preventives.

For every GDS working guide dog, TAC provides a comprehensive health screening every 6 months that includes a physical examination, wellness blood tests, and supplies each dog with monthly preventives against heartworms, ticks, fleas, and intestinal worms.

Official Joint Supplement Partner: Vetz Petz® Antinol®

Vetz Petz® Antinol® is proud to be our Official Joint Supplement Partner. Antinol is a 100% all natural anti-inflammatory supplement to support joint health in dogs and cats. Vetz Petz has partnered with us to provide Antinol to all our working and training guide dogs.

Guide dogs lead a more active lifestyle than most dogs. Our guide dogs take Antinol as a preventive, to support their joint health, skin/coat and mental health. Antinol enables our guide dogs to maintain their active lifestyle, allowing them to guide more effectively and provide their VI users with the independence they strive for.

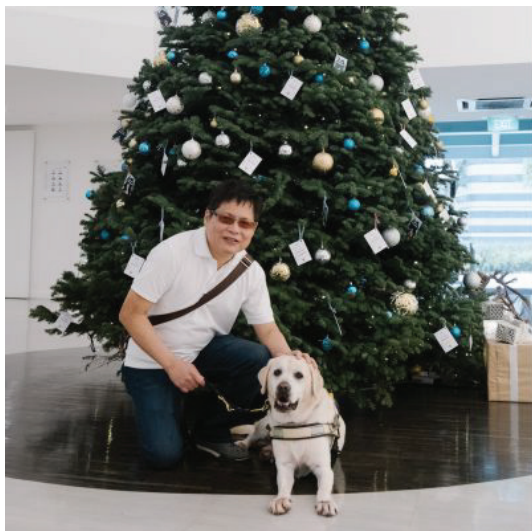


The Pets Workshop

The Pets Workshop provided complimentary grooming sessions for our well-deserved dogs in training and guide dogs, helping our users maintain the well-being of their devoted guides.

RETIRED GUIDE DOGS

We would like to honour and express our gratitude to our retired guide dogs.



Dennis and Guide Dog Melba

Melba has made a profound impact by providing assistance, support, and companionship to her handler, Dennis. For eight years, Melba helped Dennis travel to places safely and efficiently, including his workplace, which enabled him to continue contributing to his professional capabilities despite his loss of vision. Melba greatly improved Dennis' quality of life, empowering him to lead a more fulfilling and independent one. A confident, hardworking, and vigilant guide dog, Melba has been adopted by a member of our Board and is enjoying her well-deserved retirement.

"My life has improved tremendously. With a guide dog as my trusted companion, I can travel even faster and safer. I can again lead an active lifestyle and rebuild my career as a Financial Services Manager."

Dennis, GDS Guide Dog User from 2014 to 2022

Gary and Guide Dog Jordie

In Loving Memory of Guide Dog Jordie

For eight years, Jordie has enabled Gary to embrace a newfound sense of independence and confidence. With Jordie by his side, navigating the world has become significantly less challenging and scary, allowing Gary to explore and travel around Singapore with ease and assurance. This partnership has not only opened new opportunities for Gary but has also enriched his social life, allowing Gary to connect with others in ways he never thought possible. The bond they share transcends that of mere assistance, as Jordie had become a loyal and trusted companion.

Jordie will be remembered by us deeply and we would like to thank him for all his hard work over the years guiding Gary around safely.

“Life with Jordie has changed things for the better. He has made a positive impact on my life and brings a lot of joy not only to me but also to my family members. I feel a sense of pride after being paired with him as he is an amazing dog who is also highly intelligent.”

Gary, GDS Guide Dog User since 2015



Alvin and Guide Dog Seretta

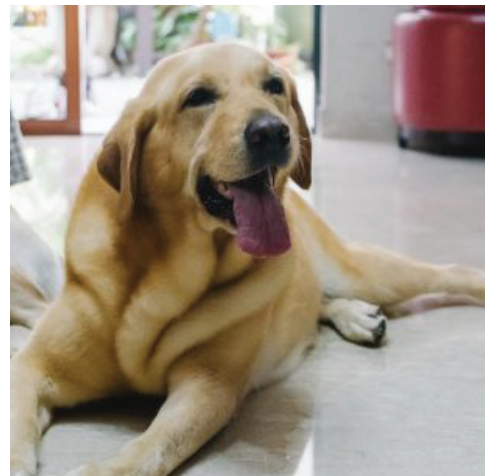
In Loving Memory of Guide Dog Seretta

Guide dog Seretta was not just a loyal companion, but a source of unwavering support and unconditional love for Alvin and his family. Her impact on Alvin's life over the past years was immeasurable, as she enabled him to navigate the world more confidently and independently. Seretta's exceptional abilities kept Alvin safe in his travels and allowed him to engage in daily activities with ease. Beyond her remarkable service, Seretta brought a lot of love and joy. Her wagging tail and gentle spirit were a constant source of happiness and comfort for all.

