

ISSUE

41

WorldTalentWeb NEWSLETTER

June 2026

A newsletter of the World Giftedness Center



ISSN
2709 - 0728

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WTW Editorial - June 2026. Celebrating Gifted Awareness Week in Australia
Jennie Quinn & Penina Kiss 03

Comparative Analysis of Gifted Education in Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon
Prof. Anies Al-Hroub 06

Beyond the Logistics: How Families Abroad Can Cultivate Creativity
Marina Porto-Ribeiro & Denise de Souza Fleith12

Promoting Social Intelligence
Dr. Steven Pfeiffer 17

Gifted adolescents’ beliefs and emotions towards Artificial Intelligence use: a luminous
promise that demands vigilance and boundaries.
Aikaterini Gari 21



June Editorial



WTW EDITORIAL - JUNE 2026

CELEBRATING GIFTED AWARENESS WEEK IN AUSTRALIA

Jennie Quinn & Penina Kiss

Welcome to the latest edition of the WorldTalentWeb newsletter. In this issue, we are delighted to share contributions from international researchers whose work continues to shape conversations in gifted education and talent development around the world. We'd also like to share the recent events of our annual celebration which focuses on the education of gifted and talented individuals.

Here in Australia, Gifted Awareness Week was celebrated from 18–24 May, with schools, professional associations, universities, and education sectors across the country coming together to recognise and advocate for the needs of gifted and talented learners. This year's theme, Varied Voices, Shared Future, inspired a range of activities and events nationwide.

In Australia's capital, the Canberra Gifted Awareness Week Symposium brought together educators and representatives from across the Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales. Held at the Ann Harding Centre at the University of Canberra, the symposium featured keynote speaker, Dr. Genevieve Thraves from the University of New England (UNE), whose presentation explored the purposes of education, and gifted education, through the interconnected lenses of knowledge and skills, belonging, and agency. Dr Thraves also shared important perspectives from parents of twice-exceptional children, drawing attention to how broader educational trends can shape, and at times, complicate the learning experiences of these students.

The symposium also highlighted significant developments in Australian education policy and practice. Representatives from the NSW Department of Education and NSW Catholic sector shared updates on their evolving approach to high potential and gifted education following recent policy reforms, while the New South Wales Education Standards Authority outlined how curriculum reforms have been designed with gifted education and talent development in mind. Schools across both regions showcased examples of evidence-based practice that are making a meaningful difference to student outcomes.

Nationally, the Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (AAEGT) hosted its online conference, bringing together 24 presenters from across the country to share research, classroom practice, and emerging ideas. Queensland contributors included Michelle Ronksley-Pavia and co-host John Munro, who explored the potential of generative AI to support twice-exceptional learners. The Queensland Association for Gifted and Talented Children also hosted a major event where PhD candidates, Caz Prince and Anna Fowler shared their emerging work on belonging, wellbeing, and social supports for gifted students.

Across the country on 23 May, educators continued important conversations around identification, acceleration and support for twice-exceptional learners. In Western Australia, discussions focused on practical approaches to recognising and supporting twice-exceptional students, while in Tasmania, Lynne Maher reflected on what gifted education could look like in an ideal world. Victoria featured presentations on the complexities of misdiagnosed giftedness and being overlooked, while New South Wales and ACT educators shared practical examples of data-informed teaching, collaborating with school principals to support twice-exceptional students and the value of autonomy support. Dr Denise Wood also shared her insights on where-to-next in gifted education.

Collectively, these events served as a powerful reminder of why Gifted Awareness Week matters. It is an opportunity not only to celebrate gifted learners, but also to ensure their needs remain visible in educational conversations, policies, and practices. We'd like to thank all the state and national representatives who volunteered their time to coordinate Gifted Awareness Week across Australia this year.

As our nation continues reviewing its professional teaching standards and educational priorities, the message shared throughout the week was clear: gifted students must be intentionally considered within national educational frameworks. When giftedness is explicitly recognised in policy, curriculum, and teacher preparation, educators are better equipped to plan for these learners proactively - not as an afterthought, but as an integral part of everyday teaching and learning.

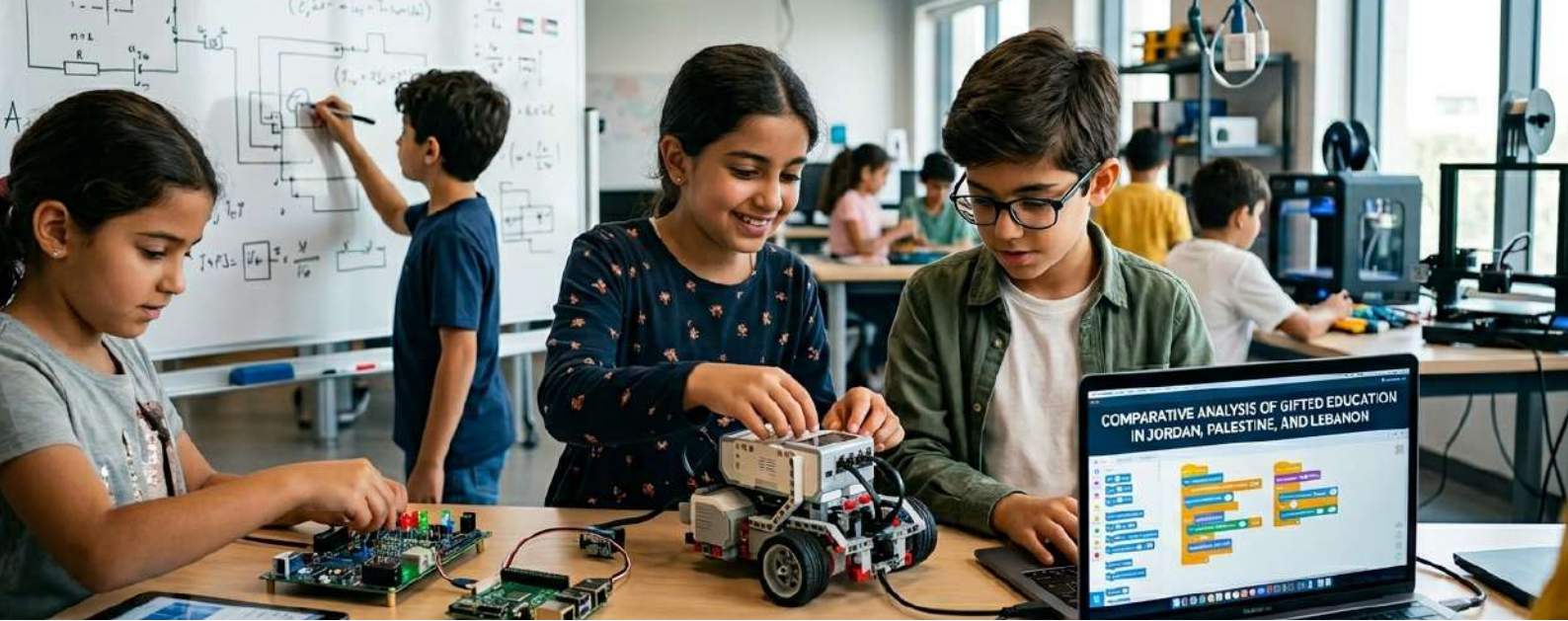
How does your community celebrate gifted awareness? We would love to hear from educators, researchers, parents, and advocates from around the world. If you would like to contribute an article or reflection for a future edition, please consider sending us a submission.

