



**REGIONAL MEMBER**

World Federation of  
Occupational Therapists

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Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Regional Group



Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Regional Group

# **APOTRG Newsletter**

**Volume 2 | Issue 1**

**January 2023**

**Highlights:** WFOT Congress, History of APOTRG, Japan Conference, Sato Lectureship Award, OT from the Maldives

# Welcome from the Editors

Welcome to our first newsletter in 2023. We hope that the year has started well for you.

In this edition, we will recap on the WFOT Council Meeting and Congress in Paris, France. It was certainly a fantastic opportunity for the APOTRG (Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Regional Group) members to finally catch up and meet each other in the flesh once again, and to mingle with our international colleagues from all over the globe. The minutes of the APOTRG General Assembly held in Paris is also included in this newsletter.

We will also explore the history of the APOTRG about how it all started, why was it formed and what have we done so far.

This edition will promote the upcoming 8<sup>th</sup> APOTC (Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Conference) in Sapporo, Japan, in 2024. We will introduce the "Sato Lectureship" award, which was established in honour of Professor Tsuyoshi Sato who was one of the key instigators of the APOTRG and APOTC, as well as how to nominate someone for it.

We will also hear from a pioneering occupational therapist from the Maldives, Thootha Adley.

Please email your contributions to [apotrgnews@gmail.com](mailto:apotrgnews@gmail.com). Articles of interests include occupational therapy related initiatives, individual/team/organisational success stories, lessons learnt, opinion piece about specific topics of interest, training and education opportunities, achievements and awards, stories of collaboration and partnership, research ideas and more.

Have a fantastic year ahead in 2023!

**Adam Lo and Amber Chang**

**Newsletter Co-editors**

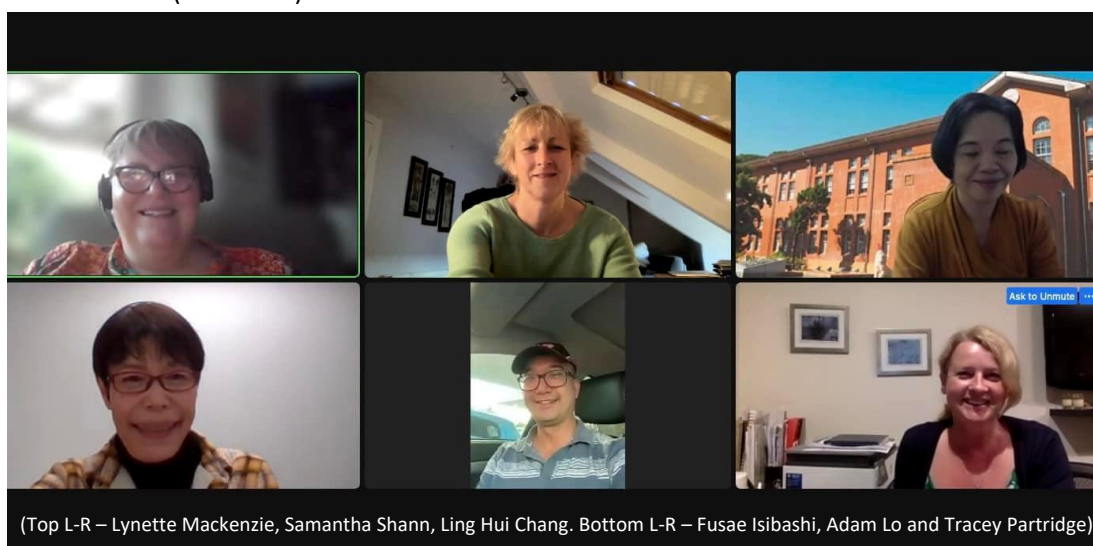
## Your APOTRG Committee



**Vice President's Message** 2023 is now upon us with all the opportunities and challenges a new year brings, including the events that will happen that we don't yet anticipate or know about! As occupational therapists we have so much to offer to the people we serve by assisting them to live their best lives and engage in meaningful occupations. I wish you all a very happy new year and happy lunar new year.

Reflecting on 2022 most of us have been adjusting to the "new normal" since all the change that occurred as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. Some of us in our region were more isolated than others and experienced more negative health outcomes than others. For some people this continues through the advent of long COVID and other long-term conditions that need occupational therapy intervention. We are also adjusting to more online learning and service delivery that will stay with us for many years to come.

