



An Institute of



SINGAPORE CENTRE FOR CHARACTER AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Advancing research and professional learning
in character and citizenship education from Singapore to the world

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WELCOME MESSAGE

From Centre Director

As educators, we believe that every child can learn and achieve his or her potential. More than a decade ago, during my tenure as the Dean of Teacher Education at NIE, we launched the V³SK model of teacher education which emphasises values above skills and knowledge. Many liberal critics were sceptical about the dialoguing on values at that time. Nevertheless, we have always done things differently in Singapore. Our founding Prime Minister, the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew, once said that if Singapore does the ordinary, we will never survive – we must be “extraordinary”.

V³ represents the multiple dimensions of our values as teachers, illustrating how we cherish the learner, our teacher identity, and our community. Mindset alone is not sufficient to power us in our education mission. The value-set of the teacher is integral to reaching the hearts and minds of our learners. We remind ourselves constantly that while we entered the teaching profession with a firm understanding of our subject matter, we are ultimately teachers of learners, not subjects. We want our learners to experience meaningful interactions where values such as respect, responsibility, resilience, integrity, care and harmony are woven into their daily lives, both inside and outside the classroom. We view each child not just in terms of their academic achievements, but more importantly, as individuals with a trajectory of character growth and maturity in citizenry. The goal of education is to flourish in

life. Flourishing lives involve a symbiotic equation of nurturing individuals in their identities and building their relationships with others. Today, teachers hold a pivotal role in moulding future citizens who are capable of contributing positively to society.

To further Singapore’s expertise and capabilities in Character and Citizenship Education (CCE), the Singapore Centre for Character and Citizenship Education (SCCCE) was established on 30 May 2023. SCCCE’s mission is to advance research and professional development in the field of CCE. We extend a warm welcome to educators, professionals, academics and policy makers to join us in this enlightening journey through the world of CCE, with the aim to flourish future generations through a more intentional approach to CCE.

The setting up of SCCCE has come at a most crucial time given the confluence of several developments. In an era marked by diversity, division and polarisation, peace and harmony cannot be taken for granted.

“The value-set of the teacher is integral to reaching the hearts and minds of our learners. We remind ourselves constantly that we are ultimately teachers of learners, not subjects.”

I have shared on several international platforms that we are living in a world characterised by the acronym, FEARS: a Fractured world, Ecological deterioration, Artificial intelligence, Resilience breakdown, and Social media impact. The next generation is growing up in a world marked by geopolitical tensions and deep ideological divides. The ecological implications of climate change affect sustainability of all life processes and are already devastating livelihoods and communities. Artificial intelligence, especially generative artificial intelligence (GAI) and artificial general intelligence (AGI), poses great concerns pertaining to human agency and human values and virtues. The rise in mental health issues points to the breakdown of resilience across culture and population groups. The social media landscape, while facilitating the sharing of ideas and learning, has also introduced serious issues such as misinformation, cyberbullying, and data breaches.

Whilst we adopt an approach of learning about AI, learning to use AI, learning with AI, and learning beyond AI, there is a need for greater ethical considerations and equipping our young with human thinking that surpasses machines.

The world has become multi-polar with rapidly changing politics, social scenarios and economic challenges. These have implications on our understanding of democratic values and national identity. The changing profile of our young learners and the world they are experiencing have led to increasing uncertainty, a weaker sense of purpose and worry about their near and long term futures. Yet, it is in such times that education must strengthen character concomitantly with competence. We want our young people to know that character is their “everyday conversations” and that character is destiny.

Character education involves strengthening social-emotional competencies, performative virtues, learning optimism and well-being. In this increasingly complex and challenging world, we must reimagine education. Traditional academic competence is inadequate. We need big-picture thinking, creativity, grit, and social-emotional competencies.

“It is in such times that education must strengthen character concomitantly with competence. We want our young people to know that character is their “everyday conversations” and that character is destiny.”

The immense significance of CCE in education and our society can only be realised through greater reflection, deeper research, richer dialogue, and stronger professional development. SCCCE has responded by embarking on a range of professional development programmes and securing research in several areas of CCE. As educators, our goal is to create an inclusive, caring, and inspiring learning environment. The journey of CCE begins with us embodying the qualities and virtues we aim to instil in our learners. Professional development in education is not just about resources and innovative pedagogies. It is about embracing our role as character educators. This requires constant self-reflection, understanding of our own biases, continuous learning, and striving to exemplify the virtues we teach.

Join us as we explore the transformative power of CCE and its potential to not only enrich the lives of our students but also to elevate our own professional journeys. Welcome to the journey of shaping minds and hearts in CCE, for a better classroom today and a better world tomorrow.

Professor Tan Oon Seng
Centre Director
*Singapore Centre for Character
and Citizenship Education
National Institute of Education
Nanyang Technological University*

ABOUT SCCCE

The Singapore Centre for Character and Citizenship Education (SCCCE) is a centre jointly established by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the National Institute of Education (NIE) to advance Singapore's expertise and capabilities in Character and Citizenship Education (CCE).

