



East-West Center
Leadership Program

LEADERSHIP FELLOWS

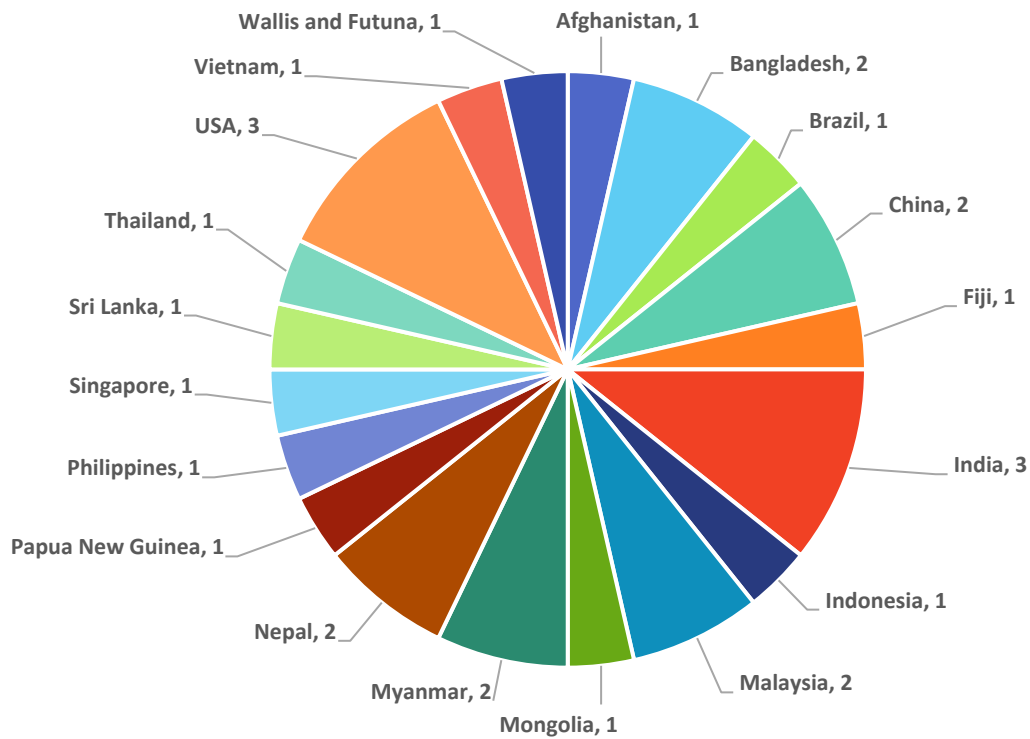
Asia Pacific
Leadership Program
(APLP)
Generation Twenty-One (G21)
2023



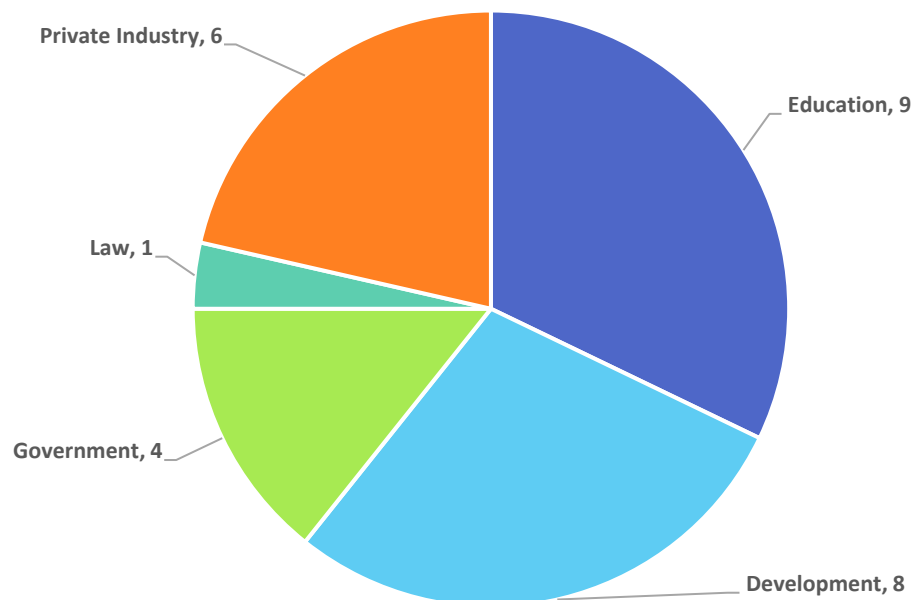
EAST-WEST
CENTER

APLP Generation 21

Fellows by Country



Fellows by Industry Sector





Ratchada “Tarn” ARPORNSILP (Thailand) is a gender and human rights expert at the European Forest Institute and a PhD candidate in the Resource, Environment and Development Group at the Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University. She earned a bachelor’s in international relations from Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. She also has an MA in inter-Asia NGO studies from Sungkonghoe University and a master’s in environmental governance from Albert-Ludwigs

