

Executive Summary

This report examines the gig economy in Singapore and strives to provide sensible policy solutions to mitigate the challenges and vulnerabilities faced by local gig workers. The unprecedented arrival of COVID-19 has exposed glaring gaps in the rights and protections offered to gig workers, while exacerbating risks and vulnerabilities are felt by this workforce. Our research has identified that primary concerns of gig workers in Singapore are financial uncertainty and lack of support systems for effective recourse. To mitigate these challenges faced by gig workers in Singapore, we seek to answer the policy question: How can the Singapore government minimize financial uncertainties and promote a supportive environment for gig work?

Our analysis of the Singaporean policy landscape has uncovered that the Singaporean government has attempted to address the needs of gig workers through measures such as the Tripartite Standard, the provision of payment-dispute mediation services, financial grants, and more. However, these measures are inadequate in fully responding to the challenges faced by gig workers due to multiple policy gaps. These gaps are informed by research conducted on Singaporean gig workers selected across different sectors of the gig economy by means of online surveys and interviews. Some limitations of these policies include its ineffective top-down approach, the inaccessibility of information, the lack of community support and the lingering negative perceptions towards gig work by both the gig worker and the public.

Therefore, to address these limitations and enable a better gig economy, we propose three policy recommendations: SGIG Online Platform, GigZone, and Go GIG! Grants. These policies are part of an overall sustainable Gig Ecosystem that works through a softer, bottom-up approach, seeking to retain the desirable qualities of gig work such as its flexibility and autonomy, while simultaneously empowering them to make better decisions to prevent further injury and exploitation.