# FROM ASPIRATION TO IMPACT Humanistic Buddhism In Action

A Decade of Scholarship and Engagement at Nan Tien Institute

2015 - 2025

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Humanistic Buddhism by Venerable Master Hsing Yun

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# FROM ASPIRATION TO IMPACT

# Humanistic Buddhism in Action

A decade of scholarship and engagement at Nan Tien Institute 2015 - 2025

## **FOREWORD**

# Most Venerable Hsínbao, Chíef Abbot, Fo Guang Shan



Most Venerable Hsinbao, Chief Abbot, Fo Guang Shan

It is with immense joy and pride that we extend our heartfelt congratulations to the Humanistic Buddhism Center (HBC) at Nan Tien Institute on its remarkable 10th anniversary! Our sincere felicitations also go out to all members, partners, and allies who have been instrumental in this achievement.

As the implementing arm of Fo Guang Shan's mission to spread the Dharma across five continents, HBC deserves commendation for its pioneering efforts in research and publication that strengthen not only the academic foundation of its mother organization, the Nan Tien Institute of Higher Education, but also in serving as catalyst for the growing and evolving body of literature in Humanistic Buddhism across the world. More importantly, it provides a dynamic platform for ongoing global dialogue that explores the highest possibilities of shared values and humanity in addressing modern challenges and concerns of our time.

"The influence of Buddhism lies in its doctrines; its true role is to offer spiritual guidance, ethical principles, foster social harmony and stability, and strive for world peace."

"Venerable Master Hsing Yun

This accomplishment is a true reflection of Venerable Mater Hsing Yun's vision of education: to uncover the inner Buddha-nature and cultivate the highest form of personhood—one that serves the collective good and advances the well-being of all. As the Master had eloquently stated, "The influence of Buddhism lies in its doctrines; its true role is to offer spiritual guidance, ethical principles, foster social harmony and stability, and strive for world peace." In alignment with this vision, the cenre has dedicated itself to providing resources that enable in-depth application and critical analyses of Buddhist thought and practice in everyday life, while also nurturing the culture and ethos that sustain its growth. This work is further strengthened by its active engagement with communities of practice rooted in the spirit of service and compassion.

As HBC continues to rise as a leader in Humanistic Buddhist dialogue and ideas, offering perspectives rooted in right view, right understanding, and right thought, it is our sincere hope that it will further illuminate the distinctions between the real and the illusory, the true and the imagined, and the wholesome and the unwholesome. We offer our unwavering support and commitment as the centre continues to shine as a gateway to wisdom and compassion in a world in dire need of unity and understanding.

Thank you for keeping the Humanistic Buddhist spirit bright and truly alive in the midst of multiculturalism and religious pluralism that characterize today's global society. Once again, congratulations on this momentous occasion!

## **FOREWORD**

# Chíef Abbess Man Ko, Chair of Hsing Yun Education Foundation



Chief Abbess Man Ko, Chair of Hsing Yun Education Foundation

Ten years ago, the Humanistic Buddhism Centre (HBC) at Nan Tien Institute (NTI) was established to promote Buddhist scholarship rooted in the values of wisdom, compassion, and contemporary significance. As the Centre celebrates its 10th anniversary, the Hsing Yun Education Foundation (HYEF) is honoured to extend our heartfelt congratulations and reflect on a decade of shared commitment to Buddhist higher education.

Founded by the late Venerable Master Hsing Yun in 2016, the Hsing Yun Education Foundation carries forward his enduring belief that "the wisest of us leaves education as his legacy." HYEF upholds this vision by supporting initiatives that inspire ethical action, nurture spiritual growth, and contribute to a more harmonious society. The Humanistic Buddhism Centre, with its emphasis on Buddhist research, translation, and public engagement, has exemplified these goals with distinction.

Since 2018, HYEF has been a dedicated partner in HBC's growth, supporting major initiatives such as the translation of the Global Humanistic Buddhism Journal, the development of the NTI research database, the organisation of international symposia, and collaborative research projects—including the landmark "Buddhism in Australia" project, which explores the history, impact, and localisation of Buddhism in the region. Each of these efforts reflects our mission to advance education grounded in Buddhist principles and to share Humanistic Buddhist values in ways that resonate across cultures and disciplines.

Beginning in 2019, HYEF has also awarded scholarships to students pursuing Humanistic Buddhism studies at NTI, fostering the next generation of Buddhist scholars and compassionate leaders. Through this ongoing support, we have witnessed the Centre's continued contribution to bridging tradition and modernity through accessible, thoughtful, and socially engaged scholarship.

As we commemorate this milestone, the Hsing Yun Education Foundation reaffirms our enduring commitment to the mission of the Humanistic Buddhism Centre. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Venerable Juewei, Director of HBC, and her dedicated team for their tireless efforts and inspiring achievements over the past decade. We look forward to continuing this journey together, inspired by the wisdom of Venerable Master Hsing Yun and united by a shared purpose: to bring compassion into education and wisdom into the lives of all.



## WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

## Professor Deníse Kírkpatríck, Presídent, Nan Tíen Instítute



Nan Tien Institute was established a little over ten years ago with the mission of providing graduate level educational programs informed by Buddhist philosophy and practice. Its educational programs not only teach about Buddhism, with a focus on Humanistic Buddhism, but incorporate Buddhist values and wisdom in the teaching of mental health, and health and social well-being. In all of our programs we emphasise professional practice, and the application of these ideas to everyday life and the world around us.

Like all institutions of higher learning Nan Tien Institute is committed to scholarly practice and knowledge dissemination. It is therefore appropriate that a unit with a mandate for scholarly investigation be established within the Institute. HBC's engaged scholarship is exemplified by the development and dissemination of knowledge that addresses social issues through collaboration and shared activity between staff within the Institute and beyond.

The work of the Humanistic Buddhism Centre is perhaps best described in Ernest Boyer's terms, as practising the scholarships of application and dissemination.

Over the past decade, its translation of foundational Fo Guang Shan texts and articles, the teachings of the Venerable Master Hsin Yun and Chinese language journal articles has extended the reach of these writings to an English language audience.

A notable feature of the engagement of the HBC has been its successful and growing Community of Practice supported by Sunday check-in sessions. These have involved students and academics from around the globe, devotees of FGS, Buddhist practitioners and interested individuals. This vibrant and diverse group of individuals have one thing in common - a deep commitment to understanding the world in which we live, and to making it a better place.

A significant contribution of HBC has been the creation of resources that can be used in the teaching at NTI, particularly in the Humanistic Buddhism program where there were previously few English language resources. While these resources have been invaluable to the students of NTI's formal programs, they have also been embraced by non-formal learners and international scholars. The HBC has embraced the contribution of technologies to scholarship, engagement and community building melding traditional wisdom and philosophy with Artificial Intelligence and social media.

In its first decade the HBC at NTI has achieved much. Its reach continues to expand and its engagement to deepen. On behalf of the staff of NTI I congratulate the Humanistic Buddhism Centre on its achievements, impact and reputation, and wish it a long and successful future.



# INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM CENTRE

A Story of Fluídíty, Boundlessness, and Relevance

The cover of this book speaks of fluidity and boundlessness—and so does the story it tells. The Humanistic Buddhism Centre (HBC) at Nan Tien Institute (NTI) began as a small ripple, with one part-time director and a single community outreach project. Today, it has grown into a dynamic Centre staffed by a team of four part-time professionals and a growing network of volunteers Its journey is a testament to the vision of its spiritual founder, the dedication of its community, and the living spirit of Humanistic Buddhism itself—a tradition that meets people where they are and evolves with the world around it.

This book is for anyone who wants to understand what it takes to build something meaningful in a space that was, until recently, largely uncharted in the English-speaking world. Humanistic Buddhism (HB) is not yet widely known outside Chinese contexts, but NTI has trail blazed its introduction, translation, and evolution for a broader audience. This book captures the many difficulties, quiet triumphs, and ongoing opportunities that come with that work. It is a story not only of projects and publications, but of a living philosophy in motion. A philosophy that aims to meet the suffering of the world with compassion, courage, and creativity.

#### A Mission Rooted in Need and Opportunity

HBC's origins are grounded in NTI's foundational mission: to meet people's needs in a troubled world by offering relevant and applied Buddhist education. The Centre was founded in 2015, but the roots stretch back to the success of the Buddha's Birthday Education Project (BBEP), an international community project begun in 2012. Based on research conducted for the Director's PhD, BBEP brought Humanistic Buddhist values and stories to schools, libraries, and communities through creative arts and educational activities. At the time, it was the only initiative under the Centre's purview, and so the name 'Humanistic Buddhism Centre' was chosen to reflect a broader potential beyond one research stream.

This humble beginning, one part-time director and one project, set the tone for what would become a defining feature of the Centre: adaptability. Over the years, BBEP evolved into a more interactive and sustained program of on-site Communities of Practice workshops (2018–2019), which in turn transformed into the weekly online Sunday Check-Ins that have run since 2020, offering continuity, connection, and Dharma reflection during global disruptions.

human-centred,
daíly life-oriented,
altruístic, joyful,
tímely, and
beneficial

Meanwhile, with the support of the Hsing Yun Education Foundation (HYEF), new opportunities emerged. After HYEF was established in 2016, funding became available for research projects and resources that allowed HBC to grow its vision. Access to an extraordinary body of Chinese research material provided the foundation for translation and interpretation work, while the dedication of staff and volunteers—often working far beyond the call of duty—enabled consistent delivery and innovation.

#### Defining and Redefining Humanistic Buddhism

Humanistic Buddhism as envisioned by Venerable Master Hsing Yun, NTI's founder, is grounded in six key characteristics: it is human-centred, daily life-oriented, altruistic, joyful, timely, beneficial. These principles shaped HBC's early years, and still guide its work. But over time, a second and equally important task has emerged: reinterpreting and expanding Humanistic Buddhism in a way that resonates with diverse English-speaking audiences. This doesn't mean changing its heart, but rather translating itliterally and philosophically—so that it becomes a relevant and inclusive living tradition.



This redefinition work is not just theoretical. It manifests in projects like the NTI and Humanistic Buddhism Readers, developed by an NTI alumnus to help English-speaking students engage with Chinese canonical texts and the writings of the Venerable Master. It lives in the translation methodology behind the Studies on Humanistic Buddhism Journal, which pioneered a "gloss translation" technique to keep the layered meanings of Chinese terms while making them readable for non-specialists. It flourishes in the NTI Ethos Project, which grounds the Institute's values in everyday pedagogy, teaching content, practices, and culture.

#### From Research to Outreach: A Story of Flows & Counterflows

What started as outreach has since become a powerful engine for research, publication, and academic development. First came the 'Buddhism in the Sea of Islands' project (BiSI), which brought attention to emerging Buddhist communities and cross-cultural spiritual encounters in the Pacific. The BiSI project grew into a three-year research stream, mapping little-known intersections of tradition, migration, and resilience.

