

• **DAY 1 - Friday 7 November 2025**

08.00-08.20	WELCOME & REGISTRATION	
08.20-08.30	INTRODUCTION by Prof. Dr. Marie-Therese Claes (Auditorium)	
08.30-09.00	WELCOME AND OPENING SESSION (Auditorium) Dean of Faculty KBS: Asst. Prof. Dr. Suparek Sooksmarn , KIMBA Director: Dr. Jul Thanasrivantichai , Joyce Jenkins , Pres. SIETAR SEA	
09.00-09.45	KEYNOTE 1 (Auditorium) Chair: Prof. Marie-Therese Claes • Dr. Prompilai Buasuwan - <u>Changing Landscape of Work in ASEAN: Building Essential Skills for Future Workforce in the Age of AI</u>	
09.45-10.15	COFFEE BREAK	
10.15-12.15	Track 1 WORKSHOP (10.15-11.30) (Room 1101 - 1st Floor) • Vincent Merk - <u>A Discovery Journey into the UNESCO Story Circle</u>	Track 2 CROSS-CULTURAL LEADERSHIP Chair: Joyce Jenkins (Auditorium) • Martina Suter - <u>How is Intercultural Competence and Behaviour applied in Hybrid Leadership?</u> • Ludmila Ghil - <u>Decoding to Cooperate: Religious Symbolism and Intercultural Complexity in Brazil–Thailand Business Relations (Online)</u> • Claudia Gomes & Marlon Muraro - <u>Fostering Brazil-Thai Connections: Insights from 32 years of the Brazilian Community in Thailand (Online)</u> • Ben Horgan - <u>Cultural Agility in Action: Corporate Insights from the 2025 Intercultural Landscape Survey</u>
	Track 1 WORKSHOP (11.30-12.15) (Room 1101 - 1st Floor) • Michelle Bradley - <u>Artificial Intelligence and its 1.3 Trillion Dollar Intercultural Opportunity</u>	
12.15-13.15	LUNCH SPONSORED BY KIMBA	

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13.15-14.00	KEYNOTE 2 (Auditorium) Chair: Marie-Therese Claes Jakrapob Penkair - <u>A Compelling Look at Thailand's LGBTQ+ Community, Exploring Cultural Complexities and Social Impacts Shaping Inclusion Efforts</u>	
14.00-15.30	Track 1 LEVERAGING DIFFERENCES Chair: Joyce Jenkins (Room 1101 - 1st Floor) • Dhivagari Gopala Krishanan- <u>Global Minds (Marie Tseng & Asma Abdullah), Malaysian Roots: Thriving in Multinational Corporations</u> • Dr. Zsuzsanna Tungli - <u>Global Leadership and Asian Voices in Western Multinationals</u> • Dr. Abeni El-Amin, Ph.D - <u>Words and Deeds: Achieving a Workplace Culture Without Bias</u> • Claudia Kästner - <u>From Cultural Awareness to Human Connection – Intercultural Work with Purpose</u>	Track 2 CULTURE AND TOURISM: LESSONS FROM INDONESIA (Online Session) Chair: Michael Jenkins (Auditorium) • Misbah Zulfa Elizabeth - <u>Strategy of Local-Based Cultural Tourism Development: A Study of Religious Cultural Development in Bayan Lombok, Indonesia (Online Session)</u> • Akhriyadi Sofian - <u>Waste in Tourism Sites: A Threat to Halal Tourism Development in Lombok (Online Session)</u> • Naili Ni'matul Illiyyun - <u>A Decade after Implementing Regional Regulation on Halal Tourism: Problems and Challenges in Lombok Island, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia (Online Session)</u>
15.30-16.00	COFFEE BREAK	

16.00-17.30	Track 1 BRIDGING GAPS, BUILDING BELONGING Chair: Dr. Zsuzsanna Tungli (Room 1101 - 1st Floor) • John Knipfing - <u>A New Approach for Understanding Cultural Gaps Between Southeast Asian Cultures</u> • Michelle Bradley - <u>Going Past East-West Communication Barriers</u> • Prof. Eugene Tartakovsky - <u>Acculturation Strategies: Testing the Support and Discrimination Model in Three Largest Minority Groups in Israel</u> • Huang Qi - <u>Intercultural LGBTQ+Youth Identity Recognition: HongKong-Mainland China Aspect (Online)</u>	Track 2 LANGUAGE AND LEARNING Chair: Dr. Petra Heidler (Auditorium) • Vincent Merk - <u>The Convergence between Challenge-Based Learning and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the Asian Higher Education Context</u> • Kirstie Sobue - <u>Why Japanese Language Learners Pretend to Understand, and What We Should Learn from it (Online)</u> • Roopali Saxena - <u>Comparing Technology Integration in Education: India vs. Other Asian Countries (Online)</u>
17.30-19.00	Track 1 COACHING ACROSS CULTURES Chair: Claudia Kästner (Room 1101 - 1st Floor) • Joyce Jenkins & Nattavut Kulnides - <u>The Coaching and Culture Combo: How Using Coaching Skills Across Cultures and Intercultural Skills in Coaching is the Perfect Pairing</u> • Tan Po Li - <u>The Chinese Dao (道) to Coaching</u> Track 1 WORKSHOP (18.20-19.00) • C.J.Ng - <u>Coaching Across Cultures</u>	Track 2 COLLABORATING ACROSS CULTURES Chair: Michael Jenkins (Auditorium) • Prof. Eugene Tartakovsky - <u>Language Acculturation among Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union in Israel: Language Use, Group Relations, and Psychological Well-Being</u> • Dr. Mahboubeh Rakhshandehroo & Kristin Ziegner-Llewellyn - <u>A Collaborative Autoethnographic Study of an Intercultural COIL Collaboration between Japan and Germany</u> • Dr. Marie Therese Claes - <u>Management Analysis of Thailand Expatriate Case (2008–2011)</u>

Optional Social Event: Dinner at nearby local restaurant

DAY 2 - Saturday 8 November 2025

08.00-08.15	WELCOME & REGISTRATION	
08.15-09.45	Track 1 FUTURE GAME-CHANGERS Chair: Dr. Marie-Therese Claes (Room 1101 - 1st Floor) • Dr. Petra Heidler - <u>The Future of Work: Navigating Global Challenges, Disruptive Technologies, and Burnout – Building Inclusive, Sustainable Workplaces for Health and Wellbeing</u> • Gabor Holch, Aarti Kelshikar and Michael Jenkins - <u>How Can Allyship Be a Game-Changer for Success?</u>	/Track 2 FAMILIES AND THIRD CULTURE KIDS Chair: Tamerlaine Beasley (Auditorium) • Prof. Ashok Ashta - <u>Family and Work Aspirations and Dynamics in Advanced and Emerging Asian Markets</u> • Dr. Judit Vegh - <u>Multi-Level Strategies for Sustained Family Well-Being and Integration in Global Mobility (online session)</u> • Joyce Jenkins: <u>Third Culture Kids of Asia - Sharing Perspectives and Discussion</u>
09.45-10.15	COFFEE BREAK	
10.15-11.00	KEYNOTE 3 (Auditorium) Chair: Joyce Jenkins • Dr. Mai Nguyen - <u>From Saigon to Synapses: Memory, Division, and the Neuroscience of Reconciliation - the Case of Vietnam</u>	
11.00-11.40	Track 1 WORKSHOP (Room 1101 - 1st floor) • Tamerlaine Beasley - <u>Getting Practical – How Do We Truly Enable Intercultural Capability?</u>	Track 2 UNDERSTANDING AND ALIGNMENT Chair: Aarti Kelshikar (Auditorium) • Yuko Deneuve - <u>Thriving Beyond Borders: From Cultural Competence to Energy Alignment</u> • Desta Haile - <u>Intercultural Understanding through Music</u>

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11.40-12.20	Track 1 WORKSHOP(Room 1101 - 1st Floor) • Dr. Philip Merry - <u>Synchronicity and Decision-Making: the Cultural Differences</u> (Online)	Track 2 DIGITAL INNOVATION Chair: Michael Jenkins (Auditorium) • Endang Supriadi - <u>Decentralisation of Digital Innovation: NTB Mall's Contribution to the Development of an Eastern Indonesian Technology-Based Economic Ecosystem</u> (Online) • Rupesh Kumar - <u>Transforming Healthcare: The Impact of AI and Automation on Work and Skills</u> (Online)
	LUNCH BREAK	
12.20-13.20		
13.20-14.05	KEYNOTE 4 (Auditorium) Chair: Aarti Kelshikar Michael Jenkins - <u>Embedding Compassion in the Workplace to Foster Trust, Boost Collaboration, and Enhance Cross-Cultural Performance</u>	
14:05-15:30	Track 1 WORKSHOP (14.05-14.45) (Room 1101 - 1st Floor) • David Sauvignon - <u>Tools for Promoting Intercultural Competence "LEGO ® SERIOUS PLAY ®"</u>	Track 2 DIVERSITY AND IDENTITY Chair: Marie-Therese Claes (Auditorium) • Dr. Neil Gains & Sriven Naidu - <u>What Can Beauty Teach Us About Intercultural Communication</u> • Lidia Wiśniewska - <u>Korean Wave and Its Impact on the Societies and Cultures in South East Asia</u> (Online) • Pooranasoundari Venkatesan & Usha Krishnan - <u>Contemporary Cultural Understanding Based on Amartya Sen's Cultural Identity Pluralism</u>
	Track 1 WORKSHOP (14.45-15.30) (Room 1101 - 1st Floor) • Hans J. Roth - <u>Social Fundamentals in Western and Eastern Competitiveness</u>	
15.30	CLOSING REMARKS (Auditorium)	

15.40

BOAT TRIP & CONFERENCE DINNER

DAY 3 - Sunday 9 November 2025

09.00-14.00

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL PROGRAM

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Last Name	First Name	Title & Abstract	Short Biography
Akhriyadi	Sofian	Waste in Tourism Sites: A Threat to Halal Tourism Development in Lombok Akhriyadi Halal tourism in Indonesia holds significant potential for development. In addition to having a predominantly Muslim population, Indonesia also possesses abundant tourism resources. Lombok Island, often referred to as the “island of a thousand mosques,” is one of the regions in Indonesia endowed with beautiful natural landscapes and a rich cultural heritage. Nature tourism in Lombok includes not only pristine and picturesque beaches but also mountainous areas that are equally captivating. Cultural attractions, from heritage sites and artifacts to traditional performances, are also prevalent throughout the island. This study aims to investigate the impact of waste and waste management at tourism sites affecting the implementation of halal tourism programs in Lombok. This is a field research study using a qualitative method and a descriptive approach. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants, namely stakeholders involved in halal tourism in Lombok, have used focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. Observational data were also gathered from various tourist locations across Lombok. The findings of this study are as follows: first, cleanliness at many tourism sites in Lombok is generally poorly managed. Second, waste management infrastructure and facilities at these sites are severely lacking. Third, there is a low level of awareness among tourism managers regarding the importance of maintaining cleanliness.	Akhriyadi Sofian studied Anthropology at Gadjah Mada University. Has an interest in contemporary social, political and cultural issues. His works are in the form of books, anthology books, national and international journal articles.

