

***MEDIA RELEASE - EMBARGOED UNTIL 8pm - THURSDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2019***

## **Inaugural 40 Under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australians announced**

Trailblazing software engineer Dr Muneera Bano has been named the overall winner of the inaugural 40 Under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australian awards, a list that includes well-known educator Eddie Woo, author Benjamin Law, infectious disease specialist Dr Meru Sheel and Airtasker founder Tim Fung.

“Dr Bano is a highly visible role model for women in STEM, whose personal journey is incredibly inspiring,” says Jason Johnson, Managing Director of executive search firm Johnson, and one of eight judges brought together ahead of the Asian-Australian Leadership Summit.

“All 40 named on this list are accomplished leaders in their sectors - and it demonstrates that there is an extraordinary cohort of next-generation Asian-Australians that need to be recognised for their powerful contribution to this country,” says Jason Johnson.

“It is indeed an honour to receive this recognition, says Dr Muneera Bano.” “Every day, Asian-Australians play a critically important bridging role with our neighbours in the Asian region.”

There are remarkable stories of impact: Dr Meru Sheel from the Australian National University led a team of health professionals that responded to a 2018 diphtheria outbreak among Rohingya refugees living in Bangladesh, Tim Fung co-founded rising online marketplace Airtasker, which now has more than two million users globally, while Dr Imran Lum has built the Islamic Finance capability at National Australia Bank.

Eddie Woo is one of Australia’s foremost educators and a leading advocate for the study of mathematics, while Benjamin Law is one of Australia’s most prominent writers, creating some of Australia’s highest rating TV series and documentaries.

### **Awardees:**

**Overall Winner:** Dr Muneera Bano, Swinburne University

**Arts, Culture & Sport:** Benjamin Law, Author

**Community & Advocacy / Not for Profit:** Khunapong Khunaraksa, Gravity Water

**Corporate:** Dr Imran Lum, National Australia Bank

**Education:** Eddie Woo, Department of Education, NSW

**Entrepreneurship:** Tim Fung, Airtasker

**Science & Medicine:** Dr Meru Sheel, Australian National University

**Professions:** Astrid Haban-Ber

**Public Sector / Government:** Philip Le Liu, City of Melbourne

“Asian-Australians account for roughly 12 per cent of Australia’s population, but they hold under four per cent of senior leadership positions,” says PwC Asia Practice Leader Andrew Parker. “It’s time to celebrate the stories of success and confront the underlying issues that are holding back some of our best talent. Cultural diversity in leadership needs to be a high priority across our community”.

As the winner of the “40 Under 40 Awards” Dr Muneera Bano receives a scholarship from the University of Sydney to participate in the “Cultural Diversity and Leadership Fellowship” at the University of Sydney Business School in November 2019. This program is the first of its kind in Australia to address the gap in training for high-achieving multicultural leaders, and for organisations who want to take their diversity and inclusion to the next level.

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*Additional information is attached*

The [Asian-Australian Leadership Summit](#) is an initiative of Asialink, PwC and Australian National University. The Summit will be held in Melbourne on Thursday 12th and Friday 13th September and aims to confront the under-representation of Asian-Australians in senior leadership positions.

The 40 Under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australian awards winners were selected with the help of leading executive search firm, Johnson, and a panel of judges that includes the firm's Managing Partner Jason Johnson, Chancellor of the University of Queensland Peter Varghese AO, Race Discrimination Commission Chin Tan, director Naseema Sparks AM, chef Adam Liaw, Managing Editor of AFR, Joanne Gray, CEO of Asialink Penny Burt and PWC's Asia Practice Leader Andrew Parker. Applicants need to identify as Asian-Australian and be under the age of 40 to be considered for the awards.

