

STS forum 2024 – 21st Annual Meeting
Forum for Unity, Science, and Empowerment (FUSE)

by the Henry Luce Foundation
October 5, 2024 | 4:00 – 6:00 PM JPT

Kyoto International Conference Center, Room SWAN

Objective:

FUSE 2024 continued its mission to inspire and empower women in STEM by fostering meaningful connections and sharing uplifting personal stories. This year's event gathered women leaders from around the world, allowing participants to engage in discussions on their journeys and aspirations in a collaborative and supportive environment.

Opening:

Opening remarks set an inspiring tone. FUSE Chair, Deborah Wince-Smith, President and CEO, Council of Competitiveness, captured the spirit of the afternoon by saying, "You are all pioneers for the future," followed by Chairman of STS forum Prof. Hiroshi Komiyama and Chairman of AA-STS forum Dr. Hank McKinnell, who emphasized the gathering's importance and the progress made in supporting women in STEM.



Panel Discussion:



Moderated by Dr. Padma Raghavan, Vice Provost Vanderbilt University, the panel featured reflective discussions from women leaders in STEM. Dr. Cynthia Friend, President of The Kavli Foundation, shared that her drive to "win" has helped her persevere in the face of gender-based adversity. Ms. Jaya Baloo, Chief Security Officer at Rapid7, discussed her frustration with systemic biases, noting that only 13 Nobel Laureates have been women and describing the challenges posed by dismissive remarks in her field. Dr. Heike Frei, Head of Space Flight Technology at DLR, emphasized her passion for building collaborative teams, reinforcing her commitment to her field.

Throughout the panel, the common theme of mentorship and community-building emerged, with each panelist underscoring the importance of creating supportive networks for women in STEM.

Table Discussion:

After the panel, participants engaged in table discussions with a mix of STS session speakers and young leaders, exchanging experiences and ideas. The relaxed setting, accompanied by Japanese tea and sweets, encouraged informal and meaningful conversations. The event concluded with a reflection by Dr. Margaret Leinen, Director of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.



Participant Feedback:

"I wanted to extend my heartfelt thanks for the incredible STS Forum and the invitation to the women's meeting. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to be a part of such impactful activities." CEO, Switzerland

"Many thanks for inviting me to the FUSE session at STS - I learned a lot!" Director, UK

"FUSE was an inspiring space to connect with women in STEM and hear their uplifting stories." Professor, Nigeria

"I felt honored to participate in this event as both a woman scientist and a proud representative of my organization." Scientist, USA