

Nathan Peng Li

Curriculum Vitae

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS/ EMPLOYMENT

- 2024-Present Assistant Professor of Political Science (Education), Singapore Management University
- 2023 Lecturer of Political Science, Singapore Management University
- 2016- 2022 SMU Overseas PhD Scholar, Singapore Management University
- 2013-2016 Assistant Director, Ministry of Social and Family Development (Singapore)
- 2013 Operational Understudy, Southeast Community Development Council (Singapore)
- 2012-2013 Senior Assistant Director, Ministry of Trade and Industry (Singapore)
- 2011-2012 Assistant Director, Ministry of Trade and Industry (Singapore)

EDUCATION

- 2017-2023 PhD in Political Science, University of British Columbia (5 y 10 m)
- 2007-2011 B.A. in Social Sciences, Double Major in Political Science and Economics, Singapore Management University

PUBLICATIONS

- 2026 Peng, Nathan. "Balancing Economics and Politics: Singapore's Dual Markets Approach and the Shaping of Inequality and Poverty", In R. Rasiah, J. Saldanha, S. Maisharah, and M. Zhang (Ed.). *Poverty and Inequality in Southeast Asia: Mainstreaming Sustainable Development Goals*. Nature Springer (forthcoming)
- 2026 Peng, Nathan. Review of the book *Public Subsidy, Private Accumulation: The Political Economy of Singapore's Public Housing* by Chua Beng Huat, in *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* (forthcoming)
- 2023 Peng, Nathan. "Essays on the political economy of equality, development, and influence in Indonesia and Singapore". Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia
- 2021 Peng, Nathan. "Inequality and the Social Compact in Singapore: Macro Trends versus Lived Realities" (Updated). In H.A. Lee and C. Choong (Ed.). *Inequality and Exclusion in Southeast Asia*. ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute.
- 2021 Peng, Nathan. Review of the book *This is What Inequality Looks Like* by Teo You Yenn, in *Pacific Affairs* 94, no. 2, 452-454
- 2019 Peng, Nathan. "Inequality and the Social Compact in Singapore: Macro Trends versus Lived Realities". *Journal of Southeast Asian Economies* 36, no. 3, 355–379.
- 2018 Peng, Nathan, and Sock Yong Phang. "Singapore's Economic Development: Pro- or Anti-Washington Consensus?" *Economic and Political Studies* 6, no. 1, 30–52.

CONFERENCE/ WORKSHOP PAPERS

- 2025 Peng, Nathan. "Lingering Detachments: How Socialization of Narratives Past Still Affect Social Policy Success Today" East Asian Social Policy Network and Social Policy Association Joint Conference. July 2-4. York, Uni
- 2023 Peng, Nathan. "Lingering Detachments: Understanding Self-Denial of Social Assistance Among Older Singaporeans". Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference. March 16-19. Boston, MA, United States of America.
- 2022 Peng, Nathan. "The Halo of Winners: How success at home shifts institutional preferences in aid receiving countries". Asia Pacific Political Science Research and Publication Conference (American Political Science Association Asia). July 21 – July 23. Bangkok, Thailand.
- 2021 Peng, Nathan. "Patronage, Aid, and Development". American Political Science Association Asia Pacific Workshop. July - August 2021. Virtual.
- 2018 Peng, Nathan. "Managing in the Steady-State: The Impact of Slow Growth on Public Management". American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. August 30 – September 2. Boston, MA, United States of America.

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2024-Present Collaborator for "The Curation of Blue Zone 3.0 – Societal Transformation to Promote Well-being of a Superaged Population" (PI: Paulin Straughan)
- 2023-Present Collaborator for Social Science and Humanities Research Fellowship Grant for "Unite or Divide? How Exposure To Socioeconomic Diversity Shapes Cross-Class Relations" (PI: Jacinth Tan)
- 2022 Asia Pacific Political Science Research and Publication Conference Grant
- 2021 American Political Science Association (APSA) Asia Fellow
- 2017-2022 Overseas Postgraduate Scholarship, Singapore Management University, Singapore

COURSES OFFERED*

- 2026 Social Science Practicum. Singapore Management University
- 2026 Politics of Southeast Asia. Singapore Management University
- 2025 Southeast Asia: Past and Present. Singapore Management University
- 2024 Political Economy of Inequality in Singapore. Singapore Management University
- 2024 Introduction to Political and Policy Studies. Singapore Management University

*Date indicates year course was last taught

AWARDS/ RECOGNITION

- 2025 Winner, Core Curriculum Teaching Excellence Award (Communities Pillar), Singapore Management University
- 2025 Winner, Most Promising Teacher Award, Singapore Management University
- 2025 Winner, Best Paper Award for Early-Career Scholar Work, East Asian Social Policy Network and Social Policy Association Joint Conference

MEDIA/ PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT (last 3 years)