Launched on 30 May 2023, it is the first centre of its kind in the region. SCCCE's mission is to advance professional learning and research in CCE to support the development of children and youth in Singapore and beyond.

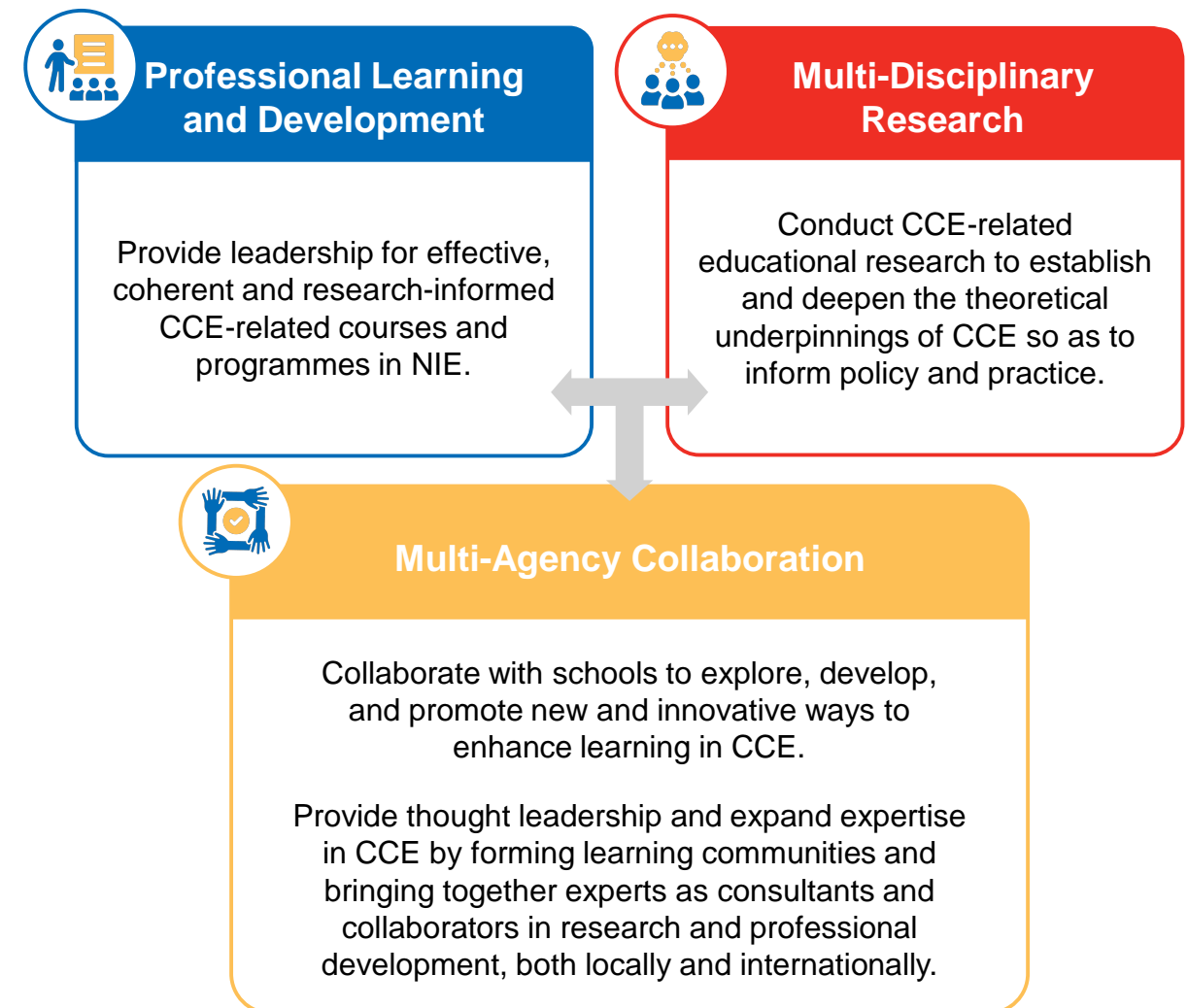


The Centre's logo is inspired by the iconic Tembusu tree, a native heritage tree overlooking Swan Lake at the Singapore Botanic Gardens.

At more than 150 years old, it is known for its longevity, strength, and resilience. The Tembusu tree symbolises SCCCE's commitment to cultivating the young generation's foundations in character and values, citizenship, and social-emotional well-being, so that they flourish holistically as good people and citizens.

Key Pillars

SCCCE's work is organised around three interconnected pillars: multidisciplinary research, professional learning and development, and multi-agency collaboration. Together, these pillars deepen the theoretical foundations of CCE, strengthen the research-policy-practice nexus, and foster local and international partnerships in research and professional learning. The Centre brings together academic, research, teaching, and administrative expertise within NIE and across partner institutions.