In this issue, we are excited to feature articles from Anies Al-Hroub, Marina Porto-Ribeiro and Denise de Souza Fleith, Steven Pfeiffer, and Aikaterini Gari.

To finish, we'd like to share with you the winner of the 2026 Tasmanian Association for the Gifted (TAG) GAW poster competition. Congratulations to **Rafael Mendoza Butler** for his creative expression of Varied Voices, Shared Future!



We hope you enjoy this edition, and we look forward to connecting with you again in the next.
Penina & Jennie



COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF GIFTED EDUCATION IN JORDAN, PALESTINE, AND LEBANON

Prof. Anies Al-Hroub

Abstract:

This article offers a comparative analysis of gifted education in Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon, examining how governance capacity, political stability, and educational infrastructure shape national approaches to providing gifted education. The findings reveal three contrasting trajectories: Jordan's institutionalized and centralized model, Palestine's legally recognized yet operationally fragile system, and Lebanon's historically fragmented landscape, recently reshaped by the 2024 endorsement of an inclusive gifted education policy. Particular attention is given to Palestine, where occupation, displacement, and in Gaza, systemic destruction of the educational institutions by Israeli occupation have rendered gifted education structurally inoperable despite continued cultural valuation of giftedness.

Across the three contexts, persistent challenges include inequitable access for refugees, narrow identification practices, and limited implementation capacity. The article argues that effective gifted education in fragile and conflict-affected settings requires not only formal policy recognition but also inclusive implementation frameworks and sustained institutional support.

Keywords.

Gifted education; inclusive education; comparative education; Palestine; Jordan; Lebanon; refugees; conflict-affected contexts; educational policy

Gifted education in Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon reflects three country trajectories shaped by governance capacity, political stability, and access to educational resources. Although all three countries place a high cultural value on education, their approaches to identifying and supporting gifted learners differ markedly across policy frameworks, institutionalization, and equity of access. Together, these contexts illustrate a continuum ranging from centralized state provision to legal recognition without full implementation capacity, to policy absence, and to privatization.

Policy Frameworks and National Mandates

Jordan represents the most institutionalized and systematized model of gifted education among the three contexts. Since the mid-1980s, gifted education has been formally recognized by the Ministry of Education through ministerial resolutions, specialized directorates, and national initiatives. Gifted learners are integrated into special education services, with structured pathways including acceleration, enrichment centers (Pioneer Centers), and selective schools operating under state supervision (Al-Hroub, 2023b). This long-standing policy commitment has ensured continuity and national coordination, even amid economic pressures and large refugee populations.

Palestine occupies an intermediate but fragile position. Gifted education is explicitly acknowledged in the 2017 Education Law, which mandates the identification and support of gifted students and endorses acceleration and flexible curricula (Al-Hroub, 2023).

However, the law lacks operational clarity, standardized definitions of giftedness, and enforceable mechanisms for implementation. As a result, a persistent gap exists between policy intent and educational practice, exacerbated by occupation-related constraints, restricted mobility, and chronic underfunding (Al-Hroub, 2023a). Recent evidence from Gaza further demonstrates that, under conditions of war and genocide, large-scale institutional destruction, gifted education becomes not merely under-implemented but structurally inoperable. While giftedness remains culturally valued and legally recognized, the institutional conditions required to activate talent development can collapse entirely (Al-Hroub, 2026).

Lebanon has historically lacked a national mandate for gifted education, resulting in fragmented, privatized provision (Al-Hroub, 2024). In 2024, the Lebanese Minister of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) formally endorsed a national policy for the education of gifted and high-ability learners, grounded in an inclusive education framework.

This endorsement marks a turning point, formally aligning Lebanon with international models that reconceptualize giftedness within inclusive education rather than parallel or selective tracks. From a comparative perspective, this places Lebanon's discourse closer to that of Finland, Canada, and parts of the UK, where gifted learners are supported through differentiated instruction, enrichment, and flexible grouping within mainstream classrooms.

However, unlike these high-income contexts, Lebanon's policy emerges within a fragile educational system marked by economic crisis, displacement, and uneven school capacity, highlighting a central comparative tension between policy convergence at the level of discourse and divergence at the level of implementation.

Identification and Conceptions of Giftedness

Differences in how giftedness is conceptualized and identified further distinguish the three systems. Jordan employs relatively clear cognitive and academic criteria, including standardized intelligence testing and high achievement thresholds.

These criteria underpin access to acceleration programs, Pioneer Centers, and selective institutions such as the Jubilee School. While this approach provides structure and selectivity, it has been critiqued for its heavy reliance on psychometric measures and limited sensitivity to socio-cultural diversity and refugee backgrounds (Al-Hroub, 2023b).

In Palestine, identification practices are inconsistent and highly context-dependent. Although the legal framework encourages identification, the absence of standardized tools and validated Arabic assessments leads schools to rely heavily on teacher and parent nominations, academic achievement, and informal observation (Al-Hroub, 2023a; Al-Hroub & El-Khoury, 2018b). Practices vary substantially across the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem.

Evidence from Gaza indicates that identification has effectively ceased following the deliberate Israeli military destruction of Palestinian schools, universities, assessment systems, and academic records after October 2023. Giftedness is not described as disappearing; rather, it becomes undocumented and unrecognizable within formal systems, rendering gifted learners institutionally invisible (Al-Hroub, 2026).

