

25 October 2026

MEDIA FACTSHEET ON THE SECOND COHORT OF PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE FELLOWS

About President's Challenge Fellowships

1 11 individuals have been selected for the second cohort of President's Challenge Fellows, across the Civic Action, Springboard and ITE Inspire tracks. They bring the total number of Fellows across the first two cohorts to 23.

2 The 2026 Fellows include social sector practitioners developing new approaches for social good, individuals overcoming major difficulties in life, and role-modelling recovery, and ITE alumni who have shaped successful journeys and are mentoring others. Together, they are creating opportunities for others.

3 The President's Challenge Fellowships were launched by President Tharman Shanmugaratnam in May 2025 to support individuals in developing new approaches in the social sector, enable individuals to bounce back from major setbacks, and recognise outstanding career achievements among ITE graduates.

- 4 The Fellowships recognise and empower individuals along three tracks:
- **Civic Action:** Empowers professionals and active volunteers in the social sector to deepen their expertise and develop new approaches to achieving social good. The Fellowships enable full-time or part-time sabbaticals over one to two years.
 - **Springboard:** Empowers individuals who are determined to bounce back from major disadvantages or setbacks in life. The Fellowship supports them in pursuing new pathways through education, skills development or entrepreneurship training.
 - **ITE Inspire:** Recognises individuals who have achieved remarkable career or entrepreneurial success following a technical education background. Fellows serve as role models and mentors to youths and others in the community, encouraging them to develop themselves to the fullest.

5 The President's Challenge has partnered with the Institute of Technical Education, Quantedge Foundation Singapore, Singapore Business Federation Foundation, Singapore Institute of Management, Singapore Management University, Singapore University of Social Sciences, Temasek and Temasek Foundation. These partners support the Fellowships through their expertise, networks and capabilities.

6 For more information, please visit: [President's Challenge Fellowship | President's Challenge](#)

President's Challenge Fellows

S/N	Fellows	Biography
Civic Action		
1	 Ng Shou Jin Social Service Professional, Currently on Career Sabbatical Break	• She is a social service professional with experience across education, frontline community work, volunteer management and service innovation. • Her career began as a teacher before moving into the social service sector. At New Hope Community Services, she led SG Cares Volunteer Centre operations and built partnerships with over 120 organisations. • At HCSA Community Services, she led the development of its Theory of Change and impact measurement frameworks. She has also volunteered for over six years, supporting seniors and children from low-income families. • She recently obtained a Master's in Social Innovation from the University of Cambridge and is an alumna of the NCSS 40-Under-40 2024 cohort, as well as an NCSS Volunteer Management Champion. <u>Fellowship Purpose and Aspirations</u> • She plans to develop and test an Empathy-to-Action Framework that helps individuals move from understanding social issues to sustained civic participation through experiential learning, guided reflection and community engagement. • The Fellowship will enable her to produce evidence, practical tools and an implementation model that schools, corporations, social service agencies and community partners can use to support volunteering, advocacy and community involvement.
Civic Action		

2	 Lovelynne Chong Founder, FyreFlyz	• She is a social entrepreneur and youth practitioner with experience in youth development, community building and civic engagement. • As Founder of FyreFlyz, she has spent 17 years supporting young people who face barriers to social mobility. • She has also volunteered alongside the communities she serves for nine years. • Under her leadership, FyreFlyz was recognised as a Champion of Good under Company of Good in 2025. <u>Fellowship Purpose and Aspirations</u> • She plans to develop and test a structured intergenerational collaboration model that connects underserved youths with experienced adults, professionals and civic leaders to work towards shared goals. • The Fellowship will enable her to develop and test the framework, produce practical resources, and gather implementation insights and evidence on how social capital can be intentionally built to support youth development and social mobility.
Springboard		
3	 Nor Natasha Binte Samian Preschool Teacher <i>Track: Education and upskill for employment</i>	• She has demonstrated resilience in overcoming a difficult childhood, trauma and health challenges. • She received Director's List recognition once, during her first year at ITE. She was also an Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA) Training Award recipient for her progression from ITE to polytechnic and received bursaries and Edusave awards during her ITE and polytechnic studies. • She is currently pursuing a part-time Bachelor of Early Childhood Education at the Singapore University of Social Sciences. • She works as a preschool teacher and hopes to support children who have experienced trauma. • She serves as an Alumni Leader with HCSA Dayspring – OWENA, advocating for trauma survivors and people with lived experience. <u>Fellowship Purpose and Aspirations</u> • She plans to pursue courses in special needs education and trauma-informed care with support from the Fellowship and graduate with honours. • She hopes to work at the intersection of education and social support, with mentorship to guide her personal and professional development.
Springboard		

