



ASIA
SOCIETY

ASIA 21
YOUNG LEADERS

Changing the World

MEET THE CLASS OF 2022



LIMA AHMAD

Human Security Expert
Ph.D. Candidate
Fletcher School of
Tufts University



AFGHANISTAN

“Leadership means prioritizing human security and putting people at the center of our changing world. Our collective effort towards empathy for others will minimize the need for competition and destruction.”

Lima Halima Ahmad is a human security expert. She is a Ph.D. candidate in international security and human security at The Fletcher School of Tufts University. Her research focuses on youth and their vulnerability to extreme violence. Ahmad holds a master’s degree in international security from The Fletcher School and an undergraduate degree in women and gender studies from Bucknell University.

Ahmad is founder of the Paywand Afghanan Association, which focuses on research regarding women’s issues. She has worked on several projects with national and international organizations, mainly focusing on gender mainstreaming. Ahmad has served as monitoring and evaluation director with the Administrative Office of the President of Afghanistan, where she worked on system development and primarily system reforms in the governmental institutions.

In 2017, Ahmad organized the South Asian Youth Conference in Kabul, which focused on youth, gender, and violence. Currently, she is a research fellow at the Center for Strategic Studies at the Fletcher School of Tufts University. Ahmad is an independent researcher with research reports published on the women’s penal system in Afghanistan, women’s participation in Afghanistan’s peace process, and NATO as the security sector reform organization as well as several analytical articles.

ANU ANWAR

Fellow
Faculty of Arts
and Sciences
Harvard University



BANGLADESH

“Leadership means leading others — not always by providing direction — but being an inspirational figure in one’s own field and doing exemplary work that motivates others to follow.”

Anu Anwar is a fellow at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and an associate in research at the John K. Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University. Before joining Harvard, Anwar worked as a research fellow at the U.S. Department of Defense’s Institute — Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies. He was also an affiliate scholar at East-West Center, visiting scholar at the Edwin O. Reischauer Center for East Asian Studies, and visiting scholar at the University of Tokyo and Kobe Gakuin University, Japan. Besides academic journals, his work has appeared in *Foreign Policy*, *War on the Rocks*, *East Asia Forum*, *The Diplomat*, *The South China Morning Post*, *Harvard Kennedy School Review*, *Lowy Interpreter*, and the *Asia Times* among other publications.

Anwar was educated at Tsinghua University, the University of Geneva, the University of Dhaka, and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in international relations at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. He has traveled around 50 countries, and has extensive experience living and traveling in China. He speaks Chinese, Hindi, and Bengali.

BILGUUN ERDENEBAT

Director
EducationUSA
Mongolia



MONGOLIA

“Leadership means helping others and giving back to the community. It means being the voice of the unheard, and ensuring that no one is left behind in development.”

Bilguun Erdenebat is the director of EducationUSA Mongolia and a social development and gender specialist at the Asian Development Bank, where she advocates gender equality and women's rights in East Asia. She has over 12 years of experience in social inclusion, gender equality, inclusive education, women's empowerment, and community engagement.

Erdenebat is the president of the Mongolian Association of State Alumni (MASA), which strives to offer Mongolian youth an inclusive and accessible education. In 2019, under her leadership, MASA became the first U.S.G alumni association selected to implement the U.S. State Department-funded EducationUSA in Mongolia. In 2020, the U.S. Department of State awarded her with "the Asia-Pacific Region's Rising Star Award" and "the Global Outstanding Team Project Award" for developing innovative and inclusive initiatives to address educational inequality.

During the COVID pandemic, Erdenebat initiated and implemented an educational program to improve the online teaching and media literacy skills of 1,500 English-language teachers across Mongolia. She is the creator of a popular Mongolian podcast with 94 episodes that reached over a million listeners.

Erdenebat was the first Mongolian Fulbright Scholar to study at Cornell University, where she received her master's degree in international development. She holds a bachelor's degree in international economic relations from the National University of Mongolia.

SOPHEAP CHAK

Executive Director
Cambodian Center for
Human Rights (CCHR)



CAMBODIA

“Leadership means having the determination to empower and enable others to claim their rights peacefully.”

Sopheap Chak is the executive director of the Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR), an organization working to promote and protect political and civil rights in Cambodia. As one of the country's most prominent human rights advocates, Chak's work has been recognized by former U.S. President Barack Obama. She is a recipient of the Indian-ASEAN Youth Award (Young Women Achiever Category), the Franco-German Prize for Human Rights and the Rule of Law, and in 2019 appeared on Southeast Asia's shortlist for the Women of the Future Award. She holds a master's degree in international peace studies from the International University of Japan. Chak writes about human rights at (<http://sopheapfocus.com/>)

MARIUM CHAUDHRY

Founder
The Current



PAKISTAN

"Leadership is letting others take charge, allowing mistakes, and applauding success. A leader encourages others, allows growth, and steps in when most needed — like a guardian who always has people's back."

Marium Chaudhry is a journalist who has been based in Pakistan for the past 13 years. She has been affiliated with GEO News, one of Pakistan's most extensive news networks, as a senior executive producer, launching and producing many programs for the network as well as heading the channel's general election coverage in 2013 and 2018.

Chaudhry is currently the founder of *The Current*, Pakistan's fastest-growing independent digital news platform, which caters to millennials. The platform has amassed more than a million followers in two years and, in 2020, became the first news startup in Pakistan to win the Google News Innovation Challenge. *The Current* is also the first Pakistani organization to enter a formal partnership with the Media Development Investment Fund.

Chaudhry will be launching Pakistan's first membership program, giving young citizens a platform to raise their voices and opinions, and training students and young professionals on digitizing Pakistan. Her goal is to spearhead the digital innovation of the country's news media, helping it transition from television news to digital journalism. She is a Google News Initiative Newsroom Leadership Program fellow, a Fulbright-Hays scholar, and a journalism graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

CHEN QIUFAN

Speculative Fiction Writer
Thema Mundi Studio



CHINA

"Leadership means not only supervising and managing, but initiating actions and inspiring ideas to bring about changes in the real world."

