

What national symbols mean to Singaporeans

The Citizens' Workgroup for National Symbols conducted a survey of nearly 1,500 people and held extensive discussions and interviews over four months. These are their findings and recommendations.

KEY FINDINGS



Flag

It is important to Singaporeans that the flag is displayed properly, although they are open to its use on artwork, commercial products and digital platforms.



Anthem

The understanding of the anthem's lyrics can be strengthened. Visual aids to be used for students who are hearing-impaired.



Pledge

There is strong potential for the pledge to spark conversations on national values and identity. Most felt that the values are still relevant to Singapore and that there is no need to change the words.



Coat of Arms

This is mostly associated with government institutions and official documents and is more familiar to those in uniformed groups, males and new citizens.



Lion head symbol

It is strongly associated with excellence and the Singapore brand. People are open to modifying its colour or superimposing an image on it.



Vanda Miss Joaquim

It is least identified with expressing love or patriotism to the country and its most appropriate use is for the commemoration of national events.



Merlion

It is preferred as an outward-facing symbol for an international audience. Singaporeans are not as inclined to use it to express love for the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Spark lively dialogues

- Engage students, new citizens and those in specialised, marginalised, special needs and migrant communities to talk more about how national symbols are relevant to their daily lives.



Reimagine shared experiences

- Flag-raising assemblies to be conducted in at least one other official language. Rethink the singing of the anthem and the taking of the pledge in the context of the special needs community.



Redefine creative and responsible use

- Recognise other local icons and landmarks of Singapore, such as the SG logo, the Esplanade, Changi Airport Jewel and control tower, etc.
- A single platform containing the history of national symbols and guidelines and application forms surrounding their use. A one-stop government application to report illegal usage of the symbols.



Enhance prominence in the everyday

- Use the national symbols more, including in the community, workplaces and at tertiary education level. Explain their meaning on everyday products like envelopes and locally manufactured products.
- Work with the community to express their artistic interpretations of the national symbols through food, fashion, street art and new media.