THE HAWKER LIBRARY · VOLUME A
BY UNCLE JAMES · A SILICON WOK PROGRAMME

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THE RECORD

Who already helps hawkers, the record since 2012, what Parliament has said sitting by sitting, the Government's objections answered, the UNESCO record and NHB's part; and what only this plan does, and what it borrows.

小贩文化 · Warisan Penjaja · உணவுக்கடை மரபு · Hawker Culture

THE HAWKER LIBRARY · THE OPEN REFERENCE ON SINGAPORE'S HAWKER TRADE: ITS HISTORY, ITS PRICES, ITS INCOMES AND ITS SOURCES.

In this volume: A.1 Who helps today · A.2 The record since 2012 · A.3 What Parliament said · A.4 The objections, answered · A.5 The UNESCO record · A.6 NHB, fairly · A.7 What only this plan does, and what it borrows.

COMPANION VOLUME A

The Record at a Glance

READ THIS IF YOU…

- want to know what has been tried since 2012, by whom, and what it taught;
- run a charity, a grassroots group, a hawkers' association or a company programme that already helps hawkers, and want to know where the plan would work with you;
- want to know what Parliament has said, what the Government has objected to, and how the plan answers;
- want to know which of the plan's ideas are new, and which were proposed or tried before.

THE BOTTOM LINE

1. **Government's schemes come first.** Training, incubation, stall hand-over, grants, vouchers and tender reform: each works, and each stops short of the cook's income and the hand-over itself (A.1.1, *Standing on What Works*).
2. **Beyond Government, the help is real, generous and thin.** Hawkers' own bodies speak for the trade; the Mayors' CDC Vouchers (Government vouchers for every household) carry money to the stall; charities pay hawkers for the meals their beneficiaries redeem. Much of the rest came and went with the pandemic (A.1.2, *Beyond Government: Who Else Already Helps*).
3. **The record is ten years of well-aimed schemes that lack what makes them work.** Training without the recipe, a succession scheme that pays nothing for the stall's name and regulars, centres run by operators the trade came to distrust (A.2, *The Record since 2012*).
4. **Parliament has asked for much of this already.** Members on both sides of the House have proposed a ballot, quality in the tender, cheaper food paid for by the State and an academy; the Government's objections are fair ones, and each has an answer (A.3, A.4).
5. **The hand-over itself has no scheme.** No scheme pays a retiring hawker for his goodwill (what a stall's name, recipes and regulars are worth when it changes hands), pays a master to teach, keeps his recipes in an archive good enough to cook from, or counts the dishes at risk, which UNESCO's form asks for (A.5, A.7).

Granted, the search was wide, not exhaustive. "Found no scheme" is the honest claim, and I would rather be told what I missed.

HOW THIS CONNECTS

Where it comes from. The Plan's §1.2 and §1.3 in full, with the parts of §1.1, §2.2, §3.6, §3.8, §4.2 and §5.5 that set out what was said and done before this plan. The Plan keeps the findings, the map of who helps today (Fig. ES.1) and a card for each proposal; this volume is the record behind them.

Read with. The Executive Summary, for the whole plan in eight pages; the Plan, for each proposal named here; the Budget Book (B.7), for what the plan asks of Government and what it does not.

In this volume. A.1 Who helps today · A.2 The record since 2012 · A.3 What Parliament said, sitting by sitting · A.4 The objections, answered · A.5 The UNESCO record · A.6 NHB, fairly · A.7 What only this plan does, and what it borrows.

TERMS USED

FMAS. The federation that has spoken for the hawker trade since 1989, with an association at each of more than 110 hawker centres.

CDC vouchers. Government vouchers given to every household in rounds, half spendable at hawkers and heartland merchants.

HDP. NEA (National Environment Agency, which runs the public hawker centres) and SkillsFuture's 2020 training programme for aspiring hawkers, now under review.

HSS. NEA's 2022 scheme letting a retiring veteran assign his stall, recipes and skills to a non-family successor.

Operator-run centre. A hawker centre run for NEA by a socially-conscious enterprise operator: 16 of the 123 today.

Regulars' List. The plan's list, at every government centre, of the dishes its regulars want kept, graded Bronze to Platinum by their endorsements, kept apart from the yearly count of stalls at risk, which never names one (the Plan, §3.6, *The Regulars' List and the Endangered Dish Registry*).

A.1

Who Helps Today

Government comes first, because its schemes carry most of the weight: training, incubation, assignment, grants, vouchers and tender reform, each of which works and stops short of the cook's income (A.1.1, *Standing on What Works*). Beyond Government the help is real, generous and thin, and much of it came and went with the pandemic (A.1.2, *Beyond Government: Who Else Already Helps*). Both reviews are printed here in full. The Plan keeps their findings in short, with the map of who helps today (the Plan, §1.3, *Standing on What Works*).

A.1.1 Standing on What Works

This plan proposes almost nothing from a blank page. Government has spent a decade building schemes: training, incubation stalls, stall hand-over, productivity grants, vouchers and tender reform. Each works, and each stops short of the cook's income. The honest reading is not 'nothing has been done' but 'the machinery exists and the push is missing' – and every mechanism in the plan is an extension of something already standing.

WHAT EXISTS TODAY	VERIFIED STATE OF PLAY	WHAT THIS PLAN ADDS
HDP + Incubation Stall Programme	3-stage training with allowances. Pre-fitted stalls at subsidised rent for 15 months. HDP under review; next intake unannounced.	An 18-month apprenticeship at the master's side that ends in a stall of the graduate's own. Financed equipment, and a top-up to the graduate's income for 24 months. That is what the incubation stalls were always aiming at. The Budget Book, B.15–B.16
Hawkers Succession Scheme	Hand-over to non-family successors allowed since 2022. No resale for 3 years; the stall's name and dish kept. 6 hand-overs completed by Sep 2025.	The missing money: the veteran is paid for the stall's goodwill through a mortgage whose payments a neutral party holds (escrow). The successor's rent rises in steps to the published band over 3 years. Mentoring paid at Fellowship rates. HSS's rules against quick resale stay: they were right. Succession Economics, E.3, E.4

WHAT EXISTS TODAY	VERIFIED STATE OF PLAY	WHAT THIS PLAN ADDS
Tender reform	Rents in dollars a month. Minimum (reserve) rent removed in 2012. Since Nov 2024, high rents come down in stages at renewal, to discourage very high bids. Four measures, one range (Follow the Plate, D.14): median assessed market rent $1,250 (last given to Parliament, Nov 2024); median rent paid about $1,250 across NEA's tendered stalls, stable for a decade, and $1,450 in 2025 at centres comparable with the operator-run ones; median winning bid about $1,800 (2023). About 1 in 5 stalls let at $500 or less (2023). At the 16 operator-run centres, rents already fixed and capped without bidding.	Published rent bands set against the assessed market rent, with stalls let by ballot. The Progress Singapore Party proposed this model in Parliament in 2024 and the Government rejected it; Follow the Plate, D.14 answers its four objections.
Hawkers' Productivity Grant + Productive Hawker Centres	80% co-funding for automation, capped at $7,000; about 1,150 stallholders helped. Its last application phase closed on 31 Mar 2026; NEA says the next "will be announced". Central dishwashing at 26 centres; at existing centres NEA co-funds up to 70% of the dishwashing fee for four years.	Lease-to-own finance for new entrants, which the HPG never offered. The Budget Book, B.16 Repairing a stall's own equipment stays the hawker's business, as it always was: the HPG co-funds new equipment, never repairs, and between its phases it funds neither (Hawkers and Social Protection, C.10).
Repairs and upgrading – R&R and the Hawker Centres Upgrading Programme 2.0	NEA and the Town Councils repair and redecorate each centre every six to eight years (NEA, 2026; "every five to seven years" when the Government last told Parliament, Official Report, 19 Nov 2018). HUP 2.0 (Mar 2025): up to $1bn over 20–30 years, ventilation included, building on the pilot at Geylang Serai. Keeping a stall's own exhaust duct clean is the stallholder's legal duty (SFA).	Nothing new: the centres' repairs stay with R&R and HUP 2.0. The plan times its pilots around the works (the Plan, §6.3) and points hawkers to HUP 2.0's consultations. The gap left: a stall's own equipment and duct upkeep while the HPG is between phases (Hawkers and Social Protection, C.10).

WHAT EXISTS TODAY	VERIFIED STATE OF PLAY	WHAT THIS PLAN ADDS
CDC vouchers	Vouchers for every household: $300 in Jan 2026; $500 in Jun 2026, brought forward; a further $300 for Jan 2027, added on 29 Jul 2026. Half can be spent at hawkers and heartland merchants. More than 24,000 merchants signed up.	A permanent round of Makan Vouchers, for hawker food only and for the households that need them, paid through the same system. Smaller than one round for every household, but aimed, and permanent. Follow the Plate, D.15
Affordability policy correction	NEA does not require budget meals at the centres it runs itself, but requires a value meal at every stall in an operator-run centre as a tender condition. HDB made budget meals in coffeeshops voluntary, with a rent discount the coffeeshop must pass on to the stallholder, and began collecting stall-rent data (Jan 2026). At centres run by socially-conscious enterprise operators, each stall must still offer a cheap meal, on a margin of a few cents.	Finish the correction Government has begun: cheap-meal offers become voluntary everywhere, with the State paying the gap – the value-meal condition at operator-run centres included. Help with affordability goes to the diner, not the cook. Follow the Plate, D.15
Personal-operation regime	Stallholders must run the stall themselves, at least four hours each business day. Registered hawker assistants allowed. Since 2012 a joint operator may share the stall's hours, and an ill hawker may appoint a joint operator or a nominee (a nominee takes four to six weeks).	A pool of trained relief cooks a hawker can book, using those two routes, so that illness never has to look like subletting. Two changes: a faster way to appoint a relief joint operator, and a version that lets a named deputy cover one capped hour a day. The Plan, §2.7

Framed this way, the plan is not a critique of the establishment's work – it is the establishment's own trajectory, extended to its logical conclusion and funded to arrive there.

A.1.2 Beyond Government: Who Else Already Helps

The schemes above are the state's, and they are not the only help a hawker gets. A federation of hawkers' associations has spoken for the trade since 1989; the five Mayors' Community Development Councils (CDCs) and the People's Association (PA) put vouchers in every household's hands, and meal cards in some; a food charity pays neighbourhood stalls to feed its beneficiaries; a bank pays diners cashback at the stall every week of its yearly campaigns; and social enterprises train cooks whom few others would hire. Before proposing anything, we mapped

who does what. The aim is to join what works, defer where someone else does it better, and fill only what no one fills. The table is meant to be generous; where we could not confirm a figure or a current status, it says so.