Chen Qiufan (a.k.a. Stanley Chan) is an award-winning Chinese speculative fiction author, translator, creative producer, and curator. He is honorary president of the Chinese Science Fiction Writers Association and a member of the Xprize Foundation Science Fiction Advisory Council.

Chen's works include the novel *Waste Tide* (finalist of Locus Best First Novel Award, and *The Guardian's* Best SF Book of the Year 2019) and, co-authored with Kai-Fu Lee, the book *AI 2041: Ten Visions for Our Future* (Best Book of the Year 2021 on Amazon, *The Financial Times*, *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*).

He focuses on the topics such as climate change and environmental issues, the inequality of tech society, culture and biodiversity, and many other subjects. He currently lives in Shanghai and is the founder of Thema Mundi Studio.

ALEXANDRE CHENESSEAU

Managing Director
Evercore



UNITED STATES

“Authentic leaders not only inspire others with empathy and purpose, but also enable them, both individually and collectively, to create meaningful impact and lasting change.”

Alexandre Chenesseau is currently a managing director at Evercore, a premier global independent investment banking and advisory firm. He advises clients on mergers, capital raising, joint ventures, and strategic partnerships, particularly in the technology, media, entertainment, and consumer goods sectors. Prior to Evercore, Chenesseau worked at Lazard in Paris, Beijing, and New York, where he advised clients around the world. He worked in Beijing between 2011 and 2016 during the boom era of Chinese outbound investment, and has been a frequent speaker on the topic of China’s financial system and cross-border investments.

Chenesseau has been actively involved in community-building at organizations such as the French-American Foundation and the Sciences Po American Foundation, and co-chairs the China Supper Club in New York. He is a term member at the Council of Foreign Relations.

Chenesseau received his master’s degree in finance from Sciences Po Paris and completed the Program for Leadership Development at Harvard Business School.

CALVIN CHUA

Founder
Spatial Anatomy



SINGAPORE

“Leadership is about building up the next generation. Mentoring and grooming the next generation of leaders is key to ensuring the relevance of any organization.”

Calvin Chua is an architect and urban strategist working at the intersection of sustainable design, planning, and advocacy. He currently directs Spatial Anatomy, a strategic design practice that uses design as a multi-disciplinary approach towards solving pressing urban challenges. Spatial Anatomy has collaboratively designed buildings and regeneration master plans across Asia through rigorous research and ground engagement process.

Chua also serves as an adjunct assistant professor at the Singapore University of Technology and Design. With a keen interest in bridging design and geopolitics, he has led ground-breaking non-profit capacity-building programs on urban economic development in North Korea over the past decade for the Choson Exchange. Recognized as one of the leading voices on the Korean peninsula, his opinions have been featured in multiple news organizations, including CNN and Reuters.

Recognized for his unique approach towards design practice, Chua was longlisted for the 2020 Royal Academy of Arts Dorfman Award and was a St. Gallen Symposium Young Leader of Tomorrow. Prior to founding Spatial Anatomy, he worked with leading urban planning and architecture firms. A registered architect in the U.K., he graduated from the Architectural Association School of Architecture.

ALIETTE DE BODARD

Multiple Award-Winning
Writer of Speculative
Fiction



Photo by Chloé Vollmer-Lo

FRANCE /
UNITED STATES

“Leadership means creating a nurturing space that allows different people to develop to their fullest extent. It means sharing an energizing vision which creates connections for the future.”

Alette de Bodard is a multiple-award-winning writer of speculative fiction. She has won three Nebula Awards, an Ignyte Award, a Locus Award, a British Fantasy Award, and four British Science Fiction Association Awards. de Bodard is the author of multiple critically-acclaimed and influential books, including the Xuya universe series, a space opera informed by Vietnamese culture; and the Dominion of the Fallen series, a Gothic fantasy set in fin de siècle Paris where magicians, fallen angels, and Vietnamese dragons mingle.

de Bodard has spoken at multiple events, including the World Science Fiction Convention and Melon Sci-Fi; has worked as an instructor on the Writing Excuses cruise, and has served as a mentor to American science fiction and fantasy writers. Her work deals with diaspora, parenthood, gender, sexuality, the aftermath of war, and responses to empire.

de Bodard is of Franco-Vietnamese descent and lives in Paris, where she has a day job as a systems architect specializing in railway signaling. She is a graduate of Ecole Polytechnique (France).

PAOLO ROBERTO DOMONDON

Chief Program Officer
Global Fishing Watch



PHILIPPINES

“Leadership is about making a decision every day to channel one's energy and creativity into solving the most pressing social and environmental issues.”

Paolo Roberto Domondon is the incoming chief program officer at Global Fishing Watch, an international NGO that advances ocean governance through increased transparency of human activity at sea. He leads the development and implementation of strategies to advance the organization's transparency vision through global program and policy work.

Previously, Domondon was the senior director of policy and partnerships at Rare, a leading behavior change organization for the environment. He led Rare's grassroots and global policy around fisheries, oceans, climate, and biodiversity. He also recently initiated and led Coastal 500, the largest global network of mayors committed to revitalizing coastal communities.

Domondon also served as the youngest board member of the Philippines' largest election citizen group, the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting, and was the youngest board member and general manager of Gawad Kalinga's regional office in Singapore.

Domondon has over 15 years of international development work experience in environmental and social sectors across various issues. He received his master's degree from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore; and graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor's of science degree in psychology from De La Salle University in the Philippines.

GUO DONG

Associate Director
Research Program on
Sustainability Policy and
Management at
Columbia University



CHINA

KAYE-MAREE DUNN

Director
Making Everything
Achievable



NEW ZEALAND

“Leadership means responsibility. A leader has to care for others and truly have their best interests at heart. They have to put their egos aside and listen to diverse voices and make collective decisions.”