The pioneering Buddhism in Australia Research Project is the first of its kind to document Buddhism's growth and diversity across the country. This project will give rise to conference presentations, publications, and educational resources, positioning HBC as a key voice in Australia's interfaith and multicultural landscape.

HBC's academic work has not stayed confined to NTI. Over time, it has contributed articles to top-tier journals, presented at global conferences, and hosted its own colloquia and symposia. These include the 2024 Humanistic Buddhism Colloquium on Compassionate Futures and the 8th International Symposium on Humanistic Buddhism in 2021. In each case, HBC took the role of both host and connector, bringing together scholars, practitioners, and community leaders to explore what Buddhism can offer a troubled world.

#### The Journal, the Visualiser, and the Bibliography: Building the Foundation

A major turning point came with the accreditation of the world's first Graduate Certificate in Humanistic Buddhism (GC-HB). This milestone highlighted a new need: resources. To meet it, HBC launched a suite of translation and reading tools.

First, the Journal, *Studies on Humanistic Buddhism*, offered accurate and context-sensitive translations of Chinese-language articles, supported by an innovative glossary and a cloud-based editing workflow. Second, the NTI Visualiser enabled English speakers to access Chinese canonical materials. Finally, the Humanistic and Engaged Buddhism Research Bibliography catalogued over 1,600 resources, supporting deeper research and public exploration.

These tools reflect HBC's approach: rigorous but generous, intellectually serious but always aimed at practical understanding and application.

#### Inspired Projects, Living Values

The success of the teaching program also gave rise to other initiatives. The NTI Ethos Project helped evaluate the extent to which NTI values were taught and embodied in and outside the classroom. The Mindful Check-In app responded to the everyday stress of modern life. The Turning Points Stories project gathered personal narratives of transformation through the Dharma. Each project arose from a real need and tried to meet that need using Humanistic Buddhist wisdom in down-to-earth ways.

Mettā Verses tackles the widespread loneliness and disconnection of modern life by fostering communities, online and offline, rooted in loving-kindness.



MettāVerses is one of the most ambitious of these recent projects. First proposed in 2021 and launched as a full project by 2024, MettāVerses tackles the widespread loneliness and disconnection of modern life by fostering communities, online and offline, rooted in loving-kindness. It represents HBC's most creative application of Humanistic Buddhist values to attention ecology, digital culture, and community resilience. In 2025, a dedicated MettāVerses website will provide practical tools, stories, and support for kind communities around the world.

#### A Collaborative Team, Multi-skilled Team

The activities and projects of these 10 years in HBC were made possible because of the work of a fabulous team working selflessly together. They are, in alphabetical order:

- Jasmine Brinsmead
- · William Chong
- Pema Düddul
- Grace Ewart
- Magali Goirand
- Bruce McKenzie
- Michael Murphy
- Juewei Shi
- Sioh-Yang Tan
- Priscilla Wong

#### A Future Guided by Experience

As we look ahead, HBC's vision is not to become bigger for its own sake—but to grow deeper, clearer, and more responsive. That means:

- Continuing research into the evolving shape of Buddhism in Australia and the Pacific
- Publishing accessible, transformative materials for new generations of students and practitioners
- Hosting conversations and collaborations that connect Buddhist ethics to leadership, sustainability, and innovation Supporting kindness, inclusion, and practical wisdom through initiatives like MettāVerses and Sunday Check-Ins

Most of all, it means continuing to redefine Humanistic Buddhism as a tradition of meeting people where they are, offering teachings not as escape, but as engagement; not as doctrine, but as lived, relational wisdom.

This book, like the Centre it chronicles, is a work in motion. It is an invitation to reflect on the past, recognise the present, and move into the future with clarity, compassion, and curiosity. As the ripples of HBC's work continue to spread outward, its founding principles remain unchanged: that Buddhism is a resource for real life, and that a small Centre with a big heart can indeed make a difference.



Nan Tien Institute

## 2015 - present

# RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

The Humanistic Buddhism Centre (HBC) stands at the forefront of integrating Buddhist principles into contemporary academic discourse and societal applications. Through a diverse array of research outputs, the HBC explores themes central to Humanistic Buddhism, emphasizing its relevance in addressing modern challenges.

#### Core Research Themes

1. Humanistic Buddhism in Contemporary Society

The HBC's research delves into how Humanistic Buddhism can inform and transform modern life. For instance, "Humanistic Buddhism: integrating compassion and engagement in the modern world" presented at the Australasian Association of Buddhist Studies, examines the role of Humanistic Buddhism in contemporary settings.

2. Intersections with Technology and Ethics

Exploring the nexus between Buddhism and emerging technologies, the HBC has produced works like "The interface between Human and Artificial Intelligence: Chinese Approaches in Global Context," presented at the China Forum for Intercultural Dialogue. This research investigates how Buddhist ethics can guide the development and application of artificial intelligence.

3. Cultural and Historical Analyses

The Centre also focuses on historical perspectives, such as the "Reflections on Venerable Master Hsing Yun's temple-building endeavour between 1988 and 2000," which offers insights into the expansion of Humanistic Buddhism through temple construction and its cultural implications.

#### Significance of Research Outputs

The HBC's research contributes significantly to both academic scholarship and practical applications:

- Academic Advancement: By publishing in journals like
  Journal of Global Buddhism and Journal of the Royal
  Anthropological Institute and contributing to volumes such as
  Cultivating Compassion: Going Beyond Crises, the Centre
  enriches scholarly understanding of Buddhism's role in
  modern issues.
- Societal Impact: Research on topics like "Flows of Innovation in Fo Guang Shan Oceania" sheds light on how Buddhist practices adapt and influence multicultural societies, particularly in regions like Australia and New Zealand.

#### Global Reach and Collaborative Efforts

The HBC's influence extends internationally through collaborations and presentations:

- International Conferences: Participation in events such as the American Academy of Religion (AAR) and the 8th International Symposium on Humanistic Buddhism allows for the dissemination of research findings to a global audience.
- Collaborative Publications: Joint efforts with institutions like the Fo Guang Shan Institute of Humanistic Buddhism in Taiwan facilitate cross-cultural research and publication endeavors.

#### Conclusion

Through its comprehensive research initiatives, the Humanistic Buddhism Centre at Nan Tien Institute plays a pivotal role in bridging traditional Buddhist teachings with contemporary global challenges. Its work not only advances academic discourse but also offers practical insights into fostering compassion, ethical engagement, and cultural understanding in today's world.

For more information on the HBC's research outputs, visit their official page: https://www.nantien.edu.au/about-us/humanistic-buddhism-centre/publications/research-outputs/



Dr. Juewei Shi with the major publication *Cultivating Compassion: Going Beyond Crises* 



## LANDMARK PUBLICATIONS

The following selection represents a series of landmark publications authored and co-authored by members and close associates of the Humanistic Buddhism Centre (HBC), showcasing the Centre's sustained commitment to advancing Humanistic Buddhist scholarship in Oceania and beyond.

These works span edited volumes, peer-reviewed journal articles, and contributions to international conferences and research collections, reflecting the diversity, depth, and evolving focus of Humanistic Buddhism. Highlights include the edited volume *Cultivating Compassion: Going Beyond Crises* (Peter Lang, 2024), which brings together multidisciplinary perspectives on compassion in times of crisis, and a pioneering article on MettāVerses as a Humanistic Buddhist response to global challenges.

Other publications explore regional dynamics of Buddhism in Australia, New Zealand, and Hawai'i; transregional innovation in the Buddha's Birthday Festival; and theoretical dialogues between anthropology and Buddhist theology. Further contributions delve into the legacy of Venerable Master Hsing Yun, digital transformations in Dharma communication, and reinterpretations of classical texts such as the *Platform Sūtra*. Collectively, these works not only document the vibrant research culture at HBC but also shape contemporary discourse on the application of Humanistic Buddhism in the modern world.

#### 2024

Shi, J, Franzway, S & Hill, S (eds.) 2024, Cultivating compassion: going beyond crises, Peter Lang,

Shi, J & Ewart, G 2024, 'A Humanistic Buddhist response to Crises through MettāVerses' in J Shi, S Franzway & S Hill (eds.), Cultivating compassion: going beyond crises, Peter Lang.

Tan, S & Shi, J 2024, 'Reflections on Venerable Master Hsing Yun's temple-building endeavour between 1988 and 2000', *Studies on Humanistic Buddhism*, vol. 6, Fo Guang Cultural Enterprise, Taiwan, pp. 175 - 200.

#### 2023

Shi, J 2023, 'A Reflection on the Humanism in The Platform Sūtra of the Sixth Patriarch', *Studies on Humanistic Buddhism*, vol. 5, Fo Guang Cultural Enterprise, Taiwan.

#### 2022

Halafoff, A, Rocha, C & Shi, J 2022, 'Flows and Counterflows of Buddhism "South of the West": Australia, New Zealand and Hawai'I', Special Issue, Journal of Global Buddhism, vol. 23, no. 2.

Shi, J & Tan, S 2022, 'Flows of Innovation in Fo Guang Shan Oceania: transregional dynamics behind the Buddha's Birthday Festival', *Journal of Global Buddhism*, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 185-202.

Mair, J & Shi, J 2022, 'Connecting with the human condition from the inside out and outside in: a dialogue between a social anthropologist and a Buddhist theologian', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*.

#### 2020

Shi, J 2020, 'Humanistic Buddhism in the digital age: make truth great again', 2019 7<sup>th</sup> Symposium on Humanistic Buddhism: Humanistic Buddhism and the Future, Fo Guang Shan Cultural Enterprises, Taiwan, pp. 314-324,

Shi, J 2020. 'Humanistic Buddhism at cross-roads: relevance of the Buddha's intent in Australia', in CH Chen (ed.), *Deep into Dependent Origination, Gather all Dharma-treasure: The Practice of Humanistic Buddhism in East and Southeast Asia*, vol. 2, Centre for the Study of Humanistic Buddhism, Chinese University of Hong Kong, pp. 1333-1353.

#### 2019

Shi, J 2019, 'Buddhist Merit in the West: a case study of Nan Tien Temple', *Journal in Chinese Religions*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 165-179.

#### 2018

Shi, J 2018 'Buddhist Economics: a cultural alternative', S Yamash'ta, T Yagi & S Hill (eds), *The Kyoto Manifesto for Global Economics: The Platform of Community, Humanity, and Spirituality*, Springer, pp. 417-448.

#### 2016

Shi, J 2016, 'Chan Buddhism during the Times of Yixuan and Hsing Yun: applying Chinese Chan principles to contemporary societies', *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 64, no. 3, pp. 261-273.

#### 2015

Shi, J 2015, 'National Recognition of a Religious Festival: comparing Buddha's birthday celebration organized in Taipei to the Northern Wei Buddha's birthday parade', *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, vol. 63, no. 3, pp. 1148-1154.

For more information on the HBC's research outputs, visit their official page: https://www.nantien.edu.au/about-us/humanistic-buddhism-centre/publications/research-outputs/

## 2015 - present

# OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

The Humanistic Buddhism Centre (HBC) has developed a range of outreach and engagement initiatives aimed at integrating Buddhist principles into everyday life. These programs encompass online and in-person events, storytelling projects, and public talks, all designed to promote self-reflection, community connection, and the practical application of Humanistic Buddhism.