The APOTRG executive has been meeting regularly throughout 2022 to address several projects such as the 2024 congress in Sapporo, Japan, and we are meeting regularly with the Japanese congress committee. I hope you will all put the dates in your diary and plan to attend (Nov 6-9<sup>th</sup> 2024). We also seek to support the needs of developing programs in our region where we can (currently Vietnam, Nepal and the Maldives). On occasions this has involved members of the WFOT Executive and Samantha Shann (President).



For those of us able to attend the WFOT Congress in Paris, it was lovely to be able to catch up in person with so many colleagues and benefit from the richness of face-to-face interactions. The congress program was huge and provided many opportunities for delegates to learn from each other across cultural differences and languages. The APOTRG also held a general assembly of delegates that were members of APOTRG during the Council meeting.

At the WFOT Council Meeting I was appointed as the WFOT program co-ordinator for research – an immense privilege but also a big role to fulfill. We are working on some important projects such as implementing a research engagement program for WFOT members and investigating options for WFOT to institute a research ethics board for members who do not have access to local ethics approval.

I look forward to having contact with you all throughout 2023, and wish you all the best for the upcoming year!

**Lynette Mackenzie**



# WFOT Council Meeting & Congress 2022

The 35<sup>th</sup> WFOT Council meeting was held in Paris, France in August. Delegates from 57 countries and six regional groups joined with the executive management to review and discuss the aims of WFOT and strategic planning for the future. All the delegates participated in focus groups on justice equity, diversity and inclusion, education, human resources and governance. Four new full members were welcomed into the WFOT family and they included Peru, Lebanon, Ethiopia, and Costa Rica, as well as one new associate member – Kyrgyzstan. This brought the total membership to 107 organisations. APOTRG Secretary, Adam Lo, acted as proxy in Paris for the President, Ling Hui Chang, in her absence as she was unable to make it to France. The representatives and Presidents from the Regional Groups used the opportunity to network, plan and work together over the course of the week. This includes the Association of Caribbean Occupational Therapists (ACOT), the Arab Occupational Therapists Regional Group (AOTRG), the Confederacion Latinoamericana De Terapeutas Ocupacionates (CLATO), the Council of Occupational Therapists for the European Countries (COTEC) and the Occupational Therapy Africa Regional Group (OTARG). All the Regional Groups agreed to further enhance collaboration and communication moving forward, through several identified strategies and actions.

Of course, the APOTRG also had the opportunity to host its 8<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Meeting, which was a fantastic opportunity for the various representatives from the Asia-Pacific regions to come together face-to-face and form deeper level connections at the human level. Especially since the Covid-19 pandemic had prevented this for extended periods since 2020.



(ABOVE: The APOTRG General Assembly Meeting in Paris, France)





(ABOVE: Azusa Kami, Adam Lo and Professor Jumpie Oba)

During the week-long Council Meeting, elections were also being held for several WFOT executive positions. The vice president of APOTRG, Professor Lynette Mackenzie (Second-alternate WFOT delegate for Australia) was elected as the WFOT Programme Coordinator Research. In addition, Margarita Gonzalez (Colombia) was re-elected as the WFOT Vice President, and Tecla Mlambo (Zimbabwe) we re-elected as the WFOT Programme Education.

Following the Council Meeting was the long-awaited WFOT Congress. **The 18th WFOT Congress 'Occupational R-Evolution'** was successfully held in Paris during 27 – 31 August 2022. The hybrid Congress was attended by over 2500 delegates from around the world, from more than 100 countries. The Congress provided a range of content, starting from the Education Day to the Closing Ceremony, spanning across topics relevant to the occupational therapy profession to provide a valuable learning experience for all, in both English and French.



(ABOVE: New Zealand WFOT Delegate, Dan Johnson and his poster presentation at the Congress)

The APOTRG hosted a stall at the Congress, with many members manning it throughout the proceedings and interacting with delegates from around the world. One of the biggest events being heavily promoted was the upcoming APOTRG's conference in Sapporo, Japan, 2024! There was a lot of interest and hundreds of flyers were handed out. Another popular item being handed out was the mini plush Koalas from Australia!



