Annual Report
2018-19
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Foreword
The progress of education nurtures the progress of humanity. This idea moved me to establish the Yidan Prize – an inclusive education award that transcends religion, race, and nationality. The prize advances my dream of making the world a better place through education. Today the Yidan Prize is the world’s biggest education prize. Tomorrow we hope it becomes the world’s most influential.

The prize recognizes individuals who have made significant and exceptional contributions to innovation in education. It also supports projects that promise a long-term impact, and which promote people’s wellbeing through learning. Education transformed my life. The prize was motivated by my gratitude for its blessings. I would like everyone to experience the positive transformative effects of learning and understanding. I hope this will encourage everyone to reflect the universe and our contribution to humanity.

Entrenched education systems around the world evolved primarily to meet vocational needs. Today we have moved on and need to find ways to cope with the continual change of modern life. This suggests more agile education systems that are responsive to students’ needs, as well as systems that encourage and nourish each individual’s talent and capacity.

To me the prize is more than an award. It’s an inclusive global community, an idea incubator and a solutions bank, all designed to facilitate change. As such, a lot of thought goes into the prize’s structure and operation. By identifying, recognizing and rewarding change makers, we can open doors and light the way through innovation in education. Inspired, we learn together.

This report introduces the accomplished and diverse educators who nurture the prize. As the founder, my role is to empower the prize committees to work together courageously and effectively. Together we can ensure the prize develops and flourishes in a healthy and sustainable way.

We are a young organization that’s eager to learn from our peers, and from leading influencers in education. In May 2018, I had the honor to meet Nobel Prize laureate and former United States President Jimmy Carter. He explained how he founded the Department of Education, a cabinet-level department with the power to modernize education in the US.

The Yidan Prize has made a huge impact on at least one person’s education – mine. I have learned a lot during its first three years of establishment. As a speaker at the 2018 Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok, Russia, I shared what I have learned and my views on the globalization of education. I hope to promote the Yidan Prize to world leaders, obtain their understanding and support to the prize’s mission.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the Board of Directors, the Advisory Committee, the Judging Committee, partners and supporters. The success of the Yidan Prize is only possible with your generosity and support.

I thank you all wholeheartedly.

Dr Charles Chen Yidan
Statement by Chairman of the Board of Directors

Established in 2016, the Yidan Prize has gained acceptance and support from educators and societies around the world. The past three years have been fruitful. The prize has made steady progress in promoting greater access to education. It has successfully connected some of the brightest minds creating the future of education. The prize is internationally recognized as a platform and incubator for innovation in education.

As a forward-looking initiative, the Yidan Prize goes beyond recognizing outstanding individuals. It also promotes action for change.

Since our launch we have formed collaborative relationships with a wide range of educational institutions. We have engaged with international organizations, such as the United Nations, World Bank, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Furthermore, we have established partnerships with educational authorities in various countries, renowned higher education institutions, and leading educational research institutions.

Educators and other stakeholders in education have taken notice of the Yidan Prize and actively participated in our discussions, roundtables, and other activities. At the same time, the breadth and depth of news coverage by international media outlets have helped opinion leaders worldwide gain a deeper understanding of our mission.

The projects of our inaugural laureates, Professor Carol S. Dweck and Ms Vicky Colbert, are well underway. Conducted by researchers in the United States, the two projects on Professor Dweck’s mindset theory are progressing well. Fundación Escuela Nueva (FEN), founded by Ms Colbert, has carried out 34 teacher training workshops on the Escuela Nueva (EN) model. So far, 578 teachers have received training, and over 25,000 EN learning guides have been distributed in 151 rural schools, reaching 5,890 students.

The contributions of the second Yidan Prize laureates, Professor Larry Hedges and Professor Anant Agarwal, involve applying robust data analysis and technology to enhance learning. Professor Hedges’ leadership and research in statistical methods for meta-analysis and evaluation of education policy reveal the importance of objective measurement in education. Professor Agarwal’s groundbreaking edX platform applies technology to make affordable and quality education a reality for billions of people around the world.

Over the next three years, the Yidan Prize will continue to identify, recognize, reward and encourage progress in learning. We will continue to develop our inclusive global community, and knowledge network. We are committed to helping education projects take root in local communities.

We will also enhance our communication with stakeholders, and facilitate their connections with each other. To maintain the integrity and pre-eminence of the Yidan Prize, we will work to strengthen transparency and governance.

The Board of the Yidan Prize would like to take this opportunity to express its heartfelt appreciation to the Advisory Committee, the Judging Committee, advisors, partners, and supporters. Without their generosity and support, our success would not have been possible.

We look forward to creating more synergy as together we inspire learning for future generations.

Dr Charles Chen Yidan
The Yidan Prize is a future-oriented charitable institution with a worthy mission to benefit educators and learners worldwide. Without a doubt, the Yidan Prize treasures learning, and is eager to stand on the shoulders of education experts when formulating a blueprint for development.

The past three years have seen the Yidan Prize advance. With Dr Charles Chen Yidan’s strong commitment to education philanthropy and the generous support of many reputable organizations and individuals, prizes have been successfully awarded to two cohorts of laureates. As evidenced by the laureates’ caliber, both the Yidan Prize for Education Research and the Yidan Prize for Education Development have created waves in the global education community. Their impact and influence continue to shape education communities around the world. I am also delighted to learn that more and more stakeholders in society have heard of the Yidan Prize, which means the prize will have even more impact.

To enhance the credibility and perceptions of the prize, the Advisory Committee values and strives for good governance. Great power comes with great responsibility. We firmly believe that a robust governance framework and sound practices will help raise the stature of the prize, which in turn will make it more effective. Looking forward, the Advisory Committee will provide more advice on designing strategies and processes in order to optimize the meaningful impact Yidan Prize can have on the global area of education.