Guo Dong is the associate director of the Research Program on Sustainability Policy and Management at Columbia University, where he also serves as an associate research scholar teaching graduate-level courses in microeconomic and policy analysis, and sustainability metrics. He is also a senior advisor for recruitment at the School of Professional Studies and formerly served as the director of the Earth Institute China Initiative at Columbia University.

Guo is a non-resident fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute in New York and served as a distinguished non-resident fellow at the Shanghai Institute of International Finance and Economics, a distinguished adjunct professor at the Finance School of the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, and an adjunct chair professor at Henan University in China.

Guo helped design an urban sustainability measurement system that produces annual rankings of 100 Chinese cities based on their sustainability performance. In addition, he has co-edited books on sustainable development, co-authored *The Financial Ecosystem — the Role of Finance in Advancing Sustainability* (with Satyajit Bose and Anne Simpson), and *The Sustainable City, 2nd Edition* (with Steven Cohen). He received his doctorate in economics and education from Teachers College, Columbia University; a master’s of public administration from Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs; and a bachelor’s in economics from University College London.

“Leadership is about being clear about who you are and where you come from. Leadership is not just leading from the front. It requires a level of sensitivity, consideration, and kindness to serve others and support them in their time of need. Finally, leadership is a culmination of the lessons our ancestors left behind for us to follow or discontinue, and it is about our character – to strive always to be the very best you can and be ready to respond and pivot where required.”

Kaye-Maree Dunn is director of Making Everything Achievable, Ahau NZ. Limited, and Indigital Blockchain Limited. She is a social impact and technology entrepreneur from Te Rarawa, Ngā Puhī, Ngāi Te Rangikoianaake, and Ngāti Mahanga me Ngāi Tāmanuhiri, and has been working in Maori and community development for over 21 years.

Dunn’s career has included stints with Child, Youth, and Family (CYF); The Department of Labour, The Māori Land Court, and NZ Maori Tourism and Community Housing. She has recently been involved in social enterprise development, governance training, e-commerce development, and Whānau Ora planning and Regional Covid Response initiatives.

Dunn is currently on the interim Maori Spectrum Trust Board, the North Hokianga Development Trust. She is also a Sir Edmond Hillary Fellow and an Atlantic Fellow at the University of Melbourne.

Dunn believes leadership relies on unlocking potential and believing in the good of others.

ZAK DYCHTWARD

Founder and CEO
Young China Group



UNITED STATES

“Leadership is bringing the best out of a team working towards a worthy goal. It’s a lively dance between vision, action, empathy, and empowerment, plus the hard-headedness to walk an uncertain road with something resembling a smile.”

Zak Dychtwald is an author and founder whose mission is to help spread a people-first understanding of China for a better world. He is the author of the critically acclaimed *Young China: How the Restless Generation Will Change Their Country and the World* (St. Martin’s Press; 2018) and the founder of market insights firm, Young China Group.

Dychtwald’s work has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic*, *Harvard Business Review*, *The Washington Post*, NPR, Bloomberg, and elsewhere. In addition, he has been invited to speak on six continents at events like The Aspen Ideas Festival, the *Wall Street Journal* CEO Summit, and Google Talks.

ATENA FARKHONDEH KALAT, PH.D., M.SC.

Scientist and Scientific
Project Manager,
National Center for
Advancing Translational
Sciences, National
Institutes of Health



IRAN

“Leadership means influencing and guiding people by what you say and do, so they can be the best they can be. It means helping others accomplish and direct their organizations in a way that makes them more coherent and cohesive.”

Atena Farkhondeh Kalat is a scientist and scientific project manager in the Division of Pre-Clinical Innovation at the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS), at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the U.S. She manages pre-clinical drug discovery projects that lead to new drug identification in collaboration with government agencies, academia, and the private sector, such as pharmaceutical companies and disease foundations.

Currently, Kalat is responsible for managing the therapeutic programs and teams for rare genetic diseases, neurodegenerative illnesses, and opioid-related ailments in partnership with biopharmaceutical companies, academia, and disease foundations. She also serves as a reviewer of international peer-reviewed journals and grant applications. She has completed several senior management, science policy, and leadership training programs and has gained experience in pre-clinical drug development in neurodegenerative and genetic rare diseases.

For more than a decade, Kalat has volunteered in several children’s charities and fundraising events in the U.S., such as Children’s Inn at the NIH, and internationally at Children of Persia and Lions Clubs International in Japan.

Kalat received her doctorate in neuroscience from the University of Tokyo, medical school, in 2013, where she was mentored by Japanese Nobel prize nominee Nobutaka Hirokawa.

FEI XIAOJING

Co-Founder and Executive
Managing Director
Impact Hub Shanghai



CHINA

“Leadership means holding space to empower people and organizations to find their work and race to the place they want to be.”

Fei Xiaojing is in charge of the overall management of Impact Hub Shanghai, leading the hub’s strategic planning and incubation system building. She has dedicated herself to the sustainable development and innovation leadership fields for many years. In addition, as a former negotiation observer of UNFCCC, she was deeply involved in China’s collective civil climate movement.

Fei was also part of the International Antarctic Expedition Program led by Robert Swan, and went to Antarctica to investigate climate change’s impact on ecosystems there. Before founding Impact Hub Shanghai, she worked in several leading consulting firms and international organizations, providing sustainable solutions for many corporations and governments. She has been involved in establishing process of several social enterprises and NGOs.

Fei has studied in Sweden and has two master’s degrees in ecology and strategic sustainability management. In 2019, she joined the Ecosystem Leadership program hosted by Dr. Otto Schemer from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and got involved in the global practice of ecosystem transformation.

DHANANATH FERNANDO

Chief Operating Officer
Advocata Institute



SRI LANKA

“Leadership means helping people of limited means to improve their quality of life. This can be achieved through free markets and free exchange where hard work can prosper.”