University of Freiburg. She has over eight years of professional experience with international non-governmental organizations and public agencies working in regional program management across Asia and the Pacific region, including Oxfam Great Britain in Asia, Good Governance for Social Development and Environment Institute, The Asia Foundation, and The National Human Rights Commission of Thailand. With a background in environmental politics, Ms. Arpornsilp takes an interdisciplinary approach to integrating social inclusion and gender equity from the community level in order to influence national and international policy in the field of natural resource management, especially forest landscape governance and sustainable development. She looks forward to engaging with her APLP cohort and the EWC community and aspires to practice a transformative leadership approach towards sustainable development.



Hasina “Hashi” BEGUM (Bangladesh) is a social policy specialist at UNICEF Bangladesh. She holds a master’s of public administration from the National University of Singapore, where she was awarded a Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy graduate scholarship. Hasina has held various roles at UNICEF in Bangladesh and Zambia, the International Labour Organization, Save the Children, and in the civil service of Bangladesh. She has co-authored several publications and been invited to

speak at several regional and global events, including the Multi-Dimensional Poverty Peer Network Annual Meeting. She played a pivotal role in designing the national labor inspection management system to improve working conditions in the ready-made garments industry in Bangladesh and is currently helping the government to implement a social protection scheme for young children. Ms. Begum aims to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of the Asia Pacific region and to learn from the diverse experiences and backgrounds of others in her cohort. She hopes to use her newfound knowledge and leadership skills to foster an environment of collaboration and mutual learning and to work with the community and the people of the region to promote positive change and create a brighter future.



Medardo “Medz” Bombita (Philippines) is the Program Head of the Department of Political Science and a graduate professor at the University of Rizal System. He previously served the university as Director for Administrative Services, Campus Director for two of its campuses, and Dean of the College of Social Sciences. Dr. Medz received bachelor’s, master’s, and doctorate degrees in Public Administration from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, a master’s in ASEAN studies at the

University of the Philippines, and completed a post-doc in quality management from Centro Escolar University. He has also completed educational courses on executive development, foresight thinking, and knowledge management, and received a fellowship in e-Governance under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme. He is an accreditor of higher education institutions, an ISO internal auditor, and a trained assessor of the Philippine Quality Awards. He also serves in the Armed Forces of the Philippines as a reserve officer with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. As a Fellow in APLP, Dr. Medz aims to contribute to various higher education reforms and public service initiatives in the Asia Pacific region.



Saruul BULGAN (Mongolia) is passionate about developing capital markets in Mongolia and currently leads the Administration and Finance Department of the Mongolian Agricultural Commodities Exchange. She has extensive regulatory background both at home and in Hong Kong. Ms. Bulgan believes APLP will help strengthen her leadership abilities, especially around motivating a team in environments where change and ambiguity have become the norm. In particular, she would like to learn more about how women can become more successful leaders. Ms. Bulgan looks forward to the active exchange of expertise within the APLP cohort and engaging with other women aspiring to make an impact on their communities.



DANI (Indonesia) is a practitioner and scholar who has focused for over 15 years on youth issues, interreligious-intercultural dialogue, peace education, and social cohesion. He is a graduate of the UN-established University for Peace Asia Leaders Programme, through which he earned a degree in international peace studies from Ateneo de Manila University. Dani currently works for the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development and was previously with the United Nations Development Programme. Dani has extensive experience linking evidence-based intervention research to capacity building with social emotional learning. His goal in joining APLP is to internalize and implement leadership understandings and practices that reflect and embody peace-making values.



