

Singapore Book Council launches inaugural Translation Day Singapore (TDSG)

Over 10 local and overseas speakers to explore
technology and literary translation



SINGAPORE, 9 SEPTEMBER 2025 — Singapore Book Council launches the inaugural Translation Day Singapore (TDSG) from 27 – 28 September 2025 at The Arts House. To mark International Translation Day, the 2-day event features more than 10 overseas and local speakers. They include 2025 International Booker Prize judge Anton Hur, award-winning translators Arunava Sinha (India), Jamie Chang and Sung Ryu from Korea, as well as 2025 Singapore Book Award winner Joshua Ip and playwrights Johnny Jon Jon and Zoea Tania Chen.

The public can use the SG Culture Pass to buy tickets to the 2-day event, which comprises talks, workshops and free public programmes.

Translation Day Singapore (TDSG) is a new initiative that aims to raise the public awareness of translation and celebrate the diverse linguistic landscape of Singapore. TDSG is anchored by two main components: The Symposium, which comprises insightful panels and workshops focusing on professional development in the field of literary translation, and free programmes, which invite the general public to engage with language and culture meaningfully through interactive activities.

William Phuan, Executive Director of Singapore Book Council, says “Translation Day Singapore aims to celebrate our linguistic diversity and the dynamic art of translation.



It is an important part of our continuing efforts to strengthen literary translation in Singapore, as well as support and grow the translation community here.”

Technology and Translation

One of the key topics that TDSG will explore is the ethics and practice of using technology in literary translation. With the development of machine translation, TDSG pushes beyond binary views to examine the possibilities it opens up for translators to advance their craft.

Programme highlights include:

1. **Ctrl+T: Translation Beyond the Machine**
With Anton Hur, Johnny Jon Jon and Soh Wan Wei
This panel examines how translators are navigating the rise of AI and machine-assisted tools.
2. **Experiments in Translating with Technology**
with Joshua Ip, Hemang Yadav
This panel discusses experimenting with machine translation and AI technology, such as refining machine-generated drafts, and navigating cultural and stylistic nuances.

Spotlight on Korean Lit

With the global popularity of translated Korean literature in English, TDSG brings Sung Ryu (*Shoko's Smile, Tower*) in conversation with Jamie Chang (*Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982*) to unpack the genres or themes that are resonating most with international readers, and the challenges of carrying a story across linguistic and cultural borders.

Public Programmes

TDSG will also feature free public programmes, including a Singapore Sign Language storytelling by Equal Dreams and bilingual storytelling workshop by veteran storyteller Roger Jenkins.

Translation Day Singapore is supported by the National Translation Committee, LTI Korea, Commonwealth Foundation, and Arts House Group.

The full line-up of programmes and speakers can be found in Annex C.

Translation Day Singapore

Dates: 27 – 28 September 2025

Time: 9.30am – 8.30pm (Sat), 10am – 5.30pm (Sun)

Venue: The Arts House

Tickets: <https://sg.bookmyshow.com/en/collections/tds25>

The TDSG pass and selected workshop tickets are eligible for Culture Pass

Website: bit.ly/TDSG2025

Annex A: About Singapore Book Council

Annex B: About Translation Day Singapore

Annex C: Full TDSG line-up

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Annex A: About Singapore Book Council

Established in 1968, the Singapore Book Council (SBC) has for over 50 years remained committed to developing and promoting a multicultural literary arts sector in Singapore. Our programmes focus on creative writing, translation, storytelling, reading and illustration. Our festivals, awards, workshops and school programmes have reached out to the various language and ethnic communities, boosting creativity, imagination, and empathy. SBC is a nonprofit and charity with IPC status.

Vision: The power of words, connecting peoples and cultures.

Mission: To champion Singapore's role in enhancing multicultural literary arts.

Our programmes run year-round, reaching out to many audiences. They include the annual Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC), a premier festival for children's books; the prestigious biennial Singapore Literature Prize, the top literary prize in the country; the Singapore Translation Symposium, which promotes literary translation; SBC Campus and Little Campus, our school outreach programmes; as well as our training and mentorship programmes that support and nurture new talents.

