

UPF IAAP: International Association of Academicians for Peace

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A Global Network of Academicians Dedicated to Peace



The [International Association of Academicians for Peace](#) (IAAP) is one of the [primary associations](#) of the [Universal Peace Federation](#). It brings together professors, researchers, university leaders, educators and other academic professionals to examine questions affecting peace, human development and the future of societies and the wider world.

IAAP was inaugurated on February 5, 2020, during the [World Peace Academic Conference](#) at the KINTEX convention center in the Republic of Korea. The conference formed part of [World Summit 2020](#), sponsored by the Universal Peace Federation.

IAAP began as a new global association within UPF. Decades of scientific, academic, publishing and educational work by the UPF founders [Dr. Hak Ja Han](#) and the late [Dr. Sun Myung Moon](#) provided a foundation for the association. IAAP builds on that foundation while developing its own programs, partnerships and professional identity.

Current Network and Coordination

IAAP works through UPF's international, regional and national structures. Its participants include scholars from the natural and social sciences, philosophy, education, peace and conflict studies, international relations, ethics, religion and culture.

[Dr. Thomas Selover](#), a scholar of comparative religion and East Asian philosophy and a former university president, serves as the global coordinator of IAAP.

IAAP creates settings in which specialists from different disciplines can address a common question. Academicians also exchange views with policymakers, religious leaders, media professionals, business leaders and civil society organizations. Participants contribute from their own intellectual traditions and retain responsibility for their own research and conclusions.

Founding and Purpose

The World Peace Academic Conference was convened as a component of UPF's World Summit and organized by the [Hyo Jeong Academic Foundation](#) on February 4 and 5, 2020. Its program brought together four areas of work: the unity of the sciences and environmental responsibility; international relations, human rights and peacebuilding; religion, culture and ethics; and a World University Presidents' Congress on higher education.

Participants included university presidents, scientists, philosophers, policy specialists and educators. Sunhak Peace Prize laureate [Dr. Modadugu Vijay Gupta](#) spoke about the public responsibility of scholars. At the closing plenary, Dr. Thomas Selover read the resolution establishing IAAP under the auspices of UPF, Dr. Thomas G. Walsh, then UPF Chair, offered congratulatory remarks, and Nobel laureate [Dr. Mario J. Molina](#) led the signing.

The founding resolution identified five practical areas of work: research for the benefit of humanity, high-quality academic publication, teaching, professional networking and the convening of scholarly programs. These objectives allowed regional chapters to develop work suited to their academic communities while remaining connected through an international association.

IAAP therefore serves as a meeting point for scholarship and public life. Its value lies in sustained intellectual exchange, cooperation among institutions and the development of results that can continue through publications, teaching resources, research partnerships and policy discussion.

Regional Programs and Recent Projects

In the Asia Pacific region, IAAP-Oceania, coordinated by [Dr. John Bellavance](#), has developed a sustained program in values education. Beginning in 2021, the [Values Education Summit series](#) brought together academics, teachers, parents and community leaders. Their contributions were developed into working papers and later into [Living with Purpose](#), published by UPF-Australia and IAAP-Oceania in 2026. The 360-page guide contains more than 90 activities for classrooms, communities and personal development.

The wider IAAP Asia Pacific network convened about 100 scholars, policymakers and peace practitioners in April 2026 for a [forum that considered a wide range of topics, including the United Nations Charter](#), multilateral cooperation, artificial intelligence, health security and social cohesion. The program connected academic analysis with questions facing international institutions and public leadership.

In Europe and the Middle East, IAAP programs under the coordination of [Yoshihiro Yamazaki](#) have concentrated on Northeast Asia and international connectivity. A series of forums examined peace on the Korean Peninsula and the proposal for an [International Highway](#) that would include a Japan-Korea tunnel linked to wider transport networks. [IAAP-Russia](#) later developed a national academic network through interviews and public discussions with Russian professors.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, [IAAP-Argentina](#) established work in education and values, technology, culture, media and environmental questions. In Peru, IAAP and UPF-Peru worked with the office of a member of the Congress of the Republic to convene a [2024 forum marking International Mother Earth Day](#), with the Minister of the Environment participating as guest of honor. In 2026, IAAP joined regional programs on family well-being and [cultural diversity](#) involving participants from South America, Central America and the Caribbean.

These programs show several ways in which IAAP can work: sustained consultation, national academic panels, cooperation with public institutions, and interdisciplinary regional forums.

Academic and Educational Work that Prepared the Foundation for IAAP

IAAP's institutional history begins in 2020. However, its deeper intellectual background reaches to academic and educational initiatives supported by the UPF founders from the early 1970s onward. These projects followed different institutional paths, yet together they created a substantial record of engagement with scientists, professors, universities, publishers, teachers and students.

The International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences

One of the most visible initiatives was the [International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences](#), or ICUS. The first conference was held in New York in 1972 with 20 participants from eight nations. By ICUS X in Seoul in 1981, participation had grown to 808 people from 100 nations. Twenty-two conferences were held between 1972 and 2000.

