

# ASIA SOCIETY SWITZERLAND



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Asia Society Switzerland is an independent Swiss nonprofit organization dedicated to Asia. Our mission is to foster Asia Competence and prepare Switzerland for a deeper and more sustainable engagement with Asia.

We are part of the global Asia Society network with 16 offices around the world: Delhi, Hong Kong, Houston, Los Angeles, Manila, Melbourne, Mumbai, New York, Paris, San Francisco, Seattle, Seoul, Sydney, Tokyo, Washington, DC, and Zurich.

Asia Society was founded in 1956 by **John D. Rockefeller III**. The 9<sup>th</sup> Asia Society President and CEO is Dr. **Kyung-wha Kang**, South Korea's former Minister of Foreign Affairs and the first woman to hold that position. Our global network gives us unparalleled access to international speakers and experts on a broad range of Asia issues.

Asia Society Switzerland was founded in 2016 and is financed entirely out of Switzerland. We have a dedicated team of seven people in Zurich, ensuring that our programs are relevant and tailored to a Swiss audience. Asia Society Switzerland is committed to connect business, policy, and society, helping Switzerland to understand and engage with Asia and to navigate our shared futures. We provide strategic intelligence and access to experts, offer education and talent development, and build communities and networks.



IMPRESSUM

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ASIA SOCIETY SWITZERLAND

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# OUR MISSION: FOSTER ASIA COMPETENCE IN SWITZERLAND

**Asia Matters.** Over the last decades, the geopolitical and economical center of gravity of the world has continually shifted east. Asia is no longer just a manufacturing hub, or a market opportunity – it is the world's most populous and dynamic region. Asia, and what happens in Asia, influences Swiss society and businesses on every level.

To navigate an “Asian Future”, it is crucial to develop Asia Competence. We define Asia Competence not just as knowledge and understanding of Asia, but as an actionable skill including the ability to understand different viewpoints, and to access local and international networks related to Asia. In short, **Asia Competence is the ability to operate in an Asian context.**

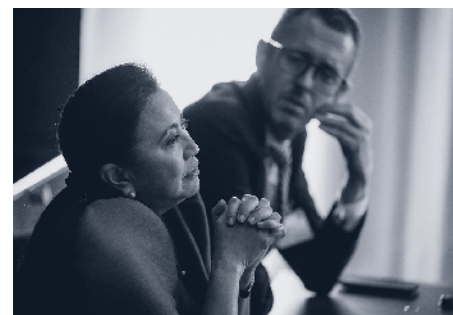
We deeply believe that only with increased Asia Competence and sustained engagement with Asia will Switzerland be able to continue to thrive in a multipolar world and play a constructive role in shaping the “Asian Future”. For this reason, we have made it our mission to foster Asia Competence in Switzerland.

# WHY OUR WORK MATTERS

> Asia Competence can no longer only be delegated to a dedicated team, department, or office. Headquarters, leadership, and board of almost every company and organization need **continued Asia Competence to successfully navigate a new world.**

> While not everyone will work on Asia in the future, we all need a **broad understanding of the developments in Asia**, and how they matter to Switzerland and the world.

> Increasing Asia Competence also helps to **keep Switzerland open and connected** to the world, and to make it an attractive place for people from all around the globe to work and live.



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1 Executive Roundtable with former Vice President of the Philippines, Leni Robredo and James Crabtree, former Executive Director of IISS Asia, Zurich, Nov 2022

2 Parag Khanna, author of *The Future Is Asian*, at the Jade Dinner, Zurich, Jun 2022

3 Kaiser Kuo, host of the Sinica Podcast, at a live recording of an episode in Zurich, Oct 2018



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- 1 Kyung-wha Kang, South Korea's former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Asia Society President and CEO
- 2 Suhanya Raffel, Museum Director of Hong Kong's M+ museum, Zurich, May 2019
- 3 Executive Director Nico Luchsinger and Kevin Rudd, former Prime Minister of Australia and CEO of global Asia Society, Zurich, Jun 2022
- 4 Berliner Salon hosted by the German Embassy to Switzerland in Berne, with Nico Luchsinger, Sebastian Heilmann, Doris Leuthard, Norbert Riedel, Philipp Rösler, Mar 2020

# OUR VALUE PROPOSITIONS

We provide strategic intelligence and access to experts, offer education and talent development, and build communities and networks.



# STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE AND EXPERT ACCESS

Asia Competence requires not just knowledge and information – it requires actionable and usable intelligence. Through our global network across Asia, Europe, and the U.S., we have access to outstanding individuals – world-renowned policy makers, thought leaders, authors, entrepreneurs, and experts from think tanks and academia. The insights we deliver are carefully curated and specifically tailored to business leaders, government officials, academics, and people with a high-level interest in political and economic developments across the region. We provide a global perspective – with a Swiss focus – on geopolitical, economic, business, and social trends and developments across Asia to help and inspire Swiss leaders and organizations to make informed decisions, achieve business outcomes, and engage effectively and sustainably with Asia.

Our annual flagship conference **STATE OF ASIA** provides an overview of the key developments in Asia and their global implications.

STATE OF ASIA features a broad selection of leading experts from across Asia, Europe, and the U.S. Their diverse perspectives and in-depth expertise foster dialogue and discussion, making STATE OF ASIA a premier platform to get an update on global issues from an Asian perspective.



STATE OF ASIA  
podcast

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Throughout the year, we host **Executive Roundtables** for a select group of people. We invite experts on current topics and developments in the fields of geopolitics, diplomacy, economy, environment, technology, and innovation. In an intimate setting, they share their unique insights and expertise and engage with our audience in active dialogue.

- 1 C. Raja Mohan, Senior Fellow with the Asia Society Policy Institute in New Delhi, Nov 2022
- 2 Keyu Jin, author of *The New China Playbook: Beyond Socialism and Capitalism*, and Jörg Wuttke, President Emeritus of the EU Chamber of Commerce in China, Nov 2023
- 3 Agatha Kratz, Director at Rhodium Group, and Markus Herrmann, China Macro Group, Nov 2022
- 4 Commentator-in-Chief Bruno Maçães, Nov 2022

Access our growing library of insightful videos, produced by us in Switzerland, and globally:



Switzerland Videos  
on YouTube



Global Asia Society  
YouTube Channel

In our popular **Oxford Debate** series, we address the big questions that have no one answer or solution, but invite many conflicting views. Four renowned experts form teams of two, one team arguing for the motion, the other against it. This format provides the audience with different perspectives on a contested issue in a short, structured, and often entertaining way.

In 2023, we have established the TOY Senior Fellowship together with the Asia Society Policy Institute in New York. Dr. **Simona Grano** served as the inaugural fellow, focusing on Taiwan and the presidential election in January 2024. **James Crabtree** joined as the second fellow in July 2024, with geopolitics in Asia at the center of his analysis and commentary. The Fellowship is made possible with the support of Max and Monique Burger & “Thinking of Yves” Family, Hong Kong.



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1 James Crabtree and Nico Luchsinger, Jul 2024



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2 Live audience at the debate at Kraftwerk Zurich, Jun 2023  
Noah Barkin and Simona Grano, the team arguing in favor of the motion “Europe should side with the U.S. on China”, against Marina Rudyak and Philippe Le Corre, Jun 2023