(ABOVE: Multiple Visitors at the APOTRG Stall)

WFOT Awards were officially presented during the Congress. The Thelma Cardwell Foundation Award for Research was presented to María Agostina Ciampa, Natalia Soledad Fiorella Martínez and Gonzalo Aranés. WFOT Merit Awards were presented to past WFOT Executive Management Team members Marilyn Pattison, Sandra Bressler and Liliana Alvarez. The highly prestigious WFOT Honorary Fellow Award was presented to Sue Baptiste, Margarita Gonzalez and Ritchard Ledgerd.

Whilst the 18<sup>th</sup> WFOT Congress in Paris was a success, the location of the next Congress in 2026 is yet to be decided. This was due to the uncertainty of the global situation. The WFOT Executive Team will announce their decision in due course after some careful planning and consideration.





# **The History of Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Regional Group (APOTRG)**

Dear fellow members and friends, do you know how Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Regional Group (APOTRG) was founded? In this article, we would like to share with you all about the evolutionary flow of APOTRG. Please hop on in for a time-travel throughout our history!

## ***Q1: When was APOTRG founded?***

**Answer:** The origin of APOTRG was Asia Pacific OT Network (APOTN). The first meeting was held on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1995, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The meeting was chaired by Professor Tsuyoshi Sato from Japan. APOTN then evolved into a regional group in order to more inclusive to all members from the Asia Pacific region. APOTRG was officially a regional member of World Federation of Occupational Therapist (WFOT) since 2006.

## ***Q2: Who were the initiative countries of APOTRG?***

**Answer:** The initiative countries included Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Taiwan.

## ***Q3: What is the purpose of APOTRG?***

**Answer:** The main goal of APOTRG is to enhance communication and networking of all countries in the Asia Pacific region. APOTRG provides a platform for interaction and information exchange among countries through meetings and conferences. This organization is also aiming for promotion of Occupational Therapy in Asia Pacific region.

## ***Q4: What is the SATO Lectureship Award?***

**Answer:** The “Sato Lectureship” award was established in honour of Professor Tsuyoshi Sato, who was one of the key instigators of the APOTRG and APOTC. The aim of the ‘Sato Lectureship’ is to stimulate interest in the development and advancement of occupational therapy, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. It aims to inspire members of the profession through the sharing of knowledge and experience in research, education and the practice of occupational therapy. \*Please see application details on page 9.

## *Some facts and stats about the APOTRG*

### Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Regional Group

Official Year of Establishment 2006

### Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Conference

1995	1 <sup>st</sup> APOTC	Malaysia
1999	2 <sup>nd</sup> APOTC	Taiwan
2003	3 <sup>rd</sup> APOTC	Singapore
2007	4 <sup>th</sup> APOTC	Hong Kong
2011	5 <sup>th</sup> APOTC	Thailand
2015	6 <sup>th</sup> APOTC	New Zealand
2021	7 <sup>th</sup> APOTC	Philippines (online due to Pandemic)
2024	8 <sup>th</sup> APOTC	Japan

### Sato Lectureship Award

2007	Lim Hua Beng (Singapore)
2011	Kit Sinclair (Hong Kong)
2015	Lyle Duque (Philippines)
2021	Athena Tsai (Taiwan)

### APOTRG Presidents

2006-2007	Tan Hwei Lan (Singapore) (Pro-tem President Elect)
2007-2011	Suchada Sakornsatien (Thailand)
2011-2015	Nathan Vytialingam (Malaysia)
2015-2017	Thelma Burnett (Australia)
2017-2021	Patrick Ker (Singapore)
2021 -	Chang Ling Hui (Taiwan)

### APOTRG General Assemblies

Initial Meeting	Sydney, Australia 2006
1 <sup>st</sup> General Assembly	Hong Kong 2007
2 <sup>nd</sup> General Assembly	Chiang Mai, Thailand 2011
3 <sup>rd</sup> General Assembly	Taipei, Taiwan 2012
4 <sup>th</sup> General Assembly	Yokohama, Japan 2014
5 <sup>th</sup> General Assembly	Rotorua, New Zealand 2015
6 <sup>th</sup> General Assembly	Taiwan 2017
7 <sup>th</sup> General Assembly	"Zoom" 2021
8 <sup>th</sup> General Assembly	Paris, France 2022



## **Guidelines and Nomination Form for the Sato Lectureship**

### **Background**

The “Sato Lectureship” award was established in honour of Professor Tsuyoshi Sato, who was one of the key instigators of the APOTRG and APOTC. The award was established in 2003 during the 3rd APOTC in Singapore and after its rectification by the Japanese Association of Occupational Therapists (JAOT), the 1st official award was given in 2007 during the 4th APOTC in Hong Kong. The award of the “Sato Lectureship” is to be given once every 4 years in conjunction with the APOTC. Only one award will be granted each period.

