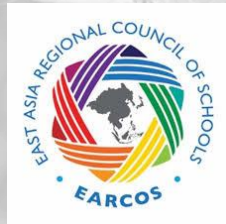


# Leadership Learning Collective

## Cohort#1 2025-2026

# Impact Report



# Purpose

*"How do we grow a learning collective of International School senior leaders across Asia?"*



The Leadership Learning Collective has been designed as a new way for senior leaders in international schools to engage in leadership development. Part leadership retreat, part speaker series, and part peer coaching, this experience is a 10 month leadership journey, for a group of 36 senior leaders.

This project is a partnership between [Leadership Lab Global](#) and [EARCOS](#) (East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools).

# Key features of the Leadership Learning Collective

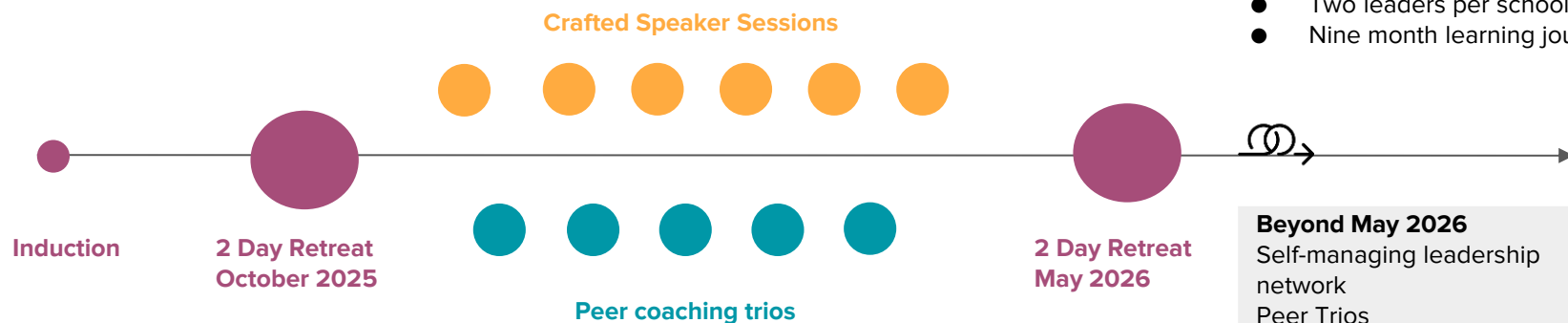
- Senior leaders from across international schools in Asia
- Two leaders per school
- Nine month learning journey
- Residential retreat experiences
- Crafted Speaker Series
- Peer coaching trios



# LLC Programme overview

Key features of the LLC

- Senior leaders from international schools in 12 countries
- Two leaders per school
- Nine month learning journey



**Beyond May 2026**  
Self-managing leadership network  
Peer Trios  
Connection with next LLC cohort  
EARCOS Conference presenting

## Retreat #1

- 2 day face to face
- Activities, discussions
- Opportunity to explore leadership content & build trust

## Crafted Speaker Sessions

- 60 minute zoom meetings
- Guest speakers on inspiring topics related to the three themes
- Opportunity for leaders to connect

## Peer coaching trios

- Mixed groups of 3 leaders
- Zoom based peer coaching based on shared protocol
- Opportunity to unpack and explore leadership dilemmas together

## Retreat #2

- 2 day face to face
- Peer sharing wisdom and expertise
- Further opportunity to explore leadership content & build trust

# Themes as lenses to explore our content and experience

## **Leadership identities**

*Who we are is how we lead*













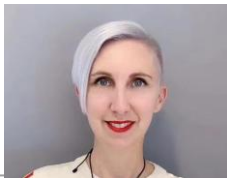





## **Building collaborative cultures**

*Collaboration for collective impact*

## **Designing for impact**

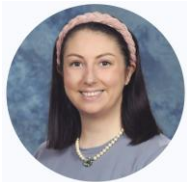
*Systems transformation in educational contexts*