Ashta	Prof Ashok	Family and Work Aspirations and Dynamics in Advanced and Emerging Asian Markets A distinctive feature of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal for international partnerships (SDG 17) is the involved diversity of cultures. Related to this cultural diversity, when considering the goal of decent work (SDG 8), one notes that the meaning of work—as part of overall life—is rooted in cultural values. My developing research compares and contrasts the attitudes towards professional and private life found in advanced economy Japan and emerging market India. The research paradigm employs a subjectivist ontological positioning and an interpretivist epistemology, with data collected through ethnographic observation and informal conversations. The analysis of the data reveals an increasing aspiration in Japan to separate the family from work, at least in policy pronouncements. This phenomenon may come as a surprise in the context of India, where the work and family spheres are less clearly delineated. However, the ability to transfer expertise to emerging economies is a key factor in helping to realize SDG 17, which is an umbrella goal for other sustainable development goals. The present study discusses the potential of spiritual capital formed through acculturation to a harmonious view on work and family, and its contribution to achieving SDGs 17 and 8. I am scheduled to move to Thailand in April 2025, and that move provides the opportunity for further data collection and triangulation of findings, in time for the conference in November.	Ashok Ashta (PhD, De Montfort University, UK) is a Professor of Global Business in the Faculty of Foreign Studies at The University of Kitakyushu, Japan. He has over three decades of international business experience at world-class manufacturing companies such as Toyota, Hitachi, Minebea and Kameda Seika. When at Minebea, he served as Managing Director and CEO of their Indian subsidiary. Later, he served as non-resident board director of TH Foods, Inc. - Kameda's joint venture with Mitsubishi Corporation in the USA. Educated in the West and with professional experience rooted in Japan, he has lectured and written extensively in international journals such as European Management Review, Management Decision, Journal of Organization Change Management and Asian Journal of Business Ethics. He is an Associate Editor with the International Journal of Organizational Analysis. He teaches global business subjects such as Cross-cultural Management. He also enjoys fun running up to half marathon distances.
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Beasley	Tamerlaine	Getting Practical – How do we truly enable intercultural capability? Intercultural training and advisory services often focus on building awareness and sharing knowledge, but what's really required to deliver results? In this interactive, practitioner focused workshop, you will explore: • The importance of authentic voices and reflecting the lived realities, challenges and opportunities of intercultural workplaces • Why and how we must customise programs to the organisational culture and the specific roles of learners • What trainers and facilitators need to do to ensure psychological safety and trust to enable discussions and where participants can lean into discomfort and truly learn • How to maximise inclusion and role model the principles of intercultural practice through integrity of process • Critical insights from neuroscience and the application of behavioural insights to nudge behaviour change Participants will: • Explore common risks and opportunities when designing and delivering intercultural programs • Engage in structured and facilitated dialogue with other practitioners • Access and apply the SURF® model • Apply frameworks for effective intercultural process Tamerlaine Beasley is founder and CEO of Beasley Intercultural, Australia's premier intercultural training and consultancy company. Tamerlaine leads a team of specialists, who have delivered programs to more than 35,000 participants over the past 24 years, equipping leaders and their teams with the confidence and skills to achieve better outcomes in challenging and culturally diverse workplaces and communities. Key clients include international diplomats, global organisations, leading multinational companies and Universities. Tamerlaine speaks Thai, has studied Bahasa Indonesia and Lao, and has more than 30 years of experience focused on the countries and cultures of Southeast Asia. She is a trusted advisor to leaders of global organisations, and has served on many Boards and advisory bodies, including two terms on the Australia ASEAN Council, appointed by the Australian Foreign Minister, and as a visiting Fellow of the Australian Strategic Studies Centre.	Tamerlaine Beasley is the founder and CEO of Beasley Intercultural, Australia's leading intercultural consultancy. Over the past 24 years, her team has trained more than 35,000 participants across multinational corporates, government, and education sectors, equipping leaders and teams to work effectively across cultures, complexity and change. Tamerlaine is a trusted advisor and has served two terms on the Australia-ASEAN Council, appointment by the Australian Foreign Minister, and as Visiting Fellow at the Australian Strategic Studies Centre. She speaks Thai, has studied Bahasa Indonesia and Lao, and has deep expertise and experience in Southeast Asia.
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Bradley	Michelle	Artificial Intelligence and its 1.3 trillion dollar Intercultural Opportunity Artificial Intelligence and its 1.3 trillion dollar Intercultural Opportunity“Taiwan is really the engine that’s driving AI,” says Sean King, a senior vice president at Park Strategies and a former US Department of Commerce official. Global Artificial Intelligence leaders are increasingly dependent on Taiwanese companies to support them and to date, Taiwanese companies manufacture more than 90% of the world’s most advanced semiconductors. Why such dominance? According to Professor Konrad Young at National Taiwan University, skilled engineers and a disciplined work culture are two of Asia’s biggest edges in advanced semiconductor production, and that Asia’s “Confucian culture” is a perfect fit for modern chipmaking. According to a Nikkei Asia article, Confucian culture traditionally emphasizes respect for elders and experienced mentors and for upholding traditions. It also focuses on social harmony and collectivism, where the group’s well-being takes precedence over that of individuals. Western cultural values, by contrast, prioritize creativity, innovation, and independent thinking, all of which are needed when forging new industries. It argues that Western countries will need to embrace Asian cultures and skilled immigrants as it did in the 1980s. As AI continues to grow in importance, Taiwanese companies are expanding into the United States and Europe, while American companies are opening locations in Taiwan. The rapid pace of these developments has brought disruption and a variety of intercultural communication challenges to these rapidly expanding East-West teams. In this interactive session, we’ll explore what the obstacles to successful collaboration – including intergenerational ones – that may be met along the way are, and what skills both leaders and global teams in the AI industry need to successfully navigate them. Finally, we will explore how the best of Asian Confucian culture and Western independent thinking can be integrated in order to foster a culture of excellence, innovation, and creativity on a global level.	Michelle Bradley specializes in global collaboration and leadership development across Asia Pacific and beyond. Based in Taipei, she supports multinational teams and leaders in building cultural intelligence, psychological safety, and inclusive communication. Michelle is the founder of Elephant Communications, a training and coaching consultancy. She currently facilitates intercultural leadership programs for global teams in both English and Chinese, particularly in the semiconductor industry, fostering collaboration between the East and the West. She is a certified coach and a CQ Fellow (2026). In addition, she is a Certified Fearless Organization Scan Practitioner, trained to help teams measure and strengthen psychological safety, and a graduate of the Advancing Inclusion in Asia Masterclass Certificate Program. Michelle believes that cultural intelligence is not just a skill but a mindset that unlocks human connection and global success. She grew up in NYC, London, and Cape Town, and has lived in Asia for the past 20 years.
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Bradley	Michelle	Going past East-West Communication Barriers Communication isn't just about how we engage with the grammar and vocabulary of a language, it is also about how we use it based on cultural as well as generational background(s). For example, our cultural background plays a significant role in how we communicate in English, influencing not just the words we choose but also how we interpret and deliver messages. Certain gestures, tones, or conversational styles might be perfectly normal in one culture but misunderstood in another. Misunderstandings in communication often arise not from language barriers themselves, but from differences in cultural norms, values, and expectations. What one person considers polite or direct might come across as rude or evasive to another. Therefore, effective communication requires an understanding of both the language and the cultural contexts in which it is used, and applying effective strategies such as: 1. Develop Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity 2. Practice Active Listening and Engagement 3. Adapt Your Communication Approach 4. Be aware of different Generational Values 5. Seek Feedback 6. Utilize Gen AI with Cultural Intelligence 7. Understand Negotiation and Conflict Styles 8. Develop a Growth Mindset Specific advice for Asian team members accustomed to high context communication: Most Western countries can't decode silence the way that those in many Asian countries can. While you may think you're showing respect to your foreign leader or coworker, or need more time to think, they're probably viewing your quiet response as something negative, for example lack of interest or professionalism. This makes being willing to take risks and be proactive even more important, as it will have a huge impact on the success of the project and relationship.	Michelle Bradley specializes in global collaboration and leadership development across Asia Pacific and beyond. Based in Taipei, she supports multinational teams and leaders in building cultural intelligence, psychological safety, and inclusive communication. Michelle is the founder of Elephant Communications, a training and coaching consultancy. She currently facilitates intercultural leadership programs for global teams in both English and Chinese, particularly in the semiconductor industry, fostering collaboration between the East and the West. She is a certified coach and a CQ Fellow (2026). In addition, she is a Certified Fearless Organization Scan Practitioner, trained to help teams measure and strengthen psychological safety, and a graduate of the Advancing Inclusion in Asia Masterclass Certificate Program. Michelle believes that cultural intelligence is not just a skill but a mindset that unlocks human connection and global success. She grew up in NYC, London, and Cape Town, and has lived in Asia for the past 20 years.
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Buasuwan	Dr. Prompilai	Changing landscape of work in ASEAN: Building essential skills for future workforce in the age of AI The rapid diffusion of artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping ASEAN's economic and social systems, fundamentally altering the concepts of work, skills, and leadership. Although AI has the potential to contribute nearly US\$1 trillion to Southeast Asia's GDP by 2030, it also poses risks of automating millions of jobs and exacerbating inequality, particularly in countries with underdeveloped digital infrastructure. The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) Blueprint 2025 reflect the region's commitment to economic resilience through deeper integration and open regionalism, thereby positioning ASEAN as a neutral and adaptive actor within the Indo-Pacific. To navigate this transition successfully, ASEAN should implement an integrated Essential Skills Framework that balances technological proficiency with human-centric capabilities. This framework encompasses four domains: (1) technical skills, including AI and data literacy; (2) human skills, such as empathy and intercultural communication; (3) lifelong learning skills, including adaptability and creativity; and (4) sense-making and well-being skills, which foster reflection, ethical judgment, and happiness literacy. These competencies are essential for cultivating inclusive and future-ready human capital. The presentation further advances wisdom-based leadership (WBL) as the guiding paradigm for the future workforce. Integrating cognitive (IQ), emotional (EQ), and moral-spiritual (WQ) intelligence, WBL enables ethical, purpose-driven decision-making in an AI-driven world. Rooted in Asian values of harmony and collective well-being, wisdom-based leadership offers ASEAN a culturally grounded model for sustainable, human-centered innovation in the age of AI.	Promptilai Buasuwan is an Associate Professor in the Program of Educational Administration, Kasetsart University. She was a Deputy Director for the Office of Computer Services, Assistant to the Vice President for International Relations, and Department Head of Education. Her research interests focus on development education, innovation, educational leadership, and policy, specifically in 21st Century Skills, equity, academic transformation, and blended approach professional development. She has done various projects with national and international organizations, including the Teacher Council, Ministry of Education, Educational Equity Funds, Office of Education Commission, UNICEF, UNESCO, and a co-editor for the book "Higher Education Access in the Asia Pacific: Privilege or Human Right" and "Asia Pacific Graduate Education: Comparative Policies and Regional Developments." In 2019, she received the Outstanding Emerald Literati Award from Emerald Publishing on "Rethinking Thai Higher Education for Thailand 4.0." She is an Education Section Editor for the Kasetsart Journal of Social Science. Her research on Skills Framework for Thai Basic Education also received National Research Award 2024.
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Prof. Claes	Marie Therese	Management Analysis of Thailand Expatriate Case (2008–2011) This presentation analyzes a four-year expatriate assignment in Thailand from a management perspective, focusing on the intersections of leadership, crisis response, cultural intelligence, and organizational resilience. Through the lens of a family's transition from the Netherlands to Bangkok, and the concurrent development of a large-scale chemical plant, the talk explores how global leaders can navigate complex environments shaped by political unrest, legal challenges, natural disasters, and economic uncertainty. Key management principles—including adaptive leadership, cross-cultural collaboration, and ethical decision-making—are illustrated through real-world challenges such as the 2008 airport occupation, the 2009 global financial crisis, the 2010 political riots, and the 2011 floods. The case emphasizes the importance of local stakeholder engagement, strategic flexibility, and open communication. Ultimately, this presentation offers actionable insights into turning crises into opportunities, fostering resilient teams, and building leadership capacity in international assignments.	Professor Marie-Therese Claes led WU Vienna's Institute for Gender and Diversity (2000–2025) and held senior roles at CEMS, UCLouvain, and Asian University in Thailand. A visiting professor worldwide, she also consulted for international organizations. She has presided over SIETAR Europa, EWMD, and IACCM, and is a Fulbright and Japan Foundation alumna, recognized for her global leadership in intercultural management.
Deneuveille	Yuko	Thriving Beyond Borders: From Cultural Competence to Energy Alignment After living in several countries and recently experiencing reverse culture shock in my own country, Japan, I realized that thriving abroad, or anywhere, is not only about Cultural Competence, but about Energy Leadership. In this session, I'll share personal insights from my global journey and introduce the Energy Leadership Index (ELI), a pragmatic tool that can transform how you understand yourself and others, helping you lead, connect, and thrive across cultures. I use this tool with globally minded clients, and it has made a remarkable difference in their adaptation, leadership, and overall fulfillment, both personally and professionally.	Yuko Deneuveille is a Professional Certified Coach (ICF-PCC), Trainer, Author, and Speaker specializing in Intercultural Communication, Leadership, and Life Transitions. With over 30 years of international experience across Japan, France, the U.K., China, and the U.S., she has worked with global leaders and teams across diverse industries. Fluent in three languages, Yuko draws on her own expatriation and repatriation experiences to help others navigate cultural transitions with authenticity and confidence. She is also a Certified Energy Leadership™ Index Master Practitioner, passionate about bridging the gap between cultural competence and energy awareness. A past President of SIETAR Florida and current member of SIETAR Japan, Yuko is an active speaker