For more details see: <https://www.asianaustrianleadership.com.au/>

For more information on the "Cultural Diversity and Leadership Fellowship" at the University of Sydney Business School see: <https://sydney.edu.au/business/industry-and-community/industry-partnerships/executive-education/cultural-diversity-and-leadership-fellowship.html>

<b>Overall Winner</b>			
<b>Category Winner</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
<b>Arts, Culture &amp; Sport</b>	<b>Benjamin Law</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>N/A</b>
	Marc Fennell	Journalist & Interviewer	SBS, ABC & Audible
	Walter Lee	General Manager, Strategy	Australian Football League
	Leah Jing McIntosh	Editor	LIMINAL magazine
	Chris Pang	Eminent Actor/Producer	Empty by Design, Crazy Rich Asians, Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: Sword of Destiny, Tomorrow, When the War Began
	Pallavi Sharda	Eminent Actress	Les Norton, Tom and Jerry, Lion, Besharam, Beecham House, Hawaizaada
<b>Community &amp; Advocacy</b>	<b>Khunapong Khunaraksa</b>	<b>Board Member/Founder &amp; Chief Executive Officer</b>	<b>Gravity Water/Khunapong Consulting</b>
	Cat Thao Nguyen	Co-Founder & Chairperson	Australia Vietnam Young Leadership Dialogue
	Yasmine Poole	Youth Ambassador	Plan International
	Alan Wu	Member of the Board	Oxfam Australia
	Weh Yeoh	Founder, OIC Cambodia and Co-Founder and CEO, Umbo	
<b>Corporate</b>	<b>Dr Imran Kai-Shek Bin Omar Lum</b>	<b>Director, Islamic Finance</b>	<b>National Australia Bank</b>
	Queenie Chow	Microinsurance Center @ Milliman Consulting	Association of Australian Actuaries
	Matthew Park	Vice President, Communications and Media	Oil Search
	Adriana Saw	Assurance Chapter Lead – Deposits & Wealth	Australia & New Zealand Bank Group
	Shuyin Tang	Partner	Patamar Capital
<b>Education</b>	<b>Dr Muneera Bano</b>	<b>Lecturer</b>	<b>Swinburne University of Technology</b>
	<b>Eddie Woo</b>	<b>Mathematics Teacher, Author &amp; Communicator</b>	<b>NSW Department of Education</b>
	Huong Le Thu	Senior Analyst	Australian Strategic Policy Institute
	Shivali Nayak	Senior Content Producer	Learn English, Australian Broadcasting Corporation
	Dr Mimi Zou	Fellow in Chinese Commercial Law	Oxford University
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>	<b>Tim Fung</b>	<b>Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer</b>	<b>Airtasker</b>
	Fung Lam	Co-Founder and Director	New Aim
	Sarah Liu	Founder and Managing Director	The Dream Collective
	Zion Ong	Director and Co-Founder	Alyka
	William Taing	Co-Founder and Director	Beanstalk AgTech
<b>Science &amp; Medicine</b>	<b>Dr Meru Sheel</b>	<b>Westpac Research Fellow</b>	<b>ANU</b>

	Dr Zhaojun Han	Senior Lecturer and Senior Research Scientist and Co-Founder	CSIRO and University of New South Wales Joint Lab
	Dr Jagnoor Jagnoor	Senior Research Fellow and Head of Injury Division	The George Institute for Global Health
	Dr Rebecca Lim	Scientific Director, Monash Health Translation Precinct	Hudson Institute of Medical Research
	Dr Chengxue Helena Qin	Group Leader & Baker Fellow	Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute
<b>Professions</b>	<b>Astrid Haban-Beer</b>	<b>Barrister</b>	<b>Victorian Bar</b>
	Jehan Kanga	Deep Tech Lead – High Growth Ventures	KPMG
	Sue Ann Khoo	Director	Greenwoods & Herbert Smith Freehills
	Kenneth Hong	Principal	H&H Lawyers
	Sek-Loong Tan	Partner	Boston Consulting Group
<b>Public Sector / Government</b>	Helen Dai	Director, Office of Deputy CEO	Austrade
	<b>Philip Le Liu</b>	<b>Councilor</b>	<b>City of Melbourne</b>
	Yen Tan	Regional Director (Hong Kong, Macau and South China), Trade & Investment Northern Ireland	The British Consulate-General Hong Kong
	Andrew Wan	Chief Information Security Officer	The Smith Family