



Nurturing Talents - APFG Newsletter 2021 Issue 8 No. 1

Special Issue on Support for Gifted Learners during the COVID19 Pandemic

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Editors: Mantak Yuen & Suzannie Leung

Table of Contents

Support for Gifted Learners during the COVID19 Pandemic: Editor's Message Mantak Yuen	P1
Social and Emotional Wellbeing of High-ability Students in India during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Gender Differences Anyesha Mishra and Paromita Roy	P2 - 4
HKU CAISE International Online Enrichment Programmes for Talented Students 2021 Jo Ng, Virginia Cheung, Serene Chan, Lai-Kwan Chan, Mantak Yuen	P5 - 6
International Webinar Series on Students' Well-being Webinar on Character and Moral Education Mandy Chan	P7 - 8
The Constitution of The Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness (APFG)	P9 - 16
APFG Executive Committee Members 2018-2022	P17
APFG Delegates 2018-2022	P18
Meetings and Conferences in Brief	P19
Membership	P19
Contacting the APFG	P19

Support for Gifted Learners during the COVID19 Pandemic Editor's Message

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Greetings from the Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness!

We are pleased to share with you the APFG Newsletter Special Issue on Support for Gifted Learners during the COVID19 Pandemic.

Special thanks to the graphic designer, Suzannie Leung, and the following contributors to this issue: Anyesha Mishra, Paromita Roy, Jo Ng, Virginia Cheung, Serene Chan, Lai-Kwan Chan, Mantak Yuen, and Mandy Chan.

I hope you will enjoy and benefit from this sharing of knowledge and experience. Please feel free to pass on the APFG Newsletter to your colleagues, friends, students, administrators and policy makers. You can also invite them to join the 2021 Virtual WCGTC World Conference.

Date: July 31 - August 1 & August 7 - 8, 2021 Website: https://worldgifted2021.com/

If you have any suggestions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Grateful thanks for your encouraging support and stay well.

Kind Regards, Mantak Yuen



Social and emotional wellbeing of high-ability students in India during the COVID-19 pandemic: Gender differences

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In almost all parts of the world, the devastating Covid-19 pandemic has greatly impacted students who are struggling with education and mental wellbeing during this period. Uncertainty looms over the future of millions of students, because many education institutions shut down intermittently, and academic calendars have gone haywire. In developing countries, the pandemic has exacerbated an achievement gap between the rich and the poor, between the majority and the minority, between males and females, and between high and low ability students. India, a nation with nearly 25% of its population younger than 30 years, is facing a crisis of unknown proportions.

During the pandemic, isolation and social distancing are strategies introduced to protect physical health—but their impact on mental health can be detrimental. According to Santini et al. (2020), social connection is an evolutionary characteristic of humans that relates to survival, while isolation appears to increase vulnerability to depressive symptoms. Similarly, Amend et al. (2020) say that social distancing, staying at home, and online schooling all tend to increase anxiety in children of high ability, because these changes to normal life patterns leave them with intense feelings of fear for their family and themselves. This is despite the fact that they can easily comprehend virus-related factual information.

It is reported that teenagers and adolescents tend to be more prone than adults to suffer psychologically negative effects of stress, and to display more vulnerability (Zhang et al., 2020). It also seems that anxiety may lead children and adolescents of high ability to avoid sharing their worries as a way to protect others (Dalton et al., 2020). Their effort to confront these feelings alone can result in intensification of emotions, with negative results such as unusual behaviour, eating disorders, sleep disturbances, anger, withdrawal, depression, and excessive worrying about the health of others (Amend et al., 2020; Boonstra, 2020).

Under these stressful conditions, it is relevant to wonder if males and females react differently. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020), psychological distress generally increases during crises, with depressive symptoms being more common among women than men. Similarly, a study by Moghe et al. (2021) found that female students appear to be more prone than male students to psychological issues such as feelings of uncertainty and helplessness about health and the future. Male students appear more likely to exhibit an increase in need for solitude, withdrawal, and self-harm.

This article highlights challenges faced by 472 male and 206 female science students of high-ability in India. Students came from all socio-economic levels and across urban to rural areas. They were in the 17 to 20 years age range, identified by India's talent search organization Jagadis Bose National Science Talent Search, Kolkata, India. The students responded to an online survey in May and June 2020, amidst a strict lockdown in India due to the pandemic. The survey was designed to provide information on the effect of the pandemic and lockdown on students' lives.

