

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

*Inclusive Sustainable
Development Goals*

24 October 2025

Sunway University



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Dr. Donnie Adams
University of Melbourne



Professor Malissa Maria Mahmud
Sunway University

Welcome Message

Welcome to the International Conference on Inclusive Education 2025!

This year's conference is guided by the timely theme, "Inclusive Sustainable Development Goals", positioning inclusion at the heart of sustainable societal transformation. The conference brings together researchers, scholars, and practitioners dedicated to advancing human rights, equity, and educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

The event aims to:

- Facilitate scholarly exchange on inclusive education, human rights, and disabilities;
- Present findings from 12 peer-reviewed papers selected for a special issue in the International Journal of Developmental Disabilities (Taylor & Francis);
- Inspire change through keynote addresses and thought-provoking discussions;
- Create meaningful networking opportunities and foster global partnerships;
- Strengthen advocacy for neurodiversity and inclusive practices in education and beyond.

We look forward to meaningful dialogue, shared commitments, and bold action as we gather in Malaysia for this important milestone in inclusive education.

Dr. Donnie Adams & Professor Malissa Maria Mahmud
Conference Chairpersons, International Conference on Inclusive Education 2025

SUNWAY
UNIVERSITY



A CLASS ABOVE

About **School of Education**

Our foundation is built on strong academic and research capabilities, and our primary goal is to develop future educators and leaders ready to navigate the complexities of the 21st century. Our vision sets us apart as a leader in shaping education both regionally and globally. We strive to create an environment that promotes critical thinking, creativity, and a passion for lifelong learning.

Central to our mission is the delivery of high-quality education that skillfully combines theoretical foundations with practical application. This ensures our graduates are not only knowledgeable but also adept at responding to the dynamic demands of the education sector. To keep up with changing educational trends and practices, our curriculum is regularly updated. This approach guarantees that our students are equipped with up-to-date knowledge and skills, preparing them for real-world challenges and opportunities in education. Our focus is on providing an education that is relevant and practical, enabling our students to have a significant impact in their future roles as educators. Under the umbrella of SOE, we have several departments and research units focusing on various aspects of education, including educational technology and curriculum development. Our faculty comprises esteemed educators and researchers who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the classroom.



About **RYTHM** **Foundation**

RYTHM Foundation is the social impact arm of the QI Group, dedicated to fostering sustainable and inclusive development in communities across the globe. Grounded in the philosophy of Raise Yourself To Help Mankind (RYTHM), the Foundation drives positive change through strategic partnerships, community service initiatives, grant-making, and employee volunteerism.

Our work aligns closely with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on empowering individuals and uplifting underserved communities through education, livelihood skills, social inclusion, and community resilience programmes.

Our Core Values

We are guided by the principles of Empowerment, Volunteerism, and Resilience. These values shape our belief that true and lasting impact happens when people are equipped to lift themselves and others, one person, one community, one goal at a time.

Our Vision

To empower lives and transform communities by:

- Supporting impactful, community-driven initiatives through grant awards
- Investing in human development programmes that foster learning, inclusion, and empowerment
- Promoting and mobilising volunteer engagement as a force for sustainable change

At RYTHM Foundation, we believe in creating ripple effects of hope and opportunity, inspiring individuals to become agents of change in their own communities.

About Faculty of Education



At the Faculty of Education at the University of Melbourne, we are a dynamic and inclusive community of scholars, educators, and students, committed to shaping the future of education through research, innovation, and collaboration. As Australia's top-ranked education faculty and 16th globally in the 2025 QS World University Rankings by Subject, we are proud of our legacy of excellence and our ongoing impact in Australia and around the world.

Education is at the heart of societal transformation, and we embrace this responsibility with intellectual rigour, care, and ambition. We are driven by a deep commitment to advancing education across all sectors—from early childhood and schools to tertiary education, and beyond. Our faculty is not just about teacher education; we are home to world-leading educational research that pushes boundaries, challenges assumptions, and drives meaningful change.

At the core of our faculty is a strong sense of community, where every student, educator, and researcher contributes to and benefits from our collective pursuit of educational excellence. We welcome diverse voices, perspectives, and experiences, knowing that they enrich our learning and research environment. Through national and international collaborations, we engage with pressing global challenges, working to create educational systems that are equitable, future-focused, and impactful.

