

The Singapore Institute of Management Library has completed renovations to create a more comfortable learning environment

Differing from typical libraries filled with shelves, the Singapore Institute of Management Library, after a transformation, has not only removed bookshelves but also added a 24-hour open learning space with a café-style design, creating a more comfortable learning environment for its learners.

This 1600-square-metre library completed its renovation in July of this year, believed to be the first shelf-less library in the country.

Gerald Lum, Director of Brand, Marketing and Communications at Singapore Institute of Management, said in an interview with Lianhe Zaobao that the idea to renovate the library arose in 2021, and the institution sought the opinions of nearly 300 students to understand what facilities they would like to see added. "Most students expressed the desire for a more modern library, and when conceptualising the design, the institution incorporated their suggestions, aiming to create an environment conducive to learning."

One significant feature of the renovated library is the relocation of existing bookshelves to make room for various types of seating. The institution has installed smart book lockers outside the library for students to conveniently return and pick up reserved books. Students can use the MySIM app to log in to the library website to search for and reserve books. Upon receiving an email notification, they only need to present their student ID, QR code, or enter a password to pick up the books.

The library has soft lighting, and in addition to individual seats and long tables, some spaces feature a café-style design, with high chairs and round tables for group discussions. There are also bean bags in one corner for students to relax. Each seat is equipped with power outlets, allowing students to charge their phones and laptops anytime.

To provide students with a suitable place to study after regular library hours and on Sundays and public holidays, the institution has added a 24-hour shared space at the side entrance of the library. This space, accommodating 32 people, is only open to students who have made advance reservations online.

Gerald shared, "Setting up different types and designs of seats in the library can meet the needs of different students and help enhance their learning experience. Currently, the library's visitor count has increased by at least 15% to 20% compared to before the renovation."

Huang Ya Qi, 23, who is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Sociology at SIM-University at Buffalo through the Singapore Institute of Management, used to visit the library three to four times a month. Now, she goes almost every day. "The library used to have rows of bookshelves and a monotonous design. The current library is more comfortable, which helps improve efficiency in studying. During my internship, I also often work remotely from the library, and they have added reading pods that provide more privacy, making it convenient for video conferences."

Su Hui Si, 21, studying for a Bachelor's degree in Data Science and Business Analytics at SIM-University of London, believes that the renovated library looks more spacious and aesthetically pleasing. The new environment also helps students relax and focus more on their studies."