The Yidan Prize embraces diversity. It is an important value that can guide us to deliver our goal of improving global education with better accessibility. A more diverse membership – be it gender, geography, professional background, or experience – in our committee, will promote pluralistic approaches and enhance decision-making.

In addition, we plan to create more partnerships with international organizations and seek the guidance of more experts. We hope that such partnerships will help us to mobilize more resources and support better education for students no matter where they come from.

In regard to nominations, there will be more from developing countries. We will continue to encourage local authorities and communities to take more action to improve education.

The Yidan Prize offers support to our laureates’ innovative projects. In the not-so-distant future, we will see the fruitful results of this. We look forward to learning from their experience to widen our horizons and imagination.

Last but not least, on behalf of the Advisory Committee, I would like to thank all the members for their time and valuable contribution in the last three years.

Dr Qian Tang
Statement by Chairman of the Judging Committee

Enlightenment and scientific research are critical to the advancement of humanity. The Yidan Prize aims to promote a brighter and better world through education. It seeks to recognize the world’s most pre-eminent educators and researchers, and advance outstanding and impactful ideas that promise positive and transformational change in education.

The judging for the 2018 Yidan Prize proved to be another herculean task, as nearly 1,000 nominations from 92 countries were received. The nominations were of exceptional caliber, which speaks volumes about the stature of the Yidan Prize in the global education community.

Judging principles and processes remained the same as the inaugural year – each nomination was reviewed according to a set of rigorous criteria to identify the very best individuals. The criteria were: be future-oriented, be innovative, be transformative, and be sustainable.

As Chairman of the Judging Committee, I can say that the two laureates are of exceptional talent, and their work aligned well with the mission of the prize and passed the rigorous criteria with flying colors. The unique science-based approach employed by Professor Larry Hedges is truly remarkable in the field of education research. His work is exceptionally valuable in the sense that it is widely applicable, replicable, and scalable. To this end, the Judging Committee was impressed with how this evidence-based approach to improving education to meet future needs could be adopted everywhere in the world. It was fitting that the Yidan Prize for Education Research was awarded to him.

The edX platform has opened up countless new opportunities for learners around the world. In particular, with the help of technology, people no longer have to struggle to access quality traditional sources of education. It is a perfect example of making education more accessible across the world. The edX platform is empowering, and the Judging Committee was pleased to have awarded the Yidan Prize for Education Development to Professor Anant Agarwal.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the panel members and individuals who provided assistance. Their professionalism and dedication to the prize were instrumental in helping the committee to fulfil its mandate. Judging is never easy. Judging for the Yidan Prize is even more challenging, as all those involved are determined to bestow the honor on the most deserving individuals and projects.

On that note, I am confident that our rigorous nomination and selection process will attract even more exceptional nominations. This means a more stringent vetting and judging process will be implemented, to ensure the prize will be awarded to those with the best ideas for the advancement of humankind.

Dr Koichiro Matsuura
Inspiring progress in learning together

Founded by Dr Charles Chen Yidan in 2016, the Yidan Prize identifies, recognizes, and rewards individuals with the courage to commit and achieve in education.

The prize champions people who are making a profound contribution to educational research and development.

Each year, the Yidan Prize gives out HK$60 million (around US$7.8 million) in two categories:

**Yidan Prize for Education Research**
This recognizes an individual or team of up to three members whose outstanding research has made a significant contribution to our understanding of education.

**Yidan Prize for Education Development**
This recognizes an individual or team of up to three members whose innovative ideas address pressing challenges in the field of education.

Each Yidan Prize comprises of a gold medal and a total sum of HK$30 million (around US$3.9 million), including a cash prize of HK$15 million and a project fund of HK$15 million to help them scale up their contribution and apply it in the wider world.

To ensure transparency and sustainability, the prize is managed by the Yidan Prize Foundation. This is a registered charitable institution in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region that is financed by an independent charitable trust.

The HK$2.5 billion (around US$323 million) irrevocable endowment was made prior to the establishment of the prize.

We want to share the hope and inspiration of learning with practical solutions that will create local impact on a global scale.

To achieve this we are developing an ideas bank of proven effective educational strategies and promising directions for research. The prize represents our wholehearted commitment to supporting leadership in education.

We also seek to nurture an inclusive global community engaged in educational innovation and philanthropy through initiatives such as:

**Yidan Prize Summit**
A meeting of minds to celebrate our new laureates and exchange ideas and insights on the future of education and learning.

**Yidan Prize Conference Series**
At a series of free public events around the world, Yidan Prize laureates and leading academics engage in robust discussion about progressing education.

**Worldwide Educating For the Future Index (WEFFI)**
An assessment of the effectiveness of education systems in preparing students for life in a rapidly changing world. It focuses on the 15-24 age band in 50 economies around the world.

Video: About the Yidan Prize
Logo and Medals

The symbolism and origin of the Yidan Prize and medals

Yidan Prize Logo

Designed by the world-renowned designer and artist, Dr Kan Tai-keung, SBS, BBS, AGI, the Yidan Prize logo seeks to remind us of the award’s vision and mission.

The concept centers on the two Chinese characters yi (一) and dan (丹). As well as echoing the founder’s name, the logo celebrates the wholehearted way outstanding scholars approach their quest for understanding.

The yi character is rendered in traditional ink brush calligraphy. Passing through it are geometric lines symbolizing a door to unlimited knowledge.

The dan character is completed by a blooming lotus, which represents a loyal heart, the courage of commitment and the blessings of enlightenment.

Yidan Prize Medals

The Yidan Prize medals are derived from ink brush paintings by Dr Kan Tai-keung. Both depict an individual on a mountain rock from which grows a pine tree.

The Yidan Prize for Education Development medal shows the figure standing and gazing toward the light. This suggests how the recipient can look forward to a better world through education.