Seretta will be remembered by us deeply and we would like to thank her for all her hard work over the years guiding Alvin around safely.

"For nine years, Seretta was my pair of eyes and faithful companion. She has made such a positive impact on my life, keeping me safe in my travels. Along with helping me gain independence in my daily living, Seretta also brings my family and me a lot of love and happiness."

Alvin, GDS Guide Dog User since 2012



APPRECIATING OUR GRANTMAKERS, DONORS, PARTNERS & VOLUNTEERS

GDS operates with limited resources and is extremely grateful to the following grantmakers and donors for their contribution. Their generosity helped us advance our mission, and touched the lives of people with vision loss and their families.

The following grantmakers, corporate and individual donors have supported GDS with \$5,000 and above from the period 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2022. While we have taken care to ensure the accuracy of the list, we seek your kind understanding for any inadvertent omission on our part. We would also like to thank all our donors, not mentioned here, for their kind contribution.



Chow Joo Ming
Chua Ying Ying
DBS Bank Ltd
Ho Ching
Koh Tat Lee
Loo Geok Heng
Mavis Khoo Bee Geok
Mellford Pte Ltd
Parkway Hospitals Singapore Pte Ltd
Robin Ian Rawlings
Shirley Patricia Sutton
Shum John Dominic Tze-Juen
Supriya Addanki
Tabernacle of Christ
Tan Hiap Tia
Tan Xuanwei Ivy
The Community Foundation of Singapore
Timothy Lynch
UK Online Giving Foundation
Vetsurge Pte Ltd
Wong Hon Tym

**We would like to thank the following pro bono Partners
who provided their time and expertise to GDS.**

Official Veterinary Partner



Legal Counsel

KING & WOOD
MALLESONS
金杜律师事务所



OUR SUPPORTERS

CORPORATE DONORS

We hope to amplify the impactful work that Guide Dogs Singapore is doing for the community



“Our colleagues are at the heart of what we do. We are humbled to see the unwavering commitment from colleagues in support of persons with vision impairment. Our partnership with Guide Dogs Singapore has inspired colleagues to contribute to the cause in creating a more inclusive society and we hope to amplify the impactful work that Guide Dogs Singapore is doing for the community.”

**- Hui Joo Hoo,
Head of Compliance APAC, Barclays**

Heartened to witness the many lives that they have touched and empowered over the years

“At DBS/POSB, we believe in creating a positive impact beyond banking, and helping to pave the way for a more equitable and inclusive society where everyone is well-equipped to face the future with confidence. We’re thus glad to be supporting the meaningful work that Guide Dogs Singapore does, and are heartened to witness the many lives that they have touched and empowered over the years.”



**- Yeo Wenxian,
Managing Director, Head of POSB & Head of Retail Customer Segment,
Consumer Banking Group Singapore**

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Helpful for the children to have a better understanding of vision impairment

“Thanks for the informative session to help the teachers and children learn and understand about vision impairment. The videos and visuals were very helpful for the children to have a better understanding of the various terms related to vision impairment.

The personal sharing of Uncle Gary and Jordie has been very engaging and it was very helpful especially when Uncle Gary explained the details to help the children understand his experiences. Thank you for the time and sharing!”

- Learning Vision Preschool

We learned how to help the vision impaired when the occasion arises

“The outreach talk and simulation walk conducted by the GDS team was very insightful and informative for all of us. We had interactive Q&A sessions with the Guide Dog team and we have learned how to help the vision impaired when the occasion arises.”

**- Ms Mariette Ong,
Teacher at School of the Arts, Singapore (SOTA)**



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



“In 2022, SPYN had the privilege of holding multiple events with Guide Dog Singapore and we are proud to be an establishment that serves as a platform to educate others about the use of Guide Dogs! We are proud to support Guide Dog Singapore and we look forward to being able to educate the masses.”