			on inclusion and personal growth. Her mission is to empower people to live a life with no regrets, wherever they are in their journey. A proud mother of two and married to a French-Vietnamese husband, Yuko loves traveling, spending time with her family, and dancing.
Dhivagari Gopala	Krishnan	Global Minds, Malaysian Roots: Thriving in Multinational Corporations Expanding on their co-created tool, the Cultural Impact Scan (CIS), Dr. Asma Abdullah, an interculturalist in Malaysia, joins Marie Tseng in curating a book that explores the experiences of Malaysian professionals navigating careers within multinational corporations (MNCs). It examines the challenges and opportunities individuals face adapting to global work cultures, focusing on cross-cultural interactions. This research presentation will focus on dissecting the four segments of their book, which are: Part I: Introduces the Cultural Impact Scan Framework, a tool designed to help understand cultural dimensions and their impact on workplace dynamics. Part II: Comprises personal essays from 21 seasoned Malaysian professionals, sharing their real-world experiences of overcoming cultural hurdles and achieving success in international settings. These essays cover a range of industries and roles, offering a diverse set of perspectives. Part III: Outlines practical strategies and action plans in relation to the CIS and Learning Competency Model, assisting individuals in thriving within global organizations, emphasising cultural agility, communication, and professional development. Part IV: Provides a conclusion that summarizes key takeaways and reflects on the importance of cultural understanding in the global workplace. By offering intercultural insights tailored to young Asian professionals and organizations striving for inclusivity, this book aligns with the conference theme, fostering deeper self-awareness and equipping individuals and teams to thrive in Asia's dynamic, multicultural landscape.	Dhivagari Gopala Krishnan is a certified intercultural trainer and facilitator - certified from the Intercultural Training Academy Hamburg. Dedicated German language trainer with more than 11 years of experience in teaching A1 to B2 levels at various MNCs, Universities, Schools and Goethe Institute. Has conducted courses and workshops together in various multinational companies, schools and for Goethe Institute. Presented papers in international conferences and has four paper publications as well on innovative teaching methodologies. Presented on various intercultural and Diversity topics in international forums.

El-Amin	Dr. Abeni	Words and Deeds: Achieving a Workplace Culture Without Bias In "Words and Deeds: Achieving a Workplace Culture Without Bias," Dr. Abeni El-Amin emphasizes the responsibility of organizational leaders to create inclusive, bias-free workplaces. The presentation highlights the need for proactive leadership in recruitment, promotion, and succession planning to combat bias, alongside ongoing employee training and development. Unconscious bias is discussed as a cognitive process that shapes attitudes without malicious intent, affecting emotions and social identities. Cultural communication and emotional intelligence (CQ) are central to addressing bias, promoting a workplace environment that respects diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB). The presentation advocates for developing DEIB training programs that address unconscious bias, cultural awareness, and ethical behaviors to foster a more inclusive culture. The importance of nonviolent communication (NVC), emotional intelligence, and cultural intelligence in handling workplace conflicts and bias is highlighted as a way to improve job satisfaction and reduce workplace discrimination. The premise suggests that effective diversity management includes trauma-informed training, radical inclusion practices, and the alignment of DEIB strategies with organizational goals. Lastly, the presentation calls for ongoing research into DEIB methods, emphasizing the importance of continuous assessment, stakeholder involvement, and leadership commitment to successfully achieve cultural change and mitigate unconscious bias in the workplace.	Dr. Abeni El-Amin is a globally recognized thought leader on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. She helps organizations develop a culture of belongingness through innovative and thought-provoking trainings. Dr. El-Amin is an author, international university lecturer, trainer and speaker. She is co-founder of Project Ricochet, Inc., a youth development organization and Titan and Mogul Inc., a global consultancy that provides lean six sigma and HR consultancy focusing on DEIB to improve organizational culture.
Gains & Naidu	Neil & Sriven	What Can Beauty Teach Us About Intercultural Communication In 1878, Margaret Wolff Hungerford first penned the well-known phrase, "beauty is in the eye of the beholder". Beauty is the ideal metaphor for understanding cross-cultural differences and the promotion of effective intercultural relations. In this paper, the authors will explore research on female beauty and how it illuminates both human universals and cultural differences across countries in Southeast Asia and further afield including Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, Thailand, and UK. The paper will also explore how language sometimes struggles to capture subtle cultural differences. Research was conducted by one of the authors (partly	Neil Philip Gains: Neil uses human and cultural psychology to help organisations drive social and individual behaviour change. He is a faculty member at Thammasat University School of Global Studies, focusing on applying behavioural science and cross-cultural psychology to sustainability. He is also the owner of TapestryWorks, an insight which conducted much of the research discussed in this paper. Neil is the author of Brand esSense, published by Kogan Page in 2013, and has lived in the UK,

		commissioned by a global client and partly self-funded). The findings demonstrate the core motivations and goals of women across seven countries and highlight how subtle differences reflecting local meaning have profound implications for the marketing of beauty products (and help explain the strength of local brands in many markets). The presentation will also highlight some of the fundamental differences between individualistic and collectivistic cultures and how these influence beauty perceptions and behaviours. Understanding such differences is critical for communicating across cultures and effectively addressing important global issues such as climate change.	Indonesia, China, Singapore and Thailand.
Ghil	Ludmila	Decoding to Cooperate: Religious Symbolism and Intercultural Complexity in Brazil–Thailand Business Relations This study explores the intercultural dynamics in business relations between Brazil and Thailand, focusing on how religious symbolism influences communication, leadership, and conflict resolution. Thailand, a Buddhist-majority nation with a deeply rooted hierarchy and emphasis on social harmony, contrasts sharply with Brazil, a predominantly Christian country shaped by expressive communication and relational leadership styles. The findings contribute to a broader understanding of interculturality, negotiation and cultural integration.	Ludmila Kobi Ghil is a Brazilian intercultural communicator and researcher with over 20 years of experience across Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Her decade living in Asia—six of those years in Thailand—profoundly shaped her perspective and continues to inform her work. She specializes in intercultural training, focusing on the intersection of religious, cultural, post colonialism and organizational values in Brazilian and Southeast Asian contexts. She is the creator of The Intercultural Brazilian, a mentorship program that explores the cultural identity of Brazilians working globally. Ludmila holds a degree in Social Communication (UFES), with specializations in Intercultural Anthropology and Intercultural Education. She is certified in the Cultural Active model by Richard Lewis and is a member of SIETAR Brazil.