#### Sunday Check-Ins

The Sunday Check-Ins are weekly sessions that provide a space for self-reflection, exploration, networking, and Dharma practice. Open to all interested individuals, these sessions are mostly recorded, allowing participants to revisit the discussions or catch up if they were unable to attend live. This initiative fosters a sense of community and ongoing engagement with Buddhist teachings.

#### **Turning Points**

Turning Points is a storytelling project that collects inspirational real-life narratives demonstrating how Buddhist Dharma has been applied to navigate everyday challenges. Each account illustrates the practice of Buddhism in daily life, embodying the essence of Humanistic Buddhism. This project, created by volunteers from the Buddha's Birthday Education Project, aims to deliver the Dharma through accessible mediums, providing "ancient wisdom for modern times."

#### **Public Talks**

HBC's Director, Venerable Dr. Juewei, frequently presents public talks at various forums worldwide, sharing insights on topics related to Humanistic Buddhism and contemporary issues. These talks often involve collaborations with distinguished guests and partner organizations, exploring subjects ranging from "Women in Buddhism" to "Ethics in Today's Digital World." Such engagements reflect HBC's commitment to applying Buddhist teachings to modern societal contexts.

#### The Detox Series

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, HBC launched The Detox Series, a collection of free weekly webinars offering holistic guidance and support to the public. These sessions address various aspects of well-being, providing practical advice rooted in Buddhist philosophy to help individuals navigate the challenges posed by the pandemic.

Through these outreach and engagement projects, the Humanistic Buddhism Centre at Nan Tien Institute continues to promote the integration of Buddhist principles into everyday life, fostering a compassionate and connected community.

You can learn more about the Humanistic Buddhism Centre's outreach and engagement activities here: https://www.nantien.edu.au/about-us/humanistic-buddhism-centre/outreach/



Dr. Juewei Shi appearing on ABC Radio's Soul Search program

# MINDFUL CHECK-IN: BRIDGING TRADITION AND TECHNOLOGY FOR EVERYDAY MINDFULNESS

Mindful Check-In app, developed collaboratively by the Nan Tien Institute (NTI) and the Buddha's Birthday Education Project (BBEP), offers a practical solution. Designed to facilitate brief mindfulness practices, this free app helps users transition smoothly between the various settings and interactions they encounter daily.

#### Origins and Purpose

The Mindful Check-In app was created in 2016 to address the need for accessible mindfulness tools in everyday life. Recognising that individuals often move between different environments—be it from home to work, or meeting to meeting—the app provides a structured way to pause and prepare mentally and physically for what's next. This practice aligns with the principles of Humanistic Buddhism, emphasising the integration of mindfulness into daily activities.

#### Features and Functionality

The app offers customisable meditation sessions ranging from 1 to 60 minutes, allowing users to select durations that fit their schedules. Its user-friendly interface guides individuals through the process of "checking in," promoting awareness of the present moment and fostering a sense of balance and peace. Whether used individually or in group settings, the app serves as a versatile tool for cultivating mindfulness.

#### **Integration into Community Practices**

Beyond individual use, the Mindful Check-In app plays a role in community initiatives. For instance, it complements the "Sunday Check-In" sessions organised by the BBEP, where participants engage in half-hour gatherings featuring Dharma talks, reflections, and group discussions. These sessions, led by experienced facilitators, incorporate the app to enhance collective mindfulness practices.

#### Accessibility and Availability

The app is freely available for download on the iOS platform. Its design caters to a wide audience, from those new to mindfulness to seasoned practitioners seeking a convenient tool to support their practice. By offering a simple yet effective means to incorporate mindfulness into daily routines, the Mindful Check-In app stands as a testament to the harmonious blending of traditional wisdom and modern technology.

#### Conclusion

The Mindful Check-In app exemplifies how ancient practices can be adapted to meet contemporary needs. Through its thoughtful design and integration into community programs, it provides users with a practical resource to navigate the complexities of modern life with greater awareness and composure.

As we continue to seek balance in our daily lives, tools like the Mindful Check-In app offer valuable support on the journey toward mindfulness and well-being.



# STUDIES ON HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM

The *Studies on Humanistic Buddhism* journal is a distinctive academic publication dedicated to exploring and disseminating the principles of Humanistic Buddhism. Jointly published by the Fo Guang Shan Institute of Humanistic Buddhism in Taiwan and the Nan Tien Institute in Australia, the journal serves as a platform for scholarly discourse on the integration of Buddhist teachings into contemporary life.

#### Mission and Vision

The journal aims to provide access to articles on Humanistic Buddhism in English for scholars and practitioners worldwide. It focuses on translating significant Chinese-language works into English and publishing original English articles, commentaries, and student papers. This initiative ensures that the core teachings and contemporary interpretations of Humanistic Buddhism are accessible to a global audience.

#### Collaborative Effort

A unique aspect of the journal is its reliance on a global network of volunteers who contribute to translating, editing, proofreading, and publishing each volume. This collaborative approach not only enriches the content but also fosters a sense of community among contributors.

#### **Publication Process**

The journal employs an innovative online workflow that includes a cloud-based glossary to maintain consistency and accuracy in translations. Hard copies are published by the Fo Guang Shan Institute of Humanistic Buddhism and the Nan Tien Institute of Higher Learning.

#### **Advisory Board**

The journal's advisory board comprises esteemed scholars from various institutions, including:

- Lewis Lancaster, University of California, Berkeley
- Jane Iwamura, University of the West
- Jonathan Mair, Universidad Complutense, Madrid
- D. Osto
- Nathan Jishin Michon, Ryukoku University

Their expertise ensures the academic rigor and integrity of the journal's content.

#### Accessibility

The journal is available online, providing free access to its content for readers worldwide. This open-access model aligns with the journal's mission to disseminate the teachings of Humanistic Buddhism broadly and inclusively.

#### Volume Highlights

Since its inception, the journal has published several volumes, each focusing on different aspects of Humanistic Buddhism:

- Volume 1 (2019): Foundational Thoughts
- Volume 2 (2020): Practical Applications: Venerable Master Hsing Yun on Humanistic Buddhism
- Volume 3 (2021): Glocalization of Buddhism
- Volume 4 (2022): Human Life
- Volume 5 (2023): Humanistic Chan Buddhism
- Volume 6 (2024): Humanistic Buddhism: Wisdom and Compassion in Action

#### **Notable Articles**

Volume 6 includes several noteworthy articles that exemplify the journal's commitment to exploring the practical applications of Humanistic Buddhism:

- "Reflections on Venerable Master Hsing Yun's Temple-Building Endeavor between 1988 and 2000" by Sioh-Yang
  Tan and Ven. Juewei examines the global expansion of Fo
  Guang Shan temples and their role in spreading
  Humanistic Buddhism.
- "Interpreting Venerable Master Hsing Yun's Commentaries on the Guanyin Faith" by Li Guo explores the humanistic transformation of Guanyin devotion, emphasizing self-awakening over divine intervention.
- "Beyond The Stroke: The Dharma of One-Stroke Calligraphy" by Julius Hofer delves into the spiritual significance of Venerable Master Hsing Yun's calligraphy and its role in conveying Buddhist teachings.

#### Summary

Studies on Humanistic Buddhism stands as a testament to the collaborative spirit and scholarly dedication to making Buddhist teachings relevant and accessible in the modern world. Through its diverse articles and global volunteer network, the journal continues to foster a deeper understanding of Humanistic Buddhism and its application in contemporary society.

For more information or to access the journal, visit <a href="https://journal.nantien.edu.au/">https://journal.nantien.edu.au/</a>.





Top: journal covers for first five issues Left: Foundational Thoughts in Humanistic Buddhism

## NTI VISUALISER AND HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY

The NTI Visualiser is an innovative digital platform designed to enhance the exploration and understanding of Humanistic Buddhism research. This web-based tool allows users to search, build, and visualize bibliographic data, offering a dynamic approach to academic research in this field.

#### Purpose and Development

The NTI Visualiser originated from the first thematic academic bibliography on Humanistic Buddhism, aiming to provide researchers with a more interactive and comprehensive means of engaging with scholarly materials. By transforming traditional bibliographic lists into visual formats, the Visualiser facilitates a deeper understanding of the relationships and trends within Humanistic Buddhism studies.

#### **Functionality**

Users can interact with the Visualiser by selecting a collection, such as the "Humanistic Buddhism Research Bibliography (Dec2024Update)," and entering specific keywords to generate visual representations of related academic works. The platform supports the creation of personal bibliographies, controlled vocabularies, and various visualizations, including time, space, and keyword analyses.

Key features include:

- Personal Projects: Users can build and manage their own bibliographic collections.
- Time, Space, and Keyword Visualisations: These tools help users identify patterns and connections within the research data.
- User-Defined Keyword Networks: Researchers can explore relationships between concepts and topics in Humanistic Buddhism.

The platform is supported by an advisory panel comprising esteemed scholars and technical experts, ensuring its academic rigor and technical reliability.

#### Uptake and Impact

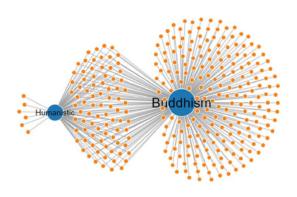
Since its launch, the NTI Visualiser has become a valuable resource for scholars, students, and practitioners interested in Humanistic Buddhism. By providing an accessible and interactive means of exploring academic literature, it supports the growth and dissemination of knowledge in this field.

The Visualiser is part of NTI's broader commitment to integrating technology and Buddhist principles in education and research. It complements other initiatives, such as the Humanistic Buddhism Centre's resource development projects, by offering tools that enhance the study and application of Buddhist teachings in contemporary contexts.

#### **SUmmary**

The NTI Visualiser stands as a testament to the innovative integration of technology and humanities scholarship. By transforming static bibliographic data into dynamic visual formats, it enriches the research experience and fosters a deeper engagement with Humanistic Buddhism studies. As the field continues to evolve, tools like the NTI Visualiser will play a crucial role in shaping the future of academic exploration and understanding.

For more information and to explore the Visualiser, visit: https://visualiser.nantien.edu.au/



NTI Visualiser

# NTI ETHOS PROJECT: INTEGRATING HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM INTO HIGHER EDUCATION

The NTI Ethos Project was a pioneering research initiative undertaken by HBC aimed at integrating Humanistic Buddhist principles into the landscape of higher education. The project, led by Bruce McKenzie and Magali Goirand, explored how Buddhist ethics, reflective practices, and pedagogical methods could be embedded into academic institutions, shaping teaching, learning, and institutional culture.

#### Purpose and Vision

At its core, the NTI Ethos Project sought to identify effective pathways for embedding Buddhist ethical positioning—referred to as the "Buddhist Ethos"—into the daily operations and educational practices at NTI. This initiative not only enhanced the institute's distinct identity but also provided a potential framework for other organisations interested in aligning their educational environments with Buddhist values and ethics.

