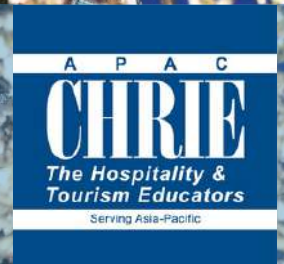


APRIL - MAY 2026

NEWSLETTER

# APacCHRIE NEWSLETTER



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# Main Conference & Youth Conference

Ritsumeikan University Business School (RBS), together with The Hong Kong Polytechnic University's School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) invites you to the APacCHRIE 2026 Conference in Osaka, Japan from May 28 to 31, 2026

Japan's hospitality and tourism sector continues to experience dynamic transformation as international travel rebounds and the country moves beyond the immediate impacts of the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai. While the surge in hotel demand associated with the Expo has begun to stabilize, inbound tourism remains robust. International visitors continue to return in large numbers, supported by a favorable exchange rate, expanded flight capacity, and sustained global interest in Japanese culture, cuisine, and destinations. As a result, major cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, and Fukuoka are witnessing continued investment in hotels, convention facilities, and tourism infrastructure, reflecting both strong inbound demand and the government's long-term strategy to position tourism as a key driver of economic growth.

One of the most notable developments shaping the future of Japan's hospitality landscape is the construction of the Osaka Integrated Resort (IR), scheduled to open in 2030. Led by MGM Resorts International in partnership with ORIX Corporation, the project represents Japan's first large-scale integrated resort and is expected to create approximately 15,000 jobs across more than 4,000 occupational categories. The scale and complexity of this project are generating significant discussion regarding the development of internationally competitive hospitality talent and the role of higher education in preparing the future workforce.

Against this backdrop, Japan will host the APacCHRIE 2026 Conference in Osaka from 28-31 May 2026, co-organized by Ritsumeikan University Business School and the School of Hotel and Tourism Management at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The conference theme, "Futurizing Tourism and Hospitality: Embracing New Challenges and Innovation," reflects the sector's ongoing transformation in response to technological change, workforce restructuring, and evolving global travel patterns.

A highlight of the conference program will be a keynote session focusing on the Osaka IR development. The session will include an overview of the latest developments of MGM Osaka, followed by a panel discussion on workforce development and talent strategies toward the 2030 opening. The discussion will bring together industry leaders, hospitality educators, and other stakeholders to examine how Japan and the broader Asia-Pacific region can cultivate globally competent hospitality professionals.

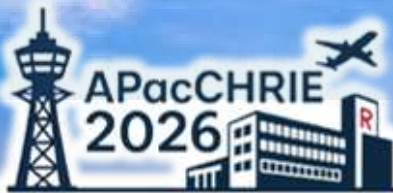
In addition to the academic program, a series of unique excursions have been designed by students from the Tourism Management program at Ritsumeikan University Business School. These excursions highlight distinctive aspects of Japanese destinations and industries—ranging from traditional craftsmanship and regional food culture to emerging tourism initiatives—offering international participants opportunities to experience Japan's tourism ecosystem through student-led perspectives.

Despite ongoing geopolitical tensions and uncertainties affecting international mobility, the conference has received strong interest from the global academic community. Submissions have been received not only from across Asia but also from Europe, North America, and other regions, demonstrating the continued vitality of hospitality and tourism research and the importance of international academic collaboration during a period of global change.



**Prof. Keiko Nishimoto**

*Conference Chair*



**24<sup>th</sup> APacCHRIE Conference**  
**17<sup>th</sup> APacCHRIE Youth Conference**

**Futurizing Tourism and Hospitality: Embracing New Challenges and Innovation**

[www.APacCHRIE2026.org](http://www.APacCHRIE2026.org)



**OSAKA JAPAN**  
 May 28-31 2026

# Registration fee

*JPY(Japanese Yen)*

Registration Type	Gala Dinner	Early Bird Rate Until April 15, 2026	Regular Rate After April 16, 2026
CHRIE member <i>*Evidence required</i>	Included	60,000	70,000
	Not Included	40,000	50,000
Non-CHRIE member	Included	75,000	85,000
	Not Included	55,000	65,000
Graduate student <i>*Evidence required</i>	Included	55,000	55,000
	Not Included	35,000	35,000
Youth Conference <i>*Evidence required</i>	Included	35,000	35,000
	Not Included	15,000	15,000
Gala Dinner Only		20,000	20,000



## 2026 APacCHRIE

## TOKYO SYMPOSIUM

## BOARD MEETING



The APacCHRIE Tokyo Symposium successfully wrapped up at Tokyo Midtown Yaesu! A heartfelt thank you to our host, Ritsumeikan University, for hosting us and organizing the event!



