



BUILDING AN ALLIANCE FOR TOMORROW

ANNUAL REPORT
2026



ANNUAL REPORT 2026

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APRU AT-A-GLANCE

APRU (The Association of Pacific Rim Universities) is a network of 64 leading universities from 20 economies of the Pacific Rim, linking the Americas, Asia and Australasia. It brings together thought leaders, researchers, and policymakers to exchange ideas and collaborate on practical solutions to the challenges of the 21st century.

OVERVIEW OF APRU ACTIVITIES IN 2025-2026

64 

Universities

20 

Economies of the Pacific Rim

2.4+ Million 

Students

200,000+ 

Faculty Members

CHINESE MAINLAND & HONG KONG SAR

- 28 Fudan University
- 29 Nanjing University
- 30 Peking University
- 31 Shanghai Jiao Tong University
- 32 Southern University of Science and Technology
- 33 Sun Yat-sen University
- 34 The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- 35 The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
- 36 The University of Hong Kong
- 37 Tongji University
- 38 Tsinghua University
- 39 University of Chinese Academy of Sciences
- 40 University of Science and Technology of China
- 41 Xi'an Jiaotong University
- 42 Zhejiang University

CHINESE TAIPEI

- 12 National Taiwan University
- 13 National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University

VIETNAM

- 64 VinUniversity

INDIAN OCEAN

INDONESIA

- 15 Universitas Indonesia

AUSTRALIA

- 1 Adelaide University
- 2 The Australian National University
- 3 The University of Melbourne
- 4 The University of Queensland
- 5 The University of Sydney

KOREA

- 22 KAIST
- 23 Korea University
- 24 POSTECH
- 25 Pusan National University
- 26 Seoul National University
- 27 Yonsei University

JAPAN

- 16 Keio University
- 17 Kyushu University
- 18 Nagoya University
- 19 Osaka University
- 20 Tohoku University
- 21 Waseda University

THAILAND

- 50 Chulalongkorn University

PHILIPPINES

- 51 University of the Philippines

MALAYSIA

- 43 Universiti Malaya

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

- 6 Universiti Brunei Darussalam

SINGAPORE

- 48 Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
- 49 National University of Singapore



RUSSIA

- 47 Far Eastern Federal University

CANADA

- 7 Simon Fraser University
- 8 The University of British Columbia
- 9 University of Alberta



MEXICO

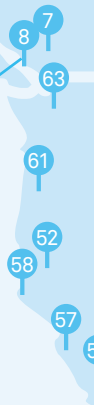
- 44 Tecnológico de Monterrey
- 45 Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

NEW ZEALAND

- 46 The University of Auckland

NORTH
PACIFIC
OCEAN

SOUTH
PACIFIC
OCEAN





USA

- 52 University of California, Davis
- 53 University of California, Irvine
- 54 University of California, Los Angeles
- 55 University of California, Riverside
- 56 University of California, San Diego
- 57 University of California, Santa Barbara
- 58 University of California, Santa Cruz
- 59 University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
- 60 University of Michigan
- 61 University of Oregon
- 62 University of Southern California
- 63 University of Washington

ECUADOR

- 14 Universidad San Francisco de Quito

CHILE

- 10 Universidad de Chile
- 11 Universidad de Concepción

*APRU member institutions are listed in alphabetical order

APRU MEMBERS

as of March 31, 2026

APRU membership is comprised of 64 leading universities from 20 economies of the Pacific Rim known worldwide for their academic and research excellence.

FROM THE CHAIR

DEAR APRU MEMBERS,

Building an Alliance for Tomorrow is the guiding theme for APRU's 30th year. In today's complex geopolitical and geoeconomic climate, meeting this challenge will require us to remain focused on our mission with determination and moral courage.

Within this global complexity, higher education today is facing its own profound challenges. Worldwide, universities are navigating financial pressures, political interventions, the rapid rise of artificial intelligence, and societies that often question our role and relevance. In this context, the question is no longer merely how or what we teach and research, but why we teach and research. It is a moment that requires moral courage: the courage to uphold truth when it is contested, to defend justice when it is fragile, and to place the needs of society above convenience or expediency.

What distinguishes APRU is not scale or visibility, but the trust cultivated among members. Across borders, systems, and cultures, our universities stand up for one another, share

resources, and collectively confront challenges. This spirit of authentic partnership has become one of our network's strengths. It lives in the cross-border relationships we nurture, the trust built through years of student and staff exchange, and the long-term impact we foster through our many programs. These are the foundations upon which we are building our alliance, for today, and for the long term.

At the same time, public trust in higher education is waning. Rising costs, shifting societal needs, and global crises have strained the social license, which is the foundation of universities. APRU is dedicated to rebuilding trust through the tangible impact we create in our communities, the future-oriented education we offer to students, and the solutions we bring to the world's most pressing problems.

This year's theme, *Building an Alliance for Tomorrow*, calls on us to be even more intentional about our work. We must strive to conduct research with a moral compass and embrace the ethical dimensions of emerging technologies, ensuring that innovation serves humanity rather than undermining it. We must refocus our collaborative efforts while continuing to act as engines of hope—places where ideas flourish, where diversity strengthens us, and where knowledge lights the path to a better future.

Throughout the ages, universities have evolved to meet the demands and challenges of the world around them. Our forebears navigated such challenges, and their example now inspires and guides us as we lead APRU, our institutions, and our shared future.

I am grateful for the openness, generosity, and leadership I have witnessed across our network this past year. Together, let us move forward with courage and conviction, building the alliance that will shape a world that is more sustainable, just, and prosperous.

Dawn Freshwater
Chair
Association of Pacific Rim Universities



FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DEAR APRU COLLEAGUES,

This year's Annual Presidents' Meeting in Hong Kong rings in APRU's 30th year. Three decades testify to our continued relevance and impact. As higher education rapidly changes, APRU is more essential than ever as a trans-Pacific platform for collaboration and dialogue. Our anniversary encourages reflection, but more importantly, it calls us to envision and shape the future. "Building an Alliance for Tomorrow" means ensuring we remain a catalyst of transnational engagement fit for the next three decades.

A guiding concept is relationality. It highlights two insights: our planet results from dynamic interconnectedness among earth's systems, including humans whose identities emerge within these relationships. Because of this, we carry responsibility for ethical engagement. Global systemic change affects everyone, and we cannot escape the networks we inhabit. For this reason, national isolationism and protectionism cannot work.

For our universities, this signifies that global engagement operates under a new, global social license. Such a mandate will be fundamentally relational and planetary. By embracing the spirit of transnationalism, we emphasize that solutions to all existential issues lie beyond the capacity of nation states and that we have the collective responsibility to address them.

As an alliance built for tomorrow, APRU will provide precisely this transnational, planetary platform of engagement. We have the power to help form a planetary polity underpinned by the same values and priorities. What will these values and priorities be?



- ❖ Pioneering transformational partnerships to advance research and education as a lasting foundation of humanity's future.
- ❖ Championing purpose-driven initiatives based on actual purpose and informed by planetary frameworks of orientation beyond and more effective than the SDGs.
- ❖ Advocating for the advancement of knowledge and civic engagement for the betterment of society, rooted in a deep sense of responsibility towards our communities.
- ❖ Amplifying transnational connectivity based on relationships of trust and responsible leadership—demonstrating relationality within the sphere of multilateral diplomacy.

As we embark on this landmark year of our history, I am excited to work with all of you to honor this spirit of transnational purpose and interconnectedness. I invite you all very warmly to lend your vision and leadership as we build the alliance of tomorrow—an alliance that will carry our collective mission forward into the future!

Sincerely,

Thomas Schneider
Chief Executive
APRU

IN MEMORIAM PROFESSOR EMMA JOHNSTON AO

APRU is deeply saddened by the passing of Prof. Emma Johnston AO in late 2025. We extend our heartfelt condolences to her family, close friends, and the many colleagues who were fortunate to know and work with her.

Emma was a remarkable presence in our network—a pioneering marine ecologist, an inspiring leader, and someone whose warmth and genuine care made every interaction feel meaningful. She supported APRU steadfastly through her roles at UNSW Sydney, The University of Sydney, and as Vice-Chancellor of The University of Melbourne, where we were excited to begin new collaborative journeys together.

We hold especially fond memories of her contributions to APRU events. Her engaging keynote at the APRU Presidents' Meeting Gala Dinner in 2017 and her thoughtful, passionate address at the APRU APEC University Leaders' Forum 2023 on "Investing in Tomorrow's Biodiversity" continue to resonate deeply.

We also cherish the unique way she brought her love of nature into our gatherings. At the APRU Senior International Leaders' Meeting in 2023, she opened the program by leading delegates on the Coogee-Bondi coastal walk in Sydney. As she reflected afterwards:



A walk like this is a great way to connect with each other and with the ecosystems we depend upon. We were able to share important understandings of our local biology, including sharks, whales, and seaweeds, and our local geomorphology, including beaches, sandstone, and rip currents.



This particular experience captured so much of who Emma was—generous with her knowledge, eager to foster real connections, and always linking science to the world around us in ways that felt immediate and human.

Though far too brief, her time with us left a lasting inspiration. We are grateful for the moments we shared and will honor her by continuing the collaborative work she championed so passionately.

Our thoughts are with her loved ones and with everyone at The University of Melbourne, The University of Sydney, UNSW Sydney, and across our community who feel this loss so keenly. May her memory continue to light our path as we build stronger alliances for higher education and beyond.



EMERGING PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES

Expanding Network-Wide Connection, Exchange, and Impact



Each year, APRU opens new pathways for members to collaborate and lead. Three additions broadened APRU's work—from practical support for digitally enabled higher education, to an inter-university orchestra performance, to stronger links with global peers focused on regional innovation and societal impact across the Pacific Rim.



CATALYZING THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION WITH THE DIGITAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

In February 2026, APRU and the Digital Education Council (DEC) announced a strategic partnership to give APRU members direct access to global insights on the rapidly-evolving impact of AI on higher education. Through shared research, collaboration, and executive briefings, the partnership connects APRU universities with emerging trends, policy developments, and institutional practices shaping AI adoption—supporting evidence-based decision-making and strengthening institutional readiness.

The collaboration will deliver executive briefings for APRU members and a global survey jointly developed by APRU and DEC on faculty resistance to AI, to be made publicly available. By combining APRU's university network with DEC's expertise in AI and digital transformation, the partnership aims to help members navigate opportunities and challenges while also providing opportunities to APRU universities to lead in AI-enabled higher education.

This collaboration was enabled by the University of the Future Working Group which is working together to identify shared challenges faced by our member institutions and to map out paths toward viable solutions. The Working Group is led by Prof. José Escamilla from Tecnológico de Monterrey and Prof. Christie Chung from Palo Alto University.

ADVANCING CULTURAL EXCHANGE WITH THE INAUGURAL APRU ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCE

Music became a new way for APRU universities to collaborate in 2025 with the inauguration of the APRU Orchestra—a network-wide platform for cultural exchange among musicians of diverse backgrounds. Launched at Universiti Malaya during the APRU Annual Global Health Conference in October, the pilot performance was titled “A Symphony of Cultures – East Meets West,” spotlighting how shared performance can bridge regions while celebrating what makes us human: empathy, imagination, and cultural spirit.



APRU Orchestra:
A Symphony of
Cultures

Conceptualized by APRU Chief Executive Prof. Thomas Schneider and led by conductor Prof. Dr. Mohd Nasir Hashim, the Orchestra also supports deeper engagement through student and faculty exchanges. The next performance is planned for APRU's Annual Presidents' Meeting at the University of the Philippines in Manila in June 2026.

AMPLIFYING SOCIAL IMPACT THROUGH 4GU COMMUNITY

In 2026, APRU joined the 4th Generation University (4GU) Community, a global initiative uniting universities, industry, and policymakers to strengthen universities' role in orchestrating regional innovation ecosystems and delivering societal and economic impact. Guided by a board of global university presidents and senior higher education leaders, 4GU supports collaboration and is developing practical tools, indicators, and best practices to help institutions demonstrate and grow regional impact.

APRU is contributing through the Community Working Group, which advises the board and helps shape engagement, partnerships, and community activities. This involvement connects APRU members to a growing global peer network, creates opportunities to share case studies and thought leadership, and expands participation in events, webinars, and collaborative initiatives.

NEW APRU MEMBERS



UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE MÉXICO

The Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) is the most important public university in Mexico and among the most prominent in Ibero-America. Re-founded in 1910 as the National University of Mexico, building upon the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico of 1551, it gained its autonomy in 1929, becoming the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM).

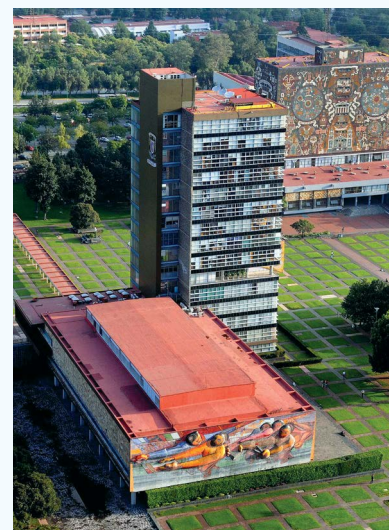
Today, in accordance with its Organic Law, UNAM's mission is to provide education, conduct research, and disseminate culture and its benefits to the population. To this end, it offers three high school programs, more than 130 undergraduate programs, and more than 40 postgraduate programs in all areas of human knowledge across more than 35 colleges and schools. In addition, it conducts research in physical and mathematical sciences, engineering, earth sciences, health and life sciences, social sciences and humanities, and the arts in more than 50 centers, institutes, programs, and special projects. Through an extensive network of museums, concert halls, theaters, publishing programs, and public spaces, it projects Mexican culture both nationally and internationally.

UNAM is the repository of numerous national collections and services, integrated throughout its history or created directly within the university. For example, UNAM houses the National Library of Mexico, the National Periodical Library, the National Seismological Service, the National Astronomical Observatory, the Coordination of Oceanographic Platforms, the National Tide Gauge Service, the National Biodiversity Pavilion, and numerous paleontological and geological collections, as well as historical documentary archives.

In Mexico, UNAM has a presence in practically all of the country's states, and in addition to its main campus in Mexico City, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it maintains campuses in Baja California, the State of Mexico, Guanajuato, Michoacán, Morelos, Oaxaca, Querétaro, and Yucatán.