The individual is posed more meditatively on the Yidan Prize for Education Research medal. It suggests the recipient has reached a certain level of achievement, and is contemplating ways to progress their ideas.

Video: Yidan Prize Medal: Masterpiece in Detail
Judging Criteria and Process

How the prize is awarded

Judging Criteria

The Yidan Prize is a global award that identifies, recognizes, rewards and encourages change makers opening doors and lighting the way in learning.

Two prizes are awarded to individuals or teams of up to three persons with forward-looking innovations that promise a transformative effect on learning, and the education systems of today and tomorrow.

Yidan Prize-winning initiatives are judged to be:

- Future-oriented
- Innovative
- Transformative
- Sustainable

Eligibility

Yidan Prize nominees can be proposed by governmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, professional associations, educational institutions, and individual thought leaders. Self-nominations are accepted in exceptional cases.

Nominees can be either individuals or teams of up to three members. They can be teachers, researchers, academics, policymakers, and education advocates. Posthumous nominations are not accepted.

Nomination and Judging Processes

Nominations for the two awards are accepted each year within a six-month period from September to March.

The judging process — led by an independent committee — takes place from April to September.

Yidan Prize laureates are announced in September.

The new laureates and their initiatives are introduced at the Awards Presentation Ceremony and the Yidan Prize Summit in December.
The Laureates
Yidan Prize for Education Research Laureate 2018

Professor Larry Hedges
Chairman of the Department of Statistics, Northwestern University
Professor Larry Hedges came from a humble background. Neither of his parents received a college education, and they were unsure if they could afford to send him to university. But Professor Hedges very much wanted to go, so he applied for financial aid.

He subsequently received an admission offer and scholarship from the University of California, San Diego. It proved to be an important point in his life, as he became a tutor to other students while studying both mathematics and physics. His interest and commitment to helping others went beyond tutoring. He spent three years in the student affirmative action office creating programs to help students.

His experience at University of California, San Diego crystallized the young scholar’s career path. He realized that through education he could help build a better world. That idea inspired him to study for a doctorate in mathematics and statistics, and apply these disciplines to improve education.

Professor Hedges began his career as an assistant professor in the Education Department of the University of Chicago. Here he was involved in higher education access programs. In 1985, he published, with Mr Ingram Olkin, *Statistical Methods for Meta-Analysis*, a seminal work that was controversial initially but laid the groundwork for his future contributions to education. In his own words, “meta-analysis is a systematic way of finding coherence in chaos”.

In 1994, he published meta-analyses that challenged the prevailing view among economists that money spent on schools was unrelated to academic achievement. Five years later, he found evidence that class size did matter. In the papers on the Tennessee class size project, Professor Hedges showed that reducing class size led to lasting improvements in academic achievement.

“

*When I was a child, I didn’t know anybody who went to college. People used the phrase ‘college kids’ to refer to some alien species that inhabited a different world than ours. The reason that I had the life that I did was because of education. I went into education as a field of study, because I wanted others to have that opportunity, too.*

**Professor Larry Hedges**
Applying the Yidan Prize to evidence-based education policymaking

In 2018, Professor Hedges received the Yidan Prize for Education Research in recognition of his work in educational policy. His approach helps policymakers, educators and other stakeholders understand what works in the field of education. It makes it possible to take a scientific approach to improving education for future generations.

Professor Hedges remarked that the Yidan Prize was specially valuable in the way it placed a spotlight on his life’s work. He said that more scientific evidence is needed to propel substantial improvements in education.

Professor Hedges pledged to use the US$3.9 million prize money to raise the profile of evidence-based learning and amplify its role in improving education. He believes that failing to provide children with an effective education can have a lasting effect on their lives.

In 2019, Professor Hedges helped create the Statistics for Evidence-Based Policy and Practice Center (STEPP Center). Made possible by the Yidan Prize, this initiative aims to further his research work and facilitate collaboration between statisticians, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners by using evidence to guide decisions. Based at the Institute for Policy Research (IPR) at Northwestern University, the center is an evolution of the IPR’s Q-Center.
"I'm going to use whatever I gain from this prize to try and increase the profile of evidence in education for the purposes of improving education. Evidence and even science are under attack these days. Not just in the US, but worldwide, or at least in other parts of the world, too. And I think in a situation like this, it's important that we avoid any mistakes that can be used to discredit education or to discredit evidence in education science.

Professor Larry Hedges

Professor Larry Hedges’ research into educational effectiveness broke new ground and led to an increased investment in education by the US government.

Video:
Interview with Professor Larry Hedges, Yidan Prize for Education Research Laureate 2018
Yidan Prize for Education Development Laureate 2018

Professor Anant Agarwal
Founder and CEO, edX
Professor Anant Agarwal is an electrical engineering and computer science professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He is also the Founder and CEO of edX, a not-for-profit online learning initiative launched by Harvard University and MIT in 2012.

Professor Agarwal grew up in a middle class family in Mangalore, India. His life-long interest in electronics, electrical engineering, and computer science began at the age of 11 when his uncle gave him an electrical motor kit. His parents were heavily into education and inspired his learning. His mathematics teacher, Mr J.L. Saldanha, also encouraged him to aim high. Eventually, he completed his bachelor’s degree in electrical and electronic engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras, and received his PhD in electrical engineering and computer science from Stanford University.

Professor Agarwal takes a keen interest in making education accessible. He believes that education is a right, and accessible education is akin to the air we breathe. Professor Agarwal recalled that going to school was not fun when he was a kid. However with technology, learning can be both interesting and accessible anytime and anywhere.

With the support of Harvard University and MIT, Professor Agarwal taught the first edX course. Covering circuits and electronics, it drew 155,000 students from 162 countries. He aims to deliver high quality education at scale, to learners around the world, regardless of their geographic location, financial resources, prior academic qualifications, gender, race or other demographics.