About **International Journal of Developmental Disabilities (IJDD)**

The IJDD publishes scientific articles on work dealing with different approaches to the habilitation problems of people with an intellectual disability. The Journal covers the entire spectrum of intellectual disabilities, and is concerned with definitions, IQ, genetic predisposition, evaluation of abilities, learning interventions, challenging behaviour, medication, attitudes to death and bereavement, sexuality, legal aspects, WHO, NICE and other governmental guidelines, care in the community, advocacy, stress and coping strategies for families and carers - though this is not an exhaustive list. The unifying theme is that all of these aspects should be of practical help for those with intellectual disabilities or those caring for persons with intellectual disabilities. Emphasis is placed on the practical implications of the work of educationists, instructors, nurses, occupational and other therapists, psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers, whether taking place in a hospital setting or in community care.

The British Society for Developmental Disabilities (BSDD) is a registered charity that promotes the education, training and rehabilitation with a view to bring relief to those with developmental disabilities (specifically those with intellectual/learning disabilities) and to advance public education in and knowledge of developmental disabilities by means of meetings, publications, partnerships and other legal means. The BSDD is the owner of *International Journal of Developmental Disabilities*.



PROGRAM

Time	Agenda
8:30 AM	Registration and Welcome
8:45 AM	<p>Opening <i>Welcome Address:</i> Professor Dato' Elizabeth Lee, Chief Executive Officer of Sunway Education Group</p> <p><i>Opening Speech:</i> Dr. Donnie Adams & Professor Malissa Maria Mahmud, Conference Chairs</p> <p><i>Welcome Address:</i> Dr. Brian Salmons & Dr. Arturo Langa, Editors of International Journal of Developmental Disabilities (IJDD)</p>
9:15 AM	<p>Keynote Address</p> <p>Professor Sibrandes Poppema President of Sunway University</p>
9:30 AM	Tea Break & Group Photo

PROGRAM

Time	Agenda
10:00 AM	<p>Paper Presentations</p> <p>Session 1: Leadership and Policy in Inclusive Education <i>Session Chair: Dr. Donnie Adams</i></p> <p>Shaping Leadership and Inclusive Education: Insights from Cambodia, Myanmar, and Vietnam <i>Presenting Author: Dr. Nguyen Thi Lan Ngan</i></p> <p>Leading Inclusive Education Initiatives: Comparative Insights from Malaysia, Lao PDR, and Brunei <i>Presenting Author: Dr. Donnie Adams</i></p> <p>Toward Effective Inclusive Practices: Dynamics among School Leadership, Academic Optimism, and Teacher Collaboration <i>Presenting Author: Dr. Visal Moosa</i></p> <p>Autism Management and Inclusion in East Java, Indonesia: A Reflection on Opportunities and Challenges <i>Presenting Authors: Dr. Margaretha & Dr. Jo Mosen</i></p>

PROGRAM

Time	Agenda
11:30 AM	Comfort Break
11:45 AM	<p>Paper Presentations Session 2: Neurodiverse and Disability Inclusion in Southeast Asia <i>Session Chair: Associate Professor Matthew Harrison</i></p> <p>How the Science of Learning Can Strengthen Neurodiverse Inclusive Literacy Instruction in the Philippines <i>Presenting Authors: Mr. Rodny Giverson Garcia & Dr. Jo Mosen</i></p> <p>Advancing Disability Inclusion in Thailand Through AI for Sustainable Development <i>Presenting Author: Dr. Pennee Narot</i></p> <p>Cultural Understandings of Inclusion in South East Asia <i>Presenting Authors: Ms. Deborah Rhodes & Mr. Ernest Antoine</i></p>

PROGRAM

Time	Agenda
1:00 PM	Lunch and Poster Exhibitions
2:00 PM	<p>Paper Presentations Session 3: Teacher Attitudes, Social Inclusion and Practices <i>Session Chair: Associate Professor Matthew Harrison</i></p> <p>Social Inclusion through Attitudinal Change in Singaporean Teachers <i>Presenting Authors: Dr. Thana Thaver & Associate Professor Levan Lim</i></p> <p>A National Study on Teacher Beliefs and Teaching Practices in Preschool Inclusive Education in Taiwan <i>Presenting Author: Dr. Pei-Fang Rachel Wu</i></p> <p>Bridging Theory and Practice: Competency Development for Special Education Graduates in Vietnam <i>Presenting Author: Dr. Nguyen Thi Lan Ngan</i></p>