### **Aims of the Sato Lectureship**

The aim of the ‘Sato Lectureship’ is to stimulate interest in the development and advancement of occupational therapy, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. It aims to inspire members of the profession through the sharing of knowledge and experience in research, education and the practice of occupational therapy.

### **Nomination Procedure**

1. Only member organizations of APOTRG, not individuals, are eligible to submit nominations.
2. The nomination form enclosed in this document must be submitted to the Secretary of APOTRG when the call for nomination is opened.
3. The narrative must include detailed examples of the nominee’s contributions to the profession of occupational therapy nationally and internationally, particularly in the Asia-Pacific Region.
4. The narrative is not to exceed 1500 words; single-spaced; 12 point; and Arial or Calibri font.
5. The nominator should include the nominee’s resume/curriculum vitae (CV) which list professional experience, affiliations and special interests.

### **Selection Criteria**

Nominations must meet the following criteria:

1. Nominees must be Individual Members or Honorary Fellows of their national organisations and in good standing.
2. Nominees should have outstanding contribution to the body of knowledge of occupational therapy nationally and in the Asia-Pacific region.
3. Nominees should have provided opportunities for members of the profession to benefit from the above contributions through publication, presentations, organizational impact, policy development or Governmental involvement.
4. Nominees should be providing mentorship to nurture professional growth in others.
5. Nominees should be seen as an inspiration to occupational therapists.

### **Specific Information Regarding the Award**

1. The recipient of this award will present the ‘Sato Lecture’ as a keynote address during the APOTC
2. The length of the address will be 45 minutes.
3. The lecture topic will be the choice of the recipient who will notify host country of APOTC at least one year prior to the Conference.
4. APOTRG / Host country of APOTC will provide \$1000 USD towards accommodation and airfare and a complimentary registration to the Conference.

## **NOMINATIONS FOR THE SATO LECTURESHIP OF APOTC 2024 WILL BE OPENING SOON**

Sato Lectureship key dates:

End of February 2023	APOTRG President’s Call for nomination
End of July 2023	Nomination closed
August 2023	Judging
Early September 2023	Awardee notified
November 2023	Topic of the Sato Lectureship announced

### ‘Sato Lectureship’ Nomination Form

<b>Name of Nominee:</b>	
Member Organization:	
Contact (email) Details:	

<b>Name of Nominator/s:</b> (President of Member Organization or WFOT Delegate)	
Member Organization	
Contact (email) Details:	

#### Information to support the nomination (maximum word count 1500)

1. Please provide a detailed narrative (maximum word count 1500) of the nominee's outstanding *contribution* to the profession of occupational therapy nationally and regionally/internationally, under the following headings:
  - 1.1 A national and a regional/international profile as an occupational therapist. (not in Patrick’s judging rubrics. Shall we keep this one?)
  - 1.2 Outstanding contribution to the body of knowledge, practice development, policy advocate, etc of occupational therapy nationally and in the Asia-Pacific region.
  - 1.3 Enabling members of the profession to benefit from the above contributions through education, research, organizational impact, or policy development.
  - 1.4 Providing mentorship to nurture professional growth in others.
  - 1.5 Being seen as an inspiration to occupational therapists.
2. Please provide other materials to support the narrative above, including but not limited to: Professional experiences; Affiliations; Special interests; Awards and recognitions; Support letters and references

This nomination form and supporting information should be sent to the APOTRG Secretary **APOTRG@gmail.com**





**Empowering Collaborative Community:  
Sustainable and Evidence-Based Occupational Therapy**

## #APOTC2024

The APOTRG is extremely excited that the next APOTC (the 8<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Conference) will be held in Sapporo, Japan, from November 6 (WED) to 9 (SAT), 2024! It will be held at the Sapporo Convention Center.