"Doing well in school is important, but lessons from Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) and daily life are just as – if not more – valuable. Doing well in life means knowing how to empathise, knowing what is appropriate to say at the right time, how to pull a team together, how to face difficult situations, and having the resilience to adapt and rise again.

Singapore's education system aims to balance academic achievement with holistic development and personal growth. I am sure our students will do well in the future by not just focusing on their studies, but also placing equal emphasis on growing themselves as individuals and as a community."

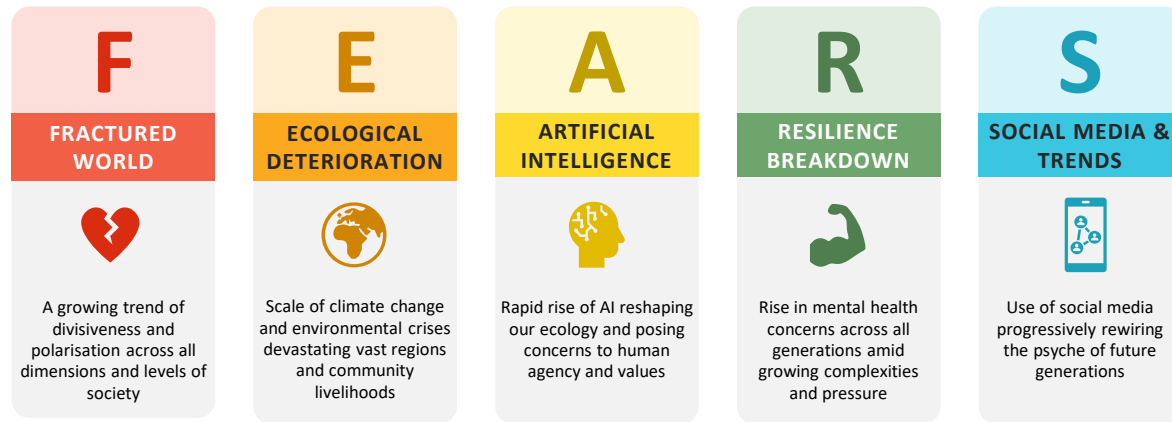
Mr Desmond Lee
Minister for Education and
Minister-in-Charge of Social Services Integration





Why CCE, and why now?

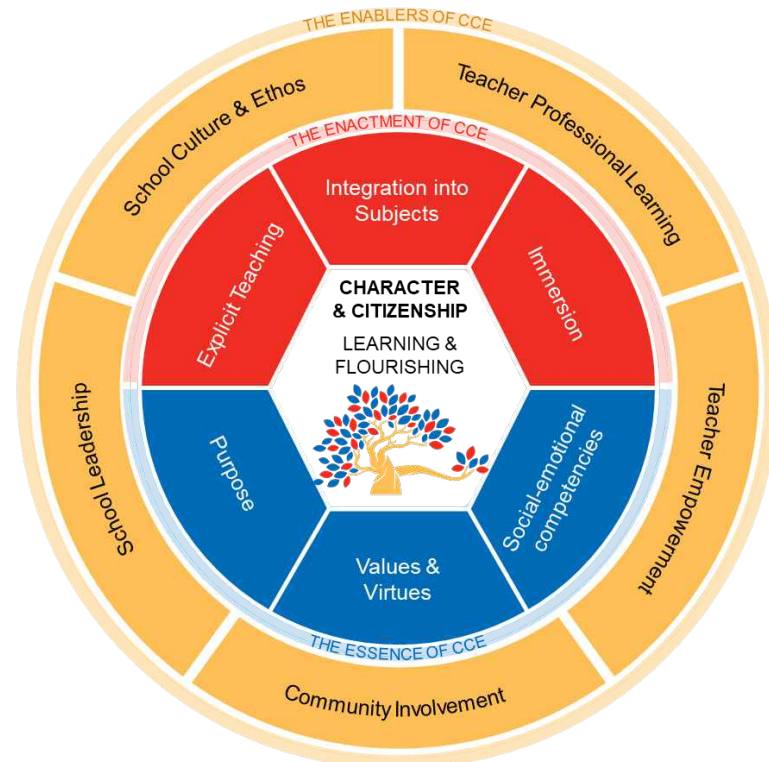
In a world shaped by FEARS — Fractured World, Ecological Deterioration, Artificial Intelligence, Resilience Breakdown, and Social Media and Trends — CCE can no longer be left to chance.



Today's challenge is no longer only whether students can make a living, but whether they can make a life worth living for themselves and for others. Hence, in Singapore, character is inseparable from citizenship because character is expressed through how one lives with others and contributes to the common good. In this context, SCCCE emphasises character before competence, not as a rejection of competence, but as the moral grounding that gives competence its purpose and direction.

