



Wenhui (文暉) Award for Educational Innovation 2017 *Innovations in the Professional Development of Teachers*

We demand a lot from our teachers. We want them to have strong subject and pedagogic content knowledge, possess effective classroom management skills, readily adopt new technologies, and be inclusive and sensitive to the diverse needs of their students. No longer simply transferring information to learners, teachers are expected to create a conducive environment to facilitate learning and prepare their students for a rapidly changing world. We have these demands because the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers and the quality of teaching.

The Sustainable Development Goal 4 - Education 2030 Agenda – *ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all* – reinforces the central role of empowered, professionally qualified and motivated teachers who must be supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems.¹

On World Teachers' Day in 2016, the joint message from the Heads of UNESCO, ILO, UNICEF, UNDP and Education International could not have said it any better:²

Teaching could be an attractive, first-choice profession – if teachers were valued commensurate with the immense value they provide to our children, and if their professional status as educators reflected the enormous impact their profession has on our shared future. That means providing them with continuing training and development to support them in their critical role of educating all children, in all contexts – including the poorest, most remote communities, and in communities in crisis. It means compensating them properly and giving them the tools they need to do their indispensable jobs. It means putting in place policies that safeguard and reinforce the status of teachers – beginning by giving teachers a place at the table and an active role in decision-making that affects their work. And it means improving the efficiency and effectiveness of education systems at every level.

The measure of effective teachers, unfortunately, is often linked to students' performance. High stakes assessments such as PISA place great pressure on education policy makers to learn from the high-performing countries such as Singapore, Finland, China (Shanghai and Hong Kong). Notably, teachers are highly valued in these countries. In fact, teaching has become the most prestigious profession in Finland, where apparently those who cannot get a place in teacher education can still become lawyers and doctors.³ These countries know that great teaching needs a lot of practice to deepen teachers' knowledge base and skills. They recognize that talent can and must be nurtured through high-quality training and continuous learning. This is why professional development is critical.⁴ In fact, teachers themselves reported that professional development makes a difference in their learning, particularly when engaged in school-based learning communities and collaboration.⁵

However, professional development is more than attending workshops, seminars and courses, important though they may be. A very different type of professional development can be seen from this example:⁶

¹ UNESCO, 2015. Incheon Declaration. World Education Forum, Incheon, Republic of Korea. <http://en.unesco.org/world-education-forum-2015/incheon-declaration>.

² Message from Heads of UNESCO, ILO, UNICEF, UNDP and Education International on the occasion of World Teachers' Day, 50th anniversary of the 1966 UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, 5 October 2016.

³ Schleicher, A., 2017. Preparing teachers for change – in and outside of the profession. OECD, *Education and Skills Today*, <http://oecdeducationtoday.blogspot.com/2017/04/preparing-teachers-for-change-in-and.html>.

⁴ Carvalhaes, E., 2017. Finding and cultivating talented teachers: Insights from high-performing countries. OECD, *Education and Skills Today*, <http://oecdeducationtoday.blogspot.com/2017/03/finding-and-cultivating-talented.html>; OECD, 2017. What do we know about teachers' selection and professional development in high-performing countries? *PISA In Focus* 2017/70.

⁵ Opfer, D., 2016. Conditions and Practices Associated with Teacher Professional Development and Its Impact on Instruction in TALIS 2013. *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 138.

⁶ Jensen, B., Sonnemann, J., Roberts-Hull, K. and Hunter, A., 2016. *Beyond PD: Teacher Professional Learning in High-Performing Systems*. National Center on Education and the Economy, Washington D.C., p3.

At the start of the year, a new teacher in Shanghai is nervous as she prepares to face her class of 45 students for the first time. Her learning curve over her first weeks, months and years will be steep. She is both challenged and supported by two mentors: one provides subject-specific guidance, the other more general pedagogical development. Her classroom teaching is observed on a regular basis and she observes her mentors' classes so she can learn and work on those aspects of her teaching that are most critical for her students. In between classes, she regularly attends research groups with other teachers to analyse specific research questions to improve teaching and learning in their classrooms. The new teacher quickly learns she must continually develop her teaching expertise. She will be supported through this process but she knows her career will only progress if she develops high-level expertise in her subject area.