Participants in the survey were asked to rate the degree of financial, academic, and psychological suffering, taking into account the possible factors or issues listed below:

- uncertainty about future, domestic violence, financial crisis, family troubles, health worries, isolation from peers, disrupted schedule at home, inability to concentrate
- b. manifestations like worry, anxiety, depression, anger, confusion, resignation, hope, alternative planning, frustration, withdrawal, disrupted sleep and eating patterns, humanitarian involvement, and pursuit of a hobby.

A chi-square analysis was performed on collected data to help reveal any gender differences in academic, financial, and psychological suffering, and their causes and manifestations. Results suggested a significant gender difference in academic and psychological suffering, with females experiencing these sufferings more than males. Gender differences were also seen in perception of uncertainty about the future and worrying about health, with females reporting these causes of suffering more than males. A similar pattern emerged in manifestation of anxiety, implying that females were more affected by anxiety over the pandemic than males. Males, however, surpassed their female counterparts in manifestations of confusion and loss of appetite.

Factors that particularly increased anxiety for females were uncertainty of the future, family troubles, domestic violence, and inability to concentrate, while males were seen to be more hopeful than females when addressing these same factors. Interestingly, even though females responded more strongly to anxiety, worry and depression, they were seen to be more helpful towards others.

The results obtained were not unexpected, considering that anxiety and unpredictability have become the "new normal" in life in many countries. For males, who thrive on agency, the pandemic has tended to render them powerless, and they are struggling to achieve intended goals through different actions. Yet, this agency that they value and have cultivated throughout their lives seems to have kept them more hopeful and optimistic than females.





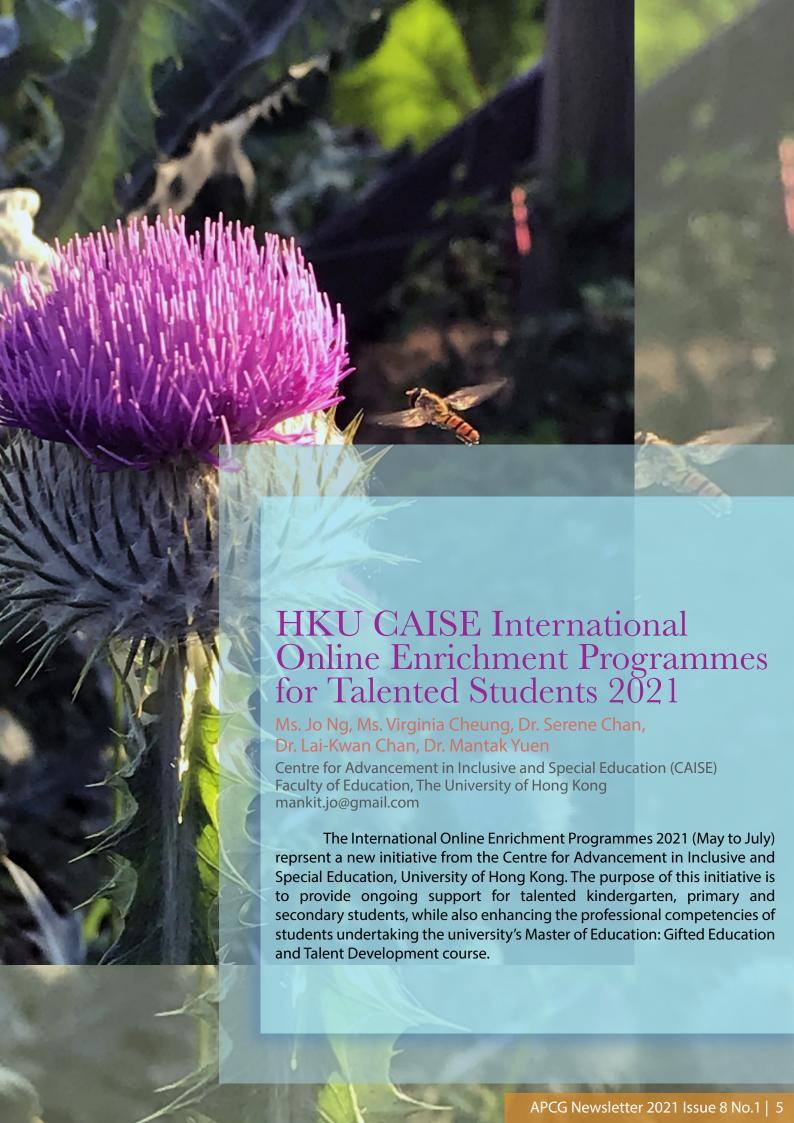
For females, reduced social contact and being unable to explore alternate avenues during the pandemic, has led to increased anxiety, feelings of loss, isolation, and depression. Also, most young girls aged 17-23 years in India, face stereotypical conflicts related for example to being compelled to take lifelong decisions about marriage and career. The effects of the pandemic on social and family life have strengthened these stereotypes, with millions of girls from low-income families defunded from pursuing their education. This outcome was corroborated by several respondents in this study.