PROGRAM

Time	Agenda
3:30 PM	<p>Panel Discussion <i>Future Directions in Inclusive Education and SDG Implementation</i> Moderator: Dr. Donnie Adams</p> <p>Panelists: Professor Aznan Che Ahmad - Quest International University, Malaysia</p> <p>Associate Professor Matthew Harrison - University of Melbourne, Australia</p> <p>Dr. Sunitha Sivakumaran - Principal of the Pusat Pendidikan Khas Sinaran@Taarana</p>
4:30 PM	Prize-giving Ceremony & Closing
5:00 PM	Post-Conference Refreshments

WELCOME ADDRESS BY



Professor Dato' Elizabeth Lee

Chief Executive Officer, Sunway Education Group

Elizabeth is CEO of the Sunway Education Group, owned and governed by the not-for-profit Jeffrey Cheah Foundation. Under Elizabeth's leadership since 1992, it has grown from just one institution into a dynamic group of over 20, encompassing kindergarten all the way up to university, and alternative education pathways. As a respected thought-leader in education and leadership, she serves as trustee of MERCY Malaysia (a world-renowned humanitarian organisation), and the 30% Club (promoting women leadership in public company boards). Internationally she is a member of the British Council's Going Global Partners Group and the High-Level Advisory Council of the UN SDG Academy. Elizabeth holds a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Education from Cambridge University. She is a past-president of the Oxford and Cambridge Alumni Society of Malaysia. Her many awards and accolades include three honorary doctorates from the University of Nottingham and Lancaster University, United Kingdom, and Victoria University, Australia, respectively. For her lifelong dedication and commitment in the field of education, she was appointed as Professor at Sunway University in February 2021 and bestowed the state title of Dato' by His Royal Highness Sultan Nazrin Shah, the Sultan of Perak in 2022.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Professor Sibrandes Poppema

President and Vice-Chancellor of Sunway University

Professor Sibrandes Poppema came to Sunway in 2019 as a Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah Distinguished Professor and Advisor to the Chancellor on the establishment of a Medical School at Sunway University. Professor Poppema is trained as a pathologist and holds a doctorate in Immunopathology from the University of Groningen. He has widely published on subjects in immunology, haematology, oncology and transplantation, his papers have been cited more than 21,000 times for an H-factor of 84 in Google Scholar, and he is among the top 2% highly cited authors in the world in the field of immunology. He is an expert in lymphoma pathology, especially in Hodgkin Lymphoma, and he has contributed to several Hematopathology textbooks. On April 27, 2007, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands awarded Poppema a Knighthood in the Order of the Netherlands Lion for his scientific achievements. In 2020, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the President of the Federal Republic of Germany awarded Poppema the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, for his achievements in strengthening scientific and educational ties between Germany and the Netherlands.

EDITORS OF INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Dr. Brian Salmons



Dr. Brian Salmons is currently the co-editor for the International Journal of Developmental Disabilities (IJDD) with Dr Arturo Langa and has been since 2006. Before this he was the editorial advisor for the journal from 1994 (when it was known as the British Journal of Developmental Disabilities). He is also a trustee of the British Society for Developmental Disabilities. Dr Salmons is the author/co-author of over 150 peer reviewed articles and publications in international scientific and medical journals. He was the co-author of the first German language textbook on gene therapy. He is also a reviewer for numerous scientific/medical journals as well as the inventor of 8 patent families.

Dr. Arturo Langa

Co-editor of the IJDD, Dr Arturo Langa is a Consultant Psychiatrist for NHS Lanarkshire, in Scotland and a non-executive director of NHS National Services Scotland. Arturo's undergraduate training included time at Yale University Teaching Hospital, he undertook psychiatric training in London, Edinburgh, and Harvard University. He is also a published author, book editor. A former Visiting Professor at the University of the Highlands and Islands. He is a member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists; he was awarded an OBE by King Charles III in 2024.



SPECIAL ISSUE EDITORS

(Inclusive Sustainable Development Goals)

Dr. Donnie Adams



Dr. Donnie Adams is currently based at the Faculty of Education, University of Melbourne. Previously, he served as the Director for The Centre for Research in International and Comparative Education (CRICE) at the University of Malaya (UM), Malaysia. He was recently awarded the Emerald Young Researcher Award 2021 by Emerald Publishing and is the Editor for Cogent Education, and Associate Editor for Educational Research and Evaluation and the Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice (JUTLP). He is actively involved in research and development work towards the area of inclusive school leadership and school-wide reformation of inclusive education agenda in Malaysia.