#### Methodology and Implementation

The project employed a comprehensive research methodology, analysing diverse components of the educational experience. This included an in-depth study of plenary sessions, student discussions, assignments, and reflective learning journals from both students and staff. By collecting and examining these narratives, the project evaluated the influence of NTTs teaching programs on students' understanding and embodiment of the institute's Humanistic Buddhist ethos.

#### Humanistic Buddhism in Education

Humanistic Buddhism, as advocated by Venerable Master Hsing Yun, emphasised bringing Buddhist teachings into daily life, promoting altruism, and cultivating universal compassion. The NTI Ethos Project embodied this philosophy by striving to create an educational environment where these values were not only conveyed theoretically but lived out in practice. This initiative aligned with NTI's broader mission to integrate Eastern spiritual wisdom with Western academic rigor, thus offering students a holistic educational experience rooted in ethical reflection and community responsibility.

#### Pilot Study

The NTI Ethos Project team, Bruce McKenzie and Magali Goirand, ran a pilot study at Nan Tien Institute (NTI) focused on cultivating and transmitting a distinct Buddhist educational ethos through its postgraduate subjects HB901 and HB902, core subjects in the Graduate Certificate in Humanistic Buddhism. Amidst the shift to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, a trial contemplative pedagogy was developed to strengthen the NTI ethos, grounded in the values of compassion, wisdom, committed service, practice, and generosity.

The project involved a qualitative study exploring how these values were integrated into course design, classroom interactions, learning materials, and assessments. Using reflexive and systems thinking methodologies, the study analysed video recordings, assignments, faculty reflections, and student interviews.

The research identified five key experiential dimensions that supported the transmission of the NTI ethos: self-awareness, knowledge and understanding of values, personal story sharing, role modelling, and classroom environment.

Students reported increased self-awareness and compassion, not only in personal development but also in professional contexts. Role modelling by faculty, especially monastic lecturers, emerged as particularly powerful, and classroom practices such as breakout rooms and "Friendship Circles" helped foster emotional safety and a lived experience of values. Despite challenges such as the time-limited format of the courses and competing academic demands, the findings suggest that a values-rich, contemplative pedagogy can effectively embody and transmit NTI's Buddhist ethos within higher education.

#### Impact and Broader Applications

Although the NTI Ethos Project was focused on the Nan Tien Institute, its impact extended well beyond the institution. The findings and frameworks developed through the project offered practical guidance for other educational institutions and organizations seeking to incorporate contemplative and ethical values into their own operational cultures. By illustrating how Buddhist principles could be translated into effective educational practice, the project contributed to an evolving global conversation around values-based and holistic education.

#### Summary

The NTI Ethos Project marked a significant step in bridging traditional Buddhist wisdom with contemporary educational methodologies. Through its thorough and reflective approach, the project enriched the learning environment at NTI and modelled how ethical, compassionate, and reflective values could inform teaching and institutional ethos. Its legacy continues to inspire similar efforts across diverse educational and professional contexts, where the integration of inner development and outer engagement remains a vital concern.

## BUDDHISM IN THE SEA OF ISLANDS

#### MAPPING PACIFIC BUDDHIST FLOWS AND FUTURES

The Buddhism in the Sea of Islands project, coordinated by the Humanistic Buddhism Centre, is a ground-breaking academic initiative that investigates the historical and contemporary trajectories of Buddhism across the vast Pacific region. Led by a multidisciplinary team, this project foregrounded the dynamics of Buddhist transmission—its flows, counterflows, and interconnections between immigrant practitioners and Indigenous communities.

#### Purpose and Scope

Launched in mid-2021, the project brought together scholars from multiple global institutions to explore the under-examined landscape of Buddhism in Pacific contexts. Despite Asia hosting the world's largest Buddhist population, its presence in the Pacific—across Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, Hawai'i, and Pacific islands—remained significantly underexplored by academic research. The initiative aimed to fill this gap by examining both historical and contemporary expressions of Buddhism and its cultural adaptations.

Through a five-part public webinar series titled "Buddhism in the Sea of Islands," the project unpacked key issues including colonial histories, migration, adaptation, and religious exchange —shedding light on how Buddhism travelled, settled, and evolved across the Pacific region.

#### Webinar Series

Held monthly from June to October 2021, the series fostered scholarly dialogue on themes such as the invisibility of Buddhism prior to World War II in Far North Australia, the emergence of Japanese Buddhist women in Hawai'i, and the social framing of Buddhist communities in contemporary New Zealand. This format offered a robust public engagement platform, combining academic rigour with accessible conversation.



Key webinar topics included:

- "Buddhism in the Far North of Australia pre-WWII: (In)visibility, colonialism and lived religion", presented by Anna Halafoff, Enqi Weng, Kim Lam, and Cristina Rocha (Deakin & Western Sydney Universities).
- "Flows of Innovation in Fo Guang Shan Oceania: transregional dynamics behind the Buddha's Birthday Festival", presented by Juewei Shi and Sioh Yang Tan from NTI, illuminating how Fo Guang Shan temples in Oceania blend Taiwanese roots with local context.
- "Japanese Buddhist Women in Hawai'i: Waves of Change" (Karma Lekshe Tsomo, University of San Diego).
- "Casting Indra's Net across the Pacific: Robert Aitken and the Growth of the Diamond Sangha as a Trans-Pacific Zen Movement" (Helen Baroni, University of Hawai'i).
- "The Social Sources and Cultural Forms of Buddhism in Contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand" (Sally McAra & Mark Mullins, University of Auckland).

Webinars were co-organised with Deakin University, Western Sydney University, and sponsored by the Hsing Yun Education Foundation, highlighting strong institutional and philanthropic support.

#### Special Journal Issue

A significant outcome for this project was the editing of a special issue in the esteemed academic publication, the *Journal of Global Buddhism*. "Flows and Counterflows of Buddhism 'South of the West': Australia, New Zealand, and Hawai'i" explores horizontal flows and counter flows of Buddhism across the Pacific sea of islands, rather than the usual flow from Asia to Europe and the Americas. As such, this special issue fits within the more recent scholarship on the globalisation of Buddhism that seeks to point to a more complex picture of historical and contemporary flows of Buddhist ideas, practices, objects and peoples across the globe. You can read the issue online here: <a href="https://www.globalbuddhism.org/issue/view/261">https://www.globalbuddhism.org/issue/view/261</a>



#### Research Themes and Contributions

The project explored three overarching themes:

- 1. Transnational flow and counterflow
- 2. Emphasis was placed on how Buddhism journeys across borders—not only as migration but as reciprocal cultural exchange. Presentations examined how Buddhist institutions originating in one context adapt, influence, and transform local spiritual terrains, and how Indigenous customs, colonial structures, and diaspora dynamics shape Buddhist expressions in return.
- 3. Immigrant and Indigenous Interactions
- 4. By focusing on regions like Northern Australia and Hawai'i, the project interrogated relationships between migrant Buddhist communities and Indigenous peoples. It sought to uncover continuity, tension, assimilation, and collaborative space within religious and cultural realms.
- 5. Historical and Contemporary Perspectives
- 6. Covering both pre-World War II histories and modern-day developments, the research traced Buddhism's trajectories across time. Topics ranged from colonial marginalisation to the emergence of public festivals, chaplaincies, and community networks in Oceania.

#### Significance and Impact

Academic Innovation: This initiative represented one of the first comprehensive attempts to mainstream Pacific Buddhism into global Buddhist studies. By convening international experts, NTI positioned the project at the confluence of religion, migration, history, and cultural studies.

Interdisciplinary Collaboration: The project's success hinged on collaboration across universities (Deakin, Western Sydney, University of Auckland, University of San Diego), NTI, and funding support from the Hsing Yun Education Foundation—demonstrating the power of cross-institutional partnerships.

Public Engagement: As an open webinar series, the project made academic discourse accessible to broader audiences, offering recorded lectures and sessions for public learning. This model reinforced NTI's commitment to combining scholarly rigour with free, inclusive educational outreach.

Visibility and Continuity: By drawing attention to Buddhism in settings outside Asia, the project expanded conversational and scholarly awareness. It identified gaps in historical narratives, uncovered connections between disparate Buddhist communities, and laid groundwork for future research.

#### Ongoing Developments and Future Directions

Though the webinar series took place in 2021, the "Buddhism in the Sea of Islands" project continues to influence NTI's research trajectory. As part of the Humanistic Buddhism Centre's broader mission to apply Buddhist insights to modern global contexts, it joins other initiatives like the nationally focused "Buddhism in Australia" project and international collaborations via the Humanistic Buddhism Special Interest Group.

The groundwork laid by "Sea of Islands" is expected to inspire deeper archival research, ethnographic fieldwork, curriculum development, and public events that explore Pacific Buddhist life. NTI's commitment to documenting these dynamics is a step toward recognising and legitimising Pacific voices in the wider Buddhist world.

#### Summary

The Buddhism in the Sea of Islands research project stands as a pioneering initiative in Buddhist studies. It broadened scholarly attention to the unique histories and lived realities of Buddhist practitioners across the Pacific, forging cross-cultural academic collaborations and enhancing public understanding. By tracing journeys of religion, culture, and identity across islands and oceans, the project deepens our understanding of Buddhism's role in the contemporary Pacific—and its capacity to adapt, influence, and enrich human communities.

It is a vital contribution to global humanities scholarship and reflective of Nan Tien Institute's mission to combine contemplative education with rigorous, socially relevant research.

For more information, visit:

https://www.nantien.edu.au/about-us/humanistic-buddhism-centre/research/sea-of-islands/

the historical and contemporary trajectories of Buddhism across the vast Pacific region

# THE 8TH INTERNATIONAL HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM SYMPOSIUM: HUMANISTIC BUDDHIST RESPONSE TO MODERN CRISES

The 8th International Symposium on Humanistic Buddhism, held from 6 to 8 November 2021, marked a significant milestone as the first of its kind conducted outside Fo Guang Shan HQ, Taiwan. Hosted by Nan Tien Institute (NTI) in Australia and the Fo Guang Shan Institute of Humanistic Buddhism, the symposium was conducted entirely online due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The event brought together over 30 esteemed scholars, practitioners, and thought leaders from diverse disciplines to explore the theme: "Humanistic Buddhist Responses to Modern Crises".

#### A Timely Theme for Global Challenges

The symposium's theme addressed pressing global issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, social inequality, and mental health crises. These challenges have disrupted lives worldwide, prompting a re-evaluation of societal norms and personal values. The symposium aimed to explore how Humanistic Buddhism could offer compassionate and practical responses to these modern crises.

#### Keynote Dialogue: "Never Waste a Crisis"

A highlight of the symposium was the keynote dialogue between Emeritus Professor Lewis Lancaster, a leading scholar in Buddhist Studies, and Hugh Mackay AO, a prominent Australian social researcher. Their discussion, titled "Never Waste a Crisis: A Human Response to Disruption," delved into the transformative potential of crises. They examined how disruptions could serve as catalysts for positive change, fostering resilience, community strength, and a more humanistic future.