Khagendra DHAKAL (Nepal) is a specialist faculty member at King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok, with over 12 years of international experience. He also serves as Chair of the Nepal Policy Institute, a global think tank committed to Nepal's sustainable development. With a master's from Avondale University and a post-graduate certificate in applied linguistics from the University of Oregon, Dhakal is currently defending his Ph.D. at King Mongkut University of

Technology Thonburi. His teaching and research emphasize communication and critical thinking skills that prepare graduates for future work and life. As an East-West Center Asia Pacific Leadership Program Fellow, Mr. Dhakal aspires to enhance his leadership abilities across various contexts, from classrooms to institutional operations, and strives to create a positive impact on society. He considers leadership a vital skill for teachers, researchers, and policymakers to tackle interdisciplinary challenges throughout society. As an APLP Fellow, Mr. Dhakal aims to deepen his understanding of effective leadership to equip future generations with the skills needed to address complex local, national, and regional challenges.



Sitong DIAO (China) is currently an executive management team member at Doodod Technology, where she is responsible for facilitating cross-border cooperation and partnerships. She earned a bachelor's of commerce and a master's of management from the University of Melbourne. As former head of fundraising at China's largest environmental protection foundation, Ms. Diao has extensive experience in the nonprofit sector as well as with Chinese environmental issues. During her early career

at the Wildlife Conservation Society, she assisted in launching a pilot project to enforce a comprehensive ban on the ivory trade in China. As an APLP Fellow, Ms. Diao seeks to enhance her leadership communication skills and deepen her understanding of the diverse cultures and perspectives of the Asia Pacific region. She looks forward to forging lifelong connections with like-minded individuals and working collaboratively to promote regional cooperation on common interests.



Thi Ngoc Quy DINH (Vietnam) holds a master's in environmental science from Hue University in Vietnam. She has 15 years of experience working in community development, environmental sustainability, and child protective services. She is currently Head of Governance and Partnerships for a children's organization in Vietnam. In the spirit of lifelong learning, she was recently selected to attend a conference for world leaders at Harvard University. She hopes that by working with and learning from other members of the APLP cohort, she will be able to share the knowledge and skills she gains from the program with others in her country and, in turn, contribute to disadvantaged communities. At the same time, she seeks to expand her network and create a more prosperous Asia Pacific region.



Denis EHR SAM (Wallis and Futuna) is currently Chief Executive Officer for the Chamber of Commerce, Skills and Agriculture of Wallis and Futuna, a small territory between Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga. He has a master's in political science from Sciences Po Paris. Mr. Ehrsam grew up and studied in Paris and worked in the political and academic arenas for French universities for several years before settling in the South Pacific. He is committed to helping the economic and social development of the Pacific regions. He hopes to bring to APLP a unique background and to improve his management skills in multicultural environments thanks to the diversity of APLP's cohort and program.



EINT PYAE PYAE KHIN "Jessica" (Myanmar) is a Director of Admissions and Student Affairs at Parami University in Myanmar, an online university that offers four-year undergraduate degrees. She has worked in the higher education sector for over seven years. She has a master's in education and a bachelor's from Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Ms. Eint Pyae Pyae Khin hopes to better understand and enhance her own leadership skills by learning from the diverse group of APLP Fellows and by embracing the complexity and challenges of leadership. Inspired by the transformative experiences from her college years in the US, she is passionate about supporting college-aged students and nurturing their personal growth through experiential learning. After the program, she hopes to continue contributing to the higher education landscape and providing quality education to students in Myanmar and its neighboring countries.



Clifton ESTEBAN (USA) is an entrepreneur and workplace coach. Previously, he was a real estate agent for a property developer, attaining the company's highest distinction in 2010. He shifted industries and co-founded an education consultancy in 2014, focusing on empowering local and international organizations through learning design. Inspired by the impact of alternative learning, he next co-founded a landscaping company in 2019 that focused on outdoor education and sustainable design. As a director for both companies today, his responsibilities include sales planning and production, client communications, and employee growth and development. He also maintains a private coaching practice focused on strengths formation and communication for young professionals. Mr. Esteban holds a bachelor's in legal management from Ateneo de Manila University and a master's in outdoor environmental and sustainability education from the University of Edinburgh, where he researched the application of Martin Buber's dialogue in therapeutic and educational work. He is also a Gallup-certified Global Strengths Coach. Whether selling, directing, or coaching, Mr. Esteban enjoys helping people grow. He envisions a world in harmony and through APLP hopes to learn more about social intelligence, cross-cultural communication, interreligious dialogue, and social empowerment.



