

Architects  
of Diversity  
MALAYSIA

**2021 PROSPECTUS**

**AOD** has grown exponentially in the past year and a half since our last review. From a small camp with a dozen volunteers, we have expanded into becoming one of the leading voices in diversity and inclusion for the country. Our team has expanded to include staff, interns and volunteers in a short duration of time.

More than ever, Malaysia desperately needs space for empathy. Besides the global COVID-19 pandemic that greatly affected our line of work, we also saw an unexpected change in government that introduced different dimensions of uncertainty. As Malaysia approaches a social and political crossroad, AOD's mission to act as a bridge weighs heavily on us.

We have been fortunate to have great members and partners. Despite operating with limited resources, the team has found ways to make do with the tools on the table. We successfully adapted our in-person programming to virtual activities, now reaching a more diverse range of students than before.

As we look towards 2021 and beyond, AOD will be focusing on consolidating our activities and ensuring sustainability for the organisation. We are grateful for the UWC Alumni Association Malaysia for acting as our incubator for the past 3 years as AOD will be exploring independent governance in the coming few months.

My hope is that we continue to act slowly and humbly as we take on the complexity of human misunderstanding and conflict.



**Jason Wee**  
Co-Founder & Lead Coordinator  
*March 2021*

Architects of Diversity aims to bridge **communities** and **identity groups** among youth in Malaysia.

Our future leaders need to learn how to navigate issues of stereotypes, privilege and conflict in this fast-changing world. We provide the tools to critically engage in sensitive conversations about race, religion and class through empathetic learning and listening.

## Since July 2019, AOD has..

created spaces for  
better intergroup  
interactions for

**360**

youth

engaged and  
contributed to

**5**

public events,  
sharing our knowledge  
with more than

**490**

audience members

established new  
partnerships with

**14**

local organisations

# HIGHLIGHTS



# OUR TEAM

committee members



Jason Wee



Preethika Bharadwaj



Azif Fazriq



Frieda Thaveethu



Sabrina Qistina



Syuen Chia



Kieren Gill

our staff, interns and volunteers



# OUR WORK

## PROGRAMME

At the heart of AOD's work is our student programmes. Our flagship activity, UWC Short Course, fields innovative methods for facilitating empathy and difficult conversations around intractable social issues to improve Malaysia's collective development of diversity and inclusion curricula. We implement our programmes with partners to reach a wide demographic of Malaysian youth.

## RESEARCH

To better inform our work, AOD has expanded into opportunities for greater understanding of the Malaysian public. We focus on developing knowledge on intergroup dynamics, including but not limited to racial tensions, identity-based discrimination and polarisation.

## ADVOCACY

AOD has ventured into becoming a voice to advocate for policies and practices that improve spaces for intergroup relationships. We focus on working with stakeholders from educational institutions, namely students, teachers and policymakers.