- Emily Siau, Co-Founder of SPYN

Our Supporters

VOLUNTEERS

GDS has been very supportive towards our initiatives for our Youth For Causes project

“As a team of 4 participating in the Youth For Causes (YFC) programme, we were more than honoured to successfully partner with Guide Dogs Singapore (GDS). Throughout these few months, GDS really supported us in all the initiatives we carried out, whether it is to raise funds or awareness about both the vision impaired and guide dogs. We are also especially grateful to be a part of an outreach talk conducted by GDS as well as the 2022 Guide Dog Graduation Ceremony, which was extremely meaningful. We are tremendously thankful to GDS, who have been such a superb supporter in our YFC journey!”



- Team Dawg, YFC Team 2022

In the course of my volunteering work, it has given me a new appreciation for life






“Volunteering with GDS has given me a sense of accomplishment as I help out those who are in need. In the course of my volunteering work, it has given me a new appreciation for life. It’s a rewarding effort when we talk to people to create awareness on guide dogs and what they are capable of. Every year, I will look forward to events organised by GDS and see how we can help out.”

**- Hussin Bin Rahmat,
Assistant Manager of Facilities & Maintenance at TechnipFMC**

THANKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS




As part of our efforts to stay tuned with the needs of our clients, GDS formed our first advisory committee consisting of clients of different profiles.

The purpose of the advisory committee is to:

-  Assist GDS in cultivating a broader perspective on how the services and programmes provided by GDS can better serve its clients
-  Enable the board and staff to increase its governance by including opinions of GDS clients and others who are not part of the board or staff
-  Advise the board and staff on new initiatives from the ground up

We would like to thank our clients for their valuable contribution during the three-year term from 2019 to 2022 - Dennis Sim, Sherriza Hareani, Chia Hong Sen, Yeo Sze Ling and Lawrence Tan.

Their contribution has helped GDS in these areas:

-  Content for outreach & advocacy materials
-  Programme format and delivery for virtual IT workshops to make learning easier for people with vision impairment
-  User feedback on new technology

We look forward to welcoming our new advisory committee members in 2023.

FUTURE PLANS AND COMMITMENTS

EXPANDING THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is responsible for steering and overseeing GDS's long-term goals and strategies, and ensures the organisation is run responsibly, effectively and sustainably. We are identifying suitable candidates to join our Board of Directors to ensure succession planning with diverse skillsets and knowledge to contribute to the growth of the organisation.

INCREASE PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY OF CLIENT SERVICES

Vision rehabilitation is a growing need as proven by the increasing number of new clients we received over the years. We served 432 clients in 2020, 535 in 2021 and 636 in 2022. To ensure every client who is referred to us has prompt access to our services, and receives holistic help, we will be expanding the capacity and capability of our Client Services Team.

1. Orientation and Mobility Specialist (O&MS)

Our Orientation and Mobility Specialists (O&MS) perform a multi-faceted role in GDS. They teach people with vision loss to travel safely, confidently and independently in their environment; assist them to manage their daily living tasks independently, and collaborate with stakeholders, in particular, the policy makers to ensure a safe environment for people with vision loss.

With the addition of a Senior O&MS, Melody Deng from Taiwan who joined us in 2022, we now have three O&MS. With over 20 years of experience in teaching O&M skills, she will helm the expansion of our Client Services Team, and mentor the younger O&MS.

As the institutes of higher learning in Singapore do not offer Orientation and Mobility in its curriculum, we will have to either hire O&MS from overseas or invest in nurturing new talents in this specialisation in order to increase the number of Specialists.

2. Social Worker

Vision loss can be traumatising. Some of the clients referred to us require emotional and psychosocial support before they are ready to receive rehabilitation. A Social Worker will assist our clients to adjust to vision loss, and work through their psychological, family and employment problems related to the loss of vision, leading to a more successful rehabilitative outcome.

TRAINING OF A SECOND GUIDE DOG MOBILITY INSTRUCTOR (GDMI)

Our Guide Dog Mobility Instructor sources for suitable dogs to train and pair with clients. She also provides life-long support to clients who use guide dogs to ensure the teams* continue to work efficiently and safely. In anticipation of the increasing demand for guide dogs and number of working teams*, we recruited a cadet, Tan Shi Lin, to be trained as our second Guide Dog Mobility Instructor. The training will take about three years, and she will join us as a fully trained GDMI in 2025 – 2026.