Dhananath Fernando is the chief operating officer and a founding member of Advocata, an economic policy think tank based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Advocata, which promotes market-oriented economic policy reforms, was ranked as the best upcoming think tank in 2017 and 2018 on the University of Pennsylvania’s “Global Go-To Think Tank Index.” In addition, Advocata’s report *SOEs: Beyond Profit and Losses* made the list of best policy study reports by a think tank in 2019.

Fernando earned a bachelor’s in biosciences and biochemistry from the University of Colombo. He is an alumnus of the U.S. State Department’s International Visitor Leadership Program and the ATLAS Think Tank Leadership Academy in Washington, D.C.

In 2018, Fernando won the “Asian Think Tank Shark Tank Competition” in Jakarta and was a finalist for the “Think Tank Shark Tank Global Competition” in New York the following year. He is also a founding member of AK Lit Fest, a trilingual literary festival for local authors. In addition, he is a volunteer at CandleAid Lanka, a humanitarian organization, and is part of a team training vision and hearing-impaired students on swimming and safety.

THE HON. JAMES GRIFFIN MP

Minister for the Environment, State of New South Wales, Australia



AUSTRALIA

“Leadership is delivering outcomes that benefit the greatest good, and that lift up the marginalized and provide the voiceless with a voice.”

James Griffin MP is the minister for the environment of Australia’s most populous state, New South Wales. As minister, he has responsibilities and powers under legislation covering environment protection and natural resource management. He oversees an extensive and dynamic portfolio positioned at the forefront of solving some of contemporary society’s most critical issues. He is responsible for one of the world’s oldest and most respected park management agencies, the National Parks and Wildlife Services, which employ more than 2000 people – 10% of whom are Indigenous Australians. The agencies manage a national park estate comprising over 28,000 square miles, including four world heritage listed areas.

Griffin is passionate about the economics of biodiversity and the importance of strong public and private sector recognition of natural capital as a powerful tool for a sustainable future. He believes governments, citizens, businesses, and finance all have a role to play in a sustainable future.

Prior to entering the cabinet, Griffin was the parliamentary secretary for health, veterans, and the environment. Immediately before being elected to parliament in 2017, James was a Director of KPMG Australia.

MATTHEW GUILFORD

Co-Founder and CEO
Common Health



UNITED STATES

“Leadership is about driving real impact in people’s lives – by being coolheaded in identifying what matters most and warmhearted in helping the team deliver it.”

Matthew Guilford is co-founder and CEO of Common Health, a purpose-driven company that uses mobile technology to advance universal health coverage. Through an innovative model that integrates primary healthcare services and health financing benefits, Common Health improves access to care and reduces out-of-pocket costs for families with complex health needs like pregnancy, early childhood health, and chronic diseases.

Since launching services in Myanmar in April 2021, the company has grown to serve more than 27,000 members through a blended business model of partnerships with multilateral institutions and sales to consumers. Prior to founding Common Health, Guilford served as co-founder, chief commercial officer, and chief growth officer of Telenor Health, scaling health coverage to more than five million clients while living and working in Bangladesh for five years. He holds an MBA with high distinction from Harvard Business School and a degree in behavioral neuroscience from the University of Pennsylvania.

Guilford was named a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum in 2019. He splits his time between Yangon, Myanmar, and Providence, Rhode Island.

ASKA HAMAKAWA

Executive Director
Earth Company



JAPAN

“Leadership comes in a million forms, and there is no one right answer — but it must come with humility, gratitude, and a genuine motivation to do good for the world.”

Aska Hamakawa is a passionate and determined social entrepreneur and accelerator. After leaving PricewaterhouseCoopers as a management consultant, her career focused on climate change and disaster relief. Her life mission is to ensure her generation passes on a promising future to their children and beyond.

With the aim to build regenerative futures, in 2014, Hamakawa and her husband co-founded the Earth Company, a Bali- and Japan-based NGO that supports “Impact Heroes” — defined as exceptional paradigm-shifting change-makers in the Asia Pacific. So far, Earth Company has funded and supported 17 projects in seven countries, reaching over 1 million people in need. In 2019, in pursuit of a truly circular regenerative business model, the couple founded Mana Earthly Paradise in Bali — a progressively conscious hotel where the more the business develops, the better the world becomes.

Hamakawa was awarded as one of the “Unsung Heroes of Compassion” by the Dalai Lama in 2014, selected as one of the “Women of the Future” by *Newsweek* in 2018, as well as “100 Japanese People Respected by the World” by *Newsweek Japan* in 2021. She now lives in Ubud, Bali, juggling work and raising four children.

SOPHIA HAMBLIN WANG

Chief Operating Officer
Mineral Carbonation
International



AUSTRALIA

“In order to lead, you must be true to yourself and others. Leadership requires the courage to follow a path that may not have been previously forged, and the humility to learn from the mistakes you make along the way.”

Sophia Hamblin Wang is Chief Operating Officer of Mineral Carbonation International (MCI), a technology platform that transforms carbon dioxide into valuable industrial products. MCI recently was named the Best Clean Energy Start-up of COP26’s Pitch Battle.

Hamblin Wang grew up in Far North Queensland and completed a Bachelor of International Business with first class honors at the Australian National University’s College of Business and Economics.

Hamblin Wang values the importance of aligning private and public priorities when investing in meaningful action. She is a member of the ACT Climate Change Council, Curator of the Canberra Hub for the Global Shapers, and a Sessional Lecturer at the University of Sydney. In 2022, Hamblin Wang has been appointed to the forum of Young Global Leaders by the World Economic Forum.

Hamblin Wang has been featured in ABC TV’s Q&A and TEDx and her articles have been published in *The Australian Financial Review*, *The New York Times*, TEDx and *Time*. She has appeared in the Australian’s 100 Green Power Players, represented Australia at the inaugural UN Youth Climate Summit in New York, and was a panelist for the World Economic Forum in Davos.