Currently edX offers over 3,000 online courses from more than 140 leading institutions to more than 25 million people around the world, and is determined to continue increasing its reach. The edX platform also links education and employment by allowing learners to obtain micro certificates. High-achieving certificate holders get access to job interviews at multinational IT companies, and numerous companies use edX to upgrade their employees’ skills.
A mission to provide high quality learning for all

"Imagine now you could learn whenever you want whatever you want. Imagine you could also be learning at midnight. You could be eating a snack when you’re learning. Learning becomes like a videogame – you are enjoying it," said Professor Agarwal.

In his speech on the day edX was launched, Professor Agarwal shared his dream to educate one billion people via the platform and provide a vital alternative to mainstream models of education. The edX platform opens up countless new opportunities for potential learners who would otherwise struggle to access traditional sources of education. It succeeds in empowering people to choose what they learn, when they learn, where they learn, and how they learn.
We want to use the prize money to launch radical new efforts that would enable much younger learners, both at the late high school and college level, to get radically increased access and quality for their learning. I would love to see, in the fullness of time, billions of students routinely accessing a quality education like this. Education is made affordable for everybody everywhere with a will to learn.

Professor Anant Agarwal

Building on success with Yidan Prize

Professor Agarwal’s work to make education more accessible was recognized when he was awarded the 2018 Yidan Prize for Education Development.

Supported by the prize money and building upon its success with MicroMasters® programs, edX’s new MicroBachelors® programs are the first credit-backed stackable credential, marking a significant milestone in online learning. Created by edX in an innovative partnership with top universities and Fortune 1000 corporations, MicroBachelors® programs deliver immediately transferable skills to meet the real-world needs of employers, while providing a pathway to a full Bachelor’s degree.

Professor Anant Agarwal discusses the finer points of engineering code with an edX engineer in his Boston office. (photo credit: edX)

Video: Interview with Professor Anant Agarwal, Yidan Prize for Education Development Laureate 2018
Professor Carol S. Dweck is one of the world’s leading researchers in the field of motivation. Her research has identified different mindsets that students can hold about their talents and abilities. A fixed mindset, in which talent and ability is viewed as unalterable, and a growth mindset, in which they are seen as qualities that can be developed. Her research demonstrates the importance of these mindsets for students’ motivation, resilience, and achievement – particularly for students from vulnerable populations. It also reveals that these mindsets can be changed. She was awarded the inaugural Yidan Prize for Education Research in 2017.

Supporting two mindset-related studies

Professor Dweck has chosen to support two universities in the United States, where researchers are carrying out scientific studies related to the mindset theory. One of those teams is led by Dr David Yeager at The University of Texas at Austin. His research, titled, The National Study of Learning Mindsets (NSLM), was designed to understand which kinds of students, in which kinds of classrooms and schools are most likely to benefit from a short online program designed to foster a growth mindset during the transition to high school.

Applying a nationally representative probability sample, the study is the largest-ever randomized controlled trial of an online growth mindset program in the United States in a K-12 setting. In addition to exploring variation in the effects of the growth mindset program, the study was designed to create a rich, longitudinal data set that would enable research by experts from multiple scientific disciplines on a broad array of research questions in education for years to come.

The other team is led by Dr Stephanie Fryberg at the University of Washington in Seattle. Her study is titled Enhancing Cultural Toolkits and Student Mindsets Teacher Training Institute. The researchers will partner with educators to develop and disseminate best practices for creating culturally inclusive growth mindset (CIGM) classrooms.

Video:
Interview with Professor Carol S. Dweck, Yidan Prize for Education Research Inaugural Laureate
Ms Vicky Colbert
Founder and Director, Fundación Escuela Nueva
Yidan Prize for Education Development Laureate 2017

A successful educational innovation expands further

Ms Vicky Colbert co-authored the world-renowned Escuela Nueva (EN) education model. She has pioneered, expanded, and sustained this educational innovation in various roles, including as Colombia’s Vice Minister of Education, UNICEF’s Education Adviser for Latin America and Caribbean, and now Fundación Escuela Nueva (FEN). She established FEN as an NGO to ensure the quality, sustainability, and innovation of the EN pedagogical model. She was awarded the inaugural Yidan Prize for Education Development in 2017.

The award also supported other research and development activities, such as carrying out virtual microcenters and training of teachers, designing and structuring forums and chats, and adjusting FEN’s virtual campus. These activities are aimed to strengthen EN’s community of practice, connect partners and stakeholders and generate new knowledge around quality education.

With funding from the Yidan Prize, FEN has carried out 34 teacher training workshops on the EN model, trained 578 teachers from 151 rural schools in 12 Colombian municipalities. Over 25,000 EN learning guides have been distributed in 151 rural schools, reaching 5,690 students and approximately 600 training manuals for teachers have been delivered.

The curriculum design team also satisfactorily completed the development of final PDF versions of EN learning guides in six subject areas (language, mathematics, science, social studies, ethics, and technology). Targeting students from K to Grade 9 (covering the basic primary and secondary education cycles), these learning guides take into account the latest curricular guidelines from the Colombian Ministry of Education.

Video:
Interview with Ms Vicky Colbert,
Yidan Prize for Education Development Inaugural Laureate
Yidan Prize Laureates Announcement 2018

Chosen from nearly 1,000 nominations spanning 92 countries

The Judging Committee, chaired by Dr Koichiro Matsuura, announced the Yidan Prize laureates 2018, in the presence of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region’s Secretary for Education Mr Kevin Yeung Yun-hung, JP, on 15 September 2018 in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

The six-month judging was led by an independent committee headed by Dr Matsuura. The geographical reach of the nominated projects increased by nearly 70% this year, indicating the growing significance of the Yidan Prize on the global stage.

