

ISEAS – GUIDE ON RELOCATION TO SINGAPORE

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1 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 About ISEAS:

The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, an autonomous organization established by an Act of Parliament in 1968, was renamed ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute (or ISEAS) in August 2015. Its primary objectives are:

To be a leading research centre dedicated to the study of socio-political, security, and economic trends and developments in Southeast Asia and its wider geostrategic and economic environment.

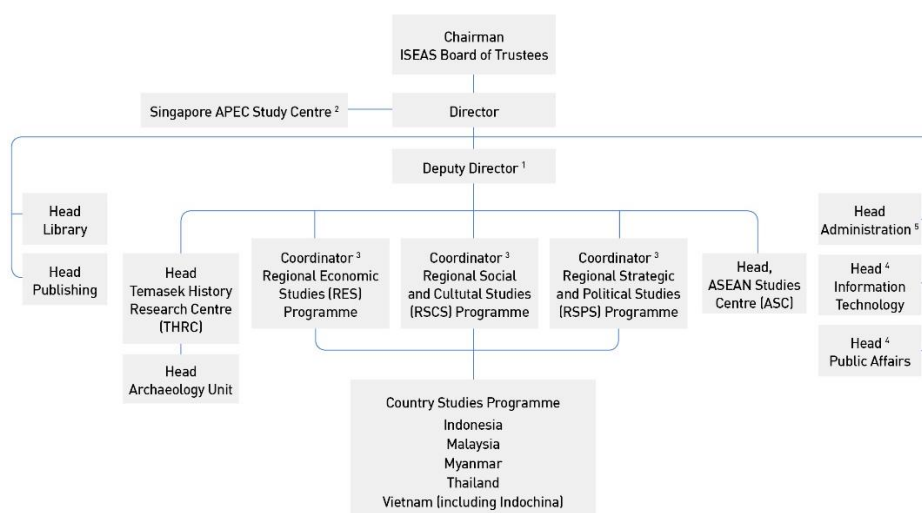
To stimulate research and debate within scholarly circles, enhance public awareness of the region, and facilitate the search for viable solutions to the varied problems confronting the region.

To nurture a community of scholars interested in the region and to engage in research on the multi-faceted dimensions and issues of stability and security, economic development, and political, social and cultural change.

The Institute conducts a range of research programmes; holds conferences, workshops, lectures and seminars; publishes briefs, research journals and books; and provides a range of research support facilities, including a large library collection.

The Institute comprises three Regional and five Country Studies Programmes, as well as three Centres. Besides the research programmes/centres, there are five other units supporting the researchers - Publishing, Library, Public Affairs, Information Technology and Administration. The structure of the organisation is as follows:

ISEAS ORGANISATION CHART



1. Deputy Director assists the Director in overseeing the three Regional Research Programmes and the academic programmes of ASC and THRC.
2. The Singapore APEC Study Centre has as its head, the Director of ISEAS. Its functions are executed through the Regional Economic Studies Programme.
3. The Coordinators of the three Regional Research Programmes are rotated every few years.
4. The Head of Administration coordinates Information Technology and Public Affairs.
5. The Head of Administration is ex-officio Secretary of ISEAS Board of Trustees.

Read more on ISEAS Website at: <https://www.iseas.edu.sg/about-us>

1.2 Location & Contact Information

30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Singapore 119614

Tel: +65 6778 0955

Fax: +65 6775 6264

Google map: <https://goo.gl/maps/tKnEXfU6xx5QfCKa7>

1.3 Operating Hours

Monday to Thursday: 8.30 am to 6.00 pm

Friday: 8.30 am to 5.30 pm

Closed on weekends and Public Holidays

2 RELOCATION RESOURCES

2.1 Accommodation

Researchers who are relocating to Singapore shall decide on the type of accommodation that is suitable for their needs. Based on our contract terms, accommodation will be self-sourced. There are many types of accommodation available in Singapore. Depending on your length of stay, budget and personal preference, you can choose to stay at a hotel, serviced apartment, rent a room or entire apartment.