3 Simona Grano at the Oxford Debate LIVE, Jun 2023

Rachel Ann Go, Bilahari Kausikan, Alexander Gabuev, Milan Vaishnav, Joerg Wuttke, Keyu Jin, Mercedes Ruehl, Simona Alba Grano, Veronica Scotti, Bruno Ma... Michael Schaeppman, Yamini Aiyar, Frédéric Grare, Garima Mohan, Rathin Roy, Brian Hioe, Raji C. Steineck... zuz Huggler, Setsuko Klossowska de... Matthew Guilford, Aurelia Rauch, Rorry Daniels, Khanh T... a Srito, Uli Sigg, Rita Sigg, Ju... ecbbinska, Émilie Luthringer, Robin Weber, Ma... ler, Bettina Schaller, Phil... Cappelli, Andrew Sh... nke, Samuel L... Noah Barkin, Philippe Le... n, Mark Greeve... Isaac Chong... mrita Narlikar, Patrick Rei... u, Elisa Cadel... ly Schlegel, K... Delury, Lion... Michael Bueh... ttlieb Keller, S... dra... ada Sirivu... wanesan, Joha... oshi... am, Jay Bart... e, S... ie D... nnie S. Glaser... ahj... istir... bert Anneler... ni F... . Ra... of Tsukuba and former tine Braden... gio P. Ermotti, Shotaro Tani, Boas Lieb... ent, Agatha K... herry Rehman, Kristin Hoeltge, Elina P... san, David La... hie-Charlotte Fischer, Jan-Peter Kleinha... onas Jörin, Tantikom Supachai, Christine Schraner Burgener, Debjani Bhattacharyya, Bek Strating, Henry Lee, Alejandro Reyes, Ian Lee, Nilanjan Raghunath, Fuchsia Dunlop, Parag Khanna, Karin Wenger, Kevin Rudd, Gabriel Rugg... holm, Tripurdaman Singh, Vidya Venka, Christophe Ja... l, Christophe Penot, Sophie Richard, Yuichi Kodai, Tho... 'sedevdamba, Byambajargal Ayushjav, Markus Herrma... milbek Dzhuraev, Manuel L. Quezon III, Mina Roces... lan Feldman, Diana Lange, Chloé Michel, Steve Tsang... ker, Deborah Yi Wen Lee, Heinzpeter Znoj, Ashish S... s Berger, David N. Bresch, Hongqiao Liu, John O'Brie... er Frank, Zaheer Sitabkhan, Mulan Sun, Ariane Reime... Elms, Audrey Tang, John O'Brien, Cherie Gray, Nerg... , Hairong Huang, Abhishek Poddar, Fabienne Wasserr... Brinză, Raffaello Pantucci, Francesca Ghiretti, Philip... tt Haas, Annette Bhagwati, Mami Miz... niko M... esserre, Dahlia Scheindlin, Moier... au, Nici Jost, Sara Hossain, Faraha Nawaz, Martin Frech, Iswandi... essa Teo, Far... Kurolova, Matthias Kamp, Jennifer Altehenger, Margit Molnar... midt, An... Eduard Kögel, Zhang Xi, Virginia Chan, Misaki Nagaoka, Amb... yvani Fon... Graham, Pichamon Yeophantong, Sophie Altermatt, Martin... enny Chan... anson, Michelle Yun, Olivia Killias, Linh Nguyen, Le Hong Hiep... mel, We... rah Elms... Bernhard... Sa... Niquet, Ang... u Phyu A... halie F... Ferrer, Pas... ndani, D... Weber... onsiri, Sha... Jeremy L... er, Sam... Bland, Alexandra von Przychowski, John Schoonbe... en Men... Plamen Tonchev, Alicja Bachulska... Peter Achten... khoun, Jacinta Yu, David Chiava... ven Denney, San... amont, Li Shuo, Peng Qinqin, ... nen, Suhasini H... Megha Rajagopalan, Bethany All... wati, Sarah Kenderdine, Kishore Mahbubani, Guy Miller, Sara Jane Ahmed, Jaleh... Rob Hulme, David Bosshart, Hanno Elbraechter, Michal Meidan, Ruth Kattumuri, ... a, Fynn Holm, Zhao Mengzhuo, Minkyong Kim, Tai Myoung Chung, Sang-Il Kim, Jessi... g Khanna, Viktor Novikov, Olivia Wang, Tanvi Madan, Samir Saran, Jamil Anderlini, Jaboury Ghazoul, Sebastian Heilmann, Kaiser Kuo, Shirley Yu, Narges Bajoghli, Fritz Demopoulos, Linus von Castelmur, Natasha Kassam, Chan Heng Chee, Philippe Welti, Daniel Woker, Chitra Narayanan



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Specially Appointed Professor at University of Tsukuba and former Special Advisor to Japan's longest-serving Prime Minister, the late Shinzo Abe, Tokyo



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Digital Minister of Taiwan



**CHRISTINE SCHRANER BURGNER**  
State Secretary to the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) and former UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Myanmar



**STEVE TSANG**  
Director of the SOAS China Institute, School of Oriental and African Studies University of London

# EDUCATION & TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Competence-building requires long-term talent development. We develop Switzerland's capability to engage with Asia, to strengthen our prosperity and security, and to enable greater contribution of our communities to Switzerland's shared future with Asia for the long term. Our educational programs are designed to foster Asia Competence in young talents and rising leaders. We provide them with the insights and tools they need to analyze developments in Asia and identify opportunities for successful collaboration with the region. Throughout the programs and beyond, participants are encouraged to maintain a **global mindset** and **commit to lifelong learning**.