WHO	WHAT THEY DO FOR HAWKERS TODAY	WHERE THIS PLAN JOINS, DEFERS OR FILLS
FMAS, its Hawkers' Division, and the centre hawkers' associations	The trade's recognised voice since 1989, with an association at each of the more than 110 hawker centres (2019). Its President, Yeo Hiang Meng, co-chaired the 14-member UNESCO nomination committee of 2018–20 with the CEOs of NHB and NEA; FMAS ran focus groups with 73 hawkers and gathered the associations' consent (2019); UNESCO names it with NHB and NEA on the element's record. Organises the Singapore Hawkers' Celebration and Awards with NEA and NHB (heritage, enterprising and mentor awards; 24 Nov 2025). The awards honour a few hawkers a year, with a token prize (S$500 each in January 2022); we found no stipend or teaching role attached to them. Partners the CDCs in signing up merchants for vouchers; co-led a workstream of the 2021 Alliance for Action on online ordering, whose Digital Ambassadors reached more than 4,500 stallholders. We found no FMAS welfare or hardship fund. Its standing as the trade's voice is wide but not uncontested: KF Seetoh called in May 2024 for an independent hawkers' association (below).	**Joins.** The Hawker Council works with FMAS and each centre's association, not around them, and FMAS holds a voting seat on it (the Budget Book, B. 14). Heritage and Mentor award holders are a natural pool of Fellows, and the Fellowship adds what the awards do not: three years' pay to teach and to stay beside the apprentice (the Budget Book, B.13). The Heritage Plate is a different instrument from the awards (the Plan, §5.5). Each pilot centre, the Lighthouses first, starts with its centre association's support (the Plan, §6.3).
Singapore Foochow Coffee Restaurant & Bar Merchants Association	Represents more than 400 coffeeshops (2023) and encourages members, including those outside HDB premises, to offer budget meals. Started a mutual-aid fund in 1956 (we could not confirm that it still runs, or that it reaches stall tenants as well as proprietors). Opened the Singapore Coffee Shop Heritage Gallery in 2024.	**Joins.** The natural first partner for Heritage Anchor coffeeshops, under roofs the 2026 rent support does not reach (Hawkers and Social Protection, C.12).
The labour movement – NTUC U SME; NTUC Foodfare and FairPrice Group	A memorandum with FMAS (29 Jul 2024) gives workers of merchants in FMAS-affiliated associations NTUC membership benefits, including NTUC GIFT group term life of up to $40,000 and training support; uptake is not published, and we could not confirm that self-employed stallholders themselves are covered. NTUC formed associations for delivery workers and freelancers in Dec 2020, but none for hawkers. Foodfare and FairPrice Group run socially-conscious enterprise centres and budget meals, and piloted Gift-A-Meal in 2018.	**Joins and extends.** The Security Package widens this group-cover route to critical illness and to stallholders before building anything new (Hawkers and Social Protection, C.10).

WHO	WHAT THEY DO FOR HAWKERS TODAY	WHERE THIS PLAN JOINS, DEFERS OR FILLS
The five Mayors and their CDCs – South West (Low Yen Ling, who chairs the Mayors' Committee), Central Singapore (Denise Phua), North West (Alex Yam), North East (Baey Yam Keng), South East (Dinesh Vasu Dash)	Have run the CDC Vouchers Scheme with the PA since Dec 2021. Half of each household round can be spent only at hawkers and heartland merchants, paid out the next day with no fees: more than $2.1bn of CDC and SG60 vouchers over four years, about 53% of all voucher spending (MCCY, 3 Feb 2026). More than 24,000 merchants take them, over half in food (Jan 2026). We found no district hawker policy, welfare fund or succession scheme run by any CDC.	**Joins.** The Makan Vouchers run through this system, not on a new card (Follow the Plate, D.15).
CDC targeted meals – Value Meals @ South West (Mar 2025), Ready Meals @ North West (May 2026), Warm Meals @ North East (Aug 2026)	Meals at about $3 or less for lower-income residents: 80 vending machines in the South West and 14 in the North West (rising to up to 100), each backed by $600,000 of corporate credits; and in the North East, $500 of meal credits for each of 1,000 households, redeemed at about 30 food lockers (OCBC and the CDC, $500,000; 165,000 meals in the first year). None passes through a hawker stall.	**Fills the gap at the stall.** The plan asks that such credits also be spendable at hawker stalls (Follow the Plate, D.15).
Other CDC rails – Jobs Nearby @ CDC; the CDC Vouchers Donation Scheme	Jobs Nearby (nationwide since 23 Oct 2025) keeps a district job bank for heartland businesses without HR, with Job Ambassadors and job clinics in community centres and coffeeshops; no placement figures are published. The Donation Scheme lets households give vouchers to charities with Institution of a Public Character (IPC) status, whose donors get a tax deduction: about $1.19m from some 9,880 households to 245 such charities in 2023.	**Joins.** Jobs Nearby is a local channel for recruiting relief cooks and assistants (the Plan, §2.7). The Donation Scheme is a ready way for households to give once the Seed Bank is an IPC (the Budget Book, B. 6.1).
The PA and its grassroots – Citizens' Consultative Committees (CCCs), community centres	The CCC ComCare Fund gives urgent short-term help, including ad hoc meal vouchers. Some constituencies run their own cards and vouchers, such as Kreta Ayer–Kim Seng's MealsPlus, a monthly food top-up usable at more than 50 partner merchants (hawker share not stated), and MacPherson's $3 hawker meal vouchers, 15 for each of up to 2,400 households at about 137 stalls (Apr 2025). Community centres staff voucher claim counters (200+ roving counters, 500+ volunteers, Jan 2026), and the PA is training 1,000 community facilitators from 2026. Merchants' and hawkers' associations are not PA grassroots bodies: they are registered societies, federated under FMAS.	**Joins.** Grassroots meal cards are a channel for the Makan Vouchers (Follow the Plate, D.15). The facilitators can run the public sessions (the Plan, §6.2.1).

WHO	WHAT THEY DO FOR HAWKERS TODAY	WHERE THIS PLAN JOINS, DEFERS OR FILLS
Town Councils	Manage and maintain the HDB-owned hawker centres, such as Whampoa and Bendemeer: 80 of the 123 on NEA's list of 17 Aug 2026, beside 27 NEA manages and 16 that NEA-appointed operators run in centres MSE owns. NEA regulates the tenancies at all of them. With NEA, they carry out each centre's repairs and redecoration every six to eight years. The Minister said on 5 Aug 2026 that there are no plans to change this.	**Joins, as a partner.** A Town Council centre can host a pilot centre, a Lighthouse included. NEA stays the tenancy landlord, so rents, bands, the ballot and tenancies work as at NEA's own centres; the Town Council manages the common property and collects the conservancy charge, and the table-cleaning fee follows the cleaning contract, which at HDB centres the hawkers' association manages for the stallholders (NEA tender notices, Dec 2022 and Aug 2024). So re-tendering it needs the association to act and the Town Council to agree; the fee subsidy itself is the Government's (Follow the Plate, D.14, the Plan, §6.3, the Budget Book, B.7).
Charities that pay hawkers to feed people – Food from the Heart; The Food Bank Singapore; Temasek Foundation with The Food Bank Singapore	Project Belanja! (scaled up in Aug 2020) lets beneficiaries redeem up to 15 cooked meals a month at participating neighbourhood stalls with a QR card, and pays the hawkers (rate not published). The pilot reached more than 20 stalls and 104 beneficiaries with $75,000, including a South East CDC match; by 2024 it served more than 430 beneficiaries, spending $108,307 in FY2024 (current status unconfirmed, Oct 2026: Food from the Heart's page no longer describes it). The Food Bank Singapore's Feed the City (from 2021) let beneficiaries buy meals at hawker and F&B partners with its Bank Card, reimbursing vendors at normal prices; Fei Siong was its first partner (current status unconfirmed). Temasek Foundation's Hawker Food Delivery Programme (May–Aug 2020) bought about 30,000 meals from 30 hawkers; it has ended.	**Joins.** Where a charity already reaches a household through a stall, the Makan Vouchers work through it, not beside it (Follow the Plate, D.15).

WHO	WHAT THEY DO FOR HAWKERS TODAY	WHERE THIS PLAN JOINS, DEFERS OR FILLS
Heritage bodies and one-off recipe books	The Malay Heritage Foundation, a charity, and the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre document community heritage; SCCC's "Secret Ingredients" exhibition traced the origins of hawker dishes (2022). HeritageSG, NHB's fundraising arm, mainly runs festivals such as Singapore HeritageFest and the Night Festival, and takes sponsorship and gifts for heritage. Recipes have been gathered project by project: Temasek Polytechnic's *Singapore Hawker Classics Unveiled* (2015), which recreated and taste-tested 25 hawker dishes after talking with the hawkers who cook them; about 100 from ten Chitty Melaka matriarchs (NHB-funded, 2024); Tan Tock Seng Hospital Community Fund's #WeLoveSingaporeHawkers book (2023, 2,000 copies, proceeds to patients, not hawkers); youth-led Kampung Eats (from 2021). NHB keeps the national inventory of intangible cultural heritage, 106 elements reviewed once a year a few at a time; the entry for hawker culture was last revised in March 2019 (periodic report to UNESCO, Dec 2024; Roots.sg). We found no registered charity whose objects are hawkers or hawker heritage. The Charity Portal could not be searched by keyword, so this is "we found none", not "none exist".	**Fills.** The Seed Bank partners these bodies and adds what none holds: a standing archive good enough to cook from (the Plan, §3.2), and a charity for hawker heritage itself (the Budget Book, B.6.2).
Social enterprises and training pipelines – Hawker Boys; New Hope Noodles; Dignity Kitchen; Yellow Ribbon Singapore with NYP; Temasek Polytechnic; ITE	Hawker Boys trains cooks, places them with partner hawkers at market pay, and offers a stall-ownership pathway with sponsorship and micro-loans (scale not published). New Hope Noodles (Chinatown Complex, Dec 2024) employs ex-offenders and plans to hand stalls to them. Dignity Kitchen has trained people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups as hawkers since 2010 (more than 160 by 2013). Yellow Ribbon and NYP's Asian Culinary Institute agreed on 22 Nov 2023 on culinary training in prison and after, for about 700 inmates a year. Temasek Polytechnic's 12-month Hawkerpreneurship work-study began in 2021 (later intakes unconfirmed). ITE runs a short, NEA-approved course on managing a hawker business, a prerequisite for the Incubation Stall Programme, and with Food Republic opened a student incubator stall in 2022.	**Joins.** Local pipelines are where apprentices, relief cooks and stall assistants come from (the Plan, §2.7, the Budget Book, B.15). The income top-up none of them offers is the gap (the Budget Book, B.16).