Sajeed FAHURDEEN (Sri Lanka) is an Attorney at Law with a strong passion for human rights and peace building. He holds a bachelor's and master's degrees in human rights from the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. He also holds a master's in international law and human rights from the University of Peace, Costa Rica, and a master's in transdisciplinary social development from the Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines. As a lawyer, human rights activist, development practitioner, and peacebuilder, Mr. Fahurdeen has helped improve access to justice, enhanced the rights of pretrial detainees, promoted the rights of internally displaced persons and disadvantaged communities, and strengthened peace and harmony through a human rights-based approach in Sri Lanka. Mr. Fahurdeen hopes to improve his leadership skills during APLP and to continue making positive changes in people's lives. In collaboration with the APLP cohort, Mr. Fahurdeen plans to broaden his interventions towards the promotion of human rights and to initiate approaches for peacebuilding in the Asia Pacific region. He also plans to carry out collective advocacy campaigns using social media platforms to address human rights issues and threats to peace in the region.



Alma HARTMAN (USA) is the Director of Marketing and Communications at Mobile Pathways, an immigration non-profit. She holds a bachelor's in business administration from the University of Vermont. Throughout her time with Mobile Pathways, she has contributed significantly to enhancing the brand's visibility and amplifying its organizational impact. Currently, Ms. Hartman is spearheading an effort to organize and promote a data project aimed at demonstrating implicit bias in US immigration court decisions to critical decision-makers in the public and private sectors. Alma hopes to gain coalition-building experience and bottom-up leadership skills during APLP. In the future, she hopes to expand her work into climate migration affecting the Asia Pacific region and support underserved communities in gaining equitable access to resources.



Ankit JAISWAL (India) is a Program Associate with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Dehradun, India. He has a master's degree in disaster management from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Mr. Jaiswal has worked in the development sector with government, non-government, and inter-government organizations focused on disaster risk reduction, community and youth development, and skills and entrepreneur development. As an APLP Fellow, he hopes that a better understanding of leadership will provide the opportunity to learn from and contribute to the global conversation on youth in leadership. This will help him create an ecosystem for youths in social entrepreneurship. As a participant, his goal is to learn, unlearn, and re-learn from and contribute to the diversity of the APLP cohort and to help his colleagues achieve their goals.



KHIN MOE AYE (Myanmar) is a Chief of Field Office, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Myanmar. She holds two masters' degrees, one in international relations and the other in social sciences, from the University of Yangon and the National University of Singapore, respectively. Since 2008, she has helped hundreds of thousands of the most vulnerable people and communities in remote, disaster, and conflict-affected areas within Myanmar. At the same time, she has worked closely with the regional government of Shan State on its disaster-response policy development, COVID-19 response, and child protection mechanisms. Ms. Khin Moe Aye's goal as an APLP Fellow is to become a better leader for a productive multi-racial team at home, to learn about diverse cultures, and to discover development initiatives in other parts of the world.



Jessica KOHATSU (Brazil) is a member of the Law Department of Itamarathy Company Group and the Hotel Manager of Pousada Caborê. She has a bachelor's in international relations from Sao Paulo State University and a bachelor's in law from Sao Paulo University. In her professional position, Ms. Kohatsu oversees hotel improvements in the areas of infrastructure and services. For Itamarathy Company Group, she serves as a lawyer in the labor litigation field and regularly assists clients in implementing best practices with employment law. She is also an active member of the Nishihara Chojinkai Association and World Uchinanchu Business Association. Through APLP, she hopes to improve her leadership skills to become a successful entrepreneur and strengthen the Okinawan entrepreneur community. She also hopes to establish good friendships, learn from and contribute as much as possible to the program and its cohort, and help all APLP Fellows achieve their goals.



Bingxin LENG (China) is a branding expert committed to the development of Chinese local brands. She holds a master's in communication studies from the University of Leeds, UK, and is currently in a gap year applying for further research opportunities. In her past work experience, Ms. Leng has carried out in-depth interviews and facilitated focus groups with more than 300 Chinese women to better understand their social contexts and the challenges they face. She is also devoted to other social welfare initiatives, and, with her mother, has helped more than 100 stray animals find adoptive families in central China over the past ten years. As an APLP Fellow, she hopes to improve her leadership skills to help local Chinese women and other disadvantaged groups through deeper, cross-cultural understanding. At the same time, she aims to learn innovative skills to help small companies and NGOs operate more efficiently.