Lebanon has a feeble identification infrastructure. There are no nationally standardized protocols or prevalence data, and identification has historically been implicit and elite-driven (Al-Hroub, 2024; El Khoury & Al-Hroub, 2018a; 2018b).

The 2024 inclusive gifted education policy explicitly challenges this model by rejecting narrow psychometric identification and emphasizing developmental potential, opportunity, and differentiated support within mainstream classrooms.

This emphasis resonates with contemporary multidimensional models of giftedness (e.g., Renzulli; Gagné), which foreground context and learning opportunities over fixed ability. Nevertheless, implementation remains contingent on teacher preparation and school-level capacity.

Educational Provision and Program Models

Jordan offers the most diverse and multi-tiered provision for gifted learners. These include after-school Pioneer Centers, academic acceleration, resource rooms within public schools, and full-time selective institutions such as Jubilee School and King Abdullah II Schools for Excellence. Together, these models provide both enrichment and acceleration pathways, serving several thousand students nationwide (Al-Hroub, 2023). Nonetheless, access remains uneven across regions, and funding constraints limit scalability and inclusivity.

In Palestine, provision is limited and uneven. While acceleration is permitted in principle, enrichment programs are poorly defined, under-resourced, and inconsistently implemented (Al-Hroub, 2023). Broader educational emergencies, including school closures, movement restrictions, and infrastructural damage, frequently overshadow gifted education. In Gaza, the scholasticide and collapse of the education system since 2023 have eliminated all formal gifted-education pathways, including specialized schools and NGO-led enrichment initiatives.

In their absence, learning for gifted students has shifted to improvised, continuity-oriented practices such as tent-based instruction, low-bandwidth digital supervision, and community learning hubs. These practices reflect moral and symbolic commitments to education rather than sustainable talent-development models (Al-Hroub, 2026).

Lebanon relies largely on private-sector and NGO initiatives, many of which are short-term and donor-driven (Al-Hroub, 2024; Al-Hroub & El Khoury, 2018a). The implementation gap between Lebanon's 2024 inclusive policy and school-level practice mirrors challenges identified in other crisis-affected or low-resource contexts, where inclusive gifted-education policies exist nationally but are unevenly implemented at the local level.

Equity, Refugees, and Vulnerable Populations

Equity is a major fault line across the three contexts. Jordan has made partial progress in integrating Palestinian refugees as citizens and in extending access to public education. However, gifted refugee students remain underrepresented in specialized programs due to identification biases, socioeconomic barriers, and uneven geographic access (Al-Hroub, 2023).

In Palestine, gifted education is profoundly shaped by occupation, displacement, and structural violence. Restricted mobility, poverty, and psychological trauma undermine both the identification and nurturing of gifted potential (Al-Hroub, 2023).

Refugee students, particularly in Gaza, face compounded disadvantage: not only are gifted-education services unavailable, but the educational capital required for talent development, e.g., schools, mentors, assessment systems, and stable learning environments, has been systematically destroyed. Under such conditions, giftedness persists as potential but remains structurally non-activatable (Al-Hroub, 2026).

Lebanon presents the most severe equity challenge. Refugees, both Palestinian and Syrian, face legal, economic, and educational exclusion, with virtually no formal pathways to identify or support gifted learners (Antoun, 2022). Giftedness among refugees is addressed only through isolated NGO initiatives, leaving most high-ability students unsupported and vulnerable to long-term marginalization (Al-Hroub, 2024).

Lebanon's inclusive gifted education policy, therefore, holds comparative significance: it formally acknowledges gifted learners within inclusive systems, even under systemic stress, while simultaneously revealing the structural supports required for such policies to move beyond symbolic commitment.

Synthesis and Comparative Implications

Together, the three cases illustrate a continuum of state responsibility in gifted education. Jordan exemplifies a centralized, policy-driven model with established institutions but persistent equity concerns. Palestine reflects a legally recognized yet operationally fragile system, where gifted education can shift from under-provision to complete suspension under extreme military occupation conditions.

Lebanon is a fragmented, market-driven landscape characterized by deep structural inequities. However, Lebanon's 2024 policy offers an important comparative case: it demonstrates how inclusive gifted education can be formally endorsed even amid economic collapse and displacement.

Across all three contexts, common challenges persist: insufficient teacher preparation, narrow conceptions of giftedness, under-identification of marginalized learners, and the systematic exclusion of refugees and twice-exceptional students (Al-Hroub, 2023; 2024).

The Palestinian case, particularly in the Gaza Strip, underscores a critical insight for comparative gifted-education research: giftedness cannot be understood in isolation from the educational ecosystem that enables its development. Where educational capital is destroyed, giftedness does not vanish; rather, it becomes non-activatable (Al-Hroub, 2026).

These findings suggest that gifted education in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, particularly Palestine and Lebanon, requires more than policy recognition. It requires robust implementation frameworks, culturally responsive identification practices, and the protection of educational infrastructure as prerequisites for equity. Without these conditions, gifted education risks becoming either an elite privilege or a suspended aspiration, rather than a mechanism for human development and social renewal.

References

Al-Hroub, A. (2023a). Evaluating gifted education in Palestine: A study of educational and learning capitals. *Cogent Education*, 10, 1-31.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2240931>

Al-Hroub, A. (2023b). Rethinking gifted education in Jordan: An analysis of the role of educational and learning capitals. *Cogent Education*, 10(1), 1-21.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2203591>

Al-Hroub, A. (2022). Gifted education in Lebanon: Re-examining the role of educational and learning capitals. *Cogent Education*, (9) 1, 1-19.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2022.2073644>

Al-Hroub, A. (2026). Displaced giftedness in Gaza: A systemic model of non-activatable giftedness.

Gifted education in Lebanese schools: Integrating theory, research, and practice (pp. 1-7). Switzerland:

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15332276.2026.2633159>

Al-Hroub, A., & El Khoury, S. (2018a). Introduction to giftedness in Lebanon. In S. El Khoury, & A. Al-Hroub, *Cogent Gifted and Talented International*, 41(1), 1-21.