Following the opening remarks by Prof. Kaye Chon, Founding Chair of APacCHRIE and Dean of School of Hotel and Tourism Management at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, we enjoyed a series of insightful presentations from distinguished speakers from different sectors.



We are deeply grateful to our board members for sharing their valuable perspectives during the panel discussion on “The Future of Tourism and Hospitality Education”. Special thanks to the leaders of APacCHRIE for introducing our organization, providing updates, and speaking about how to make a greater impact on society.

The board meeting was held on the second day, where the achievements and dedication of our board members were recognized. We also received exciting updates from our host of the upcoming [#APacCHRIE2026](https://www.apacchrie2026.org/) Conference in [#Osaka](https://www.apacchrie2026.org/), which is now in full preparation!

Updates about the APacCHRIE 2026 Conference:  
<https://www.apacchrie2026.org/>



# PHILIPPINES

## COUNTRY REPORT

### ***From Farm to Table to Travel: Philippines Launches Roadmap to Boost Farm and Gastronomy Tourism\****

#### ***Benigno Glenn R. Ricaforte, PhD***

In a major step to diversify its tourism offerings and strengthen rural livelihoods, the Philippines unveiled the Farm Tourism Strategic Action Plan (FTSAP) 2026–2031. The plan, launched by the Department of Tourism (DOT), the Department of Agriculture (DA), and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), with private sector partners from the Farm Tourism Development Board (FTDB), aims to turn farm and gastronomy experiences into sustained economic opportunities for Filipino farmers and rural communities.

Rooted in the Farm Tourism Act of 2016 (Republic Act 10816), the FTSAP moves beyond policy to full operational execution. It seeks to connect tourism demand directly with agricultural production and rural enterprise by strengthening accreditation systems, weaving farm tourism sites into structured tourism circuits, and aligning infrastructure, enterprise development, and market access.

#### ***Key elements of the roadmap include:***

- A joint governance framework: A Joint Technical Working Group, comprising representatives from DOT, DA, DTI, and private sector stakeholders, will oversee program implementation, coordinate among sectors, and develop detailed work plans for farm, food, and gastronomy tourism nationwide.
- Expanded accreditation and capacity building: DOT has already accredited 138 farm tourism sites as of February 2026, reflecting the growing role of farm tourism in diversifying the country's tourism portfolio.
- Infrastructure and circuits: The plan envisions Farm-to-Market Roads aligned with tourism circuits to improve access to farm experiences and the markets for agricultural products.
- Strengthened supply chains and market access: The Memorandum of Agreement signed by DOT and DA formalizes closer collaboration to expand offerings, promote Filipino cuisine and agricultural heritage, and connect farmers directly with hotels, restaurants, and other tourism establishments.
- Grassroots impact: By linking visitors' demand to farmers, rural enterprises, and local producers, the plan aims to translate tourism into steady income, employment, and long-term livelihoods at the community level.
- Growth in agritourism: Tourism leaders emphasize that global demand for agritourism is rising, presenting an opportunity for the Philippines to position its countryside as a premier, value-driven tourism destination. Secretary of Tourism Christina Garcia Frasco and Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. underscored the plan's potential to stimulate rural development, modernize supply chains, and celebrate Filipino cuisine and agricultural heritage.



Tourism association leaders and industry stakeholders join the DOT, DA, and DTI during the launch of the Farm Tourism Strategic Action Plan (FTSAP), reaffirming whole-of-government and industry support to advance the country's farm and gastronomy tourism.