WHO	WHAT THEY DO FOR HAWKERS TODAY	WHERE THIS PLAN JOINS, DEFERS OR FILLS
Companies – DBS/POSB; Grab and foodpanda; Tiger Beer; Maybank; hawker-centre operators, Kopitiam and Foodfare among them	PayLah! weekly cashback of up to $3 at hawkers and heartland shops since 2023: more than $14m of everyday and hawker purchases subsidised in 2024; DBS expects about 2.7m rewards in the run that ends on 19 December 2026. Grab and foodpanda absorbed or waived commissions for NEA hawkers in 2020–21; the waivers have ended, and since Deliveroo went offline in Singapore after 4 March 2026 there are two large platforms, not three. Tiger's Street Food Support Fund gave 25 new and young hawkers $10,000 each in 2017, and its festival that September raised over $72,000 towards a next round; we found no later grants. Maybank, with Makansutra, runs Hawkers' Omakase (2026), showing heritage hawkers' vanishing dishes to its cardholders. Kopitiam's HawkerBoss Programme (May 2022, S$1m from the NTUC FairPrice Foundation) gives new hawkers a year of rent and stall-fee subsidies, staff-wage subsidies, sourcing help and advice in Kopitiam outlets (current intake unconfirmed). Operators train too: Fei Siong's salaried Entrepreneur Programme (2016) and its Hawkerpreneur programme with the Institute for Adult Learning (2024); scale not published. Some operators of socially-conscious enterprise centres offer their stallholders bulk purchasing, and the Minister told Parliament that take-up has not been widespread: most stallholders keep their own suppliers or are particular about quality (MSE, written reply to Edward Chia, 10 Jan 2024).	**Joins, and asks for more.** Cashback is a private demand-side subsidy the vouchers sit beside (Follow the Plate, D.15). Because company giving to hawkers has come in campaigns, the plan asks for a standing pledge (the Budget Book, B.6.1). HawkerBoss is the nearest thing to the landing package, and Kopitiam is a natural partner for it (the Budget Book, B. 16). The Buying Circles put operators' bulk-buying offers on an open board beside every other supplier's (Follow the Plate, D.16).
Ground-up groups and voices – Hawkers United – Dabao 2020; KF Seetoh (Makansutra)	Hawkers United (Melvin Chew, 3 Apr 2020) is a volunteer-run, commission-free marketplace page with more than 300,000 followers (Jan 2026). KF Seetoh has called for an independent hawkers' association, differentiated rents for stalls selling vanishing dishes, an end to forced $3 meals and pay-it-forward quotas, and leave without fines (May 2024); raised the Bukit Canberra clauses, which the operator and the local MP disputed (Aug 2025); and urged the Prime Minister to save hawker culture "beyond words", as a news headline put it (May 2026).	**Joins the argument.** The Council gives hawkers an elected voice of their own (the Budget Book, B.14). The ballot's heritage priority and the Registry take up the vanishing-dish case (Follow the Plate, D.14, the Plan, §3.6). The Compact is funded, never contractual (Follow the Plate, D.15). Hawkers United's commission-free page is one channel for the Buying Circles' delivery orders (Follow the Plate, D.16).

WHO	WHAT THEY DO FOR HAWKERS TODAY	WHERE THIS PLAN JOINS, DEFERS OR FILLS
Researchers and price data – IPS; NUS (Prof Ivan Png); Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE); NTU, SMU, LKYSPP; NEA and MSE	The IPS Makan Index 2.0 priced 18 items at 829 outlets, 92 of them in hawker centres, across 26 towns (prices of late 2022, published 2023), and a commentary in The Straits Times by an IPS researcher, Dr Teo Kay Key, asked in Jan 2026: "Budget meals are needed, but why should hawkers bear the burden?" Prof Png builds price and volume indices from NEA tender bids (quarterly from 2018). CASE's Price Kaki listed 37,000 cooked-food items (2023; current status unconfirmed). NEA publishes the top five bids for each stall, and MSE has given median rents, service charges and table-cleaning fees in a reply to Parliament (8 Sep 2026). NTU, SMU and LKYSPP researchers have written on hawker centres' terms, people and future.	**Defers on prices; fills on costs.** The Plate Ledger uses the price data others already collect and adds the cost data no one publishes (Method, Levers and Data, F.6). These teams are natural evaluators (the Plan, §6.4).
NHB and NEA community grants not in A. 1.1	NEA's Vibrant Hawker Culture Programme funds community projects up to $5,000 each ($10,000 an applicant a year), with the hawkers' association's written support. NHB Heritage Grants pay up to $50,000 (minor) or $150,000 (major), at up to 80% of cost: more than $16.6M to more than 580 recipients since 2013 (NHB Annual Report 2024/25). The Stewards of Intangible Cultural Heritage Award gives $5,000 plus up to $20,000 for transmission projects; two of the five stewards of 2024 are food houses, the tea merchant Pek Sin Choon and the Teochew pastry house Thye Moh Chan. NHB's SG Heritage Business Scheme (2025) gives 42 long-running businesses a plaque, logos and promotion, with no money or IP; NHB's Organisation Transformation Grant does put money into heritage businesses, more than 40 since 2021, a heritage restaurant, Rumah Makan Minang, among them. Since August 2024 NHB has piloted a Heritage Apprenticeship: six months at a master's side, in three Malay crafts (NHB Annual Report 2024/25). Our SG Heritage Plan 2.0 runs to 2027, and NHB is drafting the next. NEA and MTI's "Becoming a Hawker" platform (Nov 2025) guides newcomers through tenancy and licensing.	**Joins.** The Seed Bank applies for these grants rather than duplicating them (the Plan, §3.2, §6.2.1). The Heritage Plate is a different instrument (the Plan, §5.5). The landing package links to "Becoming a Hawker" instead of rebuilding it (the Budget Book, B.16). The Heritage Apprenticeship is kin to the Fellowship, and the plan asks that the next Heritage Plan carry a hawker strand in it (the Budget Book, B.13, B. 7).

A.2

The Record since 2012

The State built hawker centres from the early 1970s to move street hawkers indoors, paused for almost 30 years, and began building again in 2011. Since then it has asked two panels of its own how to keep the trade alive, closed the one route a hawker ever had to owning his stall, and run a decade of schemes for the trade. A.2.1, *What a Decade of Schemes Teaches* is the Plan's account of that decade, with each scheme's result and the lesson the plan takes from it; the box after it is how stall ownership began and ended.

A.2.1 What a Decade of Schemes Teaches

Four interventions define the last decade of effort, and a fifth came before them – each well-intentioned, each instructive. Each fell short differently on the surface and identically underneath, and each lesson shapes a mechanism in this plan.

The record, in short. The State began building hawker centres in the early 1970s to resettle street hawkers, "so as to improve hygiene and food safety standards" (Masagos Zulkifli, Official Report, 19 Nov 2018), and finished the resettlement by the mid-1980s (Panel report, ¶2). In 2011 it began building again, after a pause of almost 30 years: 20 new centres by 2027, "a ballast to stabilise cooked food prices against the emerging dominance of coffee shops and food courts" (Masagos Zulkifli, Official Report, 19 Nov 2018). Twice since then it has asked panels of its own how to keep the trade alive, and they deserve the credit first. The **Hawker Centres Public Consultation Panel** (November 2011 to April 2012), 18 members chaired by Elim Chew, with one seat for a hawkers' association, proposed not-for-profit operators under a government-appointed board; rents "pre-determined" by food type, at a share of the professionally valued rent; priority for individuals over companies; central bulk purchases; and "an institution" for passing on the skills of "traditional and heritage hawker food" (Panel report, ¶12–19). The Ministry accepted most of its report on 10 May 2012 (The Straits Times, 11 May 2012, as reported). In 2013 the Workers' Party's Yee Jenn Jong asked how the first operators were chosen, what rent they paid and how prices would stay affordable, and Dr Vivian Balakrishnan set out the principle the plan keeps: "the key principle is personal operation of the stall", to take "property speculation and arbitrage" out of the centres (Official Report, 12 Mar 2013). The **Hawker Centre 3.0 Committee** (2016–17), chaired by Dr Amy Khor, then Senior Minister of State, made eleven recommendations, and the Ministry accepted all of them on 8 March 2017. They became the HDP, the Incubation Stall Programme and the Productivity Grant; they included bulk purchasing (Recommendation 5) and "food curation, including the retention of traditional hawker food" when stalls fall vacant (Recommendation 9). No hawker sat on the Committee. It gathered no figure on earnings, hours or succession, and it backed expanding the operator-run centres (Report, Feb 2017, pp. 20, 38, 41). Both panels asked how to bring new cooks in. Neither asked what the old ones earn, or how they hand over.

INTERVENTION	WHAT IT DID	RESULT	THE LESSON – AND WHERE THIS PLAN ACTS
Master Hawker Programme (2013–14, WDA & NEA, as reported; the Hawker Centre 3.0 report calls it the Hawker Master Trainer Pilot)	Trainees learnt the trade beside established hawkers, with Workforce Skills Qualifications and on-the-job training; the training covered operations only, not the masters' recipes.	13 trainees in the first run; two opened incubation stalls at Amoy Street (Makansutra, Jun 2014); later runs not found	Training without the recipe: the trainees cooked dishes of their own, not their masters'. The Government's own review found that "very few of the graduates have become hawkers given … high set up costs and lack of experience" (Hawker Centre 3.0 Committee, 2017, p. 22). *Answered here: the Technique Genome documents the dish itself, with the master's consent, the Plan, §3.2.*
Hawkers' Development Programme (2020, NEA & SkillsFuture)	Three-stage training, 8-week apprenticeship, 12-week start-of-business mentorship, allowances throughout.	566 finished classroom training · 120 completed apprenticeship · 29 started a stall in a hawker centre, of whom 16 still operate (MSE, Jul 2024; stalls elsewhere are not counted); now under review, next intake unannounced	The funnel narrows hardest between training and the stall: 29 of 566 started one in a hawker centre. Once in, 16 of the 29 stayed. *Answered here: the Graduate Landing Package, the Budget Book, B.16 – and the current HDP review is the natural moment to build it in.*
Hawkers Succession Scheme (2022)	Relaxed tenancy rules so retiring veterans can assign stalls, recipes and skills to non-family successors, with a 3-month apprenticeship and tasting evaluation.	6 transfers completed · 4 in progress · 2 veterans still seeking successors (Sep 2025)	The right route with no money behind it: the veteran hands over a lifetime's goodwill for a small stipend, and the successor pays the full assessed market rent (NEA's valuation) from the start. *Answered here: pay the goodwill – the Succession Mortgage (Succession Economics, E.4), built on the scheme HSS set up (Succession Economics, E.3).*

Social-enterprise hawker centres	Private operators under government contract managing centres. The model came from the Hawker Centres Public Consultation Panel of 2011–12, which proposed that "a social enterprise or co-operative" run the new centres; Grace Fu, then Senior Minister of State, put it on record on 6 March 2012 (Official Report). The Panel meant a plough-back model: any surplus shared among stallholders, manager and NEA, none paid to shareholders (CNA/TODAY Big Read, 20 Oct 2018). The Hawker Centre 3.0 Committee backed expanding it in 2017.	Piloted at two centres in 2015; 7 of 114 by Oct 2018; 16 of 123 today. Deep, durable distrust, voiced on both sides of the House: 13 PAP MPs, two NMPs and a WP NCMP asked about the centres on 19 Nov 2018, and NEA capped key contract terms that month. In the same sitting Liang Eng Hwa of the People's Action Party asked whether the social enterprise model was "the only way to go", and offered another: a strata-title model, "where the hawkers can come together to self-manage". Dr Amy Khor replied that the Government was "open to any model" that met its social objectives (Official Report, 19 Nov 2018, Vol 94, No 85). The Government's own case is on the record too: in 2018 the median hawker at the seven operator-run centres was 43, against 60 at its existing centres (Masagos Zulkifli, Official Report, 19 Nov 2018). Contracts under active parliamentary scrutiny again (2025–26)	Terms many stallholders resented, as reported (MSE, 24 Sep 2025): a cheap 'value meal' at every stall (a condition NEA set and operators applied), handing over sales data, absorbing app discounts and giving away free meals. *Answered here: no surveillance, no data mandates, no operator between hawker and public – the Plan's Parts II and V.*

INTERVENTION	WHAT IT DID	RESULT	THE LESSON – AND WHERE THIS PLAN ACTS
FMAS liaison model	The Federation of Merchants' Associations, Singapore (FMAS), with an association at each of some 110 centres, as the trade's voice; its President co-chaired the UNESCO nomination committee of 2018–20 with the CEOs of NHB and NEA.	Wide reach and Government's ear; no welfare fund and no decision rights of its own	Representation spread across 110 associations, without authority or funding. *Answered here: an elected Hawker Council with vetoes over the Seed Bank's own decisions and a voting seat for FMAS, which works with FMAS and the centre associations rather than around them and puts forward two candidates for each of the board's three hawker seats, the Budget Book, B.14 and A.1.2.*

The pattern reads: **training without income, ceremony without structure, partnership without trust, fragmentation without responsibility.** Every mechanism that follows is an answer to one line of that sentence – and the whole plan is sequenced so that trust is deposited before anything is withdrawn.