By its very nature, UNAM maintains a vigorous international program of exchange, mobility, project development, and academic collaboration, which includes direct representation through Mexican Studies Centers and Extension Schools in the United States, Canada, Spain, China, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Cuba, and Latin America.

The UNAM community comprises more than 105,000 high school students, over 230,000 undergraduate students, more than 33,000 graduate students, over 46,000 academic staff members, and more than 29,000 administrative staff members. Collectively, the university produces approximately one-quarter of all research conducted in Mexico and has led to the creation of numerous research centers, disciplinary groups, and academic societies throughout the country, outside of its own structure, playing a fundamental role in the development of modern Mexico.





UNIVERSITI BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Established in 1985, Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) is Brunei Darussalam's oldest higher education institution. The university is committed to nurturing holistic, globally-minded graduates through innovative, technology-enabled education and research. Guided by Brunei Darussalam's national aspirations and the principles of Malay Islamic Monarchy (MIB), UBD is committed to developing ethical leaders who can contribute meaningfully and sustainably to society.

Over the past decades, UBD has evolved from a primarily teaching-focused institution into a research-intensive university. Today, it advances strengths across fields such as biodiversity and environmental research, energy transition, health and bio-innovation (encompassing precision medicine, genomics, and halal science), and digital futures, including data analytics and Artificial Intelligence. Sustainability is an increasingly central, cross-cutting priority at UBD, embedded across research, education, operations, and engagement, and advanced through the university's Sustainability Masterplan and Sustainability Action Plan. Alongside these areas, UBD has established expertise in Islamic history, governance and civilization. UBD's international standing continues to strengthen, as one of the highly-ranked universities in the Southeast Asia region according to the QS World University Rankings and the Times Higher Education World University Rankings.



UBD's main campus serves as the university's academic and residential hub, and is situated close to the coastline at Tungku Link in the Brunei-Muara district. The campus is also home to the UBD Botanical Research Centre, a six-hectare site within a tropical lowland heath forest locally known as Kerangas – supporting applied research, learning, and community engagement.

A defining strength of UBD is its focus on developing future-ready undergraduates. From 2026, the University will introduce the GenBESTARI curriculum, an education framework that promotes active, student-centered and technology-enabled learning, with sustainability embedded across teaching and learning. This builds on UBD's signature experiential component the Discovery Year program, which was introduced in 2011. Through this program, students may spend up to six months in study abroad, internships, incubation projects, or community outreach, ensuring the integration of real-world, design-oriented learning into every degree.



VINUNIVERSITY

VinUniversity (VinUni) is the first private, not-for-profit university in Vietnam established in 2019 by Vingroup, the largest private conglomerate in the country. The University has built strategic collaborations with Cornell University, the University of Pennsylvania and recently Nanyang Technological University, Singapore—a choice that speaks to our commitment to excellence, innovation in research and teaching, and to making a difference in the world.

The University comprises of the College of Arts and Sciences; College of Business and Management; College of Engineering and Computer Science; and College of Health Sciences and several Research Centers. In September 2024, VinUni became the youngest and fastest university in the world to achieve QS



5 Star overall rating. In October 2024, VinUni was appointed by UNESCO as the first and only UNESCO University Chair. In March 2025, VinUni became the youngest university in Vietnam to achieve institutional accreditation from the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA) following international standards, right after its founding cohort of students graduated and within five years of its inception. Since June 2025, VinUni has officially entered a new chapter in its development: transitioning into a research- and innovation-oriented university, with an ambitious vision to join the world's top 100 universities.

APRU LEADERS

STEERING COMMITTEE 2025-2026

The Steering Committee is APRU's executive body, as elected by the presidents of member universities. It oversees the strategy, policy, programs and finances of the network.



Dawn FRESHWATER
Vice-Chancellor
The University of Auckland
Chair
June 2025-April 2026



HO Teck Hua
President
Nanyang Technological
University, Singapore
Interim Chair
April-June 2026



Joy JOHNSON
President and
Vice-Chancellor
Simon Fraser University
Interim Vice-Chair
April-June 2026



Kohei ITOH
President
Keio University



TAN Eng Chye
President
National University of
Singapore



DING Kuiling
President
Shanghai Jiao Tong
University



David GARZA
President
Tecnológico de
Monterrey



Nancy Y. IP
President
The Hong Kong University
of Science and Technology



Deborah TERRY AO
Vice-Chancellor and President
The University of Queensland



Rosa DEVÉS
Rector
Universidad de Chile



**Noor Azuan ABU
OSMAN**
Vice-Chancellor
Universiti Malaya



Gary S. MAY
Chancellor
UC Davis



Pradeep KHOSLA
Chancellor
UC San Diego



Angelo A. JIMENEZ
President
University of the
Philippines



Dong-Sup YOON
President
Yonsei University



Thomas SCHNEIDER
Chief Executive
APRU



Albert CHAN
Chief Operating Officer
APRU



Gene D. BLOCK
Former Chancellor
UCLA



Rocky S. TUAN
Former Vice-Chancellor and President
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

APRU AMBASSADORS

The APRU Ambassador is a distinguished role of APRU and is held by a highly respected academic or leader who has made significant contributions to higher education and APRU.

NEW PRESIDENTS

as of March 31, 2026



Nicola PHILIPS
Vice Chancellor and
President
Adelaide University
from January 12, 2026



Rebekah BROWN
Interim Vice-Chancellor &
President
The Australian National
University
from September 2025



YANG Jinlong
President
Tongji University
from June 2025



Jacqueline SEPÚLVEDA
Rector
Universidad de Concepción



**Leonardo LOMELÍ
VANEGAS**
Rector
Universidad Nacional
Autónoma de México



Hazri bin Haji KIFLE
Vice-Chancellor
Universiti Brunei
Darussalam



Jack S. HU
Chancellor
UC Riverside
from July 15, 2025



Dennis ASSANIS
Chancellor
UC Santa Barbara
from September 2025



Domenico GRASSO
Interim President
University of Michigan
from May 8, 2025



Beong-Soo KIM
President
University of Southern
California
From February 4, 2026



Robert J. JONES
President
University of Washington
from August 1, 2025



LE Mai Lan
President
VinUniversity



MA Yanming
President
Zhejiang University
from March 28, 2025



29TH ANNUAL PRESIDENTS' MEETING

Connecting University Leaders to Exchange Knowledge on Human Longevity



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The APRU Annual Presidents' Meeting (APM) is the premier gathering of university leaders across the Pacific Rim, where they come together to address critical issues, set strategic priorities, and advance evidence-based solutions to global challenges. Hosted by UC San Diego, the 29th APRU APM 2025 welcomed 28 university presidents and 98 delegates around this year's theme: human longevity. Discussions explored the innovations and societal shifts shaping longer lives, from healthcare breakthroughs and persistent socioeconomic inequality to the ways that the erosion of trust in science hinders progress across the innovation ecosystem. Over three days of fireside chats, panel sessions, and triton talks, leaders strengthened partnerships, sparked new collaborations, and energized students to help drive progress on pressing longevity challenges.



126 

Participants

46 

Universities

HOST UNIVERSITY

UC San Diego

KEY MOMENTS

FIRESIDE CHAT: ADDRESSING GLOBAL LONGEVITY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

LEADING IN AN ERA OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

Hosted by Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla of UC San Diego, the APM 2025 Fireside Chat set the tone for the meeting by examining how university leaders can navigate the rapidly changing landscape of higher education, technological acceleration, and global uncertainties. The panelists—Prof. Teck-Hua Ho of Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, Prof. Xiang Zhang of The University of Hong Kong, and Prof. Joy Johnson of Simon Fraser University—shared challenges and innovative initiatives addressing aging populations in their respective cities, while highlighting the rapidly evolving role of universities as anchor institutions that must remain adaptive, resilient, and prepared for the future. Participants walked away with a consensus around cross-border, multidisciplinary collaboration, and university-led community engagement to improve quality of life.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS ON LONGEVITY AND COLLABORATION

TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION FOR AGING POPULATIONS

The event featured a series of high-level panel discussions focused on global challenges related to human longevity, from healthcare innovation and aging societies to socioeconomic inequality and climate-related risks. Panelists explored how geopolitical tensions affect trust, data sharing, and international research collaboration, emphasizing that trust is crucial to AI research and development and to the translation of science into public policy. The panels highlighted the importance of transdisciplinary research, inclusive innovation, and evidence-based policymaking to ensure that advances in biomedical science and technology benefit diverse communities across the Pacific Rim.

TRITON TALKS

SHOWCASING INNOVATION AT UC SAN DIEGO

UC San Diego's signature TEDx-style Triton Talks series explored the science and ethics of longevity, artificial intelligence, and public health innovation. Speakers examined how social inequality, technological change, and sport shape human performance and healthy aging worldwide. World-class experts and campus leaders shared case studies on translating research into real-world solutions—from precision medicine and healthy aging to community partnerships—and highlighted how host universities can serve as living laboratories for interdisciplinary collaboration on local and global challenges.



With higher education systems undergoing significant shifts—especially in the United States—our shared insights are more vital than ever and reinforce our shared commitment to higher education that is responsive, resilient, and ready for the future. Institutions across the Pacific Rim face challenges that demand courageous leadership and bold collaboration.

Prof. Pradeep Khosla

Chancellor
UC San Diego



STUDENT PANEL: THE FUTURE OF LONGEVITY RESEARCH

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION OF SCHOLARS

The student panel brought forward the voices of emerging young leaders from Yonsei University, POSTECH, The University of Sydney, UC San Diego, and The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, who shared their perspectives on advancing longevity research through interdisciplinary approaches and integrating insights from key faculties. Young scholars in longevity research represent a powerhouse for the future of health and wellbeing. By empowering these passionate young leaders, APRU invests in a future where sustainable solutions to longevity can thrive, ultimately benefiting society as a whole.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

ALIGNING INITIATIVES WITH APRU'S STRATEGIC VISION

Delivered by Prof. Thomas Schneider of APRU, the report charted how APRU is operating at a 21st-century turning point, highlighting four areas: core principles, connectivity, collective power, and community. It showed how initiatives across AI, human longevity, sustainability, and biodiversity are becoming more integrated to maximize network-wide impact. Linking APM outcomes with flagship programs and new collaborations featured in the APRU Annual Report 2025, it emphatically reinforced the association's strategic vision of diplomacy and determination.

Two articles related to the APM were published on University World News in 2025



AI and Human Longevity: Universities' Role Beyond Research
By Nathan M Greenfield
Published on
June 26, 2025



Biomedical Research Enters New Era Amid Global Shifts
By Nathan M Greenfield
Published on
July 1, 2025

SENIOR INTERNATIONAL LEADERS' MEETING 2025

Creating Vital Pathways for Global Engagement and Social Impact through Higher Education



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APRU's Senior International Leaders' Meeting (SILM) is an annual forum where international higher education leaders share best practices and strengthen global engagement across the Pacific Rim. Hosted by Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ) on October 15-17, SILM 2025 brought together over 30 leaders from 15 universities under the theme "Global range, local change: educational diplomacy and social impact." Through keynotes, panels, workshops, and the International Advisory Committee meeting, participants emphasized more intentional internationalization—building trust and "transformational" partnerships with local impact. Sessions highlighted APRU flagship programs, marked five years of the Asia Pacific Women in Leadership Mentoring Program, and showcased USFQ's field-based research via visits to its Amazon, Galápagos, and Andes Cloud Forest stations.

39 
Participants

20 
Universities

13 
Economies

HOST UNIVERSITY



KEY MOMENTS

WELCOME CEREMONY CELEBRATING GLOBAL RANGE AND LOCAL CHANGE

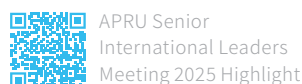
Prof. Diego Quiroga of USFQ and Prof. Thomas Schneider of APRU opened SILM 2025 with a welcome ceremony, setting an immediate tone of connection across geographies and perspectives. Framing the meeting's theme, "Global range, local change," Prof. Schneider brought attention to the important role that a university alliance such as APRU can play in enhancing civic engagement and amplifying transnational cohesion, which underscored the convening's focus on educational diplomacy: strengthening trust, widening participation, and translating global engagement into local benefit.

KEYNOTE ON COLLABORATION IN SUSTAINABLE CITIES, GLOBAL HEALTH, AND ECOLOGY TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO FRAMING UNIVERSITIES AS ENGINES OF LOCAL CHANGE

Prof. Andrea Encalada of USFQ highlighted collaboration as a cornerstone of research with real social impact, particularly in sustainable cities, global health, and indigenous knowledges. Drawing on her expertise in freshwater ecology and biodiversity, she underscored the ecological importance of the Amazon River Basin and the pressures it faces from issues such as mining and deforestation. She showcased how USFQ connects local science to global partnerships through initiatives such as the Science Panel for the Amazon, the Tiputini Biodiversity Station, and the Amazon Waters Alliance, illustrating a model of internationally networked research grounded in place-based stewardship.

PANEL SESSIONS: REIMAGINING GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT ENHANCING TRANS-PACIFIC COHESION

The three panel sessions on "Reimagining global engagement," "Transpacific education," and "Creating impact for tomorrow" enabled Senior International Leaders to exchange institutional experiences and emerging models of collaboration. Discussions examined how to move from transactional exchanges to strategic, multi-nodal partnerships that integrate education, research, and community engagement, with a focus on equity and reciprocity. Speakers highlighted innovations in joint programs, co-developed curricula, and networked learning opportunities that prepare students and staff to act as global citizens while responding to regional priorities and constraints.



Now more than ever, universities must take an active role in building bridges across regions, cultures, and disciplines. Hosting this gathering of academic leaders reaffirms USFQ's commitment to internationalization, sustainability, research connections that foster innovation, and the education of global citizens who will positively transform our societies.

Prof. Diego Quiroga
President
Universidad San Francisco de Quito



ASIA PACIFIC WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP (APWiL) CEREMONY CELEBRATING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE ASIA PACIFIC

A special ceremony was held to celebrate five years of the APWiL Mentoring Program, a flagship initiative of APRU that empowers emerging women leaders across the region. The session honored the visionary leadership of Prof. Joanna Regulska of UC Davis and Prof. Yvonne Lim of Universiti Malaya, whose leadership helped shape APWiL's reach and impact. Reflections and tributes highlighted mentoring as a practical form of educational diplomacy—building networks, confidence, and career momentum across borders. The ceremony also welcomed incoming co-directors Karla Urriola of Tecnológico de Monterrey and Prof. Dimitria Groutsis of The University of Sydney.