The standing of ICUS was reflected in its [conference chairmen](#). They included Nobel laureates Lord Edgar Adrian, Robert S. Mulliken, Sir John Eccles and Eugene P. Wigner, as well as political scientist Morton A. Kaplan and other senior scholars. The conferences addressed nuclear energy, biomedical ethics, information technology, environmental responsibility, universities, culture and the relationship between scientific knowledge and human values.

ICUS also connected academic discussion with long-term proposals. At ICUS X in 1981, the [Great Asian Highway proposal](#) advanced by Dr. Moon envisioned links among Japan, Korea and China, including a Japan-Korea tunnel, as part of a wider international transport network. This concept later developed into the [International Peace Highway](#) vision and stimulated engineering, geographical and policy research.

In 2017, [ICUS XXIII](#) deliberated on the environmental crisis and the social responsibility of science. Participants included Nobel laureates Luc Montagnier and Shuji Nakamura, Dennis Meadows and J. Martin Ramirez. The environmental series continued through ICUS XXVIII in 2022, addressing scientific responses to environmental threats, health, quality of life and implementation.

Conference papers and the [ICUS Books](#) series extended these discussions into published work. Titles included *Mind and Brain: The Many Faceted Problems*, *Genetic Knowledge: Human Values and Responsibility*, *Global Climate Change: Human and Natural Influences* and *Education and Values in Developing Nations*.

Professors World Peace Academy and Knowledge Networks

The [Professors World Peace Academy](#), or PWPA, was founded in Seoul on May 6, 1973, at a gathering of 168 professors from Korea and Japan. Its early discussions focused on historical reconciliation and on the contribution scholars could make where political relations had reached their limits.

PWPA expanded into Europe, Africa and the Americas. In December 1983, representatives from 70 nations gathered in Seoul for the establishment of PWPA International. Political scientist Morton A. Kaplan, Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago and author of *System and Process in International Politics*, became its international president.

PWPA organized conferences on political systems, development, education, democratic institutions, the

global economy and international order. It also created a substantial publishing record. The [International Journal on World Peace](#) began in 1984 as a refereed interdisciplinary journal, while [Paragon House](#) published books connected with PWPA and ICUS conference committees.

A later UPF-supported knowledge project, the [New World Encyclopedia](#), was launched in 2005 with editorial management through Paragon House. PWPA, its publications and the encyclopedia reflected a continuing path toward the scholarly networking, editorial cooperation and public access to knowledge that later found a new global framework in IAAP.

Applied Education through the International Educational Foundation

The [International Educational Foundation](#), or IEF, was established in 1990 to develop moral and ethical education. It worked with educators, schools and public institutions on character education, preparation for family life, service learning and prevention education.

Its first large-scale work took place in the former Soviet Union. Exchanges involving Soviet and American students and educators led to collaboration with Russian specialists on [My World and I](#). Teacher training introduced the curriculum across Russia, Mongolia and other countries of the former Soviet Union.

The English two-volume edition, [My Journey in Life](#), developed from this work and contributed to [Discovering the Real Me](#), a wider series of student texts and teacher manuals. The materials were distributed and adapted in the United States, Europe, Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Pacific islands. China became another major field of activity, with more than 260 programs organized between 1994 and 2004 with governmental and nongovernmental partners.

IEF added an applied dimension to the UPF founders' intellectual contribution. Ideas about character, relationships and social responsibility were translated into curricula, teacher training and materials used in classrooms and communities. This experience remains relevant to IAAP's interest in connecting scholarship with practical educational outcomes.

Universities and Academic Cooperation

The founders' engagement with academic life also included long-term support for universities and international educational exchange. [Sun Moon University](#) developed in the Republic of Korea with programs across science, engineering, the humanities, social sciences and international studies, adding a durable university dimension to this work.

In the United States, PWPA entered a partnership with the [University of Bridgeport](#) in 1992. The partnership helped the university continue during a period of severe financial difficulty and broadened its international relationships. Such initiatives expanded the academic environment from which IAAP later emerged, encompassing scholars, students, institutions, research, publishing and education.

Scholarship as a Long-Term Contribution to Peace

Academic work rarely produces immediate political agreements. Its contribution is cumulative. Research clarifies causes, tests assumptions, preserves evidence and helps societies understand the consequences of public choices. Universities prepare people who later carry responsibility in government, science, business, media and civil society.

IAAP offers a new international framework for this long-term work. It is grounded in a broad history of engagement with science and education while remaining focused on its own responsibility to develop credible programs, useful scholarship and professional cooperation in the present.

Universities, research institutes, academic journals, professional associations and individual scholars are welcome to explore cooperation with IAAP. Through open inquiry and practical collaboration, academic knowledge can contribute to peaceful and humane societies and to the founders' vision of humanity as [one family under God](#).