DOT Secretary Frasco highlighted agritourism's role in rural development and the Philippines' readiness to participate in a global shift toward value-driven tourism. She noted that tourism demand for food and culinary experiences can directly benefit farmers and rural communities when linked to local production. Agriculture Secretary Laurel echoed the need for stable market opportunities that encourage value-adding and integrated supply chains, ensuring agriculture contributes meaningfully to the service economy.

Looking forward, the FTDSAP positions the Philippines to grow its agritourism offerings while safeguarding rural livelihoods. Through coordinated policy, stronger market linkages, and collaborative implementation, the country aims to deliver authentic farm and gastronomic experiences that reflect the country's agricultural heritage and diverse regional flavors—benefiting visitors and rural communities alike.

*\*Condensed from an article published by the Philippine Department of Tourism on-line (<https://www.lovethephilippines.travel/newsroom-and-media/news/dot-da-dti-launch-national-roadmap-for-stronger-farm-tourism>)*

**Dr. Benigno Glenn R. Ricaforte,  
PhD, RMicro**

*Country/Regional  
Representative-The Philippines*



# MONGOLIA

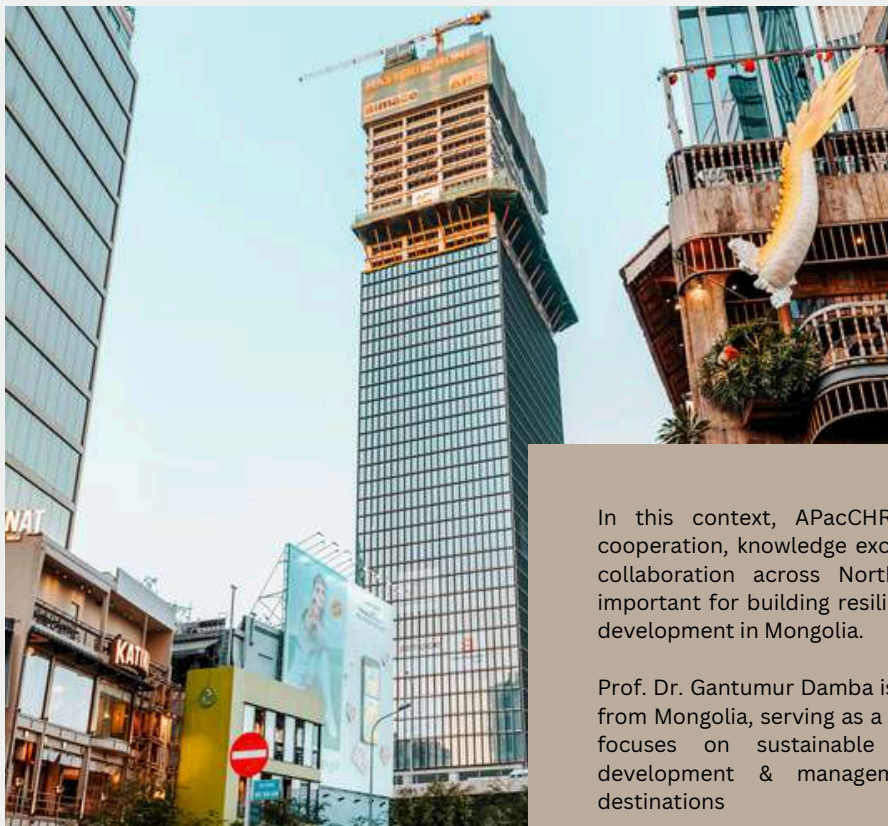
## COUNTRY REPORT

### APacCHRIE Country Representative in Mongolia

Mongolia's tourism and hospitality sector has entered a new phase of recovery and strategic development following the global pandemic. Increasingly, tourism is recognized as a key driver for diversifying Mongolia's mining-dependent economy. Under the Government's national initiative, "Years to Visit Mongolia (2023-2028)," the country aims to attract over one million international visitors annually while promoting year-round and regionally balanced tourism growth.

