

OCTOBER 2021 | VOLUME 40 | NUMBER 1

World Gifted

NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD COUNCIL FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN

2021 WORLD CONFERENCE A VIRTUAL SUCCESS



A huge thank you to all the attendees at our first virtual World Conference where we discussed *Developing the Future of Gifted Education*! More than 600 participants representing 55 countries came together virtually to continue the tradition of sharing ideas to benefit gifted, talented, and creative individuals around the globe. The conference featured four days over two weekends and across multiple timezones, eight keynote presentations, and more than 200 concurrent sessions, panel discussions, on-demand sessions, and audiovisual presentations.

“ I WAS ABLE TO COMMUNICATE AND GET IN CONTACT WITH OTHER MEMBERS IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES; WE INTEND TO COLLABORATE TO GAIN NEW INSIGHTS IN TEACHER PREPARATION AND STUDENT IDENTIFICATION.”

Nidal Jouny, Lebanon

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- ## 19 - Sparkle Project

Dear Members of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children,



It is such an honor to serve as the president of the World Council! Thank you very much for your trust and support! We have just held our first virtual Biennial World Conference. Due to the unprecedented health crisis we are facing, we knew it would be important to ensure the safety of the attendees. The conference gave participants around the world the opportunity to connect with others and discuss many issues related to the development and education of gifted individuals. The feedback we received was very positive! It will help us plan the 2023 World Conference.

We are also planning to conduct webinars in 2022 to expand networking and to provide more opportunities for exchanging information. We also recently released the Global Principles for Professional Learning in Gifted Education, developed by a committee featuring 24 educators from 19 countries. Let us know how you plan to use the document. I also hope you will consider submitting a manuscript to the Gifted and Talented International journal. We want to disseminate knowledge produced worldwide in the field of giftedness.

I take this opportunity to once again thank Dr. Julia Roberts and Dr. Leonie Kronborg for all their work in favor of the gifted while serving as past president and vice-president of the WCGTC. For the members of the new executive committee, I look forward to productive and cooperative work.

For the next four years, I envision the WCGTC as an organization that will: (a) consolidate an international network among educators, psychologists, researchers, and parents of the gifted; (b) encourage the advancement of studies on giftedness and creativity; (c) bring together, as members of the WCGTC, a larger number of people interested in giftedness; (d) disseminate evidence-based knowledge on talent development; (e) encourage professional development programs on giftedness for educators and psychologists, (f) support identification and intervention programs for gifted and talented children around the world; and (g) create a constructive and creative dialogue with the gifted community.

Let's stay in touch and work together!

Feel free to share this newsletter with friends, colleagues, and students! I wish you all a pleasant reading!

Denise Fleith

Denise Fleith, Ph.D.
President of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children

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Gifted and Talented International

Leonie Kronborg, Editor in Chief

Gifted and Talented International (GTI) is the international, refereed journal of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, and our next two issues are underway for 2021. The special issue focusing on transformational contributions or achieving eminence as an outcome of talent development that guest editors, Dr. Rena Subotnik and Dr. Paula Olszewski-Kubilius, and I are working on, will be ready for production very soon. We have seven manuscripts online already thanks to the authors and reviewers who have helped with this issue. Authors have approached this research topic from different aspects of talent development and different contexts. It should be an exciting issue to read!

The regular issue is still under development at the same time, but editors have found it harder to get reviewers during this second year of COVID, so if you are invited to review, we hope you will be able to support the journal!

We are conscious that impact factors are particularly important for academics publishing in journals. So, I would like to remind all of you who are conducting research and writing papers to cite relevant research from our *Gifted and Talented International* journal as this is how our impact factor can improve! We have a range of excellent research articles in *GTI* that could be used by researchers in the field!

I am pleased to advise we have an additional Associate Editor in our editorial team, with Dr. Maria Paz Gomez-Arizaga joining us from Universidad de los Andes, Chile. We look forward to working with her.

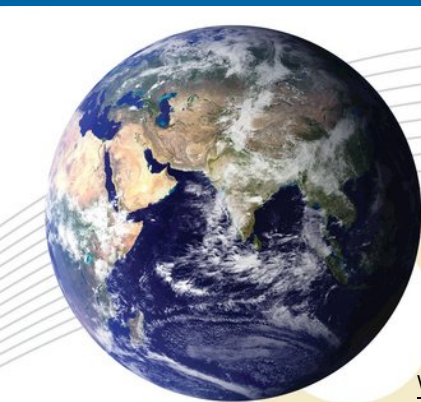
This is the second year where researchers are experiencing limitations on conducting research in schools around the world due to the impact of COVID-19 on all teachers and students. It will be interesting to see how academics and researchers manage to work around those limitations and if they have an impact on research productivity and publications!

If you are doing some exciting, cutting-edge research and thinking about where to publish, then I would like you to consider *GTI*! I would like to thank all authors, reviewers, and editors for their valued contributions to *GTI*, and the support of the past and new WCGTC Executive Committee and Tyler, in what has been a particularly challenging past six months.

WORLD-GIFTED.ORG/GTI

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Global Principles for Professional Learning in Gifted Education

world-gifted.org/press-release/global-principles

THE GENDER GAP IN STEM: CAREER CHOICES OF GIFTED WOMEN

Maria Paz Gomez-Arizaga

A country's development depends on the contribution of all its citizens; therefore, it is crucial that both men and women have the opportunity to develop and fulfill their potential. However, women have far less representation than their male counterparts in STEM careers (STEM understood here as the disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics and career fields related to these areas). The process that produces this gap begins in and intensifies through the schooling period. During elementary and secondary education, despite starting out equally competent in math and science, girl students develop attitudes toward these subjects that are more negative than those of boys; these attitudes have a significant impact on girls' achievement on academic measures, their later school-related decisions, and their career choices (OECD, 2015).

In Chile, regarding career choice, women tend to enroll in careers typically more “feminine” (understood as a sociocultural construct), such as those related to health, social services, or education (78% female participation) and less in fields that are traditionally more “masculine,” such as engineering or science (18% female participation) (Comisión Nacional de Investigación Científica y Tecnológica [CONICYT], 2015). These statistics are consistent with what has been reported in other OECD countries where women enroll less in engineering (17%) and sciences (22%) and more in health-related fields (78%) (OECD, 2015).

The discussion about the different ways men and women choose paths in science or mathematics has evolved over time to include other factors that tend to mediate the behaviors in both groups. Hence, differences should be explained in light of the psychosocial factors that affect this relationship (Valla & Ceci, 2014). In the case of gifted students, during adolescence, different intrapersonal factors can have an influence on school performance so that giftedness and high abilities in STEM-related fields may be concealed or camouflaged (Kerr & McKay, 2014).

A group of researchers in Chile from the Universidad de los Andes and the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso decided to conduct a longitudinal study focused on gifted female students. The study considered the individual, societal, and contextual influences that can arise during secondary education which can then orient and/or determine the career choices of gifted female students in STEM. This study was funded with FONDECYT grant N. 1181770.

In the video: “[Gifted girls in STEM, why so few?](#)” we present the main findings of our research which may help to explain why gifted girls tend to stay away from STEM disciplines. Some of the results can be summarized as follows.

Gifted girls with high interests in science and mathematics:

- Have a lower self-concept, especially when participating in gifted programs.
- Can be more self-critical about their grades and performance in STEM courses than boys.
- Can display stereotypical feminine traits when they participate in competitive environments.