THE ONE ROUTE TO OWNERSHIP HAS CLOSED

Between 1994 and 1997, about 2,000 stalls in 15 centres, about 600 of them cooked-food stalls (MTI, 2015), were sold to their sitting stallholders on 20-year leases under the Stall Ownership Scheme. Those leases expired in four batches from 2014 to 2017. Grace Fu, then Second Minister, set out the options for the almost 2,000 hawkers concerned: an owner who had paid subsidised rent before buying could go back on it, hand the stall back for an ex-gratia payment, or assign it to another hawker at market rent; the rest could carry on at market rent (Official Report, 12 Mar 2013). The centres carried on after refurbishment. No hawker in a public centre owns a stall today.

A.3

What Parliament Said

What Parliament has said about hawkers since 2012, sitting by sitting, as the plan cites it. Members on both sides of the House have asked for much of what this plan proposes, and the Government has answered each time, often with reasons I accept. The right-hand column says where the plan takes the point up. A party is named only to attribute a proposal.

SITTING	WHAT WAS ASKED, PROPOSED OR ANSWERED	WHERE THE PLAN ANSWERS (§: THE PLAN)
6 Mar 2012	Grace Fu, then Senior Minister of State, puts on record the Public Consultation Panel's proposal that "a social enterprise or co-operative" run the new centres.	A.2.1; §2.2
12 Mar 2013	Yee Jenn Jong (WP) asks how the first operators were chosen, what rent they paid and how prices would stay affordable. Dr Vivian Balakrishnan: "the key principle is personal operation of the stall", to take "property speculation and arbitrage" out of the centres; 55% of the stalls let in the year after the reserve rent went were let below it. Grace Fu sets out the options for the sold stalls as their leases run out.	§2.1, §4.3; A.4

SITTING	WHAT WAS ASKED, PROPOSED OR ANSWERED	WHERE THE PLAN ANSWERS (§: THE PLAN)
19 Nov 2018	Thirteen PAP MPs, two NMPs and a WP NCMP ask about the operator-run centres. Masagos Zulkifli: "The market mechanism is working"; it is "inappropriate for the Government to subsidise a hawker on the basis that business is poor"; NEA must award "one vacant stall at a time" to the highest bidder; more than a third of hawkers and their assistants will retire within ten years. Dr Amy Khor: "There is already an implicit Government subsidy". NEA caps key contract terms that month.	A.4; §1.1, §2.2
4 Mar 2021	Committee of Supply. The Workers' Party asks for the old hardship scheme, which let stalls to people in hardship, to be revived; the Government declines. The scheme ended in 1990 for low take-up.	§2.7, §2.9; A.7
6 Jul 2021	As tray return becomes the rule, MSE: "We do not anticipate any reduction in cleaning costs to stallholders".	§2.2
3 Aug 2021	Leon Perera (WP), in an adjournment motion, proposes a national Hawker Academy, the documentation of heritage recipes, a move from tendering to tasting committees, and discount cards for lower-income diners at operator-run centres.	§2.5, §3.2, §3.3; A.7
Apr 2023	Dr Tan Yia Swam (PAP) asks that hawkers over 60 may hire one foreign worker for food preparation.	§2.8, §7.9
10 Jan 2024	In a written reply to Edward Chia (PAP): some operators offer their stallholders bulk purchasing, and take-up has not been widespread.	§2.12
14 Oct 2024	Melvin Yong (PAP) asks whether a ballot "at a fixed rental rate targeted at cost recovery" has been considered. The Government: the tender lets first-time tenderers win stalls below market rent, which "would not be attainable" at fixed rents; about one in five cooked-food stalls went for $500 or less in 2023.	§2.2; A.4
13 Nov 2024	The motion on hawker culture, moved by Leong Mun Wai (PSP): a ballot within each food category at a turnover rent with a minimum, a heritage category, and one work permit holder a stall. Hazel Poa (PSP): a ballot and a pre-determined rent; a centralised procurement system. Louis Chua (WP): a price-quality tender, a rent cap, a single independent hawker academy, CHAS discounts paid by the Government. Liang Eng Hwa and Mariam Jaafar (PAP): quality in the tender. Dr Koh Poh Koon gives four objections to a ballot and a fixed rent, calls the work permit "not inconceivable", and points to the Asian Culinary Institute. The House passes the motion as amended by Edward Chia (PAP); no Member records dissent.	§2.2, §2.5, §2.8, §2.12, §3.3; A.4, A.7
Feb 2026	Jessica Tan (PAP) asks for graduated foreign-worker thresholds for hawkers and small food businesses. MOM (25 Feb 2026): only citizens and permanent residents may be stallholders, "to preserve the local identity of our hawker culture and heritage".	§2.8
Mar 2026	Committee of Supply. Foo Cexiang (PAP) asks for work-permit assistants at stalls more than ten years old; Louis Chua (WP) asks again for the CHAS discount.	§2.5, §2.8
4 Aug 2026	MND: of 65 eating-house tenders scored on price and quality since 2018, 40 went to someone other than the highest bidder.	§2.2, §5.2
5 Aug 2026	The Minister: there are no plans to change the Town Councils' management of the HDB-owned centres.	§6.3
8 Sep 2026	A written reply gives the 2025 medians for rent, conservancy and table cleaning, at operator-run centres and at centres comparable with them.	§2.2, §2.10
10 Sep 2026	Kenneth Tiong (WP) asks why work permit holders may work in coffeeshops and food courts but not in hawker centres. Grace Fu leaves the rules as they are: "Hawker centres are a unique part of Singapore's cultural heritage and it is important to preserve the local identity".	§2.8, §7.9
6 Oct 2026	Jamus Lim (WP), in an adjournment motion, asks for tender criteria beyond "raw bid prices alone", and proposes Malaysian stall assistants.	§2.2, §2.8
7 Oct 2026	MCCY confirms that the Government keeps no list of hawker trades or culinary practices at risk. Answering Victor Lye (PAP), Grace Fu says there is no single affordability threshold, and Dr Tan See Leng that comparative price data "are not available".	§1.1, §2.5, §2.10, §3.6

The credit that comes before any party's is the Government's own: its Public Consultation Panel proposed a rent known in advance in 2012, and the Plan builds its bands on that (the Plan, §2.2, *Rent Bands & Ballot*). The paragraph that says so follows.

A rent known in advance is older than any party's proposal. The Government's own Public Consultation Panel proposed in 2012 that rents be "pre-determined" by food type, at "a certain percentage of the market rent … assessed through professional valuation", and that individuals come before companies (Panel report, ¶17–18; A.2.1, *What a Decade of Schemes Teaches*). The bands are that idea, at three centres, with a test. A ballot has been proposed in Parliament too (A.7, *What Only This Plan Does – and Where It Builds on Others*). In the debate of 13 November 2024 Leong Mun Wai and Hazel Poa, then Non-Constituency MPs, both proposed allocating stalls by ballot: Leong within each food category, at a turnover rent with a floor ("$500 or 3% of Gross Turnover, whichever is higher"), and Poa in place of the tender, with a pre-determined rent. A month earlier Melvin Yong, the MP for Radin Mas, asked whether a ballot "at a fixed rental rate targeted at cost recovery" had been considered. I agree that stalls should be allocated by ballot rather than by the highest bid. Price is a poor test of a cook, and the State's own record says so: of HDB's 65 eating-house tenders scored on price and quality since 2018, 40 went to someone other than the highest bidder (MND, 4 Aug 2026). I do not agree with one fixed rent, or with a rent tied to turnover, and the Government's objections, answered one by one below, are fair ones. What has been missing is a design that keeps the tender's virtue. We put one forward here: **published fixed bands, allocated by ballot.**

A.4

The Objections, Answered

The Government has answered ideas like this plan's before, some of them more than once, and its objections are fair ones. They come in three kinds: that the trade is sound as it stands, read from occupancy, medians (the middle figure: half are above it, half below) and surveys; that the State already subsidises every stall; and that a ballot or a fixed rent would do more harm than the tender. The first two are answered in the table from the Plan (§1.1, *The Crisis in Five Numbers – and a Blank*); the third, objection by objection, after it (§2.2, *Rent Bands & Ballot*). Each answer is to the claim, never to the person who made it.

This is not a training deficit, and it is not indifference to heritage. It is a market failure. The trade matters deeply to Singapore, yet what a stall earns would put off any sensible newcomer. And the people who cook carry the craft in their hands – the wrist for the char kway teow flick, the fermentation clock for sambal, the rempah balance never written down – with no way to hand it on before they stop. The craft problem and the money problem are one problem; neither can be solved alone. That is why this plan works on both at once and refuses to pick between them.

The pay has been measured once. The third number is the Government's own reading: the typical hawker earns about as much as the second-poorest tenth of earners (MSE, Nov 2024). MOM (Ministry of Manpower) has measured it too, in passing, in a chart about platform workers. In 2021 the median full-time hawker or stallholder working on his own earned about $1,470 a month before tax: below the poorest fifth of full-time employees ($2,200), below the delivery riders ($1,800) and private-hire drivers ($2,000) whom the Platform Workers Act now protects, and above only taxi drivers (MOM, Comprehensive Labour Force Survey 2021, in the Advisory Committee on Platform Workers' report, Nov 2022, Fig. 1.1; read from the chart). Three caveats apply: 2021 was a year of dine-in restrictions, the figure is profit before tax, and hawkers who employ an assistant are not in it. Granted, in 2016 hawkers told the Government's own committee that pay was not what kept newcomers away. Some of the Hawker Centre 3.0 Committee's members thought a decent livelihood was hard to make, but low earnings were "not flagged by the hawkers in our discussions as a key challenge or deterrent" (Report, Feb 2017, p. 20). Still, the focus groups heard from the hawkers who had stayed. The cooks whom the pay kept out were not in the room, and the long hours they did name are what a thin margin costs. Singapore has since told UNESCO that keeping hawker culture alive includes "ensuring decent livelihoods for hawkers" (periodic report, Dec 2024). I take that at its word.

WHAT THE REASSURANCES LEAVE OUT

Ten things said about the trade, each true as far as it goes. The right-hand column answers the claim, never the person; every source is beside its line.

WHAT IS SAID	WHAT IT LEAVES OUT	THE EVIDENCE	IN ONE LINE
"Hawker Culture remains a viable ICH practice": 121 centres, cooked-food stalls more than 95% occupied (periodic report to UNESCO, Dec 2024)	Occupancy is not transmission	29 of 566 HDP trainees started a stall in a hawker centre (MSE, Jul 2024); 6 HSS transfers completed by Sep 2025 (MSE); no list of trades or practices at risk (MCCY, 7 Oct 2026)	A centre can be full and still lose what made the queue worth joining. Occupancy counts tenants; no one counts dishes.