The SCCCE Framework

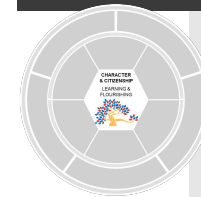
Drawing on local and international best practices in CCE, SCCCE developed a meta-framework for the holistic approach to CCE.



A framework for the holistic approach to CCE
© Singapore Centre for Character and Citizenship Education (2024)

The framework articulates the aim of CCE, and distils CCE into three essential components: values and virtues, purpose, and social-emotional competencies, alongside key enactment principles and enablers. It provides a comprehensive approach that guides educators, parents and communities in nurturing compassionate and responsible individuals who can flourish both individually and with their communities.

THE AIM OF CCE



The overarching aim of CCE is to enable learners to flourish. In Singapore, flourishing is not merely individual success or subjective well-being. It is the holistic development of individuals across multiple domains, as they grow in character and competence while remaining grounded in belonging and responsibility to the community.

THE ESSENCE OF CCE



The essence of CCE comprises a system of three interrelated components: purpose, values and virtues, and social-emotional competencies (SECs).

The three components form the “why”, “what”, and “how” of character and citizenship development, and interact continuously to shape how individuals think, feel and act as persons and citizens. A balanced integration of all three components helps students navigate complex and trying situations wisely. CCE becomes most powerful when purpose, values and virtues, and SECs are nurtured together.

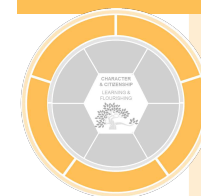
THE ENACTMENT OF CCE



CCE cannot be confined to a standalone subject or lesson. It is also enacted across subjects and through the lived experiences of schooling.

The enactment of CCE can be understood as both a science and an art. As a science, it draws on established principles of curriculum design, pedagogy and developmental science to intentionally plan instruction. It is also an art, requiring professional judgement, and relational and contextual sensitivity on the part of teachers to recognise and harness everyday situations as opportunities for learning.

THE ENABLERS OF CCE



Development occurs within nested and interdependent systems, from the student's closest relationships to the wider social and cultural context. Hence, CCE needs to be supported by an ecology comprising enablers within and beyond schools.

CCE requires coherence across the system and shared responsibility among key stakeholders to make a lasting impact. It is sustained by trusted relationships where schools, teachers, families and communities work in alignment to uphold a common vision.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AT SCCCE: DEVELOPING TEACHERS AS CHARACTER EDUCATORS

Teachers are not merely teachers of subjects, they are shapers of character. A teacher shapes not only what students know, but who they become, making every teacher a CCE teacher. SCCCE's professional learning work is built on this conviction.

Values-based Initial Teacher Preparation

Teacher preparation at NIE is anchored in a values-based paradigm that places character at the heart of professional identity. The Teacher Education Model for the 21st Century (TE²¹) and its underpinning V³SK framework centres teachers in three core value commitments: to the Learner, the Profession, and the Community. These commitments are supported by essential Skills and Knowledge. These commitments shape not only what teachers do, but who they are: educators who act with ethical conviction and see their role as extending beyond academic instruction to the holistic development of students as persons and citizens. In this way, CCE is the foundation of teacher development.

VALUES³

V1: COMMITMENT TO THE LEARNER

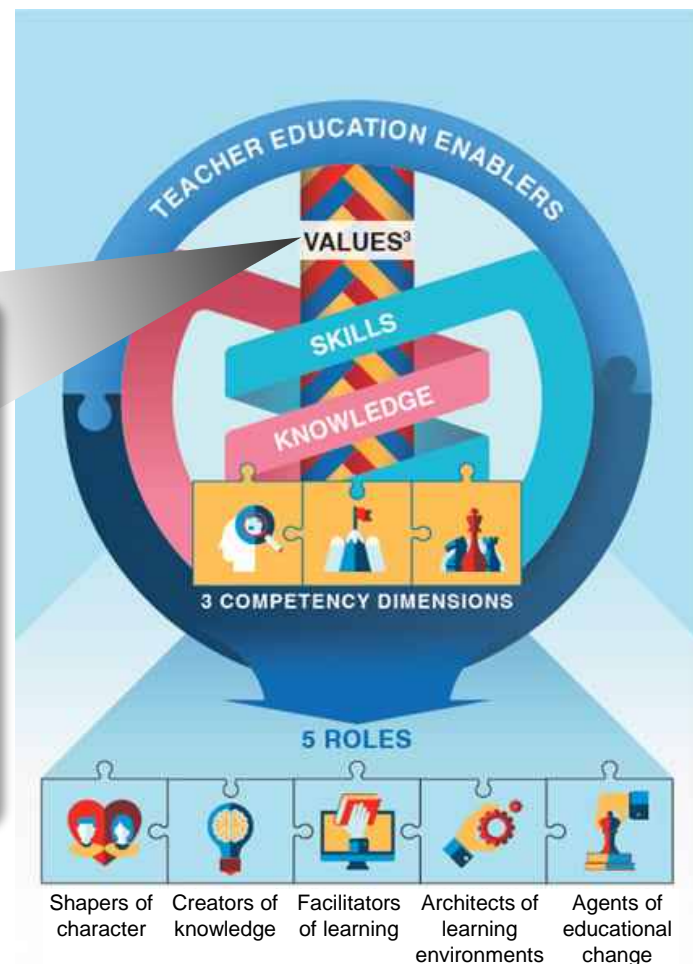
- Believing all children can learn
- Nurturing every learner holistically
- Valuing diversity