- Have similar self-efficacy in science and mathematics to boys.
- Display an array of interests and abilities in many disciplines other than STEM areas.
- Prefer favoring “secure” career options where they know they can succeed, rejecting others that might be perceived as more challenging or difficult.
- Have had critical experiences with parents and teachers encouraging them to move toward STEM fields, especially when they are inspirational role models; however, some interactions can also be detrimental and can push girls away from areas that were once enjoyed.

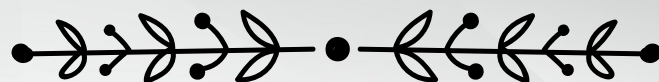
These results reveal the need to study gender gaps in more detail and understand the implications for the gifted population so that effective and contextualized intervention strategies can be created to decrease these barriers and gaps.

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We would like to express our gratitude to the following individuals for recently giving to the WCGTC® Scholarship fund either directly or through purchasing a silver, gold, or platinum membership. These donations make it possible to provide more opportunities to interested individuals around the globe to join us at the World Conferences.



- | | |
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From 22 to 30 May 2021, Australia came together as a nation to celebrate the seventh annual Gifted Awareness Week (GAW). GAW is a flagship project of the national gifted association, the Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (AAEGT). More than 30 events were held around the country in celebration of the 2021 theme “Thriving as Gifted.” This theme, established in continued partnership with our colleagues in New Zealand, was a celebration of gifted learners and systems that are thriving throughout diverse demographics across our nation. The week raised awareness and promoted challenges to optimise learning environments so that gifted individuals can thrive. Our international colleagues and organisations advocating for gifted learners are also encouraged to consider joining us in 2022 for a combined international theme.

The Australian Curriculum Review is well underway. To date, the voice of the gifted has been represented through the ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority) Student Diversity Group, in addition to the private meetings and group consultations. The review of all learning areas is to be completed by the end of 2021, and the updated version of the F-10 Australian Curriculum, once approved by ministers, will be made available on a newly designed Australian curriculum website for the start of 2022. The public consultation period is now open, and all are welcome to respond in light of the terms of reference. In addition, the AAEGT has convened a committee to draft a response to the Review. It is essential that the needs of gifted children are documented and brought to light at every opportunity.

- In **Victoria**, the Association for the Gifted and Talented Education Victoria (AGATEVic) has been presenting a series of events over 2021 to support its Professional Learning for Educators of the Gifted, Talented and Creative Students. Presentations will cover topics including emotional well-being, identification, stress and giftedness, acceleration, giftedness and autism, and inquiry learning. The VAGTC series of seminars were delivered in partnership with the Department of Education and Training Victoria. The seminars focused on points of relevance regarding identifying, understanding, advocating for, collaborating with, and supporting gifted and high-ability learners.
- In **New South Wales**, the Third Biennial Gifted Awareness Forum for Educators (GAFE) was jointly hosted by Gifted NSW and the Teachers’ Guild of NSW. GAFE envisions the provision of a unique platform for all educators to use for networking as they engage in evidence-informed application for gifted learners within their chosen field. The GAFE Program emphasised both networking within focus areas and stages as well as practical application, all delivered on a professional platform. Dr. Melinda Webber, international keynote, and Dr. Jared Cooney Horvath, national keynote, provided a wealth of expertise and provocative thought.
- In **Tasmania**, the Tasmanian Association for the Gifted’s move from face-to-face information evenings to Zoom presentations has gone from strength to strength. Not only is it reaching and meeting the needs of rural and regional members, but it is also having national and even international reach and effectively raising the profile of the organisation and attracting members from across Australia as well as New Zealand. Provisions and support for gifted students continue to be ad hoc across the various education sectors. Work begins again on advocating for gifted students with the appointment of a new state education minister.
- In the **ACT**, the new *Gifted and Talented Students Policy* 2021 reflects the ACT government’s continued interest in pursuing the very best provisions to meet the learning needs of gifted and talented students. This policy provides consistent advice to principals regarding the best approaches in identifying and supporting gifted and talented students in ACT government schools. ACT Gifted Families Support Group has continued to liaise with the department over the new policy. Furthermore, additional information for parents and carers is available through a series of Gifted and Talented Fact Sheets.
- **Western Australia** is in an exciting phase of building awareness of gifted and talented education with Gifted WA working hard since its inception to build community and increase awareness. Parents, families, and schools in WA are keen to access further training in this area, and attendance at in-person and online events is extremely high. The current focus has been various events in the Perth metropolitan area for Gifted Awareness Week Australia 2021, including advocating for compulsory professional learning for teachers in gifted and talented education through pre-service training and for ongoing registration.
- Gifted advocacy continues in **Queensland** with some key events being held across the state to raise the profile of Gifted Awareness Week 2021. Teachers and parents have had the opportunity to engage in dedicated learning opportunities that enable a deeper understanding of giftedness in educational settings and provide supportive ways for parents to engage with schools when seeking to advocate for their gifted child. Additionally, Griffith University has come together with a group of state primary school leaders to initiate a professional network for educators, titled “giftEdXchange.” The premise is to provide a forum for Queensland state schools to learn, lead, and share knowledge and understanding of gifted learners in their settings.

Submitted by Melinda Gindy (President@gfsg.org.au), Lesley Henderson, and Margaret Plunkett



The provision of gifted and talented education continues to grow during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The Ministry of Education executed various programs regarding gifted and talented development in 27 elementary and intermediate schools, and 2481 gifted and talented students benefited from these programs.

A wide range of programs and activities were conducted. According to the recent official report from the Bahraini Ministry of Education's Department of Special Education, in the first half of the academic year, from September 2020 until January 2021, 464 virtual meetings were carried out via Microsoft Office platforms. Accordingly, a range of lessons in developing higher-level thinking skills, building self-values, and teaching scientific research methods were delivered to gifted and talented students during school hours. Furthermore, 261 enrichment activities including various competitions were conducted, and 171 virtual activities regarding gifted students were performed, and 120 educational leaflets and brochures that specifically targeted gifted and talented students, their teachers, and their parents were produced and distributed to them. In addition, 69 training workshops for teachers were executed regarding nurturing gifted and talented students via the Microsoft Office Teams platform.

The virtual programs and activities for nurturing gifted and talented students were evaluated by both gifted and talented students and their parents, who indicated their great satisfaction and appreciation. 98.2% of parents indicated that enrichment programs were adequate. 65% indicated that enrichment activities were not a burden to their children, and 68% considered Microsoft Office Teams as the right platform for delivering these programs.

In harmony with their parents, gifted and talented students reported a high level of satisfaction from the gifted programs and activities. 90% of gifted and talented students showed interest in the continuation of the programs. 75% reported that lessons in developing higher-level thinking skills were successful to a great extent. 76% indicated that mentoring lessons were effective in building and developing their self-values. 74% indicated that lessons in developing scientific research methods were effective in developing their research skills, and 83% stressed the effectiveness of programs and activities in developing their talents in various academic and non-academic fields.

The Bahraini Ministry of Education also hosted several national events for gifted and talented students including the national celebration of Gulf Talent and Creativity Day, when several Bahraini gifted and talented students demonstrated their talents in a virtual meeting under the patronage of the Bahraini Minister of Education. The national-wide competition of Future Scientists was also a great success; gifted and talented students from elementary, intermediate, and secondary levels virtually competed and demonstrated their scientific research and creative and innovative projects including Smart Mask and Nano recycling innovations. National TV shows also hosted several gifted students to further cultivate the culture of gifted and talented development.

Submitted by Um Albaneen Yusuf Jamali (29jamali@gmail.com)



The COVID-19 pandemic brought several challenges to education around the world, including to the education of the gifted. In Brazil, as happened in several places around the planet, remote education and distance learning strategies were adopted to give continuity to educational processes and to provide specialized educational services to gifted students. In this context of the pandemic, we will highlight three initiatives that represent advances in the education of gifted people in our country.