WHAT IS SAID	WHAT IT LEAVES OUT	THE EVIDENCE	IN ONE LINE
The median rent has stayed near $1,250 for a decade (NEA, 4 Nov 2024)	The median of those still paying	Entrants pay their bid, a median of about $1,800 (2023); the subsidised share fell from 53% (2013) to about 30% (2023); the sale-scheme stalls went back on rent from 2014 to 2017; a newcomer at the median bid pays about $18,900 above NEA's valuation in his first six years (our arithmetic, Follow the Plate, D.14)	The median rent has not moved in a decade. The hawker paying it is not the hawker who is leaving.
A median age of "about 60" in 2018, 2021 and 2024, read as steady (Official Report, 19 Nov 2018; MSE, 2021 and 2024)	A flat median over an ageing trade	"More than one third" of hawkers and assistants to retire within ten years (Masagos Zulkifli, 19 Nov 2018); new entrants since 2013 at a median of 46 (NHB and MCCY, 17 Nov 2020)	A median can hold at 60 while the oldest leave and too few arrive to move it. The Minister's ten years run out in 2028.
"More than 600 participants have enrolled"; "more than 60 new hawkers" (periodic report, to 31 Dec 2023)	Inputs reported as outcomes	HDP: 29 of 566 started a stall, 16 still operate (MSE, Jul 2024); incubation stalls: 37 of 99 became full hawkers (MSE, 2025); no evaluation published	Six hundred trained, sixty landed, none yet evaluated. A count of outcomes would show what works.
Hawkers "did not flag" pay (Hawker Centre 3.0 Committee, 2017); "It is inappropriate for the Government to subsidise a hawker on the basis that business is poor" (Masagos Zulkifli, 19 Nov 2018)	Only those who stayed were asked, and no one here asks for that subsidy	The median full-time own-account hawker: about $1,470 a month in 2021, below the poorest fifth of employees and below riders and private-hire drivers (MOM, in the Advisory Committee's report, 2022, Fig. 1.1)	The Government protected delivery riders on about $1,800 a month. Its own chart puts the hawker at $1,470.
"The market mechanism is working" (Masagos Zulkifli, 19 Nov 2018)	Transparency is not fairness	A 1% rise in rent goes with a 0.03% rise in hawker prices (MTI, 2015); 55% of the stalls let in the year after the reserve rent was removed went below it (Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, 12 Mar 2013)	A tender shows the price. It does not show who paid it: not the diner, but the cook.
Diners are content: more than 95% say centres are part of Singapore's identity (NEA, 2023); 91% are satisfied overall (NEA, 2019)	The diner's verdict on the cook's living	87.3% of patrons would not want to be a hawker (NEA, 2019)	Nine in ten diners are satisfied. Nearly nine in ten would not do the job. Both are true, and both are NEA's own findings.
"There is already an implicit Government subsidy" in every public stall (Dr Amy Khor, 19 Nov 2018); building costs are not recovered from rent (Masagos Zulkifli)	The building's cost counted as help to the cook	About $13M of rent support for six months, to every stall alike (2026–27); a stipend of about $5,000 a handover under the HSS, as reported	The subsidy is in the concrete. It reaches the building, not the cook, and a chain's stall as much as a master's.
Government paying part of a self-employed person's CPF "departs from the principle of self-help" (Tripartite Workgroup on Self-Employed Persons, 2018, ¶54)	A principle since relaxed	Employer-rate CPF for riders "to preserve the key feature of co-contribution which is part of the unique social compact in Singapore" (Advisory Committee on Platform Workers, ¶5.6.2; accepted in full, Nov 2022)	Self-help was the whole principle until 2022. Then riders got an employer's share of CPF. Hawkers are still waiting for it.

WHAT IS SAID	WHAT IT LEAVES OUT	THE EVIDENCE	IN ONE LINE
"Hawkers are entrepreneurs after all" who set their own prices (Masagos Zulkifli, 19 Nov 2018)	Freedom without pricing power	At operator-run centres a value meal at every stall is a tender condition, and changing its price needs approval (Hawkers and Social Protection, C.2); the Advisory Committee marked out platform workers because they could not raise prices when costs rose (2022, ¶3.2.8)	He sets his own prices, but the $3.50 value meal needs approval to change.

Four objections, answered. On 13 November 2024 Dr Koh Poh Koon, the Senior Minister of State, gave Parliament four reasons against a ballot and a fixed rent (A.7, *What Only This Plan Does – and Where It Builds on Others*). Each deserves a straight answer.

- **"Frivolous applications and excess demand for stalls."** The qualification gate answers it. Only a completed apprenticeship, a Seed Bank programme or a food-business record admits an applicant, and each enters once a round. A ballot among qualified cooks is not a lottery open to all comers.
- **A fixed rent at the assessed market rent (NEA's valuation of what a stall would fetch) would raise rents for "close to about half of tenderers".** The bands are not one rent at the AMR: they follow NEA's own valuations by centre and stall, and Band C sits at about half the median AMR. Granted, Band C's $650 is still above the $500 or less that one winner in five paid in 2023, so a ballot entrant cannot win a stall for a dollar. That is the trade: a known, fair rent for every qualified entrant in place of a bargain for a lucky few. The pilot tests whether it is worth making; the tender carries on everywhere else.
- **A rent cap would pull bids up to the ceiling.** Inside a band there is no bidding, so there is no ceiling to bid towards.
- **Only about 4% of stalls pay above their own AMR.** I accept the point, as above: the case for bands rests on the door, not on the outliers.

A fifth objection, older than the others. In 2018 the Minister told Parliament that NEA must award "one vacant stall at a time based on tendered rentals to the highest bidder", and that an allocation that curated stalls "would be complex to execute and be subject to potential audit issues" (Masagos Zulkifli, Official Report, 19 Nov 2018). The answer is in the Government's own centres. In the same speech he praised the operator-run centres for something a price tender cannot do: their operators "conduct food tasting when letting out stalls". The pilot goes further and does it by published rule – a qualification gate anyone can read, bands set in advance, a ballot drawn in public – so the audit has something to check, and the evaluator publishes the result.

Not a subsidy for poor business. The same Minister said it would be "inappropriate for the Government to subsidise a hawker on the basis that business is poor", unfair to the hawker who thrives and to the private food shops nearby. I agree, and nothing here pays a hawker for doing badly. A band is a rent known in advance, not a rebate; the fee subsidy pays for a service at three centres and shrinks if the service costs less; the income top-up runs for two years after a graduate opens his stall, only for a cook who passed the gate (the Budget Book, B.16, *The Graduate Landing Package*); and the retirement match pays only on what the hawker saves first (Hawkers and Social Protection, C.8.1).

A.5

The UNESCO Record

Singapore asked the world in 2020 to recognise this culture, and reported on it in December 2024; the next report is due on 30 June 2027. This section sets out what that record holds: what UNESCO's form asks a State to count, what Singapore's first report counted and left out, the warning about marketing that came with the inscription, and the UNESCO nomination committee that won the inscription, set up for that task alone. The plan's count, its Registry and its standing committee are offered to that record, not imposed on it.

This section answers a gap that is now a matter of public record – the list the Government confirmed in Parliament this October that it does not maintain (the Plan, §1.1, *The Crisis in Five Numbers – and a Blank*). NHB's inventory of intangible cultural heritage names food practices worth keeping, but it does not say which stalls or dishes are at risk, or who still cooks them. NHB (National Heritage Board) reviews its 106 elements once a year, a few entries at a time, and the entry for hawker culture was last revised in March 2019 (periodic report to UNESCO, Dec 2024; Roots.sg). The Registry is new research for its next revision, offered with the hawkers' consent. The answer comes in two parts: the Regulars' List, on which a centre's regulars name the dishes they want kept, and a ranked registry of dishes that takes longer to build. Beside them, and kept apart on purpose, sits a yearly count for Parliament of how many stalls are at risk, which never names a stall.

The at-risk count, for Parliament and partners. The plan still owes Parliament the number the Plan, §1.1 found missing, and it keeps that number apart from the list, so that no decal and no listing ever carries it. It comes from two simple signals a hawker may give, if he wishes, when his stall is listed or at any time after: that no successor is in view, and that he intends to stop within three years. A listed stall whose hawker gives both, or that a public fact flags – a closure notice, a lease ending – is counted. The count is published only as a national total and a total for each centre, never naming a stall, in line with the Personal Data Protection Act. It goes each year to NEA and MSE (Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment, NEA's ministry), to NHB and MCCY, and to the Singapore Tourism Board (the Budget Book, B.7, *The Ask, Itemised – and What We Don't Ask*); the first comes at the end of Year 1. To be sure, it is not a census: it counts only stalls that someone has listed, and only the signals their hawkers choose to give. Still, it is the number the Plan, §1.1 found missing, it sits beside the Registry's list in Singapore's reports to UNESCO, and the evaluator can test it, because each year's count can be checked against what happened next (the Plan, §6.4, *Independent Evaluation*).

Why UNESCO needs the count. UNESCO's reporting form asks each State to describe "the demographics of practitioners" and "the severity and immediacy" of the threats an element faces. Singapore's first report, signed in December 2024, named the threats – how the trade is perceived, passing skills on to the young, the cost of operations – and measured the element's viability by occupancy above 95%, enrolment and patron surveys. It gave no count of practitioners or of stalls at risk. It also promised: "we will also improve efforts in monitoring not just the viability of ICH practice but the communities of bearers and practitioners" (periodic report, Dec 2024). The at-risk count is one way to keep that promise, with a method and a starting count, and we offer it to NHB and NEA for the next report, due on 30 June 2027 (the Budget Book, B.7). It is an offer, not a charge.

The Endangered Dish Registry: the ranking. Where the Regulars' List names stalls, the Registry ranks dishes, and it gives the Government's own accepted recommendation of 2017, "food curation, including the retention of traditional hawker food" (Hawker Centre 3.0 Committee, Recommendation 9), a list to work from. It is a ranked register kept with the National Heritage Board, culinary historians and the communities who know the food: practitioner count and age, technique complexity, cultural significance. **Fragility and cultural weight set rescue priority; popularity informs commercial strategy but never gates rescue.** Obscure, commercially marginal dishes – Eurasian curry debal, fully hand-made Hakka yong tau foo, complex Peranakan rempah work, endangered kueh – are precisely what a

seed bank is for, and they enter through the grant track (the Plan, §4.5). Prevalence is judged with the communities concerned: a dish rare at stalls may still live in homes and festival kitchens, and an older version out of fashion with today's diners may still carry a technique or story worth keeping. Hawkers and their communities – not officials, and not queue length – judge what counts. Its test of fragility is published and open, and it is the test that decides when a Fellowship is offered. Every listed stall's dish has its page in it, in the regulars' own words, and diners who name what they would save add to it (the Plan, §6.2.1, *Bringing the public in*). The Registry's first published list can go into Singapore's next periodic report to UNESCO (the Plan, §3.2, *The Technique Genome*).