SBC is chaired by Ms Claire Chiang, Co-founder and Senior Vice-President, Banyan Group. Change this

We are a recipient of the National Arts Council of Singapore's Major Company Grant for the period from 2022 to 2025. For more information, please visit <https://www.bookcouncil.sg/>

Annex B: About Translation Day Singapore



Translation Day Singapore (TDSG) is a new initiative that aims to raise the public awareness of translation and celebrate the diverse linguistic landscape of Singapore. By introducing participants to the diversity of languages spoken in Singapore and showcasing translation as both an art and a skill, Translation Day Singapore (TDSG) seeks to foster greater understanding between the many linguistic and cultural communities in Singapore through the bridge of translation.

TDSG is anchored by two main components:

27 September - Symposium

The Translation Symposium comprises insightful panels focusing on professional development and discourse in the field of literary translation. It offers opportunities for practicing translators to exchange knowledge, learn from international experts, and stay informed on current trends and best practices.

28 September - Workshops & Public Programmes

Our workshops invite practitioners to elevate their craft through hands-on sessions with renowned translators, while our public programmes invite language enthusiasts and the general public to engage with language and culture meaningfully through interactive activities, encouraging a deeper appreciation for translation and Singapore's multilingualism.

The objectives of Translation Day Singapore Translation are to:

- Recognise and highlight the diversity of languages used in Singapore, while promoting deeper appreciation for Singapore's multicultural fabric
- To showcase how literary translation can be a creative tool for fostering understanding between different linguistic and cultural communities
- To strengthen the professional development of literary translators in enhancing their skills and gaining more industry knowledge



Annex C: TDSG Programmes

Saturday 27 September - Talks		
<p>Ctrl+T: Translation Beyond the Machine</p> <p>9.30AM – 11AM @ Blue Room, The Arts House</p>	<p>Anton Hur Johnny Jon Jon Soh Wan Wei</p>	<p>In an age of fast-evolving machine translation and AI-assisted tools, translators face not just new technologies, but new questions of ethics, authorship, and creative control. Bringing together translators with different experiences and perspectives, some who are cautious about using AI, and others who enjoy experimenting with it in creative ways, they'll examine the choices translators face today.</p> <p>What parts of the translation process are we comfortable letting AI assist with? Or what do we hold back or resist, especially as technology interferes more deeply in our everyday lives and work?</p> <p>This session is supported by the National Translation Committee.</p>
<p>Experiments in Translating with Technology</p> <p>11.30AM – 12.30 PM (SGT) @ Blue Room, The Arts House</p>	<p>Joshua Ip Hemang Yadav</p>	<p>As AI and machine translation tools evolve, how can literary translators use them effectively? The panellists will share their experiences of experimenting with machine translation and AI technology, such as refining machine-generated drafts, and navigating cultural and stylistic nuances. Join us for a discussion on the opportunities, limitations of using machine translation in literary contexts.</p> <p>This session is supported by the National Translation Committee.</p>
<p>In Plain Sight: Translation Across Different Media</p> <p>2PM – 3PM (SGT) @ Blue Room, The Arts House</p>	<p>Boedi Widjaja Zoea Tania Chen Shaza Ishak</p>	<p>Creators whose work engages with translation in unexpected ways—across languages, disciplines, and creative forms—come together in this session. From visual arts to theatre and literature, the panellists will share how translation can be reimagined, opening space for new perspectives and possibilities that challenge conventional ideas of language and expression.</p> <p>This session is supported by the National Translation Committee.</p>
<p>Between Words and Worlds: Responsibility,</p>	<p>Arunava Sinha Jamie Chang Shelly Bryant Sung Ryu</p>	<p>This panel brings together translators and scholars to talk about the real-world challenges and ethical questions they face, from commercial pressures to translating</p>



