

The 6th Asia Future Conference Report

The 6th Asia Future Conference took place from August 27 (Saturday) to August 29th (Monday) 2022, in a hybrid format – the main venue being Chinese Culture University in Taiwan, with international participants joining online. This conference was originally scheduled to be held in August 2021 in Taipei, but because of the global spread of the novel coronavirus it was postponed by a year and a one-day preconference held in its place on August 26, 2021. A year has passed since then. East Asia is still in the throes of the pandemic, but we still succeeded in holding a hybrid event in which many people were able to participate in person as well as online.

The overall theme of the conference was “Building a Future Asia – Solving Problems, Together.” The venue for this conference was announced during the closing ceremony of the conference in Manila back in January 2020 by Shing-Ching Shyu, the then-dean of Chinese Culture University, our co-host institution. In February of the same year the Atsumi Foundation team visited Taiwan and had a look at the conference, accommodation and banquet venues as well as had our first meeting with the Chinese Culture University side. At that time most people were wearing masks, but no one thought that it would become impossible to travel between Taiwan and Japan and that this situation would continue for over two years.

At the 6th Asia Future Conference, it was not possible for all of the participants to gather together at once, but with the help of recent online technology the conference was held over three days, with a keynote lecture and symposium, three roundtable sessions, and 179 presentations that crossed academic disciplines and contributed to international and academic discussions. Asia and the world are in the process of great change. It is precisely because of the times that we are in that the conference theme of “Solving Problems, Together” is so necessary.

On August 27 (Saturday) the conference took place at Chinese Culture University in Taipei City as well as online. In the morning, there were twelve parallel sessions with 45 presentations held in English, Japanese and Chinese. The parallel sessions were held using the breakout room function in Zoom, with chairs and presenters at Chinese Culture University joining online from a classroom. At 2pm (Taiwan time), the opening ceremony took place, connecting Chinese Culture University in Taipei and the Atsumi International Foundation in Tokyo. There were 220 participants joining from the venue in Taipei, and 324 registered participants for the Zoom webinar. To begin, Yasushi Akashi, the Chair of the 6th Asia Future Conference, gave the opening address for the



Opening Ceremony



conference. This was followed by opening remarks by Naoki Atsumi, Executive Director of the Atsumi International Foundation, who spoke on behalf of the organizers, and Shu-Yin Wang, Dean of Chinese Culture University, speaking as co-host. Hiroyasu Izumi, Chief Representative of the Taipei Office of the Japan-Taiwan Association and David Hwang of the Society of Distinguished Alumni, CCU Alumni Association offered congratulatory remarks.

Next was the keynote lecture by Dr. Chen Chien-jen, entitled “International Infectious Diseases and Taiwan – Coexisting with COVID-19 or Zero-COVID?” (with Chinese-English, Chinese-Japanese simultaneous interpretation). Coming from one of the people behind Taiwan’s pandemic strategy, it was a powerful talk comparing Taiwan and the rest of the world, and discussed how Taiwan had the smallest number of infected people in a cumulative population of one million people, as well as the second lowest death rate for the same cumulative population (behind New Zealand). He emphasized that although Taiwan’s GDP growth in 2020 had been maintained at 3%, this success was due in large part to the efforts of the Taiwanese people.

In the symposium “International Cooperation to Overcome Pandemics – Recommendations for a New Model of International Cooperation,” (with Chinese-English, Chinese-Japanese, English-Japanese simultaneous interpretation) Shing-Ching Shyu served as the moderator, with presentations in-person and online from Hsiao-Chih Sun (National Taiwan University), Sangbae Kim (Seoul National University), Sheng-Jean Huang (Taipei City United Hospital), Norio Ohmagari (National Center for Global Health and Medicine, Japan) and Wei-Bin Chen (Chinese Culture University). With analyses from the perspective of philosophy, international politics, medicine, public health and international exchange, the significance of international cooperation and “solving problems, together” was further discussed.

