



MEDIA ADVISORY (For Immediate release)

Pursuing Literary Excellence: 5 Recipients Awarded the 2nd Edition of the Writers+ Grant

SINGAPORE, 19 June 2026 – Jointly selected by the Copyright Licensing and Administration Society of Singapore (CLASS) and the Singapore Book Council (SBC), a total of five recipients - three authors and two translators - were awarded in the most recent edition of the Writers+ Grant, which continues to support the literary pursuits of local Singaporean writers and translators.

The 5 awardees are authors Daryl Yam and Nur-El-Hudaa Jaffar, translators Jamal Ismail and Sim Wai Chew, and poet Jerald Lim. From amongst a pool nearly 50 applicants with projects spanning across a wide variety of genres, themes and languages, the recipients were selected based on their proposals' quality, past work and experiences as well as their projects' potential.

In a recent joint-statement, Andrew Fong, CEO of CLASS, and William Phuan, Executive Director of SBC re-emphasised the importance of the grant in helping nurture a vibrant literary arts sector, saying: "The increase in applicants reflects a growing enterprising spirit in our writers and translators to create new windows for their works to be enjoyed by wider audiences. We hope the grant will contribute to the dynamism of our literary arts sector, and wish our five recipients nothing but the best in bringing their exciting projects to life."

Daryl Yam will use the grant to adapt his novel, *Lovelier Lonelier*, which was longlisted for the 2023 Dublin Literary Award, into a limited TV series while Nur-El's project focuses on completing a manuscript for her novel, *Lara Wulan*. Jamal Ismail will translate from Malay to English, a book he previously published, *Songsang*. Sim Wai Chew's project involves a Chinese-to-English translation of a 2021 short story collection by 2024 PEN Translates Award Winner Hai Fan, tentatively titled *Wilderness Tracks* (野徑). And Jerald's project revolves around the development and spread of the twin cinema, a distinctively Singaporean poetic form.



The selection panel comprised the chairperson Daren Shiau, novelist, poet and editor; Gene Tan, Chief Librarian and Deputy Chief Executive (Strategy & Experience), National Library & Archives Board, Singapore; Lim Geok Leng, General Manager, International Sales (Chinese), Marshall Cavendish Education; and Suriani Suratman, Senior Lecturer, Department of Malay Studies, National University of Singapore.

A collaboration between CLASS and the SBC, the Writers+ Grant sees both organisations committing a total amount of \$150,000 over three years. It aims to support both local writers and translators in their creative literary pursuits, nurturing the local literary landscape. It was initially launched in June 2024, and first opened for applications in September 2024. The next cycle of applications will open on Monday 29 June 2026.

Appendix A: General Information

Appendix B: About the Writers+ Grant Recipients

Appendix C: About the Writers+ Grant Selection Committee

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Appendix A: General Information

About Copyright Licensing and Administration Society of Singapore (CLASS)

The Copyright Licensing and Administration Society of Singapore (CLASS) was established in 1999 by book publishers and authors to protect their published works. It is an independent, not-for-profit, government-regulated organisation which seeks to eliminate unauthorised use of copyrighted works of its members and affiliates. CLASS collects and distributes royalties to its members and foreign creators through reproduction rights organisations (RROs). It also provides licensing services to any local organisations, which allow access to the repertoire of copyrighted works handled by CLASS. For more information, please visit <https://class-singapore.com/>.

About Singapore Book Council (SBC)

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 festivals, awards, workshops and school programmes have reached out to the various language and ethnic communities, boosting creativity, imagination, and empathy. 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; Translation Day Singapore, 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. For more information, please visit bookcouncil.sg.



Appendix B: About the Writers+ Grant Recipients

Daryl Yam Qilin



Daryl Qilin Yam is the award-nominated author of two novels, a novella and the bestselling short story collection *Be Your Own Bae* (2024). He co-founded the literary charity Sing Lit Station and serves as the managing editor of its publishing arm AFTERIMAGE. In 2025, he was bestowed the Young Artist Award, Singapore's highest award for arts practitioners aged 35 and below.

As a consultant in a writers' room organised by the New York City-based screenwriter Eunice Lau with Brooke Swaney, Daryl's project revolves around the creation of a story bible and a pilot script for the TV adaptation of his second novel *Lovelier, Lonelier*.

Nur-El-Hudaa Jaffar



Nur-El-Hudaa Jaffar is an award-winning writer and translator of short stories and poetry. She is also the author of picture books and middle grade novels. As a freelance editorial consultant, she helps writers and publishers develop books for publication.



To encourage creative expressions in Malay among primary and secondary students, she developed and ran Komikkan Ceritaku, a comic book writing and illustrating programme, in 2025.

Nur-El's project focuses on completing a manuscript for her novel, *Lara Wulan*, a contemporary fiction novel set in Singapore, focusing on fourteen-year-old Wulan's attempt to fit in when she moves in with her relatives of her estranged father after her mother's passing.