4	 Nurul Ashikin Binte Seman Final Year Technical Diploma Student, ITE College East <i>Track: Education and upskill for employment</i>	• After leaving school at 17, she returned to education in 2023 while raising her son as a single mother. • She completed her Nitec in Beauty & Wellness as a Gold Course Medalist and received the Outstanding Graduate Award. • She is currently in the final year of a Technical Diploma in Beauty and Wellness Management at ITE College East. • She received the 4PM Anugerah Bestari Cemerlang (Excellence Award), recognising her determination, commitment and personal growth. • She shares her experiences at 4PM events and hopes to encourage students to pursue their goals and seek support when needed. <u>Fellowship Purpose and Aspirations</u> • She hopes to explore different education and career pathways through mentorship. • Through the Fellowship, she aims to better understand her strengths and long-term aspirations before deciding on her next steps.
Springboard		
5	 Quek Hwee Kimberly Part-Time Social Science Research Assistant, SUSS <i>Track: Education and upskill for employment</i>	• She persevered through challenges arising from her profound hearing loss to complete her university education and continued building her career. • She worked with peers, staff and faculty at the National University of Singapore to develop guidelines for live notetaking services and inclusive teaching. • She introduced Singapore Sign Language (SgSL) workshops, SgSL lunch tables, Deaf Hangouts and a digital 'Sign of the Day' initiative on the National University of Singapore campus. • She volunteers with Youth Corps Singapore, Singapore Association for the Deaf, SG Enable and the Disabled People's Association. <u>Fellowship Purpose and Aspirations</u> • With support from the Fellowship, she plans to pursue postgraduate studies to gain the knowledge and skills needed to design inclusive, population-level community health interventions. • She hopes to give back by applying the knowledge and insights gained to inform and shape policy work and build positive communities.
Springboard		

6	 Rizwan Habib Social Worker, Yellow Ribbon Cares <i>Track: Education and upskill for employment</i>	- Orphaned at age 14, he rebuilt his life through education, after experiencing homelessness and repeated incarcerations in his younger years. - He completed his primary and secondary education, O and A Levels in prison. - He went on to earn a degree in social work from the Singapore University of Social Sciences, where he is now pursuing a Master's in social work. - He works as a social worker at Yellow Ribbon Cares (YR Cares) and serves as a YR Cares Titan, mentoring inmates and ex-offenders. <u>Fellowship Purpose and Aspirations</u> - With the Fellowship's financial support, he aims to pursue postgraduate studies and deepen his expertise in the field. - He aspires to teach one day through the lens of his lived experience.
ITE Inspire		
7	 Sheila D/O Manokaran Co-founder, River Valley Irregulars	- She overcame stigma associated with being in EM3 and Normal (Technical), as well as financial and personal challenges, to complete her diploma and degree. - Discovered her passion for volunteering and a sense of purpose beyond academics at ITE. - Founded River Valley Irregulars in 2022 to empower youths through experiential learning, mentorship, design thinking and career development opportunities. - She helped facilitate large donations to ITE since 2019, benefiting 13,500 students and established a sustainable annual donation for needy ITE students. - She serves on the ITE Alumni Association Management Committee, advises its Youth Wing and mentors youths through SINDA, 4PM, Youth Corps Singapore and National Youth Council programmes. <u>Fellowship Purpose and Aspirations</u> - She aims to strengthen the ITE Alumni Association Youth Wing and reconnect younger alumni. - She plans to create more opportunities for alumni to serve as mentors, volunteers and role models for current ITE students.
ITE Inspire		