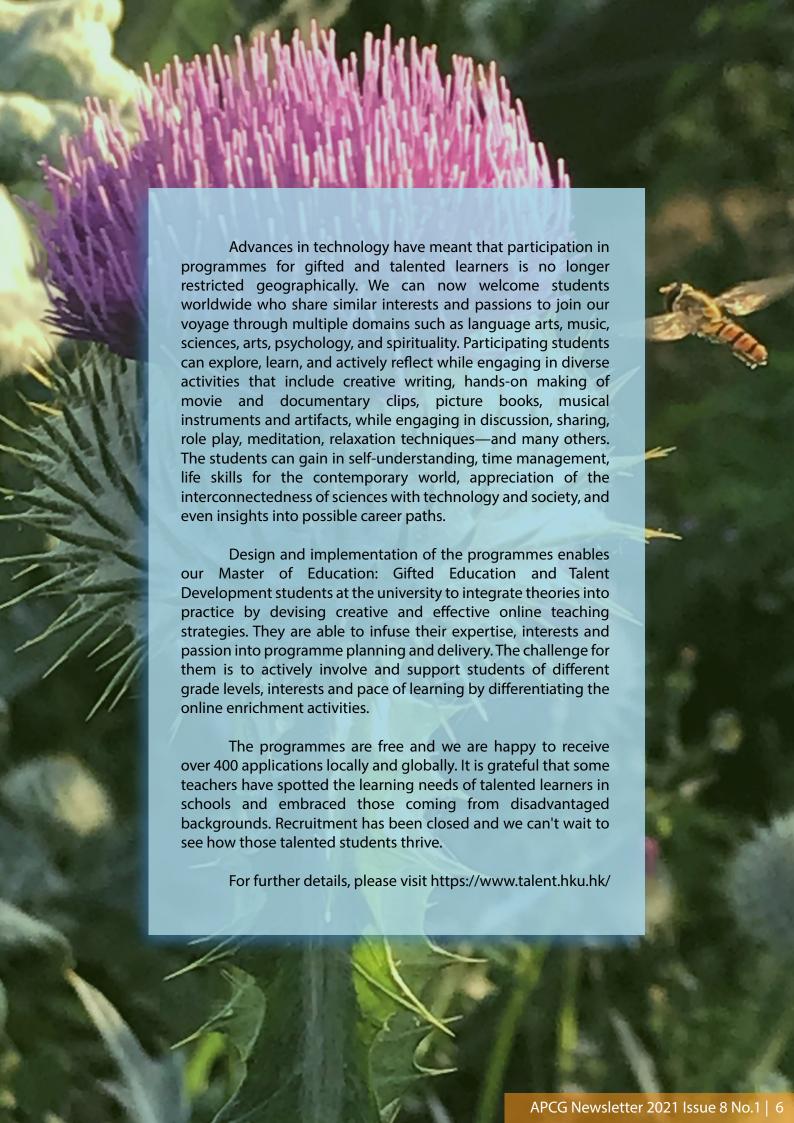
The conclusion from this study in India is that both young men and women of high ability are undergoing high levels of negative emotions due to the isolating effects of Covid-19 and are desperate to find solutions to deal with this crisis. They have been left feeling compromised in terms of developing their talent and achieving their academic targets. A year after this survey was conducted, the situation in India has worsened exponentially, with truly alarming daily rates of infection and death, and it is a matter of extreme concern that many young adolescents in India stand at the precipice of a mental health pandemic.

