



## **Open call: Recruiting Participants for 3 Curated Conferences**

Mekong Cultural Hub is inviting applications from people who would like to contribute to one of 3 curated conferences between November 2020 – April 2021, and then share the outcomes from those conferences at a gathering MCH is arranging in May 2021.

### **What gathering?**

MCH is arranging a *Meeting Point* for people concerned with arts and social action in Asia. The theme for this meeting point is “Revealing Contexts”. The *Meeting Point* will take place at [C-Lab](#), Taipei, from May 20-22, 2021.

More information about *Meeting Point* will be released in the next few weeks. Please [follow MCH on social media](#) for updates. In addition to the curated conferences, there will be other ways to get involved, and people will also be welcome to come to the Meeting Point even if they aren’t already participating in a related program.

### **What does ‘curated conference’ mean?**

To “confer” means to consult together, to deliberate and exchange opinions. MCH is interested to honor the concept behind *conferencing*, and create an opportunity for three small groups to come together, to consult each other on a certain topic, to exchange ideas and finally to transmit their exchanges to a wider audience.

Each conference will involve 4-6 participants, whose ‘act of consulting together’ will take place over a 6-month period. The groups will include participants from different Asian countries, and with different personal and professional backgrounds – but with a shared interest in a topic to confer on.

Each group’s conference will be facilitated/supported/guided by a curator, invited by MCH. The curator will help the group to shape their discussions, and then to prepare to share their findings from their conversations at the Meeting Point that MCH is arranging in Taipei in May 2021. The sharing might be a panel presentation, a roundtable or a workshop. That will be up to the group.

Each group will be joined by a Creative Interpreter. Their role will be to listen to the discussions, and to find a creative way to document the journey of the group and the story of the conference over the six months. This will not be a literal documentation of what the participants say (which will be confidential within the group) but a creative expression of the overall exchange of ideas and how they change over time.

Summary:

- 3 groups of 4-6 members, guided by a curator
- Each group 'conferences' about one theme
- The conferencing takes place online, with 4-6 sessions between November 2020 and April 2021
- In May 2021, the groups will share the reflections and directions for their conferences to a wider audience at the MCH Meeting Point in Taipei
- A creative document about each conference will be produced

### Who are the curators?

The three curators are:



**CHUNG Shefong**, Taiwan  
Shefong is a producer and curator who regularly organizes a number of music and film festivals in Taiwan.



**Janet PILLAI**, Malaysia  
Janet is currently an independent consultant and resource person in the field of arts and culture education and cultural sustainability.



**Anmol VELLANI**, India  
Anmol is the founder and former executive director of the India Foundation for the Arts, an independent philanthropic organization.

*You can learn more about the curators by referring to the separate attachment which introduces both the curators and the topics in more detail.*



## **What are the topics for the conferences?**

Each curator has come up with a starting prompt for their group's conference. We have included a short summary of each one below. Please refer to the following [link](#) for a more detailed description of each topic, including some of the key questions that the Curator would like to explore with the participants.

### **Artistic Action in Practice in the Mekong Region**

This conference will discuss the role of art in social change; the creative power of the arts to make positive impacts on communities; and strategies for dealing with censorship and other challenges in the context of the arts and social action ecosystem in the Mekong region.

*This conference is curated by CHUNG Shefong*

### **Perspectives on socially-engaged arts/culture in Asia**

In this session, we will explore the practice of socially engaged arts in the Asian region and its current manifestations and characteristics in relation to place, people and use. We will examine practices of how social situations/conditions are moved into the realm of art or culture-making (or vice versa) and how art/culture is being used to activate a social environment. We hope to conclude with how this practice is received or nurtured in the Asian context and its relevance to our future.

*This conference is curated by Janet PILLAI*

### **In the wake of COVID-19: altered contexts and prospects for the arts in Asia**

COVID-19 has disrupted the arts around the world. Lockdowns and social distancing have driven teaching, production, viewership and debate online—with mixed results. But while the contagion has altered the context and outlook for the arts everywhere, it has done so unequally across and within regions and countries. This conference will ask vital questions that this unprecedented and precarious situation has posed for the arts in Asia

*This conference is curated by Anmol VELLANI*

**NOTE:** For more information about each of the curators and the conference topics, please read the longer descriptions on the document [here](#).

## Who can join?

To be eligible to participate in a curated conference you must:

- Be interested in the topic and willing to engage in exchanging ideas with people from different professional and cultural backgrounds to you
- Be active in the arts and cultural field
  - This could be as an artist, an administrator, researcher or any other kind of practitioner
  - If you do not work directly in the arts and cultural field, that's fine but you need to show an active, ongoing connection through your work (professional or otherwise) with the arts
- Be available to make time for 4-6 sessions with your group between November-April
- Be available to join the Meeting Point in Taipei between May 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> 2021 (all costs covered by MCH)
  - Arrival 19<sup>th</sup> May, preparation and group work 20<sup>th</sup> May, Meeting Point program 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> May, departure 23<sup>rd</sup> May
- Be able to speak and understand enough English that you can have a meaningful conversation with a peer about the issues raised up in the prompts
  - Your English does not need to be perfect, and it definitely doesn't need to be academic or technical, but you do need to be willing and able to express yourself and share with others in your group
- Be willing to use online platforms for discussion (if you need technical or logistical support for this, or training, then MCH can do our best to help)
- Be a citizen of an Asian country

## How to apply?

To apply please complete the [application form](#) and send it by email to [rina@mekongculturalhub.org](mailto:rina@mekongculturalhub.org) by October 11<sup>th</sup> 2020

**NOTE:** Please make your application related to **one** specific conference, and **only send one application**. There is space on the form where you can note if you are also interested in the other conferences. If you have any questions, please contact Rina using the email address above.

*MCH Meeting Point is possible thanks to support from*