



**PRESS RELEASE
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Asia's largest literary festival for children's stories returns for 8th year

More than 1,000 participants expected to attend the Asian Festival of Children's Content organised by the National Book Development Council of Singapore

Singapore, 9 May 2017 – This May, the Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC), the largest annual literary festival in Asia dedicated to promoting and developing children's books and stories, will return for its eighth run.

Aimed at children's writers, illustrators, preschool and primary school teachers, librarians as well as parents, the five-day event will offer **151** ticketed children's content-related talks and conferences, panel discussions, workshops and masterclasses, as well as many free public activities such as cultural performances, storytelling sessions, book launches, language programmes, and a public book fair.

The festival will feature a total of **157** local and international speakers from **18** countries: Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, Israel, Slovakia, India, Myanmar, the UK and the USA.

Kenneth Quek, Festival Director of the AFCC, said, "Every year, we go all-out to put together a vigorous programme that will inspire Singaporean and international delegates in the industry of children's literature, and also expose them to cross cultural and literary exchange and networking opportunities – whether you're a children's author or illustrator seeking publishing opportunities, or a preschool teacher or parent wanting to improve the literacy skills of your children."



157 industry experts to speak at AFCC conferences

From 17–21 May 2017, delegates can attend ticketed conferences and look forward to picking the brains of **86** Singaporean and **71** international speakers from the field of children’s literature.

Notable speakers include:

- PJ Lynch, children’s laureate of Ireland (Ireland)



PJ Lynch has worked as a children’s book illustrator since leaving Brighton College of Art in England in 1984. He has won many awards including the Mother Goose Award, the Christopher Medal three times, and the prestigious Kate Greenaway Medal on two occasions. PJ has recently been announced as the fourth Laureate na nÓg, Ireland’s laureate for children’s literature.

- Leslie Udwin, filmmaker and human rights activist (UK)



Founder & CEO of the non-for-profit organisation THINK EQUAL. Her films include Best Film British Oscar-winning “East is East” and last year’s Peabody award-winning documentary “India’s Daughter”, which sparked a global movement to end violence against women. She was voted by The New York Times as the No 2 Woman of Impact 2015 (after Hilary Clinton), and also won the prestigious Swedish Anna Lindh Human Rights Award.

- Kari Love, Creative Technologist & Soft Robotist (USA)



Kari Love built an unconventional career mixing soft robotics, spacesuits, costumes and puppets. Highlights include Super-Releaser soft robotics R&D, serving as a technical expert on 5 NASA contracts, her Spider-Man: Turn Off The Dark Broadway costume being inducted into the Smithsonian, and working at The Jim Henson Company on Sesame Street.

Country of focus: Indonesia

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Singapore-Indonesia diplomatic ties. In conjunction with RISING 50, the festival will feature **Indonesia** as the Country of Focus, with more than **29** children’s authors, illustrators, educators, publishers, literary agents, storytellers and musicians arriving in Singapore to share their knowledge and expertise in the field of children’s literature.

Visitors can attend **19 sessions and performances** on various topics related to Indonesian books and culture – from attending talks on Indonesians mysteries and historical fiction, to watching a live performance of a traditional Indonesian folktale or a *Tarunajaya* dance.

Notable speakers from the Indonesian delegation include:

Dr Murthi Bunanta, Children's Literature Specialist and President, SACL and INABBY



Dr Murti Bunanta is a children's literature specialist, researcher, children's folklorist, and an international award-winning author of 50 books published in Indonesia, Canada, and the USA. Her books have been translated into several languages. She is the founder and president of Society for the Advancement of Children's Literature and Indonesian Section of IBBY that pioneered children's reading in Indonesia. She is an advocate for reading quality children's books, and serves as a member of the AFCC Board of Advisors.

- Christian Tamaela, Creative Technologist & Soft Roboticist



Christian Tamaela is an ethnomusicologist, lecturer and musician. He is adept at using various instruments such as the tifa, bamboo flutes, conch shell and many others. He lectures at the Universitas Kristen Indonesia Maluku.

AFCC 2017 Highlights (Ticketed)

- **Writers and Illustrators Conference (17–19 May)**

This 3-day conference at the AFCC 2017 will offer more than **80** talks and workshops for aspiring and experienced children's writers and illustrators, with the aim to update them on children's book trends and developments around the world, as well as to equip them with skills and tips to develop and improve their craft. Session highlights include:

- ❖ *Books from the Island of Storytellers*
- ❖ *Is It Correct Politically to be Politically Correct in Children's Books?*
- ❖ *Making Sense of the Singaporean and Indonesian Comics Scene*
- ❖ *Authors Discussion: Who Gets to Write Asian Stories?*
- ❖ *Hide-and-seek: Hidden Elements in Asian folklores in Kidlit*
- ❖ *Book Watch: Investigating ASEAN Markets*
- ❖ *From Fairy Tales through History and Back Again*

- **Cross Platform Summit (19 May)**

This 1-day conference at the AFCC 2017 will offer **19** talks and workshops focusing on topics like multi-platform storytelling, interactive narratives, digital marketing, and many others.

