

Opening Ceremony – Welcome Address by Local Host

**Asia-Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE)
Conference & Exhibition 2018**

**25 to 29 March 2018
Marina Bay Sands, Singapore**

Conference Theme

The Impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on Higher Education in the Asia Pacific

Lead Host

National University of Singapore

Co-Hosts

Nanyang Technological University
Singapore Management University
Singapore University of Technology and Design

WELCOME ADDRESS on 26 March, 11.30am

By Associate Professor Anne Pakir

Associate Vice-President (University and Global Relations), NUS

Vice-President, APAIE

Professor Sarah Todd and fellow members of the APAIE Board of Directors

Professor Ian Goldin, our Keynote Speaker for APAIE 2018

Presidents and Provosts of the Singapore universities

Ambassadors and friends from the diplomatic corps

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Friends!

Opening Ceremony – Welcome Address by Local Host

1. On the behalf of the Asia-Pacific Association for International Education, and the Singapore universities co-hosting this Conference – National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore Management University and Singapore University of Technology and Design – I am delighted to welcome each of you to the APAIE 2018 Conference and Exhibition.
2. I have the privilege of serving as both the Vice-President of APAIE, as well as the Co-Chair of the local committee organising this huge Conference in Singapore. I am very glad to say that, coming from both perspectives, many hours of good work have been put into this event. It wasn't too long ago when Singapore put forth our bid to host the APAIE Conference – this was in Melbourne, Australia, in 2016. After close to two years of planning and preparation, our efforts have come to fruition today, and we are looking forward to bringing you a significant and exciting Conference.
3. I recall the last APAIE Conference that was hosted in Singapore about 10 years ago, in 2007. It was held on the campus of the National University of Singapore, with just under 500 participants from 280 institutions representing 48 countries. A decade on, I am glad that we are once again hosting this Conference - a conference that has grown in scope, stature, and size over the years. Today, we welcome 2,200 delegates from over 360 institutions representing 60 countries. This is a record and an achievement that has made our many hours of hard work worthwhile.
4. The theme of the Conference this year - *The Impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on Higher Education in the Asia Pacific* – when it was first proposed in 2016 – seemed a forward looking one. Today, please pardon my pun, the topic of the 4IR is very topical.
5. The 4IR is a pertinent happening that has a big impact on each of us gathered here today. Higher education is one of the key pillars of society that must respond to a future economy and world dramatically different from the one we grew up in, or are familiar with. Even as the world continues to change and adapt constantly to the new disruptions caused by the Fourth Industrial Revolution, IHLs and organisations have to leapfrog the changes in order to stay relevant in an uncertain future.

Opening Ceremony – Welcome Address by Local Host

6. To help us gain deeper insights on the impact of the 4IR, we have with us today is our Keynote Speaker, Professor Ian Goldin, Professor of Globalisation and Development at the University of Oxford's Martin School. Professor Goldin is a distinguished academic and experienced policy-maker, having served in various organisations such as the World Bank, the Development Bank of Southern Africa and the OECD Development Centre in Paris. We certainly look forward to hearing from him shortly after our lunch today. We would be especially interested in his keen observations regarding the impact of globalisation and technology on the world today, and how it applies to the Asia-Pacific and the state of higher education in the region.
7. I am delighted as well that our Guest-of-Honour, Singapore's Minister for Education (Higher Education and Skills), Mr Ong Ye Kung, will be gracing this Ceremony. As far as precision goes, we predict an arrival time of 1 pm for him. As a small city-state, Singapore's rapid progress and sustained success has been built on our ability to constantly reinvent ourselves to stay ahead of the curve in addressing future global challenges. You will be able to hear directly from our Minister for Education about Singapore's experiences and plans in addressing the crises and the opportunities that the fourth industrial revolution will bring about.
8. On the lighter side of things, I am looking forward to a delightful evening tomorrow at the APAIE Gala Dinner, which will be held in this same ballroom. For those of you who have registered for the Gala Dinner, do look forward to networking with fellow delegates whilst experiencing a "Uniquely Singapore" evening, when we bring you our happy blend of good food and multicultural entertainment. Do come in your ethnic or national dress and join us for a lively evening that will bring out the best of Singapore's multi-ethnic society.
9. Having personally attended a number of APAIE Conferences over the years, I have witnessed and experienced the value of such international gatherings. The many friendships built, the partnerships forged, and substantial collaborations, all coming together in a short week. I am confident that this year's Conference will be no less successful on this front, and I wish each of you many productive and insightful discussions throughout the rest of the week. I look forward as well to speaking with many of you in the next days, and wish you an enjoyable stay in Singapore. The

Opening Ceremony – Welcome Address by Local Host

local and international teams working on this project hoped to bring you the 'best APAIE ever' and, on their behalf, I say thank you again for travelling all the many miles to this beautiful venue in Singapore. May each and everyone of you be blessed with 'the best APAIE ever,' my friends. May you have a thoroughly enjoyable stay in Singapore. May your memories of APAIE 2018 be great! Thanks again for being here!