- 2026 Discussed implications of Singapore's National Budget 2026 on inequality on The Straits Times's The Usual Place Podcast with Second Minister for Finance Indranee and Mr Gunasekharan Chellappan of SGTech (<https://www.youtube.com/live/Qo1r0sB4ZWE?si=dbA5LBljgO-G1s4w>), which was also featured in a separate media article (<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/politics/ai-can-narrow-inequality-if-rolled-out-well-indranee>)
- 2026 Discussed implications of Singapore's National Budget 2026 on inequality as part of 15-person panel on CNA's Talking Point with Second Minister for Finance Indranee Rajah (<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/watch/talking-point-20252026/budget-forum-2026-5931951>)
- 2026 Discussed implications of Singapore's National Budget 2026 on inequality during panel discussion at Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYO9vD5TZ9E>)
- 2026 Discussed how inequality affects societal openness in South China Morning Post's article "Who are 'we'? Why some Singaporeans bristle at 'we first' inclusive society call" (<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/lifestyle-culture/article/3341573/who-are-we-why-some-singaporeans-bristle-we-first-inclusive-society-call>)
- 2026 Interview on what the year 2026 would bring, focusing on how global inequality drives key trends in The Business Times' article "When change is the constant: Policies and politics to watch in 2026, at home and abroad" (Jan 2)
- 2025 Explaining decline of ComCare recipient numbers in MoneyFM 89.3's radio and podcast program "The Big Story: ComCare's numbers dropped - Are families now really better off?" (<https://omny.fm/shows/moneyfm-evening-show/the-big-story-comcare-s-numbers-dropped-are-families-now-really-better-off>)
- 2025 Discussion on inequality and national identity in CNA's documentary "Being Singaporean - Part 1: What Defines Our National Identity: How Class & Race Shapes Belonging" (<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/watch/being-singaporean/part-1-what-defines-our-national-identity-how-class-race-shapes-belonging-5435046>)
- 2025 Interview on national identity in CNA's article "After 60 years of Singapore's nationhood, multiculturalism has become its defining trait - but not without some house rules" (1 Nov)
- 2025 Interview on tuition and inequality in Singapore in The Straits Times' article "'Over 800 messages on A-level day': Enter the emotional support tutor-therapist" (19 Apr)
- 2025 Interview on inequality in CNA's documentary "Singapore's Balancing Act: Trade-offs of a Global City-state" (<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/watch/singapores-balancing-act/trade-offs-global-city-state-4920586>)
- 2024 Interview on inequality as a theme in Singapore's National Day Rally Speech 2024 in CNA's article "PM Wong makes 'radical' policy shifts in maiden National Day Rally: Analysts" (19 Aug)
- 2024 Speaker on Panel on Retaining Talent and Tackling Brain Drain at Times Higher Education Campus Live SE Asia Conference, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- 2024 Moderator for Panel on Understanding essential needs in different contexts SMU-DBS Foundation Symposium on Essential Household Needs in Singapore.
- 2024 Invited Speaker on Social Mobility, Access Singapore and BP

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

2025-Present Centre Associate: Centre for the Study of Social Inequality
2024-Present Research Fellow: Lien Center for Social Innovation
2024-Present Member: Advisory Panel on Social Mobility, Care Corner Singapore
2023-Present Collaborator: Centre for Research on Successful Aging (ROSA)

TECHINCAL PROFICIENCY

R	Advanced
Stata	Advanced
Qualtrics	Advanced
Latex	Intermediate

MEDIA/ PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT (3 years and beyond)

- 2022 Interview by Bloomberg on the impact of motorcycle permit costs on inequality in Singapore. Cited in “Motorcycle Permits Now Cost More Than Motorcycles in Singapore” by Natalie Choy. Published October 26, 2022.
- 2022 Moderator for Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY)’s Leadership Advance 2022.
- 2022 Interview by Today Online on the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on migration patterns and social divides in Singapore for national day special. Cited in “National Day Special: 'Home' revisited — an increasingly chaotic world prompts a rethink of where one belongs” by Taufiq Zalizan and Loraine Lee. Published August 6, 2022.
- 2022 Guest of Honor at Speech Day, Temasek Secondary School, on inequality and the importance of social unity.
- 2022 Interview by CNA (Channel NewsAsia) on progressiveness of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) after upcoming increases and offset measures. Talking Point. Season 1 Episode 39: “GST Hike: Is It Fair?”. Aired February 25, 2022.
- 2021 Interview by Kwan, Jin Yao on “Inequality and the Social Compact in Singapore: Macro Trends versus Lived Realities”. Socialservice.sg. Available online <https://anchor.fm/socialservicesg/episodes/Macro-inequality-and-mobility-trends--felt-inequality--and-the-case-for-a-healthy-degree-of-equality-of-outcomes-PhD-candidate-Nathan-Peng-Li-er5ftp>