SEIGO HARA

CEO
MICIN, Inc.



JAPAN

"Leadership means showing a vision, igniting the innermost thoughts and motivations of each person involved, creating an environment that allows them to exert themselves to the fullest and make an impact."

Seigo Hara is the founder and CEO of MICIN, a health tech startup that provides telemedicine services, insurance, and digital therapeutics. Its telemedicine service, curon, has spread widely in the wake of COVID-19 and is currently in place in over 5,000 hospitals and clinics.

Hara has been committed to improving the healthcare system throughout his career, namely through his work at the National Center for Global Health and Medicine, Health and Global Policy Institute, and McKinsey before founding MICIN.

ABHISHEK JAIN

Director
Powering Livelihoods



INDIA

"Leadership is identifying impact opportunities where others see none; the courage to walk on unchartered paths to realize such opportunities; the ability to take others along on such paths; and humbleness and grit to learn and adapt on the way."

Abhishek Jain is a public policy professional. He works at the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, one of Asia's leading energy and climate policy institutes. He built and continues to lead CEEW's work on energy access, rural livelihoods, and sustainable food systems. He also directs "Powering Livelihoods," a \$3 million initiative catalyzing a \$50 billion market to transform India's rural economy with clean energy solutions.

Jain's work focuses on leveraging technological, market, and policy innovations to uplift the marginalized in a climate-constraint world. Having contributed to further energy access in India over the last decade, he is now driving a transformation in India's food system.

He has written for leading publishers like *Nature*, Springer, and Cambridge University Press, and continues to shape public discourse through op-eds in national dailies. His research-backed engagements with the Government of India have contributed to the largest public programs on energy access, bringing more than 400 million Indians out of abject energy poverty. He was a member of the Technical Working Group for the UN High-level Dialogue on Energy, and recently completed a fellowship at the Fletcher School, Tufts University.

He is a Chevening Fellow and an alumnus of the University of Cambridge and IIT Roorkee.

CHONNIKARN JIRA (FERN)

Head of True Digital
Academy
True Digital Group



THAILAND

“Leadership means conviction, steadfastness, service, and humility. It also means recognizing, nurturing, and enabling the best in others.”

Chonnikarn Jira)Fern(leads True Digital Academy, which provides digital capability building to enable individuals and enterprises to thrive and stay relevant in the digital era. True Digital Academy aspires to help close Thailand’s and Southeast Asia’s digital skills gap, enabling the competitiveness of the region’s workforce in this rapidly changing environment.

In her previous roles at McKinsey & Company, Thailand, Fern focused on building and transforming digital businesses across various sectors for organizations in Southeast Asia. She also helped higher-education institutions and governmental units in the region on business strategy, education blueprint, and student outcomes development.

Fern holds a doctor of business administration)DBA(in technology and operations management from the Harvard Business School. She obtained her bachelor’s in electrical engineering)with distinction(from Stanford University, where she attended as a King’s Scholar from the Thai Government.

Fern’s personal mission is to help bring about a greater degree of social mobility, equality, and well-being through lifelong learning, career transformation, and mentorship.

MAXIMILIAN JOHNSON

CEO
MJ Capital



UNITED KINGDOM

“Leadership to me means giving credit to others for the successes and accepting responsibility for the failures, setting an example, and knowing when it’s time to step aside.”

Maximilian Johnson has spent the past 15 years in Asia. After graduating in 2009 from Tsinghua University, Beijing, with an MBA (becoming the first British citizen to do so), Johnson spent five years in China working as the business development manager for a British metals trader. He then spent four years at Goldman Sachs in Hong Kong as an investment banker, working on a wide range of transactions across many industries (2013-2016) before establishing his own independent advisory business, MJ Capital.

Johnson was vice chair of the British Chamber of Commerce in China, is a Leading Light for the British Council China, and is a founding member of China Britain Business Council’s China Committee. He was educated at Eton College (1998-2003), has a bachelor’s with honors in Russian with Polish from Christ Church College, University of Oxford (2003-2007); an MBA from Tsinghua University in Beijing (2007-2009), and a certificate in management from MIT (2007-2009). He holds a black belt in Taekwondo.

SHUBHA KAYASTHA

Co-Founder and Executive Director, Body & Data



NEPAL

“A good leader prioritizes sharing power and opportunities with the community and team while being open about their strength and vulnerabilities.”

Shubha Kayastha is a feminist activist based in Nepal who works at the intersection of gender, sexuality, and technology. She has been working in the country and Asia-Pacific region in different civil society organizations, feminist, and sexual rights movements, and in the digital rights movement.

Currently, she runs Body & Data, an NGO that she co-founded in 2017, a digital rights organization that advocates for just, open and safe internet for all. Her work revolves around bringing a feminist lens to the issue of freedom of expression and sexual expression, data privacy, and digital security.

Kayastha is also a member of a Global South-led transnational feminist network, “[Resurj](#),” that works on sexual justice. In her formative professional career, she worked in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights of women, young people, and people with disabilities in national and regional NGOs. She completed her master’s in gender studies from Tribhuvan University, Nepal, in 2013.

BUTHEINA KAZIM

Founder
Cinema Akil



UNITED ARAB
EMIRATES

“Leadership is cultivating an environment of action and compassion and working simultaneously towards a common goal. Leadership at its core is adaptive to the forces and realities that surround a pursuit. Malleable and acutely aware; true leadership can exist outside of the constructs of formal authority and on every rung of the ladder.”

Butheina Kazim is the founder of Cinema Akil, the first arthouse cinema in Dubai and the Gulf region. She was a Fulbright scholar of media, culture, and communication at New York University and has worked as a project manager in television and radio stations in the United Arab Emirates at the media conglomerates Arab Media Group and Dubai Media Incorporated. Kazim has contributed to publications including *Gulf News*, *Harper’s Bazaar Arabia*, Al Jazeera, and the Art Dubai blog. She has been involved in programming cinema popups including the Abu Dhabi Film Festival at The Pavilion and the “Focus on the UAE” program at the Short Film Week (Kurzfilmwoche) in Regensburg, Germany.

