



Newsletter

APacCHRIE

● **May 2025**

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APacCHRIE 2025 Conference



Chiang Mai University, Thailand warmly invites you to the APacCHRIE 2025 Conference, held from 28 May to 30 May 2025, in Chiang Mai. This conference provides an excellent platform to connect with hospitality and tourism academics and industry professionals, fostering discussions on rapidly evolving industry trends. Under the theme “Transforming to the Future: Innovation, AI, and Regenerative Tourism and Hospitality”, we look forward to welcoming all delegates to Chiang Mai, the heart of Thai Lanna culture!

Some of our
FEATURED KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Main Conference:



Professor Bela Stantic
School of Information and Communication technology,
Griffith University



Professor Haiyan Song
Associate Dean and Chair Professor, The School of Hotel and Tourism Management of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Youth Conference:



Professor Kaye Chon
Dean and Chair Professor, The School of Hotel and Tourism Management of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Workshops:



Professor Peter Kim
Co-Editor-in-Chief of Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research



Professor Cathy Hsu
Editor-in-Chief of Tourism Management

Topic Areas

- Innovation in Tourism and Hospitality
- AI for Tourism and Hospitality
- Emerging ICT in Tourism and Hospitality
- Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG) in Tourism and Hospitality
- Regenerative Tourism
- Tourism Planning, Development, and Sustainability
- Special Interest Tourism (SIT)
- Creativity and Culture in Tourism and Hospitality
- Critical Issues and Cases in Tourism and Hospitality
- Management and Marketing in Tourism and Hospitality
- Tourism Logistics
- Tourist Experiences and Changing in Tourist Behaviors
- Service Designs in Tourism and Hospitality
- tourism Impacts
- New Trends In Tourism and Hospitality
- Other Topics Related to Tourism and Hospitality

2025 APacCHRIE Board meeting



On January 18, 2025, we held our board meeting at the Eastin Grand Hotel Phayathai in Bangkok. The meeting was productive, with many accomplishments and new initiatives presented by our board members. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our founding chairman, Professor Kaye Chon, and past president, Professor Peter Kim, for their invaluable support and advice.

Following the presentations by the executive committee, our directors and regional/country representatives provided updates on their achievements and ongoing projects. We also extend a warm welcome to the new board members who have joined us!

Our host of the APacCHRIE 2025 Conference also shared updates about the planned activities for the upcoming conference this May in Chiang Mai. The meeting concluded with a delightful lunch featuring exquisite Thai cuisine at the hotel.

Networking Event in Mainland China:

An Online Symposium about the Breakthrough of Hotel and Tourism Management Education in the AI Era

On April 12, 2025, an online symposium was hosted by APacCHRIE and co-organized by the SHTM Mainland Alumni Association of HKPolyU and Guangzhou Wentour Information Technology Co., LTD. The theme of the meeting was: How can the HTM major break through in the AI Era by Taking Advantage of the minor specialization trend? The meeting attracted 125 college teachers to participate. The meeting was hosted by Dr. Kevin Yu, the representative of APacCHRIE in Mainland China. Dr. Lawrence Fong, the president of APacCHRIE, introduced the development of ICHRIE and APacCHRIE.



Dr. Truman Huang, the Director of Networking of APacCHRIE initiated a discussion on the construction of minor specialization for digital and intelligent operation of hotel and tourism enterprises under the background of the "Double Thousand Plan". During the roundtable forum, Dr. Wang Dan, an associate professor from the School of Hotel and Tourism Management at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Professor Tian Furong, the dean and professor of the School of Tourism at Kunming University, Hu Xiaohan, the executive dean of Shanghai Lausanne Hotel Management Institute, Professor Chen Guang, the dean of Modern Hotel Management at Chengdu Ginkgo Hotel Management Institute, and Dr. Simon Tian, the founder of Menduner Recruitment Platform, shared their insights. Dr. Zhang Yong, the president of Fengyue Hotels & Resorts, Yin Ying, the president of Jinling Hotel Management Company, and Chen Mengchao, the vice president of Wanda Hotels & Resorts Group discussed the construction of minor specialization from the perspective of talent supply and demand.