# Leadership Learning Collective 2025 team members

<p><b>Darla Her</b> (Malaysia)</p> 	<p><b>Sok Wee Kho</b> (Malaysia)</p> 	<p><b>Ben Voborsky</b> (Indonesia)</p> 	<p><b>Mike Hopaluk</b> (Indonesia)</p> 	<p><b>Molly Burger</b> (South Korea)</p> 	<p><b>Miles Carey</b> (South Korea)</p> 
<p><b>Nitasha Crisna</b> (Vietnam)</p> 	<p><b>Cheryl Hordenchuk</b> (Vietnam)</p> 	<p><b>Joe Lumsden</b> (India)</p> 	<p><b>Manpreet Kaur</b> (India)</p> 	<p><b>Simon Ma</b> (China)</p> 	<p><b>Kate Doyle</b> (China)</p> 
<p><b>Jacqui Patrick</b> (China)</p> 	<p><b>Sara Morrow</b> (China)</p> 	<p><b>William Randall</b> (Thailand)</p> 	<p><b>Andy Vaughan</b> (Thailand)</p> 	<p><b>Shawna Wood</b> (Malaysia)</p> 	<p><b>Tressa White</b> (Malaysia)</p> 

# Leadership Learning Collective 2025 team members

**Serrin Smyth**  
(Japan)



**Alex Lee**  
(Japan)



**Erin Threlfall**  
(China)



**Kirsty van Rooyen**  
(China)



**Krista Zavits**  
(China)



**Renee Couturier**  
(China)



**Amanda Cooper-Marcon**  
(South Korea)



**Geoffrey Dumelie**  
(South Korea)



**Andrea Strachan**  
(Singapore)



**Ardene Mandziy**  
(Singapore)



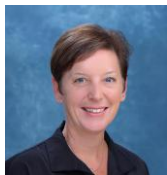
**Christopher Allen**  
(Indonesia)



**Diana Sumadianti**  
(Indonesia)



**Becky Klar**  
(Taiwan)



**Lori Richardson Garcia**  
(Taiwan)



**Angela Strunks**  
(Hong Kong)



**Sean Miller** (Hong  
Kong)



**Ted Mockrish**  
(India)



**Kevin Thomas**  
(India)







# Why did you join the Leadership Learning Collective?

## 1. Desire for Growth and Reflection in Leadership Practice

- Deepening self-awareness and leadership identity
- Moving toward more strategic, transformational leadership
- Exploring systems thinking and impact-oriented leadership

## 2. Commitment to Collaboration and Learning with Others

- Collaborative learning with peers and colleagues
- Mentorship and coaching opportunities
- Build shared leadership language & practice with a colleague from the same school
- Belonging to a regional community of practice

## 3. Focus on Real-World Application & Impact

- Lead change and innovation in complex, diverse school settings
- Align leadership with school-wide strategic goals and initiatives
- Enhance systems that support equity, wellbeing, and sustainable transformation

# Impact Stories



## **Christopher Allen**

*Deputy Executive  
Principal  
Indonesia*

“

I was attracted to the Leadership Learning Collective as it was an opportunity to learn collaboratively with my primary school leadership colleague to help us have a common understanding and alignment in leading our school community.

”

# Impact Story | Christopher Allen



**School: Sekolah Ciputra, Indonesia**

**Role: Deputy Executive Principal**

*I'm Chris Allen and it has been wonderful being able to work and learn alongside my colleague and other educational leaders from across the region. It has given us time to align our vision for our school, sharing ideas and learning from others throughout the process.*

*"I was attracted to the Leadership Learning Collective as it was an opportunity to learn collaboratively with my primary school colleague to help us have a common understanding and alignment in leading our school community".*

## Background

I was born in Atlanta in the USA. I have a BA in History, an MA in Curriculum & Instruction and an EdD in Educational & Organizational Leadership.

My wife is from China and we have two children, a son in 4th grade and a daughter in 7th grade.

## First impressions

The Leadership Learning Collective was a great way to connect with other leaders who share many of the same challenges and opportunities.

The structure of the programme was particularly useful, with the crafted speaker sessions and online trio meetings sprinkled throughout the year and the in-person sessions being the bookends that provided a real opening and sense of closure was beneficial.

## Ongoing impact

The connection between my primary school colleague and I has been strengthened, helping us to better understand each other and improve collaboration throughout the school. The Crafted Speaker Sessions have been nice to bring in different perspectives to learn from and make connections with.

The Coaching Trios have been nice as well. The personal and professional connections made with other leaders across the region will allow for continued conversations going forward, which I am excited about.

## **Andrea Strachan**

*Curriculum Coordinator  
Singapore*



“

For me, the biggest impact I feel will be developing a network that I can reach out to with questions. The balance of experience in the room was helpful, I felt I was able to support others in their thinking based on my experience, and also able to learn from others..