Professor Larry Hedges was awarded the Yidan Prize for Education Research for his ground-breaking statistical methods for meta-analysis. Professor Anant Agarwal was granted the Yidan Prize for Education Development for making education more accessible to people around the world via the innovative edX open-source online platform.
edX, founded by Professor Anant Agarwal, gives people the tools to decide where to learn, how to learn, and what to learn. It brings education into the sharing economy, enabling access for people who were previously excluded from the traditional system of education because of financial, geographic, or social constraints. It is the ultimate disrupter with the ability to reach every corner of the world that is internet enabled, decentralizing and democratizing education.

Ms Dorothy K. Gordon  
Head, Judging Panel, Yidan Prize for Education Development

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We are pleased with this year’s results. The Judging Committee is delighted to see that the laureates’ projects are helping both developed and developing countries transform education systems today for a better tomorrow in an innovative and sustainable manner.

Mr Andreas Schleicher  
Head, Judging Panel, Yidan Prize for Education Research

Professor Larry Hedges has given us new glasses for seeing what works in education. It is hard to improve what we cannot see and measure, and Professor Hedges provides researchers with the tools and methods to better understand how we can help students learn better, teachers to teach better, and schools to become more effective. It provides a way to base educational improvements on scientific evidence. As we live in a time when misinformation is rife, and the quantity of available data is almost infinite, this work could not have come at a more critical time.

Mr Kevin Yeung Yun-hung, JP  
Secretary for Education, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all who have made the Yidan Prize Foundation a success. It is particularly encouraging to see that the foundation’s heart and soul lie right here in Hong Kong, a valuable member of the Pacific Rim and, most importantly, a place that places a high value on education and research.

Dr Koichiro Matsuura  
Chairman, Judging Committee, Yidan Prize

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Dr Koichiro Matsuura  
Chairman, Judging Committee, Yidan Prize

We are pleased with this year’s results. The Judging Committee is delighted to see that the laureates’ projects are helping both developed and developing countries transform education systems today for a better tomorrow in an innovative and sustainable manner.
The Yidan Prize laureates 2018, Professor Larry Hedges and Professor Anant Agarwal, accepted their awards on 9 December 2018 in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

The night began with a performance by the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, followed by two documentaries introducing the laureates’ impressive work. The event was attended by global guests dedicated to education and betterment of society, including HRH Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands and child rights advocate and humanitarian, Mrs Graça Machel. The two laureates received the awards from the Honorable Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, GBM, GBS, the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Each laureate received a gold medal and an award of HK$30 million (around US$3.9 million) in recognition and support of their contributions to education reform, which marked the climax of the night.
I want to congratulate both laureates for being recognized by the independent judging committee, and for being awarded the Yidan Prize. Your theory and projects have transformed many thousands of lives. I am grateful for your dedication to education and your contributions to society through education. In the future, I look forward to seeing more innovations in all aspects of education systems with wider participation from various stakeholders.

Dr Charles Chen Yidan  
Founder, Yidan Prize

Yidan Prize is connecting a world of educational innovators, researchers and policymakers. My congratulations to Professor Hedges and Professor Agarwal, this year’s Yidan Prize laureates. The fact that they were chosen from among nearly 1,000 nominations spanning more than 90 countries is remarkable testament to their sterling achievement as well as the global reach and reputation of the Yidan Prize.

The Honorable Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, GBM, GBS  
Chief Executive,  
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

The two laureates, Professor Larry Hedges (left photo) and Professor Anant Agarwal (right photo), receive gold medals and certificates from the Honorable Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, GBM, GBS, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Video:  
Yidan Prize Ceremony 2018 Highlights
The Yidan Prize Summit 2018 was held on 10 December 2018 in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Over 400 delegates from six continents gathered at the summit to exchange insights and strategies on the topic, “Educating for the Future: HOW?”. The theme invited a response to the great global challenge of ensuring students of today and tomorrow can obtain the skills needed for life and work in the future.

Dr Charles Chen Yidan delivered the welcoming address. This was followed by keynote talks by three distinguished speakers: HRH Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands, Mrs Graça Machel, child rights advocate and humanitarian, and the Rt Hon Gordon Brown, UN Special Envoy for Global Education and former Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer of the United Kingdom.

The two new laureates, Professor Larry Hedges and Professor Anant Agarwal, took the stage for a conversation about how their initiatives could contribute to educating future generations.

Professor Hedges gave a succinct explanation on how statistical analysis can take politics out of the debate about what works in education. Professor Agarwal highlighted the power of the internet in democratizing quality education.

Over 400 delegates gathered at the summit
The summit also included sessions on the following topics:

- Evidence-based education policy
- Deploying innovative educational models
- Utilizing technology to improve educational outcomes
- Lifelong learning
- Effective education philanthropy

Speakers interacted with the delegates, for the most part global movers and shakers involved with various aspects of education and learning. Delegates included leaders in education, business leaders, policymakers, and senior representatives from multilaterals, NGOs, and academia.

Discussions centered on ways to collaborate across different sectors and how to respond to the inevitable challenges. Moderators sought to emphasise initiatives and innovations in line with the spirit of the Yidan Prize – especially those that are sustainable, transformative, scalable, and which deliver results.

Video: Yidan Prize Summit 2018 Highlights
Children today are no longer the children of yesterday. The key question is whether educators can keep up with that change and adjust their approach according to what children need, not what they have always done. The roles of educators and pupils have become more interchangeable.

HRH Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands

Investing in education from early childhood has a lasting effect on the survival, development, protection, and active participation of children in social, economic, and political activities. Investment in girls' education is not optional. And it is not the job of government ministries of education or NGOs alone. It is a national imperative and the responsibility of all.