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Acknowledgments: The authors wish to thank Jagadis Bose National Science Talent Search, Kolkata, India and the survey respondents.







development needs during the pandemic. The international webinar series explored ways of promoting positive development and well-being of students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants learned ways to foster students' well-being and flourishing through social-emotional learning, existential-positive psychology, character education and moral philosophy, creativity and mindset, and education for meaning.

More about the Webinar on Character and Moral Education

The webinar had two keynote presentations. The first keynote presentation was delivered by Professor Marvin W. Berkowitz, McDonnell Professor of Character Education, and Co-Director of the Center for Character and Citizenship, College of Education, University of Missouri-St. Louis. In his presentation, he shared about the "Six Evidence-based design" principles for effectively promoting character development". The second keynote speaker was Professor Desheng Gao, Distinguished Professor of the "Zijiang Scholars Program", East China Normal University. His presentation was on "Organizing and Reconstructing Children's Experiences: Compiling National Civic Textbooks in China".

Besides the keynote presentations, there were six concurrent sharing sessions or workshops conducted by educational practitioners and frontline educators. The speakers shared their experiences in fostering students' character development through different means, including values education, social-emotional learning, storytelling, positive education and character strengths, and narrative practice. To cater for the needs of different participants, simultaneous interpreting services into Putonghua and English were available for the Keynote presentations, and the sharing session on values education.

Our webinar has attracted over 380 participants from Hong Kong, the Mainland China, Asia-Pacific and other regions of the world enrolling for it. This was a webinar that explored the promotion of well-being of students through character and moral education. The webinar was well-received by the participants.





The Constitution of The Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness

The Executive Committee met in July 2019, May 2020 and November 2020. The Executive Committee worked together and amended The Constitution of The Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness (APFG). The Constitution will be discussed and endorsed in the Biennial Meeting of members of the APFG in 2022.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC FEDERATION ON GIFTEDNESS (APFG)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Article I Name
Article II Purposes

Article III Membership and Dues
Article IV Executive Committee
Article V Assembly of Delegates

Article VI Committees

Article VII Meeting of APFG Members

Article VIII Publications

Article IX Biennial Conference Article X Official APFG Business

Article XI Amendments
Article XII Termination

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC FEDERATION ON GIFTEDNESS (APFG)

ARTICLE I-NAME

The name of the organization shall be Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness, referred to hereinafter as the APEG.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSES

Section 1. The main purpose of the APFG is to focus attention on gifted and talented children in the Asia-Pacific region, and their valuable potential contribution for the benefit of humankind.

More specifically, the purposes of APFG are:

- 1.1 To initiate, conduct, and support research into the nature of giftedness, talents, creativity and the education and development of gifted and talented children; to disseminate the findings of this research; and provide a database for members and researchers.
- 1.2 To facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences of people in the Asia-Pacific region who are interested in gifted and talented education.
- 1.3 To cooperate with national and other organizations for gifted and talented children, and to persuade governments to recognize gifted children as a category for special attention in normal education programs.
- 1.4 To facilitate the continuing exchange of ideas, experiences, teaching, and teacher-training pedagogy in respect to gifted and talented education.
- 1.5 To promote a climate of acceptance of gifted and talented children, whether from advantaged or disadvantaged backgrounds, disabled or able-bodied, and from developing or developed countries/regions.
- 1.6 To initiate, conduct, and support activities designed to bring together gifted and talented children in the Asia-Pacific region.
- 1.7 To encourage parent and family education that supports and enhances the potential of gifted students.

Section 2. The APFG seeks to achieve these purposes through the following activities: organizes conferences and symposia; publishes a newsletter and a journal; acts as an Asia-Pacific clearinghouse for information on gifted education to guide parents, teachers, other professionals and governments; assists countries/regions in the Asia-Pacific seeking to develop educational programs for gifted and talented children.





ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Section 1. Membership of the APFG is open to individuals and organizations who support the purposes of the APFG, support gifted education in the Asia-Pacific region, and satisfy the criteria for membership as stated in the Constitution.