Short-term serviced apartments is about S\$5,000 per month, with units closer to the city-centre being more expensive. As ISEAS is located at the south-western part of Singapore, you may wish to take this into consideration when selecting your accommodation.



Length of Stay	Type of Accommodation
Short-Term (< 1 Week)	1. Hotel Fuss free, no minimum stay period, many options to choose from but may be expensive in the long run and has limited amenities. Available from S\$60/night onwards 2. Hostel Hostels may offer a cheaper alternative to hotels but may fair lower in terms of security and privacy due to shared spaces. There are no hostels within 5km of ISEAS.
Short to Mid-Term	1. Serviced Apartment

Length of Stay	Type of Accommodation
(Min 1 week to 3 months)	<p>Has similar services and facilities as hotels but has more amenities like kitchen, laundry area and larger living space.</p> <p>Available from S\$100/night or S\$2,900/month for 1BR apartments</p>
Short to Mid-Term (2 to 6 months)	<p>1. University Serviced Apartments /Student Apartments</p> <p>Located in National University of Singapore, includes house-keeping, laundry and breakfast. Depends on availability only.</p> <p>1BR from S\$1000/month (shared common areas) or from S\$2,600/month</p>
Mid to Long-Term (Min 3 months)	<p>- Private (Apartment/Condo/Landed)</p> <p>Private residential homes rented out, could range from unfurnished to fully furnished, may or may not have facilities depending on the type.</p> <p><u>Room</u> Fr S\$600 - S\$2,500 per month</p> <p><u>Entire Unit</u> Fr S\$2,500 per month</p>
Mid to Long-Term (Min 6 months)	<p>1. Housing Development Board flats (HDB)</p> <p>Public flats may be rented out. It could be unfurnished to fully furnished. Usually cheaper than private homes.</p> <p><u>Room</u> Fr S\$500 - S\$1,000 per month</p> <p><u>Entire Unit</u> Fr S\$2,500 per month</p>

2.1.1 Rental Types

There are different types of properties available for rental – public and private. Public housing are cheaper but have more restrictions (HDB). Private properties provide more options and more facilities, but are more expensive; these included condominiums, landed houses, or apartments.

1.1.2 Sourcing

While most rental ads can be found on the property search engines, you can choose to engage a property agent to help you with the search. The agent may charge a commission (typically up to half a month's rent), depending on the agreement.

2.1.3 Minimum Rental Duration

In general, property rentals in Singapore have to be at least 3 months for private properties and 6 months for HDB flats capped at 2 years for HDBs.

2.1.4 Maximum Occupancy

If you are thinking of relocating with your family, there is a maximum occupancy for rental of bedrooms and entire flat. For private residential properties, the maximum occupancy is capped at 6 unrelated persons per property. For HDBs, it's dependant on whether it's a room or entire flat rental. Refer to the table provided by HDB:

Flat Type	Renting of Flat	Renting of Bedroom(s)	
	Maximum Number of tenants Allowed in Each Flat [^]	Maximum Number of Bedroom(s) Allowed	Maximum Number of Occupants* Allowed in Each Flat [^]
1-room and 2-room	4	Owners are not allowed to rent out the bedroom.	
3-room	6	1	6
4-room and bigger	6	2	6

* Include flat owners, authorised occupiers, and tenants

[^] Only bedrooms originally constructed by HDB can be rented out. All other parts of the flat (including partitioned rooms) cannot be used as bedrooms for tenants.

2.1.5 Rental Conditions

Rented apartments can range from unfurnished to fully-furnished, you should negotiate before signing the tenancy agreement. Fully furnished units and rooms may cost more than unfurnished ones.