Asia Society Switzerland is committed to **empowering young voices in the dialogue with Asia**, recognizing youth as a key driver of Switzerland's future success in the region. Since 2020, 25 students and young professionals are selected each year to become Fellows of the **Gen A – Young Leadership Program**. We host a series of expert roundtables and workshops for the Fellows exclusively, expose them to regions and topics outside their daily routine, and support their work on an individual project, featured at our STATE OF ASIA conference. Gen A is a multi-disciplinary community of young Asia-curious individuals from all of Switzerland. Since 2024, the program is generously supported by the Ernst Göhner Stiftung and the Hirschmann Stiftung.



1 Group Shot: The 2022 Gen A Fellows at STATE OF ASIA, Zurich, Nov 2022



Over 80 Fellows have graduated from the program since its inception in 2020. Members of our **Gen A Alumni Community** actively contribute to our mission by regularly serving as experts in our programs. In 2024, we have launched the Gen A Day with the generous support of Nicolas Oltramare, a platform for members of the community to catch up and share their expertise and successes.



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Since 2021, we offer **Asia NEXT**, an Executive Education Program specifically designed for rising executives and leaders, together with the prestigious business school IMD. This program advances understanding of significant geopolitical and economic developments in Asia, their impact on Switzerland and the world, and provides opportunities to engage with high-level experts and a community of like-minded professionals interested in Asia.

1 Elisa Cadelli, Gen A 2020, and Fellows from all cohorts at the Gen A Day, Zurich, Apr 2024

2 Jonas Rüegg, Gen A 2022, at the inaugural Gen A Day, Zurich, Apr 2024

3 / 4 Asia NEXT 2023 participants Lukas Hofmann and Gabriela Lippe-Holst at the STATE OF ASIA conference, Zurich, Nov 2022

# COMMUNITIES AND NETWORKS

At the heart of Asia Society Switzerland are our **diverse communities and extensive network**. We are committed to fostering meaningful exchanges among individuals as well as between organizations across various sectors and backgrounds. By connecting Swiss leaders and communities with their peers in Asia and the global Asia Society network, we build relationships, share insights, and develop understanding for future engagement with Asia.

Our **cosmopolitan Passport Community** is made up of over 30 Asia-connected individuals who are passionate about Asia and recognize the need for enhanced Asia Competence in Switzerland. Our Passport Members receive regular invitations to exclusive gatherings, such as our *Executive Roundtable* series, unique Art Tours, as well as special events; like the cooking demo with British star chef Fuchsia Dunlop, who specializes in Sichuanese cuisine and took us (and our tastebuds) on a culinary trip to the southwest of China.



1 / 2 Cooking demonstration with Fuchsia Dunlop, Zurich, Jul 2022



3 Audience at the Oxford Debate LIVE, Zurich, Jun 2023

A key pillar of our work are **arts and culture**. Through the *Big Picture* event series, we celebrate art in all its forms and shapes: Be it food, movies, museums or literature. We invite artists, curators, and experts to talk about their practices and share their work for our audiences to experience it first-hand. The public event series allows for meaningful conversations and encounters, both off and on stage, as seen here in pictures from the event 'Big Picture: Kimono – Unwrapping A Living Thing'.

Whether it's during a *Talk at the Library*, in our *Book Salon*, or over drinks at a *Members Get-Together*, our interactive members-only events offer **opportunities to meet other Asia-minded individuals**, forge friendships, and engage in informal discussions with peers and experts.



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1 Big Picture event with artist Countess Setsuko Klossowska de Rola and fashion designer Kazu Huggler...