#### **Engaging Format and Accessibility**

Unlike traditional academic conferences, the symposium emphasized interactive and interdisciplinary dialogue. Prerecorded presentations were made available before each panel, allowing participants to engage deeply with the content. Live moderated discussions followed, encouraging real-time interaction between panellists and the audience. The final panel was conducted entirely live, featuring NTI scholars and alumni, and was broadcasted from the Nan Tien Institute.

#### Global Participation and Impact

The online format enabled widespread participation, attracting over 900 attendees from various countries and backgrounds. The symposium's inclusive approach facilitated a rich exchange of ideas, reinforcing the global relevance of Humanistic Buddhist principles in addressing modern challenges.

#### **Interdisciplinary Panel Discussions**

The symposium featured six thematic panels, each addressing different facets of Humanistic Buddhist responses to contemporary issues:

- I. Creating an Inclusive Society: Explored strategies for fostering inclusivity and compassion in diverse communities.
- 2. Working Towards a More Humanistic Society of the Future: Challenges for the Self within Complex Systems: Discussed individual and collective responsibilities in navigating complex societal systems.
- 3. Learning from Australian Responses to Modern Crises: Analysed Australia's approaches to recent crises, highlighting lessons applicable globally.
- 4. Revaluing Buddhist Adaptations in the Modern
  World: Examined how Buddhist practices have evolved
  to remain relevant in contemporary society.
- Examining Humanistic Approaches to Health and Wellbeing: Focused on integrating Buddhist principles into healthcare and personal wellbeing.
- Putting Compassion into Action: Highlighted initiatives that translate compassion into tangible social action.

#### Summary

The 8th International Symposium on Humanistic Buddhism at NTI exemplified the application of Buddhist wisdom to contemporary issues. By fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and emphasizing compassionate action, the symposium contributed to a deeper understanding of how Humanistic Buddhism can inform and inspire responses to the crises of our time. The symposium went so well that the organisers decided to create a scholarly book out of some of the presentations.



To explore more go here: https://2021hbsymposium.fgsihb.org/

### **Keynote Speakers**

Never Waste a Crisis: A human response to disruption



EMERITUS PROFESSOR LEWIS LANCASTER



**HUGH MACKAY AO** 



# CULTIVATING COMPASSION: GOING BEYOND CRISES A HUMANISTIC BUDDHIST RESPONSE IN PRINT



The book *Cultivating Compassion: Going Beyond Crises* is a timely and profound anthology that emerged from the 8th International Symposium on Humanistic Buddhism, hosted by Nan Tien Institute and the Institute of Humanistic Buddhism in Fo Guang Shan in 2021. Published by Peter Lang in 2024, the volume gathers insights from 30 scholars, educators, activists, and spiritual practitioners, all of whom share a common commitment to exploring how compassion—grounded in Humanistic Buddhist values—can guide humanity through the most pressing crises of the modern age.

Curated in the wake of a global pandemic, climate emergency, and social upheaval, this collection offers a wide-ranging and multi-disciplinary dialogue on the transformative potential of compassion. The book is co-edited by Juewei Shi, Director of the Humanistic Buddhism Centre at NTI, who also co-authors a chapter in the book. The publication reflects the collective intent of the 2021 Symposium: to bring Humanistic Buddhism into direct conversation with the lived crises of our time—across social, ecological, political, and personal domains.

#### Structure and Themes

The book is structured into three themed sections, each addressing a specific dimension of crisis and response:

Section 1: Contemporary Buddhist Reading of the Crises
This first section contextualises modern crises through Buddhist
analysis and philosophical response.

- "A Humanistic Buddhist Response to Crises through MettāVerses" by Juewei Shi and Grace Ewart introduces the MettaVerses project as a digital multiverse of kindness, blending technology with Buddhist compassion to counter social atomisation.
- "From Self to Our Shared Humanity" by Stephen Hill explores the movement from self-focus to collective awareness as a foundational shift necessary to address systemic crises.
- "Compassion and Kindness as Tools for Transformation" by Len Fisher examines how simple human capacities can serve as mechanisms of social resilience and systemic change.
- "A Humanistic Buddhist Approach to the Contemporary Climate Crisis" by Jonathan Page applies Buddhist ethics to ecological degradation and climate response.

- "Buddhist-Informed Humanistic Responses to Gender-Based Violence" by Jane Wang brings a feminist lens to Buddhist teachings, proposing compassionate frameworks for addressing gender-based harm.
- "Social Connection in the Attention Economy: Cultivating Compassion on Commercial Social Media" by Jade Hutchinson and Alexander Trauth-Goik.

Section 2: Enriching Compassion in Times of Crises

This section offers pathways for deepening compassionate engagement at both personal and structural levels.

- "Compassion, Belief and Macrocompassion" by Iain Sinclair interrogates how belief systems shape the scale and effectiveness of compassionate responses.
- "For the Benefit of All...: Towards Reading the Dharma for Practices of Diversity and Celebration" by Bee Scherer provides a non-binary, inclusive re-reading of Buddhist texts.
- "Compassion and Beyond: How Can Buddhism Help Address Contemporary Crises?" by Gawaine Powell-Davis blends Buddhist doctrine and modern activism.
- "Bodhisattvas in Action Turning Crises into Sacred Leadership" by Meg Hart explores crisis leadership through the lens of the Bodhisattva ideal.
- "Resisting Genocide through D'harawal Relatedness" by Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, Shannon Foster, Aunty Frances Bodkin, and others shares an Indigenous Australian framework for healing historical trauma, linking Buddhist and Aboriginal worldviews in a powerful act of cultural compassion.

#### Section 3: Paths of Compassion

This final section focuses on education, medicine, art, and cross-cultural research as practical avenues for compassionate living.

- "Teaching with Heart: Reflections on Compassionate Pedagogy in Higher Education" by Nadine Levy reflects on how compassion can transform classrooms and pedagogy.
- "The Role of Humanistic Buddhism in Improving the Response of Modern Medicine to Contemporary Challenges" by Kwong Chan and Linda Humphreys explores the integration of Buddhist care ethics into medical practice.



- "Transcending Cultures East and West: Ethnographic Research Methodology as a Path of Compassion" by Jonathan Mair reconsiders research itself as an ethical encounter.
- "Hopeful Monsters: Can Art Build Empathy?" by Linus Lancaster and Asherah Weiss discusses a sculptural project aimed at social-emotional macroevolution through art.
- "Walking the Paths of Compassion amidst Conflict" by Tina Ng explores peacemaking from the grassroots, drawing from Buddhist values and interfaith collaboration.
- "Abundance from Dukkha The Pandemic from a Third World Perspective" by Cecilia B. Manikan offers a Global South viewpoint on how suffering becomes a gateway to spiritual and social transformation.

#### A Collective Offering of Hope

In addition to the 17 scholarly and practice-based chapters, the book includes a foreword, introduction, glossary, and comprehensive index, making it a valuable resource for educators, activists, and practitioners alike. The diversity of voices—ranging from Buddhist scholars to First Nations leaders, social scientists, and artists—underscores the universality of compassion as a shared human response.

The contributors challenge the notion that compassion is merely an internal quality or emotional reaction. Instead, they present it as a force capable of reshaping economies, digital culture, healthcare, education, and justice systems. In this way, *Cultivating Compassion: Going Beyond Crises* builds on the legacy of Humanistic Buddhism as advocated by Venerable Master Hsing Yun: a Buddhism for the people, in the world, for this very moment.

#### Summary

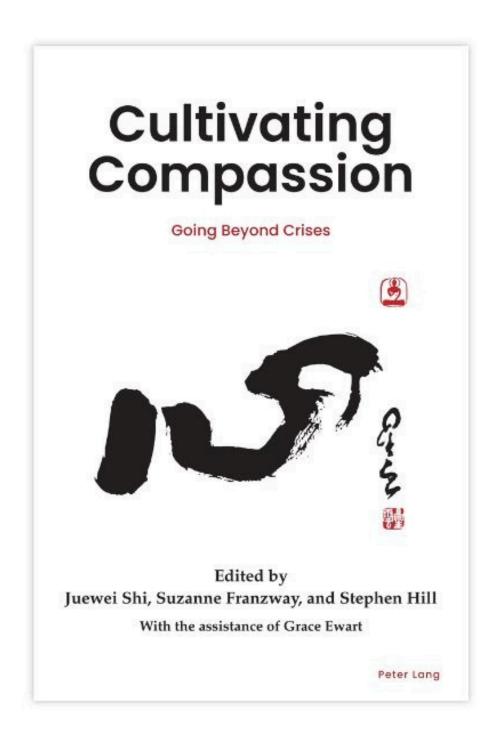
This important publication is both an outcome of the 8th International Humanistic Buddhism Symposium and a standalone contribution to the evolving field of socially engaged Buddhism. It invites readers not only to understand compassion but to embody it—to go beyond crises by transforming suffering into solidarity, and disruption into dharma. To learn more or to download the eBook for free, visit Peter Lang's website: https://www.peterlang.com/document/1340151







Above, the editors: Dr. Juewei Shi, Prof. Suzanne Franzway, Prof. Stephen Hill.





## 2023 - present

# THE HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

The Humanistic Buddhism Special Interest Group (HB SIG) is a collaborative initiative spearheaded by the Humanistic Buddhism Centre (HBC) at Nan Tien Institute (NTI) in Wollongong, Australia. Established in 2023, the HB SIG aims to foster a global community of scholars, researchers, and students dedicated to the academic exploration of Humanistic Buddhism. Through regular online meetings, the group provides a platform for sharing research, methodologies, and fostering collaborative projects in the field.

#### Objectives and Structure

The HB SIG is designed to be an inclusive and supportive network that encourages the exchange of ideas and collaborative research efforts. Meetings are held three times a year and are characterized by their informal nature, featuring short presentations followed by open discussions. This format allows participants to present ongoing research, discuss methodologies, and explore topics relevant to Humanistic Buddhism in a collegial environment. The group's overarching goal is to serve as a safe platform for individuals to connect, discuss their research, and collaborate on papers and projects related to Humanistic Buddhism.

#### Global Participation and Reach

The HB SIG boasts a diverse international membership, with participants hailing from various countries including Australia, Brazil, the Philippines, Pakistan, and the United States. This global representation enriches the discussions and perspectives within the group, reflecting the universal relevance and application of Humanistic Buddhist principles. The online format of the meetings facilitates this international collaboration, allowing for a broad exchange of ideas and fostering a sense of global community among members.

#### Notable Presentations and Themes

The HB SIG meetings have featured a range of presentations that delve into various aspects of Humanistic Buddhism. For instance, the March 2025 meeting included a presentation on the "Buddha's Light AI Translator" by Venerable Youheng from the University of Illinois Chicago and Fo Guang Shan Chicago, highlighting the intersection of technology and Buddhist teachings. Another presentation by Dr Badshah Sardar (Department of Pakistan Studies, AIOU, Islamabad) focused on the present state of research on Buddhist rock inscriptions of Uddiyana (Swat valley, Pakistan).