Kazim is the producer of short documentary *Letters to Palestine*, which won the Special Jury Prize at the Abu Dhabi Film Festival in 2010. She has served on the jury at several festivals, including the International Documentary Awards (2020), the Sarajevo Film Festival (2019), the Malmö Arab Film Festival (2019), the Marrakech International Film Festival (2019), the International Competition at the Regensburg Kurzfilmwoche (Short Film Week) in 2015, the Imagine Science Film Festival AD, and A Shaded View on Fashion Films (ASVOFF) in Paris at the Centre Pompidou (2016.) She is a member of the UAE Academy Award Committee, and the Steering Committee of the Network of Arab Alternative Screens (NAAS).

HAJRA KHAN

Professional Football Player;
Founder, Fortis Sports
Academy



PAKISTAN

ADIL KUSMANOV

Head of the
Expert-analytical Group
Center for Analysis and
Monitoring of Socio-
Economic Reforms under
the President of Kazakhstan



KAZAKHSTAN

“A leader creates a strong vision and sets direction while encouraging leadership at all levels on the way. It is truly taking a little more than my share of the blame and a little less than my share of the credit.”

Hajra Khan is the captain of the Pakistan National Football Team and has been playing football competitively in Pakistan and abroad since she was 14. She is a three-time Guinness World Record holder, a mental health ambassador for British Asian Trust, and a UNICEF Pakistan MH champion.

Khan is an Asian Football Confederation and FC Barcelona-certified coach. She founded the Fortis Sports Academy, which uses the Sports For Development (S4D) program to empower and provide elite training and competitive opportunities to youth all across Pakistan.

She is an advocate for mental health for athletes and gender equality in sports, which she has spoken about in TED Talks. She is a member of the Pakistan National Youth Council, focusing on mainstreaming marginalized youth, and was listed in the Malala Fund “Top-18 Game Changers” among other accolades.

Khan is a football analyst on TenSports and worked as a business development and corporate engagement consultant for international organizations, including Right To Play.

“Leadership is the art of motivating and inspiring people to act toward achieving a common goal. A true leader is a person who is not afraid of taking responsibility for his/her actions and the people around.”

Adil Kusmanov is a head of the expert-analytical group of the Center for Analysis and Monitoring of Socio-Economic Reforms under the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan. He is also a member of the Public Council of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of Kazakhstan, a member of the Young Experts Club under the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and a co-founder and ex-chairman of his alma mater’s alumni association.

He is one of the leading members of the teams that developed the National Development Plan of Kazakhstan until 2025 and forecasted its KNIs (Key National Indicators). He also actively contributed to the development and implementation of the pension reform, which has allowed about 1 million people to improve their housing conditions. The team also developed a methodology for gauging countrywide progress and assessing the performance of state bodies of Kazakhstan, etc.

Kusmanov has work experience at a non-governmental think-tank, where he was involved in economic, public policy, and statistical analysis and research work. He has part-time teaching experience in mathematics and economics at the undergraduate level. He has participated in several leadership programs, including the G20 Global Leadership Program conducted by the KDI School of Public Policy and Management.

Kusmanov received his master’s degree in mathematical modeling and scientific computing from the University of Oxford and a bachelor’s degree in mathematics from Nazarbayev University.

RACHEL LAU

Managing Partner
RHL Ventures



MALAYSIA

“Leadership is giving a voice to those who don’t have them.”

Rachel Lau is managing partner at RHL Ventures, a Southeast Asian-based private investment firm that focuses on growth capital investments in the region.

Lau serves on the board of directors for GNC Holdings (NYSE: GNC), which was privatized by Harbin Pharmaceutical; Caring Pharmacy Bhd, Privasia Technologies Bhd (KLSE: PRIVA). She serves as the Malaysia chair for Global Dignity, on the board of governors of the Charterhouse School, and as president of the Malaysia Gymnastics Federation. Previously, she served on the leadership team of the Hong Kong chapter of Ellevate (formerly 85 Broads); and sits on the program committee of EM-power, a global not-for-profit organization that supports at-risk youths in developing countries.

In 2018, Lau was named as one of the 50 “People who are Redefining the Way We Live” by *Business Times Singapore* and was selected as part of the Milken Institute Young Leaders Circle.

Lau graduated from Australian National University with a bachelor’s of commerce with distinction and received a master of law from the University of Sydney. In addition, Rachel represented Malaysia in rhythmic gymnastics internationally.

ERIKA FILLE T. LEGARA

Aboitiz Chair in Data
Science, Asian Institute of
Management



PHILIPPINES

“Leadership is about one’s ability to rally and empower others toward a vision of improving not only each other’s lives and well-being, but also that of whole communities.”

Erika Fille T. Legara is a scientist, educator, and policy advisor. She has been recognized in the Philippines and abroad for her contributions to education innovation — particularly for “equipping Filipinos for a data-driven future” — since she took leadership in launching and designing the first data science graduate program in the Philippines.

Legara has also been leading the training of over 200 data science leaders with strong Asian anchoring at the Asian Institute of Management. As a scientist, she’s also been helping popularize STEM, inspiring youth to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. She has also been working with the Philippine government in crafting a national artificial intelligence strategy aimed to uplift the Philippine economy and society.

In 2020, Legara received the National Academy of Science & Technology Outstanding Young Scientist award. In addition to her R&D work and consulting initiatives with enterprises, she has also authored over 20 peer-reviewed publications in the fields of complexity and artificial intelligence. Legara is a TOYM honoree — the most prestigious leadership award for Filipinos under 40. And in June 2019, she made it to *Asia Tatler’s* GenT list — the definitive list of young leaders shaping Asia’s future.