Session highlights:

- ❖ *Storyhacking: A Journey of Narrative Creation*
- ❖ *Writing Screenplays for Children's Film & Television*
- ❖ *Writing for Video Games*
- ❖ *Bringing Stories to Life Using AR and VR*

- **Teachers Congress and Parents Forum (20–21 May)**

This 2-day conference will offer **60** talks and workshops designed to equip preschool and primary school teachers, as well as parents, with the latest skills and tips on improving their children's literacy skills in the classroom, and at home. Session highlights:

- ❖ *Blokes with Books: Can Social Belonging Impact on Reading Motivation and Skill for Young Boys?*
- ❖ *Bring on the Drama: Teaching Playwriting*
- ❖ *Jishobiki: The Japanese Approach to Enhancing Children's Knowledge and Use of Dictionaries*
- ❖ *Spelling in the 21st Century*
- ❖ *Literacy for Special-Needs Children*
- ❖ *Books We Like: Children's Speak*
- ❖ *Motivating Children to Read*

- **Parents Forum (21 May)**

This 1-day conference will offer **13** talks and a workshop designed to equip parents of young children with the latest skills and tips to improve their children's literacy skills at home. Session highlights:

- ❖ *The Great Gift of Reading Aloud*
- ❖ *A Mammoth Task: Encouraging Reading in the Digital Age*
- ❖ *Saving the World: Character Building with Comics*
- ❖ *Have Fun Learning with Dictionaries*
- ❖ *Creative Parents Parenting Creatively*

Literary awards to recognise outstanding children's content

This year, in keeping with its ongoing goal to celebrate and acknowledge quality children's literature, AFCC 2017 will present the biennial **Scholastic Picture Book Award** to an outstanding unpublished picture book with distinct Asian themes by an Asian team of writer and illustrator. The winners will be announced on the **Opening Ceremony** of this year's Asian Festival of Children's Content on 16 May 2017, from 7pm, at L1, Plaza, Central Public Library.

This year, AFCC will also present the winners of the inaugural **AFCC Asian Children's Book Award by Genting Singapore**. The winners will be announced during Indonesia Night on 19 May 2017 at L1, Plaza, National Library Building.

[For more info on the winners of the Scholastic Picture Book Award, see separate press release.](#)
[To RSVP to the Opening Ceremony, please email \[mabel@bookcouncil.sg\]\(mailto:mabel@bookcouncil.sg\) by 15 May 2017.](#)

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About The Asian Festival of Children's Content

The Asian Festival of Children's Content (AFCC) 2017 is an annual event organised by the National Book Development Council of Singapore (NBDCS) to celebrate and promote the creation and appreciation of children's books and content, with a focus on Asian themes.

In 2017, the five-day festival will offer **151** ticketed children's content-related conferences, panel discussions, workshops and masterclasses, as well as many free public activities such as cultural performances, storytelling sessions, book launches, language programmes, and a public book fair.

AFCC 2017 will feature a total of **157** local and international speakers including well-known writers, illustrators, educators and industry professionals from **18** countries: Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Netherlands, Germany, Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, Israel, Slovakia, India, Myanmar, the UK and the USA.

Indonesia is the Country of Focus for AFCC 2017, in conjunction with **RISING 50**, the 50 years of bilateral and diplomatic relations between Singapore and Indonesia. The Country Partners for this year include **BEKRAF**, an Indonesian creative economy agency, and **IKAPI**, the sole professional association of publishers in Indonesia that unites book publishers in Indonesia.

For more info, visit www.afcc.com.sg

About The National Book Development Council of Singapore (NBDCS)

The National Book Development Council of Singapore (NBDCS) is a non-profit, charitable organisation founded in December 1968. It is guided by its vision to develop and promote Singapore's books and literary arts sector, as well as its mission to serve the community of professionals in the books and literary arts sector, through three core areas: festivals, awards and training. In 2018, NBDCS will celebrate its 50th anniversary, and mark five decades of working towards the growth and development of Singapore's literary arts scene.

For more info, visit www.bookcouncil.sg.

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