

# PROJECT YELLOW DRESS

**PYD**

## First Generation Interview Questions

### Disclaimer

The focus of this interview is to learn more about the experiences of first generation Southeast Asian Americans. Due to the nature of this interview, we want to make sure that the interviewee and interviewer are aware that some of these questions can trigger traumatic memories and cause emotional and mental distress. Therefore, please remind the interviewee that he/she has the right to skip a question/topic and even stop the interview at any time.

### Guidelines for Interviewers

- Please show the utmost respect to your interviewee.
- Create a safe space, and make sure you both are comfortable. Discuss points of discussion before the interview, making sure you both are on the same page.
- Acknowledge that it is not your job to interpret their experience, but rather to listen and help them share their own story.
- No two stories are the same, so do not try to force the interview into a specific narrative.
- Encourage interviewees to open up to you, but do not pry. Recognize the limits. Make sure the interviewee knows that they can pass on any question or topic they feel uncomfortable addressing.
- Try to make your questions open-ended so the answer is not just "yes" or "no."
- If you ask for or are shown photos or documents, please ask to make sure it is okay if you share them on the PYD website.
- At the end of the interview, remember to thank your interviewee. If you can, please provide us with his/her contact information so PYD can send out a thank you card to your interviewee :)

### Maps

We also have a few maps available on our resources page. While some people prefer to express themselves using the written word, others may find visuals to be helpful; some may even like the combination of the two. The first map, which is a close up of Southeast Asia, can be used to visually plot your interviewee's journey from Southeast Asia, and the second map, a world map, can be used to document your interviewee's family diaspora. However, the interviewees can also use or add other maps they like.

## **Interview Questions**

*Every interview should be different, adjusting to the needs and responses of each interviewee. The following questions are meant more as suggestions for talking points.*

### **Introduction**

- Please introduce yourself. Where were you born and raised?
- How did you hear about this project? What encouraged you to participate?

### **Childhood**

- What was your hometown like? What did the neighborhood look like?
- What was your childhood like? How many people are in your family?
- What is your favorite memory from your childhood?

### **Leaving Home**

- What led to your decision to leave your home country?
- How did you leave?
- Sample discussion topics: fleeing, sea/land/air journey, points of asylum/refugee camps, sponsorship

### **New Life**

- How, when, and where did you arrive?
- What was your first impression of the country you ultimately immigrated to?
- What was your transition into your new life like?
- Sample points of discussion: first day, school/work, first job, language classes, new customs, presence of Southeast Asian or Asian communities

### **Other Questions**

- Was there ever a moment when you felt extremely ashamed or extremely proud to be Southeast Asian?
- Have you ever been back to visit your home country? Why or why not?
- How do you stay connected to your culture or home country?
- What are three things that most people do not know about you, your culture, or your home country?
- What are some of the similarities and differences you see between the first and second+ generations?

### **Free-Response**

- Is there anything you would like to say or add?