FION LEUNG

Co-Founder and CEO
Time Auction



HONG KONG SAR,
CHINA

"Leadership is the ability to turn vision into reality."

Fion Leung is the co-founder of Time Auction, a tech-enabled charity that advocates volunteerism. Started as a side project in 2014, Time Auction quickly gained traction among generous donors and young adults, becoming a registered charity in Hong Kong in early 2017. Leung dedicates herself full-time to charity and is now leading the organization to make volunteering a fulfilling and vital part of people's lives. Over 124,000 volunteer hours have been contributed by the Time Auction community as of March 2022.

Leung has been awarded as Generation T List 2019 by *Tatler Hong Kong*, and is a fellow of the GLG Social Impact Fellowship 2021. Prior to Time Auction, Leung was a product evangelist at a media startup, Notey, and an analyst at Barclays after graduating from HKUST with a degree in business administration.

ROB LI

Partner & Managing
Director
Stone Forest Capital



CHINA

"Leadership means inspiring and empowering people around you to achieve their full potential."

Rob Li is a partner and managing director at Stone Forest Capital, a New York-based global equity investment firm. Li has over a decade of investing experience across private and public markets in Asia, the Americas, and EMEA, focusing on driving financial inclusion and empowering entrepreneurs globally to create sustainable social impact.

Previously, Li was a public equity investor at Slate Path Capital, a New York-based global investment firm, and a private equity investor at Morgan Stanley's Private Equity Group, where he worked on high-profile investments including CreditEase, Feihe, Hi-24 (acquired by Alibaba), and Nolboo. Li started his career as an investment banker at Credit Suisse in New York.

In addition, Li serves on the *Harvard Business Review* Advisory Council, Milken Young Leader Circle, Skybridge Young Leaders Council, CAMLab Advisory Board, and has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, TechCrunch, and on China Central Television. Li is a guest lecturer at Gabelli School of Business at Fordham University.

Li holds a dual bachelor's in history and international studies with distinction from Yale College, where he was a Heinz Scholar, and obtained an MBA from Columbia University.

MANDOVI MENON

Creative Director, Writer,
and Media Entrepreneur



INDIA

"Good leadership requires a willingness to learn and guide by example. For me, it's about helping others strengthen their voice and values so that they can nurture their chosen communities in authentic, new ways."

Mandovi Menon is a creative director, writer, and media entrepreneur passionate about using innovative storytelling to spark meaningful change. She has built several publications, communities, and campaigns across different media over the past decade, which continue to create social impact and shape youth culture in India.

In 2013, Menon co-founded her first media company, Homegrown. Under her leadership, the pioneering platform earned a reputation for its original voice and diverse representation of young Indians, which regularly tackled taboo topics like sex and sexuality as well as issues related to juvenile justice, women's rights, and more.

Menon has since built two other unique communities dedicated to children's rights and well-being. The first is *Apalam Chapalam* — a multi-lingual storytelling channel primarily designed to create a space of leisure for urban, underprivileged children during lockdown. The second is *The Minor Project* — a public dialogue initiative for Unicef India and Leher NGO to help end violence against children. This campaign created multimedia story formats to catalyze deeper conversations around child sexual abuse, domestic violence, corporal punishment and cyber-bullying.

Menon also writes fiction for adults and children while simultaneously pursuing independent projects developing strategy, identity, and IPs for clients focusing on social change and culture-building. Previously, she was named on *Forbes Asia's* "30 Under 30" list for Media & Advertising, *Vogue Global Network's* "50 Young Trailblazers Around The World," *Lured Magazine's* "15 Creatives Defining the New India," and several other well-known publications.

KOMRON RAKHMATULLAEV

Country Director
USAID Trade Central Asia
Activity



TAJIKISTAN

"For me, leadership is a continuous process of embodying curiosity, humility, and initiative."

Komron Rakhmatullaev is the country director for the regional USAID Trade Central Asia Activity. He leads the project's efforts in Tajikistan to improve trade, inter-regional connectivity, and economic resilience. Before that, Rakhmatullaev worked with the International Finance Corporation to advise the government on revamping investment and business regulations in the private sector in Tajikistan.

In his personal time, Rakhmatullaev is passionate about youth empowerment and currently serves as a board member for Ilmhona Skills Accelerator – an NGO solving for youth unemployment through equipping young people in Tajikistan with tech skills and surrounding them with a vibrant community of like-minded innovators.

Rakhmatullaev has a multi-disciplinary background, holding degrees in economics and public administration from Fatih University, and a master's in financial management from the University of York. In addition, he is the Central Asia fellow of the John Smith Trust, a fellowship for emerging leaders from post-Soviet countries.

FUMINO SUGIYAMA

Co-Representative
N.P.O. Tokyo Rainbow Pride



JAPAN

“Leadership means listening to small voices and speaking up for everyone. It means making suggestions rather than criticisms, taking action rather than thinking, and changing the world for the better.”

Fumino Sugiyama is a restaurateur and an LGBTQ activist. He is the co-representative of Tokyo Rainbow Pride, helping organize the biggest pride parade in Japan. As a member of the Shibuya Ward Gender Equality and Social Diversity Promotional Committee, he was part of the movement that led to the ward becoming the first in Japan to recognize same-sex partnerships in 2015.

Sugiyama, a former member of the Japan Women’s National Fencing Team, is a transgender activist. Since 2021, he has also been an executive board member of the Japan Olympic Committee. He graduated with a master’s degree from Waseda University in 2007. He is a father of two children.

VIRGINIA TAN

Founding Partner
Teja Ventures



SINGAPORE

“Leadership is using your power to make things better for others.”