The High Abilities and Giftedness Activities Centers: NAAHS and the programs linked to the state and municipal departments of education have adapted their activities to the online system, offering training courses for teachers, individual and collective assistance to gifted students, counseling, and assistance to families through meetings and thematic workshops using digital platforms and online resources.

Conexões 2020 was held virtually November 11-14. It was one of the biggest educational and innovative events of the year. The theme of Conexões 2020 was "Education generating network transformation," and it was organized in a partnership between the Alpha Lumen Institute and the Brazilian Council for Giftedness (ConBraSD). The event was attended by about 4,000 people from all over Brazil and the world and brought together great thinkers from the international and national scene. Among those from the international scene were Edgar Morin (France); Leonardo Batista

(Brown University, USA); Allan Costa (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA); and researchers Joseph S. Renzulli, Sally M. Reis, Jean Gubbins, and Del Siegle from the Renzulli Center for Creativity, Gifted Education and Talent Development (University of Connecticut, USA). Among those from the national scene were Viviane Mosé, Mário Sérgio Cortella, Luiz Felipe Pondé, Denise Fleith, Angela Virgolim, Muricel Vilalonga, Maria Lúcia Sabatella, Jane Farias Chagas, Renata Muniz Prado, and Cristina Delou. On the first day of the event, there were two important awards: the Alpha Lumen Prize for Creativity in Education, which values innovation and good practices in projects developed by educators across the country; and the Maria Helena Novaes Prize, awarded by ConBraSD for the best research projects in high abilities and giftedness presented during the Congress. All the lectures and a complete schedule can be accessed through the website: <https://alphalumen.org.br/conexoes2020/>.

From the public policies perspective, we point out a few advances. First, some top Brazilian universities, such as the University of São Paulo and the University of Campinas, are admitting medal-winning students in the Science Olympiads without the need to go through the standard selection processes. Another initiative is the planning of the first national online training course for basic education teachers about the education of the gifted by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the University of Brasília. Finally, all of us from the Brazilian delegation, as well as all researchers, professors, and teachers in the field of giftedness, feel proud and honored with the election of our colleague Professor Doctor Denise de Sousa Fleith as president of the WCGTC, and we reiterate our best wishes for her new journey. Denise, you represent us!

Submitted by Jane Farias Chagas Ferreira, Maria Lucia Sabatella, and Renata Muniz Prado (pradobasto@gmail.com)

CZECH REPUBLIC



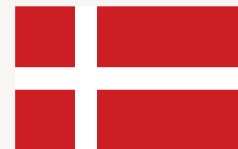
In the 1970s, a high-quality system of pedagogical-psychological counseling was established in the former Czechoslovakia, accessible to all pupils, their teachers, and their parents. At the beginning of the 21st century, this well-functioning system was changed. Bureaucracy has increased significantly, at the expense of direct work with children. The staff of the counseling centers are overwhelmed with administration, and examinations are expected to take several months. In school legislation, the gifted are included among pupils with special educational needs, but the financing of their support is limited. At the same time, there is a growing effort to "reduce the differences" between pupils, with a focus on supporting those who deviate from the average downwards. This support is certainly needed; however, it does not mean that those who are significantly above average should not be supported as well because they also have the need and the right to develop their potential, even if their further growth hinders the reduction of differences. The system does not pay attention to exceptionally intellectually gifted people. Talent support is shifting to extracurricular activities.

The Czech School Inspectorate repeatedly finds that schools fail to identify all gifted pupils. Their registered number in individual schools is low. Similarly, it is not possible to identify all exceptionally gifted students. The share of these pupils is only 0.1% of pupils in basic education. These data demonstrate that the identification and diagnosis of gifted pupils is still problematic and insufficient. When planning the professional development of pedagogical staff, principals focus little on finding and supporting gifted and exceptionally gifted students. However, even an educational offering in this area would not be sufficient. Schools fail to identify gifted and exceptionally gifted pupils and, as a result, fail to support them effectively in their development.

Parents who are organizationally and financially capable of responding to this unsatisfactory situation are setting up private schools, increasing interest in home education, and looking for other ways to enable the best possible development of their children's potential. Paradoxically, the result is an increase in disparities in available educational opportunities. We need to find a better solution. WCGTC, ECHA, and others are very useful sources of information and inspiration.

Submitted by Eva Vondráková (vondrakova@gmail.com)





During a crisis like the recent pandemic, we very often see creative ideas emerging, while some people only see the obstacles, others see resources and possibilities. We have seen a great impact on children's education as parents have been forced to change their daily life. In Denmark, all children have experienced long-term school closings, and their education has been conducted online. These changes have had a great impact on their social life. UNESCO's advice in its Education for All program was that we should base our education on four pillars: "To know – to do – to be – to be together." We can easily imagine how many children have missed being in their learning environment where they can experience different ways of working together.

Among gifted children, we are seeing different ways of coping with their education and daily life. Some find it positive that they can go in-depth in their home studies and concentrate on issues that matter. This morning I met a father who told me about his son, whom I met some years ago, having difficulties in his school. He has now won a talent competition in college, is getting top grades, and is among the best-performing students in school. Together with a few other gifted students, he found a successful way of spending his surplus time – developing a project that the technical university looks forward to continuing.

I also see children and youngsters who develop depression and anxiety with a lack of initiative, and who get lost in social media. Many of the children who are successful are very often the ones coming from family backgrounds where they are cared for and feel supported, and where they learn to work independently, not only academically but also with daily activities. Children need to feel they are supported and that they are important actors in their own daily lives. Although it has been difficult to meet physically, it has been possible to succeed with small research projects in Denmark with STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). The research has been based on formative evaluation. The focus has been on how to collect knowledge to plan future education. The projects are further developed in a special issue of the Danish journal *Kognition & Pædagogik*, June 2021. The editor is my colleague Dr. Poul Nissen, with whom I have worked together for many years.

We have also established a Nordic university research network: Aarhus University in Denmark, Karlstad University in Sweden, Oslo University in Norway, Helsinki University in Finland, and Reykjavik University in Iceland. We are still at the beginning as we meet virtually.

From publishers, we understand that many manuscripts have been received for evaluation, and among these manuscripts, I also see books on giftedness. I have written a foreword a couple of times for books focusing on social and personal development and also on more practical teaching materials. Other initiatives to come are new private schools for the gifted and a boarding school for young people (14-16 years) who are gifted and talented and at the same time have special needs. These projects are all based on private initiatives and supported by private funds, just as the scientific projects are supported by private funds. The political focus from the Ministry of Education has been on broad and mainstream initiatives and disadvantaged children (economic and social conditions).

With the newly re-opened sports facilities, not only are the kids and youngsters happy with possibilities to meet and see friends again, but the older generation appreciates being able to reestablish its social network through sports activities. At my morning swim, I met an old friend (78 years), and we talked about our still-active life. It seems that many in their 70s and 80s are still professionally active, and I hereby propose that we conduct research not only among gifted children but also among gifted seniors so that they can be qualified sparring partners (mentors) for the young people.

Submitted by Ole Kyed (info@olekyed.dk)



Recent developments in education for gifted and talented children in Hong Kong have been extended to Tier 3 by the offering of extracurricular advanced learning programs in collaboration with universities and organisations, as supported by the Gifted Education Fund of the Education Bureau of HKSAR.