In October 2024, the group discussed topics such as the launch of "Studies on Humanistic Buddhism Vol. 6" and reflections on Venerable Master Hsing Yun's templebuilding endeavours between 1988 and 2000. These discussions underscore the group's commitment to both historical analysis and contemporary relevance in the study of Humanistic Buddhism.

#### Future Meetings and Participation

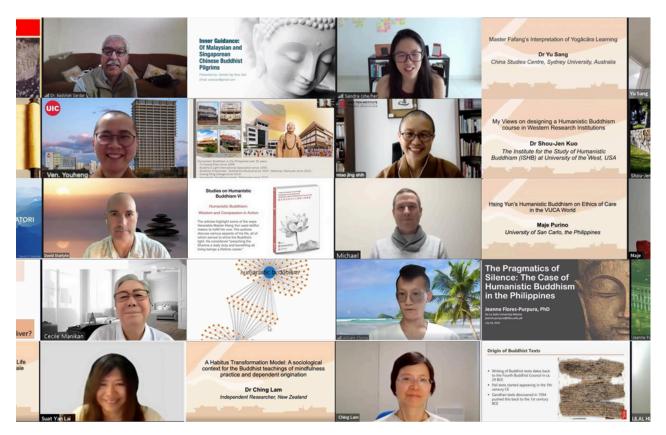
The HB SIG continues to plan future meetings, with upcoming sessions scheduled for July and October 2025. These meetings will feature speakers from various institutions and backgrounds, further enriching the group's discussions. Interested individuals are encouraged to participate, whether by presenting their research or engaging in the discussions. To join upcoming Zoom meetings, participants can register via the form available on the HB SIG's official webpage.

#### Summary

The Humanistic Buddhism Special Interest Group at Nan Tien Institute represents a significant step in fostering global academic collaboration in the field of Humanistic Buddhism. By providing a platform for sharing research, methodologies, and fostering collaborative projects, the HB SIG contributes to the ongoing development and dissemination of Humanistic Buddhist principles in contemporary society.

For more information or to participate in the HB SIG, visit the official website: https://www.nantien.edu.au/aboutus/humanistic-buddhism-centre/research/sig/





Above: A selection of HB SIG presentations Below: HB SIG online meeting



## BUDDHISM IN AUSTRALIA



The "Buddhism in Australia" project is a pioneering, multiinstitutional research initiative that seeks to comprehensively document and analyse the history, diversity, and contemporary experiences of Buddhist communities across Australia. Launched in 2023, this three-year project is led by the Nan Tien Institute in collaboration with Deakin University, Western Sydney University, and Charles Darwin University. It is generously supported by the Hsing Yun Education Foundation.

#### Project Objectives and Scope

This initiative represents the first nation-wide, comprehensive study of Buddhism in Australia, tracing its presence from the 19th century to the present day. The project aims to provide new knowledge of this previously under-researched religion in Australia.

The research employs a mixed-methods approach, including digital oral history interviews, cultural heritage case studies, and the first large-scale survey of Australian Buddhists. These methods aim to capture the multifaceted nature of Buddhist life in Australia, encompassing both historical developments and contemporary practices.

#### **Historical Context**

Buddhism's presence in Australia dates back to the mid-19th century, with early Chinese migrants during the gold rush era and Sinhalese labourers arriving in the 1870s. These communities established some of the earliest Buddhist sites in the country, such as the community on Thursday Island founded in 1876. The project seeks to document these historical trajectories, shedding light on the evolution of Buddhist communities and their contributions to Australia's multicultural landscape.

#### Contemporary Relevance

According to the 2021 Australian census, Buddhism is the country's fourth-largest religion, with approximately 615,800 adherents, accounting for 2.4% of the population. The Buddhist population is notably diverse, comprising individuals from over 60 countries, with a significant proportion born outside Australia and speaking languages other than English at home.

The project aims to explore how these diverse communities practise Buddhism in Australia, their levels of social engagement, and the challenges they face in terms of belonging and well-being.

#### Community Engagement and Participation

A key component of the project is active community involvement. The research team invites individuals to contribute by participating in surveys, sharing personal stories, and providing records that capture their experiences with Buddhism in Australia. This participatory approach ensures that the research reflects the lived realities of Buddhist practitioners across the country.

Researchers began the fieldwork in June 2024, starting in Far North Queensland, traveling over 2,200 kilometres and visiting locations such as Bribie Island, Cairns, Cooktown, Atherton, and Thursday Island. During this trip, they gathered data through interviews, field investigations, and filming to explore the diverse expressions of Buddhism in these regions.

#### **Educational and Scholarly Contributions**

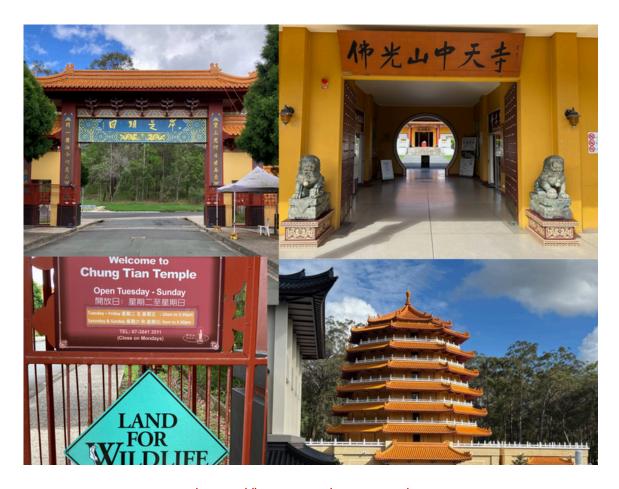
The findings from the "Buddhism in Australia" project will be disseminated through various channels, including academic publications, community events, and educational resources on a website. One of the project's goals is to develop a digital mapping educational resource linked to the Australian curriculum, thereby enhancing religious literacy and awareness of Buddhism's role in Australia's cultural fabric.

By documenting the historical and contemporary experiences of Buddhist communities, the project aims to contribute valuable insights to the fields of religious studies, sociology, and multicultural studies.

#### Summary

The "Buddhism in Australia" project represents a significant step toward understanding the rich tapestry of Buddhist life in Australia. Through comprehensive research and active community engagement, the project seeks to illuminate the diverse practices, histories, and contributions of Buddhist communities, fostering greater appreciation and inclusion within the broader Australian society.

For more information or to participate in the project, visit the official website: <u>buddhisminaustralia.org</u>



Above: Buddhism in Australia team visit Chung Tian Temple, Priestdale, Queensland Below: Buddhism in Australia team visit E-Vam Institute, Princes Hill, Victoria.



# CULTIVATING COMPASSION: MEET THE AUTHORS

The "Meet the Authors" initiative was a central feature of the Communities of Practice Sunday check-in sessions in 2024. This initiative brought together a diverse group of thinkers, practitioners, and scholars to explore compassionate responses to contemporary global crises through the lens of Humanistic Buddhism.

#### Origins and Purpose

The Communities of Practice project was initiated in 2018 by Venerable Dr. Juewei, Director of the Humanistic Buddhism Centre at the Nan Tien Institute. The project's aim is to apply Buddhist wisdom to modern challenges, fostering values such as generosity, empathy, and community spirit. Over time, it has evolved into a dynamic community that addresses issues like climate change, social inequality, and global health crises through compassionate action.

#### Cultivating Compassion: Going Beyond Crises

The cornerstone and focus of the "Meet the Authors" series is the book *Cultivating Compassion: Going Beyond Crises*, edited by Venerable Juewei, Suzanne Franzway, and Stephen Hill. This collection of essays offers diverse perspectives on applying compassion to address global challenges. The book is available as a free e-book download, making its insights accessible to a broad audience.

#### **Author Contributions**

The authors featured in this initiative bring a wealth of experience from various fields:

- Len Fisher Compassion as a Tool for Transformation
- Meg Hart Bodhisattvas in Action
- Cecile Manikan Abundance from Duhhka
- Stephen Hill From Self to our Shared Humanity
- Tina Ng Walking the Path of Compassion Amidst Conflict
- Jane Wang Buddhist Informed Humanistic Responses to Gender Based Violence
- Grace Ewart A Humanistic Buddhist Response to Crises through MettaVerses
- Kwong Chan The Role of Humanistic Buddhism in Improving the Response of Modern Medicine to Contemporary Challenges
- Gawaine Powell-Davies Compassion and Beyond: How can Buddhism help address Contemporary Crises?
- Jade Hutchinson Social Connection in the Attention Economy: Cultivating Compassion on Commercial Social Media

#### Community Engagement

The "Meet the Authors" sessions were designed to be interactive, allowing community members to engage directly with the authors. These sessions provided opportunities for participants to delve deeper into the topics discussed in the essays, fostering a collaborative learning environment.

#### Accessibility and Resources

All resources related to the "Meet the Authors" series, including the Cultivating Compassion e-book and recordings of author sessions, are freely available on the Communities of Practice website. This open-access approach ensures that individuals worldwide can benefit from the insights and discussions generated by the project.

#### Impact and Future Directions

The "Meet the Authors" initiative exemplifies how ancient wisdom can be applied to modern challenges. By fostering discussions around compassion and its practical applications, the project encourages individuals and communities to respond to crises with empathy and understanding. As the Communities of Practice continues to grow, it aims to expand its reach and impact, promoting compassionate action across various sectors of society.

For more information and to access the resources, visit the official website: <a href="https://community.thebbep.org/meet-the-authors/">https://community.thebbep.org/meet-the-authors/</a>.



# CULTIVATING COMPASSIONATE FUTURES: A GLOBAL COLLOQUIUM ROOTED IN HUMANISTIC BUDDHISM



In November 2024, the Humanistic Buddhism Centre (HBC), in collaboration with leading Buddhist institutions around the world, hosted a landmark international event—the Humanistic Buddhism Colloquium on Compassionate Futures. This two-day online gathering brought together nearly 600 registered participants from more than 15 countries, including academics, students, practitioners, and interfaith leaders, to explore how the teachings and practices of Humanistic Buddhism can shape a more compassionate and sustainable future.

Organised with generous support from the Hsing Yun Education Foundation and hosted on the MettãVerses platform (<a href="www.mettaverses.org">www.mettaverses.org</a>), the colloquium was part of a global commemorative effort honouring the legacy of the late Venerable Master Hsing Yun, the visionary founder of the Fo Guang Shan Buddhist order and tireless advocate for Humanistic Buddhism.

#### A Global, Collaborative Effort

Planning for the colloquium began in 2023, culminating in a two-day event held online from November 9–10, 2024. Key institutional partners included:

- The Fo Guang Shan Institute of Humanistic Buddhism (Taiwan)
- The Dutch Buddhist Seminary (VU, Amsterdam)
- Humanistic Buddhism Research Centre, University of Malaya
- The Institute for the Study of Humanistic Buddhism, University of the West, USA
- The Humanistic Buddhism Centre in co-operation with the Department of Philosophy, University San Carlos, The Philippines

This global consortium brought depth and diversity to the event's vision, ensuring a rich interdisciplinary and international dialogue.

