

**2021 WISE Prize for Education is presented to  
Wendy Kopp, CEO of Teach For All**

**Wendy Kopp is recognized by WISE for her contribution to quality education through creating Teach For All, a diverse global network building collective leadership in classrooms and communities to share solutions across borders and ensure all children can fulfil their promise.**

**Doha, Qatar – December 7, 2021.** The prestigious WISE Prize for Education has been presented to Wendy Kopp, CEO of Teach For All. Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation, presented the prize to Kopp at the Opening Plenary of the 2021 WISE Global Summit in Doha, Qatar, before an audience both in person and virtually of more than 10,000 participants worldwide.

The WISE Prize for Education is the first global distinction of its kind to acknowledge an individual for an outstanding contribution to education. Through *Teach For All*, Kopp is recognized for developing the concept that meaningful, sustainable education changes need leaders who are rooted in their communities and believe in the potential to transform them to deliver the opportunities all children deserve.

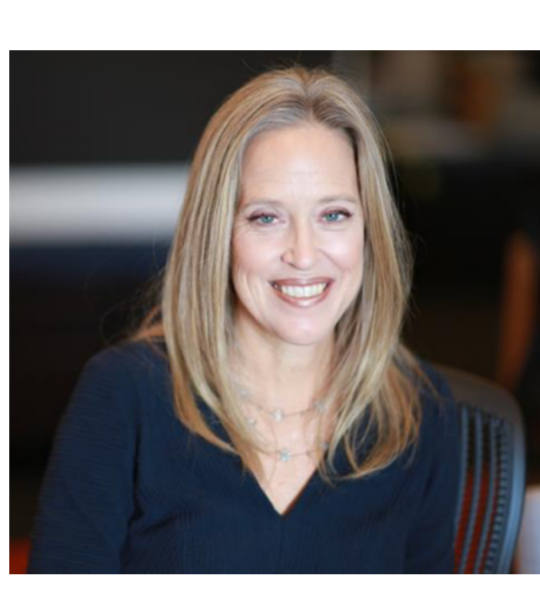
Since its creation in 2007, Teach For All has developed a benevolent ecosystem of collective leadership to ensure all children have an education that allows them to shape their future. Teach For All currently works with partner organisations at a grassroots level in 61 countries around the world, inspiring their countries' outstanding graduates and professionals from all fields to channel their passion towards expanding opportunities for children, while committing to two years teaching in the schools and communities where they are needed most. With on-going support from local partners, these teachers become effective classroom leaders and determined advocates for their students, grounded in their teaching experience and deep belief in the potential of every child.

These extraordinary teachers go on to become educators, policymakers, advocates and entrepreneurs. Alongside others they are working to change the systems that deny many young people the opportunities everyone deserves. Since its inception, partners in the Teach For All network have collectively placed over 104,400 recruits across six continents, and are currently supporting 1.1 million young people to develop the skills and knowledge they need. 75% of these teachers continue working to expand opportunities as children as alumni – whether as teachers within schools, or as activists working beyond the classroom for equity in education.

Upon receiving the award, Kopp said: *"We see this prize as an endorsement and recognition of our theory of change. Collective leadership is necessary to solve the most entrenched inequities in education and reshape the system so that it prepares our young people to navigate uncertainty and shape a better future. Complex problems can only be solved through the collective efforts of many, working together across all levels of the system."*

Stavros N. Yiannouka, WISE CEO, said: *"Wendy's work exemplifies what we so passionately believe in at WISE – the conviction that everyone deserves quality education, and you can achieve it through creating a virtuous, international network by sharing best practice and involving communities. This prize is in recognition of a lifetime's contribution to education and a constant spirit of innovation. Through Teach For All, Wendy has truly revolutionized school leadership."*

While the circumstances facing children look different from country to country, the root causes and the challenges facing them are often similar. Through the Teach For All network, staff, teachers and alumni can connect with peers around the world, learn from each other's unique insights, ideas and innovations, and adapt promising solutions to their own countries' needs. Teach For All's global organization also helps potential partners understand the network's approach and apply it in their countries, and supports existing partner organizations in developing strong, sustainable programs while connecting them to each other and encouraging them to work together to speed up progress.



**Biography of Wendy Kopp**

Wendy Kopp is CEO and Co-Founder of Teach For All, a global network of independent organizations that are cultivating their nations' promising future leaders to ensure their most marginalized children have the chance to fulfil their true potential.