On August 28 (Sunday) and 29 (Monday) roundtable and parallel sessions were held. Roundtables 1 (“Are you Okay?” Discussions on Mental Health, Trauma and Fatigue in Asia”) and 2 (“Community and Global Capitalism – It’s a Small World After All”) looked at the societies in various countries in Asia, that were affected not only by the pandemic but also natural disasters and political conflicts. There were presentations about the mental and emotional toll of such events and the discussion about how to deal with them (Roundtable 1) , and discussion about the efforts of community developments in such situations (Roundtable 2) . Both roundtable sessions were held in English. In the session “Taiwan’s Relationship with Northeast Asian Countries” organized by the Institute for Northeast Asian Future (INAF), a multifaceted discussion took place regarding the countries of the region and the relations between international politics, economics, and culture. This session was held in Japanese.

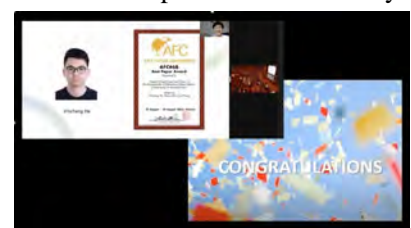
Keynote Speech



Symposium



AFC Best Paper Award Ceremony



Taiwan Best Paper Award Ceremony



The parallel sessions took place alongside the roundtable sessions, and there were 34 parallel sessions with 134 presentations in English and Japanese. In each session two chairs and four presenters from around the world gathered in a Zoom breakout room, and following the presentations there was a lively discussion between the presenters and participants. The Asia Future Conference strives for an international and interdisciplinary academic approach, and each session was arranged taking into consideration the language and keyword (“environment,” “education,” “language,” etc.) that was chosen upon abstract submission. There were 308 registered participants who took part in the parallel sessions.

The program for the 6th AFC can be accessed from the link below:
<http://www.aisf.or.jp/AFC/2021/conference-program/>

The Best Presentation from each session was selected by the two chairs of the session. The list of Best Presentations can be viewed at the link below:
<https://www.aisf.or.jp/AFC/2021/files/2022/08/AFC6-List-of-Best-Presentation.pdf>

Best Papers were selected by the Academic Committee before the conference. As the 6th Asia Future Conference had been postponed by a year, there were two selection periods for Best Papers. For the recipients of the first set of Best Papers, please see the preconference report. The second set of Best Papers were chosen from papers for which abstracts were uploaded to the AFC online system by August 31, 2021, and for which a full paper was uploaded by March 31, 2022. 133 papers were divided into 12 groups, and each group was evaluated by 6 reviewers who judged them based on the evaluation criteria, which was as follows: 1) relevance to the theme of “Building a Future Asia – Solving Problems, Together”; 2) structure and readability; 3) persuasiveness and argumentation; 4) originality; 5) international scope; 6) academic relevance and 7) overall recommendation. Papers that did not abide by submission guidelines received negative points. Reviewers recommended 2 papers from each group of 9 to 10 papers, and after tallying the scores the following 18 papers were selected. The list of the Best Papers for the 6th Asia Future Conference can be viewed at the link below:

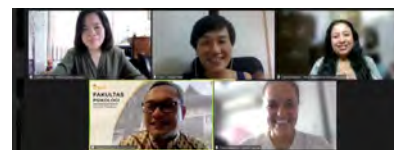
<https://www.aisf.or.jp/AFC/2021/files/2021/06/AFC6B-Best-Paper.pdf>

The edited volume of Best Papers, “Toward the Future of Asia: My Proposal Vol. 6B” is scheduled for publication in March 2023.

The Taiwan organizing committee followed the same procedure in selecting the Taiwan Best Papers. The list of Taiwan Best Papers can be accessed below.

<https://www.aisf.or.jp/AFC/2021/files/2021/06/AFC6B-Taiwan-Best-Paper.pdf>

Roundtable Discussion I



Roundtable Discussion II



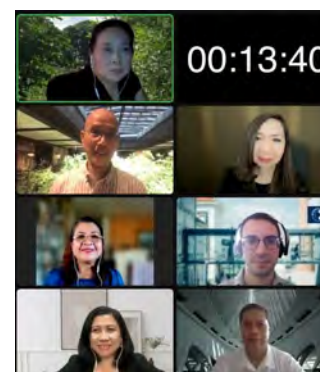
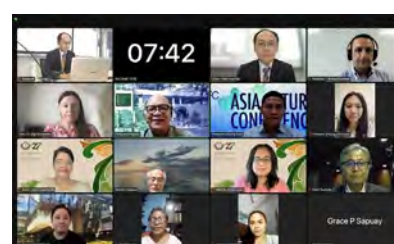
INAF Session



Group Session at CCU



Parallel Sessions



After the final parallel sessions, the closing ceremony took place. After a brief summary of the conference, the Best Presentations were announced. To close, the team from Bangkok announced that the 7th Asia Future Conference in 2024 would be held in Thailand.