In 2019-20, four programs were implemented, mainly for secondary school gifted learners. All programs focused on STEM and advancing students' science talents through mentoring. Co-hosts of the Advanced Talent Education Programs for Gifted Students in Hong Kong were Prof. Benny Hon, Department of Mathematics, and Prof. Samuel Ho, Department

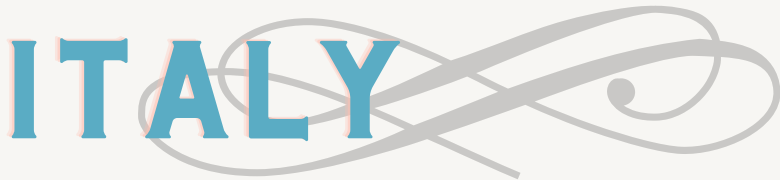
of Social and Behavioural Sciences from the City University of Hong Kong. The programs were directed toward 52 secondary students with mathematics and science talents, and the content deliberately integrated mathematics and psychology. Four sessions addressed mathematics and 3D modeling, one session was provided on psychology, one session was on integrated mathematics and psychology, and four sessions covered individual research with academic mentoring. To strengthen students' self-understanding of talents, an individual psychological profile was prepared for each student, and a group-strength profile was shared during the class, covering topics such as character strengths, self-regulation skills, emotional awareness, and target thinking.

When evaluation of the programs took place, students expressed positive feedback — e.g., “I like the part using different mathematical models to solve the problems”; and “I learned a lot about myself and my character strengths, allowing me to play to my strengths.”

Three other programs were conducted, namely, Scientific Training and Mentoring for STEM Talents, delivered by the Science Academy of Young Talent, Faculty of Science of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, for about 235 senior secondary students; Creative Mathematics and Computer Science Learning for Gifted Students: Mentoring and International STEM Program offered by Dr Tan Chee-wei from the Department of Computer Science, City University, for about 60 senior primary and junior secondary students; and Human-Robot Interaction Design, offered by Dr. Wendy Hui, Department of Computing and Decision Sciences from Lingnan University, for three senior secondary students.

In 2020-21, the Gifted Education Fund continued to support 13 programs, with two for primary-age students and eleven for secondary students. These programs covered a wide range of academic disciplines including humanities, business, and STEM. The collaborators now include six universities and three business and public organisations in the community. The academic providers have been the Department of Science and Environmental Studies, Education University of Hong Kong; Department of Computing and Decision Sciences, Lingnan University; Department of Physics and Department of Chemistry, Hong Kong Baptist University; Department of Electrical Engineering and Department of Biomedical Engineering of City University; Department of Applied Biology and Chemical Technology and Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies, Hong Kong Polytechnic University; and the Centre for Learning Sciences and Technologies and Department of Decision Sciences and Managerial Economics, Chinese University of Hong Kong. Community collaborators include Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited, the Hong Kong Maritime Museum, and Outdoor Wildlife Learning Hong Kong Limited. For more details visit https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/curriculum-area/gifted/ge_fund/gef/osalp.html.

Submitted by Anna Hui (annahui@cityu.edu.hk), Mantak Yuen, and Ricci Fong



During the past ten years, gifted education in Italy has moved forward, as evidenced by the emergence of several associations formed by parents and specialists that offer training opportunities to general education teachers throughout the country (Brazzotto, 2020). For example, in February 2021, TalentInclusivi, a national network of schools, was founded by public school teachers representing nine regions in Italy. The founding members include Emanuela Ballanti (Marche), Guglielmo Borgia (Sicily), Vania Bovino (Tuscany), Dr. Martina Brazzotto (Veneto), Paola Cirina (Sardinia), Carolina Foti (Calabria), Lucia Maffei (Piedmont), and Rita Settembrini (Lazio). This network of schools selected its lead school in the Campodarsego District located in the province of Padua in northern Italy. Director Anna Milena Ricchiuto and Coordinator Dr. Martina Brazzotto represent the Campodarsego lead school.

The TalentInclusivi network promotes training for in-service teachers and research in the field of gifted education. To pursue this dual purpose, the TalentInclusivi network collaborated with Dr. Connie Phelps (Emporia State University, Kansas) and Dr. Joyce Miller (Texas A&M University-Commerce) to offer a training program in gifted education for primary and secondary teachers funded by grants from Emporia State University. The Online Summer Institute on Renzulli Learning System and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion offered an international collaboration among teachers from Kansas, Texas, and Italy. Another opportunity for Italian in-service teachers included training courses organized through the University of Pavia with its LabTalento and a graduate master's degree program in gifted education through LUMSA University in Rome.

Despite these efforts, initial teacher institutions in Italy lack training in gifted education. At present, the Italian Department of Education fails to offer even one entire course in gifted education in the pathway for future teachers. In some universities, pre-service might on occasion participate in a 20-hour workshop. Consequently, most teachers lack content knowledge and pedagogical skills appropriate for gifted children in their classrooms, and many teachers are unaware of the existence of children and adolescents with giftedness.

In the early 20th century, Maria Montessori represented the first pedagogist to address the nature and needs of gifted children; she understood special needs children and recognized talent in all children. In the 1960s, Egle Becchi wrote five short articles on gifted education that criticized schools for excluding gifted children in their teaching. She found Italian teachers associated giftedness with genius. Since teachers conferred well-being, independence, and success with Kantian philosophy, they found it unnecessary to consider gifted children. At the end of the 1990s, pedagogist Franco Frabboni wrote an article that confirmed Egle Becchi's observation that schools neglected the needs of gifted children. He reported schools tended to level up gifted children and pay more attention to children with disabilities. Pedagogists Umberto Margiotta and Massimo Baldacci also recognized talent development. According to Margiotta, a "school of talents" would provide an opportunity for all children to discover and enhance their talents. Baldacci proposed a "didactic of talents" that considered the talent of each person a form of personalized teaching.

In Italy, although we have sufficient scientific literature to begin an entire 30-hour advanced teaching training program in gifted education, institutions remain resistant to taking the next step forward. Unfortunately, the lack of empirical research in gifted education could continue to create serious deficiencies in future teachers and in teachers in service for addressing the needs of all children in their classrooms.

The Italian constitution enacted in 1948 contains Article Number 34 which states, "The capable and deserving, even if deprived of means, have the right to reach the highest grades of studies." However, until 2007, the country lacked legislation to promote and enhance excellence. In 2019, although Ministerial Note number 562 recognized gifted children under the category of special education, teachers provide personalized education plans only when they wished to do so. More recently in 2021, Ministerial Decree number 5 clarified, for the first time, that gifted children could accelerate coursework upon the consent of teachers.

In Italy, therefore, despite illustrious pedagogists who acknowledged gifted and talented education and new regulatory measures supporting gifted children at school, pre-service teachers lack the skills to manage classrooms with gifted children because initial teacher preparation programs lack training in gifted education. One might ask why Italian universities struggle to initiate inclusive teacher training programs with gifted education coursework. Although future teachers lack opportunities for university coursework in gifted education, they can now welcome training courses promoted by TalentInclusivi and other associations. Italian teachers continue to express interest in methodologies to include gifted children in their teaching, and they seem eager to acquire pedagogical skills that acknowledge gifted children and support their well-being by creating positive classroom environments that enhance talent and ability in all children.

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Submitted by Martina Brazzolotto (martinabrazzolotto@gmail.com)



On January 26, 2021, the Central Council for Education of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology submitted a report titled "Towards Constructing Japanese-Style School Education in the New Era (Reiwa)." The report aimed to enrich school education by integrating "personalised adaptive learning" and "collaborative learning" using information and communication technology (ICT) and by establishing a detailed instruction system with small groups of children. Children who excelled in a specific field and twice-exceptional children were mentioned, and the importance of high-quality school education, collaboration with universities, educational institutions, and private sectors, as well as the utilization of distance and online learning, were proposed to provide advanced learning opportunities to fully develop talents of such children.

