Welcome to this lesson on Event Outcome and Impact and Public Policy
In this presentation, we will learn about

- Justification for public sector to be involved in events
- Means of public sector involvement
You are probably aware that government or the public sector in many countries are involve in bidding and hosting of events, especially mega events like World Cup and the Olympics. As organising and managing events may involve use of public funds, there must be a valid reason why the government should be involved. This is especially so if the funds that are allocated to the events are substantial.
There are 5 main justifications why the government should be involved.
Firstly ideology. Ideology refers to philosophies, beliefs or principles of individuals or groups. Different government personnel or political parties will likely have different approaches or opinions on proposed government policies, initiatives and plans. Their differences will translate into whether they support certain policies or plans. And why are there differences? Because of ideologies which shape their thinking and political views.
Thus one can expect that when political parties deliberate or discuss on issues, their ideologies will shape the debate. Some political parties may feel that events are good for the country due to increased in tourist visits, generate more economic benefits, make the country vibrant due to their experiences and perceptions, so they may support funding or initiatives such as hosting of mega events, festivals, developing of venues etc.
An event can be deemed a public good, like healthcare or public transport. This means that the event have advantages or values that benefit everyone in society. If so, the event should generate the same or more benefits than other government investments so that it justify the government intervening in the event.
To be a public good, an event should fit 3 criteria:

1. It should fit into an accepted policy domains, such as tourism. This means that events are part & parcel of the Tourism industry or any suitable policy domains.

2. The benefits generated from the event must be substantial so that it is worth investing in; everyone (and not just a minority group) should benefit from the event; in other words, it is inclusive. There must be evidence of such benefits as well.

3. There must be rules & accountability on how money was spent, actions made or decisions taken.
Failure or inadequacy of Marketplace

This justification is built on the concept of events as form of public good. Since events is a public good, access to the event and its benefits should be based on the principle of social equity, that is, it must be fair, justified and there is a need for such events.

If so, if events is left to the private sector or free market, there may not be enough incentives or rewards for them to organise the events. Thus society and the public would suffer. Government intervention is then necessary.

Without government intervention, the free market is likely to skew towards certain types of events, such as commercial events or events that can generate profits for the event organiser. Thus only selected people can benefit from the event.

With government intervention, benefits can extend to the public. An example would be a free health talk; such knowledge is necessary for society at large and should not be a case of only people who could afford to pay for such talks can then benefit from it.
Returns on investment, or ROI, refers to benefits attained from investment. In this case, economic benefits from investing in events.

The means of returns is usually tax benefits/gains and this can be obtained from taxing consumption of goods & services associated with the event. An example would be Singapore Grand Prix where hotels have to pay between 20%-30% tax on room bookings during the F1 period.

For buy-in however, there must be accountability and transparency on economic benefits arising from such investment, especially as public funds are used.
Besides economic benefits like ROI, the government can also justify its intervention in events through intangible benefits arising from investing in events. This usually takes the form of pride in the country or government’s capability to host a particular event.

There could also be indirect benefits arising from investing in events, such as enhanced awareness of the country. In other words, events could be used as a tool to market the country for future benefits such as tourism or brand the country as a ‘liveable’ city, thus capable of attracting foreign talents. Hence, it is justified for government to intervene in events.
After understanding why government or the public sector are involved in events, we now look at HOW they could be involved. This slide summarise the main ways for government or the public sector to be involved.
One major role of any government is to make policies; policies are simply put, a course of action, plan or strategies. To support event development, government can establish policies in major policy domains as seen in this slide.
Events provide economic benefits such as increase in tourists and hence, tourist spending. Jobs can be created and businesses may make money from consumption of goods & services. Possible government initiatives that leverage on event in this area include fostering event tourism (that is, tourists travelling to other countries to attend events), tapping on events for generic econ development such as job creation, developing and using venues for events and branding & marketing a country as the venue for events.

Example of policies that will support such development include formally establishing event tourism as a policy domain. This include having its own government agency or department to oversee development of event tourism and government funding. An example of this in local context is the SECB (Singapore Exhibition & Convention Bureau); SECB part of STB and its main objective is to oversee and promote Singapore as a destination for business events.

The government can also integrate event policies with investment in venue and operations; this means that the government can require venue developers or owners to have certain initiatives that support events, such as having convention & exhibition spaces in IR.

As part of place marketing, the government may allocate budget to initiatives or perhaps developments that help to brand the country/city as the venue for events, in line with how the government wants to brand or promote the country to be known as. An e.g. would be Tourism 2015, where events have been designated as a pillar of growth.
In the cultural domain, the government can promote/foster arts & cultural development. Some initiatives will include investing in arts & cultural events or fostering sustainable cultural event tourism, meaning tapping on culture with events as a means to draw tourists to the country.

Example of event policy initiatives would include incorporating events in cultural policy and arts development strategies and developing funding programs for cultural & arts events.

There are many examples of such policy initiatives locally.