V2: COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION

- Striving for continuous learning
- Aiming for high standards
- Acting with ethical conviction
- Upholding teacher personhood

V3: COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

- Building collaborations and partnerships
- Serving society
- Engaging with national and global issues



A Professional Development Pathway for CCE

SCCCE leads a structured range of CCE-focused professional development programmes for pre-service and in-service educators, developed collaboratively with MOE and NIE.

Programmes are mapped onto the SkillsFuture for Educators (SFEd) framework, providing a developmental pathway across the full career continuum – from pre-service preparation through to specialisation and leadership.



"The Singapore Ministry of Education has long been a world leader in valuing and promoting the place of schools in the development of character in youth. With the establishment of the SCCCE, Singapore takes a huge leap forward in the synergistic investment in the character of the people of Singapore, which has been a priority for the nation since its inception. Bringing educator preparation, leadership training, research, in-service training, and best practices together with the already impressive character education infrastructure will make Singaporean character education the model for the rest of the world."

Professor Marvin Berkowitz
Sanford N. McDonnell Professor of Character Education
Co-Director, Center for Character and Citizenship, University of Missouri-St. Louis



RESEARCH AT SCCCE: BUILDING THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR CCE

SCCCE conducts interdisciplinary, practice-oriented research to deepen understanding of CCE and translate findings into curriculum, pedagogy, and policy. Research is grounded in Singapore's educational context while contributing to wider international scholarship.

Strategic Aims

Advance Research in Values-Based Education in Asia

Position SCCCE and NIE as a leading hub regionally and internationally for scholarship on character, citizenship, and values education in multicultural societies.

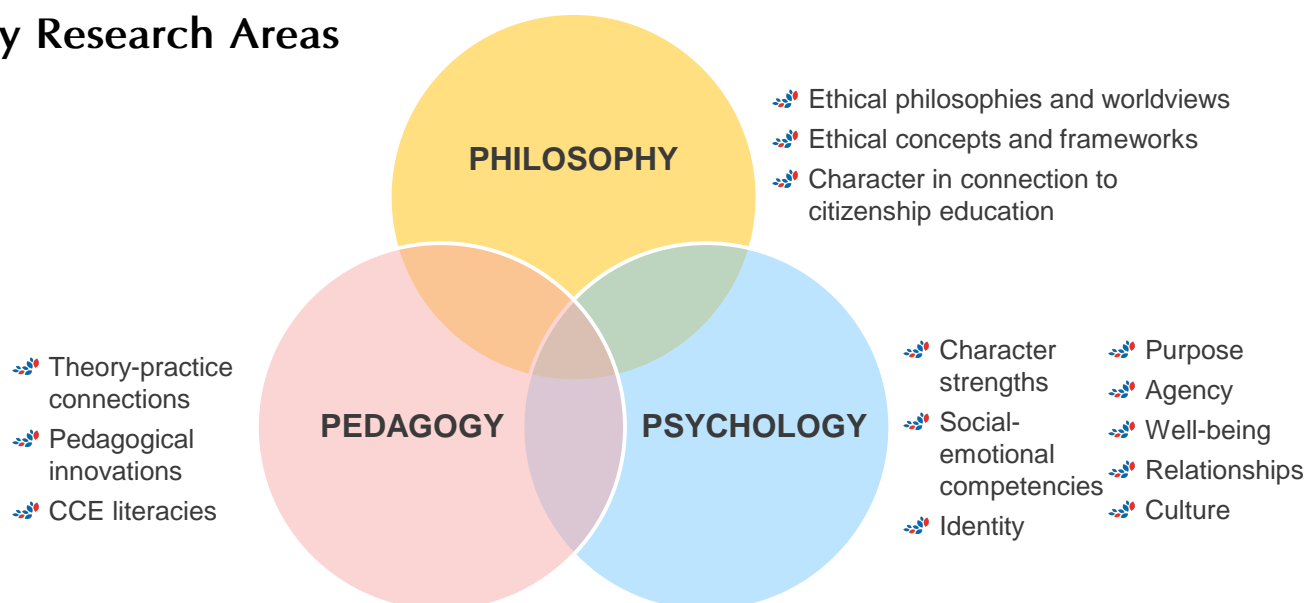
- Deepen concepts underpinning the SCCCE framework
- Explore new methodologies for studying CCE
- Expand theoretical knowledge based on ethical philosophies in Asia and the world

Strengthen Evidence-Based Practice in CCE

Build a rigorous knowledge base that informs the design, implementation, and assessment of effective CCE in schools.