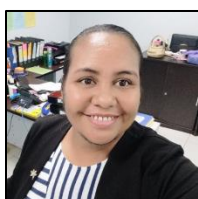
Staci MARTIN (USA) is a faculty member of the School of Social Work at Portland State University, Portland, Oregon. Dr. Martin is a learner, educator, Fulbright Scholar, Rotary Peace Fellow, and a Speaking for Ourselves Action Research (SOAR) researcher who focuses on critical hope and despair, psychosocial and social-emotional learning, peacebuilding, higher education in protracted and conflict contexts. She is a community-based action researcher and committed to co-creating practical solutions that are culturally responsive and led by, for, and in partnership with the community, especially refugee communities. Dr. Martin has designed and implemented psychosocial peace-building educational programs in four countries: South Africa, Nepal, Jamaica, and Kenya. As a Fellow, she aims to listen and learn from her cohort's knowledge, APLP, and the Hawaiian community about leadership, collaboration, and action.



Shashank MISHRA (India) serves as a Program Specialist with the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) in Myanmar, leading their disaster risk management and climate change program. He has a master's in civil engineering from Politecnico di Milano, Italy, and an advance certificate in disaster risk reduction from École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland. He spearheaded the formation of the Myanmar Climate Action Network, a network of more than 30 international and local organizations and currently manages the network as its Chair. In his professional career, he has contributed to various private, national, and international organizations in policy and technical advisory roles as well as on capacity building aimed at supporting national governments, resource mobilization, technical cooperation, and regional collaboration. He hopes to improve his leadership skills by working in multi-cultural and politically complex environments and aims to learn from APLP's diverse set of participants so he can contribute and give back to others in the Asia Pacific region.



MUN JUNE THENG “Joanne” (Malaysia) is an Architect-Urbanist with two decades of professional experience in the fields of urban design, master planning, and architecture in Australia and Malaysia. In 2015, she returned to Malaysia and joined Think City, a social impact organisation as a community architect. Her passion for community empowerment continued after her stint at Think City, and since 2018 has been deeply involved in education and urban farming with two NGOs—YWCA of Kuala Lumpur’s Vocational Training Opportunity Centre for underprivileged girls and Kebun-Kebun Bangsar, a community urban farm in the heart of Kuala Lumpur. She is currently Vice President of YWCA Kuala Lumpur and Chairperson of Kebun-Kebun Bangsar, and was recently listed in Wiki Impact’s 100 Malaysian Changemakers. Ms. Theng believes that “leadership is about inspiring others to act upon a common goal. The key to success is commitment, openness, and a willingness to extend oneself to encounter and know one another.” As an APLP Fellow, she looks forward to sharing her philosophy with her cohort and learning from like-minded Fellows.



Alice “Ale” NAVURU (Papua New Guinea) is a recently appointed Human Resource Manager at the Papua New Guinea Public Service Commission. She holds a graduate certificate in human resource management from the University of South Australia and a bachelor’s in political science and public policy management from the University of Papua New Guinea. Ms. Navuru has extensive work experience in her country’s private sector and public service organizations. Through APLP, she hopes to improve her leadership skills to challenge herself in her current professional appointment and give back more to her employer, village community, and family. Most importantly, she intends to maintain the networks created during the program to connect with peers and staff at the East-West Center and the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa. She also looks forward to being an active member of the alumni community.



Raju NEUPANE (Nepal) is an Architect/Urban Planner with 13 years of experience working for the Government of Nepal, mainly for the Ministry of Urban Development and The National Reconstruction Authority. He currently works as Section Chief of the Physical Planning and Urban Environment Sections of the Department of Urban Development and Building Construction (DUDBC) office. He has a bachelor’s in architecture from Tribhuvan University, Nepal, and a master’s in urban ecological planning from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway. He is currently the Section Chief of the Housing Section of DUDBC, where he is involved in coordinating The People’s Housing Program (Janta Aawas Karyakram). Through APLP, he hopes to enhance his leadership skills in order to play a greater role in leading projects aimed at ensuring housing to low-income groups as well as marginalized and endangered communities in Nepal. He also wants to build a strong network of professionals and international counterparts to both learn from and contribute to the cohort’s success.



