



## EVENTS | PROGRAMMES | CEO BLOG

Dear TWF friends

*"It's illegal to discriminate against a person in the workplace for being a parent. But bosses get around it in all different kinds of ways"* – Hillary Frank, author and podcast host

Hong Kong is a city that is not friendly to working mothers – a point that is clearly reflected in a [study](#) released by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) in late August. When researchers asked employers in Hong Kong about their ideal job candidates, less than 50% of those surveyed said they would hire women with children.

It's not because mothers are not competent, not committed or have little career potential, it's simply because they are mothers – and due to perceived prejudice against them. "Mothers are the main victims of family status discrimination," [said](#) Professor Dai Haijing, the study's principal investigator and associate professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Family status discrimination also has a "[glass ceiling effect](#)": if a woman caring for ageing parents applies for a management-level position, the chances of her receiving an offer is 24.5% lower than a woman in the same situation applying for an entry-level job. The study also discovered that of the employees who said they had been discriminated against, only 12% tried to report it to their employers or the EOC. This lack of reporting is largely due to ignorance: some women think such discrimination is routine, while others don't know how to report it or don't think it is important to make a complaint.

Discrimination against mothers does not only happen in Hong Kong. In Japan, pressures on female employees to quit work or efforts to demote them after becoming pregnant or giving birth are so prevalent that there is a [special word](#) to describe it: "matahara", or "maternity harassment".

In contrast, men with children enjoy certain advantages. Fathers are not only more likely to be hired than childless men, they also tend to be paid more after they have children, [according to](#) a US research paper, titled "The Fatherhood Bonus, the Motherhood Penalty". In addition, men enjoy an average wage increase of over 6% per child, while women experience an average 4% salary decrease with each child.

"Employers read fathers as more stable and committed to their work; they have a family to provide for, so they're less likely to be flaky," [said](#) Michelle Budig, the study's author and professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. "That is the opposite of how parenthood by women is interpreted by employers. The conventional story is they work less and they're more distractible when on the job."

The [gendered nature of housework](#) contributes to this widespread prejudice. In Hong Kong, men are still expected to be the primary breadwinner. Meanwhile, women shoulder the main responsibility of care duties at home – nearly one-third of women who leave the workforce cite taking care of family members as the reason.

The motherhood penalty is serious a problem for Hong Kong. A result of this stigma is that, disturbingly, some working mothers are not in favour of family leave policies as they reinforce the stereotype that mothers can't focus on career development.

We are deeply concerned by these findings – they should shock our city into action. To change this penalty, we need better education among employers to raise awareness around this discrimination and best practice to curb this type of behaviour. Equally, we need positive reinforcement from the Government and the community that mothers can (and do!) thrive in their careers and as parents.

At TWF we are committed to driving attitudinal changes and challenging gender stereotypes that underpin this form of discrimination against women. We will continue to advocate for structural change in Hong Kong to support the full participation of women at work and more broadly in our society – for a clearer picture on our areas of focus, read our [response](#) to the Labour & Welfare Bureau's Public Consultation on CEDAW.

We all have a part to play in changing the narrative. Write to us with your ideas on eradicating the motherhood penalty by emailing [Fiona.Nott@twfhk.org](mailto:Fiona.Nott@twfhk.org).

Have a great week.

Fiona Nott  
CEO, The Women's Foundation

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### 30% Club Boardroom Lunch - Extended Deadline for Women to Watch nominations

TWF and the 30% Club HK are delighted to announce the sixth annual 30% Club



Boardroom Lunch which brings TWF's list of aspiring and accomplished women directors face-to-face with Board chairs, CEOs and advisors to Hong Kong's leading companies for simulated boardroom discussions on key issues facing boards today. If you are a senior executive woman with board experience, or if you would like to nominate a potential Woman to Watch, please contact us at [30percentclub@twfhk.org](mailto:30percentclub@twfhk.org) to find out more.

**Extended Deadline Friday, September 7**

**Date:** Friday, September 21, 2018

**Time:** 12.00-2.00pm

**Venue:** The Asia Society Hong Kong Center, 9 Justice Drive, Admiralty



**TWF Gala Dinner 2018 – Now Selling!**

Tables and tickets are now on sale. Please contact [riva@twfhk.org](mailto:riva@twfhk.org) for sponsorship enquiries. A big thank you to our Title Sponsor Bloomberg and Associate Sponsors Cathay Pacific and Manulife!