Networking Event in Mainland China: "Paper Craft" salon

On March 22, 2025, the "Paper Craft" salon, hosted by APacCHRIE and organized by Fengyue Hotel & Resort, Fondney Hotel Shanghai Hongqiao and Guangzhou Wentour Education Consulting Co., LTD., was held at Fondney Hotel Shanghai Hongqiao. Twenty-one representatives from the education sector and the hotel industry attended the salon.



The salon was hosted by Dr. Kevin Yu, the representative of APacCHRIE in Mainland China. The salon invited Dr. Wang Xingyu from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Dr. Wen Xueqi from Tongji University, and Dr. Sun Yan from Shanghai Polytechnic University to give keynote speeches on doctoral dissertation writing and research methods as well as the transformation of research paradigms driven by AI. During the salon session, representatives from the education sector discussed how to publish high-quality journal papers, while representatives from the industry explored the innovation and value exploration of papers from an industry perspective.

Eta Sigma Delta (ESD) University of Macau (UM)

Chapter Induction Ceremony cum Industry Elites Panel Discussion on “The Myth of Professionalism”

Eta Sigma Delta (ESD) is an international honor society that recognizes the hospitality and tourism students for their outstanding achievement and professionalism. To date, there are over 90 ESD chapters in the world. ESD UM Chapter, which is the first and only one in Macau SAR, has successfully held its second induction ceremony on March 29, 2025. The ceremony has received over 40 guests. The Chapter is honored to receive two distinguished industry guests who were Ms. Joyce Wong (Executive Director, Training, Learning Academy, Melco Resorts & Entertainment) and Ms. Rebecca Tam (Director, Learning & Development, SJM Resorts S.A.). The UM FBA faculty members included Prof. Amy So (Assistant Dean in Business Engagement and Alumni Affairs), Prof. Soey Lei (Assistant Professor in Integrated Resort and Tourism Management), and Prof. Jacey Choe (Assistant Professor in Integrated Resort and Tourism Management).



The ceremony started from a welcome speech given by Mr. Jacques Wang (President of the ESD UM Chapter), followed by an opening remark made by Prof. Lawrence Fong (Faculty Advisor of the ESD UM Chapter). Then the student speakers delivered a brief speech on the Six Points of Honor, followed by the oath administered by the Chapter President. After that, Prof. Amy So presented the cord and certificates to the ESD member, and then delivered a congratulatory remark.

Right after the ceremony, the two invited industry guests shared their valuable experience and insights on the topic entitled “The Myth of Professionalism” in a panel discussion session moderated by Ms. Michelle Yeung (The 2nd Vice President of the ESD UM Chapter). The panel discussion was filled with active and constructive interactions among the speakers, the students and the moderator. The event was concluded by a presentation of the certificates of appreciation to the speakers by the Chapter Advisor and President.

Philippines

2025 Country/Regional Report

***Unveiled: Philippines to Host ASEAN Tourism Forum 2026 — A Gateway to Southeast Asia's Hidden Treasures!**

Philippines Embarks on Tourism Triumph 🌟

In a historic stride for Philippine tourism, the Philippines proudly assumed leadership of the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) 2026 during a ceremonial handover last January 20, 2025, at Malaysia's Johor International Convention Center. Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco accepted the symbolic gavel from Malaysia's Tourism Minister, Dato Sri Tiong King Sing, cementing the country's pledge to spearhead this premier regional event. Slated for January 2026, the ATF will anchor its flagship ASEAN Tourism Ministers' Meeting in Cebu—a province renowned for its cultural heritage and coastal allure. Preceding the main forum, preparatory sessions will unfold across two iconic Philippine destinations: high-stakes strategy talks in Manila, the bustling capital, and collaborative workshops amid the paradise shores of Boracay.

This landmark role not only spotlights the Philippines' growing influence in Southeast Asian tourism but also sets the stage to showcase its world-class destinations and dynamic cultural tapestry to global leaders and travelers.