Mongolia's competitive advantage lies in its rich nomadic heritage, vast natural landscapes, and strong potential for nature-based, adventure, and cultural tourism. These unique assets position Mongolia as an emerging destination for experiential and sustainable tourism in the Asia-Pacific region. However, the sector continues to face structural challenges, including limited infrastructure in rural areas, uneven service quality, and a shortage of professionally trained human resources.

Tourism and hospitality education therefore plays a critical role in supporting sustainable sector development. Over the past three decades, Mongolia has expanded its academic capacity, with multiple universities offering tourism-related programs at bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels. At the same time, vocational education institutions contribute significantly to workforce preparation. Nevertheless, tourism remains a relatively small academic field, highlighting the need for continued investment in both higher education and industry-oriented training.



In parallel, international hotel and resort developments are increasing, reflecting growing investor confidence in Mongolia's tourism potential. This expansion further intensifies the demand for skilled professionals across the sector.

Strengthening collaboration among academia, industry, and policymakers is therefore essential. Partnerships through internships, applied research, and professional training can enhance service quality, innovation, and sustainable destination management.

In this context, APacCHRIE plays a vital role in fostering regional cooperation, knowledge exchange, and joint research initiatives. Expanding collaboration across Northeast and Central Asia will be particularly important for building resilient tourism systems and advancing sustainable development in Mongolia.

Prof. Dr. Gantumur Damba is a tourism and hospitality scholar and educator from Mongolia, serving as a Country Representative of APacCHRIE. His work focuses on sustainable tourism governance, destination product development & management and tourism education in emerging destinations



**Prof. Dr. Gantumur Damba (Gana)**

*Country/Regional Representative-Mongolia*

# HONG KONG

## COUNTRY REPORT



Hong Kong is reshaping tourism, prioritising quality, place and sustainability over sheer volume. In 2025 the city received about 50 million visitors (up 12%) with hotel occupancy near 85–87%, but the real shift is the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong’s Tourism Industry 2.0 launched in December 2024. Its 133 measures reframe tourism as “everywhere,” weaving culture, sport, nature and large events into urban life and positioning Hong Kong as the Event Capital of Asia.

Kai Tak exemplifies the strategy. The former runway is now a vibrant harbourfront district anchored by Kai Tak Sports Park, the city’s first multi-purpose sports, entertainment and leisure precinct (50,000-seat stadium built to international standards). The stadium’s horseshoe bowl, retractable seating and dedicated broadcast facilities support athletics, football, concerts and e-sports, while rainwater capture, solar shading, energy-efficient lighting and greening advance Blueprint 2.0’s low-carbon goals. Kai Tak balances international draw with everyday community use. Regional fixtures, Asian Rugby Sevens, an ASEAN athletics meet, a waterfront marathon and an e-sports championship, sit alongside weekday training sessions, school carnivals, amateur leagues, open “play nights” and monthly recreation festivals from Zumba to skateboarding. That steady everyday use generates reliable footfall, supports local businesses and embeds the precinct in neighbourhood life. No wonder the Sports Park was honoured as one of TIME magazine’s “The World’s Greatest Places of 2026,” the only Hong Kong destination on the list; TIME praised the park for revitalising the city’s once-quiet waterfront.

Source: <https://www.kaitaksportspark.com.hk/newsroom/Kai-Tak-Sports-Park-Welcomes-%E2%80%9CThe-Chief-Executive%E2%80%99s-2025-Policy-Address%E2%80%9D>



Source: <https://www.discoverhongkong.com/eng/plan/guided-tour/geopark-hiking-tour.html>

Beyond Kai Tak, Blueprint 2.0 pairs Lantau’s Geopark trails, marine protection and curated island eco-itineraries with high-value MICE pilots to direct demand toward authentic nature experiences. The Hong Kong Tourism Board is also rolling out a Live Travel Map with an AI itinerary planner using a theme-park style interface to show live wait times and generate micro-itineraries that nudge off-peak, distributed visitation. As a Greater Bay Area (GBA) “super-connector,” Hong Kong leverages high-speed links and joint GBA campaigns to enable seamless multi-destination trips. Together, these moves signal a tightly focused, future-oriented effort to anchor mega-events in community use, blend smart ecology with place-making, and scale cross-border connectivity for more regenerative urban tourism.