Section 2. There shall be the following categories of membership:

A. Regular Individual Member: Can vote and hold office.

- B. Honorary Individual Member: Persons who have made a substantial contribution to the field and support the purposes of APFG, and are nominated/approved by the Executive Committee. Honorary members are nonvoting and not eligible to hold office.
- Institutional Member: Non-profit entities of an academic or professional nature, as determined and approved by the Executive Committee. 2 representatives with voting right; not eligible to hold office.

Section 3. Membership and Dues Policies

Policy 3.1 Membership

- 3.1.1 A member is eligible to participate in the General Meeting of the Members and to select Delegates to serve in the Assembly of Delegates, as provided for in Article VI of the Constitution.
- Each member will receive a copy of the Constitution plus other 3.1.2 services and newsletters as offered by the APFG.
- Members will enjoy discounted registration fees for the biennial 3.1.3 **APFG Conference**

Policy 3.2 Dues

- 3.2.1 A member who fails to pay dues to renew his/her membership will cease to enjoy the benefits spelled out in 3.1.1 to 3.1.3.
- The quantum of membership due and duration will be 3.2.2 determined by the EXCO.

ARTICLE IV – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

There will be 7 members in the Executive Committee Section 1. (henceforth referred to as EXCO) of the APFG, including a President, a Vice-President, the immediate Past President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and an Editor (of the Newsletter). All officers shall hold office until their successors are elected and qualified. The same person may hold only one office at any given time.

Section 2. The Assembly of Delegates must meet after the biennial APCG Conference to elect from among the Delegates the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer of the APFG for the next 2 years. Except for the office of the President, an officer's tenure can be extended through re-election for another 2 years. No person may serve as President for more than one term of 2 years.

Persons nominated must be present at the Assembly of Delegates. Members of the EXCO shall be elected by a majority vote of the Delegates.

If a member of the EXCO is unable to continue by reason of death, resignation, disqualification, removal, or other cause, the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes, provided that country is not already represented on the EXCO, will succeed to the vacant position for the unexpired term.

Oualifications and Term of Office. Members of the Section 3. Executive Committee must be members of the APFG. The term of office ends on the last day of the biennial APCG Conference. No more than one member from any one country/region may serve as an elected member of the Executive Committee at any given time, unless the number of countries/regions represented in the membership of the APFG is fewer than seven, in which case at least one member from each country represented must be elected to the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Annual Meetings of the EXCO shall be held at such place or places, on such dates and at such times as established by the EXCO and publicized among all its members.

Section 5. Special Meetings of the EXCO may be called by one-third of the members of the EXCO then in office or by the President, and shall be held at such place, on such date, and at such time as they or the President shall determine. Notice of the place, date, and time of each such special meeting shall be given each member of the EXCO by written notice before the meeting.

Section 6. Quorum - At any meeting of the EXCO, five members of the EXCO shall constitute a quorum for all purposes. If a quorum is not obtained at any meeting, a majority of those present may adjourn the meeting to another place, date, or time.





Section 7. **Roles of EXCO members**

7.1.1 President -

The President shall be the chief executive officer of the APFG and shall oversee and supervise its affairs. The President shall preside at all meetings of the EXCO, the Delegates, and the general membership. The President shall sign or countersign all contracts and other instruments to which the APFG may be a party, which shall have been authorized by the EXCO.

The President shall report on the operations and affairs of the APFG to the EXCO not less than guarterly, to the Assembly of Delegates not less than annually, and to the General Meeting of the membership not less than biennially. The President shall perform all other duties as are incidental to the office and are required of the President by the Assembly of Delegates.

The President must be a member of the APFG, and must have served as a Delegate prior to being nominated, and would normally be a current or former member of the EXCO.

7.1.2 Vice-President -

The Vice-President shall, in any unavoidable absence of the President, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President. The Vice-President shall chair the APCG Conference Committee and shall perform such other duties as the President or the Assembly of Delegates shall prescribe.

7.1.3 Secretary -

The Secretary shall consult with the President to draw up the agenda of meetings, and be the recording officer of all APFG meetings, including the Assembly of Delegates, and the General Meeting of the Members and shall report on the dealings of the EXCO, and keep a record of the notes of meetings.