”



# Impact Story | Andrea Strachan

**School: United World College of South East Asia - Singapore**  
**Role: Curriculum Coordinator**

## Background

I was born in Vancouver, Canada and I have studied in Canada, UK, France, USA and Singapore.

I have been an international educator for over 30 years. I have served as a classroom teacher, specialist teacher, curriculum coordinator & developer, workshop leader, and Vice Principal.

I live in Singapore with my husband and dog, and have 2 grown children in Canada. I love walking, reading and spending time with my friends and family.

*My name is Andrea Strachan and I believe that we are living in a time of rapid change, in which education has a vital role to play in the future wellbeing of our world. I have loved coming together with this group of educators as we reflect on our leadership journeys, share problems of practice and support each other with the challenges and opportunities we are facing.*

## First impressions

The balance of experience in the room was helpful -- I felt I was able to support others in their thinking based on my experience, and also able to learn from others. We are all tackling such similar challenges, despite working in very different contexts.

*“For me, the LLC has provided me with the opportunity to develop a support network that I can reach out to with questions that are unique to being a school leader. I have also appreciated the time with my colleague, as we reflect on strategy in our own school”.*

## Ongoing impact

I really loved the task of mapping out our leadership journeys on paper -- highlighting the highs and lows, and then discussing them. This was a powerful reflection tool and helped me to focus on my own beliefs and values connected to school leadership. Relationships are at the centre.

The Crafted Speaker series has truly been a highlight. The speakers have presented on topics that have asked me to consider what school leadership might look like through a variety of different lenses and perspectives.



## **Nitasha Crishna**

*Elementary Deputy Principal  
Vietnam*

“

I am hoping to be able to articulate my leadership identity and have some concrete strategies when designing for impact. I am excited also to meet other leaders and share with others in similar contexts..

”

# Impact Story | Nitasha Crishna



**Nitasha Crishna** *Pronouns: she/her*

**School: UNIS Hanoi**

**Role: Elementary Deputy Principal**

*My name is Nitasha and what a rich learning experience this has been, working with this group of experienced leaders all year. The monthly coaching and the Crafted Speaker sessions have been particularly impactful.*

## First Impressions

I am hoping to be able to articulate my leadership identity and have some concrete strategies when designing for impact. I am excited also to meet other leaders and share with others in similar contexts.

## Background

I am proud to lead and learn in this community. Originally from West Bengal, India, I have spent the last 23 years exploring the world as an expat educator and leader. My academic journey has taken me through India, the UK, and the US, but my heart remains in the Lower Elementary classroom where I taught for over a decade. For the past 13 years, I have shifted my focus to Curriculum Coordination and Leadership, always viewing the school through a lens of equity and inclusion. When I'm not at UNIS Hanoi, you can find me running, cooking, or traveling with my two children—a rising 8th and 11th grader—who keep me grounded (and occasionally embarrassed!).

***“So much of being a leader is about being able to listen, articulate what you hear, create strategic oversight while staying grounded in your values and the missions and vision of the organization. In schools this is deeply human work requiring vulnerability, humility and courage”***

## Ongoing impact

I have valued my monthly coaching trio meet up immensely. We have consistently met every month. The routine of having to think through a situation, ask good questions and offer ideas for consideration has been validating.

The Crafted Speaker series has also been an excellent space to think deeply, have a strategic lens and to pause and reflect.



**Amanda  
Cooper-Marcon**

*IB MYP Coordinator  
South Korea*

“

The relevance of the content, specifically the three main themes— leadership identities, creating collaborative cultures, and systems thinking in schools and leadership — has definitely hit the mark.

”

# Impact Story | Amanda Cooper-Marcon



**School: Chadwick International - South Korea**

**Role: IB MYP Coordinator**

*I'm Amanda Cooper-Marcon, when other leaders share experiences of challenges, breakthroughs, and contexts it is a profound teacher. I appreciate when leaders are honest and vulnerable, because the learning becomes collective and lasting.*

## Background

I was born in N.S.W. Australia. I have a B.Ed in Education (Arts & Design), an [M.Ed](#) (Curriculum & assessment), and a PhD that focused on navigating cultural space, leadership, and their impacts on interdisciplinary teaching and learning. An active IBEN member.

I have three adult children making a positive contribution to the world.

## First impressions

The collaboration and connection with participants were thoughtfully planned. The pacing of the two days was obviously designed to provide participants with a range of experiences and foster connections within the group. This is lacking in many other PD sessions I have attended.