In the meantime, we are looking at alternatives to expand the current capacity of our Guide Dog Programme. We hope to hire a GDMI from overseas to work in Singapore, or engage the services of overseas contract GDMIs.

**Guide dog team refers to the vision impaired user and their paired guide dogs.
Working teams are the existing guide dog teams.*

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

While GDS has always budgeted for staff training in upscaling their technical skills and knowledge, next year we will focus on the overall wellbeing of our staff to promote emotional resilience, self-awareness and positive team dynamics.

We believe in appreciating and retaining our staff, and empowering them to do their best for the organisation and the vision impaired community we serve.



GDS Takes Positive Steps Towards Achieving Better Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Standards Compliance












As a social service agency that advocates for equal rights and inclusive participation on behalf of the vision impaired community in Singapore, we see our move towards being an ESG-focused organisation a natural progression that aligns with the nature of our work.

We are including in our Annual Report a summary of the steps we have taken to incorporate ESG standards compliance into our operations and culture.









ENVIRONMENTAL

Staff are strongly encouraged to develop daily habits that reduce their and our carbon footprint and help the environment through these practices:

-  Recycling in the office
-  Going paperless whenever possible by digitalising our operations
-  Green commuting such as carpooling
-  Avoid commuting through virtual meetings and working from home when appropriate
-  Using energy-saving electrical appliances
-  Switching off all lights and aircon when no one is in the office
-  Using personal non-disposal foodware for takeaways
-  Avoiding the use of disposable utensils in the office
-  Trainers use their own wet bags to store wet umbrellas instead of plastic bags
-  Bringing foldable shopping bags to buy food and store items when needed
-  Through their own initiative, some staff have planted trees in Indonesia and Philippines to reduce carbon footprint through **EcoMatcher Tree**

SOCIAL

GDS ensures the wellbeing of staff and clients by promoting a collegial and inclusive work environment through these policies in place:

-  An annual budget is set aside for staff welfare and professional development
-  Our Human Resource Manual documents procedures on fair, inclusive and equal employment
-  Staff have access to a comprehensive employee handbook to understand their benefits, responsibilities as well as rights, and the appeal process should they have any grievance
-  A whistle-blowing policy is in place to provide an avenue for any employee or stakeholder to raise concerns about actual, suspected or anticipated wrongdoings or improprieties in matters or concerns within GDS
-  Clients are informed of their rights and the appeal process should they have any grievance
-  Establishment of an Advisory Committee that is represented by our clients to ensure a diversity of views that impact our policies and services

GOVERNANCE

As a social service agency with an Institutions of a Public Character (IPC) status, we comply with a governance checklist which we submit to the Commissioner of Charities every year. It covers these broad categories:

-  Board Governance
-  Conflict of Interest
-  Strategic Planning
-  Human Resource and Volunteer Management
-  Financial Management and Internal Controls
-  Fundraising Practices
-  Disclosure and Transparency
-  Documented Communication Policy

In addition, our major donors also have their own ESG policies (hover and click on link to read more).

[TechnipFMC](#)




[Boehringer Ingelheim](#)

Furthermore, the Board ensures our investment portfolio aligns with our ESG efforts.

GOVERNANCE

GDS BOARD

The Board's role and responsibilities are to:

-  Provide leadership and diverse expertise to support the strategic pillars of the organisation – client-centric services, community partnership and governance
-  Monitor the progress of the organisation's direct charitable services
-  Review and approve the yearly budgets to ensure funds are prudently used

GDS Board members do not receive remuneration for their Board services. There is no paid staff who sits on the Board.

One of the Board members, Ms Tan Hwei Lan, has been serving on the Board for more than ten years. She is a dedicated member valued for her contribution as an Allied Health Professional and institutional memory that helps the organisation's continuity planning.

The Board endeavours to identify potential candidates to ensure succession planning for Board members wherever possible.

BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE

From 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2022, six board meetings were held and this was the attendance of our Board members.

Date of Board Meeting	25 Jan	29 Mar	13 May	25 Jul	27 Sep	29 Nov
Dr Wong Hon Tym	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ms Shirley Patricia Sutton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mr Shum John Dominic Tze-Juen	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Ms Tan Hwei Lan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ms Trina Tan Li Lian	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dr Lennie Lee	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Mr O'Loughlan Bryan James (Resigned in 5 February 2022)						

GOVERNANCE

RESERVES POLICY

GDS maintains a reserves policy to ensure our financial sustainability, continuity of services and operational stability in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Our current reserves position is 4.24:1. We will be using the funds to expand our services to our clients, and increase our advocacy and outreach efforts.