A unique feature of the colloquium was its 24-hour "time zone relay" format, allowing each region to host its own session. This innovation allowed seamless participation across Asia, Oceania, Europe, and the Americas, embodying the colloquium's ethos of global connection and inclusivity.

#### **Exploring Compassion Across Disciplines**

The central theme—Compassionate Futures—served as a springboard for a diverse range of topics, from interfaith environmental dialogues to Buddhist chaplaincy, education reform, trauma healing, and digital communities. Across eight panels and a keynote address, participants examined how the principles of Humanistic Buddhism can offer ethical, sustainable, and compassionate responses to contemporary global challenges such as climate change, inequality, displacement, and mental health crises.

Keynote speaker Dr. Lewis Lancaster set the tone with a plenary talk exploring the evolution and global significance of Humanistic Buddhism. His insights affirmed the relevance of Buddhist values in cultivating compassion and ethical action in an increasingly fragmented world.

#### Panels that Inspired and Informed

Highlights included two postgraduate panels featuring 13 emerging scholars presenting research on topics ranging from inherited trauma and ecological ethics to the cultivation of online religious communities. These sessions signalled the colloquium's commitment to supporting the next generation of Buddhist scholars and practitioners.

Panel 2, titled Transforming While Being Transformed, focused on the "Three Acts of Goodness" (speak good words, do good deeds, think good thoughts) and their application in Filipino educational contexts, showcasing Humanistic Buddhism as a transformative educational model.

Panel 4 brought together practitioners from the Netherlands, the US, and elsewhere for a rich discussion on Buddhist chaplaincy, exploring its role in spiritual care, addiction recovery, interfaith settings, and armed forces contexts. The discussion underscored compassion as both method and goal in spiritual accompaniment and care work.



In Panel 7, titled Pathways to Compassionate Futures, Venerable Thubten Chokyi, Bhante Dhammika, and Dr. Juewei Shi presented on building compassionate communities, the nature of compassion itself, and the MettãVerses initiative—a digital multiverse of kindness developed to combat isolation and polarization.

#### **Educational Legacy and Public Engagement**

Each of the colloquium's sessions was recorded, professionally edited, and made freely available through the MettāVerses website. This commitment to open access ensures that the knowledge and wisdom shared during the event remains a resource for educators, students, and the broader public.

Post-event feedback from participants praised the depth of discussions and the international scope of participation. Suggestions for future iterations included longer networking opportunities and extended panel sessions—testament to the high level of engagement the colloquium fostered.

#### Looking Ahead: From Colloquium to Community

The colloquium also reinforced HBC's strategic focus on fostering compassionate leadership and applied Buddhist scholarship. With institutional partnerships now solidified, and with MettāVerses providing a permanent digital home for resources, the Compassionate Futures project continues to expand in reach and impact.

#### Conclusion

The Humanistic Buddhism Colloquium on Compassionate Futures was more than an academic event—it was a global act of collective care and wisdom-sharing. In the face of multiple planetary crises, this colloquium affirmed that the teachings of Humanistic Buddhism offer both practical tools and deep philosophical grounding for a kinder, more interconnected world. By bridging generations, disciplines, and cultures, the event has planted seeds for long-term collaboration and compassionate transformation.

To watch recordings and explore the topics presented, visit: https://www.mettaverses.org/compassionate-futures



## 2024 - present

## METTĀVERSES: BUILDING DIGITAL AND REAL-WORLD COMMUNITIES ROOTED IN KINDNESS

The MettāVerses project, developed by HBC is an innovative, multi-faceted initiative designed to foster communities of kindness both online and offline. Officially launched at <a href="https://www.MettaVerses.org">www.MettaVerses.org</a> in November 2025, MettāVerses aims to counter the isolating effects of digital media and social fragmentation by promoting the Buddhist principle of mettā—loving-kindness—as a unifying force in society.

At its core, MettāVerses is a research-informed platform and public engagement project committed to cultivating compassion, social connection, and well-being through educational resources, research, and strategic partnerships. It is supported by the Hsing Yun Education Foundation and led by Dr. Juewei Shi and Engagement Projects Manager Pema Düddul.

#### Purpose and Vision

The project aims to create an accessible digital hub for kindness-driven resources. The broader purpose of MettāVerses is to inspire ethical communities grounded in Buddhist values while addressing the mental health and social challenges posed by digital atomization and social media addiction. The initiative is deeply rooted in the Humanistic Buddhist ethos of compassion-in-action, practical wisdom, and collective flourishing.

#### Platform Features and Functionality

The website (<a href="www.MettāVerses.org">www.MettāVerses.org</a>) functions as the central platform for the initiative. It houses educational materials, research findings, podcasts, a kindness directory, and event listings. Resources are designed to help individuals and groups engage meaningfully with the practice of mettā, offering insights from Buddhism alongside interdisciplinary approaches to wellbeing and resilience.

A key feature of the platform is its evolving directory of organisations and initiatives aligned with the values of kindness and compassion. This includes Buddhist temples, schools, social enterprises, and refugee associations across Australia. Users can explore this network to find local opportunities for engagement or collaboration.

Content creation is underway, with resources covering topics like mental health, community-building, and mindful technology use. A volunteer database has also been established, organizing individuals to assist with content development, event facilitation, and outreach efforts.

#### **Next Steps**

With the mid-term milestones achieved—including the feasibility study, ethics approval, and preliminary website design—the next phase involves finalising the platform's interface, and expanding its content. Usability testing will also be conducted to ensure the platform meets user needs. The MettāVerses project exemplifies how digital platforms can be harnessed not just for connection, but for cultivating ethical and compassionate action in the world.

For more information, visit www.MettāVerses.org



Kind Fragrance Permeates Ten Directions by Venerable Master Hsing Yun

# Guided by an Esteemed Advisory Committee

The Humanistic Buddhism Centre is guided by an esteemed Advisory Committee comprising distinguished scholars, practitioners, and leaders from diverse fields. Their collective expertise ensures that the Centre remains at the forefront of academic excellence, community engagement, and the practical application of Humanistic Buddhist principles.

Among the committee members is Professor Stephen Hill, as chair of the Committee, whose distinguished career encompasses roles such as United Nations Regional Director for Science for Asia and the Pacific, and Principal Director and Ambassador of UNESCO, where he was based in Indonesia and part-time in the Director-General's Cabinet in Paris. Prior to his tenure at UNESCO, Professor Hill was the Director of the Australian Research Council's National Centre of Excellence for Research Policy at the University of Wollongong, following 17 years as the Foundation Professor of Sociology . Also serving on the committee is Emeritus Professor Lewis Lancaster, a globally renowned scholar in Buddhist Studies, whose extensive academic career includes over three decades at the University of California, Berkeley. His contributions have significantly shaped the understanding of Buddhist theology and linguistics.

Associate Professor Nicholas Van Dam, Director of the Contemplative Studies Centre at the University of Melbourne, contributes his research on meditation and mindfulness practices, enhancing the Centre's focus on mental wellbeing.

Venerable Miao Guang, Deputy Chancellor of the Fo Guang Shan Institute of Humanistic Buddhism, offers her extensive experience in Buddhist textual translation and international affairs, supporting the Centre's global outreach.

Gawaine Powell Davies, Chair of the Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils and the Buddhist Council of NSW, provides valuable perspectives on Buddhist practice and community engagement within Australia.

Professor Denise Kirkpatrick, President of Nan Tien Institute, brings a wealth of experience from her leadership roles in universities. Her insights into higher education governance and quality assurance are invaluable to the Centre's strategic direction.

Rodney Vickers, Dean of Studies at Nan Tien Institute, offers extensive experience in academic leadership and a deep commitment to values-based education.

Dr. Juewei Shi, Director of the Humanistic Buddhism Centre, combines her academic background in Religious Studies, Buddhist Studies, Business Administration, and Computer Science to lead the Centre's innovative programs and research initiatives

Dr. Elizabeth McDougal is a lecturer in Applied Buddhist Studies at Nan Tien Institute. She studied a Masters of Indian philosophy at Banaras Hindu University, and a PhD (2021) at the University of Sydney on the modernisation of Tibetan Buddhist meditation lineages.

Dr. Nadine Levy, Head of Program for Health and Social Wellbeing at Nan Tien Institute, brings her expertise in sociology, law, and gender studies to explore the intersections of health, spirituality, and community.

Sylvia Neubacher is the Head of Mental Health at the Nan Tien Institute. She holds a Master of Counselling, and diverse post graduate degrees in counselling, human services, family therapy, teaching and learning.

The HBC Advisory Committee's diverse backgrounds and shared commitment to Humanistic Buddhism have been instrumental in guiding the Centre's mission. Their advice and support have been pivotal in shaping the Centre's educational programs, research projects, and community initiatives. We extend our deepest gratitude to each member for their unwavering dedication and invaluable contributions to the Humanistic Buddhism Centre.



# OUR DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO THE HSING YUN EDUCATION FOUNDATION



We offer our most sincere and profound thanks to the Hsing Yun Education Foundation (HYEF), whose unwavering support has been instrumental in bringing many of the Humanistic Buddhism Centre's activities to life. Named in honour of Venerable Master Hsing Yun, HYEF embodies his compassionate vision of education as a means to uplift individuals and transform society. The Foundation is dedicated to nurturing wisdom, ethical leadership, cultural understanding, and the compassionate application of Humanistic Buddhist values in all spheres of life.

Through its generous funding and abiding encouragement, HYEF has enabled the Humanistic Buddhism Centre to pursue bold and meaningful initiatives, from academic research and publications to community engagement and international collaboration. Its support has not only advanced the scholarly exploration of Humanistic Buddhism but also helped ensure that these teachings are made accessible, relevant, and transformative in today's complex world.

To the board and members of the Hsing Yun Education Foundation, we extend our humble gratitude and heartfelt admiration. Your faith in our vision and work has been a source of strength, and your kindness and generosity has inspired us to carry forward the legacy of Venerable Master Hsing Yun with sincerity, clarity, and resolve. May the light of your beneficence continue to illuminate paths of wisdom and compassion for generations to come!



# CONCLUSION: A LEGACY OF COMPASSIONATE WISDOM AND THE ROAD AHEAD

Over the past decade, the Humanistic Buddhism Centre (HBC) at Nan Tien Institute has demonstrated how deep-rooted spiritual values can be harnessed to meet the evolving challenges of contemporary life. From the outset, its mission, grounded in Venerable Master Hsing Yun's vision of education as the cultivation of inner awakening for the betterment of all, has been a guiding force in both philosophy and practice. What began as an aspiration to make Humanistic Buddhism accessible and impactful has become a vibrant and multi-dimensional reality. Through scholarly excellence, community engagement, and technological innovation, HBC is establishing itself as a leader in Buddhist education and public scholarship, not only in Australia but globally.