## Ongoing impact

The facilitation process was excellent as it provided a balance of discussion and connection with participants. The presentation of a focus with room for dialogue and learning other ways of thinking and understanding.

Listening first has long been central to my leadership identity before initiating change. This experience has sharpened that instinct. Amin Neghavati's work creating learning spaces for displaced students challenged me to examine the conditions I create for others — leadership as architecture, not direction.

I leave more resolute in building team capacity, leading with kindness rather than regulation. The clearest shift: not managing performance, but growing people. Create growth, not restriction.

**“The relevance of the content, specifically the three main themes—leadership identities, creating collaborative cultures, and systems thinking in schools and leadership — has definitely hit the mark”.**



## **Erin Threlfall**

*Principal of Early Years  
and Primary  
China*

“

I hope to help build strong connections in my new role at SIS, and I am launching a leadership development series at my school, so I hope to gain insights into how to go about doing this.

”



# Impact Story | Erin Michelle Threlfall

**School: Shekou International School  
- China**

**Role: Principal of Early Years and  
Primary School**

*I'm Erin Michelle Threlfall, a strategic change agent in international education interested in how schools can intentionally create the conditions for people to flourish. My work sits at the intersection of learning, leadership, systems change, and well-being, with a particular focus on how happiness and human connection influence both student success and organizational culture.*

## Background

I was born in the United States and, due to my father's career, grew up living across six U.S. states and 12 countries. I hold an MSc in Education from Pace University and a Certificate in Educational Leadership from Harvard University. With more than 25 years in education, I have taught from Preschool to Grade 12 and spent nearly 15 years in leadership. I am also the founder of Happiness 101 and present globally on happiness and well-being.

## What attracted me to this?

I was drawn to this experience because I am passionate about continuing to grow as a leader while also supporting the growth of others. The opportunity to learn alongside educators from different contexts, collaborate through shared challenges, and experience leadership development in action felt like a powerful way to deepen my own practice and better support the leaders around me.

## Ongoing impact

I feel enriched by the trusted network, shared perspectives, and leadership insights that continue to shape and strengthen my practice.

**“This retreat, speaker series, and coaching trio reminded me that growth happens most powerfully in community. Through honest reflection, shared vulnerability, and collective wisdom, this experience reaffirmed for me the power of the collective.”**



## **Diana Sumadianti**

*Primary Principal  
Indonesia*

“

This is perfect timing for me. The upcoming changes to our school's leadership structure make this opportunity to learn and explore leadership perspectives and strategies from other leaders particularly valuable, further developing my own leadership capabilities.

”

# Impact Story | Diana Sumadianti



**School: Sekolah Ciputra, Indonesia**  
**Role: Primary Principal**

*I'm Diana Sumadianti. I seek to develop my leadership skills, learn from other leaders, and believe in collective and collaborative learning. This experience allows me to work closely with my colleague to build leadership alignment at our school.*

## Background

Born, raised, and building my education career in Surabaya, Indonesia. I began at Sekolah Ciputra in 1998 as a teacher assistant, progressing through roles as homeroom teacher, team leader, PYP Coordinator/VP, and Principal for Early Years and Elementary. I am also an IB Educator Network workshop facilitator and programme leader, and a WASC visiting member. It has been quite a journey.

## What attracted me to this?

I am wanting the impact to be better leadership throughout the continuum level, from the early years, the primary towards the high school. Having strong alignment of leadership will ensure stronger programmes in maintaining and continuing the quality of teaching, learning and community building for the school

## Ongoing impact

This is perfect timing for me. The upcoming changes to our school's leadership structure make this opportunity to learn and explore leadership perspectives and strategies from other leaders particularly valuable, further developing my own leadership capabilities.

I'm thinking of how to tailor the training's key takeaways for my leadership team, focusing especially on insights gained during the Retreat sessions and the crafted speaker sessions.

The Coaching Trio protocol has been very helpful. It provides a structured way to regularly share issues and matters from our different schools and leverage our shared leadership capabilities to explore strategies and approaches for addressing them.

**“It was really interesting, inspiring and heartwarming to listen to different and yet similar situations from leaders in various schools. I feel I could also contribute to the discussions / conversations as well as learning from others”.**

## Shawna Wood

*Head of School  
Malaysia*



“

I really needed the time to step back from the daily challenges and refocus on the big picture. Having a colleague from my school along was really important in that process. I enjoyed meeting and working with those from other schools as well. However, as our school is quite unique, having my teammate there was really beneficial.