**Date:** Wednesday, October 24, 2018

**Time:** From 7.00pm

**Venue:** JW Marriott Hong Kong, Pacific Place. Early bird offers expire on September 7.

**TWF PROGRAMME UPDATES**



**T.E.E.N. Programme Update**

On August 23, our current cohort of TEENs participated in a "Diversity Tour," during which ethnic minority students shared their culture and daily lives with us through guided tours through places like the Islamic Centre, Sikh Temple, and a Pakistani grocery store. The TEENs then had a summer wrap-up session, where they reflected on their breakthroughs and were encouraged to continue stepping out of their comfort zones.



**T.E.E.N. Graduation Ceremony**

Last Thursday, we held a graduation ceremony concluding the eighth year of the T.E.E.N. Programme. The TEENs summed up their experiences with a touching and funny musical drama performance. The event was a beautiful finale to our Programme, supported by an enthusiastic audience. A huge thanks to Kwai Chung Methodist College for hosting the ceremony and also to our corporate partner CLSA for their unwavering support over the last eight years.



**Girls Go Tech Teachers' Workshop**

Last Thursday, TWF delivered a teacher workshop for 60 teachers at Kit Sam Lam Bing Yim Secondary School. Thank you to Candy Liu | Hong Kong Communications Company and Janette Chiu | Atos for sharing their insights on the development of STEM and its significance for women and the economy.



**"Life Skills Programme for Adolescent Girls and Boys" Teacher Training**

Last Friday, TWF Deputy CEO Rita Ching held a teacher training on our Life Skills Programme, briefing 20 teachers from Holy Trinity College on the use of the Programme's curriculum and materials, focusing on developing students' critical life skills, including financial literacy,



positive communication and career and life planning. The curriculum will be freely accessible to schools upon request. For more details, please visit [here](#).



### **Mentoring Programme Graduation**

Last Thursday, we celebrated the Graduation of our MP1718 cohort. Our Mentors and Protégés, Knowledge Partners and Advisory Council members joined us for a fun and memorable evening, focusing on the theme of "Transformation". Thank you to Hong Kong Football Club for hosting us and to all our generous event sponsors.



### **Boardroom Series for Women Leaders Launch**

On August 30, we held our inaugural Boardroom Series for Women Leaders event where we brought together over 50 board-aspiring and board-experienced women with Executive Search Firms for facilitated board focused discussions. The event, From the C-Suite to the Board, included a fireside chat with Nick Allen | Link REIT and Fiona Nott | TWF, before moving to group discussions facilitated by Executive Search Firm representatives. Many thanks to our Series Sponsors, Standard Chartered, KPMG and Goldman Sachs and to KPMG for hosting the event. Thank you as well to Nick Allen for sharing his time and expertise as well as to our Executive Search firm supporting partners for facilitating the discussions; Meraki, Heidrick & Struggles, Egon Zehnder and Korn Ferry.

## **IN THE SPOTLIGHT**



### **TWF CEO Speaks to HSBC Employee Resource Group**

Last Wednesday, TWF CEO, Fiona Nott, spoke to members of HSBC's Balance, an Employee Resource Group that supports the recruitment, development and engagement of a gender-balanced work-force within HSBC. Fiona shared her insights on diversity, mentoring and the importance of STEM.



### **TWF CEO Speaks to Swire Women's Network**

Last Thursday, TWF CEO Fiona Nott shared tips on mentoring programme best practice at the launch of the Swire Mentoring Programme, an internal initiative organised by Swire Women's Network. The audience consisted of some of Swire's most senior leaders as they focus on supporting career development and advancement of women leaders.



### **CUHK Inauguration Ceremony for Gender Studies**

Last Saturday, TWF CEO Fiona Nott spoke on a panel as part of the Inauguration Ceremony for the Gender Studies Programme at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Alongside Fern Ngai | Community Business and Judy Chan | Grace Vineyards and moderated by Professor Jing Song | CUHK, they discussed the factors preventing women from taking up senior leadership roles and best practice to help grow the pipeline of women leaders, and shared highlights from their own career journeys.