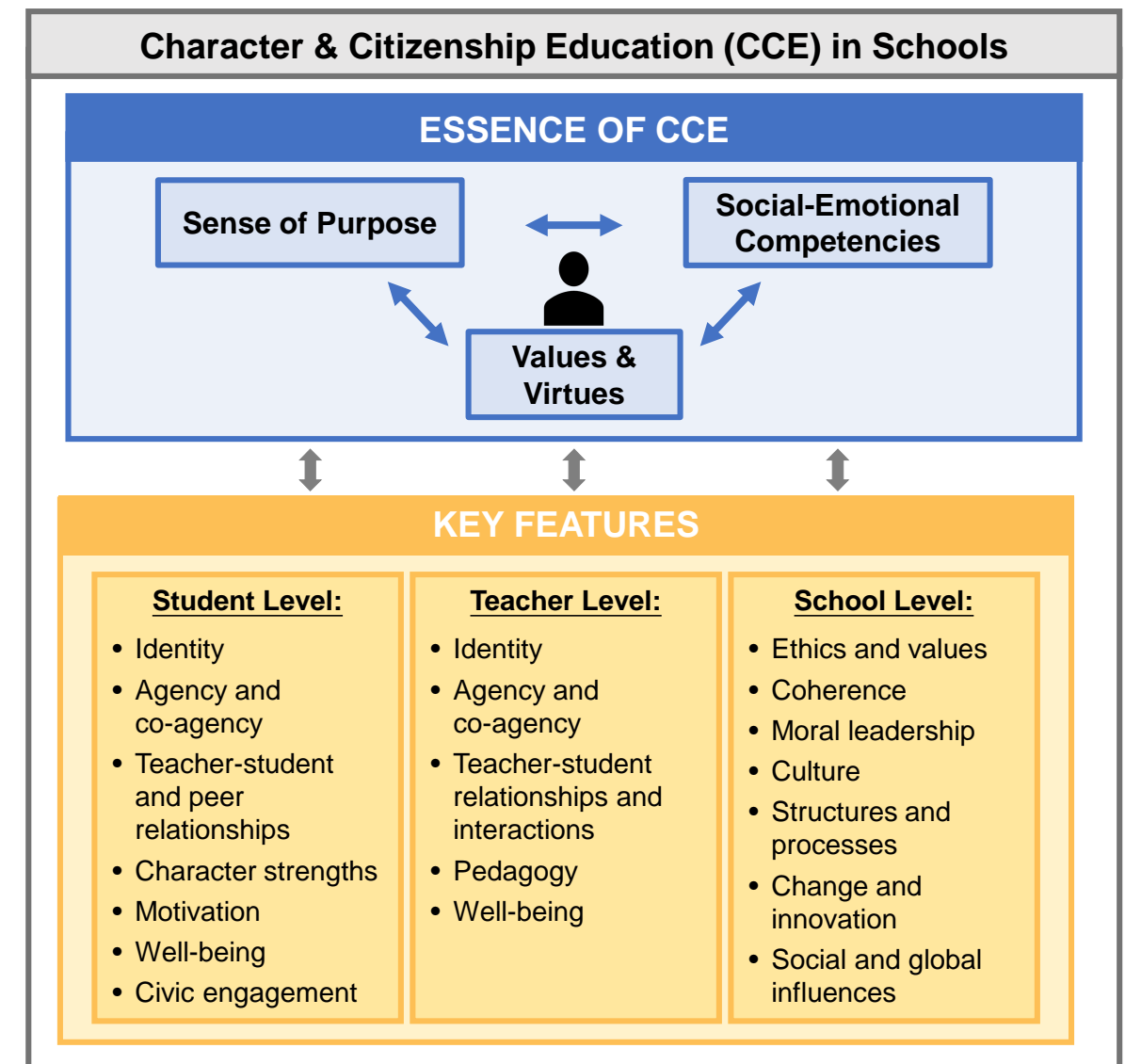
- Develop validated tools and frameworks for assessing values, dispositions, and social-emotional learning
- Drive innovation in pedagogies for ethical and reflective thinking
- Co-design research with schools and policymakers to ensure translational impact
- Inform national curriculum development and teacher professional learning

Key Research Areas



Research Framework

SCCCE's research is grounded in the conviction that schools are foundational sites for flourishing individuals and societies. The essence of CCE — values and virtues, purpose, and social-emotional competencies — functions as an integrated system, with each component reinforcing the others as they are enacted intentionally across the student, teacher, and school levels. Together, the key features at the various levels contribute to schools as communities of character.