8	 Derrick Lee Ming Yang Co-founder & Chief Technology Officer, Accredify Pte Ltd	• He developed an early interest in entrepreneurship and chose to pursue an ITE education after completing his N Levels. • He gained early industry exposure at ITE through project work, hackathons, and winning competitions such as the InnovateIT competition. Before graduating, he had completed dozens of freelance projects and launched five micro-start-ups. • He co-founded Accredify Pte Ltd, which has issued more than 20 million verifiable certificates and processed more than 30 million verifications. • He was recognised in Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia with his co-founders in 2022, Prestige's 40 Under 40 (2024), an IMDA Singapore Digital Leader (2023), and as a Singapore Leaders Network TECH Leader in 2026. <u>Fellowship Purpose and Aspirations</u> • He aims to strengthen the relevance of ITE's IT training through industry input and mentorship. • He plans to connect ITE's entrepreneurship clubs through a Founder Day, where teams present their entrepreneurial ideas for funding support. • He hopes to inspire students to see technology as a pathway to innovation, enterprise and meaningful impact.
ITE Inspire		
9	 Tan Teck Lee Deputy Principal, Singapore Institute of Power and Gas, SP Group	• He began his career as a PUB technician and progressed through engineering and leadership roles in the power sector. • Wanting better career prospects, he pursued part-time qualifications before moving overseas at 34 to earn First Class Honours in Electronics and Electrical Engineering from the University of Glasgow, where he received the University Medal and Prize. • He undertook consultancy work across Asia and the Middle East before focusing on training technicians, technical officers and engineers. • He is a SkillsFuture Fellow and served on the ITE Alumni Association Management Committee from 2009 to 2025. He initiated ITE Alumni Care Day and has mentored ITE students since 2019. <u>Fellowship Purpose and Aspirations</u> • He aims to create meaningful platforms for students to build confidence, soft skills and life skills. • He plans to conduct industry learning journeys and expand community initiatives. • He hopes to explore pathways for students to enter the industry to gain valuable experience while still studying.

ITE Inspire		
10	 Muhamad Shahril Bin Samri Teacher, PCF Sparkletots Preschool	• He built his confidence and public-speaking skills at ITE through student leadership, emceeing and overseas exposure. • He made a mid-career switch to early childhood education and became the first male teacher to receive the MOE Outstanding Preschool Mother Tongue Language Award in 2021. • He founded Pantunism to promote Malay poetry and has engaged hundreds of participants through programmes that develop confidence, creativity, language skills and appreciation of the Malay art form. <u>Fellowship Purpose and Aspirations</u> • He aims to build students' oratorical confidence and support those passionate about the arts. • He plans to involve ITE students in hosting STEMIE (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Invention and Entrepreneurship) workshops for parents of preschool children, to develop their soft skills and improve perceptions of ITE graduates.
ITE Inspire		
11	 Wang Junyong Managing Director, I.S.E. Education Co. Ltd	• He found motivation and confidence through taiko drumming after experiencing academic difficulties. • He graduated from ITE as valedictorian, established its first Taiko Club and founded Mangrove Learning, a social enterprise that uses drumming to engage communities. • He established TG International School in Cambodia and persevered through the COVID-19 disruptions. A Singapore-based education group invested and acquired the school in 2021, and the school's new campus opened in 2024. • He served on the ITE Alumni Association Management Committee from 2015 to 2023, speaks regularly at ITE, and has held regional youth leadership roles. <u>Fellowship Purpose and Aspirations</u> • He plans to connect ITE students with business and learning opportunities in Cambodia and the region. • He aims to mentor students during overseas exposure and provide more support and resources for aspiring student entrepreneurs.

For interview requests with Fellows, please contact:

<i>(Contact persons for profiles 1 to 6)</i>	<i>(Contact person for profiles 7 to 11)</i>
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