”

# Impact Story | Shawna Wood



**School: Dalat International School - Malaysia**  
**Role: Head of School**

*I'm Shawna Wood and I am always seeking to grow and improve. The time and encouragement to be reflective was extremely valuable to me.*

## Background

I was born and raised in California and my education was in the U.S.. I now have 30 years of experience in education serving in roles from elementary teacher to English teacher to principal and head of school. My experience is primarily in faith-based schools, spread across the U.S., Brazil, China, and Malaysia.

**“I really needed the time to step back from the daily challenges and refocus on the big picture. Having a colleague from my school along was really important in that process. I enjoyed meeting and working with those from other schools as well. However, as our school is quite unique, having my teammate there was really beneficial”**

## What attracted me to this?

I was keen to participate alongside my Deputy Head of School - Tressa White. We are trying to improve the systems in our school as we have grown significantly and our old systems no longer meet our needs. Learning different ways of doing things from colleagues at other schools will broaden my perspective.

## Ongoing impact

I have been Head of School for 4 years but never involved in formal coaching. I hope to learn from this process so that I can coach others in the future.

The coaching trio was really valuable to me. Having the time set aside to talk with colleagues from other schools helped me to expand my network and gain a more objective perspective on challenging situations.

The crafted speaker series brought a number of unique perspectives that helped me to look at challenges in new ways.



## **Ben Voborsky**

*Head of School  
Indonesia*

“

What drew me to the EARCOS Leadership Learning Collective was its alignment with the collaborative and inquiry-driven leadership culture we are cultivating at Cangu Community School. This experience offers a valuable space to reflect, learn, and lead with intention.

”

# Impact Story | Ben Voborsky

**School: Canggu Community School - Indonesia**

**Role: Head of School**

*I'm Ben Voborsky, Head of School at Canggu Community School in Bali, Indonesia. It has been incredibly valuable to spend focused time learning and reflecting alongside other leaders in the region.*



## Background

I am an international school leader with experience leading schools through growth, change, and strategic development across different global contexts. My doctoral research focused on international school recruitment, shaping my understanding of how to build strong teams and positive school cultures. I am passionate about creating schools where people feel a strong sense of belonging, purpose, and opportunity.

## What attracted me to this?

Working alongside my Deputy Head of School has been a key part of this experience, allowing us to strengthen our partnership and align our leadership approach. The decision to engage in this work was both strategic and values-driven, reflecting our commitment to collaboration, shared ownership, and distributed leadership at CCS. It has created space to think more deeply about how we lead as a cohesive, aligned team.

## Ongoing impact

This experience is already strengthening how we lead together at CCS, supporting greater alignment in decision-making, communication, and strategy. It has helped us build a stronger culture of reflection, feedback, and trust across the school. Most importantly, it is ensuring that our leadership continues to evolve in ways that directly support student learning, wellbeing, and future-focused growth aligned to our strategic commitments.

**“What drew me to the EARCOS Leadership Learning Collective was the opportunity to step away from the day-to-day and engage in meaningful reflection alongside other school leaders. It creates space to challenge thinking, strengthen alignment, and lead with greater intention.”**



## **Tressa White**

*Deputy Head of School  
Malaysia*

“

I found it incredibly valuable to hear from leaders across the spectrum, practice coaching skills with my peers, and explore best practices in leadership. Engaging with these principles is especially important to me as I take the next step in my professional journey and move in to a Head of School position

”

# Impact Story | Tressa White



**School: Dalat International - Malaysia**

**Role: Deputy Head of School**

*I'm Tressa White and I love Pascal's reminder that "all of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to sit quietly in a room alone". It's what drives my commitment to creating space for educators to slow down, reflect, and grow. This collective has given me more skills to support this commitment.*

## Background

I grew up in Arkansas, USA, before finding my way into the international school world. I hold a Ph.D. in Advanced Educational Leadership with a focus on understanding positive international school climates and supporting third culture kids.

Outside of work, I'm mom to three wonderful daughters and love walking, reading, hosting dinner parties, and a good, competitive board

## What attracted me to this?

I was drawn to this collective by the opportunity to grow alongside my Head of School, and my experience with EARCOS trainings gave me full confidence it would be time well spent.

## Ongoing impact

The retreat was thoughtfully designed, giving us space to reflect and then dive deeper into key leadership principles. I appreciated the opportunity to connect with other leaders and hear their stories, which added meaningful perspective. The activities were intentional and effective in helping us engage at a deeper level.