Mrs Graça Machel
Child Rights Advocate and Humanitarian

Dr Charles Chen Yidan encourages delegates use social media and graphics to spread successful educational innovations to netizens worldwide.
The education system for tomorrow needs to be more fair, more efficient and more inclusive. That is why we ask the question: HOW? To answer these questions, we must learn from each other and act together.

Dr Charles Chen Yidan
Founder, Yidan Prize

Children should not be just learning to remember, they should be learning to understand. So the teacher becomes the guide, helping everyone to develop their full potential.

The Rt Hon Gordon Brown
UN Special Envoy for Global Education and Former UK Prime Minister

Education innovators at the summit are given the opportunity to share their work with delegates during breaks.
Since establishing the prize, the Yidan Prize Foundation has held a series of conferences at universities around the world. The conferences are part of a broader initiative to engage the global community in dialogue and discussion around learning, and the role of philanthropy in education.

The three conferences were held in locations strategically selected to offer the widest coverage. These events gave education stakeholders the opportunity to exchange ideas face-to-face with the Yidan Prize laureates 2018.

All in all, the three conferences stimulated robust discussions among the world’s leading educators and education stakeholders.

The series, with its high-caliber attendees and meaningful conversations, advanced our emergence as an inclusive global community. Together we will continue to identify, recognize, reward and encourage change makers who open doors and light the way in learning and education.
Asia-Pacific

The Asia-Pacific event was held on 11 December 2018 at The University of Hong Kong (HKU). Professor Xiang Zhang, President and Vice-Chancellor of HKU, kicked off the event with an opening remarks.

Professor Larry Hedges and Professor Anant Agarwal presented keynote lectures on *The Essential Role of Research Evidence in Education* and *Reimagining Education*, respectively.

The conference ended with a closing remark delivered by Professor Cheng Kai-ming, Convenor of the Advisory Committee of Yidan Prize and Emeritus Professor of Education at HKU.

Two hundred stakeholders in education joined the event. Among them were a group of deans of education from various parts of the world.

“It was a great honor for HKU to coorganize the first of its kind in Hong Kong and Asia with the foundation.”

*Professor Xiang Zhang*  
President and Vice-Chancellor of HKU
Europe

The Europe event was held on 4 March 2019. Renowned speakers gathered at Jesus College, the University of Cambridge and debated what makes a great education. Also discussed were the role of NGOs, assessments, EdTech and data.

Speakers included: Professor Stephen Toope, Vice-Chancellor of University of Cambridge; Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Vice-Chancellor Emeritus of University of Cambridge; Dr David Halpern, Chief Executive of the Behavioural Insights Team and National What Works Advisor; Professor Paul Ramchandani, LEGO Professor of Play in Education, Development and Learning; Dr Bo Stjerne Thomsen, Vice President of LEGO Foundation; Mr Nunzio Quacquarelli, CEO of Quacquarelli Symonds; Dr Charles Chen Yidan; Professor Larry Hedges; Professor Anant Agarwal.

As the keynote speaker, Dr David Halpern, Chief Executive of the Behavioural Insights Team and National What Works Advisor, presents his views on effective ways for motivating children and young people to learn.

The Yidan Prize provides us with an opportunity to recognize the power of education in making the world a better place.

Professor Stephen Toope
Vice-Chancellor of University of Cambridge

Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Vice-Chancellor Emeritus of University of Cambridge, delivers closing remarks
The Americas

On 23-24 May 2019, a diverse array of experts from leading universities, research institutes, and non-profit organizations met at Northwestern University for The Americas leg of the Yidan Prize Conference Series.

Themed *The Future of Evidence and Innovation in Education*, the conference covered the future of educational innovation and the role of evidence in implementing educational ideals.

The conference was honored to have the presence of Northwestern University President, Dr Morton Schapiro, who gave opening remarks. The institution’s Provost, Professor Jonathan Holloway, delivered closing remarks.

In his speech, Dr Charles Chen Yidan emphasized the need for educators to learn from each other and spread innovative ideas in a global collaborative effort.

The conference invited Ms Wendy Kopp, Co-founder and CEO of Teach for All, as the keynote speaker. She made a passionate call to view education as a global, rather than a national or local issue.


“So many people share the dream of making the world a better place through education, and the vision and commitment of the Yidan Prize are allowing us to take real action.”

Dr Morton Schapiro
Northwestern University President

As the keynote speaker, Ms Wendy Kopp, Co-founder and CEO of Teach for All, describes the challenges of scaling successful interventions across different contexts.
Shared values and shared messages

The globally respected International Baccalaureate (IB) was founded in 1968. The IB and the Yidan Prize both seek to create a better world through education. Today nearly 5,000 schools in 150 countries provide IB educational programs to students aged 3 to 19.

Held in Singapore on 25-27 March 2018, the IB Global Conference attracted over 1,800 teaching professionals from around the world. They gathered in the Lion City to discuss issues central to the Yidan Prize. The theme of the event was Shaping the Future.

To share the message of the Yidan Prize, Dr Charles Chen Yidan delivered a speech at the event. He told the audience that education must be reformed to adapt to social, political, and economic challenges. He encouraged frontline teachers to change their mindset in response to the needs of a rapidly evolving society.

“Education has the power to transform lives and make the world a better place. We must do everything we can to broaden the horizons of our children, so that they can thrive in a world that lives only in our imagination right now.”

“I want the Yidan Prize not only to show my support to the cause of education, but also to spread the words about best practice that could be accessed by all.” Dr Charles Chen Yidan said.

Dr Charles Chen Yidan urges frontline teachers to change their mindsets in response to the needs of a rapidly evolving society at the event.
The Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) 2018

Expanding the reach of the prize

Established by President Vladimir Putin in 2015, the EEF supports the economic development of Russia’s Far East and aims to encourage international cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

Titled The Russian Far East: Expanding the Range of Possibilities, the forum was held on 10-13 September 2018 at Far Eastern Federal University in the port city of Vladivostok, Russia. Among the delegates were heads of state from Russia and China, as well as other world leaders.