# PROGRAMME



## Kem Muhibah Dec 13-15, 2019

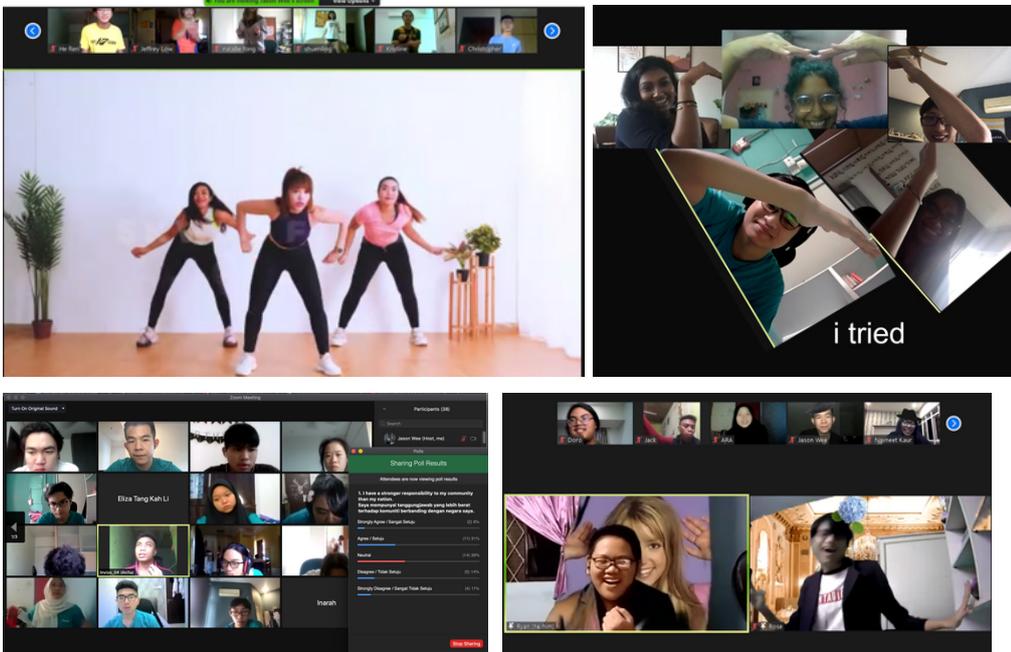
Kem Muhibah, a collaboration organised by Dong Zong and ABIM, brought together 71 students from different ends of the education system. Students from SMK, Chinese Independent schools, religious schools and vocational institutes gathered to learn about each other, discrimination of various dimensions and how to negotiate zero-sum situations. AOD provided and executed the curriculum, leading sessions and facilitator trainings.



## School Workshops Aug-Oct 2019

AOD members travelled to Johor to conduct identity exploration and community building workshops in collaboration with Teach for Malaysia Fellows. Activities were crafted around norms to treat each other in positive ways, as well as building an understanding of diversity within their classrooms.

# PROGRAMME



## UWC Short Course Online Jan 6-15, 2021

AOD's flagship programme - UWC Short Course - was conducted online due to COVID-19 restrictions. We brought together our most diverse cohort ever: 34 students from more than 10 states and 8 ethnic groups co-created a virtual community that learned about stereotypes, racial conflict and non-violent communication from each other.

This edition of the Short Course saw five 2018 Short Course alumni returning as facilitators, a testament to the growing and engaged community AOD is building.



*I've learnt so much about the different lives that a "Malaysian teenager" can have. Discussing serious topics like racism, sexism, and discrimination as a whole, has shown me how different people get treated even though we as humans had never chosen these certain things to happen to us in the first place. This safe space has genuinely let all of us express all our deepest emotions and thoughts without being judged as well allowed us to have access to a group of people who would actually listen to said emotions and thoughts.*

**Shaun Amir Renoo, 16**  
Short Course Participant

# Workshop Collaborations

## Mar 2020 - Feb 2021



**Seeds for Democracy by  
Undi18: Negotiation Simulation**



**Yayasan Tunku Abdul Rahman  
Scholar Initiation**



**Discovering Identity & Each  
Other with Yayasan Generasi  
Gemilang**



**Reading Group with King Henry  
VIII College on discrimination**

AOD partnered with various organisations to design and implement customised workshops for specific needs. Our activities ranged from crafting a political negotiation simulation for Undi18's Seeds for Democracy programme, training facilitators at Yayasan Tunku Abdul Rahman to conduct personal identity exploration, as well as helping students at KHVIII College pioneer a reading group on discrimination in a long-term effort to implement anti-discrimination policies in their institution.