Clearly, the scope for the professional development of teachers is broad. It must include all levels of education, from early childhood to higher education. It can take place in formal and non-formal settings. While school-based learning is optimal, professional learning can also occur outside the classrooms and within the communities. All stakeholders – government officials, education authorities, school leaders, teachers, parents, students and local communities – can jointly contribute to improve the quality of education and learning outcomes.

The Wenhui Award

Emphasizing the capacity of education and the human innovative spirit to address and resolve pressing issues and problems, the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID) and the National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO established the Wenhui (文晖) Award for Educational Innovation in 2010.

The Wenhui Award embodies two important elements of educational innovation. Wen (文) refers to all facets of civilization and culture, including wisdom, knowledge, moral and ethics, and encompasses the desire for learning and inquiry. Hui (晖) symbolizes the creative and radiant force of education that allows civilization and culture to flourish. Taken together, the Wenhui Award personifies the power of education in promoting learning and allowing individuals and cultures to innovate and grow. This Award will serve to improve the access to and quality of education and training, especially to those most in need. Given the challenges facing education, it is necessary to strengthen the commitment of individuals and institutions to continuously innovate and enlighten people.

For 2017, the theme of the Wenhui Award is *Innovations in the Professional Development of Teachers* in line with SDG 4 and UNESCO's vision of education to provide and enhance quality learning opportunities for all, particularly to those most disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalized, by focussing on innovative professional development of teachers.

Two individuals or institutions from the Asia and Pacific region will be selected by a jury of distinguished educators. The winners will each receive a Certificate of Excellence and prize money of US\$ 20,000. Certificates of Merit may also be awarded to individuals or institutions that have demonstrated commendable innovative practices. The results will be announced through a variety of channels to share the achievements of the winners and awardees.

What are the objectives of the Award?

The specific objectives of the 2017 Award are to:

- Value and encourage innovative professional development of teachers that have contributed to quality inclusive education and lifelong learning;
- Recognize the collective contributions of individuals or institutions in improving the professional development of teachers; and
- Foster indigenous wisdom and ingenuity in educational innovations for the professional development of teachers.

What is in the Award?

The Award shall be conferred on two individuals or institutions in recognition of their commitment and outstanding efforts in the development of educational innovations according to the theme of the year. The two winners will receive a Certificate of Excellence and prize money of US\$ 20,000 each. Certificates of Merit may also be awarded to individuals or institutions that have demonstrated commendable innovative practices.

Who is eligible for the Award?

Individuals or institutions from UNESCO Member States in Asia and the Pacific region that have designed and implemented significant educational innovations in the professional development of teachers leading to improved access to, and quality in, education and skills development will be eligible for the Award.

To qualify for nomination for the 2017 Wenhui Award, the candidates shall possess the following qualifications or attributes:

- Have demonstrated their ability in developing practices that have contributed to the professional development for teachers;
- Have verified the positive impact of their innovative practices in bringing about noticeable changes in teachers, enabling them to nurture their learners to contribute towards peaceful, just and sustainable world;
- Have proven their commitment in promoting and supporting the principles of inclusive and lifelong quality learning for all; and
- Have established that their innovative practices are current and relevant to the educational issues of the 21st century.

What are the evaluation criteria?

The emphasis of the Wenhui Award is on innovations in education for the professional development of teachers, not scientific inventions. In line with the theme of the 2017 Award, *Innovations in the Professional Development of Teachers*, innovations that can demonstrate real changes in values, mindsets, practices, behaviours and skills will be positively assessed. More specifically, the entries will be evaluated according to selected criteria reflecting the including but not limited to the following:

- Uniqueness and originality of the innovation
- Timeliness and relevance of the innovation
- Success and impact of the innovation
- Leadership and management of the innovation
- Quality of the supporting evidence
- Innovative use of available resources
- Potential for replication of the innovation
- Sustainability of the innovation

How to apply for the Award?