Springer International Publishing.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78592-9_1

Al-Hroub, A., & El Khoury, S. (2018b). Definitions and conceptions of giftedness around the world. In S. El Khoury, & A. Al-Hroub,

Gifted education in Lebanese schools: Integrating theory, research, and practice (pp. 9-38). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78592-9_2

Al-Hroub, A., & El Khoury, S. (2018c). Giftedness in Lebanon: Emerging issues and future considerations. In S. El Khoury, & A. Al-Hroub,

Gifted education in Lebanese schools: Integrating theory, research, and practice (pp. 95-110). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78592-9_6

Antoun, M. (2022). Framing the education for gifted Lebanese and gifted refugees in Lebanon.

Frontiers in Psychology, 13, 1077278.

El Khoury, S., & Al-Hroub, A. (2018a). Identification of gifted students: History, tools, and procedures. In S. El Khoury, & A. Al-Hroub,

Gifted education in Lebanese schools: Integrating theory, research, and practice

(pp. 39-59). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78592-9_3

El Khoury, S., & Al-Hroub, A. (2018b). Defining and identifying giftedness in Lebanon: Findings from the field. In S. El Khoury, & A. Al-Hroub. (2018).

Gifted education in Lebanese schools: Integrating theory, research, and practice

(pp. 73-94). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78592-9_5



BEYOND THE LOGISTICS: HOW FAMILIES ABROAD CAN CULTIVATE CREATIVITY

Marina Porto-Ribeiro & Denise de Souza Fleith

Relocation is usually handled as logistics, a spreadsheet mindset of expenses, deadlines, documents, and boxes. However, underneath, it is a cognitive event. Familiar cues disappear, social rules change, and everyday habits must be rebuilt. This is why relocation also calls for psychological preparation and intentional planning, not only practical arrangements. Research suggests that under the right conditions the same disruption can become a catalyst for positive outcomes, such as creativity, especially for families raising children across cultures (Fürst & Grin, 2023; Gocłowska et al., 2018; Porto-Ribeiro & Fleith, 2022).

In psychological research, creativity is typically defined as the ability to generate ideas or solutions that are both original and effective (Amabile, 1996). Csikszentmihalyi (1996) reminds us that creativity is also sociocultural. It grows from the interaction between individuals, the cultural tools they have access to, and the recognition of others. Because of that, the environment matters. Cross cultural living is a major shift in those conditions, which raises a key question: when does cultural transition expand creative growth, and when does it instead trigger stress and psychological withdrawal?

A useful lens comes from the Structure and Appraisal Model of Multicultural Experiences (Maddux et al., 2021). Based on a large systematic review, the model argues that multicultural experiences vary along two dimensions, and that these jointly predict outcomes such as learning, creativity, and well-being. The first dimension is structure, referring to whether experiences are deep or broad. Deep experiences usually involve longer residence and more immersive engagement with a host culture, including language use, daily routines, and meaningful relationships. Broad experiences involve exposure to multiple cultures, often through repeated short stays or frequent moves.

The second dimension is appraisal, meaning how people interpret the experience. Positive appraisals highlight learning, meaning, and growth. Negative appraisals emphasize threat, loss of control, or devaluation. Importantly, the same relocation can be experienced in varied ways across individuals and even within the same family, and these differences shape attention, motivation, and learning.

One of the model's most relevant ideas for creativity is the distinction between integrative and comparative processing (Maddux et al., 2021; Leung et al., 2008). When people have deeper cultural immersion and more positive appraisals, they are more likely to engage in integrative processing. This involves revising internal mental models, blending cultural perspectives, and building more complex ways of interpreting social life. When experiences are shallower or appraised as threatening, people are more likely to rely on comparative processing, such as noticing differences, categorizing groups, and keeping cultures mentally separate. Comparative processing can support basic learning, but when it becomes defensive, it tends to reduce exploration and limit creative synthesis.

For families raising children across cultures, being abroad quickly becomes a daily classroom. Children are constantly decoding new social scripts, and their willingness to explore often depends on whether the adults around them model curiosity or defensiveness (Fail et al., 2004). For parents, teachers, and researchers, this perspective offers an important shift. Exposure alone is not a magic solution. The creative benefits of multicultural experience depend on the quality of engagement with cultural difference. Creativity is more likely to emerge when cultural contact is paired with curiosity, reflection, and psychological safety, rather than pressure to perform or fear of making mistakes (Tadmor et al., 2012).

Several lines of research help explain why cultural learning can support creative thinking. One pathway is cognitive flexibility. Regularly switching between cultural norms and expectations strengthens the ability to consider multiple perspectives, a process linked to higher creativity in multicultural contexts (Leung et al., 2008; Maddux & Galinsky, 2009). Another pathway is integrative complexity, the ability to recognize and integrate different or even conflicting ideas. In a longitudinal study of people living abroad, increases in bicultural integration and integrative complexity predicted stronger creative outcomes over time (Tadmor et al., 2012).

Evidence from younger populations points in the same direction. In our study with multicultural children and adolescents who had lived in at least one other country, overall creativity scores were higher than the test average, with stronger performance in emotive expressiveness and cognitive aspects of creative production. Most participants presented high levels of acculturation and tended to adopt an integration strategy, which aligns with the idea that holding two cultural toolkits at once can support creative work. Higher acculturation was associated with higher creativity. When families were asked what helped the international experience, they most often pointed to school, family routines, social relationships, and language as key facilitators (Porto-Ribeiro & Fleith, 2022).

Cultural learning itself also matters. Examining study abroad participants, Cho and Morris (2015) found that active cultural study predicted gains in problem solving, particularly when participants chose engagement rather than avoidance. Broader reviews confirm a similar pattern, multicultural experiences tend to support creativity primarily when individuals actively reflect on cultural differences and experiment with new ways of thinking, rather than simply observing from a distance (Goćłowska et al., 2018; Maddux et al., 2021).

Language can add extra fuel to this process. Research links multilingualism and multicultural experience to multiple forms of creativity, including creative potential, creative performance, and real-world creative achievements (Fürst & Grin, 2023). Experimental and field studies suggest that multilingual and multicultural practices are associated with enhanced divergent thinking, particularly when individuals actively engage in intercultural interactions rather than remaining within familiar social circles (Kharkhurin et al., 2023). This effect does not arise simply from knowing more words; instead, language learning repeatedly encourages individuals to reframe meanings, tolerate ambiguity, and detect patterns across context.

The evidences point to a practical theoretical claim: living abroad can support creativity when families, schools, and organizations create conditions for deep cultural learning and for meaning-based appraisals. Creativity is less about collecting passport stamps and more about everyday practices that move people from observation to participation, and from comparison to synthesis.

