

ICOM-CECA Asia Report 2023
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2023 has been an exciting year for me as I was part of the organising committee at National Heritage Board, Singapore who hosted the ICOM CECA's Annual Conference 2023 in Singapore.

Held from 20 to 24 November at the Asian Civilisations Museum in Singapore, this is the first time the annual conference was held in Southeast Asia. The theme for the conference was "Museums: Shaping the Future of Education" and its focus was to develop and deepen museum educators' competencies in areas such as shaping "classrooms" that will be relevant for the future, considering how to make offerings more inclusive, and forging partnerships with relevant stakeholders to do so.





Left: ICOM CECA board members with Chairperson of ICOM Singapore and organising committee from National Heritage Board, Singapore.
Right: Opening ceremony of the ICOM CECA Annual Conference 2023 in Singapore

The annual conference in Singapore started with opening addresses by Chairperson of ICOM Singapore, Ms Chang Hwee Nee and President of ICOM CECA, Mrs Marie-Clarte O'Neill. It was then followed by keynote speeches by Dr Aidan Wong from Singapore Management University and Ms Claire Bown from Thinking Museum who spoke about the evolving role of museum educators, the essential approaches and mindsets necessary for success in the present and for embracing future challenges and opportunities.



Question & Answer session with keynote speakers; Ms Claire Bown and Dr Aidan Wong

More than 200 participants from all over the world attended the conference and for the first time there were participants from other Asian countries such as Indonesia and Philippines.



Some of the Asian participants at the annual conference

The participants were greatly enriched by almost 100 presentations on various topics such as inclusivity, partnership and future classroom. Two Special Interest Groups workshops and a research workshop were also conducted during the conference.



Participants also went on learning journeys to various museums and heritage sites in Singapore including the National Museum of Singapore, National Gallery Singapore, Singapore Science Centre and Singapore Discovery Centre.

The feedback received for the conference have been very positive and these are what some of the participants have said:

"I've visited many international conferences but this time the event was outstanding from all points of view! Especially I want to mention brilliant cultural programme that was very useful and interesting."

"Thank you so very much for your warmest hospitality and amazing conference. Please do stay in touch and exchange ideas about museum learning."

"Thank you for the warm greetings during the conference and the motivation to join the best practice award next year!"

It was great hosting ICOM CECA members from all over the world for this conference and I would like to thank everyone for taking time out of your busy schedule to make the trip to Singapore for the annual conference.



Closing ceremony of the ICOM CECA Singapore Conference 2023

In 2023, we have also managed to recruit another correspondent from Asia to represent Taiwan so to date we have correspondents in Singapore, Malaysia, Korea and Taiwan. Looking forward to recruiting more correspondents in Asia hopefully from Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand next.

This year, I also had the opportunity to once again serve as jury for the ICOM Best Practice Award alongside ICOM CECA President Marie-Clarte O'Neill, Margarita Laraignee and Delphine de Bethmann. It was a difficult decision to select the winners as the quality of projects submitted for the Best Practice Award has improved over the years. I congratulate all winners and wish them all the best in sustaining their projects.

Thank you everyone for your support and I look forward to catching up with all of you again at the next annual conference in 2024!