



World Access to Higher Education Day (WAHED) 2020 Asia Conference



Access and Success for Marginalised Groups in Asian Higher Education

Tuesday, 17 November 2020
11.00AM-2.00PM Singapore time



Overview and Programme

Date | Tuesday, 17 November 2020

Time | 11.00AM-2.00PM (Singapore time, GMT+8)

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Venue | Online (Zoom)

Background | The World Access to Higher Education Day (WAHED) conference will be held online on 17 November 2020. The WAHED 2020 conference will be a unique edition as it takes the form of a series of consecutive global conferences, each led by an organisation committed to equitable access to higher education. The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) takes the lead in organising the Asia edition of the conference series, relying on a group of experts in the region. Read more on WAHED here: <https://worldaccesshe.com/> Read more on ASEF here: <https://asef.org>

Target group | Access and success advocates and practitioners in higher education (university managers, NGOs), engaged in social outreach, inclusion, learning design in Asia; students and student organisation leaders engaged on the topics of the conference

Invitation | Invitation will be disseminated via WAHED, ASEF and Steering Committee members' networks, specifically aiming at target group described above

Registration | via WAHED website [via this link](#)

Objectives | Introduce perspectives from Asia (covering South, Southeast, East Asia) on current (during COVID-19) and emerging (post- COVID 19) challenges related to access and success for marginalised sectors in higher education

Steering Committee for the Asia edition |

- **Ms Cynthia C CHANG**, Head, Office of Service-Learning & Community Engagement, Centre for Experiential Learning, College of Lifelong & Experiential Learning, Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), Singapore
- **Dr Edizon FERMIN**, Vice President for Academic Affairs, National Teachers College; Co-Chair of Technical Panel for Teacher Education, Commission on Higher Education, The Philippines
- **Mr Anthony GARTNER**, Manager, AccessAbility, La Trobe University, Australia; President of the Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability
- **Prof Dr Chanita RUKSPOLLMUANG**, Vice President for Academic Development, Siam University; Member, Committee of National Education Council, Office of the Education Council, Thailand

Draft Programme

All times displayed in GMT+8, Singapore time.

11.00-11.05AM | Welcome by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), coordinator of the Asia edition

- **Ms Freya CHOW-PAUL**, Education Department, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)

11.05-11.15AM | Opening Remarks

- **Mr MORIKAWA Toru**, Executive Director, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)
- **HE Ms Kara OWEN CMG**, British High Commissioner to Singapore, ASEF Governor for the United Kingdom

11.15-12.15PM | Keynote Panel Discussion: From Asia to the World: Lessons on Ensuring Access and Success in the Time of Pandemic

Panellists are invited to reflect on the impact of the pandemic on marginalised groups in higher education in Asia, from a regional and national perspective; share some lessons learnt, and their vision on how to build back better, more equitable higher education systems in Asia.

- **HE J. Prospero DE VERA III**, Chairperson, Philippine Commission on Higher Education
- **Dr Chantavit SUJATANOND**, Director, Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation, Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development (SEAMEO RIHED)
- **Mr Parkhat YUSSUPJANOV**, President of Jiger, Youth Organization of People with Disabilities; Expert in the Inclusive Education Legislation Preparatory Working Group, Kazakhstan
- **Prof Dr Chanita RUKSPOLLMUANG**, Vice President for Academic Development, Siam University; Member, Committee of National Education Council, Office of the Education Council, Thailand

Moderated by **Ms Leonie NAGARAJAN**, Education Department, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)

12.15-12.30AM | Virtual Coffee Break

12.30-13.30PM | Breakout Sessions

Breakout Session 1 | Women Students and Students from Lower Socio-economic, Rural and Refugee Backgrounds in Higher Education in Asia

Description | Asian students from lower socioeconomic, rural, remote and indigenous backgrounds face a range of structural challenges in sustaining their engagement in higher education institutions. While women have experienced increased participation in tertiary education in Asia, they continue to face significant social and economic barriers. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated conditions for equitable access for these profiles of students. More importantly, the crisis has revealed hitherto unknown issues affecting higher education for students in marginalised groups. It is thus crucial to examine the quality, relevance, and sustainability of ongoing and emerging global, regional and national responses to meet the needs of these marginalised students at the levels of policy and practice.

- **Dr Tiffany CONE**, Associate Dean of Core Program, Professor in Cultural Anthropology, Asian University for Women, Bangladesh
- **Ms Lilianne FAN**, Co-Founder of Geutanyoe Foundation, Malaysia; Chair of the Rohingya Working Group Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN)
- **Ms Linh Giang TRAN**, Graduate Student, School of Public Policy, Central European University (CEU)

Moderated by **Ms Cynthia C CHANG**, Head, Office of Service-Learning & Community Engagement, Centre for Experiential Learning, College of Lifelong & Experiential Learning, Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), Singapore

Breakout Session 2 | Pathways and Opportunities for Non-traditional Students in COVID-19 and Beyond

Description: While current and traditional groups of higher education students are coping rapidly given the shifts in learning design and delivery, technical and vocational students, adult learners, out-of-school youth, and other non-traditional students are gradually realising the impact of the pandemic on their employability and social mobility. As such, there is a need to understand how their reskilling, upskilling, and cross-skilling needs should be jointly addressed by education, industry, and labour market specialists.

- **Mr Musa FAZAL**, Group Director, Planning Group, SkillsFuture Singapore
- **Dr Suman SHARMA**, Principal, Lady Shri Ram College for Women, University of Delhi, India
- **Mr Yosea KURNIANTO**, Deputy Director, SDG Academy Indonesia, a Partnership of UNDP, Tanoto Foundation, and the Indonesian Ministry of National Planning and Development

Moderated by **Dr Edizon Angeles FERMIN**, Vice President for Academic Affairs, National Teachers College; Co-Chair of Technical Panel for Teacher Education, Commission on Higher Education, The Philippines

Breakout Session 3 | Students with Special Needs in Higher Education in Asia

Description: Over the last decade, there had been significant achievements in furthering inclusion in higher education systems in the Asia-Pacific region. Students with special needs, learning difficulties, and disabilities, albeit still limited in number have been granted access to education provisions at the tertiary level. However, the momentum of engaging them has been affected dramatically by the pandemic. Aside from adaptations in terms of distance learning, other issues will need to be examined and anticipated in order to ensure that these students will succeed in the time of COVID-19 and beyond.

- **Prof Sarah O'SHEA**, Director, National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE), Curtin University, Australia
- **Associate Prof Tim PITMAN**, Senior Research and Equity Fellow, National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE), Curtin University, Australia
- **Mr James CHAN**, Student of Psychology, Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) and Inclusion Advisor, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), Singapore

Moderated by **Mr Anthony GARTNER**, Manager, AccessAbility, La Trobe University, Australia; President of the Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability.

13.30-13.45PM | Closing Keynote Session

The closing keynote message is providing food for thought on what will be the future of access and success in Asian higher education; what can the public and private sectors realistically do in order to address the constraints that COVID-19 has generated or has aggravated. In what ways can each nation state meaningfully recover and work together for a more inclusive higher education. At this closing plenary, we raise more questions so that the conversations in equitable access may be sustained.

- **Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dzulkifli bin ABDUL RAZAK**, Rector, International Islamic University Malaysia

Moderated by **Ms Leonie NAGARAJAN**, Education Department, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)

13.45-14.00PM | Hand over to WAHED Europe Conference

- **Dr Graeme ATHERTON**, Director, National Education Opportunities Network (NEON), UK