Gomes & Muraro	Claudia & Marlon	Fostering Brazil-Thai Connections: Insights from 32 years of the Brazilian Community in Thailand This online presentation explores the complexities of cultural exchange and community building and shares the unique perspectives by two experienced Intercultural Coaches. Claudia Gomes, Brazilian residing in Thailand for 16 years, and Marlon Muraro, Brazilian with 2 years of experience in Thailand. Social affairs director and committee member of BTCC-Social, respectively. BTCC-Social plays an important role in integrating Brazilians into Thai society by providing insights into daily life, cultural nuances, and social etiquette. Through initiatives such as magazine, monthly events, and collaborations with the Brazilian Embassy and other embassies, the association fosters a sense of community and facilitates cross-cultural understanding. Main points: Actively promote social interaction and community building through a series of monthly events. A platform for networking, cultural exchange, and social engagement to foster a sense of belonging among Brazilians in Thailand. Aquarela magazine serves as a bridge between the two cultures. Through engaging articles, interviews, and cultural spotlights, it connects Brazilians with Thai traditions, history, and contemporary life. BTCC-Social is a division of the Brazil-Thai Chamber of Commerce. Ensuring that activities are aligned with the interests and needs of the Brazilian community, expanding reach and fostering international cooperation. Bring the vibrant spirit of Brazil to Thailand by organizing cultural celebrations such as Carnival. These events showcase Brazilian music, dance, cuisine, and arts, offering Thais a unique opportunity to experience the richness of Brazilian culture. Drawing upon their personal and professional experiences, Claudia and Marlon will share valuable insights into the role of community building for intercultural adaptation. Highlighting the importance of organizations in providing support, fostering social connections, and facilitating cultural exchanges	Claudia Gomes is a Brazilian Leadership and Transformational Coach based in Bangkok, Thailand, where she has lived since 2009. She holds a degree in Business Administration and has over 20 years of international professional experience across Brazil, Spain, and Thailand. After more than a decade in the tourism industry, Claudia transitioned into coaching and has spent the last eight years supporting leaders and multicultural teams to navigate change, improve communication, and strengthen relationships. She is fluent in Portuguese, English, and Spanish, and also works as a professional interpreter in these three languages. Having worked in 13 companies across three continents, Claudia brings a broad, practical understanding of global dynamics, human connection, and cultural adaptability. She also serves as the Social Affairs Director of the Brazil–Thailand Chamber of Commerce (BTCC) and has led the Brazilian community in Thailand (BTCC Social) for over six years, fostering collaboration and integration among diverse groups. Marlon Muraro: has lived as a Coexpat for more than 15 years, in Mexico (2010-2013 / 2017-2020), Turkey (2013-2017), Thailand (2020-2023) and the United States (2008). He holds a degree in accounting from UFPR-BR and Business Coach with level 2 certification from the ICF. Holds CELTA certification - English teacher certified by Cambridge with more than 16 years of experience teaching Portuguese and Spanish. He has worked in the intercultural area as an expatriate consultant for more than 3 years and is a member of SIETAR Brasil. Several years of voluntary work coordinating global teams, always being part of international communities.
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Haile	Desta	Intercultural Understanding through Music Music is one of the most powerful — and often overlooked — tools for building intercultural understanding. As a key to universal communication, music helps participants across cultural and linguistic boundaries, creating shared experiences that transcend words. Drawing on my experience as an intercultural trainer with global companies and as founder of Languages Through Music, an educational platform blending language learning, cultural knowledge, and song. The workshop introduces ways music can serve as a framework for intercultural competence: Cognitive: Music aids memory and supports language acquisition. Cultural: Songs carry histories, values, and social contexts that reveal deep cultural insights. Relational: Music reduces stress, invites collaboration, and fosters inclusion across teams. I will share examples from around the world to illustrate how facilitators and educators can use music to spark curiosity and creativity and bridge differences. Participants will be invited to contribute to a collaborative playlist that will keep us connected and learning beyond the SIETAR conference.	Desta Haile is a Bangkok-born British–Eritrean educator, writer, and musician with over twenty years of international experience. She is the founder of Languages Through Music, a creative platform blending language learning, cultural knowledge, and song, which has reached over 10,000 learners worldwide. Desta has lived in ten countries and visited more than eighty, thanks largely to her teaching and performing arts work. The keystone of her career has always been social justice, alongside creative and cultural education, with roles at the Malala Fund, Pluto Educational Trust, and the Royal African Society. Since 2014, Desta has delivered award-winning intercultural training for leading global companies through Sirva and other relocation firms. In 2025, she obtained CPD-certification to support others in becoming intercultural trainers. She has two books forthcoming: <i>Black Beauty Model Agency</i> (Cassava Republic, 2026) and <i>Languages Through Music</i> (Teach Yourself/Hachette, 2027). After decades abroad, she is happy to be returning to her hometown of Bangkok.
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Heidler	Petra	The Future of Work: Navigating Global Challenges, Disruptive Technologies, and Burnout – Building Inclusive, Sustainable Workplaces for Health and Wellbeing The future of work is shaped by rapid technological advancements, global challenges, and shifting workforce dynamics. As industries adapt to disruptive technologies such as artificial intelligence, automation, and remote work platforms, the human dimension of work - employee health, wellbeing, and inclusivity - has become increasingly scrutinized. Research on burnout as well as gender differences in burnout reveals complex patterns. Factors contributing to gender disparities in burnout include workplace culture, self-compassion, and traditional gender role perspectives. Women often experience lower professional fulfillment and need help balancing work and personal life, including child-rearing responsibilities. Men experience stronger associations between work stressors and are less likely to use coping strategies. The study explores the effects of helplessness, misunderstanding, and anger on the competence in handling burnout and how organizations can navigate these challenges to build inclusive, sustainable workplaces prioritizing employee health and well-being. It examines global trends that impact the future of work, including economic uncertainty, climate change, and workforce diversification, and how these factors intersect with the rise of automation and digital transformation. A quantitative questionnaire based on the Self-Determination Theory and the Scale for Handling Burnout is applied. Drawing on insights from the Austrian Burnout Study and complementary research conducted in several Asian countries, the paper highlights the growing prevalence of burnout across different cultural and organizational contexts. Findings reveal significant correlations between workplace stressors, lack of inclusivity, and mental health challenges, underscoring the urgent need for systemic interventions. The study provides actionable recommendations for mitigating burnout and underscores the importance of balancing technological progress with human-centered strategies to foster a healthier, more resilient workforce for the future. Understanding these factors is essential for developing policies and targeted interventions to reduce burnout and improve well-being in organizations, work, and life.	Dr. Petra Heidler is an experienced Consultant and University Lecturer & Researcher. She is a committed, open minded and solution-oriented person with focus on Human Resources, Public Health, Change and Transformation Management, Leadership, Strategic Thinking and Mental Health. Her main research areas are public health, mental health, human resources, new work, mindfulness, psychotherapy & hypnosis. Dr. Petra is interested in developing new and existing global partnerships and linkages for various types of stakeholder engagements. She teaches at various Universities.
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Horgan	Ben	Cultural Agility in Action: Corporate Insights from the 2025 Intercultural Landscape Survey As Asia continues to shape and be shaped by global forces, the need for intercultural agility has never been more urgent. The 2025 Intercultural Landscape Survey by NetExpat offers a timely lens into how over 750 organizations worldwide are preparing their people to thrive in increasingly diverse, digital, and dynamic environments. With 96% of respondents affirming the critical importance of cultural agility, the findings underscore a global consensus: intercultural competence is no longer optional—it is essential. This session highlights: - While expatriates remain a key audience, there is a growing push to extend training to all employees, including local staff, business travellers, and virtual team members. - 86% of respondents support the introduction of “cultural compliance” as a structured, ongoing approach to embedding intercultural awareness into organizational DNA. - How organizations can leverage cultural frameworks and assessment tools to foster inclusive, future-ready workplaces across Asia and beyond.	Ben Horgan is an intercultural consultant and corporate learning specialist with over 20 years of experience in Thailand. As part of the NetExpat consulting team, he supports multinational organizations and expatriate leaders across Asia in developing cultural agility, leadership capability, and effective collaboration in multicultural environments. He also serves as Director of Training and Development at B Tools Training, where he designs and delivers customized communication and leadership programs for corporate clients across multiple industries. A fluent Thai speaker, Ben combines deep local understanding with international business experience.
Illiyyun	Naili Ni'matul	A Decade after Implementing Regional Regulation on Halal Tourism: Problems and Challenges in Lombok Island, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia Lombok Island is known as a halal tourism destination over the past 10 years. This is supported by the Regional Regulation of West Nusa Tenggara Province Number 2 of 2016 on Halal Tourism by the NTB Provincial Tourism Office. The regulation has been implemented well, although it is still limited. This field research applies a qualitative method with a descriptive approach aimed at identifying emerging problems and elaborating on the challenges in the management of halal tourism on Lombok Island. The results of this study indicate that several problems found in the management of halal tourism on Lombok Island include: first, the socialization of regional regulations is still	Naili Ni'matul Illiyyun, M.A. is a lecturer and a researcher in the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP) of UIN Walisongo Semarang. She finished his M.A. from Center for Religious and Cross-cultural Studies (CRCS) Gadjah Mada University. She also conducted some research with a focus on religion and media in Sociological perspective, studies of religious moderation, and interfaith studies. To support Tridharma college, she devotes to the community by teaching in Islamic Boarding House in Semarang. Moreover, she participates in the Interreligious Brotherhood (Pelita),