The first activity, mapping our careers and reflecting on the leaders who have influenced us, was a meaningful reminder of why I am drawn to leadership and the type of leader I aspire to be.

Everything was exceptionally well organized, and I could feel the care and thoughtfulness in every detail. The school was a gracious and welcoming host, which made the experience even more enjoyable.

**"I found it incredibly valuable to hear from leaders across the spectrum, practice coaching skills with my peers, and explore best practices in leadership. Engaging with these principles is especially important to me as I take the next step in my professional journey and move into a Head of School position."**



## Serrin Smyth

*Elementary School Principal  
Japan*

“

I feel this has been a crucial learning opportunity at this point in my career. Having sought out a coach and mentor programme recently to grow my capacity, this really was another way to learn from inspirational, dedicated, experienced leaders in a safe environment

”



# Impact Story | Serrin Smyth

**School: Seisen International School, Japan**  
**Role: Elementary School Principal**

*I'm Serrin Smyth and I am a lifelong learner. Constantly questioning how we can evolve to do better within our educational systems drives my professional inquiries. I'm fascinated by organisational psychology and culture and lead from a place of compassion and empathy.*

## Background

I grew up in Melbourne, Australia and my Bachelors Degree was in Early Childhood Education & Primary School Teaching. Having taught in Australia for eight years at Caulfield Grammar School I was ready for the International School experience and it was in my Singapore teaching role that my interest in leadership grew. I completed my Masters in Leadership with a focus on Organisational Culture whilst in the role of Curriculum Coordinator in Switzerland and then Japan. I'm already wondering... what learning will I do next?

## What attracted me to this?

I have recently been exploring different ways, beyond my Master's degree, to grow my leadership capacity. Having recently sought out a coach to facilitate a 360-degree feedback tool I have really been learning more about my leadership identity. The "Who we are is how we lead" component of this course strongly aligned with the areas I'm most eager to develop.

## Ongoing impact

I very much appreciated the modelled approach of the concept 'the network'. There was a lovely balance of explicit teaching, learning from colleagues, time to connect and to reflect on the approaches we use as leaders.

I felt in such a safe space during the retreat, surrounded by caring, passionate and knowledgeable humans, I'm so grateful for this incredible opportunity. Thank you Ellie and Chris for crafting a moment in my learning career that will have a lasting impact on my life. I have since shared thinking protocols, mindset approaches and big ideas with other leaders at my school. I hope we can continue to keep reflecting and growing as a community from this learning experience.

**"I feel this has been a crucial learning opportunity at this point in my career. Having sought out a coach and mentor programme recently to grow my capacity, this really was another way to learn from inspirational, dedicated, experienced leaders in a safe environment."**



## **Angela Strunks**

*Assistant Principal -  
Academics  
Hong Kong*

“

Having transitioned from academia into organizational leadership, I was eager to accelerate my learning curve as a new leader. My focus has been on rapidly upskilling to ensure I am fully prepared for this next chapter in my professional journey.

”

# Impact Story | Angela Strunks



**School: Stamford American School Hong Kong**

**Role: Assistant Principal - Academics**

I'm Angela and I've learned that as a leader, visibility equals value and knowing the right question to ask is often far more important than having the right answer.

## Background

With twenty years of experience in education, my career spans a variety of leadership and instructional roles, including fifteen years teaching internationally across five different countries. I transitioned to pursuing a PhD at the University of Cambridge with the ultimate goal of educating the next generation of educators. My passion now lies in mentoring and supporting teachers throughout their own professional and academic journeys.

**“Considering this is my first year in leadership, I am thankful for the guidance and learning I have received from those who have been in leadership for several years.”**

## What attracted me to this?

Having transitioned from academia into organizational leadership, I was eager to accelerate my learning curve as a new leader. My focus has been on rapidly upskilling to ensure I am fully prepared for this next chapter in my professional journey.

