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Overview

The **Harvard College Project for Asian and International Relations (HPAIR)** was founded in **1991** to create a forum of exchange for students and young professionals to discuss and learn about the most important *economic, political, and social issues* facing the Asia-Pacific region. Since 1991, HPAIR has organized *43 conferences in 12 different host countries*, touching the lives of more than *10,000 students and young professionals*. HPAIR hosts two student-led conferences a year – one on Harvard’s campus and one in the Asia-Pacific. Prospective host cities in Asia must undergo an intensive, six month bidding process; this year’s Asia Conference will be held in **Nur-Sultan, HPAIR’s first conference in Central Asia**.

HPAIR conferences feature world-class speakers and guests to foster mentorship, networking, and guidance opportunities for delegates. Previous speakers include **Kevin Rudd**, the former Prime Minister of Australia; **Ban Ki-moon**, the former Secretary General of the United Nations; **Robin Chase**, co-founder and former CEO of Zipcar; and **Frank Friedman**, current COO of Deloitte Global.

A centerpiece of our conference experience lies in our Impact Challenges, a case-competition style workshop in partnership with leading organizations designed to ask delegates to formulate solutions to some of Asia’s biggest issues. In the past, HPAIR has worked with the **World Bank**, **Schwarzman Scholars**, and the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**. Impact Challenges have sparked *startups*, offered *internship and travel opportunities*, and *mentorship events* with corporate partners.

Beyond conference experiences, HPAIR has piloted a series of events to connect the Harvard community in international dialogue. In February 2019, HPAIR welcomed **Andrew Yang**, 2020 Democratic Presidential candidate, to Harvard. In March 2019, HPAIR hosted a forum with graduate students at the Harvard Kennedy School to discuss the history of *gender inequality in international relations* to a group of undergraduates. In April 2019, HPAIR invited **Dr. Yukon Huang**, Former World Bank Country Director for China and Senior Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, to give a lecture on the US-China economic relationship to graduate students and faculty and hosted **Gary Liu**, CEO of the South China Morning Post, for a dinner with Harvard undergraduates.

What Makes HPAIR Special

An interdisciplinary, liberal arts approach to international relations

HPAIR conference programming is organized through the following **6 discussion tracks**:

- *Arts, Media, and Culture*
 - Explores the power of arts, media, and culture as a platform with the potential to either unify or divide communities and shape the global narrative.
- *Energy and Environmental Sustainability*
 - Examines scarcity of energy sources, consumption levels, and other problems associated with the growing global population.
- *Global Markets and the Economy*
 - Analyzes the evolution of the world economy, focusing particularly on Asia's role in economic development in the 21st century.
- *Governance and Geopolitics*
 - Reviews how governments respond to crises, evaluate threats, support allies, and handle domestic issues.
- *Science and Technology*
 - Addresses emerging technologies, disruptive innovation, and new scientific discoveries in Asia.
- *Social Policy and Justice*
 - Explores values of social equality, human rights, and freedom through specific case studies and standards across regions.

Rigorous screening process for attendees

Candidates interested in attending an HPAIR conference go through a **rigorous and competitive application process**. In the first round, applicants submit their **resume** and **two essays**, which are all read by individual HPAIR staff members. Select applicants are then chosen for an **interview** with a staff member, and delegates are chosen from this remaining pool in a group deliberation process that takes into account the applicant's expertise in fields relevant to their chosen discussion track, their academic and/or career achievements, and their record of leadership and collaboration. The **acceptance rate** for the 2019 Harvard College Conference was **22.7%**.

Impact Challenge

The HPAIR Impact Challenge Competition is designed to facilitate innovative solutions to intractable problems across a variety of fields. Impact Challenges are co-organized with leading organizations and companies that provide mentorship for all delegates and prizes for excellent proposals.

Impact Challenges allow delegates to:

- Tackle interdisciplinary real-world problems and learn career-oriented skills.

- Learn from mentors with backgrounds and experiences relevant to delegates' areas of interests.
- Work in small teams and develop closer relationships with other delegates.
- Create a tangible output to enrich the conference experience.

Selected Example

Harnessing New Technologies to Preserve Traditional Culture

Presented by Tencent Interactive Entertainment Group and the UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office (August 2018)

This competition challenged teams of delegates to harness the power of the Internet to create a business plan that leverages new technologies to reanimate cultural heritage, opening new pathways connecting the Mogao Caves, a UNESCO World Heritage Site at Dunhuang, to the lives of modern Chinese youth.

