

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report examines the topic of cultural diplomacy between Canada and Singapore and seeks to provide the policy recommendations addressing the research question, “How can Canada promote itself as a multicultural society through cultural diplomacy in Singapore?”.

The report first provides context on cultural diplomacy and highlights the significance of promoting Canada as a multicultural society in Singapore. Next, it delves into primary and secondary research methods, which include an online survey, focus group discussions (FGD) and case studies. The online survey and FGDs helped the task force to uncover preferences for arts and culture events and perceptions on multiculturalism to inform targeted policy recommendations in the form of cultural initiatives. The case studies examined the cultural diplomacy strategies of France and Canada, as well as the Chingay Parade. The gaps identified included the lack of a clear and focused online presence to provide an overview of Canada’s cultural diplomatic efforts in Singapore along with the absence of a specific department to solely supervise cultural initiatives. Overall, the findings revealed the need for an institutionalized cultural diplomacy framework between Canada and Singapore to set the foundation for sustained local engagement through digital and physical means.

The report proposes a dual phase approach to promote Canada as a multicultural society through cultural diplomacy in Singapore. Phase One sets the groundwork for cultural diplomacy between Canada and Singapore by institutionalizing cultural cooperation through a Canada-Singapore Cultural Agreement and the establishment of a joint institute, Entente Canada-Singapore, to drive and sustain local cultural initiatives between Canada and Singapore set out in the agreement. Phase Two details the local engagement strategies of Entente Canada-Singapore. First, digital means like the creation of a website and a TikTok account provides a focused and interactive platform to promote the cross-cultural exchange of diverse ethnic

cultures across both countries and to raise awareness of the cultural initiatives organized by Canada in Singapore. Second, the organization of a physical multicultural festival builds upon the abovementioned engagement efforts to drive the promotion of Canada as a multicultural society in Singapore. Finally, this report acknowledges the limitations of funding, the current social distancing measures due coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) as well as challenges in obtaining approval from governmental bodies.

As such, this report hopes to lay the foundations of a strong cultural diplomacy framework for Canada to adopt in its engagement with Singapore to deepen its cultural presence and bilateral ties in the long run.