## Impact Snapshot from Workshops with Yayasan Generasi Gemilang

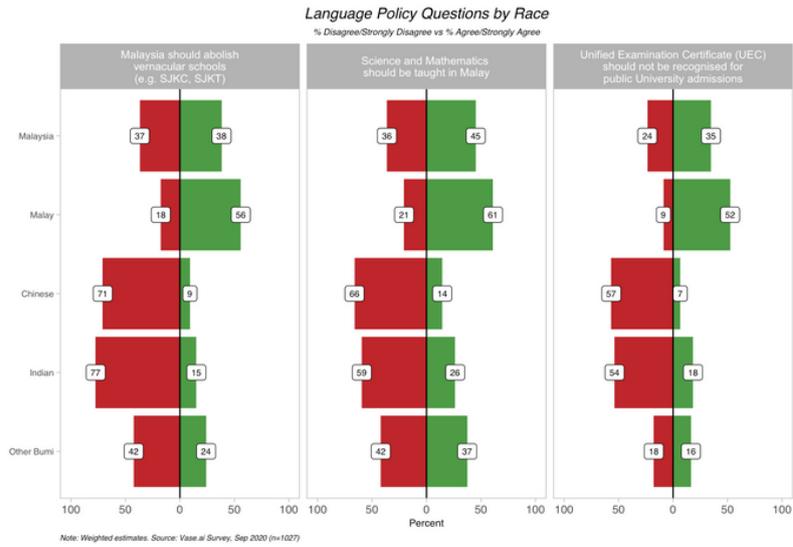
8-9 participants joined a 2 hour workshop on a Saturday morning. The module focused on eliciting perspective-sharing on a wide range of life circumstances and identities. For example, a statement would be read "The part of my identity I feel most difficult to discuss with my family is...", where participants choose from given answers to fill in the blank (e.g. race, language). Empathy and openness towards different groups or opinions saw well-sustained increases throughout all surveys. The most notable improvements among participants were in openness towards revising their viewpoints and openness in comparison to their peers.



**Empathy 1:** Apabila saya melihat atau mendengar tentang masalah orang [TARGET], saya berasa kasihan untuk mereka.  
**Empathy 2:** Jika saya melihat orang [TARGET] dibuli, saya berasa saya perlu jaga mereka.

# RESEARCH

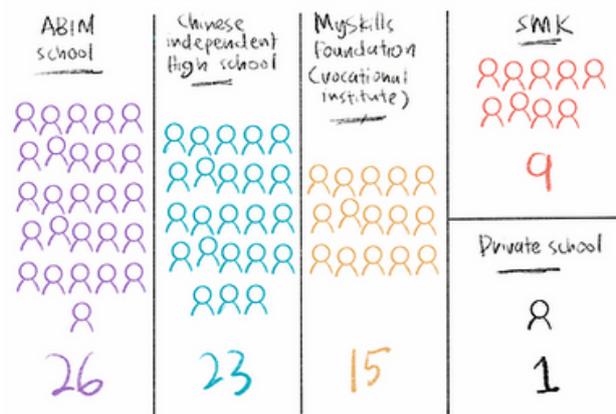
## Malaysia's Temperature Check Sept 2020



We partnered with Vase.ai and Undi18 to design and conduct one of Malaysia's first public opinion poll on social issues. We surveyed 1,027 Malaysians of age on a range of topics to identify and advance discussion on intractable tensions. Our survey was well-covered by various news outlets.

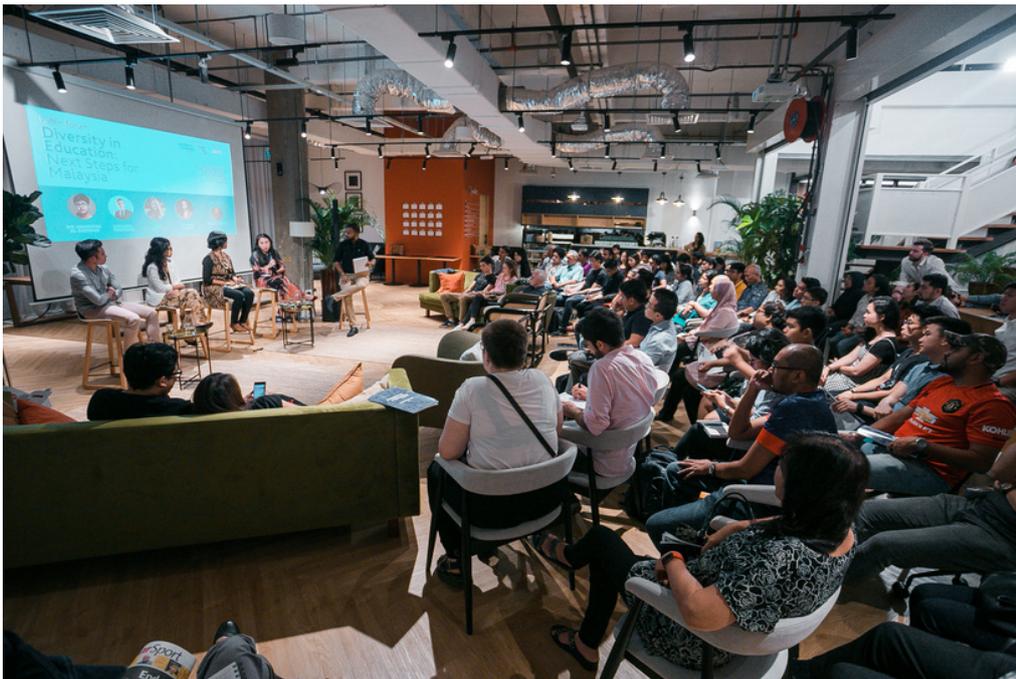
## Short-Term Intergroup Interventions Jan-Feb 2020