**Dr. Louisa Lee**

*Regional Representative-Hong Kong*

# VIETNAM

## COUNTRY REPORT

Vietnam's hospitality and tourism sector is entering a strong growth phase in 2026, supported by its resilience and increasing popularity as a global travel destination.



According to the Vietnam National Authority of Tourism and the General Statistics Office, international arrivals exceeded two million visitors for three consecutive months (December 2025 to February 2026). In the first two months of 2026 alone, Vietnam welcomed nearly 4.7 million international visitors, up 18.1% compared to the same period in 2025. This positive start creates strong expectations for the year, with a target of 25 million international visitors in 2026.

Regional markets continue to drive growth. Visitors from Northeast and Southeast Asia account for the largest share, supported by convenient travel and strong air connections. The Republic of Korea remains the top source market, followed by China. Growth from Japan and Taiwan also remains stable. In Southeast Asia, countries such as the Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia are showing strong increases thanks to improved regional connectivity.

Long-haul and emerging markets are also growing. India is one of the fastest-growing markets, while European countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Russia continue to bring high-value visitors. The United States remains an important long-haul market.



Vietnam's tourism appeal is strengthened by its safety, political stability, improved visa policies, and better international flight connections. Key destinations such as Da Nang, Hanoi, and Ho Chi Minh City continue to expand their offerings, combining natural beauty, cultural heritage, and diverse cuisine.



Looking ahead, Vietnam is focusing on sustainable tourism, digital transformation, and smart tourism development. With strong cooperation between government, businesses, and universities, the tourism industry is well positioned for continued growth and long-term success.



**Dr. Minh Nguyen**

*Country/Regional Representative-Vietnam*

# Current Board Members

**Dr. Lawrence Hoc Nang Fong - Immediate Past President**

**Prof. Kyungsoo Han - President**

**Dr. Deniz Kucukusta - Vice President**

**Dr. Bongkosh N. Rittichainuwat - Secretary**

**Dr. Arthur Wang - Treasurer**

**Dr. Daniel Leung - Director of Education**

**Ms. Pichaya Noranitiphadungkarn - Director of Industry Services**

**Dr. Soey Lei - Director of Marketing**

**Prof. Shirley Guevarra - Director of Member Services and Development**

**Dr. Xin Truman Huang - Director of Networking**

**Dr. Choongbeom (CB) Choi - Director of Research**

**Prof. Hiroaki Saito - Director at Large**

**Prof. Sunny Ham - Area Consultant I: East Asia**

**Dr. Pornpisanu Promsivapallop - Area Consultant II: South East Asia**

**Dr. Chloe Kim - Area Consultant III: Oceania**

**Prof. (Dr.) Manohar Sajani - Area Consultant IV: Indian Sub-continent**

**Dr Eerang Park - Country/Regional Representative-Australia**

**Dr Md Ariful Hoque - Country/Regional Representative-Bangladesh**

**Prof. Kevin Shichun Yu - Country/Regional Representative-China**

**Dr. Vikas Gupta - Country/Regional Representative-Fiji**

**Dr. Louisa Lee - Regional Representative-Hong Kong**

**Mr. Dennie Matthews - Country/Regional Representative-India**

**Dr. I Made Sudjana - Country/Regional Representative-Indonesia**

**Prof. Keiko Nishimoto - Country/Regional Representative-Japan**

**Dr. Jacey Choe - Regional Representative-Macau**

**Dr. Kandappan Balasubramanian - Country/Regional Representative-Malaysia**

**Prof. Dr. Gantumur Damba (Gana) - Country/Regional Representative-Mongolia**

**Mr. Khem Lakai - Country/Regional Representative-Nepal**

**Dr. Pola Wang - Country/Regional Representative-New Zealand**

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

**Dr. Michael A. Kruesi - Country/Regional Representative-Singapore**

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

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

**Dr. Arinya Pongwat - Country/Regional Representative-Thailand**

**Dr. Minh Nguyen - Country/Regional Representative-Vietnam**