2 ... and many people from the Japanese diaspora in the audience, Zurich, Oct 2023



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3 Event with Hong Kong artist Angela Su, May 2022



# OUR PARTNERS

Our work would not be possible without the generous contributions from our Corporate Members and Patrons, as well as the invaluable support from our diverse Partners. We firmly believe that **collaboration** is essential for achieving our mission to foster Asia Competence in Switzerland. That's why we are proud to collaborate with organizations, companies, and stakeholders across a broad spectrum of sectors.

Many of our Corporate Members support our work not only financially and idealistically but also with **expertise and skill**. Bergos AG's Art Consultant, Aurelia Rauch, is a regular host of our event series *Big Picture*.



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Find all our  
upcoming events  
at our website

1 Aurelia Rauch of Bergos AG,  
here with architect Yuichi  
Kodai and writer Sophie  
Richard, Zurich, Apr 2022

In July 2023 we had the honor of welcoming legendary Chinese author Yan Lianke to Zurich. An event made possible through **cooperation** with Partners such as Karl der Grosse, Zentrum für literarische Gegenwart, sinokultur, and Money Museum.

Sergio Ermotti, then Chairman of the Board of Directors at Swiss Re, delivered the opening remarks at our flagship conference, STATE OF ASIA in 2022. Thanks to the **support** from our Corporate Member Swiss Re, STATE OF ASIA takes place at the magnificent Swiss Re Centre for Global Dialogue.

Since 2023, we are hosting the State of Asia Address in collaboration with the University of Zurich. The prestigious Aula where Winston Churchill gave his famous “Let Europe Arise” lecture in 1946 serves as the fitting backdrop for today’s leading thinkers from Asia delivering an address on the eve of the STATE OF ASIA conference.

# HOW WE ARE FUNDED

We are an independent, non-profit Swiss organization, financed entirely out of Switzerland. We rely on the support of our Corporate Members, Patrons, Foundations, as well as our Passport and General Members. A small amount of funds originates from event revenues.

Asia Society Switzerland dedicates these funds to further our critical mission of increasing Asia Competence in Switzerland. They are used while maintaining the organization’s nonpartisan nature, editorial independence, and intellectual integrity, namely: to host 50+ events each year, to produce and publish our extensive editorial work, to educate leaders as well as the next generation, and to connect our 500+ members, over 20 partners of leading companies and universities, government entities, foreign diplomats, think tanks, industry associations, NGOs and media.

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1 Yan Lianke, Zurich, Jul 2023

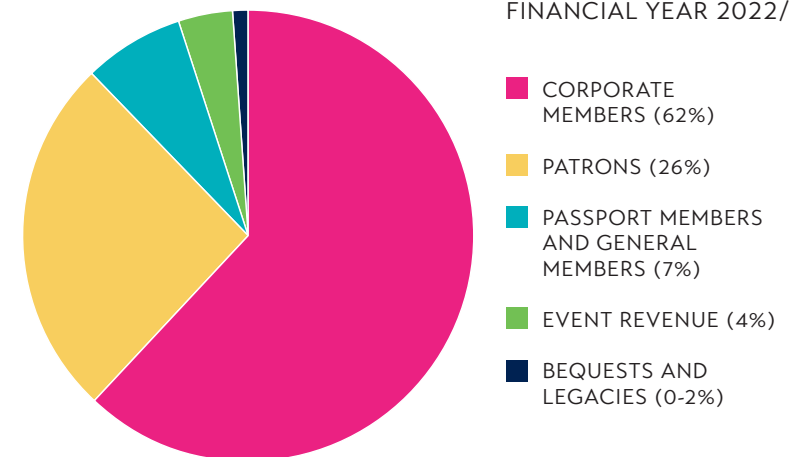
2 Sergio Ermotti, Zurich, Nov 2022

3 Singaporean diplomatic icon Bilahari Kausikan and Nico Luchsinger at the State of Asia Address, Zurich, Nov 2023

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1 Uli Sigg, Zurich, May 2019

2 Eunice Zehnder-Lai, Zurich,  
Nov 2022

3 Adrian T. Keller, Zurich,  
Jun 2022

4 Nicola Forster, Jun 2023

5 Raymond J. Baer, Jun 2023



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community, foster your  
Asia Competence,  
and support our work by  
joining as a Member!