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"The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, at the University of Birmingham, is delighted to work closely with SCCCE. The Centre is undertaking important research on character and citizenship which attracts global attention. Importantly, SCCCE strives to ensure its research has real world impact – it directly informs how character and citizenship is taught in schools in Singapore and in other countries. As Director of the Jubilee Centre, I am excited about continuing our research collaborations on character and citizenship education for many years to come."

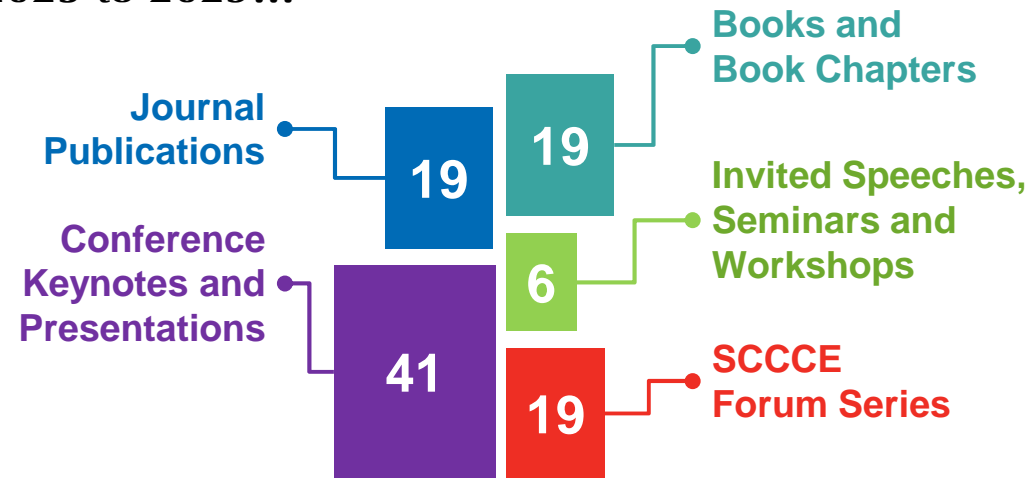
Professor Tom Harrison
Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor
Director, Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham





SCCCE contributes to international conversations on character, citizenship, teacher education, and the future of education through keynote addresses, conference presentations, hosted visits, and policy dialogues. Recent engagements have included OECD forums, UNESCO-related global citizenship education platforms, national and regional conferences, and ministerial or university exchanges across Asia, Europe, and the Americas.

From 2023 to 2025...



INTERNATIONAL KEYNOTE ADDRESSES AND PRESENTATIONS

- OECD's 8th Global Forum on the Future of Education and Skills (2025) – Assoc. Prof Suzanne Choo, featured panelist on changing roles of teachers and teaching, and focus group speaker on reading literacy in the era of AI
- United States National Governors Association Convening (2025) – Prof Tan Oon Seng, panelist on character and citizenship education and the future of education
- UNESCO-APCEIU 9th International Conference on Global Citizenship Education (2024) – Assoc. Prof Suzanne Choo, panelist on character-driven approaches to global citizenship
- Ukraine National EdCamp POINT OF RESILIENCE (2024) – Prof Tan Oon Seng, inaugural international keynote speaker
- Korea Glocal Education Fair (2024) – Prof Tan Oon Seng, keynote speaker on innovation in teacher education, character education and social emotional competencies

ENGAGEMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL ACADEMICS, OFFICIALS AND POLITICIANS

- SCCCE participated in a roundtable discussion on character development with the Ministry of Education, Kazakhstan (2025).
- SCCCE hosted high-level international visits from:
- Minister Sandra Viviana Pettovello, Minister of Human Capital, Argentina (2026),
 - H.E. Ambassador Ahmed Mostafa, Egyptian Ambassador to Singapore (2024),
 - Prof Horst Biedermann, Rector, St. Gallen University of Teacher Education, Switzerland (2024), and
 - Dr Khalifa Al Dhaheri, Chancellor, and Dr Kareema Al Mazrouie, Associate Professor, Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities, UAE (2024).

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 50th Annual Association for Moral Education Conference (2024) – “Re-thinking teacher learning and professional development with perspectives of values, character and citizenship education”
- 51st Annual Association for Moral Education Conference (2025) – “Building a DNA of caring about and for others: A Singapore experience”
- Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues Annual Conference (2025) – “Character and citizenship education in Singapore: A holistic framework to flourish the learner”
- Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues Annual Conference (2026) – “Beyond measurement: Fostering dispositions of judgement for lifelong character growth” and “Character caught, taught, and sought through Physical Education and sports in Singapore schools: A mixed-methods intervention study”
- SCCCE–Seoul National University Joint Conferences (2024) – “A harmonious approach to future-oriented character education and citizenship education” and “Global citizenship education in a fragmented age and possibilities for the future” with Prof Wiel Veugelers, University for Humanistic Studies, Utrecht



SCCCE-Seoul National University Joint Conference (South Korea, 2024)



51st Annual Association for Moral Education Conference (Finland, 2025)



The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues Annual Conference (United Kingdom, 2026)



GLOBAL ENGAGEMENTS AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

SCHOLARLY AND PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS

SCCCE contributes to scholarly, professional, and public discourse through journal publications, book chapters, discussion papers, practitioner-facing publications, and the SCCCE Insight Series.

