



Annex A: Harmony Centre's Milestones over the 20 Years

2006-2009: From Explaining Faith to Building Trust

The Harmony Centre was established by MUIS in October 2006 at a very different moment in Singapore's interfaith journey. The years following the September 11 attacks had generated difficult questions about Islam and Muslim communities around the world. Interfaith engagement was also less developed than it is today and often became most visible when tensions or crises required communities to respond.

2 Harmony Centre emerged within this context as a dedicated space where people could learn about Islam, meet Muslims and ask questions openly. Its early purpose was clear: to address misconceptions, strengthen understanding of Islam and Muslims, and build relationships across religious communities.

3 Those early conversations were often careful and structured. Trust had to be built gradually. Over time, however, Harmony Centre learnt that providing information was only one part of the work. Understanding deepens when people can meet, ask, listen and return to one another.

2010-2017: From explaining faith to encountering diversity and positive role of faiths

4 The Centre's **Learning Journeys** became an important part of this development.

5 Since 2006, visitors have encountered Islam not only through exhibits, but through conversations with its volunteer docents, discussions about Muslim beliefs and practices, and reflections on how Islamic teachings speak to living with people of other faiths.

6 A significant shift took place around 2011. Following focus groups and community feedback, Harmony Centre developed more customised Learning Journeys and placed greater emphasis on helping Muslim audiences recognise that



positive interfaith relations were not ideas external to Islam, but could be understood through Islamic texts, history and ethical teachings. By 2026, about 78,000 local and overseas visitors had passed through Harmony Centre.

7 As Singapore's interfaith landscape matured, Harmony Centre's work moved beyond the gallery. Dialogues, lectures, youth engagements, visits, friendships and collaborative projects created more opportunities for communities to hear one another's stories and engage questions of both religion and contemporary life. Initiatives such as the **Abdul Aleem Siddiqui Memorial Lectures¹** and **Building Bridges Series²** provided spaces for deeper reflection and exchange.

8 Harmony Centre also recognised that sustainable interfaith work requires greater capability-building. Greater attention was therefore placed on equipping Muslim religious teachers, practitioners and institutions with the knowledge and confidence to engage religious diversity well. Local and overseas exposure, in-house training and practitioner development helped widen the pool of Muslims able to participate meaningfully in Singapore's interfaith ecosystem.

9 At the same time, digital engagement extended this work beyond the physical Centre with a presence in **social media**, responding to changing ways in which younger generations encounter religion and religious difference.

2018-2026: From partnerships to impact

10 Another important shift has been Harmony Centre's growing role within Singapore's wider social-cohesion ecosystem. Partnerships with schools, public agencies, religious organisations, universities and seminaries have allowed accumulated interfaith experience to be shared more widely. National Education programmes brought interfaith learning into schools, while collaborations with MCCY

¹ The AASML was a lecture series (2012-2019) organised by Harmony Centre that invited key religious leaders to address youth and community leaders on issues pertaining to faith, spirituality, and pluralism in Singapore's multi-religious landscape.

² The Building Bridges Series (2013-2018) was an inter-faith dialogue event organised by Harmony Centre, bringing together religious leaders, faith communities, and youth to deep dive into understandings of faith.



and other partners extended religious literacy and relationship-building into community settings.

11 The **Faith in the Heartlands (FAITH)** programme, introduced for Harmony Circle members, represented a further step towards systematic interfaith capability-building. Practitioners were equipped with baseline religious literacy and practical knowledge for engaging Singapore's diverse faith communities. Harmony Centre also developed resources on dialogue and facilitation with input from local religious organisations.

12 The Centre's contribution increasingly extended into significant national and international platforms. Its work included an exhibition during Pope Francis' visit to Singapore in 2024, partnership in HarmonyFest 2025, engagements with institutes of higher learning and seminaries, and participation in international interfaith forums as well as organising Harmony Games in 2026 with the Taoist Federation.