Associate Professor Matthew Harrison

Associate Professor Matthew Harrison (he/him) is an experienced teacher, researcher and digital creator who is an advocate for utilising technology to support social capacity building, belonging and inclusion in education. He has taught in Australia, South Korea and the United Kingdom at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Matthew is currently a member of the University of Melbourne Faculty of Education Learning Intervention team, a project lead at the University of Melbourne Neurodiversity Project and co-founder of Next Level Collaboration, the first neurodivergent-led social enterprise to spin out of the University of Melbourne. He was awarded the Dyason Fellowship in 2020, and the GEM Scott Teaching Fellowship and the International Society for Technology in Education 'Making IT Happen' award in 2023.



SPECIAL ISSUE EDITORS

(Inclusive Sustainable Development Goals)



Dr. Jo Mosen

Dr. Jo Mosen is a lecturer within University of Melbourne's Faculty of Education. Her teaching and research focus is on inclusion in education in Australia and across the Asia Pacific region with a specific interest in evidence-informed inclusive structured literacy. Her research seeks to address ableist discriminatory barriers that are impeding access to inclusive pedagogical practices. Her application of qualitative research on inclusion is conceptualised through co-design principles and a human rights framework. Research findings seek to contribute to global evidence on the Science of Learning (SoL) and knowledge mobilization frameworks with the aim to contextualise the translation of theory into practice in low and middle-income countries. Jo is affiliated with UNESCO's Global Alliance on the Science of Learning for Education and is currently undertaking Pacific research to support country reporting on SDG targets 4.5.2 and 4.6.1 and UNCRPD Article 24.

PRESENTERS



Ms. Deborah Rhodes

Deborah is an independent consultant, trainer, and author in development cooperation, specialising in cultural values and development. She designs and evaluates programs, including in disability rights, in Asian and Pacific countries. Deborah researched disability rights in Fiji, co-founded an NGO which partnered with Pacific OPDs, and advised the Australian Government on disability inclusive development.



Mr. Ernest Antoine

Ernie is a psychologist and leadership development specialist who provides training, facilitation, coaching, and counselling. He focuses on links between leadership, culture, and psychology. He supports leaders to achieve positive changes in their lives and organizations. He has worked in Australia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, China, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Pakistan, and India and speaks Bahasa Melayu and Tamil.



Associate Professor Levan Lim

Dr Levan Lim is an Associate Professor at the Psychology and Child & Human Development (PCHD) Department at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. His research and teaching commitments and interests are focused on the inclusion of persons with disabilities and teacher development for inclusion.

PRESENTERS

Dr. Margaretha

Margaretha is an academic and a counsellor for children and adolescents at the Faculty of Psychology Universitas Airlangga, Indonesia. She completed her PhD in school mental health promotion from the Department of Paediatrics, the University of Melbourne. She is also an avid advocate for autism and has been serving as the Head of Forum Peduli Autisme Jawa Timur (autism care forum) since 2015.



Dr. Narong Kiettikunwong

Narong Kiettikunwong, Dr. rer. oec., is an academic whose interdisciplinary work spans law, ethics, and public administration. Among his varied interests, he has pursued inclusive and special education through both peer-reviewed research and practical initiatives, contributing to policy development and improved learning opportunities for students with special needs.



Dr. Nguyen Thi Lan Ngan

Nguyen Thi Lan Ngan, PhD, is interested in research on the internationalization of teacher education, inclusive internationalization of higher education, higher education governance, and the professional development of teacher educators. She earned her graduate degrees from Hiroshima University, Japan.



PRESENTERS



Dr. Pei-Fang Rachel Wu

Dr. Pei-Fang Rachel Wu, a faculty member at National Taichung University of Education, specializes in early childhood special education and early intervention. She actively advances inclusion in Taiwan through national research initiatives and contributes to policy development for the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Welfare.



Dr. Pennee Narot

Pennee Narot, Ph.D., is a retired Associate Professor of International and Development Education from the Faculty of Education, Khon Kaen University, Thailand. Her research spans inclusive education, teacher development, and ageing society across formal, non-formal, and informal education systems.



Dr. Pongmanut Deeod

Pongmanut Deeod earned a Ph.D. in Public Administration from Khon Kaen University. He currently serves as a lecturer in Public Administration at Mahamakut Buddhist University, Isan Campus. His academic interests include public policy, inclusive education, aging society management, education law, and administrative law.

PRESENTERS

Mr. Rodny Giverson Garcia

Rodny Giverson Garcia is a public school teacher in the Philippines and an Australia Awards scholar. He recently earned his Master of Learning Intervention from the University of Melbourne. His work focuses on reading and writing interventions to support diverse learners in mainstream settings.