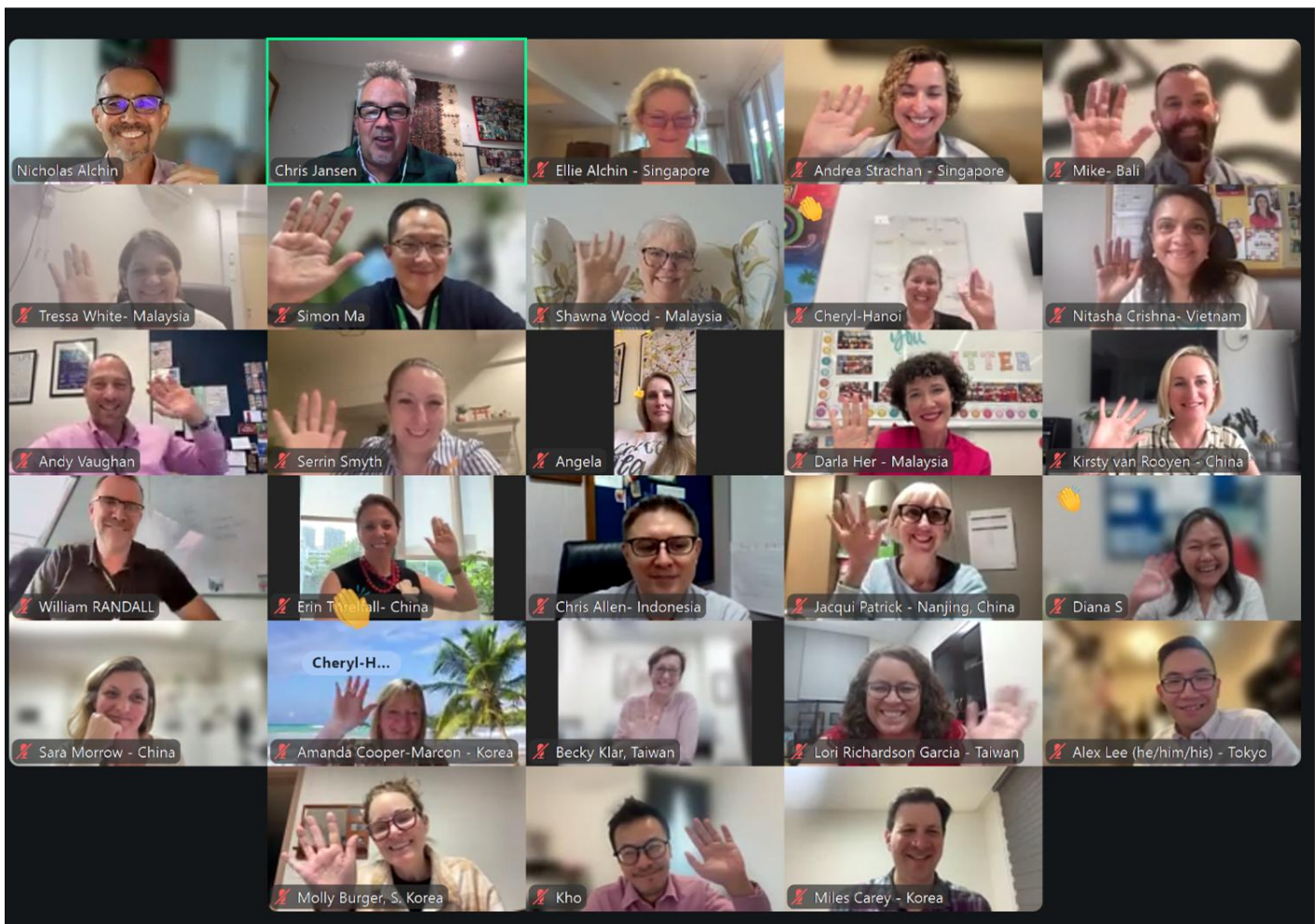
## Ongoing impact

As a new leader, this was extremely helpful to learn from so many other leaders in similar context.