VISIT TO USFQ RESEARCH STATIONS LINKING BIODIVERSITY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND EDUCATION

As part of the APRU SILM 2025, participants embarked on immersive field excursions to three of USFQ's premier research stations, each offering a unique lens into Ecuador's extraordinary biodiversity and USFQ's leadership in environmental research. The trips to the Amazon Rainforest, the Galápagos Islands, and the Andean Cloud Forest, highlighted USFQ's commitment to field-based learning and its role in advancing global understanding of ecosystem interconnectedness and sustainability.



APEC UNIVERSITY LEADERS' FORUM 2025

Leveraging AI in Higher Education to Address Asia-Pacific Challenges



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apru.org

Since 2017, APRU has hosted the APEC University Leaders' Forum (AULF) to connect academic, government, and industry leaders on Asia-Pacific priorities. Co-hosted with Pusan National University, AULF 2025 convened on Jeju Island alongside the APEC Education Ministers Meeting under the theme "Leveraging AI in Higher Education to Address Asia-Pacific Challenges." Nearly 100 participants from 13 APEC economies explored how generative AI supports education reform, workforce readiness, and sustainable development grounded in local needs. Case studies spanned healthcare, disaster response, climate action, and agriculture, highlighting digital equity, open tools, and ethical governance. The forum ended with a shared commitment to keeping AI human-centered.



95 Participants

41 Institutions

13 Economies

HOST UNIVERSITY



PROJECT PARTNER



KEY MOMENTS

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

SPOTLIGHTING AI OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS SECTORS AND THE WORLD

Dr. Padmanabhan Anandan, former CEO of the Wadhvani Institute for Artificial Intelligence, stressed that AI is not a standalone solution but a tool that amplifies human intent, with impact shaped by real-world needs. He argued that the Global South holds major potential for context-aware AI that strengthens human-led services in low-resource settings. He shared examples such as smartphone vision to estimate infant weight in rural India, maternal-health chatbots for frontline workers, and predictive tools to support tuberculosis treatment. He closed by urging “radical collaboration” and encouraged universities to serve as neutral conveners who steer efforts toward feasible, scalable solutions.

INTRODUCTORY KEYNOTE

SETTING THE STAGE FOR AI-ENABLED HIGHER EDUCATION

Dr. Ravi Pendse from the University of Michigan framed generative AI as a defining shift for higher education and asked whether the bigger risk is using AI, or failing to use it. He emphasized that AI literacy, ethics, and human oversight should be rooted in empathy. As an example, he highlighted the University of Michigan’s collaboration with Microsoft to build a secure, equitable, privacy-focused AI platform that provides campus-wide access to generative AI tools, tutors, and workflow support. Dr. Pendse also pointed to the university’s GAIA report and training resources as models for responsible, human-centered adoption and for helping universities lead in ethical AI practice.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

ADVANCING RESPONSIBLE AI FOR INCLUSIVE REGIONAL IMPACT

Across five panels, speakers discussed how universities could harness generative AI to address Asia-Pacific challenges while managing widening inequities and emerging risks. Panelists highlighted applications in healthcare (earlier detection, lower-cost access), climate and energy (forecasting, optimization, emissions monitoring), disaster response (flood prediction), agriculture (pest prediction), and education (multilingual support, accessibility tools, adaptive learning). At the same time, they warned that fragmented and low-quality data, paywalled systems, and infrastructure gaps could deepen the digital divide, and that growing computing demands raised sustainability concerns.

During discussions, speakers also urged universities to modernize curricula and assessment, embed AI literacy across disciplines, and reinforce human-centered capabilities such as critical thinking, collaboration, and ethical reasoning. They also emphasized protecting student well-being. Ethical and governance issues—including privacy, bias, misinformation, and safety—remained central, with calls for interoperable data standards, continuous evaluation, and stronger institutional stewardship. For the future of work, panelists emphasized agile, lifelong learning models, such as micro-credentials, and deeper industry partnerships so AI would enhance—not displace—human potential.



[AI] is reshaping the way we think, learn, live, and govern, while also raising pressing ethical, and social questions. The future of higher education we shape together must be global, ethical, and centered.



Prof. Jae Weon Choi
President
Pusan National University

GLOBAL ADVOCACY

Shaping the Discourse on Global Challenges

In 2025 and 2026, APRU strengthened its role as a convenor and thought leader by engaging strategically with APEC, Times Higher Education, the Global Solutions Initiative and other major platforms. It enabled APRU to shape discourse, facilitate knowledge exchange, and share valuable insights about addressing global challenges. Through various forms of contributions, APRU leaders brought research-based insights into multilateral processes, reinforcing the critical role of universities in shaping inclusive, sustainable, and innovation-driven futures for Asia Pacific and beyond.

KEY MOMENTS

INCLUSION, PURPOSE, AND LEADERSHIP: APRU AT APAIE 2026

FEBRUARY 23-26, 2026

HONG KONG,
CHINA

APRU joined the Asia-Pacific Association of International Education (APAIE) 2026 Conference & Exhibition in Hong Kong, hosted by The Chinese University of Hong Kong and seven co-hosts under the theme “Asia-Pacific Partnerships for the Global Good.” Panel speakers from APRU member universities highlighted inclusion, purpose-driven programs, and women’s leadership via APWiL. Participants agreed that cross-border partnerships are essential for inclusive, sustainable higher education.

TRANSNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION NETWORKS CAN BE CATALYSTS OF CHANGE

OCTOBER 17, 2025

PUBLISHED ON
UNIVERSITY
WORLD NEWS

An article penned by Prof. Thomas Schneider of APRU was featured on University World News in October. It focuses on universities’ “transnational” networks and emphasizes their capability to operate beyond the limitations of nation states or interstate relations, while prioritizing broader humanitarian and planetary issues. The article highlights the establishment of a new type of specialized university alliance that focuses on social and environmental issues, marking a new kind of global university engagement.

ENABLING AN AI READY WORKFORCE AT UNESCO GLOBAL FORUM

JUNE 24, 2025

BANGKOK,
THAILAND

APRU, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and data.org co-hosted an official side event at the 3rd UNESCO Global Forum on the Ethics of AI. It brought together over 65 participants to explore inclusive, ethical, and scalable approaches to AI workforce development. The session built on years of collaborative efforts to strengthen regional capabilities and promote responsible AI integration, marking a significant milestone in ongoing initiatives to foster regional collaboration around AI for Good and Data Science for Social Impact.

APEC HEALTHY WOMEN, HEALTHY ECONOMIES RESEARCH PRIZE

AUGUST 11, 2025

INCHEON,
KOREA

APRU highlighted its members’ contributions to the 2025 APEC Healthy Women, Healthy Economies Research Prize, which recognizes research linking better women’s health to stronger economic participation. Prof. Mellissa Withers, Director of the APRU Global Health Program, served as a judge since the prize began in 2019. APRU’s Global Health Program member Sok King Ong, appointed at Universiti Brunei Darussalam and affiliated with CUHK, received second place and has contributed to APRU initiatives such as the Mini Certificate in Health Research Ethics.

TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE AI WORKFORCE AT APEC SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING 3

AUGUST 11, 2025

JEJU ISLAND,
KOREA

At APEC Senior Official’s Meeting 3, APRU’s APEC liaison Berenice Voets briefed the PPSTI working group on insights from two APRU co-hosted forums on AI’s impact on education, workforce development, and equity. Discussions noted that 50–60% of jobs in the Asia-Pacific were exposed to AI, with significant displacement risk, especially for women and youth. Participants urged universal AI literacy and ethics education alongside sector-specific training, micro-credentials, and lifelong learning.

UNIVERSITY LEADERS CHAMPION INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES AT PIE LIVE: ASIA PACIFIC JULY 29-30, 2025

GOLD COAST,
AUSTRALIA

At PIE LIVE: Asia Pacific, APRU's Indigenous and First Nations Knowledges Network highlighted how Indigenous knowledges could strengthen inclusive, globally relevant international education. Speakers emphasized cross-institutional collaboration to embed indigenous perspectives in teaching, research, and internationalization. The discussion underscored truth-telling and sustained partnership with Indigenous communities as essential to ethical engagement.

APRU MEMBERS HIGHLIGHT THE META-UNIVERSITY MODEL AT NAFSA 2025 MAY 27-30, 2025

SAN DIEGO,
USA

At NAFSA 2025 hosted by UC San Diego, APRU members presented the “meta-university” as a practical model for future international higher education—one that crossed institutional and national boundaries to share learning, resources, and innovation. The session highlighted how APRU's network of universities used blended and virtual programs to widen access, address digital divide barriers, and embed locally relevant SDG- and ESG-focused case studies.

APRU ENGAGES IN DIALOGUES ON AI, CLIMATE AND EDUCATION AT GLOBAL SOLUTIONS SUMMIT 2025 MAY 5-6, 2025

BERLIN,
GERMANY

APRU participated in the Global Solutions Summit 2025 in Berlin, hosted by the Global Solutions Initiative under the theme “Bridging Divides: New Pathways for Global Prosperity.” With over 1,000 participants and 150 speakers from organizations including the EU, OECD, and UNESCO, discussions centered on AI, multilateralism, and climate action, with emphasis on institutional trust. APRU joined a closed-door workshop on next-generation AI and strengthened links with German university alliances and digital-education networks after the summit.

WORLD BOSAI FORUM 2025 MARCH 7-9, 2025

SENDAI,
JAPAN

At the 2025 World Bosai Forum held in Sendai, Japan, the APRU Multi-Hazards Program and the International Research Institute of Disaster Science at Tohoku University co-hosted a dynamic session titled “Tackling a Global Challenge: Multi-Hazards—The Role of Academia, Science, and Technology in Disaster Risk Reduction.” The session brought together leading researchers and policy experts from across the Pacific Rim to explore how science, technology, and academic collaboration can address the growing complexity of disaster risks in the region.

KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION ASIA UNIVERSITIES SUMMIT 2025 APRIL 22-24, 2025

MACAU,
CHINA

At the Times Higher Education Asia Universities Summit 2025 in Macau, APRU highlighted how universities could protect cultural heritage while advancing innovation. Discussion noted heritage's limited visibility in global development agendas, despite its importance to identity and well-being. Universities were framed as both heritage custodians and technology-enabled innovators. Speakers also called for stronger policy advocacy, sustainable funding, and cross-sector, interdisciplinary partnerships to counter “cultural amnesia.”

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN APEC FEBRUARY 24-26, 2025

GYEONGJU,
KOREA

At an APEC PPSTI meeting in Gyeongju, APRU shared insights on how universities could maximize the social and economic benefits of emerging technologies, including AI, advanced biotechnology, and quantum technology. Drawing on APRU's generative AI work with Microsoft, the briefing outlined future-facing models such as research “collaboratories” and digital university consortia to accelerate cross-border learning and innovation. It also introduced the CRAFT framework—culture, rules, access, familiarity, and trust—from APRU's 2025 AI Whitepaper to guide ethical, inclusive, and transparent AI adoption.

APRU'S FELLI FEATURED IN GLOBAL SOLUTIONS JOURNAL APRIL 25, 2025

PUBLISHED IN
GLOBAL SOLUTIONS
JOURNAL ISSUE 11

An article by APRU's Forest Ecosystems Living Lab Initiative (FELLI) was featured in Global Solutions Journal Issue 11, highlighting a multinational model for tackling forest challenges. FELLI connected university research forests to study carbon dynamics, biodiversity, and human-forest interactions. The piece described standardized, technology-enabled methods, interdisciplinary training, and partnerships with local and Indigenous communities to inform scalable, science-based policy on deforestation, climate, and biodiversity.

PARTNERING FOR THE PACIFIC

Key Outcomes and Global Impact







APRU strengthens the Pacific Rim's knowledge ecosystem by connecting over 60 leading research universities. Under the theme *Building an Alliance for Tomorrow*, APRU's Annual Report 2026 documents its impact and outcomes in addressing the region's grand challenges throughout the past year, from global health and disaster resilience to sustainability, biodiversity, food security, and AI.

15



Programs

covering a variety of topics including :

-  Health
-  Innovation
-  Sustainability
-  Global Citizenship
-  Leadership
-  Culture & Diversity

38 APRU ACTIVITIES

APRU international events and activities In 2025:

- University Leadership Summits
- Annual Conferences and Research Symposia
- Collaborative Research Initiatives
- Global Women's Mentoring Program
- Virtual Courses, Certificate Programs
- UN Training and Simulations
- Whitepapers and Academic Publications
- Cross Cultural Dialogue
- Leadership Training



[The spirit of authentic partnership] lives in the cross-border relationships we nurture, the trust built through years of student and staff exchange, and the long-term impact we foster through our many programs. These are the foundations upon which we are building our alliance, for today, and for the long term.



Dawn Freshwater
Vice Chancellor
University of Auckland
Chair
APRU

38



Events & Activities across
the Pacific Rim in 2025

4,292



Participants

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

17



Student Activities

2,195



Participants



- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>1 APRU APEC UNIVERSITY LEADERS FORUM
JEJU ISLAND, KOREA</p> <p>2 ANNUAL PRESIDENTS' MEETING
SAN DIEGO, CA, USA</p> <p>3 BIODIVERSITY AND SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM
HONG KONG, CHINA</p> <p>4 FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM
SINGAPORE</p> | <p>5 FOREST ECOSYSTEMS LIVING LAB INITIATIVE
QUITO, ECUADOR</p> <p>6 GLOBAL HEALTH PROGRAM
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA</p> <p>7 MULTI-HAZARDS 2025 SUMMER SCHOOL
SENDAI, JAPAN</p> <p>8 MULTI HAZARDS PROGRAM
MANILA, PHILIPPINES</p> | <p>9 SENIOR INTERNATIONAL LEADERS' MEETING
QUITO, ECUADOR</p> <p>10 SDG EDUCATION FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP
BANGKOK, THAILAND AND KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA</p> <p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND LANDSCAPES PROGRAM
VANCOUVER, CANADA</p> | <p>12 TECH POLICY HACKATHON 2025
BANGKOK, THAILAND</p> <p>13 UNDERGRADUATE LEADERS' PROGRAM
SANTIAGO, CHILE</p> |
|--|--|---|---|

CASE STUDY

HOW APRU IS EMPOWERING MEMBERS TO NAVIGATE THE AI SHIFT

This case study is one of many illustrations of APRU's broader impact across disciplines. As artificial intelligence rapidly shifts from a special tool to a foundational capability for universities, in the past year APRU has responded by proactively integrating AI across our programs—both as a dedicated area of work and as a practical enabler embedded in broader initiatives. By convening students, researchers, and leaders, our network is advancing responsible applications of AI to regional challenges and strengthening institutional readiness. While APRU's work spans climate resilience, public health, inclusive innovation, and economic development, this example shows how we deepen collaboration, build readiness, and advance solutions for the public good.