Jamal Ismail



Jamal Ismail is a Singapore-based writer whose works explore themes of memory, faith, and urban solitude through both fiction and non-fiction. His writing often engages with Malay cultural consciousness and the psychological dimensions of modern life. His recent projects include cross-genre narratives and literary translations that bring Malay texts into wider international discourse.

Jamal Ismail's project, *Songsang* or *INVERTED* explores the inner conflict between conscience and instinct through the troubled life of Ramadhan, a man caught between moral awareness and human desire. Rather than offering clear judgments, the novel invites reflection on the fragile balance within the self, where failure, guilt, and redemption quietly unfold. It is less a moral lesson than a mirror of the human condition.



Sim Wai Chew



Sim Wai Chew is an academic with interests in comparative literature and translation. His short fiction has appeared in *Cha: An Asian Literary Journal*, *Straits Times*, *Moving Worlds*, *Asiatic*, and *Silverfish New Writing* 5. His translation of Chia Joo Ming's novel *Exile or Pursuit* (放逐与追逐) was published in 2019. He was translator in residence (virtual) with the National Centre for Writing (UK) in 2023.

Sim is working on a Chinese-to-English translation of a 2021 short story collection by Hai Fan. Tentatively titled *Wilderness Tracks* (野径), the translation brings to the fore the ecological consciousness that pervades Hai Fan's work.

Jerald Lim Xuan Zheng



Jerald Lim is a queer ecological poet, creative technologist, and care practitioner. Their practice aims to destabilize dualisms and its offspring — anthropocentrism, colonialism, capitalism, and other forms of extractivism and violence. You may visit their corner of the internet at [jeraldim.com] (<http://jeraldim.com/>).



Jerald's project is centered around the development and spread of the twin cinema, a distinctively Singaporean poetic form that has emerged as an innovative contribution to contemporary literature. They aim to assemble a manuscript centered around experimentations with the form, develop dynamic and interactive computational twin cinema poems for digital publication, and facilitate workshops and public readings to explore its multisensorial capacities, as well as to encourage broader awareness and adoption of the form.



Appendix C; About the Writers+ Grant Selection Committee

Daren Shiau



Daren Shiau is a novelist, poet and editor. A recipient of National Arts Council's Young Artist Award in 2002, his published works include *Heartland* (1999), *Peninsular: Archipelagos and Other Islands* (2000), and the seminal microfiction collection *Velouria* (2007). Together with Lee Wei Fen, Daren co-edited a mono-titular intergenerational anthology of Singapore Writing, *COAST* (2011). From 2021 to 2023, Daren served as Co-Chair of the Singapore Writers Festival's maiden Advisory Panel. He currently serves as the Chair of the Writers' Grant Selection Committee launched by the Singapore Book Council and CLASS.

Gene Tan



Gene is the Chief Librarian and Deputy Chief Executive (Strategy & Experience) of the National Library & Archives Board (NLB), Singapore. He watches over the professional development of all librarians in NLB and oversees strategic planning and user experience transformation across the organisation.



Gene spearheaded the development of LAB25 (Libraries and Archives Blueprint 2025), a transformative vision for the National Library, the National Archives, and the public libraries in Singapore. He directed two major showcases in 2025, The SG60 Heart&Soul Experience and The Albatross File Exhibition, the flagship and capstone events to commemorate Singapore's 60th anniversary.

Previously, as the Executive Director of the Singapore Bicentennial Office at the Prime Minister's Office, Gene helmed the Singapore Bicentennial which commemorated the 200th anniversary of Raffles' arrival in Singapore in 1819. The commemoration included The Bicentennial Experience at Fort Canning which broke attendance records for exhibitions. He was also the Creative Director of the SG50 capstone event, The Future of Us Exhibition that captured the hopes and dreams of Singaporeans.

Gene was formerly the Director of the National Library, where he developed the Singapore Memory Project, and also the former President of the Library Association of Singapore.

Lim Geok Leng



Lim Geok Leng is a senior publisher in the educational publishing industry. She has more than 40 years of comprehensive educational experience in planning, publishing, marketing and training. Geok Leng has been the only partner working with Singapore Ministry of Education in publishing three language textbooks (Chinese, Malay, Tamil).

In addition to editing, leading art design, planning domestic and overseas marketing, she also shares teaching skills and classroom management with teachers. For many years, she has led Pan Pacific Education Publishing Company in Singapore and has been active in the local and overseas education markets in Singapore. These include China, ASEAN countries, Europe, America, East Africa, and recently Kazakhstan. Geok Leng is the president of the Singapore Chinese Publishing Association.

Suriani Suratman



Suriani Suratman, a social anthropologist, is Senior Lecturer at the Department of Malay Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore. Her research areas include (re)production of portrayals of Malays and gender relations in Malay families and households.

Her publications include Skills for “Marriage of a Lifetime: An Examination of Muslim Marriage Preparation Handbooks in Singapore 1974 to 2018 (2021, Religions). She is also a ceramic artist and has presented her works in solo and group exhibitions. She co-authored a journal article “Between Scientific and Sensory Knowledge: Exploring the Enactment of Clay Sensibilities among Clay Artists in Singapore” (2024, American Behavioral Scientist).