



Project Vision

7-11

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Project Type: Multi-year

Section 1: Overview

A. Area of Concern

A study by Singapore Eye Research Institute (SERI) in 2015 stated that visual impairment has claimed the sight of 17,500 Singaporeans.

A May 2019 Straits Times article reported multiple sexual assaults and workplace discrimination cases against the visually handicapped (VH) due to lack of integration between the VH and society.

Based on interviews with members of the Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped (SAVH), many said members of the public are unaware of challenges they face and often help them when they are not in need.

People often assume that the VH are unable to live independently like any one of us.

B. Challenges Identified

1. Lack of awareness of difficulties faced by VH
2. Lack of awareness of the required help the VH need
3. Lack of empathy and inclusivity for the VH community in Singapore

C. Underlying Problem

Given that there is a lack of understanding of the challenges faced by the VH in Singapore, how might we be able to help the VH integrate into mainstream society with ease through educating and encouraging the public to provide the necessary support for the VH from 2021 and beyond?

D. Plan of Action

Our original initiatives had to be altered to fit COVID-19 restrictions and because SAVH was sorting out personal matters. Hence, we have readjusted our plans to achieve our goals through our curated 4-Es (Engage, Educate, Encourage, Experience) approach.

Through social media campaigns, we hoped to allow the public to listen to and understand the VH better by spreading awareness. Through authentic interviews and sharing their inspiring stories as a means of public education, we were able to engage the public to empathise with them.

Through interaction sessions and virtual resources for the VH, we hoped to bring comfort, engagement and encouragement to them regardless of our physical presence, especially during Heightened Alert.

Through awareness campaigns, both physically and virtually, we hoped to achieve our goal of educating the public to better understand how to correctly help the VH. During more relaxed COVID-19 restrictions, we hoped to allow the public to experience the lives of the VH through meaningful activities like Dining in the Dark.

Section 2: Implementation of the Plan

A. Actions and Outcomes to Date

Phase	Action	Objectives
November 2020 - January 2021	Preliminary Research <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted research on areas of concern Beneficiary Engagement Recruited 50 Organising Team (OT) members	Understanding the issue
March - April 2021	Dining in the Dark @ SAVH <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enriching firsthand experience of eating in complete darkness to understand how the blind feel• Badly hit by COVID-19• Provided the VH staff with a source of income• We expanded our outreach through social media, encouraging the public to patronise them Volunteering Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Light morning workouts for elderly VH• Engaged the elderly VH through interactive games (Sing-along, trivia, etc.) Interview Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• VH sharing their inspiring stories, and personal anecdotes, etc.• Posted their stories on Instagram	Understanding the VH

<p>May 2021</p>	<p>Cookie & Merchandise Sales @ HCI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Held informative presentations ● Organised eye-related games like a braille activity to raise awareness and educate students about the life of the VH ● Sold: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Subway cookies ○ Handmade merchandise by VH 	<p>Raise awareness</p> <p>Allow students to experience how the VH feel</p>
<p>June 2021</p>	<p>Social Media Campaigns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our main mediums to raise awareness for the VH community amidst the pandemic ● Instagram <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Eye see” Posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Eye-related conditions that lead to visual impairment ○ Inspiring stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Life stories shared by VH ○ Interview videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engaging the public to understanding the VH ● Tik Tok <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fun facts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Trivia regarding the VH 	<p>Raise awareness</p>

	<p>Wellness Website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Without face-to-face interaction with the VH, we created a website ● Provided a source of leisure for them ● Consists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cooking videos ○ Trivia ○ Simple pre-recorded exercise workouts, etc. 	<p>Entertainment</p>
<p>July 2021</p>	<p>Social Media Campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Darkness” video <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students trying their hobbies while being blindfolded <p>Measuring Project’s Success</p>	<p>Raising awareness and empathy</p>

Section 3: Project Outcomes

A. Accomplishments

Amidst the pandemic, we **impacted 22 elderly VH** through our interaction sessions, forging **unforgettable memories** with them. We interviewed **3 VH staff** at SAVH, hearing their life stories and challenges. We invited **7 OT members** to participate in Dining in the Dark. We reached out to **over 300 students and staff** in our Cookie & Merchandise Sales, **raising \$663.80**. We garnered **over 1200 followers** on social media and **above 4200 impressions**. We even received **commendation from the VH and staff** in our support for their cause.

B. Reflection on Outcomes

We are immensely grateful for the opportunity to learn about the VH and help them integrate into society. We witnessed the vibrance of the VH as we forged precious memories with them. The valuable opportunities to interact with the VH, experience blindness and contribute meaningfully to their community were eye-opening. Having bonded with them across the span of the project, it was inspiring to hear of their life experiences that continually spur us on to raise awareness for them.

Improvising and adapting based on the everchanging COVID-19 restrictions, we provided additional support and interaction through our online resources. We realised that serving the community may not always involve making a great difference, but initiating change ourselves by championing meaningful causes and having genuine impacts on the VH.

C. Scope of the Project

Community Impact: The general public could learn more about the VH and empathise with them. They now know how to help the VH when they encounter them, progressing towards building a society of inclusiveness for the VH community.

Impact on the VH Community:

Our interaction sessions sparked joy and motivated the VH to remain optimistic towards life. We managed to interact and keep in touch with 22 VH, lending them a listening ear and supporting them emotionally during tough times.

Resolution of UP: Given that we have identified that the public possesses a lack of understanding towards the challenges the VH face, we have educated them with the right knowledge of the support they should render to the VH when encountering them. Through public outreach in physical events and social media, we helped the public to be more empathetic towards the VH. Our interactions with the VH were in effort to better integrate them into society. It is imperative to ensure that more is being done for society to become more VH-friendly sustaining our efforts in the year to come.