Dr Charles Chen Yidan delivered a speech about the internationalization of education, headlined Redefining Education for the Global Workforce of Tomorrow.

Dr Chen noted the internationalization of education has seen rapid development in the past 20 years. He also remarked that globalization, new market-driven demands, changes in consumption patterns, and the greater need for flexibility were spurring broader cooperation in education.

Dr Chen commented: “A vigorous market demand for talent has forced the education sector to adjust, leading it to undergo rapid development. Transnational distance learning, enabled by the rise of the internet, can help meet the public’s varied needs.”

He called for greater cooperation in sharing best practices to help various educational systems find the best approaches to pressing issues.

He also pointed out that sharing proven practices more widely would improve educational outcomes for a greater number of people.
Thought Leadership
The Worldwide Educating For the Future Index (WEFFI), commissioned by the Yidan Prize Foundation and created by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), was the first comprehensive index to evaluate inputs into education systems. WEFFI seeks to discover which education systems are more effective in preparing students for the demands of work and life in a rapidly changing landscape. The initiative entered its second year in 2018, and its report was released in the first quarter of 2019.

As educators seek to identify the right skills and teaching approaches to ready students for tomorrow’s challenges, the ground is shifting beneath their feet. Projections of future job markets and work environments vary widely. New technologies give rise to both optimism and trepidation about their impact on the workforce. Climate change appears to be accelerating. Political headwinds against globalisation and all it entails are gaining strength. And in many parts of the world, once firmly held assumptions about the virtues of democracy, civil freedoms and respect for diversity are being questioned.

In this context, the urgency is clear about the need to adapt education systems to deliver problem-solving, collaboration, creative and other skills that will help tomorrow’s adults address such challenges. No less urgent is ensuring that newly adapted curriculum and teaching methodologies reinforce the virtues of civic awareness and participation - in local, national and global initiatives - that can counter nativism and intolerance. The index was created to assess the readiness of education systems around the world to deliver such future-oriented skills. In this, its second year, the index has been expanded in both geographic and thematic scope. The index expanded its list of covered economies from 35 to 50, representing nearly 93% of global GDP and 89% of the world’s population. WEFFI assessed these economies on dozens of indicators, focusing on policy environment (30% weight), teaching environment (50% weight), and socio-economic environment (20% weight).
Among the 50 economies the index now covers, Finland emerges in 2018 as the leader in providing future skills education, followed closely by Switzerland. Both systems are strong in all three index categories, but they particularly excel in their policy environment - for example, the formulation of future-skills strategy and attention to curriculum and assessment frameworks. These and other small, wealthy economies in Europe and Asia dominate the upper tier of the index.

**Worldwide Educating For the Future Index 2018 scores, overall and by category (out of 100)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>ECONOMY</th>
<th>OVERALL SCORE</th>
<th>POLICY ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>TEACHING ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>90.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>87.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>90.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>89.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>88.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>85.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>83.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>66.9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<td>83.4</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>77.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>84.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The top ten economies ranked by overall score, out of 50 economies assessed.
A key finding of the research is that many educators and policymakers are coming to view the single-minded pursuit of economic competitiveness - manifested in a heavy educational focus on cognitive and technical skills, as well as examination results - has in some cases been detrimental to individuals’ personal development. The approach may actually negatively impact people’s health and well-being. Other findings of the research include the following:

• **Wealth is not all-important when it comes to future skills**
  There are some index overachievers among lower-income economies. Ghana, for example, punches well above its weight when measured against GDP per head, performing strongly in future-skills strategy and assessment. Mexico, Colombia and the Philippines merit favourable mentions for their work in policy areas, as does Costa Rica for its efforts to adapt teaching to the demands of tomorrow. There are also underachievers when comparing index scores with income levels - including Norway, the US, Israel and Spain.

• **Reviews are essential amid constant change**
  Future-skills strategy, curriculum and assessment frameworks should be reviewed periodically to keep pace with workforce and societal change. Most education systems in the index have reviewed their future-skills strategy in the past year, but fewer than half have done the same for curriculum and the assessment frameworks. Some high-income economies haven’t reviewed these in the past three years.

• **Teachers must also engage in continuous learning to stay ahead of the curve**
  “Lifelong learning” is becoming an imperative in a variety of professions - teaching foremost among them. Teaching methods must be continuously updated, as future-skills requirements are fluid. Yet this challenge is not being met: only nine index economies currently require in-service training of upper secondary teachers that includes future-skills training. The use of emergent technologies such as artificial intelligence can hasten the shift toward different teaching methods by, for example, freeing teachers to spend more time guiding students’ group-based projects rather than engaging in rote drills.

• **Diversity and tolerance should be instilled as universal values**
  Every culture is different, but some values - notably diversity and tolerance - are universal and should be reflected in the classroom and extra-curricular activities of young people everywhere. They help foster a liberal worldview in general, which is reflected in index indicators such as attitudes toward immigration, religious freedom, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals and rights.

• **Rigid approaches do not suit future-skills learning**
  Policymakers around the world, and in East Asia in particular, are realising that the rigid, exam-based approach to learning has been taking a toll on students, their families and wider society. Emphasis is shifting in some education systems toward other measures of attainment, and inculcating 21st-century skills is now part of that strategy. It remains to be seen whether the continuing pursuit of national economic competitiveness - a major motivator behind the test-based achievement systems prevalent in much of the world - will conflict with this push toward different modes of learning.
Reaching Out
This Yidan Prize outreach initiative encouraged people worldwide to share their education stories. It centered on the question, *How does education transform your life?* The objective was to highlight and celebrate how education has a profound and transformative impact on people.