This publication stands as a testament to the diverse and innovative projects that have emerged from HBC: from contemplative pedagogy to applied technology, from digital humanities to embodied community practice. These endeavours share a common thread—the active integration of Buddhist wisdom with the pressing issues of our time. The NTI Ethos Project revealed how educational environments can serve as laboratories for ethical cultivation. The Mindful Check-In app and MettāVerses platform showed that ancient principles like mindfulness and loving-kindness can be revitalised through modern digital tools to promote well-being and social connectedness.

HBC's research contributions, particularly the Buddhism in Australia and Buddhism in the Sea of Islands projects, have broken new ground in the documentation of Buddhist diversity across time and geography. They not only give voice to previously marginalised or underrepresented Buddhist communities but also affirm the significance of Buddhism's cultural, ethical, and spiritual contributions in pluralistic societies. The meticulous mapping of both historical and contemporary narratives underscores HBC's commitment to reflective, inclusive scholarship that serves both academic and public interests.

Equally compelling is the journal *Studies on Humanistic Buddhism*, a collaborative initiative that bridges East and West, practitioner and scholar, layperson and monastic. With a global network of contributors and translators, this journal exemplifies how Buddhist knowledge can circulate dynamically across languages, cultures, and disciplines. Likewise, the Humanistic Buddhism Special Interest Group (HB SIG) has cultivated a collegial space for sustained, international dialogue, further reinforcing the Centre's ethos of cooperation and cross-cultural understanding.

HBC's engagement has never been confined to the academy. Through its Sunday Check-In sessions, public talks, storytelling projects, and colloquia, it has built a community of inquiry and practice that extends across the globe. These platforms have allowed individuals from diverse backgrounds to reflect, share, and grow together.

Particularly noteworthy is the Colloquium on Compassionate Futures—a 24-hour, cross-continental relay of wisdom that united scholars, spiritual leaders, and activists around a shared vision of a kinder, more interconnected world. Events like this do not simply disseminate knowledge; they embody the relational heart of Humanistic Buddhism.

What distinguishes HBC's journey is not merely the breadth of its initiatives, but their coherence. Whether through educational reform, digital innovation, or research collaboration, the Centre has consistently actualised the foundational principles of Humanistic Buddhism: compassion, wisdom, engaged action, and the aspiration for universal flourishing. Its work honours Master Hsing Yun's exhortation to "let Buddhism be of this world"—not as an abstract philosophy, but as a living, breathing force for social harmony, ethical renewal, and inner transformation.

As HBC moves into its second decade, the path ahead is both promising and vital. The need for compassionate responses to global crises—climate change, digital alienation, social inequality, and mental health challenges—is more urgent than ever. Institutions like HBC are uniquely positioned to respond, offering not just critique but hope, not just analysis but practice, not just theory but transformation. With its solid foundation and expansive vision, the Centre is poised to deepen its impact, foster new partnerships, and continue to inspire both scholarship and service.

The story of the Humanistic Buddhism Centre is, in essence, a story of alignment—between inner and outer, between heritage and innovation, between individual awakening and collective wellbeing. It invites us to reimagine education not just as the transmission of knowledge but as a sacred space for cultivating humanity. It reminds us that wisdom traditions, when engaged creatively and compassionately, can illuminate new paths forward in a rapidly changing world.

In celebrating the past ten years, we also affirm a future built not on certainty, but on aspiration—a future where the seeds of kindness, understanding, and wisdom sown by HBC continue to grow, bloom, and nourish all sentient beings.



# **HBC Timeline**

#### 2016

- Introduction of Mindful Check-In App to support well-being and mindfulness practices.
- Presentations at conferences, including the annual HB Symposium

#### 2018 - 2019

- Presentations at key global conferences, such as the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative, Pacific Network Consortium and Digital Heritage International Congress.
- · NTI Ethos Project begins.
- HBC contributes to academic discourse on Buddhist ethics and digital technologies.

#### 2021 - 2022

- Expansion of Studies on Humanistic Buddhism journal: inclusion of student papers and original English contributions.
- Broadened international partnerships and organised a fully online HB Symposium
- Research focus expands to include Al, ethics, and environmental crises through a Buddhist lens.
- Presentations at national-level conferences such as the Inaugural Congress of the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences.
- Presentations at key global conferences, such as Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, USA; Centre for Interfaith Understanding, Singapore.

#### 2024

- Cultivating Compassion: Going Beyond Crises published.
- First MettäVerses feasibility study completed (212 participants).
- 200th Sunday Check-In session celebrated (September 22).
- Humanistic Buddhism Colloquium: Compassionate Futures held with global partners and speakers (Nov).
- Fieldwork for the Buddhism in Australia project conducted in FNQ, Darwin, Broome, NSW & SE QLD.
- HBC Director, Dr. Juewei Shi invited to appear on ABC RN (Soul Search).
- Presentations at key global conferences, including the American Academy of Religion (San Diego) and the China Forum for Intercultural Dialogue.



- Establishment of the Humanistic Buddhism Centre (HBC) at NTI.
- Inaugural activities focus on community outreach through the Buddha's Birthday Education Project (BBEP).
- First participation in international academic forums, such as the Annual Conference of The Japanese Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies.

#### 2017

- Creation of the Humanistic and Engaged Buddhism Bibliography, a dynamic scholarly resource (continually updated biannually since then).
- NTI Visualiser developed to provide a user-friendly tool for locating research on Humanistic Buddhism.
- Presentations at key conferences, such as the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Program in Buddhism and Contemporary Society, University of British Columbia, Vancouver.
- · Launch of "Turning Points"
- Launch of the Studies on Humanistic Buddhism journal.

#### 2020

- Launch of the Buddhism in the Sea of Islands project.
- Major strides in digital engagement due to COVID-19. HBC held eVesak, the first in the country, together with the Buddhist Council of NSW and FABC.
- Enhanced outreach via Sunday Check-Ins, which started in October 2020 during Mental Health month, providing weekly online gatherings and discussions.
- HBC Director, Dr. Juewei Shi invited to appear on national TV (Network 10) and regional radio (ABC Illawarra).
- Presentations at key global conferences, including the annual HB Symposium

#### 2023

- Buddhism in Australia Research Project gains momentum with oral histories and ethnographic work.
- MettäVerses initiative begins: envisioning online and real-world kindness communities.
- Writing and Translation workshops held in July and October.
- Presentations at key global conferences, including with the 'Italian Buddhist Union'.

#### 2025

- Launch of <u>www.mettaverses.org</u>.
- HBC Director, Dr. Juewei Shi invited to appear on ABC RN (God Forbid).
- Fieldwork for the Buddhism in Australia project conducted in TAS, VIC, WA and Christmas Island.
- Production of 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary eBook and documentary.
- Review and planning on multiple projects

# **GALLERY**



Above: Community of Practice Session Below: Visit to Great Stupa of Universal Compassion by Buddhism in Australia team.





Above: Presentation given to the Australasian Association of Buddhist Studies Below: Buddhism in Australia team visiting the Buddhist Society of Victoria





## **X** NTI COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE Commemorating the Legacy of the Venerable Master Hsing Yun









































Above: Community of Practice Session Below: Roundtable discussion at Buddhist Perspectives on Consciousness, Evolution and Al conference in Italy.





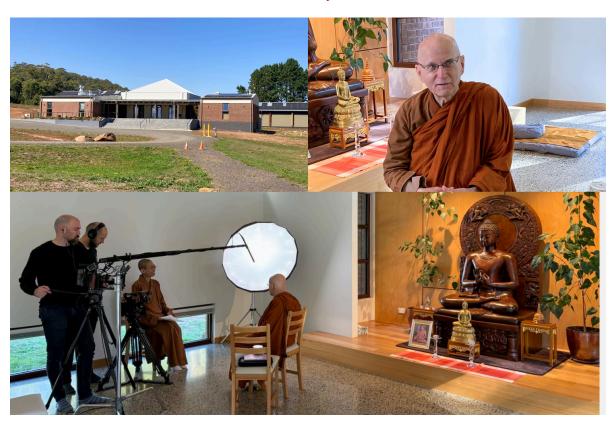
Above & Below: Interview subjects for the Buddhism in Australia project



# 南天大學 周日線上社區對話 COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE SUNDAY CHECK-IN SESSIONS CELEBRATION



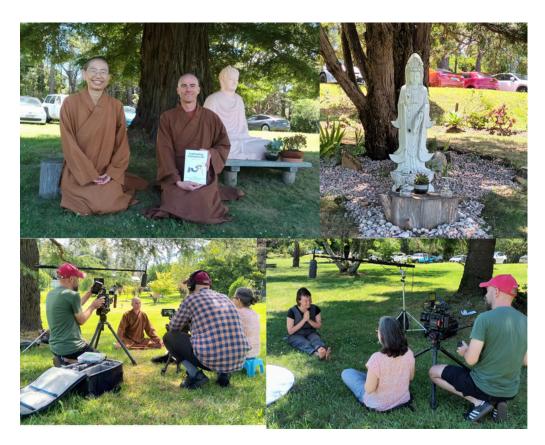
Above: Community of Practice Session Below: Buddhism in Australia team visit Newbury Buddhist Monastery in Victoria





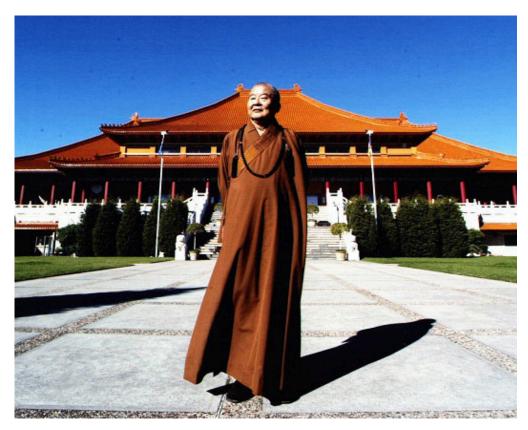
Above: Buddhism in Australia team visit Hoa Nghiem school, Springvale, Victoria Below: Buddhism in Australia team visit Chenrezig Institute, Eudlo, Queensland.





Above: Buddhism in Australia team visit Mountain Spring Monastery, Bilpin, NSW Below: Buddhism in Australia team visit Wat Buddha Dhamma, Wisemans Ferry, NSW





Venerable Master Hsing Yun



Nan Tien Institute

# **CONTRIBUTORS**



We extend our heartfelt thanks to the contributors whose reflections, insights, and scholarship have shaped this commemorative booklet. Each of you has made a meaningful and distinctive contribution to both this publication and the broader work of the Humanistic Buddhism Centre. Your generosity in sharing your time, experience, and vision is deeply appreciated.

Whether through academic exploration, community engagement, creative contributions, or institutional support or leadership, your efforts have advanced the Centre's mission to make Humanistic Buddhism more relevant, inclusive, and responsive to contemporary challenges. Thank you for your continued dedication and for walking this path together with such wisdom and heart.

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