Prof. Sumida started a series of free online seminars to broaden the awareness and understanding of gifted and talented education in 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic. The seminar has already been held 13 times, and roughly 400 people, including teachers, parents, educators, policymakers, and others interested in gifted and talented education, have registered.

After publishing the book *Sainou Hamidashikko no Sodatekata (How to Raise and Support Out-of-the-Box Children)* in September 2020, with supervision from Prof. Sumida, the author Yukiko Sakai has continued advocating for giftedness in Japan. Sakai started several social media accounts such as a Facebook page and wrote blogs to share up-to-date information with the public. There is increasing attention to giftedness, and two local newspapers highlighted her book, introducing it in an article.

Local governments are also starting to seek information on gifted education in Japan. On April 27, 2021, Sakai visited the Superintendent of Education at Nakano Ward in Tokyo City and provided information such as the definition of gifted children in other countries, the diversified natures of gifted children, challenges gifted children tend to face, and several ideas for supporting them in the Japanese education system. The superintendent had long-term experience as a teacher, and she acknowledged the existence of gifted children at schools and agreed with the importance of advocacy.

Submitted by Manabu Sumida (sumida.manabu.mm@ehime-u.ac.jp) and Yukiko Sakai (numero1@liaisondetre.jp)



In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and the University of Jordan, the Innovation for Creativity Development Association (ICDA) organized the seventh Future Scientists Competition and LUMA StarT International Award-Jordan Level last March. Six projects were nominated to the international level of the contest, which is conducted by LUMA Center-Finland. Three of the nominated projects are student team projects. LUMA Center Finland announced recently the top ten projects, and the Electronic Interactive Silent Carpet for the Deaf by the Garden of Knowledge team from Jordan is one of the splendid nominees. The Grand Prize was announced at the awards ceremony in Finland in June.

The first cycle of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Program for talented youth was conducted from July 2020-February 2021. The program included 150 blended training hours. Half of them were face-to-face workshops for designing project prototypes in different fields. In these workshops, students were able to apply innovation, problem-solving, thinking skills, and community services concepts. In addition, they gained multiple technical skills in such areas as electronics, design, and coding. Continuous improvement of the program is crucial to delivering the best outcomes to talented youth.

A reading forum for talented adolescents was conducted online to discuss the sci-fi story "Universe and Nano," written by Prof. Munir Nayfeh (University of Illinois). Prof. Munir discussed the story with adolescents and answered their questions about and revisions of the nanotechnology and universe concepts.

Submitted by Surayya Ayyad (surayyaayyad@hotmail.com)



The New Zealand Association for Gifted Children (NZAGC) recently elected a new president, Jo Brunskill. Jo, a secondary teacher at Wairarapa College, specializes in gifted education, having recently completed postgraduate studies at Massey University. Jo is also the mother of three gifted children and a talented musician. The NZ gifted community acknowledges the many contributions of the former president of the NZAGC, Brooke Trenwith, during her four terms in that role. Brooke enhanced opportunities for professionals working in gifted education by engaging the NZAGC in the establishment of Gifted Aotearoa, facilitating conferences and events, and supporting Gifted Awareness Week. Brooke will continue to act in an advisory role to the NZAGC.

The New Zealand Centre for Gifted Education (NZCGE) has welcomed a new CEO, Justine Munro. Justine is a co-founder and director of the 21C Skills Lab and brings to the NZCGE a unique range of experience across the business, community, and government sectors in New Zealand and Australia. The NZ gifted community also acknowledges the many contributions of the former CEO, Deborah Walker, who served as CEO for over ten years, leading the organization in its curriculum development, a merger with another educational provider, and partnerships to form Gifted Aotearoa and refresh the Massey University specialist teaching endorsement in gifted education.

Massey University staff supporting the Ministry of Education-funded postgraduate diploma in specialist teaching (gifted) are delighted that in 2021 five teachers were awarded study awards to enroll in the course. The study awards, funded by the Ministry of Education, provide the teachers with a travel and accommodation supplement to attend their courses on campus, costs for tuition fees, and employer funding for study leave.

Massey University's Post Graduate Diploma of Specialist Teaching Program has been awarded continued government backing for the next 16 years and includes a gifted endorsement, supported by the senior leadership team at NZCGE. This diploma represents a robust and specialized qualification that is bringing a greater level of specialised knowledge and practice into our classrooms.

REACH Education is celebrating its 16th year of running the Certificate of Effective Practice in Gifted Education. This course has been significantly updated to align it with the new fourth edition of the course set text, my *They're Not Bringing My Brain Out*.

In February 2021, the Handbook of Giftedness & Talent Development in the Asia-Pacific was published both digitally and in hard copy on Springer.com. The textbook includes many contributions from New Zealand researchers, including the editorial work of Professor Emeritus Roger Moltzen, University of Waikato, on social and cultural perceptions of giftedness. Chapters by New Zealand contributors include:

- Fostering Resilience in 'At-Risk' Gifted and Talented Young People by Dr. Nadine Ballam, University of Waikato
- How Do Teachers Meet the Academic Needs of High-Ability Students in Science? by Dr. Jenny Horsley, Victoria University of Wellington and Dr. Azra Moeed, Ako Aotearoa
- Being of Like-Mind: Giftedness in the New Zealand Context by Professor Tracy Riley, Massey University
- The Development of Mana: Five Optimal Conditions for Gifted Māori Student Success by Associate Professor Melinda Webber, University of Auckland

The first formal evaluation report of the Learning Support Coordinator (LSC) initiative acknowledges progress being made but lots of room to continue to improve how gifted students are identified and provided for in schools. There is a good number of LSCs taking advantage of free professional learning opportunities offered through the fully-government-funded network of expertise, Gifted Aotearoa.

Submitted by Brooke Trenwith (brooketrenwith@xtra.co.nz)



The biggest news from Paraguay is the launch of the Aikumby Center for Giftedness and Creativity (<http://www.aikumby.com>), the first center of its kind in Paraguay. The Center works on talent development based on scientific evidence; we conduct research and innovation projects; provide giftedness, 2e, and specialized career assessments; and offer educational consulting, family orientation, enrichment, mentoring, supervision, training, and talent development for organizations. We aim to be a reference for the Spanish-speaking world. [From our website: "Aikumby, a word in Guaraní, means 'I understand deeply.' Knowing the curiosity and love of learning in individuals with high ability, it seemed perfect that our Paraguayan language had a word that could encompass in seven letters those eager little eyes that shine when things suddenly make sense, when something clicks ... when I understand deeply, when aikumby."]

In the second year of the pandemic, we continue to work collaboratively with the General Direction for Inclusive Education at the Ministry of Education and Sciences, which is responsible for provisions for gifted students; the Paraguayan Foundation for High Ability (FUPAC – Fundación Paraguaya de Altas Capacidades), an association of families with gifted children; and the Network for Professionals in High Ability – Paraguay (Red de Profesionales en Altas Capacidades – REDPAC Paraguay).

The General Direction for Inclusive Education at the Ministry of Education and Sciences organized a roundtable series on high ability to discuss best practices as well as current practices (or lack thereof). The first roundtable included professionals representing public education, the Network for Professionals in High Ability (REDPAC), and the Paraguayan Psychology Society. The second roundtable included families from FUPAC and featured the voices of gifted children. REDPAC submitted a working paper with evidence-based best practices being implemented around the world to the ministry to serve as a basis for future legislation.