**TWF Intern Wins Bronze Medal in 2018 Asian Games**

TWF intern, Moonie Chu (far right), won a bronze medal with her teammates in the Women's Epee event as part of the 2018 Asian Games held in Jakarta. Congratulations, Moonie!



**Children's Medical Foundation Benefit Concert**

TWF is pleased to support the Children's Medical Foundation Benefit Concert. All proceeds will benefit critically ill children in rural China. TWF's community programme participants will also be benefitting from the concert so we encourage you to join. Friends of TWF receive 20% off the ticket price so be sure to enter code **WF2018** when you register.

**Date:** Monday, September 10, 2018

**Time:** 8.00pm

**Venue:** Hong Kong City Hall Concert Hall  
To purchase tickets or for more information please visit [this](#) website.



**AVCJ Women in Asian Private Equity Forum**

TWF is delighted to support the AVCJ Women in Asian Private Equity Forum this September. This stand-alone event will explore the issues and challenges the private equity and venture capital industry faces in increasing and retaining the number of female investment professionals. It also provides a unique opportunity to meet and network with like-minded professionals in Asia.

**Date:** Thursday, September 13, 2018

**Time:** 8.55am-5.30pm (8.15am registration)

**Venue:** Eaton House, Hong Kong  
For more information and to register, visit [here](#). Enter the code **AVCJWIPE18\_TWF15D** to receive a 15% discount off the standard rate!



**Entries for the 2018 HK Human Rights Arts Prize Now Open!**

TWF is pleased to support the Hong Kong Human Rights Arts Prize 2018, organised by the Justice Centre HK. Open to all Hong Kong-based and Hong Kong born visual artists, the HKHRAP invites creatives to submit work in any medium exploring the theme of local or international human rights. Deadline is October 5. Participants can enter free of charge by visiting [here](#).



**DIAN Decade Conference & Awards**

TWF is delighted to support DIAN Decade Conference & Awards, an initiative of Community Business. Join participants from around the world in examining progress made in advancing diversity and inclusion in Asia over the past decade and exploring the future of D&I in Asia - helping you to understand future trends and transform your D&I strategy. The winners of the DIAN Decade Awards will also be announced that evening.

**Date:** Monday, November 12, 2018

**Time:** 12.00-7.30pm

**Venue:** SkyCity Marriott  
Register [here](#) or visit their [webpage](#) for more information.

## Our top picks for recommended reading on the key trends and breaking stories on women and gender:

- [Half of Hong Kong employers do not want to hire women with children, study finds](#) (SCMP)
- [The Costs of Motherhood Are Rising, and Catching Women Off Guard](#) (NY Times)
- [Woman takes unprecedented step to advance LGBT cause in Hong Kong and sues government over civil partnerships ban](#) (SCMP)
- [At Hedge Funds, Where Are the Women?](#) (WSJ)
- [Aseel Al-Hamad wants to blaze trail for Saudi women in motorsport](#) (CNN)
- [All career advice for women is a form of gaslighting](#) (QZ)
- [Why Women Stay Out of the Spotlight at Work](#) (HBR)
- [打球不是男性的專利 印度學校冀以運動改變性別定型](#) (HK01)
- [城大迎新疑爆性騷擾 要求女生氣球塞胸 師兄無啦啦裸體](#) (Apple Daily)

We are following the latest developments on combatting sexual harassment. Key reports below:

- [How One Company Responded Proactively To The #MeToo Backlash](#) (Forbes)
- [Women feel sex harassment heat in subdivided flats](#) (The Standard)
- [‘It won’t happen to me’: activist tackles prejudice against sexual violence victims in Hong Kong](#) (SCMP)
- [University lecturer’s career on hold while China #MeToo claims are investigated](#) (SCMP)
- [#MeToo moves the harassment conversation into the executive suites](#) (The Globe and Mail)
- [Louis CK and Men who think justice takes as long as they want](#) (NY Times)
- [Chinese Billionaire Arrested in Minneapolis For Alleged Sexual Misconduct](#) (Time)
- [#MeToo timeout already over for many of the men caught behaving badly](#) (AFR)

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