At the ASEAN Tourism Forum's closing ceremony in Johor Bahru, Malaysia (20 January 2025), Malaysia's Tourism Minister Dato Sri Tiong King Sing handed a symbolic gavel to Philippine Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco, marking the Philippines' role as host of the 2026 ASEAN Tourism Forum.

Philippines as Vice Chair 🌟

During the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2025, Tourism Secretary Christina Garcia Frasco assumed dual roles as vice chair of the 28th ASEAN Tourism Ministers' Meeting and lead coordinator for the ASEAN Tourism Sectoral Plan (ATSP) Post-2025. The ministerial meeting gathered delegates from ASEAN nations (Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore, Thailand, Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Vietnam) and partner countries (Russia, Japan, India, South Korea). In her capacity as ATSP architect, Frasco outlined strategies to advance a tourism framework prioritizing equitable, sustainable growth across the region. Her proposals aimed to harmonize economic development with inclusivity and environmental resilience.

The Tourism Chief of the Philippines also called ASEAN a "family." "United by a shared vision for the mutual prosperity of our nations, we perpetuate the notion that tourism is a force for good: transforming lives, sustaining livelihoods, forging friendships, creating memories etched in the hearts of all who come upon our streets and shores."

**Condensed from an article published by the Philippine Department of Tourism on-line*



*Dr. Benigno Glenn R. Ricaforte, PhD, RMicro
Country/Regional
Representative-The
Philippines*

South Korea

2025 Country Regional Report

◆ Inbound Tourism in South Korea: Trends and Insights

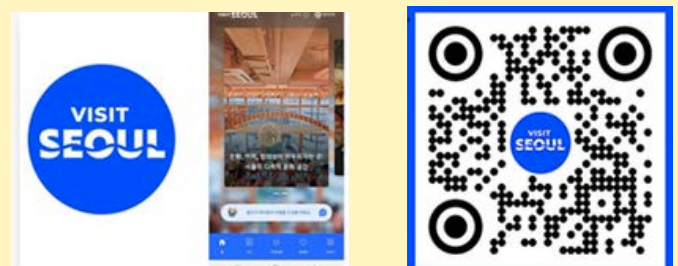
In 2024, South Korea's tourism industry showed a strong recovery from the pandemic, welcoming approximately 16.4 million international visitors—a 48% increase from the previous year and reaching 94% of pre-pandemic levels (Statista, 2024). This rebound was largely fueled by the global popularity of Korean Wave (Hallyu) content, including K-pop, Korean dramas, and cuisine. Chinese tourists accounted for 28% of all international arrivals, followed by visitors from Japan, Taiwan, and the United States. To further stimulate inbound travel, South Korea has announced that it will implement visa-free entry for Chinese group tourists starting in Q3 2025 (Reuters, 2025).

◆ Domestic Tourism and Spending Patterns (Q1 2025)

In 2024, South Korea's tourism industry showed a strong recovery from the pandemic, welcoming approximately 16.4 million international visitors—a 48% increase from the previous year and reaching 94% of pre-pandemic levels (Statista, 2024). This rebound was largely fueled by the global popularity of Korean Wave (Hallyu) content, including K-pop, Korean dramas, and cuisine. Chinese tourists accounted for 28% of all international arrivals, followed by visitors from Japan, Taiwan, and the United States. To further stimulate inbound travel, South Korea has announced that it will implement visa-free entry for Chinese group tourists starting in Q3 2025 (Reuters, 2025).

◆ Emerging Tourism Trends: Travel Tech and Smart Tourism

South Korea is increasingly recognized for its seamless integration of technology into the travel experience, positioning itself as one of Asia's leading Travel Tech destinations. For international visitors, this means highly efficient, user-friendly, and interactive tourism services powered by AI, big data, virtual reality (VR), and digital payment systems. In February 2025, the Seoul Tourism Organization introduced an AI-powered chatbot on the 'Visit Seoul' app to enhance the visitor experience. This service provides real-time, customized tourism information tailored specifically for international travelers. By offering immediate responses and personalized recommendations, the chatbot significantly improves convenience, enabling tourists to efficiently navigate the city, discover local attractions, and access up-to-date event information. This initiative represents Seoul's ongoing commitment to adopting advanced technology in tourism, boosting the city's appeal and competitiveness as a leading international travel destination (Korea JoongAng Daily, 2025).