Dr. Thana Thaver

Thana Thaver is a Senior Lecturer at the Psychology, Child and Human Development Department in the National Institute of Education (NIE), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. She obtained her PhD from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Currently, she teaches courses in general pedagogies, provisions for diverse learners and introduction to special education. Her teaching and research interests center on teacher professional development, nurturing inclusive teacher dispositions and instructional differentiation.



Dr. Visal Moosa

Dr. Visal Moosa holds a PhD in Education from Universiti Brunei Darussalam. He is currently the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) at the Islamic University of Maldives. Dr Visal has served in various positions in the education sector including leading teacher, principal and educational development officer at the Ministry of Education. He is also an active figure in research and publication and has contributed to a number of WOS/SCOPUS indexed journal articles.



PANELISTS

Professor Aznan Che Ahmad

Quest International University, Malaysia



Professor Aznan Che Ahmad obtained his PhD in Special Education from the University of Melbourne, Australia in 2008. Throughout his career as a lecturer and researcher, he was often invited as a speaker, paper presenter, and keynote speaker at various domestic and foreign conferences, including in Italy, Spain, Venice, Saudi Arabia, Japan, the Philippines, Laos, India, Brunei, Indonesia, Thailand, and several other countries. In addition, he is also an expert referring to the Malaysian Ministry of Education in the field of Special Education. He has supervised and graduated 52 PhD candidates.

Associate Professor Matthew Harrison

University of Melbourne, Australia

Associate Professor Matthew Harrison (he/him) is an experienced teacher, researcher and digital creator who is an advocate for utilising technology to support social capacity building, belonging and inclusion in education. He has taught in Australia, South Korea and the United Kingdom at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Matthew is currently a member of the University of Melbourne Faculty of Education Learning Intervention team, a project lead at the University of Melbourne Neurodiversity Project and co-founder of Next Level Collaboration, the first neurodivergent-led social enterprise to spin out of the University of Melbourne. He was awarded the Dyason Fellowship in 2020, and the GEM Scott Teaching Fellowship and the International Society for Technology in Education 'Making IT Happen' award in 2023.





PANELISTS



Dr. Sunitha Sivakumaran

Principal of Pusat Pendidikan Khas Sinaran@Taarana

Dr. Sunitha Sivakumaran is the mother of a child with autism and is personally familiar with the challenges and tribulations that come with raising a neuroatypical child. These experiences led her to forgo a career as a practicing lawyer in order to ensure her child received the best possible care. This personal journey forms the foundation of her approach as the Principal of Taarana, where she has the privilege of working with a highly motivated team to implement a holistic curriculum that supports the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive well-being of every child.

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A CLASS ABOVE

RYTHM
FOUNDATION



International Journal of
Developmental
Disabilities

LOCATION

Nestled in the vibrant city of Bandar Sunway, Malaysia, Sunway University is strategically located within the integrated township of Sunway City. Our campus offers a dynamic learning environment surrounded by diverse amenities and a thriving community

The nearest station to Sunway University is BRT Sunway Line SunU – Monash BRT station. This BRT Sunway Line is connected to the LRT Kelana Jaya line (LRT Laluan Kelana Jaya) at USJ 7 station.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We thank invaluable contributions of our authors whose research papers were part of the special issue on 'Inclusive Sustainable Development Goals', published in the International Journal of Developmental Disabilities. Their dedication and scholarly work, representing voices from 11 countries across Asia have greatly enriched the scholarship on inclusive education.

Special thanks to our co-organising partners: Sunway University, RYTHM Foundation, the University of Melbourne and International Journal of Developmental Disabilities. Their generous sponsorship and support have been instrumental in hosting this conference and bringing our shared vision to life.

We also express our sincere appreciation to the editorial team Dr. Donnie Adams, Associate Professor Matthew Harrison and Dr. Jo Mosen for their leadership in editing the special issue.

We also want to acknowledge the exceptional support and guidance provided by the Editors of International Journal of Developmental Disabilities, Dr. Brian Salmons and Dr. Arturo Langa, throughout this special issue process. Additionally, we thank our all reviewers who have assisted in peer reviewing the articles.

Finally, we extend our gratitude to all attendees for joining us in Kuala Lumpur and for your commitment to advancing inclusion, equity, and sustainability in education. We look forward to the exchange of ideas and collaborations that will emerge from this important gathering.