		limited to certain circles, so it is hoped that the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) will also help to promote the regulation. Moreover, the limited management of human resources impacts the low awareness of the community, especially business actors, in supporting halal tourism, which simultaneously poses a significant challenge in tourism development. Second, the standards and concepts of halal that are not yet clear and not evenly understood by various groups. Furthermore, the limited government budget in tourism management and the quota facilities for halal certification for business actors and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). In addition, the promotion of tourism that is still limited through free social media. The last, the management of tourist destinations is still lacking, for example, damaged toilets, disorganized parking and vendor stalls, limited clean water, and inadequate infrastructure.	as a part of activist and initiator in grass root level in promoting religious diversity and harmony in Semarang and its surroundings. She got several research funds to conduct her research and currently she is conducting her research on halal tourism in Lombok Island.
J. Roth	Hans	Social Fundamentals in Western and Eastern Competitiveness The text tries to highlight that any appreciation of modern Western-Asian relations needs to be based on a background model of social comparison. Social and individual psychic differences play a key role in the progress of globalization and the obstacles it encounters today.	Hans J. Roth is a Swiss citizen and former Swiss diplomat, having spent nearly 30 career years in North and Southeast Asia. Retired in 2016. Founding member of EurAsia Competence AG, a consulting company engaged mainly in intercultural consulting between European and Asian companies. Main object is consulting on company culture in a multinational environment. Publications on the subject mainly in German, on culture, space and time and on organizational culture. Since 2023 living again in Bangkok, Thailand.

Jenkins	Michael	Embedding compassion in the workplace to foster trust, boost collaboration, and enhance cross-cultural performance. “Past, Present and Future: the role of compassion in building successful organisations and enabling sustainability – the SE Asian experience” - Michael Jenkins, CEO of Expert Humans (Singapore) In this keynote speech, Michael Jenkins will share how SE Asian organisations have made compassion a centrepiece of their cultures and in so doing, built success and enabled sustainability. He will cover: - The impact of compassion in the workplace and how it contributes to organisational success and the wellbeing of people internally and externally - How adoption of empathy as an organisational imperative is a positive development and yet on its own, may be insufficient for lasting impact - How successful SE Asian organisations have intentionally embedded compassionate practices into how they behave and operate Michael will showcase the experience of SE Asian organisations and the learning we can derive from their efforts over the long term. He will conclude with a summary of what works (and what hinders) the creation of compassionate organisational cultures and share his thoughts on what might unfold in the future.	Michael Jenkins was born and spent his early years in Malaysia. He graduated from Durham University in Chinese, took up postgraduate studies in Japanese language, politics and economics at Nanzan University in Nagoya and then worked for Toyota Motor Corporation. He returned to the UK in 1988 and worked at the University of Bath until his move to France to join INSEAD. In 2001, he transferred back to Asia as Director of INSEAD Executive Education in Singapore and subsequently joined the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) Asia Pacific as Managing Director. In 2009 Michael took on the role of CEO, Roffey Park Institute (UK). In 2020 he set up his own company Expert Humans with his wife Joyce. He is also an Adjunct Associate Professor (Department of Management and Organisation) at the National University of Singapore Business School. The UK's HR Magazine named Michael as one of the UK's Most Influential Thinkers in HR in 2013 and 2016. In 2023 and again in 2024, ETHR (The Economic Times HR) named him as one of the top HR Influencers in APAC. Michael joined the UK-based FutureWork Forum, a partner-led thought collective, in 2020. He is a regular speaker, writer and moderator on leadership development and the Future of Work. He authored Expert Humans: Critical Leadership Skills for a Disrupted World (2021) and Toxic Humans – Combatting Poisonous Leadership in Boards and Organisations (2024). He currently serves as the Singapore Chair of VAB (Virtual Advisory Board).
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Jenkins	Joyce	Third Culture Kids of Asia: Perspectives and Discussion This presentation and discussion session will explore the unique strengths and challenges faced by Third Culture Kids (TCKs) in Asia, drawing on Joyce Jenkins' breadth of personal and professional experience in intercultural education. Through interactive dialogue, case studies, and insights from recent research, participants will explore themes such as identity formation, adaptation, and resilience among internationally mobile children in Asia and from Asia, gaining a deeper understanding of how to empower globally minded youth, bridge cultural divides, and nurture a sense of belonging within diverse communities. The session will also provide opportunities for participants to reflect on their own experiences and contribute to ongoing conversations about the future of TCK support and advocacy in Asia.	Joyce Jenkins is co-founder and President of SIETAR Southeast Asia and Past President of SIETAR Europa (Society for Intercultural Education Training and Research). She is an intercultural coach, lecturer, and researcher with a MA from the University of London (Birkbeck) in Intercultural Communication and a MA in Chinese and Japanese Studies from the University of Edinburgh. Her passion for helping people work and interact effectively across cultures was inspired by her experience as a Third Culture Kid (TCK). As a young child her parents moved to Pakistan and India and then to Thailand where she spent her formative years at primary school in Chiang Mai and High School at the International School Bangkok (ISB). At ISB she was President of the Thai History and Culture Club, recipient of the Foreign Languages Award and the Scarlet Elephant Award for her work with Cambodian refugees. She was one of the first British students to study in China after the Cultural Revolution and then went on to study and work in Japan, France and the UK. Having lived in Singapore for over 15 years she has now officially lived most of her life in Asia. Her two children were brought up as TCKs in France and Southeast Asia. Drawing on her diverse upbringing and professional expertise, Joyce brings a unique perspective to the challenges and opportunities faced by Third Culture Kids in Asia. Joyce continues to advocate for greater understanding and support for TCKs within educational and corporate environments, facilitating dialogue and research to empower globally minded individuals.
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Jenkins & Kulnides	Joyce & Nattavut	The Coaching Culture Combo: How Using Coaching Skills Across Cultures and Intercultural Skills in Coaching is the Perfect Pairing The session is part of the conference’s “Coaching Across Cultures” track and will explore the powerful intersection of cross-cultural competence and coaching methodologies in today’s globalized workplace. This session will demonstrate how intercultural skills enhance coaching effectiveness and how coaching techniques can bridge cultural divides in organizational settings. Participants will engage with practical tools and real-world examples that highlight the value of adaptability, empathy, and open communication in multicultural environments. The session will also address common challenges faced when coaching clients from diverse backgrounds and provide strategies for fostering inclusion and mutual understanding within teams. By the end of the session, attendees will gain actionable insights to improve their coaching practice and contribute to more cohesive, culturally aware organisations	Dr. Nattavut Kulnides is the founder and CEO of ADGES, a regionally recognized consulting firm with over 20 years of experience driving impactful change for organizations across Asia-Pacific. His work bridges ancient mindfulness wisdom with cutting-edge neuroscience, creating a new paradigm for leadership that transcends traditional profit-driven approaches. Dr. Nattavut was recognized as one of the Top 21 HR Influencers in Southeast Asia by the Economic Times for 2023 and 2024. He is a trusted expert shaping the future of HR and leadership across industries and has been an advisor to the Thai Listed Companies Association. Joyce Jenkins is a trained intercultural coach with a wealth of experience in coaching leaders, executives, and their families through intercultural transitions. Her coaching engagements include working as a member of IMD’s Global Coaching community, as well as designing and delivering programmes in intercultural competence, diversity and inclusion, business, and leadership development for her own business She has also served as adjunct faculty at the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) Asia-Pacific and as a Research Associate at INSEAD in both Singapore and France. In addition to her professional coaching and consulting work, Joyce teaches a module on Intercultural Development and Coaching at the University of Warwick in the UK. She is a Fellow of the RSA, further reflecting her commitment to professional excellence and thought leadership in her field. Joyce’s extensive business background includes senior management and board-level experience, having worked for more than 20 years with multinational
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			corporations such as Toyota Motor Corporation and Mitsubishi in Japan. Her client base extends to government, educational, and non-profit organisations worldwide. Having lived in Singapore for over 15 years, Joyce holds Singapore Permanent Residency. She has also resided in France, Thailand, China, Japan, Pakistan, and the UK. Joyce is multilingual, speaking conversational Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese, Thai, French, and German.
Kästner	Claudia	From Cultural Awareness to Human Connection – Intercultural Work with Purpose In today's globally connected world, cultural awareness is no longer enough. To truly thrive across cultures, we must shift from understanding to relating—from knowing about differences to creating meaningful human connection. In this session, I share insights from my work as an intercultural coach and founder of Connecting Cultures, a Singapore-based consultancy that bridges cultures through coaching, team development, and social engagement. Drawing on hands-on experience with international teams and community organizations across Southeast Asia, I present a human-centered approach to intercultural work that is rooted in empathy, purpose, and presence. Participants will explore how cultural transitions—especially in expatriate contexts—can become transformative experiences when supported by purposeful, people-driven frameworks. I introduce practical methods that combine reflective coaching, team-based learning, and engagement with local communities to build authentic and sustainable intercultural competence. Key topics: Moving from “awareness” to “connection” in intercultural practice Coaching tools that support belonging, reflection, and curiosity How purposeful collaboration with local communities fosters inclusion Reframing culture shock as a bridge, not a barrier This session is ideal for intercultural trainers, global team leaders, and coaches who want to integrate purpose and emotional intelligence into their work. Participants will walk away with new perspectives and actionable tools to	Claudia Kästner is an international trainer and professional coach specializing in corporate development, intercultural training, and behavioural assessments. She has expertise in Global Transition Coaching and Professional Behaviour Assessments and over 20 years of experience in marketing, communications, and media management. Having lived in Singapore for six years, she has a profound appreciation for Asian cultures, enriching her ability to support multinational teams. A key focus of her work is integrating corporate social responsibility into business strategies—helping organizations drive sustainable impact while enhancing their corporate culture.