- **The Council and the associations.** FMAS and the hawkers' association at each centre are the trade's recognised representative bodies; FMAS's President co-chaired the UNESCO nomination committee of 2018–20 with the CEOs of NHB and NEA, and FMAS is named with NHB and NEA on the element's record (A.2.1, A.1.2). The Council does not replace them. It is elected by every enrolled stallholder, speaks only on what this programme does, and works with them. FMAS names the holder of the Council's tenth seat, who votes like any elected member, so the trade's recognised voice sits inside the Council rather than outside its door; association members may stand for election like any other stallholder. Before any programme activity in a centre, the Seed Bank seeks the support of that centre's association, as NEA already asks for an association's written support before it funds a community project there. Still, the Council's nine elected seats and its vetoes are its own.

Two owners, one table. No one in Government holds hawker culture as a single job. MSE and NEA own the centres, the tenancies and the trade's schemes; MCCY (Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth) and NHB own the Convention, the inventory and the report to UNESCO; and neither ministry's Budget indicators carries a measure of whether a dish is passed on (FY2025 estimates). Asked in October 2026 whether a formal mechanism should identify the trades at risk, MCCY pointed to the schemes already running and left the question open (MCCY, 7 Oct 2026). Singapore once had the right table. From 2018 to 2020 the CEOs of NHB and NEA and the President of FMAS co-chaired the 14-member UNESCO nomination committee that won the inscription. That committee was set up for the nomination alone, and the public record shows no meeting after the inscription. FMAS itself carries on, as it has since 1989. The joint nomination of the Government director is this plan's small part in joining the halves. The larger part is an ask: bring the nomination committee back, as a permanent body (the Budget Book, B.7).

- **What it must not become.** When UNESCO inscribed hawker culture it warned that "the excessive and uncontrolled marketing of the element has been identified as a potential unintended consequence", and proposed that the centres be watched (decision 15.COM 8.B.6, 2020). Singapore's report of 2024 does not take the point up either way. The Heritage Plate is marketing, so it must be the controlled kind: only with the master's consent; only one master's documented dish; never on a stall's own signboard; capped in number, with every licensee and every certified plate counted in a public register that the evaluator audits each year; and with the money going back to the cook's family. If the mark ever reads as "authentic laksa", it has failed.

A.6

NHB, Fairly

NHB does real work for hawker heritage, and this plan leans on it at every turn. It keeps the national inventory of intangible cultural heritage, funds projects through its Heritage Grants, names Stewards of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and since August 2024 has piloted a Heritage Apprenticeship at a master's side. Its consent forms, which vest the rights in the practitioner, are the Genome's precedent (the Plan, §3.2, *The Technique Genome*). What it does not hold, because no agency does, is a record of which dishes are at risk and a file good enough to cook from. The paragraphs below, from the Plan, set out both sides.

Not the first record, but the first meant to stay. Hawker food has been documented before, and well: NHB's 25 short documentaries on hawkers' stories and recipes (2015), Temasek Polytechnic's *Singapore Hawker Classics Un-*

veiled (2015), which recreated and taste-tested 25 dishes after talking with the hawkers, NHB-funded community cookbooks such as the Chitty Melaka collection of about 100 recipes (2024), a hospital fund's book of hawker recipes (2023), and community projects funded by NEA's Vibrant Hawker Culture grants. So did Teo, Guan and Dashow's *Not for Sale* (2013), a record of the remaining heritage street-food vendors. Yet each was a single project, and none was kept up as an archive; NHB's own inventory entry for hawker culture lists recipe books but holds no recipes. The Genome's difference is that it stands, is versioned and is tested every relief shift. It is a file good enough to cook from. The Seed Bank partners the bodies that made those records, and the archive can feed Singapore's next periodic report to UNESCO (due on 30 June 2027, by UNESCO's page for Singapore), as a safeguarding measure with numbers behind it.

Set against what exists. Singapore already pays masters a little: about $5,000 in all to a veteran under the Hawkers Succession Scheme, as reported, and up to $25,000 ($5,000 in cash and up to $20,000 for transmission projects) with a Stewards of Intangible Cultural Heritage award, which has gone mostly to the performing arts and crafts. It has begun to reach food: a soya-sauce maker was among the 2021 stewards, and a tea merchant and a Teochew pastry house among the five of 2024 (NHB Annual Report 2024/25). No hawker has been named yet. And since August 2024 NHB has piloted its own Heritage Apprenticeship, six months at a master's side in three Malay crafts. The Fellowship is the same idea, applied at the wok. The Fellowship borrows its shape from France's Maître d'art, where a jury pairs a master of rare know-how with an apprentice for three years and the master's workshop is paid for the time spent teaching; it adds what that scheme lacks: a documentation deliverable. The holders of FMAS's Hawker Heritage and Outstanding Hawker Mentor awards are a natural first pool of candidates. Selection, though, still follows Registry priority.

- **What it is not.** Not another award: FMAS's Hawker Heritage Award honours a hawker and Michelin's Bib Gourmand rates a stall, and neither licenses a dish nor pays a family. Not NHB's SG Heritage Business Scheme either, which gives long-running businesses a plaque and logos, with no money or IP. Its nearest relatives are abroad: the Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana's collective mark, kept up by a fee per location, a binding specification and revocation for breach, and Thai SELECT, Thailand's state mark for Thai restaurants abroad (A.7, *What Only This Plan Does – and Where It Builds on Others*).

A.7

What Only This Plan Does – and Where It Builds on Others

What no scheme does yet. Across Government (A.2.1–A.1.1) and everyone in the table above, we found no scheme doing any of the following. Granted, our search was wide, not exhaustive, so "found no scheme" is the honest claim; and here and there a private deal or a one-off project has done part of the job.

- **Paying the goodwill.** No scheme pays a retiring hawker for his goodwill; the few private sales are one-off deals. The Hawkers Succession Scheme pays the veteran about $5,000 in all, as reported, and its FAQ says it "is not intended to replace commercial arrangements". Private sales happen, one deal at a time: the Sin Kee chicken-rice recipe, with training in running the stall, was sold for $42,800 to each of two buyers (The Straits Times, 2016). No scheme finances or guarantees them (Succession Economics, E.3, E.4).
- **A pool of relief cooks.** Two routes already let someone else run a stall: since 2012 a stallholder may appoint a joint operator to share its hours, and a hawker who falls ill may appoint a joint operator or a nominee (MSE, 11 Nov 2024 and 10 Mar 2025). We found no roster, platform or scheme that sends a relief cook so a hawker can take a day off without closing. Yet the personal-operation rule is enforced (the Plan, §2.7, *The Relief-Hawker Corps*).
- **Critical-illness cover for stallholders.** Group term life reaches some merchants' workers; we found no group critical-illness cover for stallholders themselves, and the plan provides it (Hawkers and Social Protection, C.10, *The Hawker Security Package*). Repairs are another matter. The State already repairs and upgrades the centres, through repairs and redecoration every six to eight years and the Hawker Centres Upgrading Programme 2.0 (up to $1bn over 20–30 years from March 2025, ventilation included), and the law makes the stallholder keep his stall's own exhaust duct clean. What no scheme funds today is a stall's own equipment and duct upkeep, while the Hawkers' Productivity Grant is between phases. This plan leaves all three where they are (Hawkers and Social Protection, C.10).
- **An income top-up for new cooks.** Training, subsidised stalls, micro-loans and allowances exist: the HDP pays up to $1,000 a month through apprenticeship and incubation, and Temasek Polytechnic's track pays $1,000 a month for 12 months. The nearest thing to the Graduate Landing Package, Kopitiam's HawkerBoss, subsidises rent and staff wages for a year in its own outlets. What no scheme offers is a top-up to the hawker's own income for two years after he opens his stall (the Budget Book, B.16, *The Graduate Landing Package*).
- **A standing archive good enough to cook from.** Tested recipes exist as one-off books, Temasek Polytechnic's 25 hawker classics (2015) among them. No scheme keeps a hawker's recipes in a standing archive good enough to cook from, and NHB's inventory entry for hawker culture lists recipe books but holds no recipes (the Plan, §3.2, *The Technique Genome*).
- **An endowment for hawker heritage, and help for ill hawkers.** The matching machinery exists; the endowment does not. Apart from the Foochow fund of 1956, we found no hardship fund for hawkers. There was once a hardship scheme of another kind, which let stalls to people in hardship; it ended in 1990 for low take-up (the share of those eligible who join), and the Government declined to revive it when the Workers' Party asked in 2021 (MSE, Committee of Supply, 4 Mar 2021). When illness shuts the stall, the help is means-tested ComCare (paid only to those whose income and property fall below set limits), or a private medical-leave policy a hawker must buy for himself; more often it is a notice on the shutter and an appeal on social media (the Plan, §2.7, Hawkers and Social Protection, C.10, the Plan, §2.11, the Budget Book, B.6).

Nor does any scheme we checked, here or abroad, combine all four things the Succession Mortgage does (Succession Economics, E.4): a price for the stall's goodwill tied to its takings; payments held by a neutral party (escrow); a guarantee if the successor fails; and a protected minimum income for the successor. Nor does any scheme pay a royalty that runs to the master's family (Succession Economics, E.5, *The Family Name Royalty*), or return a per-plate fee to that family (the Plan, §5.5, *The Heritage Plate Mark*). To be sure, parts of each exist in ordinary business sales and brand licensing: seller finance, earn-outs, franchise royalties.

Not new, and said so. Some of this plan has been proposed or done before. Where it has, we name it, say where I agree and where I do not, and build on it:

- **The Government's own panels, first.** Much of what follows was put to the Government by panels it set up itself, and they are credited before any party (A.2.1, *What a Decade of Schemes Teaches*). The Hawker Centres Public Consultation Panel of 2011–12 proposed rents "pre-determined" by food type, at "a certain percentage of the market rent … assessed through professional valuation" (¶18); priority for individuals over companies (¶17); central bulk purchases (¶12); an institution for traditional and heritage hawker food (¶14); and family assignment where it would keep a heritage dish alive (¶19). The Hawker Centre 3.0 Committee's eleven recommendations, all accepted in March 2017, included training in "traditional hawker fare" (Recommendation 1), bulk purchasing (Recommendation 5) and "the retention of traditional hawker food" when stalls fall vacant (Recommendation 9); I found no programme that does the last at NEA's own centres. The bands, the qualification gate, the Buying Circles, the apprenticeship and the Registry stand on those ideas (Follow the Plate, D.14, D.16, the Budget Book, B.15, the Plan, §3.6). What the plan adds is who pays, where it is tested, and what the evaluator publishes.
- **The ballot.** *What was proposed.* On 13 November 2024 Leong Mun Wai, then a Non-Constituency MP of the Progress Singapore Party, moved a motion on hawker culture. In his speech he proposed allocating stalls "by a random ballot within each food category", at a rent of "$500 or 3% of Gross Turnover, whichever is higher" – a turnover rent with a minimum, not a flat rent – with "a sixth category, namely heritage foods" (his words, as his party published them). In the same debate Hazel Poa, also then a PSP Non-Constituency MP, proposed replacing the tender with a ballot and "a pre-determined rent structure" (her speech, as her party published it). A month earlier, on 14 October 2024, Melvin Yong, the People's Action Party MP for Radin Mas, asked whether a ballot "at a fixed rental rate targeted at cost recovery" had been considered: a rent set to cover the centre's costs, not one tied to turnover. Louis Chua of the Workers' Party, in the same debate, asked instead for the price-only tender to be phased out for a price-quality method weighing pricing, operating hours, young entrepreneurs and heritage value, and for a rent cap.
  What the Government said. The Government answered in October that the tender lets first-time tenderers win stalls below market rent, which "would not be attainable under a model where stalls are allocated at fixed rental rates": about one in five cooked-food stalls went for $500 or less in 2023, and the median winning bid was about $1,800. In the debate, Dr Koh Poh Koon, the Senior Minister of State, gave four objections (MSE, 13 Nov 2024). A ballot could "encourage frivolous applications and excess demand for stalls". A fixed rent at the assessed market rent would mean "close to about half of tenderers will see their rent much higher than it is today", since 44% had won below it. A rent cap would pull bids up to the ceiling; answering the Workers' Party's Louis Chua, he said it could "well mean the end of the $1 bid stalls that we have in the system today". And few stalls pay above their valuation. As he corrected it by written statement the same day: "Out of around 7,000 cooked food stalls, only 4% of rent today are above their Assessed Market Rent which has a median of around $1,250". Each stall is measured against its own assessed rent, not against $1,250, so record bids are rare cases. Leong's turnover rent drew a separate objection: it would need a point-of-sale system in every stall. The House passed, with the PSP's support, the motion as amended by Edward Chia, the People's Action Party MP for Holland–Bukit Timah, calling on the Government "to continue its support for hawkers by regularly reviewing its policies relating to hawkers and the management of hawker centres" and ending "while enabling hawkers to earn a fair livelihood"; no Member recorded dissent. It was the ballot, not the motion, that the Government turned down.
  Where I stand. I agree that stalls should be allocated by ballot rather than by the highest bid. I do not agree with one fixed rent, or with a rent tied to turnover: the Government's objections to both are fair ones. So Follow the Plate, D.14, *Rent Bands & Ballot* keeps the ballot and answers each objection: a qualification gate in place of open entry, bands calibrated to NEA's own assessed market rent in place of one rent, no bidding inside a band and so no ceiling to bid towards, a priority for heritage dishes, and a pilot at three centres, where the evaluator publishes the entrants' rents beside what the tender would have charged.