AI is reshaping how knowledge is created, shared, and applied. APRU members are leading through our University of the Future Working Group, in which they contributed to the production of a whitepaper, "Generative AI in Higher Education," and shared a roadmap to navigate AI's opportunities and risks in higher education. The paper supported discussions on how to leverage the new technology to shape the future of higher education.

In the past year, AI featured prominently across the network, including:

- **data.org collaboration:** Advanced AI- and data-driven solutions for social impact
- **APEC University Leaders' Forum 2025:** Examined the role of AI in education reform and regional development.
- **Global Health initiatives:** Hosted an AI Ethics in Health workshop focused on Southeast Asia, bringing together diverse stakeholders; and delivered the Global Health Virtual Case Competition, where students and experts applied AI and data to real-world healthcare challenges.
- **Multi-Hazards Summer School:** Integrated AI into disaster risk reduction research and practice.
- **APRU Tech Policy Hackathon:** Supported student-led AI solutions promoting digital and economic inclusion.
- **Digital Education Council collaboration:** a new collaboration which expands member access to global AI insights.

Across these initiatives, AI expanded research possibilities, strengthened cross economy collaboration, and created safe spaces for student experimentation. Looking ahead to 2026, APRU will continue convening evidence-based dialogue and practical partnerships.



ASIA-PACIFIC CHALLENGES AND THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

APRU empowers a global community of universities and partners to tackle some of the most pressing challenges we face in the Asia Pacific. We align our programs with the objectives of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), which aim to achieve a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable society for all by 2030.

- Artificial Intelligence —
- Asia Pacific Women in Leadership —
- Biodiversity and Sustainability —
- Forest Ecosystems Living Lab Initiative —
- Indigenous and First Nations —
- Knowledges Network
- Food Security and Agritech —
- Global Health —
- Multi-Hazards —
- Sustainable Cities and Landscapes —

17 UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Creating Social Impact and Shaping Futures Through Advanced Technology

Since 2017, APRU has partnered with corporates, civil society, and governmental organizations to mobilize the collective knowledge power of Asia-Pacific universities and promote the responsible use of AI, particularly in governance, policies, public health, poverty alleviation, disaster risk reduction and higher education. In 2025, APRU advanced these efforts by moving forward with the newly established “AI and Data Science for Social Impact” initiative, a collaboration with data.org that included projects and events such as the APRU Social Impact Data Science Accelerator (SIDSA), and a hackathon. APRU also co-hosted a side event of the 3rd UNESCO Global Forum to empower educators, students, and social impact organizations (SIOs) to harness data and AI for inclusive growth.



397
Participants

37
Institutions

15
Economies

PROJECT PARTNERS

- 📍 ARK Solves Philippines
- 📍 AVPN
- 📍 data.org
- 📍 Google
- 📍 iDE Cambodia
- 📍 India AI Impact Summit
- 📍 National University of Singapore Fintech Lab
- 📍 Roundtable on Responsible Palm Oil (RSPO) Malaysia
- 📍 The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- 📍 United Nations ESCAP
- 📍 Universiti Malaya
- 📍 University of the Philippines

KEY MOMENTS

APRU SOCIAL IMPACT DATA SCIENCE ACCELERATOR (SIDSA) EMPOWERING SOCIAL IMPACT ORGANIZATIONS (SIOs) THROUGH DATA CAPACITY

SIDSA is a key element of the collaboration between data.org and APRU aiming to advance data driven decision making and strengthening digital capabilities. In 2025, SIDSA paired impact-focused SIOs with three multidisciplinary academic-led teams. The teams, based at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, University of the Philippines and Asia Institute of Management, were supported by innovation partner Tandemic to co-design data science solutions for non-profits, including data collection tools for smallholder farmers in the Philippines, user analytics and visualizations for microentrepreneurs in Cambodia, and improved data standardization to better support smallholders in sustainable palm oil supply chains.

APRU TECH POLICY HACKATHON 2025 TACKLING INCLUSION CHALLENGES WITH INNOVATION

Organized by APRU in partnership with Google, data.org and the National University of Singapore Fintech Lab, the event challenged interdisciplinary teams to develop context-appropriate solutions for underserved communities in Southeast Asian countries that anticipate and respond to inclusion challenges in the digital economy. The innovative event attracted a vibrant mix of 70 proposals, from which 12 teams advanced to the final competition in Bangkok. These teams were mentored by experts from academia, governments, UN agencies, tech companies, and non-profits. Winning teams received funding and continued access to mentorship, with opportunities to help transform their solutions into scalable, real-world projects.



[View Highlights](#)



APRU GLOBAL HEALTH PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP 2025
ADVANCING AN EQUITY-CENTERED ETHICAL FRAMEWORK FOR AI IN HEALTH SYSTEMS

In partnership with data.org and as an official side event of the India AI Impact Summit 2026, the APRU Global Health Pre-conference Workshop convened experts and stakeholders from industry, government, academia, and civic society at Universiti Malaya on October 28, to tackle the ethical challenges posed by AI for health. Through roundtables, participants examined data privacy and security, patient safety, equitable access, and risks of digital colonialism. Using a regional equity lens, the group co-developed key considerations and practical steps toward ethical digitization, forming five consolidated recommendations and strengthening an ongoing multi-stakeholder collaboration network.



Watch Sessions 1 and 2 of The Ethics of AI in Health Research Webinars

THE 3RD UNESCO GLOBAL FORUM SIDE EVENT ENABLING AN AI-READY WORKFORCE

On June 24, APRU partnered with United Nations ESCAP, AVPN, and data.org to host the side event “Enabling an AI-ready Workforce: Exchanging Policy Perspectives and Solutions,” on the occasion of the 3rd UNESCO Global Forum on the Ethics of AI in Bangkok, Thailand. It brought together 65 participants and AI experts from governments, the private sector, academia, and civil society to collectively explore urgent priorities around capacity building, skills, as well as data and AI literacy in the Asia-Pacific region. Experts agreed that in order to truly leverage data and AI for good, governments must build trust through partnerships with mission-aligned organizations. In addition, it was seen as imperative for governments to create open-source resources to support talent creation. An event summary report was published online to highlight policy recommendations and reveal the strong consensus reached on the need to foster a holistic ecosystem grounded in ethics, inclusivity, and local context.



Read “AI Education Needs Multidimensional Approach to be Equitable” Published on University World News on June 26, 2025



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ASIA PACIFIC WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

From Legacy to Leadership: Advancing Gender Equity in the Pacific Rim



APRU continued to advance gender equity through the Asia Pacific Women in Leadership (APWiL) program. Co-led by UC Davis and Universiti Malaya until October 2025 and transitioning to be co-led by The University of Sydney and Tecnológico de Monterrey, The APWiL Mentoring Program marked its 5th with a robust year of programming. This included launching the 5th Cohort and a series of virtual workshops, equipping emerging women leaders with the skills, networks, and perspectives needed to navigate inequities in higher education.



APWIL MENTORING PROGRAM 5TH COHORT

78  Mentors and Mentees

21  Universities

10  Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITIES

until October 2025



from October 2025



The mentoring program had a profound influence on our institution. It inspired us to launch our own mentoring initiative ... building a vibrant and expansive network of women educators and researchers at Keio University.



Prof. Akiyo Okuda
Vice-President
Student Affairs
Athletic Association
Keio University

KEY MOMENTS

APPOINTMENT OF NEW CO-CHAIRS USHERING IN A NEW CHAPTER FOR WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

In October, the APWiL Program appointed Prof. Dimitria Groutsis of The University of Sydney and Prof. Karla Urriola of Tecnológico de Monterrey as its new Co-Chairs. Bringing complementary expertise in diversity research and institutional transformation, they share a commitment to advancing gender equity and inclusion across higher education. APWiL also extends its thanks to the outgoing Co-Chairs, Prof. Yvonne Ai-Lian Lim of Universiti Malaya and Prof. Joanna Regulska of UC Davis, for their leadership and dedication. This transition marks a new chapter focused on dismantling systemic barriers, strengthening inclusive leadership pathways, and empowering the next generation of women leaders.

APWiL MENTORING PROGRAM 5TH COHORT EMPOWERING WOMEN LEADERS THROUGH MENTORSHIP AND INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Kicked off in September 2024 and running through October 2025, the 5th cohort of this flagship program paired 78 mentors and mentees from 21 APRU universities, representing one-third of the APRU membership. It provided mentoring as well as international and intercultural opportunities for the empowerment of aspiring women leaders within APRU. Participants identified personalized goals they would work towards, such as advancing gender diversity at their respective institutions, balancing career and personal responsibilities, and facilitating career growth. The program fostered enduring professional networks across borders while catalyzing institutional mentoring schemes.

Complementing the mentorship, the cohort activities featured three impactful virtual panels:

- “The Art of Communication: A Key to Effective Leadership” (February 2025), led by UC Davis, Universiti Malaya, The University of British Columbia, and The University of Sydney with 5th Cohort panelists, equipped emerging leaders with strategies to overcome bias, build confidence, and navigate high-pressure scenarios while considering cultural nuances.



Discover How the Groundbreaking APWiL Program is Shaping the Future of Higher Education



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- Joined by over 50 participants, “International Women’s Day 2025: Strategies for Balancing Career and Personal Responsibilities” featured women leaders who shared strategies for navigating both career and personal responsibilities. Discussions brought forth the importance of setting boundaries, practicing self-compassion, and embracing vulnerability as growth. The event reaffirmed storytelling’s role in strengthening solidarity and commitment to gender equity.
- The cohort’s final workshop, “Dual Roles, Dual Strengths: Leveraging Teaching, Research, and Administration for Career Growth,” featured experts from Keio University, UNSW Sydney, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Monash University, and The University of British Columbia. It drew 52 participants, spotlighted the synergies among academic roles, and offered practical tips for building a compelling case for advancement.



It is motivating to hear and learn from women who have been in your shoes before, and it's empowering to know that your experience is shared.



Dr. Taylor Willmott

Adjunct Senior Fellow
Adelaide Business School
Adelaide University

CORE GROUP

- Prof. Yvonne Ai-Lian Lim, Universiti Malaya (Co-Chair until October 2025)
- Prof. Joanna Regulska, UC Davis (Co-Chair until October 2025)
- Prof. Dimitria G. Groutsis, The University of Sydney (Co-Chair from October 2025)
- Prof. Karla Urriola, Tecnológico de Monterrey (Co-Chair from October 2025)
- Prof. Akiyo Okuda, Keio University
- Prof. Mai Har Sham, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Dr. Derlie Mateo-Babiano, The University of Melbourne
- Prof. Katherine Belov, The University of Sydney
- Dr. Ximena M. Córdova, Universidad San Francisco de Quito
- Dr. Yong Zulina Zubairi, Universiti Malaya
- Dr. Suat Yan Lai, Universiti Malaya
- Prof. Cindy Fan, UCLA
- Dr. Denise Konan, University of Hawai’i at Mānoa
- Dr. Marby Villaceran, University of the Philippines
- APRU Secretariat Representative

BIODIVERSITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Working Together to Protect Ecosystems

APRU member institutions represent a significant portion of the world's research and knowledge capabilities on biodiversity. Every year, the APRU Biodiversity and Sustainability Program provides a platform to capitalize on this expertise and support catalytic partnerships and collaboration. In 2025, APRU hosted its International Symposium on Biodiversity Conservation and Utilization, bringing together experts from diverse disciplines to explore scientific advances, innovative strategies, and practical solutions for safeguarding biodiversity while promoting its sustainable use.



100

Participants

10

Universities

7

Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITY



KEY MOMENTS

APRU INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND UTILIZATION 2025 EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE USE, ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE, AND CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

The APRU International Symposium on Biodiversity Conservation and Utilization 2025, organized by the School of Life Sciences at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and held on November 27-28, brought together scholars from across the Asia-Pacific to explore strategies for biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use amid climate change and rapid development. Opening the symposium, Professor Jiang Liwen, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (External Affairs) of CUHK, emphasized the importance of international and interdisciplinary collaboration in addressing ecological challenges. The program featured thematic talks and a poster session covering agriculture and food security, invasive species detection, forest ecosystem resilience, genomics, and the sustainable use of wild species. An eco-tour to Sai Kung complemented the academic discussions, offering participants an opportunity to explore Hong Kong's natural landscapes while underscoring the integration of research and education.



CORE GROUP

- ◉ Prof. Edwin Chan, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (Co-Chair)
- ◉ Prof. Ting Fung Chan, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (Co-Chair)
- ◉ Prof. Somsak Panha, Chulalongkorn University
- ◉ Prof. Peter Presier, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
- ◉ Prof. Hsiao-Wei Yuan, National Taiwan University
- ◉ Prof. Tien Ming Lee, Sun Yat-sen University
- ◉ Prof. Kathy Belov, The University of Sydney
- ◉ Prof. Subha Bhasu, Universiti Malaya
- ◉ Prof. Joanna Regulska, UC Davis
- ◉ Dr. Hayde Galvez, University of the Philippines
- ◉ APRU Secretariat Representative



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FOREST ECOSYSTEMS LIVING LAB INITIATIVE

Building a Global Network of Forest Innovation Labs

KEY MOMENTS

FOREST ECOSYSTEMS LIVING LAB INITIATIVE (FELLI) SECOND WORKSHOP WHERE ECUADOR’S CLOUD FOREST INSPIRED COORDINATED ACTION FOR FOREST FUTURES

From October 16-18, FELLI convened its second collaborative workshop in the Tandayapa Cloud Forest of the Andes Mountains in Ecuador. Hosted by Universidad San Francisco de Quito, the meeting gathered researchers and educators from the initiative’s core group to advance FELLI’s mission: creating a global network of “living laboratories” that generate standardized, comparative data on forest carbon dynamics, biodiversity, and the interactions between ecosystems and human communities. Over three days, participants collaborated to refine FELLI’s agenda, which included three priorities: standardizing data protocols and frameworks, advancing sustainable wellbeing and regional policy engagement, and developing transformative educational opportunities to emphasize experiential learning.