Three ingredients appear especially important. First, contact that is deep enough to matter (Porto-Ribeiro & Fleith, 2022). Depth does not require becoming a local overnight. It begins with repeated, respectful participation in ordinary settings, such as markets, sports clubs, community events, volunteering, or shared routines.

Even modest but consistent engagement can reduce threat appraisals and make curiosity easier to sustain over time (Leung et al., 2008). Second, honest meaning making. Positive appraisal is not forced optimism. Families often face loss, loneliness, language frustration, and identity disruption. The difference lies in whether these stressors are interpreted as evidence of not belonging, or as difficult but learnable parts of growth (Fail et al., 2004). In families, adults play a central role here, because children often borrow appraisals from them.

Simple family or classroom conversations that name challenges, normalize mixed feelings, and highlight learning moments can protect curiosity without minimizing hardship (Maddux et al., 2021). Third, a safety net that allows exploration. Creativity thrives when people can take social and cognitive risks without humiliation (Tadmor et al., 2012).

For children, schools can foster this by treating cultural difference as a learning resource rather than a deficit. For adults, organizations can support it through language programs, career continuity initiatives, and structured opportunities for community integration (Fürst & Grin, 2023). Without such support, the same cultural exposure can be appraised as threatening, leading to withdrawal and reduced learning.

Practical Ideas for Families Living Abroad to Cultivate Creativity

- Turn culture into a family curiosity project. Rotate who brings one small question to dinner, such as why people greet in a certain way or what a local proverb means, then look for answers together in real life.
- Treat difference as something to learn from, not something to correct. When children ask about beliefs, rituals, or celebrations that clash with your habits, stay in the conversation. Dismissing the topic teaches avoidance, while exploring it teaches respect.
- Look for cultural learning in the community. Choose a museum visit, a local festival, a public library, a historical walk, a street market, a concert. The goal is building cultural vocabulary.
- Learn the local language in usable chunks. Prioritize phrases that keep you in the room, greetings, polite repair lines, and relationship openers. A few reliable sentences can unlock friendships faster than a long word list.
- Schedule low pressure experiments. Try new foods, routes, markets, or celebrations as short experiments with a clear exit plan, so novelty feels manageable rather than overwhelming.
- Praise the effort, not only the results. Notice small wins in the transition, such as trying a new phrase, joining a group, or handling a misunderstanding with courage.
- Keep an honest space for missing home. Allow children to express missing people and places without rushing to fix it. Homesickness is not a problem to eliminate, it is information about attachment.
- Protect the basics that keep the nervous system steady. Sleep, play, movement, and unstructured time matter. Families under chronic stress are more likely to shift into defensive comparison rather than integrative learning.
- Build a social network. Choose one recurring local activity that allows repeated contact with the same people and routines, such as a class, a club, or a neighborhood ritual.
- Keep bridges to the home culture. Preserve small traditions and routines, and maintain regular contact with family and friends back home.

Implications for Teachers and Schools Serving International Students in Fostering Creativity

- Build psychological safety for cultural risk taking. Students need room to speak with an accent, ask obvious questions, and try unfamiliar social scripts without being mocked. Practical moves include explicitly teaching respectful listening norms, praising effortful communication, and treating mistakes as information.
- Teach culture as practice, not as trivia. Go beyond International Days and work with cultural tools in real tasks, how students collaborate, disagree, tell stories, use humor, and solve problems. Teachers can invite students to compare approaches to the same task, then ask what could be combined into a better solution. That is integrative processing in action.
- Support identity integration and belonging. Children can feel pressure to choose one identity, especially during transition periods. Teachers can help by validating multiple belongings, creating opportunities for students to share both and narratives, and avoiding deficit language about difference.
- Partner with families as co-designers of adaptation. Families are often running an invisible workload, with logistics, emotional containment, language learning, and social rebuilding. Schools can reduce threat appraisals by making expectations clear, offering orientation that goes beyond paperwork, and creating structured pathways for connection across families.

Mobility is not automatically enriching. It can isolate families, amplify stress, and create unequal access to cultural learning. The Structure and Appraisal Model helps name a simple truth that the same external experience can produce growth or contraction depending on how it is structured and interpreted. For parents and educators, the creative promise of living abroad lies in small, repeatable choices that increase cultural learning, support meaning making, and make experimentation feel safe. Over time, those micro-choices can transform relocation from a disruption that narrows attention into a developmental context that broadens perspective and opens new pathways for creative engagement with the world.

References

- Amabile, T. M. (1996). *Creativity in context*. Westview Press.
- Cho, J., & Morris, M. W. (2015). Cultural study and problem-solving gains: Effects of study abroad, openness, and choice. . *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 36(7), 944-966. <https://doi.org/10.1002.job.2028>
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996). *Creativity: Flow and the psychology of discovery and invention*. Harper Collins.
- Fail, H., Thompson, J., & Walker, G. (2004). Belonging, identity and third culture kids: Life histories of former international school students. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 3(3), 319-338. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240904047358>
- Fürst, G., & Grin, F. (2023). Multilingualism, multicultural experience, cognition, and creativity. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14(1), Article e1155158. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1155158>
- Gocłowska, M. A., Damian, R. I., & Mor, S. (2018). The diversifying experience model: Taking a broader conceptual view of the multiculturalism-creativity link. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 49(2), 303-322. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022116650258>
- Kharkhurin, A. V., Koncha, V., & Charkhabi, M. (2023). The effects of multilingual and multicultural practices on divergent thinking. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 26(3), 592-609. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728922000864>
- Leung, A. K. Y., Maddux, W. W., Galinsky, A. D., & Chiu, C. Y. (2008). Multicultural experience enhances creativity: The when and how. *American Psychologist*, 63(3), 169-181. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.63.3.169>
- Leung, A. K., Maddux, W.W., Galinsky, A. D., & Chiu, C.Y. (2008). Multicultural experience enhances creativity: The when and how. *American Psychologist*, 63(3), 168-181. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.63.3.169>
- Maddux, W. W., & Galinsky, A. D. (2009). Cultural borders and mental barriers: The relationship between living abroad and creativity. Maddux, W. W., & Galinsky, A. D. (2009). Cultural borders and mental barriers: The relationship between living abroad and creativity. Maddux, W. W., Lu, J. G., Affinito, S. J., & Galinsky, A. D. (2021). Multicultural <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2019.0138>
- Porto-Ribeiro, M., & Fleith, D. S. (2022). Criatividade, aculturação e vivência internacional de crianças e adolescentes multiculturais [Creativity, acculturation, and international experiences of multicultural children and adolescents]. *Interação em Psicologia*, 26(1), 71-80. <https://doi.org/10.5380/riep.v26i1.75964>
- Tadmor, C. T., Galinsky, A. D., & Maddux, W. W. (2012). Getting the most out of living abroad: Biculturalism and integrative complexity as key drivers of creative and professional success. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 103(3), 520-542. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029360>



PROMOTING SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Dr. Steven Pfeiffer

I am often invited to comment on recent developments or insights in the high ability/gifted world since I first introduced my tripartite model of academic giftedness more than 12 years ago (Pfeiffer, 2013, 2015). I have observed with keen interest the maturing of the fields of gifted education, expertise, intelligence testing, and talent development over the course of my career.