Specialized gifted programs continued at a handful of schools, with varied programming models. The Santa Elena School, a private K-12 school in the capital, uses local norms, prepares individualized plans, and offers schoolwide enrichment and differentiation. At the American School of Asuncion, a private international school, gifted programming focuses on mathematics in elementary school and begins in third grade; students enter the program after CogAT or MAP testing. Advanced tracking continues in middle school with honors courses and in high school with Advanced Placement courses. The first public school program, Proyecto Escalando, offers enrichment for gifted students in disadvantaged areas. Additionally, several schools had students privately tested for giftedness and participated in consultation services to meet their needs. The alliance with the Paraguayan Homeschoolers group continued, providing helpful resources on homeschooling and unschooling.

Paraguay received its first Gold Medal at the International Math Olympics, a feat widely celebrated in the media and in the talent development community. Sebastian Cano, the gold medal recipient, is a 17-year-old student who participates in the Young Talents Program at OMAPA (Multidisciplinary Organization to Support Teachers and Students), a nationwide talent search program for advanced mathematics.

Online trainings, both private and open to the public, continued. A training on High Ability at the University was provided for Extension and Continuing Education services at the National University of Asuncion, with ideas on launching honors programs and professor-led projects in each course. Aikumby offered an online training on gifted adults, a topic seldom covered.

The collaboration with the University of Malaga endures. Professor Dr. Serafina Castro Zamudio from Malaga participated in the online training with the National University. The collaboration opened up pathways for exchange programs among gifted secondary students in Malaga and Paraguay. For example, two highly gifted adolescents represented Paraguay at several online workshops on varied topics in GuiaMe, Malaga's signature enrichment and mentoring program for gifted students.

I continued to teach the module on high-ability university students at the Universidad Comunera as a guest professor, as part of the second and third edition of a postgraduate diploma for higher education professionals. Research projects, both active and completed, yielded several publications in peer-reviewed regional and international journals as well as presentations in worldwide conferences of major giftedness organizations.

Advocacy for gifted students and lawful provisions remains at the forefront; specifically, Paraguay needs smooth procedures for acceleration. Awareness of issues regarding high-ability must continue to spread; this will likely happen as Aikumby grows and expands services.

Submitted by Alexandra Vuyk (alexandra.vuyk@uc.edu.py)



In Spain, because of the COVID-19 outbreak and the consequent confinement, we all have had to adapt to the new situation in which we have found ourselves: children, young people, parents, and teachers.

As we mentioned in several studies and publications before the irruption of COVID-19, many characteristics of students with intellectual giftedness in their childhood years are maintained in adult life, but some are hidden, especially when it comes to women. We also find men and women with damaged self-esteem (Report presented to the Working Group at the Council of Europe, Alonso, 2018).

As already proposed by, among others, Jean Charles Terrassier, researchers found desynchrony in children and young people is still present in adults, but with some modifications. Adults with higher potential have fewer friends, but their friendships are stronger, with greater commitment, respect, mutual trust, and deep affection.

In mid-May of 2021, the European Council reflected on equity in access, inclusion, and success because all are basic principles of education and training. However, equity and inclusion are still a challenge for our educational systems, with significant differences within and between member states. As socio-economic background remains an important factor influencing educational outcomes in the European Union, the Council approved conclusions on this topic. The number of underachievers and early school-leavers is still high in the EU.

The Council approved conclusions on strengthening multi-level governance when promoting the participation of young people in decision-making processes. The aim of these conclusions is to ensure that all young people have equal opportunities for participation, involvement, and empowerment in relevant decision-making processes: "Young people are among those who have been hardest hit by COVID-19 restrictions. Their participation in policy-making is essential as today's decisions will impact their future. That is why we should all support active and sustainable structures for youth participation in the development of policies" (Tiago Brandão Rodrigues, Minister of Education of Portugal).

In their transition to adulthood, young people face specific challenges that place them in a position of vulnerability. This situation results in a need to improve young people's access to rights and should be reflected in a human rights-based youth policy. Ministers held a public debate about how authorities, at all levels, can engage, connect, and empower young people.

Along this line, throughout this year and during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Huerta del Rey Center and the Spanish Center for the Development of the Gifted have considered it appropriate to incorporate in the MEPS (Psychopedagogical and Social Enrichment Model) a series of recommendations and activities.

Those recommendations and activities have been incorporated into the program for the benefit of children and young

people in particular and their families in general. These recommendations have been taken from Guarantee Organizations and Entities, international entities to which we belong, as well as from our experiences with the virtual sessions held with the students of the Huerta del Rey Center and the informal videoconferences of the EU ministers of education.

Dr. Yolanda Benito, Director of the Huerta del Rey Center, has been part of the team in the sanitary emergency operation for COVID-19, providing psychological support through the telephone hotline of the Applied Psychology Service of the UNED (SPA), which remained active for ten months.

<https://canal.uned.es/video/60102a63b609235c156ab652>

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Submitted by Juan A. Alonso and Leopold Carreras-Truñó



In this contribution from Sweden, I would like to take the opportunity to present two of Sweden's researchers in the field, both interested in giftedness in young children.

The first is Malin Ekesryd Nordström who began her doctoral studies in the fall of 2018, at Umeå University. In her research, she examines the significance of identification of gifted children in need of educational challenges already in preschool. One of her studies involved an online survey of Swedish preschool personnel and interviews with preschool teachers, principals, and parents of gifted children.

The results show that few preschool teachers and principals have any formal education into aspects of giftedness. In the survey, a majority of the preschool personnel express that they have a moral duty to support children in difficulties, prior to gifted children. However, the respondents believe that gifted children have the right to be noticed and given the opportunity to an adequate education, but few have any suggestions on how this should be conducted. Despite this, there is a strong belief that their preschools sufficiently meet the needs of gifted children, if given "the right tools" and more education on giftedness. A dilemma that arises is how to focus on both the group and the individual in a strong tradition of an egalitarian education system, such as Sweden's.

The second researcher is Dr. Lena Ivarsson at the Mid Sweden University who defended her dissertation in 2008. Part of her doctoral studies was invested in the study of giftedness. However, since her supervisor considered giftedness to be an area for psychology, rather than pedagogy, she was recommended not to explore it further. Therefore, the focus of her study is on "early readers," meaning children who were able to read before starting school. In a longitudinal study, she followed 13 early readers from pre-school to year three. Her aim was to find any possible occurrence of common denominators in the children's home environment, and what strategies teachers applied in allowing these children to develop at their own pace and according to their ability.

In the first study, a common denominator in the children's upbringing was that they had been frequently read to by their parents. Their family lives were recognized as varied in terms of access to reading and writing material, and the parents claimed the children had learned to read on their own - as if it 'just happened. In the second study, most teachers found it challenging to support the children in their development due to an asynchronous relationship between reading ability, level of understanding of more complex material, and social development. Examples of the type of additional reading the students were given turned out to be in the form of yet another piece of reading homework based on material judged as rudimentary.

In her current work, Ivarsson explores giftedness in educational policy and leads a project concerning school absence among young girls. Ivarsson also runs a summer course at her university focused on aspects of giftedness.

Apart from the two researchers mentioned, other research projects are developing. However, as in many other countries as a consequence of the pandemic, universities have been transferred online, meaning a great deal of collaboration and exchange has been postponed. The hope is that changes will be made for the autumn as teaching and collaboration hopefully will be back to normal.

Submitted by Caroline Sims (Caroline.sims@edu.uu.se)



Mentoring for gifted students is widely used in education systems around the world. The United Arab Emirates introduced mentoring for gifted students through several initiatives in the country. The United Arab Emirates University Internet Mentoring Program and the World Giftedness Center Global Talent Mentoring Program by Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation are some examples of these mentoring initiatives.