Wendy founded Teach For America in 1989 to marshal the energy of her generation against educational inequity in the United States. Today, more than 5,000 Teach For America corps members—outstanding recent college graduates and professionals of all academic disciplines—are in the midst of two-year teaching commitments in 50 urban and rural regions, and Teach For America has proven to be an unparalleled source of long-term leadership for expanding opportunity for children. After leading Teach For America's growth and development for 24 years, in 2013, Wendy transitioned out of the role of CEO.

Wendy led the development of Teach For All to be responsive to the initiative of inspiring social entrepreneurs around the world who were determined to adapt this approach in their own countries. Now in its fourteenth year, the Teach For All network is comprised of sixty one partner organizations on six continents, including its founding partners Teach For America and the U.K.'s Teach First.

For media inquiries, please contact: [media@wise.org.qa](mailto:media@wise.org.qa)

**About the WISE Prize for Education**

The WISE Prize was established in 2011 to honour an individual or a team of up to six for a world-class contribution to education. It raises the status of education by giving it similar prestige to long-established international prizes in literature, economics and peace. Nominations for the WISE Prize are invited from individuals and institutions - including schools, international organizations and private companies – from anywhere in the world. An international Jury of distinguished individuals makes the final selection. The chosen Laureate receives the WISE Prize for Education gold medal and a \$500,000 (US) cash fund to grow their initiative.

The WISE Prize for Education Laureates are inspiring role models for all those dedicated to building the future of education as the foundation for a more secure, prosperous and sustainable world.

**Previous WISE Prize Laureates:**

**2019 Laureate - Larry Rosenstock, CEO and Founding Principal of High Tech High, a network of American public charter schools in San Diego, California.** Mr Rosenstock was recognized for his lifelong dedication to rethinking K-12 learning and tackling inequality through education. He pioneered the concept of project-based learning – the idea that students can and must learn crucial academic skills through hands-on projects that integrate multiple disciplines, engage their interest, and have an authentic purpose. His model also reimagines the role of teachers as 'designers' who adapt their curricula and blend a variety of subjects based on the specific needs of each student.

**2017 Laureate - Dr Patrick Awuah, Founder and President of Ashesi University College in Ghana.** Grounded in ethical leadership and community, Dr. Awuah became a passionate advocate for empowerment through education by establishing Ashesi University in his native Ghana. Ashesi had a humble start in 2002 in a rented house for 30 students. Today, Ashesi University College in Accra is firmly established as one of Ghana's premier universities, with nearly 900 students poised for leadership in entrepreneurial sectors across Africa.

**2015 Laureate - Dr. Sakena Yacoobi, Founder of the Afghan Institute of Learning.** Dr. Yacoobi has worked for over twenty years to bring education to the most vulnerable people under extreme conditions and oppression during the Taliban rule of Afghanistan. She has received international recognition for bringing health and education services to at least 12 million people in rural and marginalized areas of Afghanistan. Dr. Yacoobi has championed education, healthcare and empowerment for Afghan women.

**2014 Laureate – Ann Cotton, Founder and President of Camfed, U.K.** Ms Cotton spearheaded an internationally acclaimed model for improving girls' education in marginalised communities, putting it at the heart of development in Africa. Camfed's programs have benefited over three million young people in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Ghana, Tanzania and Malawi.

**2013 Laureate - Vicky Colbert, Founder and Director of Escuela Nueva Foundation in Colombia.** She co-created the Escuela Nueva model, which places children at the heart of the learning process. By transforming conventional, teacher-centered schools the model has helped achieve higher quality education in disadvantaged rural communities in Colombia and beyond. To date, Escuela Nueva has been implemented throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Brazil, Mexico, East Timor, and Vietnam, reaching more than five million young people around the world.

**2012 Laureate – Dr Madhav Chavan, Co-Founder and CEO of Pratham, India.** Dr Chavan devised a simple formula to bring mass literacy and numeracy learning to Mumbai's slum children. Now the biggest education NGO in India, Pratham's initiatives cover pre-school, in-school and out-of-school education, computer literacy, vocational training and special programs for vulnerable and working children.

**2011 Laureate – Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, Founder and Chairman of BRAC, Bangladesh.** For over forty years BRAC (Building Resources Across Communities) has directly contributed to the education of more than ten million students, from pre-primary to secondary levels, by providing access to learning to the disadvantaged students left behind by formal education systems. Now active in 13 other countries in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas, BRAC is one of the largest non-governmental organisations in the world.