You can find out all about it on

<https://www.c-linkage.co.jp/apotc2024/>

**The call for APOTC2024 Pre-Congress  
Workshops and Scientific Workshops are  
now OPEN!**

Click the following link for more information:

[Workshop Application & Abstract Submission | 8th  
APOTC.2024 Sapporo.Japan \(c-linkage.co.jp\)](https://www.c-linkage.co.jp/apotc2024/)



(TOP PICTUR: Thooha at the WFOT Congress in Paris)



## SPOTLIGHT on an Occupational Therapist

Recently I spoke with the lovely Thooha Adley, an occupational therapist from Maldives.

Adam: "Thooha, tell me about yourself."

**Thooha:** "I am an Occupational Therapist and have been working in the field for 10 years. I graduated from the University of Sydney, Australia, and I worked in Sydney and Melbourne in paediatrics. I moved back to Maldives about 12 months ago and am currently working at my private practice.

Adam: "So what else are you doing as an occupational therapist in the Maldives?"

**Thooha:** "I am also working with the Maldives National University to help develop its Occupational Therapy bachelor's program. I am quite keen to promote and develop Occupational Therapy in the country and feel developing a course that is accessible to locals will help in developing the profession and make Occupational Therapy services accessible to the public. In addition to this, with the help of Occupational Therapists working here, I am working to start an Occupational Therapy association in Maldives. We hope to work to promote the profession and encourage more people to pursue it as a career.

Adam: "That is fantastic! I am sure all the APOTRG colleagues would love to provide support where we can as well."

**Thooha:** "Occupational Therapy is an emerging profession in Maldives. Currently about 17 Occupational Therapists are working here (with 3 local Occupational Therapists), but we hope that number will continue to grow as awareness of our profession increases."

Adam: "Thank you for your pioneering work. We wish you all the best and no doubt we will keep in touch."

## Upcoming Conferences and Events

**AUSTRALIA** <https://www.otausevents.com.au/otaus2023/registration>



## JAPAN

<http://ot57.umin.jp/en/>



## MALAYSIA

<https://ot-malaysia.my/>



## NEW ZEALAND

[www.otnzwna.co.nz/conference2023/](http://www.otnzwna.co.nz/conference2023/)



**OTNZ-WNA Conference 2023**  
**He Haerenga Ngātahi**  
**Journeying Together**

The Dunedin Centre, Ōtepoti Dunedin  
Thursday 21 and Friday 22 September 2023  
[www.otnzwna.co.nz/conference2023](http://www.otnzwna.co.nz/conference2023)



**Record of Proceedings of the 8<sup>th</sup> General Assembly APOTRG**

**WFOT (World Federation of Occupational Therapists) Council Meeting, Paris, France**

**25 August 2022, 5:30pm Local Time**

**Chairperson:** Lynette Mackenzie (Vice Chairperson)

**Minute taker:** Adam Lo (Secretary)

**Attendees in no particular order**

Jumpei Oba	JAPAN
Emma George	AUSTRALIA
Jo-Anne Gilsenan	NEW ZEALAND/AOTEAROA
Adam Lo	AUSTRALIA
Anteena Aziz	BANGLADESH
Azusa Kami	JAPAN
Byoung-Jin Jeon	KOREA
Minsun Cheong	KOREA
Dan Johnson	NEW ZEALAND
M Ghazali Masuri	MALAYSIA
Patrick Ker	SINGAPORE
Tri Budi Santoso	INDONESIA
Kit Sinclair	HONG KONG
Lyle Duque	PHILIPINES
Erdenetsetseg Myagmar	MONGOLIA
Lynette MacKenzie	AUSTRALIA
Samantha Shann	WFOT Executive/UNITED KINGDOM (attended part of meeting)
Tracey Partridge	WFOT Executive /NEW ZEALAND (attended part of meeting)

## **Apologies**

Assoc. Prof. Ling-Hui Chang (APOTRG Chairperson)	TAIWAN
Fusae Ishibashi (APOTRG Treasurer)	JAPAN