VISIT SEOUL App Download (Seoul Tourism Organization, 2025)

South Korea

2025 Country Regional Report

◆ Rise in Pet-Friendly Tourism

A growing trend in 2024 has been the rise of pet-friendly travel. According to a Korea Tourism Organization survey, 60.4% of pet owners traveled domestically with their pets—marking a significant increase from previous years. Korean Air also reported a 260.7% surge in international pet travel bookings from 2020 to 2024 (Korea Bizwire, 2025). In response to this trend, initiatives such as the “Puppy Travel Map” and a “Pet-Friendly Certification” system for accommodations and cafés have been introduced.



The rise in pet air travel aligns with broader trends in pet-friendly tourism. (Korea Bizwire, 2025)

◆ Strategic Outlook

Looking ahead, South Korea has set ambitious tourism growth targets: attracting 18.5 million international visitors in 2025 and reaching 30 million annual tourists by 2027 (Korea.net, 2023). These goals reflect a strategic vision that integrates cultural influence, digital innovation, and inclusive tourism experiences. Building upon the strong rebound of inbound travel driven by Hallyu, increased domestic travel spending, and the expansion of smart tourism infrastructure, Korea is prioritizing seamless digital services, such as AI-powered travel assistance and contactless transactions. Additionally, emerging trends like pet-friendly tourism reflect a shift toward personalized and lifestyle-oriented travel. By aligning policy, technology, and consumer needs, South Korea aims to become a premier global tourism destination.

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Prof. Hyun-Jung (Helen) Choi
Country/Regional Representative-South Korea

Taiwan

2025 Country Regional Report

TRANSFORMING TAIWAN'S TOURISM: A DUAL STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABILITY AND SMART INNOVATION

✿ Rebuilding Stronger: Taiwan's Vision for Smart and Sustainable Tourism

In 2024, global tourism witnessed a strong and steady recovery. According to the UN World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism), an estimated 1.4 billion international overnight tourists were recorded worldwide. Reflecting this global momentum, Taiwan's tourism sector posted encouraging gains, welcoming 7.85 million inbound visitors, a 21.13% increase from 6.49 million in 2023. As Taiwan moves into 2025, tourism is expected to play an increasingly vital role in driving national economic growth and contributing to broader global recovery.

For 2024–2025, the Taiwan Tourism Administration has launched a Dual-Axis Transformation Strategy, positioning sustainability and digital innovation as the two core pillars of national tourism development. This strategic shift is operationalized through three key focus areas:

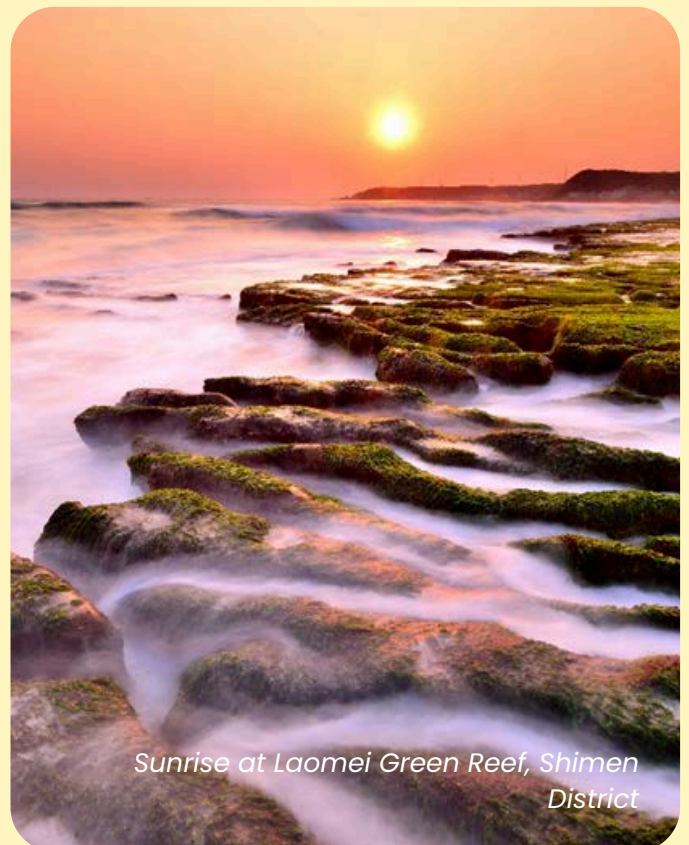
- Brand Taiwan – enhancing destination branding and international visibility.
- Charming Taiwan – aiming to cultivate talent, enhance tourism inclusivity, and drive regional regeneration.
- Smart Taiwan – advancing digital infrastructure, immersive technologies, and smart service system.

