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Media Contacts:

Stephanie Todd-Wong | Director of Communication and Audience Engagement | [st Wong@asiasociety.org](mailto:st Wong@asiasociety.org) | 713-496-9905

Chris Dunn | Marketing and Communications Manager | [cdunn@AsiaSociety.org](mailto:cdunn@AsiaSociety.org) | 713-496-9903

[IMAGES CAN BE DOWNLOADED HERE.](#)

## ASIA SOCIETY TEXAS LAUNCHES ASIA IN THE CLASSROOM A NEW ONLINE EDUCATIONAL LEARNING PLATFORM

*One-of-a-Kind Initiative Promises to Transform Student Learning with  
Asian American and Asia-Specific Educational Resources for K-12 Students and Educators*



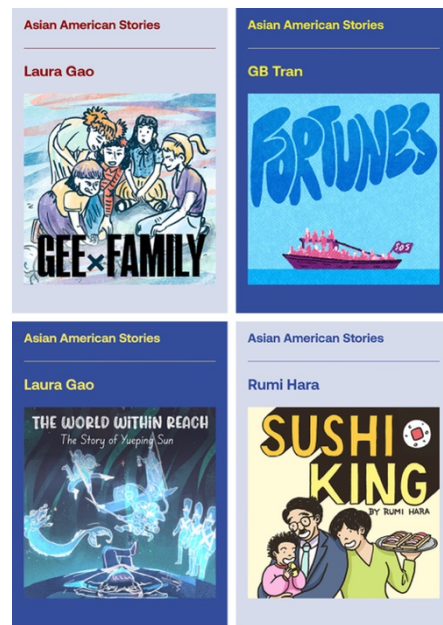
HOUSTON, October 5, 2023 — [Asia Society Texas](#) (AST) is thrilled to announce the launch of [Asia in the Classroom](#), an innovative online learning platform that will exponentially advance essential tools needed by students and educators to learn the untold narratives of Asia and Asian Americans. Featuring 14 original graphic novels alongside a robust educator portal with lesson plans (75+ available by the end of the year) and professional development courses, *Asia in the Classroom* addresses gaps in learning opportunities that often lead to stereotyping and racism. Informed by two years of research with a 14-member Advisory Council, the transformational platform is available for all Houston-based classrooms and school districts, with a state-wide and national rollout planned over the next two years.

According to research conducted by the National Commission on Asia in the Schools, an overwhelming majority of educators have little content, knowledge, or training related to Asia. The lack of exposure and understanding is reflected in their curriculum and results in student gaps in knowledge and perspective. Additionally, many districts and educators lack the resources needed to diversify their curriculum — such as professional development and curriculum tools that explore race, identity, and varying ideology. *Asia in the Classroom* seeks to

address these gaps. According to **Anne Chao**, Co-Founder and Director of Rice University's Chao Center's Houston Asian American Archive, "*Asia in the Classroom* comes at a critical time in our nation's history, where intolerance and xenophobia have surged, and when our society desperately needs more interconnectedness, more respect for each other, and more compassion."

The platform is made up of three primary components:

- **Adventures of Asia** is comprised of 14 original graphic novels that offer a one-of-a-kind and immersive journey through detailed artwork paired with engaging characters that also includes TEKS aligned interactive blocks to measure learning objectives. More than just "stories," the graphic novels are important distillations of histories, mythology, politics, and cultures of Asian and Asian American life, and feature contemporary and traditional perspectives of five featured countries – China, India, Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam – plus four Asian American stories. To ensure authentic storytelling, each graphic novel was commissioned by AST from authors that live and work in the country featured in the novel.