7.1.4 Treasurer -

The Treasurer shall tender an annual financial report to the EXCO and to the Assembly of Delegates, and an audited biennial financial report at the General Meeting of the Membership.

7.1.5 The Editor of the Newsletter will be responsible for the publication of 2 issues of the APFG Newsletter per year, and oversee any publications undertaken by the organization.

7.1.6 Removal -

The EXCO may remove any officer of the APFG at any time, with just cause. This removal is subject to ratification by the Assembly of Delegates and will take effect immediately following such action by the EXCO.



ARTICLE V - ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES

Section 1. The Assembly of Delegates shall consist of three delegates and one alternate from each country/region of residence.

Delegates must be members in good standing of the APFG. The members of the Section 2. APFG who have designated a country/region of residence shall select from among the members from their country/region three delegates to serve in the Assembly of Delegates, or a smaller number of delegates as there are from that country. Delegates must be current residents of their country, or away from their country on a temporary basis (less than 12 months). Delegates and, where appropriate, EXCO members, from each country/region shall determine the procedures for the selection of Delegates. Delegates so selected shall be the Delegates recognized by the APFG.

Delegates to the Assembly of Delegates shall be selected prior to the biennial Section 3. meeting of the members of the APFG in accordance with the foregoing provisions. At least one Delegate shall attend the biennial conference. Delegates shall serve for a term of 2 years or until their successors are selected.

Section 4. Special Meetings of the Assembly of Delegates for any purpose may be called by the EXCO. Notice of the Special Meeting must be sent in writing to delegates 30 days before the meeting date. In a situation where the Special Meeting is to be held within the announced dates of the biennial Asia-Pacific Conference on Giftedness Conference, delegates must receive notice within 12 hours of the meeting. The purposes of the Special Meeting shall be clearly stated in the notice of the meeting, together with date, time and place as determined by the EXCO.

Section 5. Quorum - At any meeting of the Assembly of Delegates, the presence in person of at least one third of the Delegates from one third of member countries shall constitute a quorum for all purposes.

Section 6. Conduct of Business - The President of the APFG shall call to order any meeting of the Assembly of Delegates and act as presiding officer of the meeting. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President or, in the absence of such a person, the Secretary, if present, or the Treasurer of the APFG, shall call to order the meeting of the members and act as presiding officer of the meeting. The Secretary shall act as secretary of the meeting. In the absence of the Secretary, the presiding officer of the meeting shall appoint an alternate secretary to record the proceedings.

Proxies and Voting - At any meeting of the Assembly of Delegate, every delegate Section 7. must vote in person. There will be no voting by proxy.

Section 8. List of Members of Assembly of Delegates - A complete list of delegates to the Assembly of Delegates arranged in alphabetical order and showing the title and affiliation, e-mail address and designated country of origin of each Delegate shall be open to the examination of any member of the APFG.

ARTICLE VI - COMMITTEES

Section 1. Appointment - The President with the approval of the EXCO may appoint such committees with such powers and duties as given in the Constitution and that the EXCO shall confer. Members of all committees shall serve for the tenure of the President who appointed them.

Section 2. The committees of the APFG may include: Constitution; Editorial; Conference; and any others deemed necessary by the EXCO.

ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS OF THE APFG MEMBERS

Section 1. Biennial Meetings of members of the APFG for the presentation of such matters as the President and the EXCO may designate, shall be held at such place and time as the President and the EXCO shall determine. This meeting shall normally be a part of the Biennial Conference and be designated as the General Meeting of the Membership.

Section 2. Special Meetings of the members, for any purpose or purposes stated in the notice of the meeting, may be called by the President and EXCO and shall be held at such place, on such date and at such time as they shall determine.

Section3. Notice of Meetings - Written notice of the place, date, and time of all meetings of the members shall be given before the date on which the meeting is to be held.

Section 4. Membership List - At each biennial meeting, a complete list of members arranged in alphabetical order by name and by country/region and showing the designated country/region of residence of each member shall be kept at the place of the meeting during the whole time and shall be open to examination by any member who is present. This list shall determine the identity and country/region of residence of the members entitled to participate in the selection of delegates to serve in the Assembly of Delegates.