The Award organizers are calling for nominations from governments, educational institutions, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and individuals in Asia and Pacific countries following the procedure below.

- Nominations shall be submitted to the Award Secretariat at UNESCO Bangkok through the National Commissions for UNESCO, UNESCO Offices and other organizations associated with UNESCO, using an official Award Application Form available online at <http://www.unescobkk.org/ru/education/apeid/wenhuiaward/2017>
- Each nomination must be accompanied by the following attachments:
 - Description of the candidate's/institution's background and achievements (1 page, A4 size, in English)
 - Summary of work, publications and other relevant documents of major importance (maximum of 4 pages, A4 size, in English)
 - Evidence to support the nomination of the candidate (may be in English or local language)
 - Letter(s) of recommendation (in English or local languages)
 - Consent form for use and distribution of materials

- All nominations must reach the Award Secretariat by **21 July 2017**. Please check with your nomination agency on the status of your submission.
- For list of UNESCO offices, see http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=34016&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
- For list of National Commissions for UNESCO in the Asia-Pacific region, see http://www.unesco.org/ncp/index.php?lc=E®ion=3&module=national_commissions&web

Conditions of entry

- All entries must be from the Asia-Pacific region.
- The work must be attested to be authentic and original.
- The innovation must be current or initiated in the last five years.
- Shortlisted entries may be asked to supply more documents or evidence, if necessary.
- All entries must be accompanied by evidence that supports the nomination.
- All nominees will be responsible for the delivery of their materials to their respective nomination agencies and for checking that their materials are received by the Award Secretariat.
- All submissions will be taken to imply the granting of permission to publish all materials and particulars, without charge to UNESCO.
- All nominees must complete the consent form available online at the Award website permitting UNESCO to publish and share their work, on the understanding that the work will be fully acknowledged and credited to the relevant individuals or institutions stated in the nomination forms.
- All materials submitted will not be returned.
- The jury's decision is final and correspondence will not be entered into.

Important dates

Closing date for nominations	21 July 2017
Announcement of winners	End of September 2017
Award ceremony	To be confirmed

Visit the Award website <http://www.unescobkk.org/ru/education/apeid/wenhuiaward/2017> for details, including the following:

- The Wenhui (文暉) Award brochure
- Information and guidelines
- Application form
- Consent form

For further information, contact:

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About the Organizers

The Asia-Pacific Region counts for almost two thirds of the world population. In serving the 46 Member States and 2 Associate Members in the region, UNESCO has to take into account the diversity of the countries in terms of their size, culture, socio-economy status and environment. Supported by a network of a Regional Bureau for

Education in Bangkok, a Regional Bureau for Science in Jakarta, five Cluster Offices (Almaty, Apia, Beijing, New Delhi and Tehran), and seven National Offices (Dhaka, Hanoi, Islamabad, Kabul, Kathmandu, Phnom Penh and Tashkent), UNESCO works to promote peace and human development through education, sciences, culture and communication, by facilitating international co-operation, setting common standards and fostering the dissemination of information.

The **Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID)** is a regional inter-country cooperative programme based in the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Bangkok, Thailand. APEID's mission is to contribute to sustainable human development through the design and implementation of educational programmes and projects, mainly at the post-primary level of education and focusing on educational innovation for development. In January 2016, APEID was restructured and incorporated into the Section for Educational Innovation and Skills Development (EISD) to meet changing contexts, priorities, needs and challenges in the region.

The **National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO** was established in February 1979. It acts as an agency of coordination, consultation, liaison and information, in addition to mobilizing and coordinating partnerships with government institutions, academic circle and civil society to contribute to the realization of UNESCO's objectives and implementation of its programmes.

The **Chinese Society of Education (CSE)**, the first and also largest academic educational organization in China, was founded on 12 April 1979. Since then, the CSE has developed into the nation's leading academic educational organization which exerts a great influence on China's academic education, encouraging reforms and innovations. It has facilitated a nationwide, well-organized professional educational system covering all curricula and disciplines of basic education as well as relevant teaching and educational work.