First, authorities now agree that gifted kids learn at a faster pace and with greater depth and complexity than their 'neuro-typical' classmates. I observed this firsthand during my tenure as Director of the Duke University gifted summer program. Gifted students, particularly when they are interested in the subject matter, can literally devour huge amounts of complex academic material at a rapid, almost breathtaking rate.

The second insight is that a youngster's gift can appear in one specific domain, such as in mathematics, or music, creative writing, dance, theater, or even athletics. Or in multiple domains. There is no one rule of thumb. Some highly able and creative learners are precocious in one narrowly defined domain, whereas others are blessed with multiple talents that amaze their peers, teachers and parents.

A third observation is that no matter how precocious or advanced a young child's gifts might be, the nurturing of the gifts is almost always necessary for the highly able student to maximize their full potential. The maxim, "there is no free lunch" fits with this third observation. Even highly capable, young kids - kids who might, for example, test at the upper limits of an IQ test, need to work hard to reach the highest levels of their God-given gifts. Think of USA superstars Michael Jordan, Kobe Bryant, Michael Phelps, or Tiger Woods in the world of athletics, arguably among the top athletes in their chosen fields. These world-class athletes trained harder in practice than almost any other competitor in their chosen field to refine and sharpen their extraordinary skill set.

The fourth observation is this: Not only do we humans present with a wide diversity of gifts and talents – the number limited only by what society deems relevant and noteworthy. But also, the degree of giftedness varies tremendously across domains (Pfeiffer, 2024b). I am reminded of a recent trip that my wife and I took to the quaint seaport of Nazaré, Portugal, made famous for its breathtakingly huge surfing waves. Only a handful of expert surfers dare challenge the gigantic, 25-plus meter breaking waves. Hundreds of visitors come daily to watch the skill and daring required of the few gifted surfers able to successfully ride these monster waves.

Many in the high ability field like to consider the minimal threshold of two standard deviations above the mean – or the top 2-to-5% of kids, as gifted. There certainly is no exact science that can help us set the minimal threshold demarcating gifted vs. not gifted. That said, among the top 2-to-5% of gifted kids in any given school, there is a considerable range of abilities amongst this already select, elite group! I again borrow from the surfing world to make this fourth point clearer.

Very few surfers, worldwide, can gracefully and safely ride waves greater than 3-or-4 meters high. Trust me, my buddies and I have tried! The group of surfers who can ride waves greater than 3 meters high, I would argue, are all gifted surfers. A more select group of elite surfers, however, are capable of riding waves 5-to-10 meters high! Their surfing skill is breathtaking and humbling to watch. And finally, there are but a handful of world-class professional surfers who dare ride the huge waves at Nazaré, Portugal.

In all human fields, there is a huge range of ability even amongst the most capable. Only a few reach the highest levels of distinction or eminence in any field, be it surfing, basketball, soccer, or tennis, or professions as varied as neurosurgery, bioengineering, nuclear physics, business, law, digital-graphic design, investment banking, restaurant management, teaching little children, or my chosen field of clinical psychology!

The fifth indisputable observation is that a great many highly able kids – we simply do not have the hard data to know exact numbers or percentages – experience heightened feelings of sensitivity and emotional reactivity, along with asynchronous development, peer relation problems, and an inner turmoil due to a sense of being different and having different interests than their peers – creating what I call an uncomfortable “outlier” status. Also, I have observed that many highly able students find themselves bored in classrooms ill-equipped to meet and challenge their intellectual and academic needs. For too many gifted students, this is a chronic problem.

Parenthetically, my motivation for writing a parenting book for raising resilient and successful gifted kids (Pfeiffer, 2024b) was because a considerable number of very bright kids present with quirky social-emotional behaviors, poor social skills, and low emotional intelligence. In my experience, working with clients in the USA as well as in Europe, Asia, South America and the Middle East, all too often parents focus on what I call the “head strengths” of their gifted student, and neglect their “heart strengths” (Pfeiffer, 2024a, b, c). Heart strengths such as persistence, frustration tolerance, kindness and generosity, humility, good social judgment, and empathy (Pfeiffer, 2017; Shaughnessy, 2023, 2024; Zeidner & Matthews, 2017). In my new book, *Parenting from the Heart: Raising resilient and successful smart kids* (2024), I speak to the importance of parents focusing on concrete ways to develop their gifted child’s heart strengths.



Last year, I also guest edited a special issue of *Gifted Education International* (2024a) and invited leading authorities to share their research and thinking about ways to encourage heart strengths: resilience, positive emotions, engagement, kindness, optimism, gratitude, honesty and integrity, teamwork, and social responsibility among gifted students (Pfeiffer, 2024c). Essentially, I was advocating for a “whole child” approach to educating and raising gifted and talented kids. I have long advocated that society focus on ways to encourage mental health and well-being in the classroom, playground, home and community.

There is an exciting, growing evidence-based literature related to ways to promote the social-emotional development and character strength of all kids, including gifted youth and students with disabilities (Pfeiffer, 2024b).

Promoting the social-emotional development and character strength of gifted and high ability students is a particularly promising direction that I would encourage educators and policy makers to explore. There exists a library of published resources on practical, cost-effective and low burden interventions that can easily be individually tailored and integrated into the existing curriculum that have demonstrated long-term positive effects on students’ social emotional development and academic outcomes.

Thank you for taking the time to read this essay. I hope that the ideas and resources are helpful as you work in your chosen field of education, psychology, public policy, and government. I wish you well!

References

Pfeiffer, S. I. (2013). *Serving the gifted*. NY: Routledge.