ARTICLE VIII – PUBLICATIONS

Section1. All publications of the APFG, with the exception of the proceedings of the biennial conference, shall be under the general supervision and editorial management of the Editor with the cooperation of an Editorial Board. The President and the EXCO shall appoint an EXCO member as the Editor who will in turn appoint the Editorial Board.

Section 2. The Editor and the Editorial Board shall have the right to select for publication any paper submitted.

Section 3. The Editor may be authorized to appoint such consulting editors as may be required. The Editor is bound by the policies of the organization and by the budget determined by the EXCO. The Editor shall report at such meetings of the EXCO as requested by that body.

ARTICLE IX BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Section 1. There shall be a biennial conference of the APFG at a time and location set by the EXCO, based on the merits of bids received to host the Conference. The biennial conference shall provide opportunities for meetings of the Assembly of Delegates, the general membership, and the committees of the APFG. The conference program shall also provide professional opportunities such as presentations, workshops, and symposia on theory, research, and practice in the development and education of gifted and talented children.

Section 2. The policies of the APCG Conference shall be regulated by the APFG EXCO.

ARTICLE X OFFICIAL APFG BUSINESS

Section 1. Reliance upon Books, Reports, and Records - Each member of the EXCO, each member of any committee designated by the EXCO, and each officer of the APFG shall, in the performance of his or her duties, be fully protected in relying on good faith, upon the books of account or other records of the APFG, including reports made to the APFG by any of its officers, by an independent certified public accountant, or by an appraiser selected with reasonable care.

Section 2. The logo of the APFG is the exclusive property of the APFG. It is used only on the APFG stationery, newsletter, journal, APFG Website and on other official documents produced for the APFG as approved by the EXCO.

- The logo shall be used on official documents and announcements of the Biennial Conference.
- APFG stationery shall be used solely by EXCO members, the journal and newsletter editor, and Headquarters staff for official business.

ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed to the EXCO by:

- A. Any EXCO member supported by five members,
- B. Assembly Delegate supported by five members, or
- C. A petition of 10 or more members of the organization.
- Section 2. Following the proposal for an amendment, the issues shall be discussed at a regular or special meeting of the EXCO. The EXCO will then send the recommended amendments to the Assembly of Delegates for further discussion. The Assembly of Delegates will then return the amendments with their suggestions to the EXCO who will submit the amendments to the membership for ratification.
- **Section 3.** Any constitutional amendment that is supported by signatures or letters from at least ten members from at least four different countries/regions must be voted upon by the membership as submitted.
- **Section 4.** Any constitutional amendment shall be determined by the three-fourths vote given from half the attendees of Delegates or by the two-thirds vote from the APFG members.
- **Section 5.** The EXCO will conduct and supervise the vote on the amendments and report the result to the membership.
- **Section 6.** Amendments shall become effective as soon as the report of the vote of the membership is made official and the membership is duly notified.

ARTICLE XII - TERMINATION

Section 1. In the event the APFG is dissolved, the EXCO then in office shall continue until all affairs of the organization have been officially terminated.

November, 2006 July, 2019 amended May, 2020 amended 23 November, 2020 amended

The Executive Committee 2018-2022

The Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness (APFG) affiliated with The World Council for Gifted and Talented Children

The APFG consists of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, the immediate past President and 2 more Delegates. The following Executive Committee Members were elected by the delegates on August 22, 2018 for a two-year term from 2018 to 2020:

President Dr. Usanee Anuruthwong

Association for Developing Human Potentials and Giftedness, Thailand

Immediate Past President Professor Kyungbin Park

Gachon University, South Korea

Vice-President Professor Ching-Chih Kuo

National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan

Secretary Dr. Quek Chwee Geok

Ministry of Education, Singapore

Treasurer Professor Ugur Sak

Anadolu University, Turkey

Executive Committee Member Dr. Jae Yup Jung

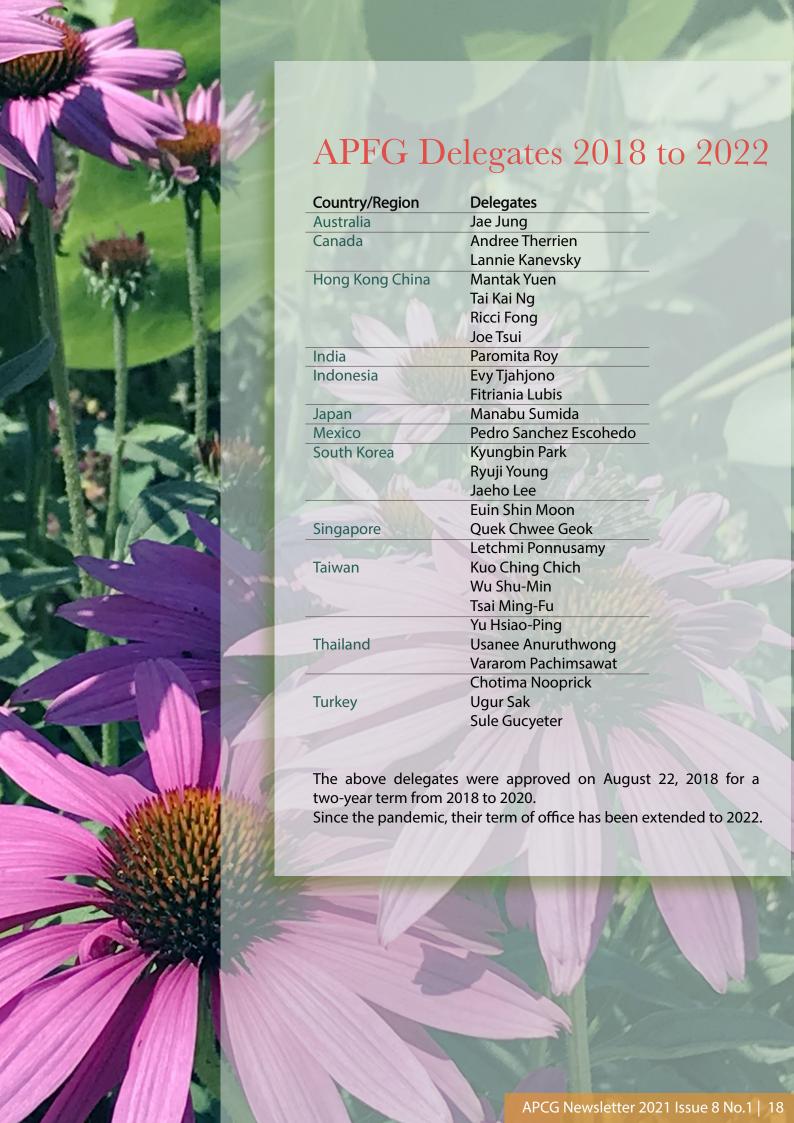
University of New South Wales, Australia

Executive Committee Member Dr. Mantak Yuen

The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong China

Since the pandemic, their term of office has been extended to 2022.





Meetings and Conferences in Brief

17th ECHA Virtual Conference

https://www.echa2021.org/ 31 August -2 September 2021 hosted by The ECHA (European Council for High Ability)

2021 Virtual WCGTC World Conference July 31 - August 1 & August 7 - 8, 2021

https://worldgifted2021.com/

hosted by World Council for Gifted and Talented Children



If you are already a member we thank you for your support. If your membership has expired (or is soon to expire) please remember to renew. If you are not yet a member, we invite you to become part of APFG.

Membership is open to individuals who support the purpose of the APFG. An individual seeking membership will be accepted as a member upon submission of the required application and fees.

To apply for membership, please send the completed application form to Dr. Quek Chwee Geok (Quek_Chwee_Geok@moe.gov.sg), our secretary who will update memberships, and Professor Ugur Sak (ugursak@gmail.com), our treasurer who will prepare the receipts to be issued when payment is made.

By joining the APFG you will benefit from:

- an annual newsletter
- opportunities to expand your expertise and broaden your horizons
- preferential member rates for a biennial APFG conference comprising keynote speeches, parallel presentations and workshops
- a voice within the organization

Contacting APFG

President Dr. Usanee Anuruthwong Asia-Pacific Federation on Giftedness c/o Association for Developing Human Potentials and Giftedness, Thailand usanee.anu@gmail.com

APFG website https://www.apfggiftedness.org/ apfg2014gifted@gmail.com **APFG Email**