		co-create inclusive, culturally aware environments—where people don't just adapt, but connect.	
Kelshikar & Holch & Jenkins	Aarti & Gabor & Michael	How Allyship can be a game-changer 1. Reality Check What are some assumptions and misconceptions about corporate gender programmes? Why do many current initiatives fall short, and how do they often misplace responsibility by focusing on empowering women rather than addressing systemic male behaviours and biases? 2. What works and what doesn't How can gender equity efforts create real systemic and sustained change? Rather than assuming women must solve gender issues and men should simply align, we explore actionable ways to shift responsibility, engage men meaningfully, and foster co-created solutions. We discuss real-life examples of programmes that have succeeded by addressing the core challenges of genders working together in different industries and cultural settings. 3. The way forward What steps are needed to create truly gender-equitable workplaces and teams? We move beyond traditional allyship models to explore how companies can redesign gender programmes to focus on co-creation rather than one-sided empowerment. The session concludes with concrete strategies for developing inclusive cultures that recognize and challenge the structural barriers that perpetuate gender imbalance.	Gabor Holch is an intercultural leadership consultant, coach, author and speaker who has served 100+ clients in 30+ countries. An expat since age 4, China-based since 2002 and working globally, Gabor is a Certified Management Consultant (CMC) in English and Mandarin at management academies of some global corporations. He is the author of Dragon Suit: The golden age of expatriate executives in China. Aarti Kelshikar is Founder, 3A Consulting and an intercultural coach with over fifteen years of work experience in Southeast Asia. She is the author of How Women Work: Fitting in and Standing Out in Asia and How India Works: Making Sense of a Complex Corporate Culture. Aarti is co-founder and Board Member of SIETAR Southeast Asia. Michael Jenkins is Chief Executive Officer at Expert Humans and Partner, Future Work Forum. He is the bestselling author of "Expert Humans" and "Toxic Humans". He specialises in humanising the workplace and The Future of Work. His current interests include human dynamics on boards and collaborative intelligence across enterprises.

Knipfing	John	A New Approach for Understanding Cultural Gaps Between Southeast Asian Cultures Existing cultural dimension models provide valuable insights into global cultural differences, yet they often show minimal variation between Southeast Asian cultures across most dimensions. This presents a challenge for individuals living and working across Southeast Asian cultural contexts, as these models do not effectively highlight the subtle but significant differences that impact communication, workplace expectations, and social interactions. This paper proposes the Flexible Cultural Mapping Model (FCMM) as a potential framework to address this gap and invites collaboration in its development. The goal is to create a regionally focused model that better identifies where cultural norms diverge between Southeast Asian societies, helping business professionals, students and others understand key cultural gaps and improve cross-cultural adaptability within the region. Key discussion points: • Limitations of Existing Cultural Models: Why Southeast Asian cultures often appear similar in global models despite meaningful differences not being expressed in existing frameworks. • The Need for a New Framework: How FCMM can help Southeast Asians understand the nuanced cultural gaps when engaging with other Southeast Asian cultures and non-Southeast Asians who interact with multiple nationalities within the region adjust their expectations and behaviors from country to country. • Proposed Cultural Factors and Methodology: Potential cultural factors such as authority structures, relational trust, workplace expectations, and governance traditions to map cultural variations effectively. • Call for Collaboration: Seeking input from practitioners and scholars to refine and validate the model to ensure both academic and practical relevance. This paper aligns with SIETAR Southeast Asia's theme of Cultural Understanding, advocating for a localized, context-driven approach to intercultural analysis and encouraging collaboration among professionals, educators, and researchers in the region.	John Knipfing is a cross-cultural facilitator and educator, and co-founder of InterX Global. With 30 years of experience in Asia—including long-term residence in Thailand, Japan, and now Vietnam—he designs and delivers learning experiences that foster intercultural awareness, adaptive communication, and relational insight. He holds a Master's in Adult Education and Training and a BA in International Studies with a focus on Asia.
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Merk	Vincent	The convergence between Challenge-Based Learning and DEI in the Asian Higher Education context In this presentation I will explain that Challenge-Based Learning (CBL) can be a strong tool to develop Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) processes, for example in an International Classroom or other places on a university campus and beyond. What is CBL? CBL offers a framework for an innovative and creative educational approach based on the large diversity of the group of students involved in solving a societal challenge proposed by the local industry or other stakeholders. These students develop their intrinsic motivation, learn and pull all their diverse forces and talents together to solve those societal challenges that match their interests and motivation. By doing so, they not only gain a large multidisciplinary theoretical knowledge, but also develop many professional skills: Working together, dealing with insecurities, problem-solving thinking and designing, brainstorming, organizing, planning, and communicating – thus all kinds of inclusive skills that they will need in their future careers. I will argue that there is a strong convergence between CBL and DEI processes, a chance for educators and their students to develop a true diverse and inclusive community in academia and beyond. In the discussion after the presentation, we will consider whether this typically Western educational approach embedded in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines based on materialistic and economic perspectives idealising logic, cal	Vincent Merk worked for 38 years as a senior lecturer in intercultural management and trainer in professional skills and community adviser at Eindhoven University of Technology in the Netherlands before he retired. He still works as an independent trainer & consultant in these areas and focuses on DEI issues, including innovative educational approaches creating inclusion, belonging and wellbeing. He is an experienced facilitator of the UNESCO Story Circles method and regularly presents on academic or business topics at academic conferences. He is a former president of SIETAR Europa.
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Merk	Vincent	A Discovery Journey into the UNESCO Story Circle The UNESCO Story Circle is a structured yet flexible methodology for developing cultural awareness, intercultural competencies and inclusion in a variety of global contexts, both formal and informal. The methodology has proven to be effective on a variety of different DEI issues with participants acquiring strong skills for respect, tolerance, empathy, critical thinking and listening for understanding. The interactive approach addresses several of the United Nations SDGs (goals 3, 4, 5, 10 and 16: Promote just, equal and inclusive societies as well as quality education, gender equality and sustainable development). It offers a forum to help bring people together to investigate and challenge their prejudices and conscious and unconscious biases and hence help develop inclusion and ultimately wellbeing. It also provides a space for an open dialogue in a psychological safe environment to share life experiences across cultures and generations. In this interactive workshop participants will be randomly divided in circles of 4 to 6 people. The process of the Story Circles goes along 3 steps: Step 1: Brief personal introduction of participants Step 2: Sharing a personal memorable experience with the group Step 3 Flashback: Reflecting on the most memorable part of each participant's story The general impact of the workshop is to develop and implement innovative didactic and participative approaches to interculturalism within its current ecosystem by using a DEI process that showcases an interactive dialogue across cultures and generations. This workshop will focus on the theme of the Conference and deal with global and typically Asian human values and moral concepts, and developing intercultural competences to thrive in Asian contexts.	Vincent Merk worked for 38 years as a senior lecturer in intercultural management and trainer in professional skills and community adviser at Eindhoven University of Technology in the Netherlands before he retired. He still works as an independent trainer & consultant in these areas and focuses on DEI issues, including innovative educational approaches creating inclusion, belonging and wellbeing. He is an experienced facilitator of the UNESCO Story Circles method and regularly presents on academic or business topics at academic conferences. He is a former president of SIETAR Europa.
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Merry	Dr. Philip	SYNCHRONICITY AND DECISION MAKING: the Cultural Differences? Many people have experienced a synchronicity: an event where answers to organisational and personal questions appear out of the blue without any logical causation. Some call synchronicity “The Law of Attraction” . We used to shrug our shoulders and say this is just “coincidence”; but now we have begun to understand how synchronicities happen – through quantum entanglement. With the birth of quantum mechanics 100 years ago physicists discovered that space is not empty and matter is not solid as Newton supposed. We now know that matter is vibrating energy. and that humans are part of a quantum field. No longer does logic reign supreme. The head AND heart, logic AND intuition are partners in finding answers to both small and large questions that our world faces. The next period in humankind's history will be one where we need to clarify how quantum physics has changed forever the way we look at decision making. Quantum Entanglement has helped us understand how synchronicity works. In this unique cutting edge session we will examine synchronicity from an intercultural perspective by asking the following questions: • How do cultural values impact synchronicity? • Do some cultures naturally attract synchronicity? • Can attraction of synchronicity be taught? Speaker Dr Philip Merry has been an inter-cultural team and leadership consultant for 43 years in 63 countries. He has a PhD in Synchronicity and Leadership from Tilburg University, is author of The 9 Keys of Synchronicity and is a former board member of Sietar International.	Dr Philip Merry has been an intercultural team and leadership consultant for 43 years in 63 countries. He has a PhD in Synchronicity and Leadership from Tilburg University and is the author of ‘The 9 Keys of Synchronicity’.
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Misbah Zulfa	Elizabeth	Strategy of Local-Based Cultural Tourism Development : A Study of Religious Cultural Development in Bayan Lombok Indonesia Tourism development strategies are an important aspect of tourism development. For the purpose of cultural conservation, such as The Bayan Mosque in Lombok it is necessary to develop religious cultural tourism using a local approach. Applying qualitative methods ,a case study approach and field research, this study aims to uncover the problems faced by the local community in developing cultural tourism; what the local community has done to overcome these problems; and what impact these efforts have had on the development of Bayan cultural tourism. The study revealed that the problems faced by the local community in developing Bayan religious cultural tourism include a lack of awareness among the local community regarding the potential of Bayan Mosque as a tourist destination, the absence of an institution specifically tasked with managing the potential of the tourist destination; insufficient government attention to designing integrated cultural tourism within the community, and the scope of development efforts remains limited. Some young people in Bayan have made efforts such as supporting the emergence of local identity; developing visits to traditional villages around the Bayan Mosque; hearings with the Tourism Office for possible assistance; forming a youth group that promotes tourism awareness; and involving the media in major events at the Bayan Mosque. The impact of these efforts, to some extent, has already led to a significant increase in tourist visits to the Bayan Mosque. These increasing visits are related to the efforts of the local community to involve the media in attracting tourists. It can be concluded that efforts to develop tourism must be comprehensive, including the media.	Misbah Zulfa Elizabeth is a professor on Anthropology in the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences State Islamic University Walisongo Semarang. She is the former-dean of the faculty (2019-2024). She graduated her undergraduate, master, and PhD program from the Department of Anthropology Gadjahmada University. She got many short courses in countries, like US, Dutch, Australia, and Rumania on the program of conflict-resolution and mediation, gender-study, academic-writing, and journal-management. She is the Editor-in-Chief of Jurnal Sosiologi Walisongo (JSW). She published her articles both in national and international reputable journals, individually and collaboratively. Some of her newest publications are: "Why Policies and Community Don't Greet Each Other: A Study of Semarang City Policies and Community Initiatives in Waste Management" https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/aspp.70009 ; "Women and Access Toward Social Change Role of Women in Legislative in Responding Regional Program" https://www.atlantis-press.com/proceedings/jicsps-23/126007815 ; "Implementing Global Ethics in Local Context: A Study of Religious Leaders' Perspectives in Central Java Indonesia" https://journal.iainkudus.ac.id/index.php/QIJIS/article/view/22766 ; She is also active in many academic forums, in the scope of local, national, and international as a speaker. In the social context, she involves in many social activities related to education, environment, and community development, especially
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			women development.
Ng	c.j.	Coaching Across Cultures Coaching Across Cultures Cultural nuances shape every coaching conversation, from how feedback is received to what progress looks like. However, what makes a practical coaching approach in Singapore might fall flat in Shanghai or create confusion in Jakarta. This workshop transforms these cultural complexities from potential pitfalls into powerful opportunities for deeper client connections. Through immersive case studies and role-play scenarios, coaches will uncover their cultural assumptions while mastering practical frameworks. We'll tackle real challenges global coaches face: building trust when trust looks different, adapting communication styles while staying authentic, and recognizing cultural signals that could make or break client relationships. Participants will gain concrete tools for assessing cultural contexts and adjusting their coaching approach. We'll explore how different cultures view leadership, personal growth, and success - and how these views fundamentally shape coaching outcomes. The workshop integrates cultural competence with IAC Coaching Masteries®, ensuring coaches maintain professional excellence while developing cultural flexibility. Key explorations include: 1. Reading and responding to cultural signals in coaching conversations 2. Developing trust across high-context and low-context communication styles 3. Aligning coaching methods with cultural expectations about growth and change This hands-on session serves internationally active coaches and those working with cultural diversity in their local practice. Participants will leave with practical tools, deeper cultural awareness, and renewed confidence in their ability to coach effectively across cultural boundaries.	c.j. Ng transforms multinational teams into high-performing engines of growth. As an ICF-PCC IAC-Masteries Practitioner, he specializes in cross-cultural leadership for Fortune 500 giants, including HP, Honeywell, and Buhler. His bilingual fluency in English and Mandarin uniquely positions him to bridge East-West business dynamics across China and Southeast Asia. Drawing from his executive experience as Asia Marketing Manager for a Fortune 500 logistics firm and Corporate Training Director for Switzerland's largest media group, c.j. delivers strategic insights that transcend cultural boundaries. As a certified Six Thinking Hats facilitator and Scrum Master, he architects agile, culturally adaptive solutions that drive measurable results. Armed with a 2:1 Honours in Management from the University of London and expertise in Cultural Navigator and Belbin Team Roles, he combines strategic rigor with cultural intelligence to help organizations thrive in complex, multicultural markets through inclusive leadership and cross-border collaboration.