Pfeiffer, S. I. (2015). *Essentials of gifted assessment*. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.

Pfeiffer, S. I. (2017). Success in the classroom and in life: Focusing on strengths of the head and strengths of the heart. *Gifted Education International*, 33 (2), 95-101.

Pfeiffer, S. I. (2024a). Optimizing mental health and well-being: Successful parenting is one key component. *EC Psychology and Psychiatry*, 13 (2), 1-5.

Pfeiffer, S. I. (2024b). *Parenting from the heart: Raising resilient and successful smart kids*. NY: Routledge.

Pfeiffer, S. I. (2024c). Parenting from the heart: Special issue of GEI. *Gifted Education international*.

Shaughnessy, M. F. (2023). An interview with Steven I. Pfeiffer: Parenting from the heart. *Journal of Gifted Education and Creativity*, 10 (1), 73-79.

Shaughnessy, M. F. (2024). An interview with Steven I. Pfeiffer: Dealing with what we know and what we don't know about gifted kids. *Journal of Gifted Education and Creativity*, 11 (4), 161-167.

Zeidner, M., & Matthews, G. (2017). Emotional intelligence in gifted students. *Gifted Education International*, 33 (2), 163-182.



GIFTED ADOLESCENTS' BELIEFS AND EMOTIONS TOWARDS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USE: A LUMINOUS PROMISE THAT DEMANDS VIGILANCE AND BOUNDARIES.

Aikaterini Gari

Professor of Social Psychology, Department of Psychology, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

The rapid development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the widespread use of social media create new challenges for children and adolescents. Although a lot of efforts have been conducted to adapt and evolve generative AI in education (e.g., ChatGPT), especially since the “COVID-19 era”, in order to meet the needs of almost all members of school systems - students, teachers and parents-it still remains a complicated challenge for all parts (Baidoo-Anu & Ansah, 2023).

The impact of AI tools on gifted education is growing. It focuses on the generative AI (genAI) outputs that are dedicated to create new and original outputs. Although AI is artificially creative per se, it still lacks intentionality and authenticity and its focus is set mostly on creative products rather than creative processes. Even when it simulates human intelligence, it does not reach the human complex framework with its conscious, social, psychological, motivational and emotional characteristics (Runco, 2023).

On the other hand, arguments that point to the risk of "unethical applications" of AI in education are not enough to warrant its rejection; however, they warrant careful consideration in education at large, and especially in gifted education. Empirical studies have shown that the genAI tools fulfil dynamically the gifted expectations for personalized and autonomous learning, instant feedback on their work, and a positive mindset about their intellectual capabilities.

Particularly for gifted adolescents, the emotional dimension of development is of critical importance for both academic achievement and personal fulfilment. They frequently experience heightened emotional and social pressure stemming from high expectations for exceptional performance, whether imposed by family and school environments or arising from internalized standards (Greenspon, 2012). To shed light on both the potential benefits and drawbacks of AI use for gifted adolescents, we conducted an empirical study examining how and to what extent the use of AI tools influences their emotional experiences, based on self-reported data.

A sample of 60 Greek adolescents with high cognitive abilities, mostly boys (55%) of 13–19 years of age, filled in an e-questionnaire that investigated their beliefs regarding the use of AI in the educational process and everyday life. These participants took part on a voluntary basis, and the majority were recruited through collaboration with MENSA Greece. Participants reported that their parents were highly educated, with at least a university degree (75% of mothers and 65% of fathers).

They appear to perceive AI tools as a means to enhance learning, facilitate the discovery of diverse new knowledge, promote self-awareness, and support their career preparation. The majority of their answers report that they use AI applications (54.9%) such as ChatGPT, DALL-E & DALL-E-Mini, Snapchat, GitHub Copilot etc., either under teachers' supervision in Technology Labs of High Schools and or by themselves. They use them for assistance in subjects such as STEM, humanities and science courses, and computer science, while they acknowledge AI's contribution to faster access to a great variety of information, generation of summaries, and text translation. They also state that they utilize AI in exploring university study options and professional opportunities for the future in the labour market (40% of their answers). At the same time, they express their interest in extracurricular activities such as STEM seminars and programming supported and reinforced by AI use (51.7% of answers). They generally recognized its potential for personalized learning, creativity, "out-of-the-box" knowledge exploration, and personal development.

To our surprise, some of them reported that AI tools function as a "digital friend" (33% of answers), offering advice and relief when psychological support is needed for relationship difficulties and everyday life problem solving. Such use may carry a great risk that adolescents may rely on unsuitable advice, without the empathy of a qualified mental health professional and the establishment of a genuine counselling relationship.

With respect to their emotions in relation to AI use, they express predominantly positive feelings toward AI, such as "enthusiasm" (71.7%), "joy" (50%), "satisfaction" and "fulfilment" (46.7%, respectively). Although positive emotions predominate, some negative emotions are also expressed regarding the safety and boundaries of AI use. Few of their answers underline that they feel anxiety for not living the rich experiences their schoolmates may have (18.3% of their answers) and also for losing important information that others have (10%). These feelings may relate to the well-documented construct of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), which refers to the apprehension that others might be having regarding experiences from which one is absent.

These feelings may manifest as a set of attitudes characterized by compulsive searching for AI-related information, frequent monitoring of social media, and a persistent need to remain constantly connected and informed about others' activities and ongoing developments (Przybylski et al., 2013), which diminishes the enjoyment of the benefits of AI and exerts emotional pressure.

Some other negative feelings were “concern over misinformation produced by AI tools about major events” (45% of their answers), “worry about the protection of personal data in AI technologies” (35%), “disappointment about being unable to acquire all the knowledge they need” (21.7%), “emotional exhaustion from the enormous volume of available information” (16.7%), and “an ongoing sense of tiredness” (13.3%). Regarding gender differences, positive feelings were higher for boys than girls ($p=.006$) but fear of missing attitudes (FOMO) were higher for girls ($p=.051$).

Boys appear more optimistic and captivated by the positive aspects of AI tools with an emphasis on the unconventional nature of the knowledge offers; girls tend to be a bit more reserved, expressing greater concern about personal data protection, feelings of missing out on experiences shared by their peers (FOMO), and a feeling of persistent fatigue.