Judges:

- Kai Yang - Marketing Director, Tencent Interactive Entertainment
- Qingyi Zeng - National Professional Officer, Communication and Information Sector, UNESCO Cluster Office in Beijing
- Bin Huang - Associate Fellow, Development Research Center of the State Council
- Dr. Siling Li - Dean of International for China, Curtin University
- Lejon Chua - Development Partner, Enterprise Singapore; Schwarzman Scholar Alumnus

Prize:

- Fully funded 3-day trip for the winning team of 5 delegates to tour the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang, China

Testimonies



Dr. John Park, *Director of the Korea Working Group and Lecturer at the Harvard Kennedy School; Member of the HPAIR Board of Advisors*

- As a Faculty Advisor to HPAIR, it's been rewarding to work with a talented and creative team of student leaders. They have an *impressive track record of converting ideas into dynamic conference activities* that foster unique growth for student delegates from around the world. **HPAIR student leaders carry on the Harvard tradition of creating opportunities to learn by doing.** It's a hallmark of the HPAIR experience that has *benefited generations of students - including myself*. I was a student delegate from the University of Cambridge at the HPAIR conference in Seoul in 1996 and subsequently served as a workshop leader at the HPAIR conference in Hong Kong in 1999 during my time as a predoctoral fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School.



Dr. Marcie Glicksman, *CSO of Orig3n and Associate Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School; 2019 Harvard College Conference Supporter and Impact Challenge Partner*

- “Orig3n was honored to be invited to participate in HPAIR’s conference in Boston in February 2019. Orig3n created a global business challenge that was focused on how insurance companies can encourage their customers to use new technologies that will promote healthier lives. **We were impressed with insightful presentations and the caliber of participants.** This gathering of young, diverse and enthusiastic business-minded entrepreneurs is a **great opportunity for companies as these are some of the leaders for the future.** Orig3n looks forward to participating in this well organized program in future years.”



Dravisha Katoch, *Co-Founder of Aida and Bachelor of Technology Candidate in Computer Science, Ansal University, India; HPAIR Asia Conference 2018 and HPAIR Harvard College Conference 2019 Delegate*



- “HPAIR conferences have given me exposure to the geopolitical challenges, socioeconomic issues, and start-up ecosystem in Asia. The conferences had amazing speakers and panel discussions as well as some great cultural events. The 2018 Asia Conference was the first international event I attended; it was a breakthrough to the outside world and truly shaped who I am today. It specifically opened doors to learning more about entrepreneurship and

	<p>sustainability, which led me to join two start-ups and take my work ahead on UN SDG-3 (mental health) forward.”</p>
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Net Promoter Scores

HPAIR’s NPS among delegates to the 2019 Harvard College Conference was **44**.
 HPAIR’s NPS among speakers at the 2019 Harvard College Conference was **61**.

Board of Advisors

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professor John Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Director of the Korea Working Group and Lecturer at the Harvard Kennedy School; Faculty Affiliate, Project on Managing the Atom at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professor Karen Thornber <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Professor of Comparative Literature and of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University Faculty of Arts and Sciences; Victor and William Fung Director, Harvard University Asia Center; Chair, Harvard University Asia Center Council



- **Professor Mark Wu**

- Henry L. Stimson Professor of Law, Harvard Law School; Faculty Director of the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society; Member of the Faculty Advisory Committees of the East Asian Legal Studies Program and the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies; Faculty Associate of the Harvard University Center for the Environment



- **David Lee**

- Partner, SK Telecom Ventures; Partner, B&C Group; Chief Corporate Development Officer, 451 Media; Co-Founder, XG Ventures; Co-Founder, Kstartup; Former Director of Asia-Pacific, Google

Contact

HPAIR's organizing committee consists of 36 students at Harvard College majoring in fields ranging from Applied Mathematics and Computer Science to Government and Philosophy. HPAIR staff alumni have pursued careers at organizations like Google, McKinsey & Company, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 500 Startups, and JP Morgan Chase.

To learn more about HPAIR, please feel free to reach out to the Organizing Committee of HPAIR Conferences at info@hpair.org.