Arising from the Arts and Culture Strategic Review managed by the Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth (MCCY), one objective is to get 4 in 5 Singaporeans to attend at least one arts and cultural event each year by 2025. The initiatives to support this objective include free museum entry for Singaporeans all year round and a cultural matching fund.
Another example would be in 2012, the People’s Association (PA) launched the PAssionArts Movement with the goal of bringing arts and culture to the community. E.g. of initiatives include PAssionArts Hotspots for residents to enjoy arts and cultural performances, Community Art Galleries allowing visual artists to showcase their work, and the PAssionArts Inspiration Series to promote mutual understanding of culture through festive celebrations.

There is also the Singapore Heritage Festival - a yearly event by the National Heritage Board – which is a platform for Singaporeans to come together and celebrate our diverse culture; Festival Hubs are set up in shopping malls and tourist destinations to house different activities and cultural performances throughout the day to promote Singapore’s heritage. Over the years, the festival has grown from two Festival Hubs in 2004 to 10 in 2013. The variety of activities, exhibits and performances have also grown immensely.
The government can also establish policies targeting society and community at large. Initiatives could be targeted to foster social integration & community involvement, enhance health & wellness through a programme of public events or even tackle social problems surrounding events.

Some example of event policies include formulating policies that govern the use of public spaces such as parks or void decks for events, like the Speaker’s Corner in Hong Lim Park, Singapore.

The government could also provide resources such as counselling to combat social problems associated with events; an example would be the problems associated with gambling when the IR casino was set up; the National Council for Problem Gambling in Singapore provide counselling services to alleviate such problems.
In the environment domain, the government can consider initiatives that reduce the negative impact of events on the environment or tap on events to promote awareness of environment protection. Some initiatives would include that events should be “green”, should meet the RRR (reduce, reuse & recycle) standards or perhaps use events to promote related environment initiatives like promoting environment education.

Some example of event policies would be limiting waste from events, encouraging or taking the lead in sustainable events or mandate that events confirm to related ISO standards such as the Sustainable Event Management Sys in UK or ISO20121, an international standard that specifies the requirements for an Event Sustainability Management System to improve the sustainability of events.
Moving on, another means of public sector involvement is funding, which could come in various forms as seen in this slide.

For the direct provision method, this refers to the government setting up and running its own events. An example would be Singapore Day, organised by the OSU (Overseas Singaporeans Unit, a division of the Ministry of Home Affairs). This event aims to bind the ties of Singaporeans overseas with Singapore. Inaugurated in 2007, Singapore Day has since been held in places like Melbourne, London, Shanghai & Sydney.

Another means of funding is the equity approach, which sees the government investing in events, just like a shareholder, by injecting money into events. An example would be F1, which is co-funded by the government and supported by STB with various activities & programs to promote the event.

The government may also sponsor events; this is done through funding events in cash or kind in return for specific benefits. Usually the benefits which the government sought in such sponsorship have a community appeal, such as ministries sponsoring door gifts with messages to stop smoking, drive carefully, etc.
Next, facilitation. This refers to the government facilitating creation and/or operations of events or perhaps assist in setting up of event management company.
Some areas of facilitation are shown in this slide.
For financial facilitation, the government can provide grants, loans or subsidies to encourage EMC to organise certain type of events which fits the national agenda. The government could also provide monetary assistance to set up EMC. Some local example include the concessionary tax rate of 10% on income accruing from holding approved mega events in Singapore or the Kickstart grant which supports the development of innovative lifestyle test-bed events and concepts with strong tourism potential. Qualifying projects include organising of live events and pop-up.

As part of technical facilitation, the government may also provide professional advice & training, such as WSQ courses on event planning. In fact, the Kickstart grant mentioned earlier features mentorship by industry leaders in various arena, including the events industry.

For marketing, the government could allow events to be promoted thru’ its marketing materials and website. If you take a look at STB’s website, for e.g., you will see a calendar of events.

For facilitation in infrastructure, the government could consider providing or improving venues and necessary services such as roads, Internet access, etc., to host and execute events. An example would be the Kallang area where the Sports Hub is located; roads have been widened and the Kallang MRT station themed accordingly with sports.
Government/public sector involvement in events can be justified on the basis of:

- **Ideology**
  - Approaches/opinions rooted in philosophies, value sets and/or religious beliefs

- **Events as a public good**
  - Everyone can benefit from the event

- **Failure or inadequacy of the marketplace**
  - Event/event benefit is necessary, so it is only fair that all should benefit

- **Returns on investment**
  - Tax gains from event tourism

- **Intangible benefits**
  - Pride, enhanced reputation, etc.
Government/public sector could be involved in events through the following means:

- **Policy-making**
  - Economic, Cultural, Social & Environmental

- **Funding**
  - Direct provision, equity & sponsorship

- **Facilitation**
  - Financial, Technical, Marketing & Infrastructure
• Consider Singapore F1 Grand Prix. How could government involvement be justified?
• What are some of the ways in which the government was involved?