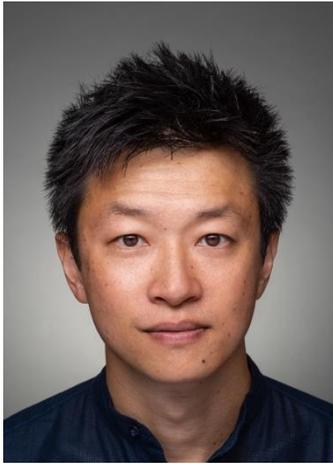
Virginia Tan is the founding partner of Teja Ventures, the first gender lens VC fund for emerging Asia. As a pioneering thought leader for gender and technology, she founded She Loves Tech, the world’s largest startup competition for women and technology. Tan is also the founder and former president of Lean In China, one of China’s leading non-profit platforms for women with over 100,000 members, supporting Chinese women’s goals and aspirations.

Tan’s background is in law and finance, having worked across five continents for Clifford Chance and Allen and Overy. She specialized in emerging market investments and handled more than \$30 billion worth of transactions during her career. She moved to Beijing in 2013 to work on strategic investments related to the “One Belt One Road” initiative.

In 2020, Tan was selected by the Rockefeller Foundation as one of eight Next Generation Gender Equality Leaders for its Beijing25+ Summit, and made Singapore’s “100 Women in Tech” inaugural list. In addition, *Forbes* recognized her for “removing barriers to global women’s empowerment,” and *Fast Company* called her “the Hua Mulan of the business world.” She has an LLB from Kings College, London.

TAO TAO

Co-Founder & COO
GetYourGuide



GERMANY

“Leadership is about creating inspiration around a shared goal and removing all obstacles to achieve it.”

Tao Tao was born in Beijing and went to school in Germany. He co-founded the Berlin-based GetYourGuide with the mission of unlocking unforgettable travel experiences around the world. Founded in 2009, GetYourGuide is the global leader in travel experiences, offering over 60,000 experiences from historical walking tours through Kyoto to skip-the-line tickets at the Vatican Museums. The company has raised more than \$800 million in funding, employs over 700 people across 17 offices, and has served more than 50 million customers to date.

Tao has a bachelor’s in economics from Tilburg University and spent a semester at Beijing University, where he coached the women’s soccer team. Besides work, he mentors young German professionals with an immigrant background and supports various causes in politics and philanthropy. Tao speaks German, English, Chinese, and a bit of French.

SI THURA

Executive Director
Community Partners
International



MYANMAR

“Leadership is the act of igniting the core values of individuals, creating enabling environments for them to evolve and achieve their goals which benefit them and society.”

Shortly after graduating from medical school in Yangon, Myanmar, in 2008, **Si Thura** joined relief efforts in the Ayeryarwady Delta, an area devastated by Cyclone Nargis, the worst natural disaster in Myanmar’s recorded history. This experience convinced him that the key for the future was to strengthen fundamental resilience and resourcefulness and support the development of community-led services to provide for essential needs such as health care and education. In 2009, Thura joined Community Partners International (CPI) as the organization’s first Myanmar-based staff member.

Starting from a small office in Yangon, Thura has played an instrumental role in expanding CPI from its roots on Myanmar’s eastern border to the forefront of health systems in Myanmar, especially for health reform efforts. Under his stewardship, CPI supports a network of community-based partners in Myanmar, Thailand, Bangladesh, and South Asian countries, delivering lifesaving health care to hundreds of thousands of people in conflict-affected, remote, rural, and urban poor communities.

He received 2013 the Australian Leadership Award and 2016 InsideNGO’s Emerging Leader Award. He is also a co-founder and general secretary of the Myanmar Liver Foundation.

YADANAR

MSc Candidate for Health Policy, Planning and Financing (LSHTM and LSE)



MYANMAR

“Leadership is not just a position but an opportunity: to support the advancement of others, to bridge the inequality gap, and to empower others to also become leaders.”

A passionate advocate for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for adolescents and young people, **Yadanar** holds a medical degree from the University of Medicine Yangon and a master’s of public health from the University of Melbourne. She previously worked as the Young Women’s Coordinator at YWCA of Myanmar, where she helped equip adolescent girls with SRHR skills and knowledge. Her work empowered young women, ethnic minority women, and the LGBTQIA community by providing them with leadership and SRHR knowledge and skills.

Yadanar won an Australia Awards Scholarship to pursue a Master of Public Health. She worked as adolescents and youth program analyst at United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and worked to promote meaningful youth participation at the decision-making level as well as advocate for comprehensive sex education.

After working at the policy advocacy level for more than seven years, she is now doing a second master’s at the London School of Economics (LSE) and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) with the support of the prestigious Chevening Scholarship by the British government. She is working to hone her health policy, economics, and finance knowledge and skills in order to help build Myanmar’s federal democratic union, especially in establishing equitable, accessible, and quality healthcare systems, and for the advancement of SRHR.

PAULINE YEUNG

Program Director
Asia Business Council



HONG KONG SAR,
CHINA

“Leadership is about building bridges across geographical and generational barriers and having the willingness to break the mold to pursue work that is important and meaningful.”

Fluent in English, Mandarin, Korean, Japanese, and Cantonese, **Pauline Yeung** combines breadth with depth to excel in multiple fields across the public, private, and non-profit sectors. With a mission of fostering meaningful dialogue and collaboration across languages, cultures, and geographies, Yeung has curated sustainability programs for business leaders in 22 jurisdictions, built strategic relationships to develop the Asian ecosystem for innovation and technology, and organized events to promote understanding in U.S.-China relations.

Yeung is also committed to engaging the leaders of tomorrow, having served as a mentor and judge for the *South China Morning Post* Student of the Year Awards, Sing Tao Interschool Debating Competition, and the Sachs Global Fellowship at her alma mater Princeton University, where she was a Hang Seng Scholar and Sir Edward Youde Scholar. An arts enthusiast, Yeung has also organized exhibitions featuring French artist JR and Japanese artist Takashi Murakami and received a master’s with distinction from Central Saint Martins.