✿ Key Trends and Government Priorities

Aligned with global trends and domestic development objectives, Taiwan has identified sustainability as a core component of its tourism strategy. The government actively encourages accommodations to eliminate single-use amenities, with new regulations taking effect in July 2025 that legally prohibit hotels from offering disposable items.

At the local level, tourism destinations are actively advancing innovative programs that integrate cultural narratives, environmental protection, and low-carbon travel, fostering regional revitalization and a shift toward sustainable development.

Smart tourism represents another key priority, as reflected in the development of six national-level smart scenic areas equipped with AI, AR/VR, IoT, and digital twin technologies. Complementing these efforts, the launch of the Taiwan PASS system offers an integrated platform for transportation, attractions access, and itinerary planning. Additionally, cloud-based digital twins support scenic area management and deliver more personalized visitor experiences.



Sunrise at Laomei Green Reef, Shimen District

Taiwan

2025 Country Regional Report

✧ Major Opportunities and Challenges

Taiwan's tourism industry stands at a strong potential, offering both opportunities and challenges. On the opportunity side, hosting major international events such as the World Masters Games 2025 is enhancing Taiwan's soft power, global visibility, and destination branding. At the same time, the expansion into new and emerging markets, along with the development of post-MICE and transit tourism sectors, offers strong potential for business growth and market diversification.

However, the industry continues to face several challenges. Most notably, ongoing labor shortages, intensified by Taiwan's world-lowest fertility rate (1.11 in 2024). In response, the government has prompted the workforce renewal initiatives, encouraging second-career professionals and older adults to enter the tourism and hospitality sectors. Additionally, rising operational costs, driven by inflation, wage growth, and the increasing demands of ESG compliance, are placing significant financial pressure on small and medium-sized enterprises. Lastly, climate resilience remains a critical concern, especially in light of recent natural disasters such as the 2024 Hualien earthquake, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive crisis management systems and infrastructure planning.



Dr. Shu-Ying (Sami) Lin
Regional Representative-Taiwan

✧ Outlook for 2025 and Beyond

Looking ahead to 2025, Taiwan's tourism industry is expected to deepen its development in key areas such as artificial intelligence applications and sustainable tourism standards. As global tourism continues to evolve, Taiwan is well-positioned to create new opportunities, strengthen its international presence, and foster deeper global connections, driven by innovation, resilience, and forward-looking strategies.



Hound Rock and Sleeping Beauty Rock,
Luda Township, Taitung

Sources:

Tourism Administration, MOTC (2024–2025 Dual-Transformation Tourism Policy & Action Plan)

Thailand

2025 Country Regional Report

Tourism continues to be a key driver of Thailand's economy. In 2024, the sector contributed approximately 12.84% of GDP and generated over 1.7 trillion Thai Baht in revenue. As of early 2025, international arrivals have rebounded significantly, with key source markets including China, Malaysia, India, South Korea, and Russia. Domestic tourism has also remained strong, boosted by ongoing government support and promotional campaigns.

Seasonal Experiences and Cultural Highlights

Year-round festivals continue to elevate Thailand's cultural tourism appeal.