- **Quality in the tender.** Members on both sides of the House have asked for tenders that weigh more than price. Leon Perera of the Workers' Party proposed tasting committees in 2021; Louis Chua's price-quality method, above, came in 2024; in the same debate Liang Eng Hwa of the People's Action Party said "we should also look at the quality of the bid", and Mariam Jaafar, also of the PAP, proposed feedback from diners and hawkers in quality-method tenders; and on 6 October 2026 Jamus Lim of the Workers' Party asked for tender criteria beyond "raw bid prices alone" (Official Report). HDB (Housing & Development Board, Singapore's public-housing landlord) already tenders its coffeeshops this way. Since 2018, 40 of its 65 eating-house tenders under the price-quality method went to someone other than the highest bidder, at about $38 a square metre a month less (MND, 4 Aug 2026). I read the qualification gate and the Taste Council as close kin of that line: price alone is a poor test of a cook (Follow the Plate, D.14, the Plan, §5.2).
- **A foreign hand at the stall.** In the same debate Leong proposed letting each stall employ one work permit holder as an assistant; Dr Koh called the idea "not inconceivable" while warning that full liberalisation "may alter the nature of our hawker centres significantly". In the same debate Louis Chua of the Workers' Party suggested that letting hawkers aged 60 and above employ at most one foreign work pass holder "should be studied". The ask is not one party's. People's Action Party backbenchers have made it too: Dr Tan Yia Swam asked in April 2023 for hawkers over 60 to hire one foreign worker for food preparation; Jessica Tan asked in February 2026 for graduated foreign-worker and levy thresholds for hawkers and small food businesses; and Foo Cexiang asked at the Committee of Supply in March 2026 for work-permit assistants at stalls more than ten years old. On 6 October 2026 Jamus Lim of the Workers' Party proposed Malaysian stall assistants (Official Report). The Government has answered at least six times since 2023, and each time kept the rule. On 10 September 2026 Kenneth Tiong of the Workers' Party asked why work permit holders may work in coffeeshops and food courts but not in hawker centres. The Minister, Grace Fu, left the rules as they are: stallholders are citizens and permanent residents who run their own stalls, "Hawker centres are a unique part of Singapore's cultural heritage and it is important to preserve the local identity", and long-term visit pass holders, about 300 of them at 1 August 2026, work as stall assistants (MSE, 10 Sep 2026). Version 1.2 of this plan proposed a narrower pass for one foreign apprentice a stall. I have moved it to Ideas for Later (the Plan, §2.8, Method, Levers and Data, F.9).
- **An academy and an archive.** In an adjournment motion of 3 August 2021, Leon Perera of the Workers' Party proposed a national Hawker Academy, the documentation of heritage recipes and a move away from tendering, preferring tasting committees to a random ballot. In 2024 the PSP proposed a hawker academy for young hawkers and succession planning, and Louis Chua of the Workers' Party proposed consolidating the Government's hawker programmes "under a single, independent hawker academy" and going "back to the drawing board" on the Hawkers' Development Programme and the Hawkers' Succession Scheme. Dr Koh answered both: "In fact, we already have a similar academy in place", the Asian Culinary Institute at Nanyang Polytechnic, which runs the Hawkers' Development Programme (Official Report, 13 Nov 2024). He has a point, and the plan does not build a second academy: the apprenticeship takes its entrants from the HDP's classroom stages and adds what they lack, eighteen months at a master's side. The apprenticeship (the Budget Book, B.15), the archive (the Plan, §3.2) and the Taste Council (the Plan, §5.2, *The Veteran Blind Panel*) build on those ideas; the Seed Bank is independent but does not replace NEA's schemes, and Succession Economics, E.3 extends the Hawkers Succession Scheme, keeping it and adding to it. On the ballot I part company with the 2021 motion, for the reasons in Follow the Plate, D. 14.
- **Paying for the cheap plate.** In his 2021 motion Leon Perera of the Workers' Party proposed discount cards for lower-income Singaporeans, so that food at operator-run centres stays affordable without forcing stalls to cut prices. In the 2024 debate the PSP proposed that the Government, not hawkers, fund targeted food discounts, give lower-income households more CDC vouchers and stop requiring hawkers to offer budget meals at their own cost. In the same debate Louis Chua of the Workers' Party proposed meal discounts for CHAS cardholders whose cost "should not be imposed on the hawkers, but on the Government instead", and that hawkers "should have the freedom of setting their own prices" rather than meet mandated budget-meal prices (his speech, as his party published it); he repeated the CHAS discount at the Committee of Supply in March 2026. I agree with both parties

on this: the public, not the hawker, should pay for the cheap plate, and the hawker should set the price. The Makan Vouchers (Follow the Plate, D.15, *The Affordability Compact & Makan Vouchers*) are one way to do it, through the CDC voucher system.

- **The Taste Council** builds on the Hawkers Succession Scheme's tasting evaluation, judged by the veteran, NEA and an independent advisory panel (the Incubation Stall Programme has a tasting too). It adds a blind protocol, retired masters only, and a published scale (the Plan, §5.2).
- **Recipe documentation** has been done well, one project at a time: NHB's 25 short documentaries on hawkers' stories and recipes (2015), Temasek Polytechnic's tested recipes for 25 hawker classics (2015), the Chitty Melaka and TTSH books, SCCC's exhibition. None was kept as a standing archive (the Plan, §3.2).
- **Buying together** has been tried and proposed. Some operators of socially-conscious enterprise centres already offer bulk purchasing, and the Minister told Parliament that take-up has not been widespread (MSE, written reply to Edward Chia, 10 Jan 2024). In the debate of 13 November 2024 Hazel Poa, a Non-Constituency MP of the Progress Singapore Party, proposed a centralised procurement system in which a new agency would contract with wholesalers and hawkers could choose to buy through it (her speech, as her party published it). Replying, Dr Koh noted that operators' bulk-buying offers had drawn little take-up. I share the aim of cheaper ingredients for hawkers. I do not agree with a single national buyer, even an optional one: it would narrow the competition among Singapore's suppliers, not widen it. Follow the Plate, D.16, *Buying Circles – Hawkers Bargain Together* proposes hawker-led circles instead, in which the Seed Bank never buys, stocks or picks a supplier: small circles at each centre, run by the hawkers through their own association, with suppliers competing on an open board and no designated supplier.
- **Stipends for masters** exist, but are small: about $5,000 in all under the Hawkers Succession Scheme, as reported ($1,500 a month for the three-month apprenticeship and $500 for the optional mentoring; NEA publishes no amount), and up to $25,000 with a Stewards of Intangible Cultural Heritage award ($5,000 in cash and up to $20,000 for transmission projects). The Fellowship pays $69,000 over three years – a teaching year at $2,500 a month, two years of stewardship at $1,000 a month and a $15,000 completion grant – plus up to $15,000 of health cover and employer CPF: real pay, not a token, and no sudden stop when the teaching year ends (the Budget Book, B.13, *The Master Fellowship*).

Borrowed from abroad – and one thing we avoid.

- **France's Maître d'art** (since 1994): a jury pairs a master of rare know-how with one apprentice for three years, and the national crafts institute (INMA, renamed the Institut pour les Savoir-Faire Français on 21 March 2024) pays the master's workshop for the time spent teaching. It is the template for the Fellowship (the Budget Book, B. 13).
- **The Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana's collective mark** (a fee per location, a binding specification, revocation for breach) and **Thailand's Thai SELECT** (a state mark carried by about 1,800–2,200 Thai restaurants abroad, renewed every three years) are the models for the Heritage Plate (the Plan, §5.5).
- **San Francisco's Legacy Business Program** (a registry from 2015, and a fund its voters approved that November) is the nearest precedent for public money that keeps heritage small businesses alive. It also carries two lessons: its grant per employee was dropped as hard for micro businesses to document, and its rent grants, paid to landlords, drew criticism. That is why support here follows the hawker, not the stall (Hawkers and Social Protection, C. 12, the Budget Book, B.6).
- **France's replacement tax credit for farmers** (60% of a relief worker's cost, for up to 17 days' leave a year, extended to 2027) and **Japan's dairy-helper organisations** (86 in Hokkaido alone) are the models for the Relief-Hawker Corps (the Plan, §2.7).
- **Hong Kong's dai pai dong are the warning.** Hong Kong has issued no new hawker licences "under normal circumstances" since 1972 (LCQ3, 22 Mar 2017). A dai pai dong licence issued before May 2010 passes to a spouse or,

with the district's support, to a child – FEHD approved a mother-to-son and a father-to-son succession in 2021 and 2023 (LCQ21, 10 Jul 2024) – and one issued since then passes to no one. The stalls have all but gone. Succession rights decide whether a street-food form survives (Succession Economics, E.3, E.4).

- **Penang is the contrast.** From 2016 its council-managed premises have barred foreign cooks, enforced through the licence. A 2024 proposal to extend the bar to 13 named dishes was not in force in January 2026, when the mayor said a bylaw was not needed (Malay Mail, 6 Jan 2026). That protects taste by licensing who may cook. This plan certifies one master's dish and pays the master; it never restricts who may cook it (the Plan, §3.7, §5.5).

Where the plan builds on others.