## **RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS – AGENDA ITEMS**

### **APOTC – Japan 2024**

- Representatives from Japan presented on the upcoming APOTC, to be held in Japan in 2024 (JUMPEI, AZUSA).
- Financial – funding for the SATO Lectureship Award currently sits in Canada (LYLE)
- Discussion around countries and locations for APOTC and APOTRG funds to be located. No solution as yet.
- Suggestion to showcase a promotional video at the end of the WFOT Congress (ADAM)

### **APOTRG Booth at WFOT Congress**

- Thank you to all who volunteered their time at the APOTRG Booth, particularly Lyle, Emma and Patrick who assisted Adam in setting it up (ADAM).
- Hundreds of flyers on the APOTC and Sapporo were handed out to participants.
- Adam also handed out Koala plush toys, vegemite and eucalyptus drops that he brought from Australia, and Emma handed out First Nations stones.

### **APOTRG Newsletter**

- New initiative by committee, co-edited by Adam Lo (Australia) and Amber Chang (Taiwan).
- QR Code to access the APOTRG Newsletter were available at the APOTRG Booth.
- Positive feedback from members
- All members encouraged to contribute to the Newsletter via email: [apotrgnews@gmail.com](mailto:apotrgnews@gmail.com)

### **Report from Membership Countries**

- Malaysia held its MOTNC conference in June/July 2022, in which WFOT President, Samantha Shann, participated in (SAMANTHA)
- Singapore's upcoming conference in November 2022 (PATRICK)
- Taiwan's upcoming conference December 2022 (ADAM)
- On the 01 July 2022, New Zealand moved to a new national health system (JO-ANNE and DAN).
- Gratitude expressed to WFOT by Korea, for their strong support in promoting the roles of occupational therapists, resulting in the 'Revised Mental Health Act' which includes occupational therapists as required mental health care service personnel being approved by the Korea National Assembly on 6 March 2020. (BYOUNG-JIN)
- Malaysia ACT 774 was discussed.

### Updates from Chairperson (Proxy)

- Adam acted as Proxy for APOTRG Chairperson, Ling-Hui, during the Council Meeting as she was unable to make it to France.
- Adam reported that he met up with the Chairs from other WFOT Regional Groups and was engaged in constructive discussions. Key takeaways are for better collaboration and ongoing communication between the regions. This includes the sharing of the newsletters from each region with one another.



(Above: The WFOT Regional Group representatives in Paris, France, 2022)



### **Key Aims and Missions for APOTRG**

- The key aims and missions for APOTRG were discussed, and the central themes are collaboration, networking and communication
- The Facebook page will be the main communication tool, supported by emails.
- Some work underway is to support other countries who are developing their OT profession e.g. Nepal, Vietnam and Mongolia
- A strategic plan will be developed in due course
- Discussion around APOTRG member countries to think about providing reciprocal membership benefits. This is up to the individual national associations.

### **Other Businesses**

- Samantha (WFOT President) provided a vote of thanks to the work of the APOTRG and its members.
- The APOTRG pay tribute to the late Suchada Sakornsation of Thailand, for her contributions to WFOT and the profession of Occupational Therapy (LYLE).

### **Closure and next Meeting**

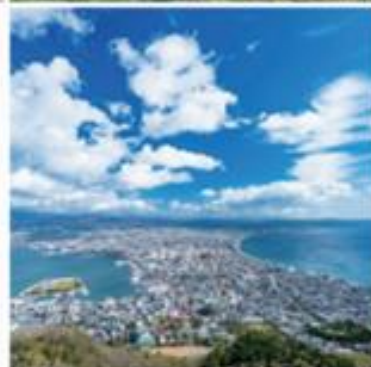
Next General Assembly to be held in Japan, 2024, during the APOTC.

Meeting close at 6:30pm Local Time.



(Above: The APOTRG General Assembly in Paris, France, 2022)





**8APOTC.2024**  
th Sapporo. Japan

**Empowering Collaborative Community:**  
**Sustainable and Evidence-Based Occupational Therapy**

Dates  
**November 6<sup>WED</sup> – 9<sup>SAT</sup>, 2024**

Venue  
**Sapporo Convention Center**  
**SAPPORO, JAPAN**

Convenors  
**Haruki Nakamura**  
President of Japanese Association of Occupational Therapists

**Ling-Hui Chang**  
President of Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Regional Group