The College of Education at United Arab Emirates University launched the Internet Mentoring Program for gifted students in March 2021. The purpose of this I-Mentoring program is to offer online enrichment resources for gifted students in Abu Dhabi during the pandemic. Students were selected based on nominations from their schools and included gifted education programs and elite classes in governmental and private schools in Abu Dhabi. After the orientation session in March 2021, the students were given the opportunity to select among three clusters to participate in: the STEM cluster, the Young Researcher cluster, and the Art and Literature/Book Club cluster. These clusters were facilitated by the Special Education Department faculty. Gifted students received mentoring regarding topics included in each cluster, and they had to participate in various activities and submit tasks. An online platform was developed to include all students' activities, communication with their cluster facilitators, discussion forums, reflection journals, artifacts, and assignments. Some of the activities during the first phase of the I-Mentoring program included live sessions with the cluster facilitator followed by homework assignments that were uploaded on the online platform.

A total of 60 students qualified for the second phase of the program (International I-Mentoring). After selecting the students, they took a pre-assessment that included math and science concepts. In the meantime, the students started the international I-Mentoring phase by attending classes of training on the REAPS (Real Engagement in Active Problem Solving) model by Prof. June Maker and her colleagues. The classes are conducted two times per week; students have classes at the beginning of the training presented collaboratively by the US partners. Then the students apply what they got with their group teacher facilitator. The students must submit their work to the platform to be checked by the international collaborators. At the end of the fifteenth class, the students will have an exit assessment to monitor their progress and assess their gains.

In addition, the Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation version of Global Talent Mentoring started its research phase in 2017 by creating a Global Talent Mentoring Program, a collaboration between the Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation in Dubai and lead universities in Germany: the University of Regensburg and Friedrich Alexander University Erlangen–Nürnberg, represented by Dr. Albert Ziegler and Dr. Heidrun Stoeger. The Global Talent Mentoring Program is a platform that fosters excellence in science, technology, engineering, and medical science (STEMM) worldwide for exceptionally talented youth through evidence-based, long-term online mentoring. To date, Global Talent Mentoring has secured official partnerships with institutions in STEMM in more than 30 countries. Such partnerships provide Global Talent Mentoring with essential support through access to their networks of top-tier students and experts who will participate as mentees and mentors.

Global Talent Mentoring is a flagship offering of the World Giftedness Center, a larger undertaking that will be an online hub for evidence-based gifted education and research. When it officially opens its virtual doors in October 2021 during the World Giftedness Center International Conference in Expo, the World Giftedness Center will facilitate stronger links between research and practice by providing instructional materials, hosting training seminars, publishing a scientific journal, and establishing an international accreditation system for gifted education and research.

Submitted by Mariam AlGhawi (malghawi@ha.ae) and Ahmed Hemdan (ahamdan@uaeu.ac.ae)



Despite the difficulties this year due to the pandemic, the organizations working in this field in the UK have been developing a range of innovative projects to support children and young people with high learning potential (HLP) and Dual and Multiple Exceptionality (DME), parents and carers, teachers and other professionals, and the community itself. Following the publication of *The School Handbook for Dual and Multiple Exceptionality* in May 2020 (available on websites such as Amazon's), webinars on DME and further research took place. In addition, a book for parents and carers (and others) on Dual and Multiple Exceptionality was written (due out in January 2021).

Educational charity NACE (the National Association for Able Children in Education) continues to develop its research focus: investing in initiatives to collate, evaluate, disseminate, and advance the evidence base that supports high-quality provisions for more able learners. A key strand has been the Making Space for Able Learners project, which combines a review of related research and theory with real-life examples drawn from schools holding the NACE Challenge Award.

The first phase of this project is summarized in the publication *Cognitive challenge: principles into practice*, available to preview and order via the NACE website. This project will be further developed in the coming year, with a particular review of related research and theory with real-life examples drawn from schools holding the NACE Challenge Award. The first phase of this project is summarized in the publication *Cognitive challenge: principles into practice*, available to preview and order via the NACE website. This project will be further developed in the coming year, with a particular focus on language-rich classrooms.

Alongside this work, NACE is partnering with York St John University on research into perfectionism in more able learners. This research commenced with a systematic review of research in the field, recently published in *Educational Psychology Review*. The project is now focusing on developing resources to help schools and learners understand and reduce the harmful impact of high levels of perfectionism.

These research initiatives will be driven forward next academic year through the NACE R&D Hubs – providing a framework for collaborative school-based research. For updates on these and other NACE initiatives, sign up to NACE's free mailing list.

Potential Plus UK (<https://potentialplusuk.org/>) is delighted to be back at its new home at the Open University (home of online learning), providing in-person assessments once more for the young people it supports. During “lockdown,” it also launched a virtual assessment service, which reduces the geographical and financial barriers that many families face to accessing vital support.

Another first for the organisation was the vPlus Festival (<https://virtualplusfestival.org>) in February when 2,500 parents and young people joined online for a virtual festival of fantastic talks and social interaction, including scavenger hunts for the children and fireside chats for the parents.

The Potential Trust has been working hard over the past year, running Virtual Potential Conferences on a range of subjects including Early Years, High Learning Potential, and Dual and Multiple Exceptionality (DME) in Alternative Provision. It has also been planning a major Potential Conference to discuss how all UK organizations working to help school-age students with HLP and/or DME can collaborate strategically for the benefit of everyone. All UK providers are invited to this event (just get in touch with The Potential Trust). Questions for discussion will be:

- What are the most important changes we'd all like to bring about?
- What are the obstacles to doing so, and what factors could be in our favour?
- If collectively we manage to obtain secure and significant funding, how best could we collaborate to promote and progress the cause that is dear to all of us?

Over the past few years, the Potential Trust has been working with organisations in Europe to exchange practical ideas. Members of the informal network HELP (High European Learning Potential) met virtually in September 2021. If you are interested in being invited, get in touch with The Potential Trust.

Recently, the Potential Trust has been making links with organisations in the U.S. and has become a sponsor of The G-Word, an excellent initiative exploring the gifted world. Many organizations in the last few years in the UK started to use the term “high learning potential” instead of “gifted,” and The Potential Trust supports any exploration of terminology and what it means today.

The Potential Trust's new website <https://thepotentialtrust.org.uk> is up and running. For all UK providers, this site provides a way to apply for small bursaries for children with HLP or DME who come from lower-income families to participate in online or face-to-face events as well as to become a partner of The Potential Trust.

Submitted by Denise Yates (denise.yates2@btinternet.com)



The Uruguayan educational system still has no programs or special services for gifted students, and the education laws and bylaws do not include this population.

At the end of the previous government (early 2020), the Ministry of Education presented a study developed in 2018-19 titled “Study on the prevalence of school students with intellectual high abilities and intellectual giftedness, their learning profile and mental health.” In addition to theoretical and methodological errors, the study had controversial results and no impact on gifted education or teachers' training in identifying or serving gifted students. Raven's Colored Progressive Matrices test was used to screen 698 eight-year-old students attending only urban schools of Montevideo, the country's capital, and then WISC IV was applied to 147 students who had passed the Raven test. After 16 students, with an average

age of 9.5 years, obtained scores over 126, the results of the study were directly extrapolated to the whole country and published in all media, announcing that Uruguay has only 18,000 intellectually gifted students, a number quite lower than the over 100,000 gifted students estimated using more complete and qualitative tools. The results of the study, which also stated that there were almost three times more intellectually gifted students in private schools than in public schools (something understandable due to the kind of tests used) seemed to perfectly justify the lack of public gifted services.