FELLI FEATURED IN GLOBAL SOLUTIONS JOURNAL

FELLI’s innovative approach to addressing global forest challenges was highlighted in an article “The Forest Ecosystems Living Lab Initiative: A Collaborative, International Network to Inform Forest Research and Management,” in the Global Solutions Journal (Issue 11, 2025). It was authored by Benjamin Weaver, Juan Manuel Guayasamín, Robert Kozak, Dominik Roeser, as well as Thomas Schneider and Christina Schönleber from APRU, highlighting FELLI’s replicable framework for integrating research, education, and policymaking to safeguard critical ecosystems.



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The APRU Forest Ecosystems Living Lab Initiative (FELLI), co-led by The University of British Columbia and Universidad San Francisco de Quito, is building a dynamic network of forest ecosystem living labs—real-world sites for collaborative research and open innovation. In 2025, it successfully convened its second collaborative workshop in Ecuador and published a blueprint of its objectives in Global Solutions Journal, highlighting the promise of the project for comparative research on different forest ecosystems, student training, and community-based work on forest management and preservation.



LEAD UNIVERSITIES



CORE GROUP

- Prof. Dominik Roeser, The University of British Columbia (Program Co-Director)
- Prof. Juan Manuel Guayasamín, Universidad San Francisco de Quito (Program Co-Director)
- Prof. Tomonori Kume, Kyushu University
- Dr. Hayato Abe, Kyushu University
- Prof. Tzung-Su Ding, National Taiwan University
- Dr. Cheng Tao Lin, National Taiwan University
- Dr. Fernanda Tomaselli, The University of British Columbia
- Dr. Ciara Wirth, Universidad San Francisco de Quito
- Dr. Sofía Carvajal, Universidad San Francisco de Quito
- Dr. Nurul Ashikin Abdullah, Universiti Malaya
- Dr. Zul Ilham Zulkiflee Lubes, Universiti Malaya
- Dr. Analyn Codila, University of the Philippines
- Dr. Marlo Mendoza, University of the Philippines
- APRU Secretariat Representative



The Forest Ecosystems Living Lab Initiative: A Collaborative, International Network to Inform Forest Research and Management.

INDIGENOUS AND FIRST NATIONS KNOWLEDGES



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Inspiring Leadership Rooted in Ancestral Knowledges

Led by The University of Melbourne and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, the Indigenous and First Nations Knowledges Network aims to support multilateral collaborations to share ancestral knowledges, build connections among Indigenous researchers, educators, and students, and advance teaching and research grounded in the identity and the place of First Nations. Through a widely attended virtual seminar series, hundreds of participants explored themes central to Indigenous futures, including climate resilience, sustainability, cultural worldviews, leadership, and community-driven solutions, highlighting the vital role of Indigenous knowledge systems in shaping more just and sustainable societies.



291

Participants

99

Institutions

29

Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITIES



KEY MOMENTS

ROOTS AND BRIDGES: APRU INDIGENOUS CONNECTIONS SEMINAR SERIES 2025



View
Highlights

Across six events held between May and December, the seminar series attracted an attendance of nearly 300 people, with strong engagement from members across the entire region. Participants shared work-in-progress, research methodologies, and fieldwork insights centered on Indigenous Peoples and communities. The series also highlighted Indigenous-led approaches, place-based knowledges, Indigenous languages, and Indigenous leadership. It fostered meaningful international collaboration and amplified Indigenous voices, visions, and connections across academic disciplines and national borders.

PROGRAM LEADERS

- Rector Rosa Devés, Universidad de Chile (Presidential Champion)
- President Angelo A. Jimenez, University of the Philippines (Presidential Champion)
- Prof. Adrian Little, The University of Melbourne (Co-Chair)
- Prof. Noelani Puniwai, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (Co-Chair)
- APRU Secretariat Representative

APRU ANNOUNCES PRESIDENTIAL CHAMPIONS OF THE INDIGENOUS AND FIRST NATIONS KNOWLEDGES NETWORK

In March, APRU proudly introduced Rector Rosa Devés and President Angelo Jimenez as the Presidential Champions of the Indigenous and First Nations Knowledges Network. The two leaders will strengthen the network's global impact by engaging in international forums and building partnerships that advance the recognition, preservation, and integration of Indigenous and First Nations perspectives—ensuring they are valued worldwide.



These seminars showcased the lives, the achievements, and the genuine impact on the world that the work of select Indigenous individuals has achieved, inspiring young generations to continue the path of imprinting the wealth of ancestral knowledge on the World. We are certain their examples are a beacon that will guide the way forward of many new generations.

Prof. Emer. David Romo
Universidad San Francisco de Quito



FOOD SECURITY AND AGRITECH

Accelerating Agritech to Create a Sustainable Food Future



The APRU Food Security and Agritech Program tackles critical challenges of food security in the Pacific Rim in a time of climate change. Co-hosted by Simon Fraser University, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, and the National University of Singapore, this initiative promotes collaboration among APRU member universities in the application of technological innovation to food production. It aims to create a research and innovation hub that addresses local agricultural needs through fostering a strong network of interdisciplinary experts and practitioners across the region. Program's inaugural symposium, held in November 2025, marked a major milestone for the program.



80 Participants 29 Institutions 14 Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITIES



KEY MOMENTS

INAUGURAL APRU FOOD SECURITY AND AGRITECH SYMPOSIUM 2025 COLLABORATING FOR A FOOD-SECURE ASIA PACIFIC

The inaugural APRU Food Security and Agritech Symposium was held in November in Singapore, co-hosted by the National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University, Singapore at the CREATE campus. It brought together 80 experts from across the region to address the urgent challenge of ensuring sustainable and resilient food systems.

The program combined keynote speeches and high-level dialogue with hands-on engagement, including a lab visit to NTU's Proteins4Singapore facility and site tours of NUS agritech translation infrastructure. Across interactive working groups and more than 40 research presentations, participants explored solutions spanning AI and robotics, data-driven decision tools, and regenerative food systems.

Key outcomes included identifying priority areas for cross-border collaboration and the launch of a data-driven initiative on soil intelligence to support climate-smart agriculture.



CORE GROUP

- Prof. Woo Soo Kim, Simon Fraser University (Program Co-Director)
- Anne Lochoff, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (Program Co-Director)
- Prof. Veerasekaran S/O P Arumugam, National University of Singapore (Program Co-Director)
- Dr. Shih-Fang Chen, National Taiwan University
- Dr. Matthew Wilson, Adelaide University
- Prof. Ermias Kebreab, UC Davis
- Ms. Nikki Grey Rutamu, UC Davis
- Dr. Amado A. Angeles, University of the Philippines
- Prof. Hak-Jin Kim, Seoul National University
- APRU Secretariat Representative



This program will advance regional innovations in food systems and strengthen resilience by bringing together interdisciplinary experts and practitioners to address local agricultural needs and global sustainability goals.

Prof. Thomas Schneider
Chief Executive
APRU



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GLOBAL HEALTH

Collectively Navigating Health, Aging, and Planetary Pressures



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Hosted by the University of Southern California, the APRU Global Health Program facilitates collaboration and regional dialogue to bridge health divides, promoting and protecting population health and meeting shared health challenges. Its 2025 activities tackled some of the most pressing issues shaping global health today—from the ethics of AI in research and health systems to challenges in aging populations and the urgent call for planetary health equity. Together, these efforts underscored the program’s leadership in convening diverse voices to confront emerging health challenges with innovation, integrity, and a sense of shared purpose.



736 

Participants

80 

Institutions

20 

Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITY



KEY MOMENTS

THE ETHICS OF AI IN HEALTH RESEARCH WEBINARS GUIDING ETHICAL, EQUITABLE, AND ACCOUNTABLE INNOVATION

Held in February 2025, The Ethics of AI in Health Research Webinars were presented by the APRU Global Health Working Group on Bioethics and co-hosted by the University of Southern California and the University of the Philippines. Eight experts from across the APRU network—including The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Universiti Malaya, The University of Sydney, National University of Singapore, Tecnológico de Monterrey, and University of the Philippines—provided an analysis of the application of Artificial Intelligence in health research, the ethical challenges posed by AI, as well as the governance and regulation put in place by researchers, research ethics boards, and the global community. The two-part series equipped participants with new insights into the ethical use of AI in ways that respect human dignity and promote equity, fairness, and accountability.

APRU GLOBAL HEALTH WEBINAR EXPLORING ETHICAL ISSUES IN AGING POPULATIONS

The APRU Global Health webinar “Surmounting Ethical Challenges in Health and Aging” gathered experts from across the Asia-Pacific to explore ethical issues in rapidly aging societies. Five speakers—from University of the Philippines, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, National University of Singapore, University of Alberta, and Universiti Malaya respectively—examined culturally sensitive, person-centered models of elder care, age-friendly environments, Confucian perspectives on caregiving, ethics in caring for older adults with HIV, human rights in long-term care, and emerging debates around life extension.

See P.45 for student events related to the Global Health program



THE 18TH APRU GLOBAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 2025 ADDRESSING THE INTERCONNECTED CHALLENGES OF HEALTH

In October, Universiti Malaya hosted the 18th APRU Global Health Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, under the theme “Towards Planetary Health Equity: A Global Call for Shared Solutions.” The event emphasized the urgent need for interdisciplinary and collaborative action to address the interconnected challenges of health, climate change, and social equity. Over 450 participants from 80 universities attended, examining topics including climate change and health, environmental sustainability, equitable healthcare systems, the One Health approach, technology and innovation, and policy and governance. The conference also featured the inaugural performance of the APRU Orchestra to promote cross-cultural understanding.



As the world navigates complex intersections of climate change, health inequities, and social transformation, we are reminded that our collective well-being depends on a deeper understanding of the unity between human, environmental, and planetary health.



Prof. Dato' Seri Ir Dr Noor Azuan Abu Osman
Vice-Chancellor
Universiti Malaya

CORE GROUP

- Prof. Sofia Gruskin, University of Southern California (Program Chair)
- Prof. Mellissa Withers, University of Southern California (Program Director)
- Dr. Taninee Sahakitrungruang, Chulalongkorn University
- Dr. Jiayan Huang, Fudan University
- Dr. Juhwan Oh, Seoul National University
- Dr. Manuel Pérez-Jiménez, Tecnológico de Monterrey
- Prof. Martin CS Wong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Prof. King Chow, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
- Dr. Judith McCool, The University of Auckland
- Prof. Mu Li, The University of Sydney
- Prof. Masamine Jimba, The University of Tokyo
- Prof. Jonathan Guillemot, Universidad San Francisco de Quito
- Prof. Budi Haryanto, Universitas Indonesia
- Dr. Sanjay Rampal, Universiti Malaya
- Dr. Erlinda Castro Palaganas, University of the Philippines
- APRU Secretariat Representative

MULTI-HAZARDS



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Harnessing Research, Technology and Innovation to Build Resilient Societies

Over the past decade, the APRU Multi-Hazards Program, hosted by Tohoku University in Sendai, Japan, has advanced regional resilience by mobilizing universities, governments, and partners to address complex disaster risks across the Pacific Rim. In 2025, building on expertise that represents nearly a quarter of global research on natural hazards, the program advanced collaboration through the 20th APRU Multi-Hazards Symposium in Metro Manila, contributions to the World Bosai Forum 2025, and onsite training via the Multi-Hazards Summer School. Together, these initiatives equipped emerging leaders with the skills to design, rebuild, and sustain livable communities amid multi-hazard events, while strengthening international efforts to reduce risk in one of the world’s most vulnerable regions.



THE 2025 MULTI-HAZARDS SYMPOSIUM

LEAD UNIVERSITY



123

Participants

38

Institutions

13

Economies



KEY MOMENTS

THE 20TH APRU MULTI-HAZARDS SYMPOSIUM 2025 EXPLORING THE INTERSECTIONS OF SOCIETY, ENVIRONMENT, AND TECHNOLOGY

From November 26-29, the College of Architecture and the College of Engineering at the University of Philippines Diliman hosted the 20th APRU Multi-Hazards Symposium in Bonifacio Global City, Metro Manila, convening 123 participants from 38 universities across 13 economies. Under the theme “Resilience Reviews and Projections: Multi-Hazard Entanglements of Society, Environment, and Technology in Space, Time, and Place,” the symposium highlighted advances in understanding and managing complex disasters, resilient design and technology, climate justice and health, and more. The event culminated in a guided walk in the community, cultural immersion activity, and a tour of the UP Diliman Resilience Institute.

WORLD BOSAI FORUM 2025: ACADEMIA AND TECHNOLOGY IN DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

In March, the APRU Multi-Hazards Program contributed to the World Bosai Forum 2025 in Sendai, Japan, through a dynamic session titled “Tackling a Global Challenge: Multi-Hazards—The Role of Academia, Science, and Technology in Disaster Risk Reduction.” Moderated by Prof. Takako Izumi, Director of the APRU Multi-Hazards Program and faculty at Tohoku University, and joined by leading researchers and policy experts from UNDRR, National University of Singapore, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, and Keio University, the session emphasized the need for innovative, inclusive, and science-based approaches to disaster risk reduction (DRR). The contribution reaffirmed APRU’s commitment to fostering cross-sectoral collaboration and leveraging academic expertise to build more resilient communities across the region.



Communication is key to an effective management style and to responding to disasters and hazards in the face of challenges. [The 20th APRU Multi-Hazards Symposium 2025] is a forum where communication can be initiated, facilitated, and disseminated for easier access and collaboration in the future.

Prof. Luis Maria T. Bo-ot
Dean
College of Architecture
University of the Philippines Diliman



View
Highlights

CORE GROUP

- ☉ Prof. Osamu Murao, Tohoku University (Program Chair)
- ☉ Prof. Takako Izumi, Tohoku University (Program Director)
- ☉ Prof. Hung Chi Kuo, National Taiwan University
- ☉ Prof. Lalith Wijerathne, The University of Tokyo
- ☉ Prof. Fumihiko Imamura, Tohoku University
- ☉ Prof. Hui Zhang, Tsinghua University
- ☉ Prof. Hugo Romero, Universidad de Chile
- ☉ Prof. John Rundle, UC Davis
- ☉ Dr. Denise Konan, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa
- ☉ APRU Secretariat Representative

See P.47 for student events related to the Multi-Hazards program

SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND LANDSCAPES

Exploring Innovative Practices, Policies and Solutions to Enhance Urban Sustainability

For the past decade, the APRU Sustainable Cities and Landscapes (SCL) Program, hosted by the University of Oregon, has united policymakers, researchers, and practitioners across disciplines to address major social, urban, and ecological challenges, with a focus on how rapidly urbanizing regions can ensure access to adequate food, water, and energy while preserving vulnerable populations and ecosystems. In the past year, APRU's SCL spotlight activities included the annual APRU Sustainable Cities & Landscapes Conference, co-organizing the Asia-Pacific Mayors Academy 2025, and contributing to the UNFCCC COP30 in Brazil.