- The **Educator Portal** provides educators with a robust library of resources, materials, and training they need to seamlessly integrate the platform into their existing curriculum. Resources feature innovative pedagogy, including resources for project-based learning and interdisciplinary connections and lesson plans for extended, long-term projects in the classroom. Working in consultation with scholars, AST developed course materials to match requirements for current Texas educational standards and to augment and extend learning objectives.
- **Professional Development** opportunities for educators will be offered regularly both online/on-demand and in-person at Asia Society Texas to deepen educator understanding of Asia and AAPI perspectives. These offerings enable teachers to directly interact with scholars, AAPI community members, and content experts.



The curriculum is grounded in the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) and Asia Society's Center for Global Education Global Competency Framework. **Jennifer Kapral**, AST Director of Education and previous educator and school administrator noted "Providing direct alignment to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), as well as national social studies and literacy standards was a critical component of the

project. The accompanying teacher training ensures the project has a solid place in educators' curriculum, encouraging the inclusion of Asian and Asian American perspectives in classrooms across the state and beyond.”

“Asia Society Texas developed this bold new initiative to build upon our belief in the power of education to combat bias and build a more empathetic society.” says **Bonna Kol**, AST President. “*Asia in the Classroom*, an educator and student-facing online portal, allows us to extend these ideas beyond the walls of our Center and directly connect with future generations nationally. In doing so, we are reinventing and leading the way culture-based non-profits approach education.”

### STUDENT QUOTES

*“I’m graduating high school this year, and I’ve never read about Asian American leaders. We focused on Western civilizations, but never spent much time learning about Asia.”*

*“No more video lectures! Give us something that looks like it is made for us.”*

### EDUCATOR QUOTES

*“We need trustworthy, reliable resources for teaching about Asia. I don’t have time to vet and search for materials.”*

*“It’s critical to bring diverse perspectives into the classroom. A visit to Asia Society always supports bringing untold narratives to life.”*

## ABOUT ASIA SOCIETY TEXAS

Asia Society Texas believes in the strength and beauty of diverse perspectives and people. As an educational institution, we advance cultural exchange by celebrating the vibrant diversity of Asia, inspiring empathy, and fostering a better understanding of our interconnected world. Spanning the fields of arts, business, culture, education, and policy, our programming is rooted in the educational and cultural development of our community — trusting in the power of art, dialogue, and ideas to combat bias and build a more inclusive society.

## ABOUT OUR DESIGN PARTNERS

**potion** [Potion](#) is a design and technology studio based in New York City. We have built projects from concept to close-out, at home and abroad, on every scale from kiosks to interactive galleries to monumental digital walls, and distributed on digital platforms for mobile, native frameworks, and responsive web. Since our founding, Potion has been committed to a different, more inclusive vision for a technology company. We are proudly minority-owned, we embrace inclusion and diversity as a core strength and believe that we make our best work when we bring together an array of people with a multitude of experiences and perspectives. With a tailored focus on experiential and interactive work, we’ve built a practice devoted to the transformation of public places and the empowerment of those who operate and support them. Potion has been recognized by AAM, SEG D, Fast Company, MUSE, Communication Arts, SXSW, and the Art Director’s Club.

**C&G Partners** [C&G Partners](#) is a multi-specialty creative studio, dedicated to design for culture with deep expertise integrated across exhibitions, signage, digital installations, branding, and web. The firm has worked on projects for cultural clients including the Smithsonian, Japanese-American National Museum, US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Library of Congress, MoMA, and the National September 11 Memorial Museum. Working in close collaboration with Asia Society Texas and Potion, the studio is creating interactive experiences that celebrate diversity and connectivity and build an understanding of both Asia and Asian-American communities in Houston.

*Foundational gifts for Asia Society Texas' Educational Project come from Nancy C. Allen, Ting Tsung and Wei Fong Chao Foundation, and Durga and Sushila Agrawal. Major support provided by American First National Bank and Wu Family, The Brown Foundation, Inc., The Cullen Foundation, The Elkins Foundation, The Faris Foundation, The Fondren Foundation, H-E-B Foundation, Chinhui Juhn and Eddie Allen, and the Thoma Art Foundation.*