These outputs address emerging issues in CCE, including AI, ethical agency, global citizenship, values education, and teacher learning.

- OECD Guiding Discussion Paper "Ethical student agency in the age of AI: An ethical ecological approach for schools" (2025)
- Asia Pacific Journal of Education "Advancing values education in the Asia-Pacific" (2025, Special Issue)
- The Straits Times Commentary "CCE isn't just an 'extra subject'. It's education at its core" (2025)
- SingTeach "Character and Citizenship Education in Singapore" (2023); "Global citizenship and multicultural education" (2024)

SCCCE INSIGHT SERIES

The SCCCE Insight Series publishes accessible thought pieces, research syntheses, and practitioner reflections on emerging issues in CCE. The inaugural issue, 'CCE in an AI-mediated World' (2026), was launched jointly with NIE's Teachers-as-Thinkers Series.

SCCCE FORUM SERIES

The SCCCE Forum Series convenes policymakers, researchers, and practitioners for dialogue on contemporary issues in CCE. Past sessions have featured leading international scholars.



2025
Ethics and Character in the Age of Artificial Intelligence
 by Assoc. Prof Chua Bee Leng, Prof Tom Harrison and Prof Kim Bongje

2024
A Humanist Perspective on Moral Development and Citizenship Education
 by Prof Wiel Veugelers

2024
The Pedagogy of Modelling
 by Prof Marvin Berkowitz

2023
A Call for CCE
 by Prof Tan Oon Seng

STUDY TRIPS

SCCCE has undertaken study trips across Asia, Europe, and the Americas to learn from and build relationships with leading institutions in CCE research, practice, and policy.

The visits have connected the Centre with institutes and organisations such as:

- The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom,
- Adolescent Moral Development Lab, Claremont Graduate University, United States,
- Rutgers Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab, Rutgers University, United States,
- Centre of Education Authorities of West Java Government, Indonesia,
- Center for Character Education Research, Seoul National University, South Korea, and
- Curriculum Research Center, National Institute for Educational Policy Research, Japan.

INTERNATIONAL VISITING CONSULTANTS

SCCCE has hosted distinguished international scholars whose expertise has enriched the Centre's research, professional learning, and policy dialogue.



Prof Marvin Berkowitz,
 Center for Character and Citizenship,
 University of Missouri-St. Louis



Prof Wiel Veugelers,
 University of Humanistic Studies,
 Utrecht



Professor Tom Harrison,
 Jubilee Centre for
 Character and Virtues,
 University of Birmingham



Professor Maurice Elias,
 Rutgers Social-Emotional and
 Character Development Lab,
 Rutgers University

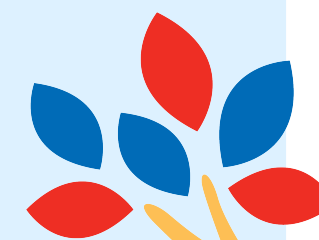


Professor Kendall Cotton Bronk,
 Adolescent Moral Development Lab,
 Claremont Graduate University

Scan here for the complete list of SCCCE's publications and presentations.



Scan here for the recordings of past sessions of the SCCCE Forum Series.





“We teach not the subject, but we teach the child. Our schools nurture the whole child and the citizen, so that they can find and take their place confidently in society and contribute to the community and country as they continually learn. In so doing, they flourish, and so do our communities. As a vibrant nation, we will care for and take care of one another, and contribute to our world.”

Ms Liew Wei Li
Director-General of Education

“Teachers are the shapers of character of future generations. Through CCE, teachers teach students the importance of being good citizens and compassionate individuals, and guide them in understanding their roles within the community, appreciating diversity, and contributing positively to society. The impact of CCE extends beyond the classroom, influencing the very fabric of our society and helping to build a more cohesive and inclusive nation.”

Professor Liu Woon Chia
Director
National Institute of Education
Nanyang Technological University





Explore our framework, publications, events,
and professional learning opportunities through our website and mailing list.

Visit SCCCE's website



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<https://for.edu.sg/sccce-mailing-list>

**SCCCE welcomes collaboration
with researchers and institutions in CCE globally.**

Collaboration possibilities include joint research projects, comparative studies,
conference panels and symposia, visiting scholar talks, and co-authored publications.

Contact us at scce@nie.edu.sg



Visit NIE's website



<https://www.ntu.edu.sg/nie>



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