Despite the observed gender differentiation, these findings reveal a broadly homogeneous and stable emotional orientation toward AI of these Greek adolescents across age, educational level, and school type, with the associated emotional load being relatively consistent and chiefly positive. Recognizing both the benefits and risks of AI, they appear to be aware and excited about the AI “achievements”, while remaining cautious about the potential risks they may entail. From a research perspective, beyond gender differences, variations might lie elsewhere for these gifted adolescents, such as the AI usage patterns, the types of applications employed, the quality of guidance or mentoring they have, and other important psychosocial factors such as self-regulation and resilience.

For students of secondary education, the involvement of teachers is essential. Teachers are important to ensure that gifted adolescents receive from AI tools information that is stimulating, credible, and academically robust. They have to instruct them that there are cases that may generate incorrect or nonsensical information and help them to be able to evaluate the results and confirm their validity.

It is crucial for students in adolescence to understand that AI tools do not replace human teachers and psychological counsellors and their responsibility and socioemotional support. Additionally, they can contribute to alleviating the anxieties of gifted adolescents and mostly gifted girls’ concerns, strengthening their high positive emotions and sense of enjoyment in exploring unconventional fields of knowledge, but under stable supervision and flexible mentoring processes (Caporusso, 2023 ; McGuire et al., 2024). Overall they have to provide consistent and “virtual mentorship” to them (Guilbault, Wang, & McCormick, 2025).



References

Baidoo-Anu, D., & Ansah, L. O. (2023). Education in the Era of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI): Understanding the Potential Benefits of ChatGPT in Promoting Teaching and Learning.

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4337484

Caporusso, N. (2023). Generative Artificial Intelligence and the Emergence of Creative Displacement Anxiety: Review. *Research Directs in Psychology and Behavior*, 3(1).

DOI: [10.53520/rdpb2023.10795](https://doi.org/10.53520/rdpb2023.10795)

Greenspon T. S. (2012). Perfectionism: A counselor's role in a recovery process. In T. L. Cross & J. R. Cross (Eds.) *Handbook for counsellors serving students with gifts and talents. Development, Relationships, School Issues, and Counseling Needs/Interventions* (pp. 597-613). Prufrock Press.

DOI: [10.4324/9781003235415](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003235415)

Guilbault, K. M., Wang, Y., & McCormick, K. M. (2025). Using ChatGPT in the secondary gifted classroom for personalized learning and mentoring.

Gifted Child Today, 48(2), 93-103.

DOI: [10.1177/10762175241308950](https://doi.org/10.1177/10762175241308950)

McGuire, J., De Cremer, D., & Van De Cruys, T. (2024). Establishing the importance of co-creation and self-efficacy in creative collaboration with artificial intelligence.

Scientific Reports, 14(1), 18525

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-69423-2>

Runco, M. A. (2023). AI can only produce artificial creativity.

Journal of Creativity, 33(3), 100063.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yjoc.2023.100063>



CALL FOR ARTICLES

We would like to invite you to write an article for the WorldTalentWeb newsletter. The theme and writing style are open for the author to determine.

Articles could take the shape of an interview with a specialist in the field, a report on research or a recent event, a book or resource review etc. The guidelines for the article are listed below.

Please submit your article to the following email: WorldTalentWeb@ha.ae

Guidelines for submitting an article for the WorldTalentWeb newsletter:

1. A submitted article should be between 800 to 2000 words, not including references.
2. WorldTalentWeb newsletter caters to the international community and thus, all articles should be written in English.
3. American or British spelling is accepted.
4. All non-native English speakers should make sure to check their articles for language accuracy before submitting them.
5. The article should be in Times New Roman font, size 12 pt.
6. Authors should avoid using footnotes.
7. Authors should adhere to the APA style and/or formatting guidelines provided in the APA Manual, 7th Edition.
8. The article should be submitted with embedded photos, and tables, and figures if relevant.
9. The article should be submitted as an email attachment as a Microsoft Word document.
10. Articles should be word-processed and single-spaced with 1 inch (2.54 cm) at the top, bottom, left, and right of every page as per the APA 7th edition requirements.
11. Authors should strictly observe the copyrights-requirements and cite the work of others correctly.
12. Relevant permission should be obtained if photos of people are used. An email giving permission to use photos publicly is sufficient.
13. Authors should include their full name, title, institutional affiliation, and a high-resolution color photo.
14. If an article was published before elsewhere, then only submit a summary of the original document with acknowledgment.
15. Authors are encouraged to use supportive pictures.
16. The editorial team reserves the right to edit articles accepted for publication.



WorldTalentWeb **CALL FOR ADVERTISING CONFERENCES**

Looking to share your conference with the world?

Send a brief description of the conference to:

WorldTalentWeb@ha.ae

(not more than 70 words)

"The WorldTalentWeb newsletter's team is very happy to advertise your conference."



WorldTalentWeb EDITORIAL BOARD

Editors:

- Penina Kiss, Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese
- Jennie Quinn, SCS Australia

Co-editor:

- Dr. Sadiq Abdulwahed Ismail, Hamdan Foundation, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Advisory Board:

- Prof. Abdullah M. Aljughaiman, King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia
- Csilla Fuszek, The Association of Hungarian Talent Support Organizations (MATHETSZ), Hungary
- Dr. David Rempel, IUBH International University of Applied Sciences, Kenya
- Dr. Jamal AlMehairi, Hamdan Foundation, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- Prof. John Munro, The University of Melbourne, Australia
- Dr. Khalifa A. Al Suwaidi, Hamdan Foundation, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- Dr. Paula Olszewski-Kubilius, Northwestern University, US



WORLD GIFTEDNESS CENTER AWARDS



APPLIED RESEARCH GLOBAL AWARD OF TALENTED EDUCATION

Offered to the international scientists with innovative applied research productions in gifted education & related areas

\$25,000
AWARD VALUE



Scan the QR-Code to
download the award
brochure and apply

Deadline: By Aug. 24, 2026



SCHOOL GLOBAL AWARD INITIATIVE OF TALENTED EDUCATION

Dedicated to schools & programs in higher education institutions with outstanding projects in gifted education.

\$25,000
AWARD VALUE



Scan the QR-Code to
download the award
brochure and apply

Deadline: By Aug. 24, 2026

WorldTalentWeb NEWSLETTER

June 2026

A newsletter of the World Giftedness Center



The WorldTalentWeb newsletter is quarterly published by the World Giftedness Center (WGC) of Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation for Medical and Educational Sciences. Dubai, United Arab Emirates