Nguyen	Dr. Mai	From Saigon to Synapses: Memory, Division, and the Neuroscience of Reconciliation - The Case of Vietnam This keynote explores the intersection of brain science and culture in a time of growing polarization. As societal divides deepen, understanding the neural mechanisms behind our beliefs, identities, and biases becomes increasingly important. Neuroscience sheds light on how our brains process information, form group loyalties, and respond to opposing viewpoints. We will examine the case of post-war reconciliation in Vietnam as a compelling example of how the legacy of conflict can evolve into long-lasting social divisions and psychological dissonance across generations. This discussion draws on a three-year research project involving interviews with 100 individuals reflecting on their experiences since the fall of Saigon in 1975. Finally, we will explore strategies for bridging divides and fostering empathy, offering science-based insights into one of the most urgent challenges of our time.	Dr. Mai Nguyen is an award-winning expert known for bridging inter/cross-cultural communication and neuroscience. With an MSc in Applied Neuroscience, she integrates interdisciplinary insights from her former role as an Associate Professor at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and her current work as a consultant. As a keynote speaker, Dr. Nguyen has presented at the Forbes Women's Summit, the World Bank, and numerous major conferences on applied neuroscience. Her acclaimed book, "Cross-Cultural Management with Insights from Brain Science" has been praised for its practical and innovative approach. She also teaches annual summer courses hosted by the University of Groningen.
Penkair	Jakrapob	A compelling look at Thailand's LGBTQ+ community, exploring cultural complexities and social impacts shaping inclusion efforts Being gay or being LGBTQ+ of today's time has never been easy or simple. Even in Thailand, where indicators show that being gay seems easier than most societies in the world. My presentation here hopes to clarify to all of you that it is easier in some aspects, but never, never simple in its ordeal. Just like The Cold War successfully symbolized the whole world in 2 political camps: the capitalist and the communist ones, and all of us, with only a few exceptions, had to endure it for 55 years or until the crumbling down to the Berlin Wall that separated Europe. The Human-made society has dominated even longer by categorizing the world into the limited gender of male and female, as toilets, government and general forms, schools, movies, arts, etc., successfully symbolize it for us. Therefore, I, who feel the "gayness" of myself since the age of nine, have been treated as an outsider since then. Such sentiment had haunted me and millions others for a very long time until the emergence of Thailand's Act of Marriage Equality on January 23rd of this	Jakrapob Penkair (Thai: จักรภพ เพ็ญแข; born October 21, 1967) is a Thai media personality, diplomat and politician who served as a Member of Parliament for Bangkok,[2] the Government Spokesperson of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra from 2003 to 2005, and later as a Cabinet Minister to the Office of the Prime Minister from 2007 to 2008 under the premiership of Samak Sundaravej. Following the 2006 Thai coup d'état by the Royal Thai Army, he became a key organizer of the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship opposed to it. He was forced to step down after allegations of lèse majesté,[3] a legal weapon commonly used in Thailand to silence dissent, and has been in exile since the 2009 Thai political unrest.

		year 2025 that barged in, courageously so, and changed EVERYTHING. The following thesis will be of what had happened before, what had happened during the 50 years of my life before the law, and what I believe will happen as a result.	
Qi	Huang	Intercultural LGBTQ+ Youth identity recognition: HongKong-Mainland China aspect This qualitative study explores how Chinese mainland LGBTQ+ youth navigate identity in Hong Kong's intercultural context. Through in-depth interviews, the study examines the influence of sociocultural factors, digital media, and the linguistic landscape on participants' self-acceptance and identity formation. Findings reveal diverse identity journeys, ranging from sudden moments of realization to gradual self-discovery, often facilitated by Hong Kong's relatively liberal social environment. Participants highlighted the role of digital media in fostering a sense of belonging and connection, enabling them to access information, share experiences, and engage with supportive communities. Additionally, strategic language use emerged as a key tool for managing social expectations, allowing individuals to negotiate between personal authenticity and external pressures. The study also sheds light on the tension between familial expectations and self-expression, illustrating the complexities of navigating cultural and social identities in an unfamiliar environment. While Hong Kong provides a space for exploration and self-affirmation, challenges remain in balancing traditional values with personal identity. These findings underscore the importance of fostering inclusive and supportive environments that empower LGBTQ+ youth in their identity development, particularly in intercultural settings where diverse social and linguistic influences shape their lived experiences.	Qi Huang is a postgraduate student in TEFL at the Department of English and German in URV, Spain. His main research fields are language acquisition, gender studies and intercultural communication. He has published several papers in journals in sociology and language studies.

Rachmawati	Lin	Designing CRP-based Teaching Materials in Translation Classes Using Audio-Visual Digital Media These days, classes cannot rely solely on conventional materials because of the changes in the era, where technology has become an integral part of life, including classroom learning. The study emphasizes only how lecturers design CRP-based teaching materials using audio-visual digital media based on the students' needs. This media varies based on the students' characteristics. Integrating technology into classroom learning is a trend in English language learning. The primary objective of this study is to ensure that students are exposed to culture and technology-based learning, encouraging them to connect their cultural knowledge with the translation process. The study used a qualitative descriptive method through in-depth personal interviews with lecturers. The study found that lecturers prefer different audio-visual digital media to ascertain that the learning media suits the students' needs well. Every lecturer has their thoughts that the media they use can significantly affect students to make the whole learning process enjoyable and interactive.	
Rakhshandehroo & Ziegner-Llewellyn	Mahboubeh & Kristin	A Collaborative Autoethnographic Study of an Intercultural COIL Collaboration between Japan and Germany This presentation offers an in-depth exploration of a virtual intercultural collaboration between universities in Japan and Germany. Grounded in Deardorff's (2006) model of intercultural competence development, the study provides valuable insights into the implementation and refinement of a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiative. A key feature of this work is the researchers' use of collaborative autoethnography, which allowed the instructors who designed and implemented the COIL project to provide an insider's perspective. The presenters engaged in a reflective, collaborative process, drawing on their personal experiences and cultural backgrounds to shed light on the practical realities, challenges, and opportunities encountered throughout the virtual exchange. The detailed account of the initial COIL setup in 2023 highlights the crucial role of navigating technological barriers, aligning curricular objectives, and	Mahboubeh Rakhshandehroo received her Ph.D. in Transformative Education from Osaka University. She is currently an assistant professor at Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts. She is also the ICLHE RG&SIG coordinator, and ELINET Japan's EMI&GE coordinator. Her research interests include English-Medium Instruction (EMI) student support, Global Englishes (GE), Intercultural Competence (IC), Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), and Sustainable Internationalization. She is currently teaching courses on international education, intercultural communication, COIL, SDGs, academic presentation, and academic writing. Kristin Ziegner-Llewellyn has been serving as a member of the academic staff at the Hochschule