2.1.6 Letter of Intent/Tenancy Agreement

a) Diplomatic/Repatriation Clause

This allows you to end the contract after the agreed notice period and claim your security deposit in the event you have to end the contract earlier.

b) Booking Deposit

This is usually one month's rent. After the LOI has been sign and this has been paid, the owner cannot rent the property to someone else.

c) Security Deposit

Usually one month's rent. Once the lease is over, this amount will be refunded. If any expenses arise due to the tenant breach in terms of the tenancy agreement i.e. damages to the property, the owner can deduct a reasonable amount from this deposit.

d) Lease Term

The lease term may or may not include a renewal option, usually with advance notice to exercise. Should be negotiated in advance.

e) Installation and monthly charges

You may likely be responsible for the monthly bills of water, electricity, gas, broadband internet connection etc. This should be negotiated in advance.

f) Minor Repair Clause & Defects Liability period

This clause states how much you are liable to pay for damages caused by wear and tear (damage from direct negligence is deducted from security deposit). Usually tenants pay the first \$150 for fixing wear and tear, while landlord covers the rest

Also check that you are entitled to a defects liability period, whereby any defects within the stated period upon moving in, the landlord is liable to make good. If it's not available, you should negotiate for one preferably 30 days.

g) Taking over the unit/room

Request for a thorough clean-up of the property before the takeover. Do check that the furniture and items agreed are present and note the defects before the handover of the keys.

Take photos of the condition of the property and any existing damages like stained tiled or scratched flooring. Get the landlord to acknowledge them so that you would not be required to pay for damages not caused by you.

2.2 **BANKS**

Depending on your duration of stay in Singapore, you may consider opening a local bank account to facilitate the payment of your salary and access to cash. Having a local bank account could save you from international withdrawal charges that your bank may impose on you, facilitate salary payments and allow easier access to your salary.

If you do not wish to open local bank account, ISEAS Finance unit can arrange for your salary to be credited to your overseas bank account via telegraphic transfer.

2.2.1 Choosing a Bank

There are many local and international banks in Singapore, but not all provide services for foreigners.

There are many considerations when choosing a bank. You may want to choose one that has the banking services you need and is easily accessible to where you live or work, as most banks in Singapore are closed on the weekends. You should also consider other services or factors like:

- ATMs availability

- Interest rates
- Remittance and fees
- Multi-currency accounts
- Credit cards
- Minimum balance and fees
- Online banking

2.2.2 Opening a Bank Account

To open a bank account, you can either book an appointment to do it after you arrive in Singapore, or apply online. The standard required documents by banks are:

- Proof of identity, at least 6 months validity (Passport or National ID card)
- Proof of residence (i.e phone bills or utility bills)
- Proof of employment (Employment pass or In Principle Approval (IPA) issued by Ministry of Manpower)

2.3 Insurance

There are many types of insurance that may be applicable for you depending on your duration of stay and requirements. You may wish to consider travel, normal health, and international health insurance.

Length of Stay	Type of Insurance Recommended	Summary
Short (less than 1 mth)	Travel Insurance	Usually covers emergencies, necessary treatment at destination but you are expected to travel home to seek further treatment when you can. If you intend to purchase travel insurance, purchasing from your home country would be a better option.
Mid-range to Long term	Normal Health Insurance	It is what locals buy for use in Singapore only. More economical than International Health Insurance for long term. Recommended if you intend to settle for a long time or indefinitely.
	International Health Insurance	Offers medical coverage in a particular country or region or world, depending on plan – but more expensive. If you are intending to move to another country (other than home country) after stint in Singapore

Length of Stay	Type of Insurance Recommended	Summary
		<p>– can consider international health insurance.</p> <p>You may purchase this from the insurance companies in your country or Singapore.</p>

2.4 **COVID-19**

As the COVID-19 situation is constantly evolving, visitors planning to enter Singapore should be prepared to be subjected to the prevailing border control measures and public health requirements.

