

**Chhayankdhar (CD) Singh Rathore**

I am writing to enthusiastically recommend Chhayankdhar (CD) Singh Rathore for the Early Career Excellence Award. As a lecturer and Self-Access Learning Coordinator at Konan Women's University, I have had the pleasure of closely working with CD and have witnessed his outstanding dedication, remarkable achievements, and unwavering commitment to advancing diversity, inclusivity, and professional development within our academic community.

Throughout CD's tenure, he has consistently demonstrated a deep understanding of the importance of promoting diversity in academia and has made significant contributions towards creating a more inclusive and equitable environment for all. One notable accomplishment is CD's efforts in ensuring a diverse panel of presenters for the SIG Forums he has been in charge of. Furthermore, due to a focus on unbiased practices within our institution, he has initiated the campaign to remove the term "native speaker" from faculty job adverts. His persuasive arguments and unwavering determination resulted in a positive change that promotes equal opportunities and challenges conventional assumptions about language proficiency. By actively inviting and advocating for scholars from underrepresented backgrounds, CD has successfully amplified diverse voices, enriched scholarly discourse, and encouraged greater cross-cultural understanding.

Equally commendable is CD's commitment to fostering the growth and development of early-career academics and university teachers. Through direct mentoring, CD has provided invaluable guidance and support to emerging scholars, helping them navigate the challenges of academia and establish a solid foundation for their careers. The positive impact CD has had on the professional trajectory of these individuals is truly inspiring and worthy of recognition. I personally have benefited from CD's guidance and support, his belief in my abilities and help decoding the world of higher education careers and research organisations has been invaluable to my career thus far.

CD's high level of expertise, intellectual rigor, and a genuine passion for advancing knowledge in the world of English Language Teaching is evidenced by his prolific publishing and presentation history. Within a span of 6 years, CD has about 60 presentations, workshops, guest lectures, and plenaries to his credit. He was awarded the Michelle Steele Best of JALT Award by the Performance in Education SIG for 2019. These presentations were given at local, national, as well as, the international level. He has published papers as well as suggestions for practical teaching activities and will soon publish his first book chapter as a co-author in *Cultivating Professional Development Through Critical Friendship and Reflective Practice: Cases From Japan* which will be published by Candlin & Mynard.

His active engagement in a range of professional organisations including the JALT Performance in Education Special Interest Group and the JALT Kobe Chapter display his

tireless dedication to our academic community. His outstanding interpersonal skills and leadership qualities are also shown through his position as President of the Kobe JALT Chapter (2022 onwards). Previous to this, he has served as the Program Co-chair of the Kobe JALT Chapter (2021-2022) and the Co-coordinator (2020-2021) and Publicity Chair (2018-2020) of the Performance in Education SIG. He possesses a remarkable ability to inspire and motivate others, building strong collaborations and fostering an inclusive environment where diverse perspectives are valued and celebrated.

In summary, Chhayankdhar Singh Rathore is an exceptional early-career academic whose accomplishments and contributions in promoting diversity, advocating for fairness, and nurturing emerging scholars are truly outstanding. His commitment to excellence, coupled with his passion for creating an inclusive academic environment, make him highly deserving of the Early Career Excellence Award.

--Isobel Hook