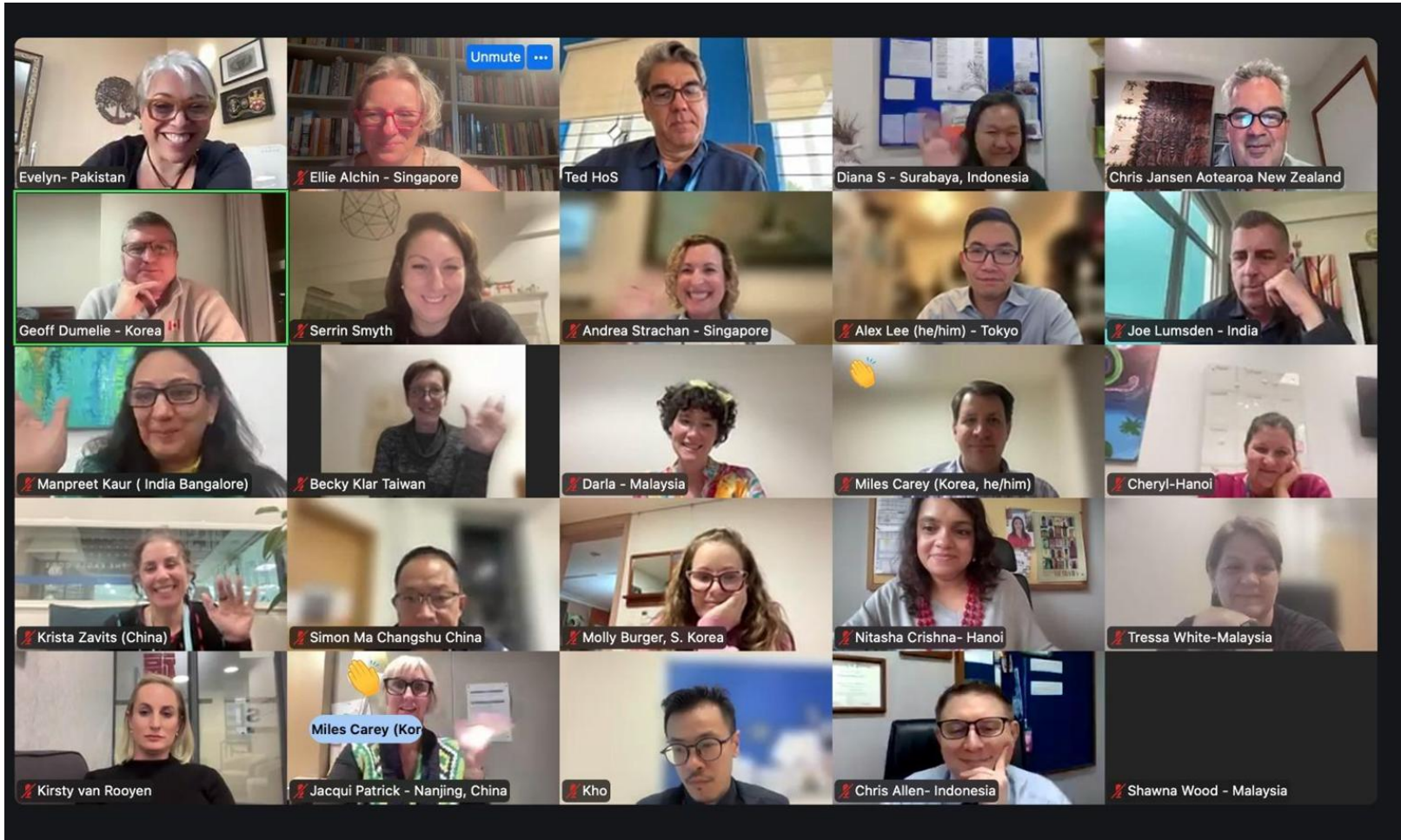
I am proactively being more visible and I am practicing my question techniques.

I really appreciate how the design incorporates movement and collaborative spaces. It has truly helped us build a stronger sense of community and allowed us to open up about the shared challenges of leadership.

# Crafted Speaker Series

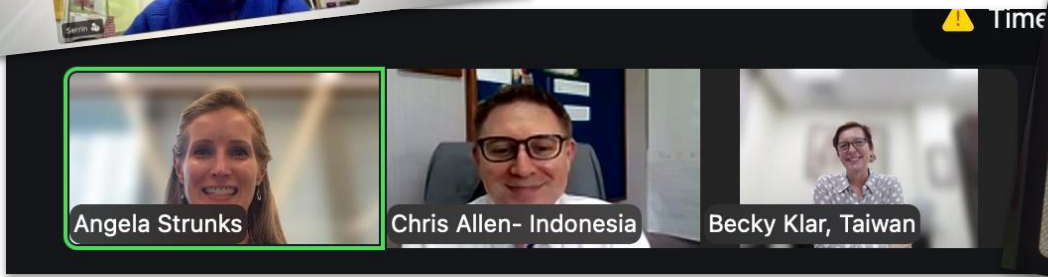


# Crafted Speaker Series





## Peer Coaching Trios



# Retreats



# Retreats



*“Is it possible to use our influence and power to create islands of sanity in the midst of a raging destructive sea?”*

*-Margaret Wheatley*