2.4.1 **Border Control Measures**

All visitors will be subjected to COVID-19 test upon arrival, and may be placed on a 7 to 14 day Stay-Home-Notice (SHN) depending on the country they are arriving from. Visitors will have to bear the cost incurred for the COVID-19 test and SHN Dedicated Facility.

Before entering Singapore, you should obtain permission for entry via the online form and submit a health declaration within 3 days prior to arriving in Singapore through the ICA's website.

As such measures may be changed, you should refer to the latest measures from following website:

Agency
Immigration and Checkpoints
Authority's (ICA)
Ministry of Health
Ministry of Manpower

Website
<https://www.ica.gov.sg/covid-19>
<https://www.moh.gov.sg/>
<https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19>

3. LIVING IN SINGAPORE

3.1 Weather in Singapore

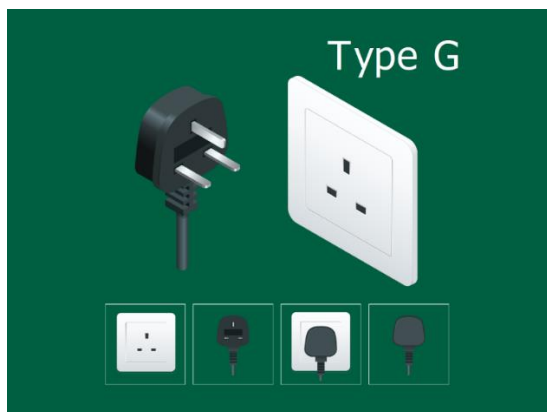
Singapore has a tropical climate and stays hot and humid throughout the year with average temperature around 23 °C to 31 °C. The hottest months are in April and May, while north east monsoon season is between December to March.

3.2 Language

Singapore is a multilingual country. There are four languages that are spoken in Singapore – English, Tamil, Mandarin and Malay. However, English is most commonly used at the workplace.

3.3 Socket and Power Adapter

In Singapore the power plugs and sockets are type G. Adapters are easily available and you'd be able to find them easily at neighbourhood homeware stores or convenient stores.



3.4 Mobile Data/SIM Card

Singapore is one of the few countries in the world with the fastest mobile broadband speeds and network that can be accessed in any part of the island. There are free public Wi-Fi easily available in malls, MRT stations and the ISEAS office itself. Depending on your length of stay and usage needs, you may consider getting a mobile sim card to stay connected. There are different type of plans, post-paid and pre-paid. ISEAS also has corporate plans at discounted rates for employees.

3.4.1 Post-paid

The major Telcos in Singapore are Singtel, M1 Limited and Starhub. Most of the Telcos post-plans require a minimum subscription period, valid long-term visa/pass and residential address as a minimum eligibility criteria.

3.4.2 Corporate Plans

ISEAS staff are eligible for discounted rates under the available Telcos' Corporate Individual Scheme (CIS), again there are different criteria and plan types:

Telco:	Criteria/Required Docs:	More info/Type of Plans:
Singtel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Min. 18 years old- Current staff of ISEAS- Valid Employment pass (at least 12 months' validity) or Work Permit (at least 12 months' validity and a deposit is required)- Staff Pass/Pay Slip/Company HR Authorization Letter	https://www.singtel.com/business/products-services/mobility/company-schemes/corporate-individual-scheme-cis
M1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Min. 18 years old- Current staff of ISEAS- Valid Employment pass (at least 6 months' validity)- Passport (at least 6 months' validity)- Proof of billing address- Work Permit holders can apply for M1 CORI (Maximum 1 line) but a deposit of \$200 is required. (Prepayment of \$600 is required for mid-tier contracts and above).	https://www.m1.com.sg/Business/Products/Mobile/corporate-individual-cori
Starhub	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Valid Employment pass (at least 6 months' validity)- Staff Pass/Pay Slip/Company HR Authorization Letter- Proof of billing address	https://www.starhub.com/personal/mobile/cis.html

3.4.3 Prepaid

Prepaid cards can be purchased when you arrive at Changi Airport (Locations here: <https://www.changiairport.com/en/airport-guide/facilities-and-services/local-sim-card-purchase.html>) or easily at any convenient stores in Singapore.