THE 8TH APRU SUSTAINABLE CITIES & LANDSCAPES CONFERENCE 2025

136 

Participants

28 

Universities

14 

Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITY



CORE GROUP

STEERING COMMITTEE – APRU SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND LANDSCAPES PROGRAM:

- ◉ Prof. Dennis Galvan (Program Chair), University of Oregon
- ◉ Prof. Xiaobo Xu, University of Oregon (Program Co-Director)
- ◉ Prof. Yekang Ko, University of Michigan (Program Co-Director)
- ◉ Prof. Jinhyun Chon, Korea University
- ◉ Dr. Feng Jianxi, Nanjing University
- ◉ Prof. Chun-Yen Chang, National Taiwan University
- ◉ Prof. Jeffrey Hou, National University of Singapore
- ◉ Prof. Zhifang Wang, Peking University
- ◉ Prof. Ruishan Chen, Shanghai Jiao Tong University
- ◉ Dr. Andréanne Doyon, Simon Fraser University
- ◉ Dr. Robert Dyball, The Australian National University
- ◉ Prof. Thomas Chung, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- ◉ Prof. Chingwen Cheng, The Pennsylvania State University
- ◉ Prof. Paola Boarin, The University of Auckland
- ◉ Prof. Natalia Echeverri, The University of British Columbia
- ◉ Dr. Francisco Cevallos Barragan, The University of Hong Kong
- ◉ Dr. Yong Guo, Tsinghua University
- ◉ Dr. Beatriz Maturana Cossio, Universidad de Chile
- ◉ Prof. John Alejandro Dunn Insúa, Universidad San Francisco de Quito
- ◉ Prof. Mohammed Ali Berawi, Universitas Indonesia
- ◉ Prof. Makena Coffman, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
- ◉ Prof. Yizhao Yang, University of Oregon
- ◉ Dr. Jennifer Amparo, University of the Philippines
- ◉ Prof. Nancy Rottle, University of Washington
- ◉ Prof. Anne Taufen, University of Washington
- ◉ Prof. Ken Yocom, University of Washington
- ◉ Prof. Catherine Evans, UNSW Sydney
- ◉ Dr. Sara Padgett Kjaersgaard, UNSW Sydney
- ◉ APRU Secretariat Representative



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KEY MOMENTS

APRU SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND LANDSCAPES CONFERENCE 2025 LIVING WITH WATER ACROSS THE PACIFIC RIM

The 8th APRU Sustainable Cities & Landscapes Conference was held at Simon Fraser University (SFU) in June, marking the first APRU SCL Conference hosted in Canada. The conference was organized with support from the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). Under the theme “Living with Water across the Pacific Rim,” the conference connected critical discussions across climate adaptation, food security, energy, biodiversity, and urban planning. Over 130 participants took part in keynote talks, field visits, working groups, and cultural sessions. Additionally, 10 interdisciplinary working groups advanced collaborative research on issues ranging from climate justice and biodiversity to smart cities, aging infrastructure, and circular economies.

ASIA-PACIFIC MAYORS ACADEMY 2025 EMPOWERING MAYORS TO DRIVE SUSTAINABLE URBAN TRANSFORMATION

This annual fellowship welcomed its 6th batch of newly elected or appointed mayors or governors in the Asia-Pacific region, providing capacity development programs for leaders to implement sustainable urban development and enhance their leadership and technical capacities in urban sustainability. Established by the United Nations ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and UCLG ASPAC (United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific), in cooperation with the Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability at the United Nations University (UNU-IAS), the Academy’s 2025 cohort engaged the seven participating mayors from cities across six economies in a series of online modules, peer-learning exchanges, and one-to-one mentoring. APRU is a major partner of the Mayors Academy, with SCL Program experts contributing to content development, curriculum, and training.



APRU UNIVERSITIES AT UNFCCC COP30 SPOTLIGHTING HIGHER EDUCATION’S TRANSFORMATIVE ROLE IN SHAPING CLIMATE SOLUTIONS

At the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP30) in Belém, Brazil, APRU leaders co-organized two sessions at the Higher Education for Climate Action Pavilion. The sessions highlighted university leadership in planetary-boundary science, community-engaged climate resilience, and student-driven innovation, underscoring APRU’s commitment to connecting research, policy, and practice to support just and impactful climate action.



Human Galapagos:
Boundaries, Territories
and Places (1st ed.).

Human Galapagos – Boundaries, Territories and Places, a new book published by Springer in January 2026, is an important outcome of collaborations initiated at the 6th APRU SCL Conference hosted by Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ) in Ecuador in 2023.

See P.49 for student events related to the Sustainable Cities and Landscapes program





EMPOWERING STUDENT LEADERS

Every year, APRU offers students a variety of activities to apply their knowledge to critical policy challenges in the region, enhance their international experience, and enrich their key competencies and leadership potential. These activities include student competitions, interactive workshops, virtual courses, and certificate programs, covering a wide range of topics.

- Asia Pacific Open Dialogues
- Certificate in Global Climate Change Leadership
- Global Health Student Leadership
- Global Sustainability: Waste & the City Course
- Multi-Hazards Summer School
- SDG Education for Global Citizenship
- Undergraduate Leaders' Program
- Virtual Student Exchange

ASIA PACIFIC OPEN DIALOGUES



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Challenging Stereotypes, Building Global Understanding

The Asia Pacific Open Dialogues, led by Tecnológico de Monterrey, promotes meaningful conversations among APRU member universities to foster empathy, awareness, and responsible leadership. In 2025, the program hosted its 4th and 5th Cohorts. Through virtual sessions, it engaged students in candid conversations in English and Spanish about shared challenges, enriching their international experience and building cross-cultural understanding. These dialogues created safe, inclusive spaces that encouraged collaboration and respect for diverse perspectives, reinforcing APRU's commitment to advancing global citizenship and intercultural competence across the Pacific Rim.



4TH AND 5TH COHORTS

244

Participants

22

Universities

15

Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITY



Tecnológico
de Monterrey

KEY MOMENTS

ASIA PACIFIC OPEN DIALOGUES 4TH COHORT CREATING CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE FOR FUTURE-READY LEADERS

Marking its largest edition to date, the APRU Open Dialogue 4th Cohort brought together more than 150 students from across the region. Focusing on how cultural stereotypes shape teamwork and leadership, the session created a vibrant space for reflection and exchange. Through conversations and shared experiences, participants gained deeper insight into multicultural collaboration, highlighting the importance of empathy, self-awareness, and adaptability in today's interconnected world.

ASIA PACIFIC OPEN DIALOGUES 5TH COHORT FOSTERING MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS AMONG STUDENTS TO BREAK STEREOTYPES

Continuing from the successful 4th Cohort, the 5th Cohort continued with guided discussions centered around "Breaking Stereotypes: Navigating Cultural Differences in the Global Workplace," participants explored ways to improve professional interactions and developed cultural competence, empathy, and leadership skills essential for inclusive collaboration in global work environments. Students also expressed feeling enriched by the interactions, highlighting that the program created an inclusive space for meaningful learning. A key component of the program is the moderation and guided dialogues, led by Tecnológico de Monterrey, with contributors from USFQ and Universidad de Chile.

PROGRAM LEADERS

- David Osvaldo Huerta H, Tecnológico de Monterrey
- César Garza Campos, Tecnológico de Monterrey
- Natalia Moreno B, Tecnológico de Monterrey
- Carlos Alejandro Reyna Velázquez, Tecnológico de Monterrey
- APRU Secretariat Representative



Multicultural teams are like navigating a river with many currents. We cannot assume everyone rows in the same direction ... When we listen, adjust, and learn each other's rhythm, we move forward together, faster and stronger.

Dr. David Osvaldo Huerta H.

Director of International Experiences and Models
Tecnológico de Monterrey



View
Highlights



CERTIFICATE IN GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE LEADERSHIP

Empowering Future Climate Advocates through Global Simulation



Launched in 2021, the APRU Certificate in Global Climate Change Leadership, co-organized by the University of Oregon and the University of Southern California, prepares students to navigate international climate negotiations through immersive role-play. Participants join multi-country, multidisciplinary teams to simulate UN Climate Change discussions, fostering collaboration, diplomacy, and problem-solving. Its 5th edition was held in 2025 equipping future leaders with global perspectives to address pressing climate challenges.



180

Participants

16

Institutions

13

Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITIES



KEY MOMENTS

APRU CERTIFICATE IN GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE LEADERSHIP 2025 TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE NEGOTIATORS

The 2025 edition of the APRU Certificate in Global Climate Change Leadership stood out as one of the program's most impactful years, bringing together a record number of students from across the Asia-Pacific for a rigorous UN climate negotiation simulation. The initiative immersed students in an online simulation of UN climate negotiations, where they worked in international, multidisciplinary teams, and used World Climate Interactive resources and MIT's C-ROADS model to test policy scenarios and debate on a wide spectrum of climate issues. It was strengthened by guidance from the Global Climate Change Leadership Advisory Board, including experts from Peking University and The Chinese University of Hong Kong, enabling students to gain transformative leadership skills, global perspectives, and collaborative experience.



Working with students from diverse cultural backgrounds and disciplines has enhanced my ability to communicate effectively across differences and synthesize varied perspectives into cohesive strategies. Perhaps most significantly, the simulation helped me understand climate change as an interconnected challenge requiring coordinated responses across sectors, nations, and disciplines.

Mr. Ryan Welch
Student
USC Sol Price School of Public Policy



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GLOBAL HEALTH STUDENT LEADERSHIP



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KEY MOMENTS

APRU MINI CERTIFICATE IN HEALTH RESEARCH ETHICS RAISING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS IN RESEARCH ETHICS

This free and interactive training was hosted online in February, providing training for students with limited backgrounds in research ethics. Through bioethicist-led lectures and breakout sessions, participants explored the main principles of ethical research and historical cases of unethical research, learning the essential skills for conducting responsible and inclusive research.

VIRTUAL CASE COMPETITION DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS THAT BALANCE INNOVATION WITH REAL-WORLD FEASIBILITY

The 10th Annual APRU Global Health Virtual Case Competition 2025, organized in partnership with Universiti Malaya, data.org, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), attracted an impressive 110 registered student teams. From the video submissions received—each proposing an innovative, feasible solution to a pressing global health challenge—three teams were selected as finalists. Their videos were screened for judging at the APRU Global Health Conference 2025, where Team Sustainabite from Universitas Indonesia was crowned champion and awarded US\$1,000, and all participants received certificates.

STUDENT POSTER CONTEST CONNECTING LEARNING TO REAL-WORLD IMPACT

The 11th Annual APRU Global Health Student Poster Contest was held alongside the APRU Global Health Conference 2025. Undergraduate and graduate students from 24 universities submitted posters on global health topics, displayed virtually during the conference to foster interdisciplinary exchange and innovation across the region. Eleanor J. Ong of the National University of Singapore won the Graduate category, while Chan Ning Long from The Chinese University of Hong Kong won the Undergraduate category.

GLOBAL HEALTH DISTANCE EDUCATION CREATING A DYNAMIC FOUNDATION IN GLOBAL HEALTH LEADERSHIP

For the 11th consecutive year, APRU has offered Global Health Distance Education Courses for students from APRU member universities. Two graduate-level courses—Global Health Leadership and Global Health Ethics—were delivered over 12 weeks of interactive learning, featuring live guest lectures and case-based discussions. The program emphasized cultural competency and collaborative skills, preparing future health leaders for diverse, team-based global health environments.

Advancing Global Health Education and Student Leadership



The APRU Global Health Program offers innovative student activities that strengthen learning and leadership in addressing complex health challenges. Through interactive initiatives, the program equips future global health leaders with practical skills, interdisciplinary perspectives, and collaborative strategies.



665 

Participants

24 

Universities

12 

Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITY



GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY: WASTE AND THE CITY COURSE

Transforming Urban Sustainability: Waste and ESG in Action



Since 2022, the “Global Sustainability: Waste and the City” course has been equipping graduate students with knowledge of the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals (UN SDGs) and Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) practices, focusing on waste and urbanization. Over 270 students from 16 economies have benefited from the course since its launch. In 2025, students sharpened their critical thinking and analytical skills through interactive lectures, case studies, and teamwork across regions. It was hosted by Nanyang Technological University, Singapore in partnership with Korea University and the APRU Sustainable Cities and Landscapes (SCL) Program hosted at University of Oregon.



73

Participants

6

Universities

6

Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITIES



KEY MOMENTS

APRU GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY: WASTE & THE CITY 2025 INTRODUCING GRADUATE STUDENTS TO GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY CONCEPTS AND APPLICATIONS

The 10-week online program went beyond introducing students to sustainability frameworks, emphasizing interactive learning through guest lectures, group presentations, and case study discussions. By analyzing real-world ESG reports and proposed solutions, many students gained their first practical insight into how corporations address complex sustainability challenges. They also benefited from cross-university collaboration, which honed their intercultural communication and teamwork. The 2025 program was endorsed by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and offered certification for students who completed 30 hours of engagement, reinforcing its role as a platform for building leadership skills and advancing practical strategies for sustainability.

PROGRAM LEADERS

- Prof. Sierin Lim, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
- Prof. Xiaobo Su, University of Oregon
- Prof. Yong Sik Ok, Korea University



Learning from academics and industry experts on a wide range of topics widened my knowledge of sustainability beyond my own field. My highlight was hearing firsthand insights into plastic pollution from a renowned researcher who has long inspired me.

Ms. Shari Lorang
Former student and Teaching Assistant
APRU Global Sustainability: Waste &
The City 2025 Course



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MULTI-HAZARDS SUMMER SCHOOL

Adapting Science and Technology for Future Disaster Risk Reduction



Launched in 2013, the Multi-Hazards Summer School held at Tohoku University in Sendai, Japan, shares the region's hard-earned lessons from the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami with future practitioners and leaders. In 2025, participants explored global disaster-risk reduction frameworks, learned from leading researchers, and tackled practical challenges, examining how data, cutting-edge technology, and international cooperation can strengthen disaster management in a complex risk landscape.