**About WISE:**

WISE was established by the Qatar Foundation in 2009 under the leadership of its chairperson, Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser. WISE is an international, multi-sectoral platform for creative, evidence-based thinking, debate, and purposeful action in education. Through the biennial Summit, collaborative research and a range of on-going programs, WISE is a global reference in new approaches to education. WISE 2021 will take place in Doha and online, on December 7-9 under the theme: "Generation Unmute: Reclaiming the Future Through Education".

**About Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential:**

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) is a non-profit organization that supports Qatar on its journey to becoming a diversified and sustainable economy. QF strives to serve the people of Qatar and beyond by providing specialized programs across its innovation-focused ecosystem of education, research and development, and community development. QF was founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, and Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, who shared the vision to provide Qatar with quality education. Today, QF's world-class education system offers lifelong learning opportunities to community members as young as six months through to doctoral level, enabling graduates to thrive in a global environment and contribute to the nation's development. QF is also creating a multidisciplinary innovation hub in Qatar, where homegrown researchers are working to address local and global challenges. By promoting a culture of lifelong learning and fostering social engagement through programs that embody Qatari culture, QF is committed to empowering the local community and contributing to a better world for all.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, please visit: [qf.org.qa](http://qf.org.qa)

**Notes to Editor:**

**2021 WISE Prize Jury members:**

**Dr. Patrick Awuah, Ghana**

Dr. Patrick Awuah is the Founder and President of Ashesi University, a private, not-for-profit institution for innovation and quality undergraduate education in Ghana. Patrick is a Fellow of the Africa Leadership Initiative; a member of the Council of Foreign Relations; and a member of the Tau Beta Pi honor society for excellence in engineering. Patrick has received the Millennium Excellence Award for Educational Development, was named a Global Leader by the World Economic Forum, one of the 100 Most Creative People in Business by Fast Company magazine, the 4th Most Respected CEO in Ghana by a survey of his peers, Social Entrepreneur of the Year 2014 by the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship and was the 2017 WISE Prize for Education Laureate.

**Ms. Rukmini Banerji, India**

Rukmini Banerji is the CEO of Pratham Education Foundation. Experienced in program design and implementation in rural and urban areas, Rukmini has led Pratham's research and assessment activities, including the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2005 - 2014. Originally trained as an economist in India, she completed her B.A. at St. Stephen's College and attended Delhi School of Economics. She was a Rhodes Scholar at the Oxford University and completed her Ph.D. at the University of Chicago. Rukmini worked as a program officer at the Spencer Foundation in Chicago for several years before returning to India in 1996.

In 2008, Rukmini was the first recipient of the Maulana Abul Kalam Shiksha Puraskar Award by the Government of Bihar, India. Most recently, Rukmini writes on matters of education in both Hindi and English dailies in India, as well as writing stories for children.

**Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Spain**

Rebeca Grynspan is elected as the Ibero-American Secretary-General and has served her role since 2014. In 2010 she was named Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations and Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Program. In addition, her career has seen her in active roles such as UNDP Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean; Vice-President of Costa Rica 1994 - 1998; Minister of Housing, Minister Coordinator of Economic and Social Affairs, and Deputy Minister of Finance; UNICEF steering committee member of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement and the Governing Council of the Society for International Development. Rebeca is a renowned advocate of human development and has highlighted matters of inequality, poverty, gender equality and development throughout her extensive career.

**Dr. Enrico Letta, Italy**

Enrico Letta is the National Secretary of the Democratic Party since March 2021 and formerly the Prime Minister of Italy 2013 – 2014. An international law graduate from the University of Pisa, with a doctorate in European Community law from the Sant'Anna School of Advanced International Affairs, Dr Letta has taught at and served as the Dean of the Paris School of International Affairs at Sciences Po. Dr. Letta has been very much a leading figure on an international level, having contributed to the construction of the European Union over the last twenty years.

**Mr. Lu Mai, China**

Lu Mai is the Secretary General of the China Development Research Foundation, which aided the enactment of the National Nutrition Improvement Plan for primary students in rural compulsory education, the Child Development Plan in poverty-stricken areas of China, and the Two-Child policy. Lu Mai has also served as the Director of Experimental Area Office for Rural Reform, Deputy Director for Communications Office, and Director of Market Research at the Research Center for Rural Development of the State Council. He was a member of the Office for Economic Restructuring of the State Council and a member of the Leading Group for the Reform of Circulation System. Lu Mai was too a Research Associate at the Harvard Institute for International Development and Department of Government and Senior Research Fellow of the Development Research Center of the State Council. He is a standing board member of the Society of Public Finance of China and, was the first Chinese representative at the World Commission on Social Dimension of Globalization 2002 – 2003.

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