For more on the timeline of the 6th Asia Future Conference that was held in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic please see the preconference report.

<https://www.aisf.or.jp/sgra/active/news/2021/16942/>

The 6th Asia Future Conference “Building a Future Asia – Solving Problems, Together” was organized by the Atsumi International Foundation Sekiguchi Global Research Association (SGRA), co-organized by Chinese Culture University, and supported by the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association, grants from the National Science and Technology Council in Taiwan and the Takahashi Industrial and Economic Research Foundation, collaboration with the Center for Japanese Studies, National Taiwan University, and the Center for Japanese Studies, College of Language, National Taichung University of Science and Technology, and sponsored by the companies and individuals in Taiwan and Japan.

The list of organizers, supporters and sponsors can be viewed below:

<https://www.aisf.or.jp/AFC/2021/>

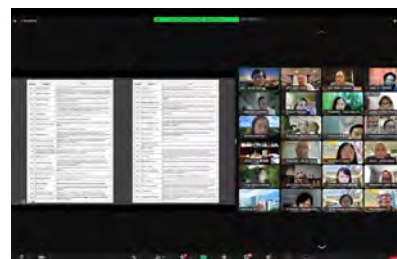
The Taiwan organizing committee, with Chinese Culture University at its core, was in charge of the keynote lecture and symposium. They also established the Taiwan Best Paper Award and provided special support for researchers based in Taiwan. With regard to the conference itself, Atsumi fellows were in charge of tasks such as the evaluation of Best Papers, serving as session chairs, providing technical support, translation and interpretation. Fellows from Taiwan served as members of the Taiwan organizing committee and helped with tasks such as scheduling and translation.

We would like to express our sincere and heartfelt thanks to the 200 authors who submitted and presented their papers, the 500 participants who joined us online as well as in person for the keynote lecture and symposium, the 300 people who participated in the parallel sessions, all those who supported this event, and each and every one of our volunteers who provided assistance in many ways. It is thanks to all of you that we managed to successfully hold this conference.

The Asia Future Conference is interdisciplinary at its core and encourages diverse approaches to global issues that are both mindful of the advancement of science, technology, and business, and also take into consideration issues pertaining to the environment, politics, education, the arts, and culture. This conference is organized together with



Best Presentation Announcement



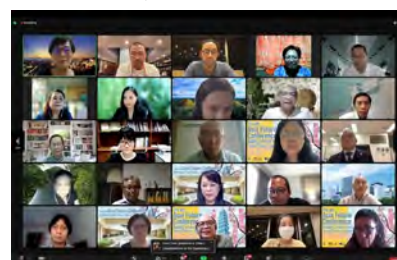
Taiwan Organizing Committee



Invitation to AFC#7 at
Chulalongkorn University in
Bangkok, Thailand



See you in Thailand!



likeminded institutions in order to provide a venue for the exchange of knowledge, information, ideas and culture. It is not only for SGRA members, but also for former international students of Japan from educational institutions around the world and their students and collaborators as well as for anyone interested in Japan.

The 7th Asia Future Conference will be held from August 9 (Friday) to August 13 (Tuesday) 2024 at Chulalongkorn University, Japanese Section. We would like to ask for your continued support and cooperation, and especially your participation,

Photo highlights from the 6th AFC:

<https://www.aisf.or.jp/sgra/plan/photo-gallery/2022/17736/nggallery/page/2>

Survey results from the 6th AFC:

<https://www.aisf.or.jp/sgra/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/AFC6-Feedback-Report.pdf>

Survey results from the Keynote and Symposium:

<https://www.aisf.or.jp/AFC/2021/files/2022/08/AFC6BFeedback.pdf>

Flyer for the 7th AFC:

<https://www.aisf.or.jp/AFC/2021/afc7-call-for-papers/>

Junko Imanishi
SGRA Chief Representative