- Summer (Mar–Jun): The iconic Songkran Festival, celebrated nationwide in April, marks Thai New Year with water fights, merit-making, and cultural performances.
- Rainy Season (Jul–Oct): Khao Phansa, the Buddhist Lent, features Ubon Ratchathani's Candle Festival, showcasing stunning wax sculptures and traditional parades. The Phuket Vegetarian Festival is a Chinese Taoist celebration known for its spiritual significance and visually dramatic rituals.
- Winter Season (Nov–Feb): Loy Krathong and Yi Peng festivals enchant travelers with floating offerings and glowing lanterns in places like Sukhothai and Chiang Mai. Satun International Kite Festival fills the sky with vibrant and artistic kites in the southern Thailand.

Amazing Thailand Grand Tourism and Sports Year 2025

Launched in February, the "Amazing Thailand Grand Tourism and Sports Year 2025" campaign aims to attract 39 million international visitors and generate 3 trillion Baht in tourism revenue. The campaign showcases Thailand's strengths across five key areas: major cultural festivals, natural wonders, exclusive travel privileges, international engagement, and milestone celebrations. Flagship events include the 33rd SEA Games, ASEAN Para Games, MotoGP Thailand, and the FIVB Volleyball World Championship. This initiative reflects Thailand's rising status as both a global tourism and sports destination initiated by Tourism Authority of Thailand.

Thailand

2025 Country Regional Report

Looking Ahead

Sustainable and Regenerative Tourism

Thailand is shifting from sustainable to regenerative tourism, emphasizing positive contributions to communities and ecosystems. Initiatives in provinces like Chiang Mai, Nan, and Loei, encourage travelers to engage in low-impact activities such as forest conservation, local craft workshops, and community-run homestays. These efforts reflect a broader commitment to environmental stewardship and inclusive tourism development.

Innovation and Smart Tourism

Digital innovation is playing a transformative role in Thailand's tourism sector. AI-powered travel assistants, contactless services, and mobile translation apps are improving the visitor experience. Augmented reality (AR) and virtual tours are also enhancing cultural storytelling at historical landmarks. EV cars are rising and charging stations have been installed all over the country to meet higher demands. These technologies not only increase convenience but help deepen travelers' connections with Thai heritage.

Tourism Workforce and Education

To support the evolving industry, Thailand is investing in its human capital. Educational institutions are integrating sustainability, digital fluency, and service innovation into tourism programs. This is especially vital in rural areas, where workforce shortages remain a challenge. Upskilling efforts are helping ensure that tourism growth is inclusive and future-ready. With renewed energy, strategic vision, and major infrastructure and digital upgrades underway, Thailand is not only recovering but redefining itself as a premier destination for cultural, experiential, and active travel. In 2025, the Kingdom stands ready to offer the world unforgettable journeys rooted in heritage, innovation, and hospitality.



Dr. Arinya Pongwat
Country/Regional Representative-Thailand

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member



FOR

HOSPITALITY & TOURISM EDUCATORS

VALUE AND RESOURCES FOR THE FUTURE

Membership Highlights:

- The ICHRIE Community Forum
- Spotlight for Gold Premium Level programs or school
- Special Interest Groups (SIGs)*
- Online access to JHTC Case Studies and Teaching Notes and other journals
- ESD Honor Society Chapter Option
- Federation Events & Networking
- Deans & Directors Meetings & Workshops
- Webinars with Industry and Colleagues
- Annual ICHRIE Conference reduced rates
- Multiple complimentary professional opportunity postings **

* ESD students not included

** Four (4) complimentary postings for Gold Premium Members;
Two (2) complimentary postings for Premium Members

Membership Levels

Gold Premium Exclusive

10 full & 25 associate members for US\$2370

Valued at \$7175

Premium Institutional

5 full & 15 associate members for US\$1215

Valued at \$4100

Emerging Nations Premium Member

5 full & 15 associate members for US\$105

Valued at \$600

Executive Member-4 year

1 faculty member for US\$565

(4-year institution, corporate)(ESD Eligible)

Executive Member- 2 year

1 faculty member for US\$365

(2-year institution) (ESD Eligible)

Exclusive Individual

1 full faculty members for US\$215

Special Individual

1 full faculty members for US\$30

Graduate students; adjunct/part-time faculty; secondary, retired, and emerging nations educators

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Area Consultant II: South East Asia	Dr. Pornpisanu Promsivapallop
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