- The 2011–12 Public Consultation Panel and the Hawker Centre 3.0 Committee, credited first; the FMAS model, read as wide reach without decision rights or a welfare fund (A.2.1).
- The 2024 ballot proposals, named: the ballot kept, the fixed and the turnover rent not, and an answer to each of the Government's objections; the operator-run centres' fixed, capped rents as a precedent at home; NEA's temporary rent support of 2026–27, which the fee subsidy follows (Follow the Plate, D.14).
- The Foochow association as a first partner, and the coffeeshop stallholders the 2026 rent support does not reach (Hawkers and Social Protection, C.12, *Heritage Anchor Coffeeshops*).
- The Makan Vouchers beside CDC meal credits, Project Belanja!, grassroots meal cards and bank cashback; the Compact funded, never contractual (Follow the Plate, D.15).
- NEA's Joint Operator Scheme and nominee route, made faster and given a short-cover version; local recruitment and training for the pool of relief cooks (the Plan, §2.7). The foreign-apprentice idea, credited to a proposal made in Parliament in 2024 and deferred after the Government's reply of 2026 (the Plan, §2.8, *Hawker Apprentice Work Pass*).
- Operators' bulk buying, on an open board beside other suppliers; the aim of the 2024 centralised-procurement proposal, without a national buyer; Hawkers United – Dabao 2020 for commission-free orders; Hazel Poa's point on designated suppliers, taken up as an ask of NEA (Follow the Plate, D.16).
- The FMAS–NTUC group cover, extended rather than duplicated; the State's repairs and the Hawker Centres Upgrading Programme 2.0, left where they are (Hawkers and Social Protection, C.10).
- The Plate Ledger publishes costs, and takes prices from those who already collect them (Method, Levers and Data, F.6, *Market Transparency*).
- A retirement match for stallholders under 55; from 55, help to claim the existing Matched Retirement Savings Scheme, for those who pass its income and home tests (the Plan, §2.11, §1.4, Hawkers and Social Protection, C.8.1, the Budget Book, B. 7 and Method, Levers and Data, F.9).
- Existing documentation and training credited, the Master Hawker Programme and the 2021 call for a Hawker Academy among them; Temasek Polytechnic, Hawker Boys, ITE and Kopitiam's HawkerBoss as partners; the archive and the Registry pointed at Singapore's next UNESCO report, as the means of a monitoring it has already promised; NHB's consent forms and its clause giving the IP to practitioners as the Genome's precedent (the Plan, §3.2–3.4 and §3.6, *The Regulars' List and the Endangered Dish Registry*).
- The Hawker Council works with FMAS and the centre associations, not around them, and FMAS holds a voting seat on it; the 2018–20 UNESCO nomination committee (co-chaired by NHB, NEA and FMAS; FMAS itself is a standing federation) asked back as a permanent body (the Budget Book, B.14 and B.7).
- The Fellowship, the Taste Council and the Heritage Plate, each set against what exists here and abroad (the Budget Book, B. 13, the Plan, §5.2 and §5.5).
- PA facilitators and NEA grants for public engagement; the Lighthouses (the first two pilot centres, Chinatown Complex and Geylang Serai) and the pilot centres at any government hawker centre, ranked by where the heritage-worthy stalls (the stalls that food guides and heritage records already name) are, with the Town Council as a partner where it manages the centre (the Plan, §6.2.1, §6.3 and §6.6).
- Arts and Heritage registration for the Cultural Matching Fund; the CDC Vouchers Donation Scheme; a standing pledge in place of campaigns (the Budget Book, B.6.1 and B.6.2).

Many hands already help the hawker, and this plan would rather join them than compete. Still, no scheme among them yet holds the hand-over itself: the goodwill, the relief day, the recipe written down well enough to cook from. That is the work this plan claims as its own – and should be judged on.

SOURCES

Sources for This Volume

Each entry in A.1.2 names its source beside it, with the date of the reply, report or article it rests on. The full references for all thirteen documents are in Sources, each printed once and numbered, under the document that cites it first. The table of A.3 quotes only what the Plan already cites, with its sources there.

What we could not confirm. Every entry was checked again on 28 October 2026, and a few could not be confirmed independently. The sittings of 12 March 2013 and 19 November 2018 are now read from the Official Report itself. For the rest, the official Hansard site would not open, so we read the debate of 13 November 2024 (the motion, Edward Chia's amendments, the resolution and Dr Koh's speech) from two unofficial copies of the Official Report, Open Hansard and SG Parliament (A.3, A.7). The same goes for the other sittings A.3 and A.7 cite, from 2021 to October 2026. Dr Koh's 4% is quoted from his correction later the same day. The Foochow coffeeshop association's figures – its 400 and more coffeeshops, its 1956 mutual-aid fund and its 2024 gallery – rest on a page that would not open (A.1.2). Dr Teo Kay Key's commentary, Professor Ivan Png's indices and CASE Price Kaki were not re-checked (A.1.2). France's relief-worker credit and Hokkaido's dairy-helper bodies rest on pages that would not open; Penang's rule on foreign cooks is now read from a press report of January 2026 (A.7). The Public Consultation Panel's report carries no date. It went to the Ministry in April 2012, by the Hawker Centre 3.0 Committee's account (Feb 2017, p. 9) and The Straits Times's (11 May 2012); the February date one press account gives is when its recommendations were first shared, before the Panel's last meeting on 27 March. The Ministry's acceptance on 10 May 2012 is known only as the newspaper reported it, and we read that report as reproduced on a blog. NHB's Heritage Grants figure is now confirmed from its 2024/25 annual report (A.1.2, A.2.1). Project Belanja's 2024 figures and its current status, and whether Kopitiam's HawkerBoss still takes new hawkers, are unconfirmed (A.1.2). We found no relief-cook service, but the search was not exhaustive.

Document Control

Document	The Hawker Library — The Record: Who Already Helps, and What Was Said
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Initiated by	Uncle James
Contributors	None yet. The project began with one person and hopes to grow into a team that cares; contributors will be credited here by name.
Hawker Heritage	1 Executive Summary 1.11 · 2 The Plan 1.11 · A The Record 1.11 · B The Budget Book 1.11 · C Hawkers and Social Protection 1.11 · D Follow the Plate 1.11 · E Succession Economics 1.11 · F Method, Levers and Data 1.11 · G The Technical Paper 1.11 · S Sources 1.11 · Your Table 1.11
Source	`src/doc_A_who_already_helps.html` in github.com/motochan/sg-hawker-heritage, tag `library-v1.11`
Licence	CC BY 4.0 for the text and data; MIT for the model code
Independence	Hawker Heritage is an independent Silicon Wok programme. It is not affiliated with the National Environment Agency, the Housing & Development Board or any government agency, and it is not an official consultation. Model figures are estimates, not measurements.

Version history

VERSION	DATE	WHAT CHANGED	TAG
1.11	2 November 2026	Its own version: the Hawker Library (A, C to G, Sources and Your Table) is versioned and logged on its own, starting at 1.11; until 1.10 it shared one version with the Plan. No proposal, figure or claim changes.	`library-v1.11`
1.10	2 November 2026	Two stalls: the Hawker Library and the Saving our Hawker Heritage Plan, by Uncle James, a Silicon Wok programme; a graded estimate of what hawkers earn above the median, with a note in G.3, a line in D.1 and three uses in the Plan; no proposal or model figure changes.	—
1.9.3	1 November 2026	Plain that the time-bound body was the UNESCO nomination committee, not FMAS, which is a standing federation; MCCY's reply of 7 Oct 2026 stated exactly; a constructive tone towards NEA; no proposal or figure changes.	`v1.9.3`
1.9.2	1 November 2026	Uncle James on every cover, in place of the full name; no proposal or figure changes.	`v1.9.2`
1.9.1	1 November 2026	The site address and contact are Silicon Wok's; no proposal or figure changes.	`v1.9.1`
1.9	1 November 2026	The library is stewarded by Silicon Wok; no proposal or figure changes.	`v1.9`
1.8	31 October 2026	A pen name, Uncle James, and an anonymised note from the author; no proposal or figure changes.	`v1.8`
1.7	30 October 2026	Plain words: nine numbers settled and the 285 hardest sentences rewritten; no proposal or figure changes.	`v1.7`
1.6	30 October 2026	Four open calls settled: NEA already staggers the rent on assignment, so the HSS ask narrows to writing that stagger into the Scheme's terms; the 2012 Panel reported in April 2012; MOM's own rules answer the foreign-worker question, so it is recorded as a fact; and Liang Eng Hwa's 2018 question on hawkers managing their own centres is credited.	`v1.6`
1.5	29 October 2026	Three doors: the Plan cut from 72 pages to 44, with a card for every proposal; A becomes The Record; volume G, The Technical Paper, comes from the models; Your Table is for diners.	`v1.5`
1.4	29 October 2026	The record: the Government's own panels, Official Reports and UNESCO report read first, hawker pay ($1,470 a month in 2021) and a day shut for illness ($372) reckoned, ten reassurances answered, the count kept as distributions with one body to own it, the Regulars' List counted in orders with a Year 0 baseline, and the Government's match now covering part of the base (40%).	`v1.4`
1.3	29 October 2026	Grounded: the library's claims checked against sources (314 checked; corrections made where the evidence differed); four proposals change to fit the evidence; Follow the Plate adds the middlemen and the plate over time.	`v1.3`
1.2	28 October 2026	Restructured, with no change to any proposal, figure or claim, as a library of standalone documents: the Executive Summary, the Plan (the case and the proposals, Part VII in brief) and six companion volumes, A to F, each opening with who should read it, its bottom line and how it connects. The Main Paper and the Technical Paper end; their sections move, with new ids, into the Plan and the volumes.	`v1.2`

VERSION	DATE	WHAT CHANGED	TAG
1.1	27 October 2026	First revision: who already helps hawkers beyond Government, and where the plan joins, defers or fills (§1.3.1–§1.3.2); hawkers' protection compared with four other kinds of worker in the Executive Summary; the retirement match applies under 55, beside the existing scheme from 55; the pilot widens from one Lighthouse Centre to two Lighthouses from Year 1, Chinatown Complex and Geylang Serai, and Tekka from Year 2, five at most before the gate, each costed from its own heritage-worthy stalls and size: $14,990,340 over four years in two-part ledgers (operating and programme); the plan pays for no hawker-centre infrastructure, and apprentices learn at the master's side instead of in a prep co-operative; hawker-led Buying Circles (§2.12), a table-cleaning fee re-priced for tray return at the pilot centres and a named deputy for an hour a day join the package; a Heritage Watchlist (§3.6) opens at every government hawker centre from Year 1 and counts each year the stalls at risk, and from Year 4 each centre funds new Fellowships at a maintenance rate fed by that count.	v1.1
1.0	27 October 2026	First edition: one document in three papers, the Executive Summary, the Main Paper and the Technical Paper.	v1.0

Each stall of Hawker Heritage has its own version: the Hawker Library and Saving our Hawker Heritage. Until 1.10 they shared one. Versions are numbered major.minor. A new major version is a new edition, made with contributors or reviewers beyond the initiator; a minor version changes a proposal, a term or a headline figure, or restructures the documents by the initiator alone; a third digit marks a correction to wording or sources that changes none of them. A change to a source bumps every stall whose documents it changes. Each version is tagged in the repository, and its PDF can be rebuilt from that tag. The PDF's file name never changes; the version on the cover, in the footer and on this page is the one that counts. Every change since 1.0, with the sections it touches and why, is recorded in the Library Change Log, The Hawker Library — Version and Change Control Log, one of the thirteen documents.