3.5 Getting Around

There are many ways to get around in Singapore, you may wish to use the public transportation (Train, Bus and Taxi/PHV) or drive.

3.5.1 Public Transport

The most economical way to get around in Singapore is via public Transport. To get to different districts in Singapore, the fastest way is via train (Mass Rapid Transit – MRT). To get around within the districts, bus/walk would be the most effective way.

Public Transportation		
	Train (MRT)	Bus
	To get to the different areas of Singapore, the fastest way is via MRT (Mass Rapid Transit). Use stored value cards* such as ez-link card or NETS Flashpay. You can also purchase a standard ticket at every station.	To get around within the different areas in Singapore, bus is the most convenient way. Use exact change or stored value cards* such as ez-link cards or NETS Flashpay.
	*Stored value cards can be purchased at Ticket Office at most train stations.	
More information	http://www.smrt.com.sg/ MRT Map: https://www.lta.gov.sg/content/lta.gov/en/getting_around/public_transport/rail_network.html	https://www.sbstransit.com.sg/
	Taxi/Cab	Private Hire Vehicles (PHV)
	Taxis in Singapore run by meter fares with flag down fees starting from \$3 to \$3.40 for ordinary taxis.	Ride-hailing apps are also legally operated in Singapore, you may consider Grab, Gojek and Ryde etc for alternatives to Taxis.

3.5.2 Driving in Singapore – License Conversion

For Foreigners residing in Singapore for less than 12 months, you are required to have the following in order to drive in Singapore:

- Possess a foreign driving licence and International Driving Permit (IDP) issued by an authorised body from your country of origin; or
- Possess an official translation of your foreign driving licence in English if an IDP is not available.

For Foreigners residing in Singapore for more than 12 months, you are required to convert your driving license to a valid Singapore Driving License before you can drive or ride on the roads.

For more information on criteria and how to convert your license, you can refer to Singapore Police Force website (select dropdown “Singapore Driving License” > “Foreigners Residing in Singapore For Less than 12 Months” / “Conversion of Foreign Driving License”): <https://www.police.gov.sg/Advisories/Traffic/Traffic-Matters>

3.6 Healthcare/Clinics

Depending on your employment contract, you may or may not be provided with medical benefits. Though the day-to-day healthcare services are relatively affordable, you may wish to consider purchasing a health insurance plan to cover at least for critical illness. Refer to section on Insurance.

3.7 Income Tax

Depending on your tax residency status, you may be liable for income tax in Singapore. As a non-resident, you will only be taxed on all income earned in Singapore. You will be regarded as a tax resident if you:

- a. Stay or work in Singapore
 - i. For at least 183 days in a calendar year; or
 - ii. Continuously for three consecutive years; or
- b. Work in Singapore for a period straddling two calendar years and your total period of stay* is at least 183 days.

This applies to foreign employees who entered Singapore from 1 Jan 2007 but excludes directors of a company, public entertainers or professionals.

* including your physical presence immediately before and after your employment.

If you are issued with a work pass that is valid for at least one year, you will also be treated as a tax resident upfront. However, your tax residency status will be reviewed at the point of tax clearance when you cease your employment based on the tax residency rules. If your stay in Singapore is less than 183 days, you will be regarded as a non-resident.

You may refer to IRAS website for more information on Income Tax.

<https://www.iras.gov.sg/irashome/Individuals/Foreigners/Learning-the-basics/Individuals--Foreigners--Required-to-Pay-Tax/>

For opportunities at ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, visit [Careers @ Gov](#) or our [website](#).

If you have other information or enquiries on relocation to Singapore, you can send them to HR department at HR@iseas.edu.sg.