Mohammad Zafar NOORZAI (Afghanistan) is the youth Empowerment Coordinator at the Human Resource Development Agency in Afghanistan where he takes an active role in promoting youth development projects within the country. He has successfully implemented several projects in his home country including Model UN, debate competitions, and a business simulation game for both university and high school students to improve their public speaking abilities, leadership skills, and

entrepreneurship potential. Mr. Noorzai holds a bachelor’s in political science and a master’s in international relations. He believes APLP will be a great chance for him to present his past work, projects, and the impact he has had in his country. He is passionate about learning about leadership in crisis and looks forward to being connected to experienced leaders in the Asia Pacific region whose work aligns with his interests.



Dorell Ben (Fiji) is an interdisciplinary artist and researcher currently pursuing a PhD in Oceanic tattoo motifs at Griffith University. Her art and research focus on the liminality of tattoo motifs in spatiotemporality. Ms. Ben prioritizes the use of Indigenous knowledge systems as responses to lingering colonial narratives within the contemporary and to realign ethnic identities through a creative lens. To navigate the many faceted liminal boundaries that arise within a multi-cultural contemporary, Ben hopes to engage in APLP to establish a stronger foundation for her skills and to learn from other leadership styles and experiences. Ms. Ben also hopes to build on the works of Indigenous women and their focus on empowering other Oceanic women.



Meghana PRAKASH (India) is an entrepreneur and product consultant for startups across India, specializing in developing technologies that create impact. With over four years of experience as Head of Product at one startup in India, Ms. Prakash looks forward to starting her own ed-tech venture to support education and improve literacy rates in developing countries. She has a background in electrical engineering and has received six gold-medal awards from her university, the highest of any student. She has completed certifications from Wharton Online and HEC Paris in business management. Her interest in the brain has led her to complete certifications in psychology, and she now counsels more than 60 students. Ms. Prakash was selected to be part of the global MIT Innovation & Leadership Bootcamp 2022. She hopes to continue to actively work on her leadership skills through APLP.



Mohammad Mizanur RAHMAN (Bangladesh) holds a bachelor's in medicine, a master's in public health, and is certified in specialized health trainings from different institutes and organizations. As a public health expert, he has worked for 15 years in the field of communicable diseases, including internationally on several continents for 10 years. He has successfully led several UN initiatives and served as a US Centers for Disease Control volunteer on assignment in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, and South Sudan.

Blending his experience and APLP's learnings, he would like to pursue, negotiate, and advocate for greater global attention on urgent, necessary actions that keep humans and the planet healthy while creating societies that focus on overall well-being. He envisions playing a greater role as a public health policy leader and a global health diplomat for the Asia Pacific region, helping to create a healthy earth that saves lives, reduces diseases, and improves health around the world. Mr. Rahman hopes to establish an interconnected and interdependent health system, rooted in advancing diversity, inclusion, and gender equality, that brings together potential Asia Pacific leaders and provides them with opportunities to develop innovative and dynamic ideas.



SANGEETHA YOGENDRAN (Singapore) is a lawyer and human rights and humanitarian professional. She possesses more than a decade of experience in international legal research, advocacy, program management, and humanitarian response. She currently works as a Project Manager with the Asia Justice Coalition, where she focuses on increasing women leaders' participation in international justice and accountability.

Sangeetha is a qualified Advocate & Solicitor in Singapore and holds a master's in public international law from the University of Melbourne, a master's in applied conflict transformation studies from the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies in Cambodia together with Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia, and a bachelor's (Hons) from the National University of Singapore. She hopes to improve the protection and promotion of human rights accountability in the region, to learn from her cohort and their diverse experiences, and to improve her leadership skills.



Edmund WILLIAMS HUNT (Malaysia) currently works as the Stakeholder Engagement Manager for the Fellowship Team at Teach for Malaysia Foundation. Edmund has a bachelor's in nutrition and community health from the University Putra Malaysia and a master's in educational leadership from the University of Malaya, Malaysia. He pursued his second master's degree in musical theatre production at Goldsmiths University of London, UK, through a Chevening Scholarship. Edmund is known for his contributions to the Orang Asli community and was recognized by the Department of Orang Asli Development, Malaysia, with a Meritorious Orang Asli Youth Award in February 2023. He wishes to develop and dissect his leadership skills during APLP, expanding his network and learning from the diverse cohort members, alumni, and EWC staff throughout the journey. Edmund has a passion for performing arts, cultural and heritage preservation, and tourism. As a proud Orang Asli, he is a strong believer in giving back to the community. His path in life revolves around his Orang Asli people and he hopes to apply the knowledge and skills gained from APLP to make a positive impact on his community.