Anyone with an interest in education was invited to share their story in the form of a short video by posting the video clip on their personal social media account with the hashtag #EducationStorytelling. Selected videos were then reposted on Yidan Prize social media platforms to reach more audiences.

Running between 6 November 2018 and 31 March 2019, the campaign saw more than 120 individuals shared their education journeys. Contributors included notable global influencers, such as President Jimmy Carter, Former US President and Founder of The Carter Center; Ms Julia Gillard, Former Australian Prime Minister and Board Chair of Global Partnership for Education; Sir Ken Robinson, Author; Mr Salman Khan, Founder and CEO of Khan Academy; Mr Andreas Schleicher, Director for the Directorate of Education and Skills of OECD; and Ms Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Scotland.

By March 2019, the #EducationStorytelling campaign had reached 5.21 million internet users with nearly 1.1 million video views.

**Video:** #EducationStorytelling Highlights
I've had a longstanding and deep conviction that all children have deep personal talents and that was illustrated to me through my time in special education. Throughout my adult life, I've become more and more convinced that everybody has special needs, it doesn't matter what their circumstances are. And that's a powerful case for making education more personalized and more individualized.

Sir Ken Robinson
Author, speaker and international advisor on education

If I hadn't had the opportunity to go to a great school then the rest of my life simply wouldn't have been possible. I would never have gone to university, I would never have studied law. I would never have gone into politics. I would never become prime minister.

Ms Julia Gillard
Former Australian Prime Minister and Board Chair, Global Partnership for Education

I've had a longstanding and deep conviction that all children have deep personal talents and that was illustrated to me through my time in special education. Throughout my adult life, I've become more and more convinced that everybody has special needs, it doesn't matter what their circumstances are. And that's a powerful case for making education more personalized and more individualized.

Sir Ken Robinson
Author, speaker and international advisor on education

Public education helped me to build the skills I needed, to help me believe that there were opportunities out there in the world that could be really exciting and that I could participate in.

Mr Salman Khan
Founder and CEO, Khan Academy

You will have found from the world of education fascinating and I quickly understood the power of education to transform lives and societies. And I saw an opportunity to make education not necessarily less of an art, but more of a science.

Mr Andreas Schleicher
Director for the Directorate of Education and Skills, OECD

My hope for the future is that every young girl and boy growing up to today gets the same chances that I had regardless of their background. For that reason, raising standards in Scotland’s education system and closing the poverty related attainment gap is the defining mission of my government.

Ms Nicola Sturgeon
First Minister of Scotland
Today the Yidan Prize is the world’s biggest educational award. One day we hope it will become the world’s most influential.

A project of our scope and ambition naturally attracts a great deal of attention from the media. We encourage this because it helps our aim to foster a better understanding between people about education. Publicity helps us promote discussion about the ideas important to us. It also spotlights the work of our laureates and helps us reach more potential nominees.

The following is a snapshot of some of the wide-ranging media coverage of the Yidan Prize from 2018 to 2019. By no means comprehensive, these extracts reveal the growing world stature of our initiative.

**Forbes**

> Through a series of initiatives – research, events, and multimedia content – alongside the annual financial award, (the Yidan Prize) Foundation wants to establish a platform that brings together a cross-section of stakeholders to engage in conversation around education and rekindle constructive and inclusive dialogue on solutions...

**Helsinki Times**

> Despite its short history, the Yidan Prize deserves to be called ‘The Nobel Prize in Education.’ The prize is divided into two categories: The Yidan Prize for Education Research, which recognizes outstanding research that contributes in significant ways to education, and the Yidan Prize for Education Development, which recognizes innovative ideas that tackle important challenges in the field of education.

**The Diplomat**

> In early December, major Chinese and international outlets discussed the world’s largest education ceremony. A cohort of high-ranked guests, including Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands; Gordon Brown, former prime minister of the United Kingdom, and others, flew to Hong Kong where Dr Charles Chen Yidan, the cofounder of China’s biggest internet company, Tencent, held the second Yidan Prize Summit.
Governance and Organization Structure

The Yidan Prize is supported by the Yidan Prize Foundation, a Board of Directors, an Advisory Committee, and a Judging Committee, whose members are independent and authoritative experts with rich experience in education.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for the governance of the Yidan Prize Foundation, the appointment of the Advisory Committee and the Judging Committee, and approving the Judging Committee’s laureate recommendations.

Chairman

Dr Charles Chen Yidan
Founder, Yidan Prize
Core Founder, Tencent

Member

Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz
FRS MA PhD FRCP FMedSci
Chairman, Cancer Research UK
Vice-Chancellor Emeritus, University of Cambridge

Member

Professor Rick Levin
Senior Advisor, Coursera
President Emeritus, Yale University

Member

Professor Tony Chan Fan-cheong
President, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology
President Emeritus, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee is responsible for designing strategies and processes in order to optimize the meaningful impact Yidan Prize can bring to the global arena of education.
Judging Committee

The Judging Committee is responsible for screening nominations and selecting laureates. It comprises two independent judging panels, one for Education Research, the other for Education Development.
Yidan Prize for Education Development Judging Panel

Panel Head

Ms Dorothy K. Gordon  
Chair, UNESCO Information for All Programme (IFAP)

Panel Member

Dr Steven Cohen  
Professor, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University

Panel Member

Dr Allan E. Goodman  
President and Chief Executive Officer, Institute of International Education

Panel Member (from 1 January 2019)

Mr Ruben Vardanyan  
Social entrepreneur, impact investor and venture philanthropist
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Mr Richard Pu
Deputy General Counsel, Tencent Group

Honorary Secretary
Mr Lester G. Huang, SBS, JP
Co-Chairman, P.C. Woo & Co.

Honorary Auditor
PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)