A center of services and investigation for high abilities/giftedness is being developed at the School of Educational Sciences of Universidad de la Empresa. The center is the only of its kind in the country and offers different services to the community, including identification of gifted children, adolescents, and adults; support to teachers and school administrations; a research group; a series of studies on giftedness; a group of gifted adults; workshops for parents; workshops for children and adolescents; and a digital library on giftedness and related topics. All the center services and activities are being developed by members of the Research Group on High Abilities/Giftedness (GIAHSD), integrated with experts on the subject with many years of experience from Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Spain, Uruguay, and the USA.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, going virtual has restricted in-person activities but has also widened the attendance of parents from other regions of the country and even other countries to the monthly workshops for parents, which now have the contribution of Latin American colleagues who kindly help in these free meetings. The group of adults is exponentially growing at every meeting, providing a rich exchange among peers from different regions and countries as they discuss their abilities, difficulties, needs and other topics collectively decided ahead of time in a very intense WhatsApp group.

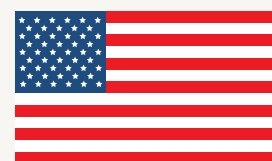
The series of studies gathers master's students of the School of Educational Sciences of Universidad de la Empresa for research projects on giftedness as well as master's students from other universities. Identification services is offered to members of the community, who get in touch through the Research Group Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/altashabilidadesenuruguay>) or are referred by ASHTUY (Association of Parents) or other people who take part in the activities of the center.

Several training courses and conferences were offered by GIAHSD members to education departments, universities, schools, and non-profit organizations from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and the USA, and interest in the field is growing quite fast.

Members of the research group have attended meetings with the new authorities of the Ministry of Education, explaining the need for developing a public policy for gifted students. A proposal to create a committee to develop a public policy for gifted students is being prepared by the group to be presented to the parliament so that some funding might be awarded in the 2022 government budget.

A specialization course on inclusive education for gifted students began in August 2019 and will end next June after 450 class hours. The course project was selected twice among several proposals from public and private universities presented to the National Agency of Investigation and Innovation to be awarded funds that allowed it to bring to Uruguay international professors who have taught parts of the discipline. The students who will be the first specialists in the country are currently conducting their supervised practicums and will present their final work to a team of experts from several Latin American countries.

Submitted by Susana Graciela Pérez Barrera (susanapb56@gmail.com)



The US National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC – nagc.org) is preparing for its 68th annual convention, featuring the theme Let's Get Together Again, offering “three exciting days of 300+ presenters, 200+ sessions, thousands of new ideas, and engaging networking events” (NAGC, 2021). The event, one of the premier professional learning opportunities in the field of gifted education, is scheduled for November 11–14, 2021, in Denver, Colorado, at the Gaylord Rockies Resort. The 2020 virtual convention was very successful, with extended time to view and review keynotes, special sessions, concurrent sessions, and posters. Designated times for virtual spaces allowed members to join with others who shared similar interests to participate in live discussions.

The opening keynote offers participants the opportunity to hear from Jeffrey Blount, award-winning author of *The Emancipation of Evan Walls*, a moving and authentic story about growing up as a gifted African American in the South during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. Evan Walls must deal with his own painful memories in order to allow his daughter to thrive. The book captures both the injustice and trauma of racism, as well as one path toward healing and overcoming oppression. The themes mirror issues faced by many gifted children today.

The 2021 convention will provide an opportunity for members to meet the new NAGC Board members whose roles commenced on September 1. NAGC's president-elect, Dr. Shelagh Gallagher, is familiar to members of the WCGTC; Dr. Gallagher, a respected scholar and author in the field of gifted education, has served as a delegate from the USA to the WCGTC for many years. More information about the NAGC convention is available at <https://www.eventscribe.net/2021/NAGC21/>.

The National Center for Research on Gifted Education (NCRGE) is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Headquartered at the University of Connecticut, NCRGE held a free virtual conference on March 26, 2021. The conference, NCRGE's First Five Years: Results, Reflections, and Recommendations, included three presentations by NCRGE researchers followed by reflections and recommendations for practice and future research from panelists with research and policy insights. Click here to watch recordings of the sessions.

Submitted by Laurie Croft, Shelagh Gallagher, and Ann Robinson (aerobinson@ualr.edu)

SPARKLE PROJECT

Educational Insights Group

Dr. E. van Gerven, Dr. R. Schader, Dr. A. Bakx, Dr. C. Deitz, A. Weterings Mep, Dr. A. Miro Meijas, W. Behrens, MA Ed.

What is this research all about, and how does it contribute to education? Being a teacher is a challenging profession. Some teachers may qualify their experiences as an educator more positively than others. Teachers are actors in an interactive system. The interplay between one or more actors (students, co-workers, parents, school support staff, administrators et cetera) affects all actors involved in that so-called ecological system. The way teachers perceive their experiences as a teacher is influenced by the interplay of the ecological system. Korthagen describes how teachers' behaviour is unconsciously guided by a mixture of cognitive, affective, and motivational dimensions. In daily practice, teachers have little time to reflect in action.

The Sparkle Project focuses on these aspects. We want to understand what inspires educators and what makes their eyes sparkle in their jobs. We want to know what similarities and differences there are regarding the motivational factors for their profession between teachers involved with gifted learners and teachers who are not involved with gifted learners or those who may not know that they are involved with gifted learners. As this research is undertaken in an international context (in different countries), we would like to determine similarities and differences between teachers worldwide. Understanding what makes teachers thrive on their jobs helps us shape the best professional context possible for teachers.

Who can participate in the research? Everybody who is professionally involved in education as a teacher, educational needs coordinator, or gifted educational needs coordinator can join us as a respondent for this study.

Why should you participate? Your participation helps us to get a better understanding of what motivates teachers for their job and how they keep themselves motivated for their job. That understanding is necessary if we want to tune into our teachers' educational needs in pre-and post-service teacher education. Increasing the quality of teacher education enhances the quality of education in general. More specifically, this study may contribute to a higher quality of gifted education.

How much time do you have to invest? The questionnaire will take no more than twenty minutes of your time

How can I participate?

- Please read the privacy statement and letter of consent at the start of the [questionnaire](#) as the first two questions on the questionnaire ask you to agree to both before you submit your answers.
- Please answer all the questions before you submit your questionnaire.
- If you feel uncomfortable at any time participating in this research, you can always stop participating. There are no penalties in case you want to stop. Just leave the webpage with the questionnaire. In that case, your answers will not be submitted.

Additional information

- After you have completed the questionnaire, please forward this email to your colleagues that might be interested in participating in this study.
- In case you want to be informed of the results of this study, please leave your email address at the bottom of the questionnaire.

For more information, contact educationalinsightsgroup@gmail.com.



World Council for Gifted and Talented Children

WorldGifted

World Gifted newsletter is the bulletin of the World Council. It contains the latest news and information concerning the organization, its membership, and the international gifted education community.

We invite all members to contribute and report on anything that would be of interest to other members, such as events and initiatives, news about regional organizations, profiles of individual members, or announcements.

Submissions should include the name of the author, title, and country of residence. Send contributions for consideration to: Tyler Clark, Editor, at headquarters@world-gifted.org. Please give us enough lead time if the submission concerns an upcoming event.

Gifted and Talented International

Gifted and Talented International (GTI) is the official journal of the World Council. GTI is refereed by an editorial review board of leading international educators of the gifted. It is published twice a year.

The purpose of the journal is to share current theory, research, and practice in gifted education with its audience of international educators, scholars, researchers, and parents. Articles for the journal are welcome and may be submitted at any time.

Learn more about the journal on our website world-gifted.org/gti

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