<p>Voice, and Ethics in Translation</p> <p>3.30PM – 4.30 PM (SGT) @ Blue Room, The Arts House</p>		<p>voices from marginalised communities. The discussion will explore questions like: How do power dynamics shape translation choices? What is the translator's role when dealing with sensitive material? And how do we decide when to stay true to the original, and when to adapt for new readers?</p> <p>Through their personal experiences and practical reflections, the panellists will share how they make the difficult decisions in their work, and how we can shape a more responsible and inclusive practice.</p> <p>This session is supported by the National Translation Committee and LTI Korea.</p>
<p>A Spotlight on Translation of Korean Literature</p> <p>5 PM – 6 PM (SGT) @ Blue Room, The Arts House</p>	<p>Jamie Chang Sung Ryu</p>	<p>In recent years, Korean literature has gained remarkable global attention, thanks to the translators who bring these works to new audiences. But what does it take to carry a story across linguistic and cultural borders? What genres or themes are resonating most with international readers, and which are being overlooked? This panel of translators at the forefront of Korean literature in English to unpack the art, challenges, and decisions behind their work.</p> <p>This session is supported by LTI Korea.</p>
<p>Translators in Focus: Anton Hur & Arunava Sinha in Conversation</p> <p>7.30 PM – 8.30 PM (SGT) @ Blue Room, The Arts House</p>	<p>Anton Hur Arunava Sinha</p>	<p>What happens when translations bring their translators into the spotlight? In this conversation, acclaimed translators Anton Hur and Arunava Sinha share their personal experiences and reflect on their relationships with the works they've translated. They examine how book prizes, reviews, and publicity can influence both the reception of a translation and the trajectory of a translator. Together, they will discuss what the success and popularity of specific translations reveal about the global literary ecosystem, and how translators navigate their growing presence within it.</p> <p>This session is supported by LTI Korea and the Commonwealth Foundation.</p>

Sunday 28 September - Workshops



In Their Own Words: Translating Character Dialogue 10AM – 12PM (SGT) @ Blue Room, The Arts House	Arunava Sinha	Join acclaimed translator Arunava Sinha for a hands-on workshop on the art and nuance of translating dialogue. Participants will learn techniques for handling slang, as well as strategies for preserving character voice, cultural nuance, and subtext. This session is supported by the National Translation Committee.
Pitching Your Translation: How to Craft the Opening Paragraphs 1PM – 3PM (SGT) @ Blue Room, The Arts House	Anton Hur	Learn how to effectively pitch your translation work with prolific translator Anton Hur! This hands-on workshop focuses on the opening paragraphs—the part of a pitch that often makes or breaks your chance. Anton will share what makes an opening compelling and how to capture the attention of Anglophone publishers. Participants will draft or refine their own paragraphs and receive constructive feedback in a supportive setting. This session is supported by LTI Korea.
Punchlines in Transit: Translating Humour across Languages 3.30PM – 5.30PM (SGT) @ Blue Room, The Arts House	Jamie Chang	From puns and wordplay to culture-specific references, humour often resists easy transfer across languages. Together with established translator Jamie Chang, participants will learn practical ways to approach the translation of humour and experiment with different strategies to carry comic effect across languages. The workshop will include translation exercises, sharing translations, and space for exchanging feedback. This session is supported by LTI Korea.

Sunday 28 September – Public Programmes

The Joys of Bilingual Storytelling 10 AM – 12 PM (SGT) @ Living Room, The Arts House	Roger Jenkins Justine Devisse Mezrani	This practical workshop encourages participants to explore ways of effectively telling a story bilingually, not by direct translation but in a manner that enables even your monolingual audience members to understand the story. You will practice crafting your telling so as to make the narration more visual while developing dialogue that carries your story forward, supported and clarified by non-verbal communicators (the language of facial expression and gesture!)
Singapore Sign	Equal Dreams	Through a fun, interactive storytelling session led by Deaf facilitator Faaiqah Alkaff from



<p>Language Storytime!</p> <p>2 PM – 3 PM (SGT) @ Living Room, The Arts House</p>		<p>Equal Dreams, participants will gain exposure to Singapore Sign Language, and pick up basic signs during a sign-along component in the story.</p> <p>Fun fact: Did you know we have our own local sign language — Singapore Sign Language? It is a highly visual language with its own grammar, syntax and vocabulary. Grammatical features unique to SgSL that make it different from spoken English include: the use of a 3D space to create imagery, facial expressions (a type of non-manual marker), and characterisation using body shift.</p> <p>As Singapore Sign Language interpretation will be provided to facilitate communication for this session, participants will also get an understanding of what interpretation from Singapore Sign Language to English (and back) looks like, which can also further emphasise the difference between the two languages.</p> <p>Join us for a fun language learning experience!</p>
<p>Rishyashruna - a Polyphonic Performance</p>	<p>Hemang Yadav</p>	<p>Experience a polyphonic retelling of N. Palanivelu's Rishyashruna, brought to life in multiple languages by the Wisdom of Monkeys collective.</p>

Download speaker photos and bios [here](#).