44  26  13 
Participants Institutions Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITY



KEY MOMENTS

MULTI-HAZARDS 2025 SUMMER SCHOOL INCORPORATING AI AND BIG DATA IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Held under the theme “Science, Technology, and Innovation in DRR: Applying Big Data and AI,” the 10th APRU Multi-Hazards Summer School incorporated content on the use of artificial intelligence into its sessions in a systematic way for the first time. In addition to insights from local government officials, academics, and non-governmental organizations directly involved in recovery efforts, participants interacted directly with industry experts from SoftBank, who demonstrated the use of AI, Big Data, and drones for early landslide detection and locating missing hikers—offering a practical view of private-sector innovation in risk analysis. The four-day program concluded with a field visit to two disaster-affected towns, offering participants firsthand insights into recovery efforts and resilience strategies.



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The field trip reminded us that disasters and resilience are not just about physical environments or data; they are deeply tied to culture and community. Meeting survivors and hearing their stories was humbling and inspiring. Their resolve to rebuild by sharing knowledge will leave a lasting impact.

Ms. Patricia Reyes
Student
UP Resilience Institute



SDG EDUCATION FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP



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Nurturing Global Citizenship by Championing Diversity and Inclusivity

The SDG Education for Global Citizenship program is co-designed by six partner universities in collaboration with the United Nations (UN) to offer an intercultural and transdisciplinary learning experience. The hybrid program in 2025 was hosted by Chulalongkorn University and Universiti Malaya and featured two onsite programs in Malaysia and Thailand. Students explored the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) and developed transformative social prototypes addressing urgent global challenges through online seminars, cultural activities, and community visits.



78 Participants 19 Universities 12 Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITIES



PROJECT PARTNER

United Nations

KEY MOMENTS

SDG EDUCATION FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM 2025 DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY: ACTIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The 2025 program under the theme “Diversity and Inclusivity: Actions for Sustainability” featured online workshops and onsite activities in Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur. The program equipped students to champion inclusive and sustainable solutions. Key moments included a keynote panel moderated by Phinith Chanthalangsy from UNESCO and a July address by Thailand’s former Prime Minister, H.E. Abhisit Vejjajiva, highlighting multilateralism and youth leadership.

CORE GROUP

- Michiko Yoshida / Taninee Sahakitrungruang, Chulalongkorn University (Chairs)
- Rafiza Hashim, Universiti Malaya (Vice Chair)
- Shally Fan, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Prof. Natalie Konomi, Kyushu University
- Wanda Preiser, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
- Xuan Wu, University of Chinese Academy of Sciences
- APRU Secretariat Representative

Over three months, students worked in cross-cultural teams to design social innovation prototypes addressing real-world SDG challenges. Their work culminated on August 29 in a dynamic Social Innovation Pitching Competition. The winning team, mentored by Dr. Jaime Jayapalan of Universiti Malaya, developed CareVend, a vending machine that trades recyclable plastic for menstrual products and advances both environmental action and menstrual equity. The team showcased their innovation at the UNESCAP Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2026.



View
Recaps



I found the experience deeply rewarding. It sharpened my skills in teamwork, cross-cultural communication, and problem-solving, while reaffirming the importance of collaboration on regional challenges.

Ms. Zhi Ying Tang
Student
National University of Singapore



UNDERGRADUATE LEADERS' PROGRAM

Empowering Next-Generation Leaders Through Diplomacy, Dialogue, and Immersive Leadership



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The APRU Undergraduate Leaders' Program (ULP) empowers emerging undergraduate leaders to become real-world change makers. Through cultural exchange experience and unique learning opportunities, the program equips the next generation of leaders with the skills needed to drive positive change in the future. The 2025 program was hosted by Universidad de Chile for the first time in South America, immersing student-leaders in two weeks of academic, cultural, and diplomatic exchange.



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Participants Universities Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITY



KEY MOMENTS

APRU UNDERGRADUATE LEADERS' PROGRAM 2025 ADDRESSING FUTURE PACIFIC-RIM CHALLENGES

The APRU ULP 2025 was held in Chile from July 20 to August 2, with the opening ceremony hosted at the Salón de Honor and led by Rector Rosa Devés of Universidad de Chile, setting the tone for two weeks of immersive learning and cultural exchange.

Under the theme "Future Global Citizenship Leaders: Addressing Pacific Rim Challenges," students engaged in an intensive agenda blending seminars, workshops, simulations, site visits, and cultural activities. Highlights included a high-level international seminar on the future of democracy with Nobel Prize laureate Professor Joseph Stiglitz, and meetings with the diplomatic corps of embassies and consulates. Collectively, these engagements fostered global citizenship by promoting a deep understanding of and respect for cultural diversity and international collaboration. Furthermore, this milestone edition advanced APRU's mission to prepare future leaders for complex challenges across the Pacific Rim.



APRU
Undergraduate
Leaders'
Program
2025 Recap



The Pacific region, as is the world at large, faces complex, interconnected challenges: the climate crisis, cultural tensions, economic inequality, and growing threats to democratic values. These challenges cannot be tackled in isolation. They demand cooperation, empathy, and collective intelligence, especially from the new generations who will forge the future.

Prof. Rosa Devés
Rector
Universidad de Chile



VIRTUAL STUDENT EXCHANGE

Strengthening Global Competence Through Borderless Learning

The APRU Virtual Student Exchange (VSE) Program champions a vital and inclusive model for the 21st century: internationalization at home. It breaks boundaries and makes international education accessible by allowing students to take academic courses and participate in co-curricular programs from their own institutions. Since its launch in 2020, the program has offered over 1,100 courses and benefited more than 4,500 students. Led by The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), the 2025 VSE Program welcomed over 500 participants from across nine economies, who joined high-impact courses and gained intercultural experience through digital platforms.



517  17  9 
Participants Universities Economies

LEAD UNIVERSITY



KEY MOMENTS

APRU VIRTUAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM 2025 MAKING GLOBAL COMPETENCE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

The APRU VSE Program exemplifies a future-focused alliance in higher education, fostering trust through inclusive access and transformative learning experiences. By removing barriers to global engagement, VSE empowers students to collaborate across cultures, develop critical skills, and embrace diverse perspectives. This innovative model continued in 2025, supporting institutional partnerships and contributing to the preparation of students for an increasingly interconnected global context.

META-UNIVERSITY MODEL AT NAFSA 2025 HIGHLIGHTING THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS IN DEMOCRATIZING EDUCATION

APRU members presented the “meta-university” model at a panel during the NAFSA 2025 Annual Conference and Expo, showcasing a framework to reshape international collaboration and access in higher education. Joined by panelists Prof. Mellissa Withers from University of Southern California, Wanda Preiser from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, and Prof. Natalie Konomi from Kyushu University, and chaired by Shally Fan from CUHK, the session highlighted CUHK’s use of APRU partnerships to develop online and in-person programs connecting students globally.



The learning atmosphere has been lively, safe, thoughtful, and surprisingly intimate for an online platform. I firmly believe that virtual learning has become an essential component of higher education. For students considering a VSE course: be open, be curious, and don't underestimate the connections you can build—even across continents.

Prof. Hyunjun Min
Yonsei University



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apru.org



APRU LEADERS, PARTNERS, AND EVENTS

As a membership organization, APRU is strengthened by the continued contributions of its members—from presidents and senior international leaders to program leaders and partners. The next pages spotlight the leadership and partnerships behind APRU’s initiatives across the region.

- APRU Presidents —
- Senior International Leaders —
- APRU Program Leaders —
- APRU International Secretariat and Statutory Directors —
- APRU Partners —
- APRU Events Calendar 2026 —

APRU PRESIDENTS

AUSTRALIA

Nicola PHILLIPS

Vice-Chancellor and President
Adelaide University
from January 12, 2026

Rebekah BROWN

Interim Vice-Chancellor and President
The Australian National University
from September 2025

Glyn DAVIS AC

Interim Vice-Chancellor
The University of Melbourne

Deborah TERRY AO

Vice-Chancellor and President
The University of Queensland

Mark SCOTT AO

Vice-Chancellor and President
The University of Sydney

Attila BRUNGS

President and Vice-Chancellor
UNSW Sydney
until December 2025

Dr. Hazri bin Haji KIFLE

Vice-Chancellor
Universiti Brunei Darussalam

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Simon Fraser University

Benoit-Antoine BACON

President and Vice-Chancellor
The University of British Columbia

Bill FLANAGAN

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University of Alberta

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Rector
Universidad de Chile

Jacqueline SEPÚLVEDA

Rector
Universidad de Concepción
from May 2026

CHINESE MAINLAND & HONG KONG SAR

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Fudan University

TAN Zhe-min

President
Nanjing University

GONG Qihuang

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Nancy Y. IP

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The Hong Kong University of Science
and Technology

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President and Vice-Chancellor
The University of Hong Kong

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Tongji University
from June 2025

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Tsinghua University

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University of Chinese Academy of Sciences

CHANG Jin

President
University of Science and Technology of China

ZHANG Liqun

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Xi'an Jiaotong University

MA Yanming

President
Zhejiang University
from March 28, 2025

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National Taiwan University

Chi-Hung LIN

President
National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University

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Rector
Universidad San Francisco de Quito

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Heri HERMANSYAH
Rector
Universitas Indonesia

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Tatsuro ISHIBASHI
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Kyushu University

Naoshi SUGIYAMA
President
Nagoya University

Atsushi KUMANOGOH
President
The University of Osaka

Teiji TOMINAGA
President
Tohoku University

Aiji TANAKA
President
Waseda University

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President
KAIST

Dong-One KIM
President
Korea University

Seong Keun KIM
President
POSTECH

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President
Pusan National University

Honglim RYU
President
Seoul National University

Dong-Sup YOON
President
Yonsei University

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Dato' Seri Noor Azuan ABU OSMAN
Vice-Chancellor
Universiti Malaya

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Tecnológico de Monterrey

Leonardo LOMELÍ VANEGAS
President
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

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Interim Vice-Chancellor
The University of Auckland

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President
Far Eastern Federal University

SINGAPORE

HO Teck Hua
President
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

TAN Eng Chye
President
National University of Singapore

THAILAND

Wilert PURIWAT
President
Chulalongkorn University

PHILLIPPINES

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President
University of the Philippines

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University of California, Davis

Howard GILLMAN
Chancellor
University of California, Irvine

Julio FRENK
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University of California, Los Angeles

Jack S. HU
Chancellor
University of California, Riverside
from July 15, 2025

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University of California, San Diego

Dennis ASSANIS
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University of California, Santa Barbara
from September 2025

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University of California, Santa Cruz

Wendy F. HENSEL
President
University of Hawai'i System
Chancellor
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Domenico GRASSO
Interim President
University of Michigan
from May 8, 2025

John Karl SCHOLZ
President
University of Oregon

Beong-Soo KIM
President
University of Southern California
From February 4, 2026

Robert J. JONES
President
University of Washington
from August 1, 2025

VIETNAM

LE Mai Lan
President
VinUniversity

SENIOR INTERNATIONAL LEADERS

AUSTRALIA

Jessica GALLAGHER

Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (External Engagement)
Adelaide University

Helen SULLIVAN

Dean of ANU College of Asia and the Pacific
The Australian National University

Frank VETERE

Pro Vice-Chancellor (International)
The University of Melbourne

Rongyu LI

Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Global Engagement)
The University of Queensland

Kathy BELOV, AO

Pro-Vice-Chancellor
Global & Research Engagement
The University of Sydney

Colin GRANT

Deputy Vice-Chancellor Global
UNSW Sydney
until December 2025

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Abdul Hanif MAHADI

Assistant Vice Chancellor and Vice President (Research, Innovation, Sustainability)
Universiti Brunei Darussalam

CANADA

Vinitha GENGATHARAN

Executive Lead, International Strategy
Simon Fraser University

Cheryl DUMARESQ

Executive Director, Global Engagement
The University of British Columbia

David BRESSLER

Chief Strategy Officer (International & Enterprise)
University of Alberta

CHILE

Alicia SALOMONE

Director of International Affairs
Universidad de Chile

Yasna Pereira REYES

Director of International Affairs
Universidad de Concepción

CHINESE MAINLAND & HONG KONG SAR

LU Lian

Director
Office of Global Partnerships
Fudan University

LU Yanqing

Vice President
Nanjing University

WANG Bo

Vice President
Peking University

LIU Weidong

Vice President for International Affairs
Shanghai Jiao Tong University

LI Jin

Vice President
Southern University of Science and Technology

WANG Fan

Vice-President
Sun Yat-sen University

Shally FAN

Director of Academic Links
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Charles NG Wang-wai

Vice-President for Institutional Advancement
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
from August 1, 2025

Isabella WONG

Chief of Staff
The University of Hong Kong

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Tongji University

LI Jinliang

Dean, Office of International Affairs
Tsinghua University

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Vice President
University of Chinese Academy of Sciences

ZHOU Congzhao

Vice President for International Affairs
University of Science and Technology of China

XI Guang

Vice President for Global Engagement
Xi'an Jiaotong University

LIANG Junying

Director, Office of Global Engagement
Zhejiang University

CHINESE TAIPEI

Hsiao-Wei YUAN

Vice President for International Affairs
National Taiwan University

Wan-Syang HSU

Vice-President for International Affairs
National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University

ECUADOR

Alexandra VELASCO

Senior Director of Internationalization
Universidad San Francisco de Quito

The International Advisory Committee (IAC) is a group of Senior International Leaders who advises the APRU International Secretariat. Erik Lithander (The University of Auckland) co-chairs the IAC.

The University of the Future Working Group convenes to identify common challenges faced by our member institutions and to map out paths towards viable solutions. The working group is led by José Escamilla (Tecnológico de Monterrey) and Christie Chung (Palo Alto University).