AOD partnered with Dr Ananthi AI Ramiah to evaluate Kem Muhibah as a case study for short-term intergroup interventions for reduced prejudice. We assisted in survey design and led data collection. Students were surveyed using social psychological various measures such as the Feeling Thermometer and Inclusion of Other in Self Scale. The results are published by Malaysiakini in a long-form piece.



# ADVOCACY

## Diversity in Education Forum July 2019



Our first event open to the public brought together speakers from politics, government and academia to discuss the current status of diversity in Malaysia's education system. Under Chatham house rules, over 120 audience members attended, exceeding our expectation by 50%.

The speakers touched on different models for social cohesion, as well as explored the limitations and challenges to integration at the federal, state and institutional level of administration.

### Public Forum **Diversity in Education: Next Steps for Malaysia**

How has racial and religious segregation in education affected Malaysian society?

What can and should be done in order to foster national unity through education?

**19 July 2019 (Friday)**  
8.30-10.30pm  
CommonGround JayaOne



**DR ANANTHI AL RAMIAH**  
Social Psychologist  
Author of "Attitudes and Ethnoreligious Integration"



**SHAHRIH HAMDAN**  
Vice Chief of UMNO Youth  
Co-Founder of The Centre

Moderated by:



**Roshan Kanesan**  
BFM Producer and Presenter of the Breakfast Grille



**LIEW SUET LI**  
Teach for Malaysia alum  
MA Education Policy



**ILMIRA MURNI**  
UCL student  
KYUEM/TKC alum

RSVP by 15 July:



[admalaysia.org/diversity-forum](http://admalaysia.org/diversity-forum)

# Public Engagements Oct - Nov 2020

COFFEE TALK SIRI #3

## 'ARE WE READY FOR HONEST INTERRELIGIOUS & INTERRACIAL DIALOGUE?'

**PANELISTS**



**JASON WEE**  
ARCHITECTS OF DIVERSITY



**HUDA RAMLI**  
JURNAL SANG PEMULA



**KHAIRI ANWAR**  
FILM DIRECTOR,  
MENTEGA TERBANG



**HISHAM MUHAIMI**  
KOMUNITI MUSLIM UNIVERSAL

**MODERATOR**



**FATIMAH ATHIRAH**  
KOMUNITI MUSLIM UNIVERSAL

**24 OCT 2020 • SATURDAY**  
8.30 PM (MALAYSIA)

REGISTER & WATCH ON ZOOM  
[HTTPS://BIT.LY/3K3GFAM](https://bit.ly/3K3GFAM)

LIVE  /KMUMALAYSIA  
 KMU MALAYSIA CHANNEL

Kompen #Kebersamaan #Togetherness Campaign

UNSW-ASEAN CONFERENCE

Free Registration [unswaseanconference.com](https://unswaseanconference.com)

**10th October, 2020 | SOCIO-CULTURAL**  
Human Rights, Diversity, and Equal Opportunities



**Mrs Diah S. Saminarsih**  
Senior Advisor on Gender and Youth to the Director General (WHO)



**Mr. Jason Wee**  
Co-Founder & Lead Coordinator of Architects of Diversity



**Mrs. Yenny Wahid**  
Director of The Wahid Institute; Presidential Advisor; WEF Young Global Leader; Mason Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School; Walkley Award Winner



