


ACMâ??s Hinrich Foundation Trade Gallery opens 18 November after a S$5 million gift

### Description

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The Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM) is renaming one of its best-known spaces. Its Maritime Trade Gallery on Level 1 will become the **Hinrich Foundation Trade Gallery** when it is unveiled on 18 November 2026, after a S$5 million naming gift from the Hinrich Foundation.

The Hinrich Foundation is an Asia-based philanthropic organisation that works on sustainable global trade. Entry to the gallery stays free for Singaporeans and Permanent Residents.

## What the Hinrich Foundation Trade Gallery is about

If you have visited ACM, you probably know this gallery. It looks at how trade moved goods, people, ideas and beliefs across Asia and beyond, and it frames Singapore as an Asian port city and a global crossroads.

â??Trade has long been central to Singaporeâ??s history, connecting people and cultures across Asia and beyond,â?• said Clement Onn, Director of ACM and the Peranakan Museum.

## Where the S$5 million goes

The gift funds a phased programme rather than a one-off refit. ACM says it will go towards:

- a refresh of the Singapore Archaeology section in 2027, adding depth to the story of Singaporeâ??s early history
- new acquisitions for the collection
- refreshed displays and interactive features
- public programmes to bring these stories to more people

Merle Hinrich, the foundationâ??s chairman, said the gallery tells a â??historically grounded narrative of how trade has shaped Singaporeâ??s role as a connector, facilitator and trusted portâ?•, and pointed

to its relevance at a time of rising geopolitical tension.

### Two anniversaries

The timing is not accidental. ACM turns 30 in 2027, and the galleryâ??s unveiling also opens the Hinrich Foundationâ??s 15th anniversary celebrations. Those began in October with a S$750,000 Global Trade Leaders Scholarship at NUS Business School and an authorised biography of Merle Hinrich, *Architect of Opportunity*.

## Our take

For locals, the useful part is simple: a familiar, free gallery is getting new money, new objects and a better Singapore Archaeology section next year. Pair a visit with ACMâ??s Sacred Caves exhibition, or head down the road to the Peranakan Museumâ??s Exceptional/Everyday. Fans of trade history will also like SHIPPED! Vessels of Taste at ArCH Square, which looks at shipwreck ceramics.

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