INDONESIA

Heri HERMANSYAH
Rector
Universitas Indonesia

JAPAN

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Vice-President for Global Engagement
Keio University

Kenji IWATA
Executive Vice President
International Affairs
Kyushu University

Yoshiyuki SUTO
Vice President (International)
Nagoya University

Mikako HAYASHI
Executive Vice-President of Global Engagement
The University of Osaka

Toshiya UEKI
Executive Vice-President
Tohoku University

Masahiko GEMMA
Vice President for International Affairs
Waseda University

KOREA

So Young KIM
Vice President
International Office
KAIST

Sang Kee SONG
Vice President for International Affairs
Korea University

Sun-Min PARK
Vice President of External Relations
POSTECH

LEE Chang-Hwan
Dean of International
Pusan National University

Taekyoon KIM
Vice President of Global Affairs
Seoul National University
from September 1, 2025

Yong Chan KIM
Vice President for International Affairs
Yonsei University

MALAYSIA

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Associate Vice-Chancellor
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Universiti Malaya

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Tecnológico de Monterrey

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Vice-Provost for International Affairs
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Far Eastern Federal University

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(International Engagement)
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Sau Kim LUM
Associate Vice-President for
Global Relations
National University of Singapore

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Vice President
Chulalongkorn University

PHILLIPPINES

Lorraine Pe SYMACO
Vice-President for Academic Affairs
University of the Philippines
from August 2025

THE UNITED STATES

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Vice Provost and Dean of Global Affairs
UC Davis

Lily WU
Chief Global Affairs Officer &
Faculty Liaison to the Chancellor (Interim)
UC Irvine

C. Cindy FAN
Vice Provost for International Studies and
Global Engagement
UCLA

Marko PRINCEVAC
Vice Provost of International Affairs
UC Riverside

Tamara C. CUNNINGHAM
Assistant Vice Chancellor of Global Initiatives
UC San Diego

Becky GEORGE
Assistant Vice Provost of Global Engagement
UC Santa Cruz

Xiaoxin (Ivy) MU
Acting Assistant Provost for Global Engagement
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
from November 2025

Valeria Maria BERTACCO
Vice Provost for Engaged Learning
University of Michigan

Dennis GALVAN
Dean and Vice Provost of the
Division of Global Engagement
University of Oregon

Anthony BAILEY
Vice President for Strategic and
Global Initiatives
University of Southern California

Ahmad M EZZEDDINE
Vice Provost for Global Affairs
University of Washington

VIETNAM

Sunmee CHOI
Vice Provost of External Engagement
VinUniversity

APRU PROGRAM LEADERS

ASIA PACIFIC WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



Yvonne LIM Ai Lian
Program Co-Chair
Universiti Malaya
until October 2025



Joanna REGULSKA
Program Co-Chair
UC Davis
until October 2025



Dimitria GROUTSIS
Program Co-Chair
The University of Sydney
from October 2025



Karla URRIOLO
Program Co-Chair
Tecnológico de Monterrey
from October 2025

BIODIVERSITY PROGRAM



Edwin CHAN
Program Co-Chair
The Chinese University of
Hong Kong



Ting Fung CHAN
Program Co-Chair
The Chinese University
of Hong Kong

CERTIFICATE IN GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



Eleanor VANDERGRIFT
Program Co-Leader
University of Oregon



Mellissa WITHERS
Program Co-Leader
University of Southern California

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRITECH PROGRAM



Woo Soo KIM
Program Co-Director
Simon Fraser University



Anne LOCHOFF
Program Co-Director
Nanyang Technological
University, Singapore



Veera SEKERAN
Program Co-Director
National University of
Singapore

FOREST ECOSYSTEMS LIVING LAB INITIATIVE



Dominik ROESER
Program Co-Chair
The University of British Columbia



Juan Manuel GUAYASAMIN
Program Co-Chair
Universidad San Francisco de Quito

GLOBAL HEALTH PROGRAM



Sofia GRUSKIN
Program Chair
University of Southern California



Mellissa WITHERS
Program Director (Global Health);
University of Southern California

GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY: WASTE & THE CITY PROGRAM



Sierin LIM
Program Director
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES PROGRAM



Rose DEVÉS
Presidential Champion
Universidad de Chile



Angelo A. JIMENEZ
Presidential Champion
University of the Philippines



Adrian LITTLE
Program Co-Chair
The University of Melbourne



Noelani PUNIWAI
Program Co-Chair
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

MULTI-HAZARDS PROGRAM



Osamu MURAO
Program Chair
Tohoku University



Takako IZUMI
Program Director
Tohoku University

OPEN DIALOGUES PROGRAM



David HUERTA
Program Director
Tecnológico de Monterrey

SUSTAINABLE CITIES & LANDSCAPES PROGRAM



Dennis GALVAN
Program Chair
University of Oregon



Xiaobo SU
Program Co-Director
University of Oregon



Yekang KO
Program Co-Director
University of Michigan

UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE WORKING GROUP



José ESCAMILLA
Program Co-Chair
Tecnológico de Monterrey
from February 2025



Christie CHUNG
Program Co-Chair
Palo Alto University
from February 2025

SDG FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM



Rafiza HASHIM
Program Vice-Chair
Universiti Malaya



Taninee SAHAKITRUNGUANG
Program Chair
Chulalongkorn University
from January 2026



Michiko YOSHIDA
Program Chair
Chulalongkorn University
until December 2025

VIRTUAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM



Shally FAN
Program Director
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

APRU INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

The APRU Secretariat is responsible for supporting the coordination, facilitation, and liaison of all APRU activities and programs.

Headquartered at Cyberport, Hong Kong, the Secretariat works with APRU members to set the organization's agenda to fulfill its mission.

LEADERSHIP



Prof. Thomas
SCHNEIDER
Chief Executive



Albert CHAN
Chief Operating Officer



Christina Maria
SCHÖNLEBER
Chief Strategy Officer

OPERATIONS



Eric CHU
Executive Manager



Ellen YAU
Manager, Administration
and Finance

PROGRAMS



Adriana ROJAS M.
Senior Director,
Programs



Benjamin ZHOU
Program Manager



David QUIMBAYO G.
Program Manager

ENGAGEMENT



Jackie WONG
Senior Director,
Communications and
Engagement



Joey CHU
Senior Manager, Events



Vini DAMAYANTI
Communications and
Administrative Officer

APRU STATUTORY DIRECTORS

APRU statutory directors have the responsibility of overseeing APRU to operate according to all rules and regulations laid down by the Hong Kong Companies Ordinance.



Salome LAM
Bursar and Director
of Finance,
The Chinese University
of Hong Kong



Prof. Kar Yan TAM
Vice-President for
Administration and Business,
The Hong Kong University of
Science and Technology

APRU PARTNERS

4TH GENERATION UNIVERSITY (4GU) COMMUNITY

The 4GU Community is a global initiative uniting universities, industry, and policymakers to strengthen universities' role in orchestrating regional innovation ecosystems and delivering societal and economic impact. It supports collaboration and best-practice sharing to help institutions advance regional impact, and APRU contributes through the Community Working Group, which advises the board and helps shape engagement, partnerships, and community activities. This involvement connects APRU members to a growing global peer network, enables the sharing of case studies and thought leadership, and expands participation in events, webinars, and collaborative initiatives.



APRU has collaborated on Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) initiatives as a guest member of the *Policy Partnership on Science, Technology and Innovation and the Human Resources Development Working Groups*. APRU has also contributed to dialogues addressing topics including oceans, health, and the digital economy. APRU co-organizes the APEC University Leaders' Forum in collaboration with APEC to bring leaders of education, government and industry to address the biggest challenges of the region.



ADB has a long-standing partnership with APRU. Most recently, APRU and ADB collaborated on the International Conference on Big Data for Disaster Response and Management in Asia and the Pacific. The two organizations have also worked together on the fields of aging and technology and their impact on the labor market with a view to better understand the link between technology and the opportunity to maximize the benefits of longevity.



APRU and The Alliance of National and International Science Organizations for the Belt and Road Regions (ANSO) jointly hosted the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences International Summer School (UCASISS) in 2025, with the theme "Earth Science for a Shared Future." It provided international young talents with an authentic and engaging experience of graduate study at UCAS.



As the home of the APRU International Secretariat, Cyberport is the digital tech flagship of Hong Kong with an innovation digital community of over 1,650 start-ups and technology companies.



With the generous support of the Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth and in partnership with APRU and the National University of Singapore, data.org (a non-governmental organization) launched Southeast Asia's first data capacity accelerator in Singapore in November 2024. APRU and data.org have since collaborated on various initiatives, including the Social Impact Data Science Accelerator (SIDSA), the APRU x Google Tech Policy Hackathon, and an official side event at the UNESCO Global Summit on the Ethics of AI in Bangkok. The initiative aims to produce a cohort of socially responsible data professionals and a social impact training model for universities that can be scaled up across other Southeast Asian countries.



In 2026, APRU and the Digital Education Council (DEC) announced a strategic partnership to give APRU members direct access to global insights on the rapidly evolving impact of AI on higher education. Through shared research, collaboration, and executive briefings, the partnership connects APRU universities with emerging trends, policy developments, and institutional practices shaping AI adoption—supporting evidence-based decision-making and strengthening institutional readiness.



APRU and Elsevier partnered to enhance research collaboration between members and to apply this strength to addressing challenges in the Asia-Pacific. APRU is particularly grateful to Elsevier for its support in the areas of gender equity, sustainability, health, and the digital economy.



The Global Solutions Initiative brings think tanks together to provide the intellectual basis of the Think20 process and inform high-level discussions at the G20, G7, and other global governance forums. The aim is to mobilize change to recouple economic, political and environmental progress with social prosperity. APRU contributed to their Global Solutions Summit 2025 through dialogues on AI, climate, and education, and to the Global Solutions Journal (Issue 11) with an article on the Forest Ecosystems Living Lab Initiative (FELLI).



APRU received funding for three collaborative projects focusing on the impact of AI on society, including AI for Everyone: Benefiting from and Building Trust in the Technology; Transformation of Work in Asia-Pacific in the 21st Century; and AI For Social Good. In 2025, APRU and Google partnered on the APRU Tech Policy Hackathon at the Google offices in Bangkok, Thailand.



Since 2023, Microsoft has supported APRU's focus on how to leverage emerging technologies—particularly generative AI—to shape the future of higher education. Microsoft has provided project funding for the development of a comprehensive whitepaper and project report on generative AI in higher education, and has supported regional policy discourse on the use of AI to address Asia-Pacific challenges at the APEC University Leaders' Forum 2025.



Since 2016, Pacific Rim Research Libraries Alliance (PRRLA) has partnered with APRU, addressing challenges in academic libraries across the Pacific Rim through digitization, shared resource access, and professional development. This collaboration enhances global access to research materials, fosters exchange, and promotes groundbreaking library initiatives.



APRU partnered on a number of THE's high-profile global events, including the Impact and Innovation Summit, the Asia Universities Summit, and Global AI Forum. THE is recognized around the world for its powerful proprietary data, world-recognized rankings and award-winning journalism.



APRU advanced its alignment with the SDGs through multiple UN collaborations. APRU experts contributed to the ILO Technical Advisory Group on Women and the Future of Work in the Asia-Pacific, while the Multi-Hazards Program partnered with the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the SDGs Education for Global Citizenship program collaborated with the Bangkok office. APRU also continued its initiatives with UN ESCAP, including developing statistical guidance for SDG 14, co-running the Asia-Pacific Mayors Academy, and partnering with Google on the AI for Social Good project.



APRU has partnered with University World News (UWN) on media coverage of key APRU events such as the APM, AULF, as well as coverage of the many topical areas of the work such as the impact of SDGs, artificial intelligence and the role of universities to overcome geopolitical tensions. UWN is an online global higher education publication, which provides in-depth, independent news and commentary on higher education and research worldwide. University World News is an open-source website attracting 2 million unique visitors.

APRU EVENTS CALENDAR 2026



Scan to explore
most up-to-date
APRU events

apru.org

Events are listed as of March 31, 2026. In our commitment to keeping you informed with the most current information, please be aware that event details may undergo periodic updates.

Please also note that the eligibility criteria for each APRU program and activity may vary. We encourage you to visit the respective program and event websites for the latest details or contact us to indicate your interest.

UNIVERSITY LEADERS' MEETINGS

30TH ANNUAL PRESIDENTS' MEETING 2026

JUNE 21-23, 2026

Host: The Chinese University of
Hong Kong

Venue: Hong Kong, China

SENIOR INTERNATIONAL LEADERS' MEETING 2026

JUNE 23-24, 2026

Host: The Chinese University of
Hong Kong

Venue: Hong Kong, China

UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVES' SUMMIT 2026

OCTOBER 28-30, 2026

Host: Tohoku University

Venue: Sendai, Japan

APEC UNIVERSITY LEADERS' FORUM 2026

NOVEMBER 15-16, 2026

Host: Tsinghua University and
The Chinese University of Hong
Kong, Shenzhen

Venue: Shenzhen, China

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

SUSTAINABILITY CITIES AND LANDSCAPE CONFERENCE 2026

MAY 21-24, 2026

Host: Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Venue: Shanghai, China

APRU MICROCREDENTIALS WORKSHOP 2026

MAY 26-28, 2026

Host: Tecnológico de Monterrey

Venue: Monterrey, Mexico

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES NETWORK WORKSHOP

JUNE 17-21, 2026

Host: University of the Philippines

Venue: Boracay, Philippines

FOOD SECURITY AND AGRITECH SYMPOSIUM 2026

OCTOBER 5-7, 2026

Host: Simon Fraser University

Venue: Vancouver, Canada

MULTI-HAZARDS SYMPOSIUM 2026

DECEMBER 3-4, 2026

Host: Yonsei University

Venue: Seoul, Korea

GLOBAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 2026

DECEMBER 7-9, 2026

Host: The Chinese University of
Hong Kong

Venue: Hong Kong, China

STUDENT PROGRAMS

VIRTUAL STUDENT EXCHANGE 2025 - 2026*

SEASON 2: JANUARY-JUNE 2026

Host: The Chinese University of Hong Kong

OPEN DIALOGUES 6TH COHORT*

MAY 6-7, 2026

Host: Tecnológico de Monterrey

GLOBAL HEALTH VIRTUAL CASE COMPETITION 2026*

FEBRUARY 1-JUNE 15, 2026

Host: University of Southern California

UNDERGRADUATE LEADERS' PROGRAM

JUNE 22-JULY 3, 2026

Host: Southern University of Science and Technology

Venue: Shenzhen, China

MULTI-HAZARDS SUMMER SCHOOL 2026

JULY 29-AUGUST 1, 2026

Host: Tohoku University

Venue: Sendai, Japan

APRU CERTIFICATE IN GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE LEADERSHIP 2026*

AUGUST 20-SEPTEMBER 11, 2026

Host: University of Southern California and University of Oregon

OPEN DIALOGUES 7TH COHORT*

OCTOBER 2026

Host: Tecnológico de Monterrey

THE 12TH ANNUAL APRU GLOBAL HEALTH STUDENT POSTER CONTEST

DECEMBER 7-9, 2026

Host: The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Venue: Hong Kong, China



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* Virtual event