	2022 (\$)	2021 (\$)
(A) General/Unrestricted Funds (Reserves)	4,036,368	2,777,031
(B) Annual Operating Expenditures	952,852	977,843
Ratio of Reserves	4.24 : 1	2.84 : 1

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

All Board members and staff are required to comply with GDS's Conflict of Interest Policy. The Board has put in place documented procedures for Board members and staff to declare actual or potential conflicts of interest on a regular and need-to basis. Board members also abstain and do not participate in decision-making on matters where they have a conflict of interest.

WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

GDS is committed to conducting its operations in compliance with applicable accounting requirements, financial reporting requirements, internal controls, corporate governance (including, without limitation, the code of governance for charities and institutions of a public character applicable to GDS) and any legislations and regulations relating thereto. Our whistle blowing policy aims to provide an avenue for any employee or stakeholder (such as any volunteer, supplier, service user, client and any other party with a business relationship with GDS) to raise concerns about actual, suspected or anticipated wrongdoings or improprieties in matters or concerns within GDS.

More information is available on our website:

<https://guidedogs.org.sg/about-us/corporate-governance/>

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Guide Dogs Singapore Ltd (GDS) depends largely on the generosity from individuals and companies to fund our programmes and services for our clients. We will be most grateful if you could support us through these ways:

Contribute to Our Cause

1. Organise fundraising events in support of GDS, make a personal donation, and/or encourage your employees to donate by matching their donations.
2. Adopt our charity as your Corporate Social Responsibility partner, and witness first-hand the difference you make to the lives of our clients and their caregivers.
3. Invite us to give an outreach talk. Our talks are curated for companies from various industries and students of different educational levels, with the purpose of helping the audience understand the vision impaired community and guide dogs.

Be an Advocate

4. Display our guide dog friendly decals and consign a donation box to spread awareness at your business premises.
5. Contact us on making your business inclusive in terms of information accessibility and/or recruitment of people with vision loss. Government grants are available for the purchase of assistive technology to help staff with vision loss contribute to the workplace effectively. Our Specialists provide free training to your staff to help them move around the workplace safely on their own.
6. Be an advocate for GDS by educating others on the respectful ways to assist people with vision loss, and the access rights of guide dogs.

Here are some resources available for the public for more information on supporting the VI community:

<https://guidedogs.org.sg/resources/for-public/>

We appreciate the efforts from all individuals and businesses that are taking active steps towards inclusiveness.

WAYS TO DONATE

ONLINE

Making a difference has never been easier; donate online with just a few clicks via these secure portals.

www.giving.sg/gds

www.guidedogs.give.asia

PAYNOW

Key in GDS's Unique Entity Number (UEN):
200302260G

Enter your name and NRIC/UEN/FIN
if you would like to claim for tax relief.

SGQR

Use any of these payment apps
to scan and donate.



CHEQUE

Crossed and payable to:
'Guide Dogs Singapore Ltd'.

Mail to: PO Box 021, Tampines Central
Post Office, S(915201).

Provide the following details if you wish
to receive tax deduction:

- Name
- NRIC/FIN/UEN
- Contact Number
- Email Address/Mailing Address

PLANNED GIVING

Making a Will is an important part of planning for the future and providing for your loved ones. Increasingly, people are also setting aside a portion for charitable causes to make a positive impact beyond one's lifetime.

Contact us if you would like to further understand Planned Giving.

GIFTS IN MEMORY

A gift in memory is a special way to pay tribute to a loved one. Your generous gift will support our rehabilitation programmes to help our clients gain independent living and mobility skills; and the provision of guide dogs to enhance their quality of life.

Contact us if you would like to further understand Gifts in Memory.



**GUIDE DOGS
SINGAPORE**

ENABLING THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

CONTACT US



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Guide Dogs Singapore Ltd



Guide Dogs Singapore Ltd



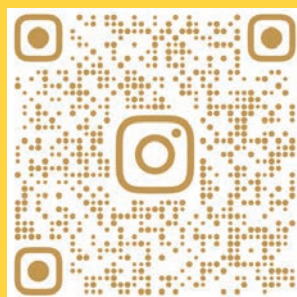
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