**Dr. Thant Myint-U**  
Writer, Historian; Chairman of U Thant House; Special adviser to the President for the Peace Process (2011)

Organised by:  Platinum Sponsors:   Supported by:    



## NADIRAH ONLINE

Diskusi Pasca-Tayangan  
Post-Screening Conversation

19 November 2020  
Khamis/Thurs

Religion - A Public or Private Matter?  
A Conversation with  
Alfian Sa'at  
Jo Kukathas  
Sharifah Amani  
Iedil Dzuhrie Alaudin  
Farah Rani

20 November 2020  
Jumaat/Fri

Talking Between Religions  
A Conversation with  
Alfian Sa'at  
Jo Kukathas  
Architects of Diversity (Alysha Saif & Doro)

An online forum by 

## How Should We Manage Hate Speech in Malaysia?

Hear the latest research. Join the discussion.

**25th Nov 2020 | 3pm - 4:30pm**   

REGISTER AT <https://tinyurl.com/centreforum>

**Special Opening Remarks**



**YB Datuk Azhar Bin Azizan Harun**  
YDP Speaker  
Dewan Rakyat

**Presentation of Study Findings**



**Nell Omar**  
Research Director,  
The Centre

**Panelists**



**Dr. Murni Wan Mohd Nor**  
Senior Lecturer,  
Universiti Putra Malaysia



**Nandini Balakrishnan**  
Senior Video Producer,  
SAYS



**Jason Wee**  
Co-founder,  
Architects of Diversity  
Malaysia



**Syahir Sulaiman**  
Political Secretary to the President of PAS

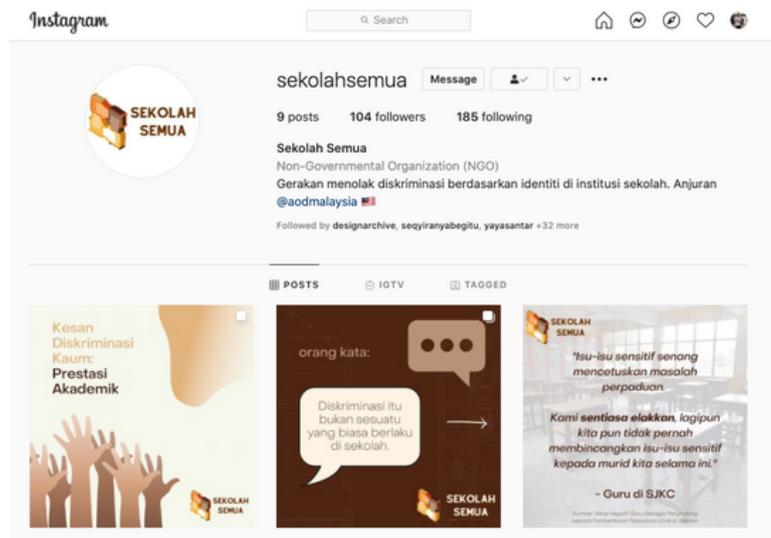
With support from:    

AOD representatives engaged in various virtual events as panel speakers, contributing our unique perspective and expertise on social cohesion, discrimination and peace-building from a youth perspective.

# ONGOING PROJECTS



Sekolah Semua is AOD's new advocacy campaign to combat identity-based discrimination in Malaysian schools, bringing together a team of volunteers to collect evidence and provide recommendations for policies. Sekolah Semua sits at our structural-level approach towards ensuring schools are better spaces for intergroup interactions.



The DEI Collective is an AOD partnership with Teach For Malaysia, bringing together current and former teachers to explore and identify challenges and opportunities to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in Malaysian schools. The Collective sits at our teacher-level approach to improve school spaces.



The Tunku Fellows programme is a collaboration with Kampung Tunku DUN Office to empower student leaders for justice and equity within their own communities. A pilot with Petaling Jaya students, the Fellowship up-skills students with fundamental tools for social change and provides a small seed fund to independently lead their own project.



# OUR PARTNERS





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MALAYSIA

 @aodmalaysia  
[www.aodmalaysia.org](http://www.aodmalaysia.org)