



## **Project Grace 2.0 (7-41)**

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Multi-Year Project (Second Year)

## **1 Overview**

### **1.1 Area of Concern**

In Singapore, there are 150,000 individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) (Ong J., 2018). In a study conducted by SMU to investigate public attitudes towards persons with intellectual disabilities (PWIDs), the participants, when asked about awareness of persons with disabilities, immediately recalled physical disabilities only (Tai J., 2016). This thus reveals the widespread lack of awareness about PWIDs in Singapore, despite Singapore having a sizable number of them. In a survey conducted by the Lien Foundation (2016), only 30% of respondents agreed that Singapore is an inclusive society for PWIDs. Thus, the stigmatisation of PWIDs is evident in Singapore.

Our beneficiary, Special Olympics Singapore (SOSG), is part of the global inclusion movement seeking to empower PWIDs and promote inclusion via sports, health, education and leadership programmes.

### **1.2 Challenges Identified**

- 1) PWIDs have a dearth of interaction opportunities with the general public.
- 2) The general public has certain misconceptions about PWIDs.
- 3) PWIDs lack the confidence to integrate with mainstream society.

### **1.3 Underlying Problem**

Given that there is a lack of understanding of the abilities of PWIDs which has resulted in stigmatisation by the public, how might we empower these individuals by providing them with the necessary socio-emotional support, as well as raise awareness about them, so that they can be integrated into society in the year 2021 and beyond?

## 2. Plan of Action

We conducted a needs analysis survey and discussed with SOSG to better understand PWIDs and their challenges. We started our social media campaign with Humans of SOSG, where we interviewed their athletes. This enabled us to interact with them and raise awareness about them by posting the interviews on our Instagram page. We also posted valuable information about PWIDs.

Weekly virtual workout sessions with the athletes gave us a platform to interact with them and help them exercise because they were unable to have in-person training due to COVID restrictions. We held a seminar, titled “Power of Sports”, with Mr Sean Bai, Academy Director of Valencia CF, as our Guest of Honour. He gave an inspirational speech about Valencia’s football players, and his own experiences working with PWIDs. Ms Cassandra Lee from SOSG shared insightful information about PWIDs and how SOSG helps them. Mr Huang Yuchi and Pin Yun, a volunteer and athlete for SOSG respectively, teamed up to give an in-depth sharing about Pin Yun’s experience with SOSG. The seminar helped us to raise awareness about PWIDs, as well as funds for SOSG through the concurrent donation drive.

We conducted an Athlete Leadership Programme (ALP) over 2 sessions where we taught the athletes interpersonal skills to sustain conversations in a plethora of contexts. This gave us valuable interaction time with the athletes.

<b>Month(s)</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
2020		
November to December	1) Took over the project 2) Met with SOSG 3) Attended ALP sessions run by Project Grace 1.0	Understanding the problem Interaction
2021		
January to February	1) Started social media campaign <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Humans of SOSG</li><li>● Information about PWIDs</li></ul>	Raising Awareness Interaction Understanding the

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2) Researched the UP</li> <li>3) Conducted needs analysis</li> <li>4) Started planning initiatives</li> </ul>	problem
March to May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Continued to plan initiatives</li> <li>2) Social media campaign</li> </ul>	Raising Awareness
June to July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Seminar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donation drive</li> </ul> </li> <li>2) Weekly workout sessions</li> <li>3) Social media campaign</li> </ul>	Raising Awareness Raising Funds Interaction
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) ALP (2 sessions)</li> <li>2) Weekly workout sessions</li> <li>3) Social media campaign</li> </ul>	Raising Awareness Interaction

### **3 Project Outcomes**

#### **3.1 Accomplishments**

We have raised \$2755 for SOSG through our month-long donation drive and seed funding. Furthermore, we have garnered 696 and 90 followers on Instagram and Facebook respectively, and 381 views on our seminar uploaded to YouTube, helping to raise awareness for PWIDs. Finally, we have helped to empower 21 athletes through our weekly workout sessions, 6 through the ALP, and 6 through interviews for Humans of SOSG. These interactions gave the athletes a socio-emotional boost, and most importantly, put a smile on their faces.

#### **3.2 Reflections**

Our greatest takeaway is that PWIDs are similar to us in many ways. We realised that if people were given opportunities to work with PWIDs, it would have a positive impact on the lives of PWIDs. We better understood their struggles as a result of their IDs, and we learnt to empathise with them and to exercise patience when working with them. We realised that we had to give simple and clear instructions for fruitful interactions. Gradually, we learnt how to converse with them well, and this helped to raise their confidence when interacting with the general public. Finally, bringing joy to them made us feel that the effort we poured in was absolutely worth it. It was truly a deep learning curve for us.

We regret that we were not able to join athletes in their physical training sessions. However, we are grateful for the opportunities to befriend them and to bring joy into their lives.

#### **3.3 Scope of Impact**

##### **3.3.1 Community Impact**

Due to COVID restrictions, our engagement with the general public was restricted to online activities. We organised a seminar, which involved participation from members of the public, including Mr Bai. With over 200 attendees of the seminar and over 800 followers across our social media platforms, we have successfully reached out to the public to raise awareness about PWIDs.

##### **3.3.2 Community Involvement**

We kept our project members to a minimum, working with 7 students from Nanyang Girls' High School, as we did not see the need for mass recruitment of volunteers given the

absence of any large-scale physical event. Mr Bai also gave us valuable input about PWIDs and ways to raise their socio-emotional well-being.

### **3.3.3 Resolution of AOC/UP**

The workout sessions helped the athletes keep their fitness levels and spirits high. ALP sessions taught athletes how to sustain conversations in different settings. This helped to improve their interpersonal skills and confidence, thereby raising their socio-emotional well-being. The seminar and social media campaign helped raise public awareness about PWIDs.

#### 4 References

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