		cultivating meaningful intercultural dialogue. The examination of the project's refinement in 2024, based on student feedback and instructor reflections, provides a case study on the importance of continuous program enhancement. The modifications, which included increasing opportunities for synchronous interaction and incorporating more structured reflection activities, led to deeper levels of intercultural learning and engagement among participants. Furthermore, the study's collaborative autoethnographic methodology offers a unique perspective on the instructor experience in COIL projects. By highlighting the presenters' personal and cultural lenses, the research sheds light on the relational dynamics that shape the development and delivery of virtual exchange programs. The findings offer insights to guide other educators seeking to cultivate shared humanity across borders through innovative pedagogical approaches.	Mittweida – University of Applied Sciences since 2019. Her responsibilities have encompassed roles such as International Student Advisor and Lecturer in German as a Foreign Language and Intercultural Communication. She is currently involved in the bachelor's programme Global Communication in Business and Culture, where she coordinates and teaches modules including Intercultural Training and Autonomous Language Learning. She holds an M.A. in Intercultural Communication and Business Administration from Chemnitz University of Technology (2009). Following her graduation, she acquired substantial international teaching experience in both higher education and secondary education contexts in China and New Zealand. Her academic interests lie in the development of intercultural competence and the implementation of Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) as a pedagogical approach to promote global citizenship and shared humanity.
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Rupesh	Kumar	Transforming Healthcare: The Impact of AI and Automation on Work and Skills Disruptive technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and automation are revolutionizing the healthcare industry, fundamentally altering the ways of working and the skills required. This transformation is driven by the need to enhance patient care, streamline operations, and reduce costs. AI and automation are being leveraged to perform high-volume, repetitive tasks, allowing healthcare professionals to focus on more complex and creative aspects of patient care. For instance, AI-powered medical image analysis can significantly reduce diagnostic errors, while natural language processing (NLP) systems improve patient interactions and sentiment analysis. Additionally, robotic process automation (RPA) enhances operational efficiency by automating administrative tasks such as patient registration and claims processing. The integration of AI and automation necessitates a shift in the skill sets required for healthcare professionals. There is a growing demand for skills in data analysis, machine learning, and AI system management. Healthcare workers must also develop competencies in working alongside AI systems, interpreting AI-generated insights, and maintaining ethical standards in AI applications. To enable less stressful and more inclusive work environments, several steps can be taken. Firstly, continuous education and training programs should be implemented to upskill healthcare professionals, ensuring they are equipped to work with advanced technologies. Secondly, fostering a culture of collaboration between humans and AI can alleviate stress by distributing workloads more effectively. Thirdly, implementing AI systems that prioritize user-friendly interfaces and provide real-time support can enhance job satisfaction and reduce burnout. Lastly, promoting inclusivity through AI-driven tools that accommodate diverse patient needs and languages can create a more equitable healthcare environment. By strategically integrating AI and automation, the healthcare industry can achieve a balance between technological advancement and human-centric care, ultimately leading to improved health outcomes and a more sustainable workforce.	Rupesh Kumar is a global-minded technologist with over 25 years of experience in Information Technology, leading enterprise-scale DevOps transformations across diverse sectors. As Principal DevOps Engineer at Humana, a major U.S. healthcare organization, he champions human-centred engineering practices that foster collaboration, innovation, and cultural empathy within technical teams. Rupesh is the inventor of a U.S. patent and a provisional patent. His work has been recognized with the DevOps World Innovation Award in 2020 and the DEVIES Awards in 2023 and 2024 for driving inclusive, transformative DevOps initiatives that connect people, processes, and platforms.
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Sauvignon	David	Tools for Promoting Intercultural Competence "LEGO ® SERIOUS PLAY ®" In recent years, gamification methods have won keen recognition of current pedagogies seeking to stimulate the modern generation-Y students' interest through entertainment. While computer-based solutions remain more popular, the engagement potential of tangible, toy-like gamification tools may not go unnoticed, seeing that they provide an excellent counter-experience to the e-learning overkill. Such interactive, project-based activities seem not only well-received, but also highly effective in terms of advanced design thinking, team building and active participation on the part of learners enrolled on the programme of intercultural field. In order to benefit from this positive energy, and generate more commitment and creativity in our trainings, we propose an experimental workshop based on the Danish method LEGO SERIOUS PLAY (LSP). Can the intercultural experience be a haptic one? Yes – this workshop will rethink interculturalism by gamifying it. This unique workshop will allow participants to gain an insight into one toolset and how it can be applied to intercultural settings: they will get to know LSP. The tool's potential for enhancing intercultural skills will be tested and contrasted to enable participants to forge new powerful non-digital realities in their own future IC gamification workshops.	David Sauvignon is a French teacher at the Sorbonne University at Abu Dhabi. He has several years of expertise in the fields of relocation in intercultural context, diversity management and cross-cultural communication. He has experience of working with various multi-national organisations like IBM, Danone, IBM, P&G, Société Générale, BNP Paribas and 3M. He has worked as a Pedagogical Coordinator and Cross-Cultural Consultant at Beijing University of Technology and has been a General Rapporteur Assistant at the Polish Ministry of Economy.
Saxena	Roopali	Comparing Technology Integration in Education: India vs. Other Asian Countries The integration of technology in education is transforming learning experiences across Asia, with countries like India, China, South Korea, and Singapore leading digital innovation. India has witnessed rapid EdTech growth, driven by government initiatives (e.g., DIKSHA, PM eVIDYA) and private platforms (BYJU'S, Unacademy). However, challenges such as the digital divide, limited teacher training, and uneven internet access hinder nationwide adoption. In contrast, China has leveraged state-driven AI-powered education, South Korea benefits from high digital literacy and advanced smart classrooms, and Singapore excels in integrating AI and personalized learning within a well-funded system. This study compares	Roopali Saxena is a French language educator based in Bangalore, India. With a background in business administration in Human Resources and Finance and a DALF C1 certification in French language, she transitioned into teaching after discovering a deep passion for the French language and Francophone cultures. She has been actively involved in language pedagogy for several years and advocates for meaningful, technology-enhanced learning. Roopali's approach combines academic rigor with intercultural sensitivity.

		India's technology-driven education model with other Asian nations, analyzing government policies, infrastructure, and innovation adoption. Findings suggest that while India's EdTech sector is expanding, a lack of universal digital infrastructure and equitable access remains a barrier, unlike South Korea and Singapore, where strong public-private partnerships ensure seamless technology integration. To bridge this gap, India must invest in teacher digital training, expand rural internet access, and implement inclusive digital policies. Future research should examine how AI-driven learning models can be adapted to diverse educational contexts across Asia.	
Sobue	Kirstie	Why Japanese language learners pretend to understand, and what we should learn from it The art of "pretending to understand" is practiced in both native and non-native language discourse for diverse reasons - anything from "this conversation is no longer interesting to me" to "I cannot admit to not understanding the conversation in present company". Foster (1998) evaluated the effects of this phenomenon among learners of English as "allowing a student whose understanding is incomplete, and whose contribution is limited, nevertheless to feel part of an English-speaking group, with the attendant feeling of achievement". As a Japanese language teacher in Japan, the author queried whether L2 learners of Japanese residing in Japan "feel part of a (Japanese-speaking) group" or achieve a "feeling of achievement" when they experience a situation in which they feel the need to "pretend to understand", and surveyed over 200 L2 learners in regard to their experience. The survey results show that a majority of students of Japanese in Japan experience negative emotions such as "shame" (hazukashii), "regret" (kuyashii), "foolishness" (jibun ga baka) when they feel the need to "pretend to understand", and put the experience down to their own lack of effort or study. They also show that a proportion of students choose to "pretend to understand" after an experience in which they were laughed at in a situation where they admitted to not understanding. Considering the results of this survey, and influenced by prior research into improving intercultural effectiveness, the author engaged in a series of classes with international	Kristie Sobue: After 25 years of working between the UK and Japan as a translator/interpreter, I pivoted into Japanese language education around 10 years ago, and now teach international students and trainee Japanese language teachers in our university's Global Studies program. My research interests include intercultural communication (particularly within the rapidly changing, increasingly multicultural environment of Japan), and the ways in which foreign language anxiety expresses itself outside of the classroom (since most international students in Japan now live independently within their communities, and have part time jobs that take up at least as much time as their studies). I'm currently completing a doctoral thesis on the reasons behind, and the implications of, Japanese language learners "pretending to understand" when in conversation with native speakers.

		students at a Japanese university designed to engage and improve their intercultural effectiveness. In this presentation, the author will demonstrate the impact of these classes on students' emotional resilience and self-awareness, both of which are considered not only aspects of intercultural awareness, but also may be tools with which to counteract the negative emotions that result from "pretending to understand".	
Supriadi	Endang	Decentralization of Digital Innovation: NTB Mall's Contribution to the Development of an Eastern Indonesian Technology-Based Economic Ecosystem In the landscape of Indonesia's digital economic development, the eastern region often lags behind the national growth centers. This research comes as a response to that gap by examining NTB Mall—a local initiative based on digital technology launched by the Provincial Government of West Nusa Tenggara. This platform not only opens up broader market access for local UMKM players but also serves as a catalyst for building a digital economy ecosystem based on local wisdom and community. This demonstrates real potential in promoting the equitable distribution of digital economic benefits for approximately 14,000 UMKM products that have been curated and marketed online at NTB Mall by 2024. The main objective of this research is to understand how NTB Mall plays a strategic role in empowering UMKM actors, driving digital transformation, and building a technology-based value chain rooted in local wisdom. This research employs a qualitative field research methodology and utilizes a descriptive approach. The results show that NTB Mall functions as an innovation hub that bridges traditional economic actors with the modern technology ecosystem. Through inclusive technological infrastructure, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and training strategies based on local needs, NTB Mall has successfully created a contextual digital empowerment model. The increase in digital capacity of UMKM and market expansion from regional to national levels demonstrates NTB Mall's ability to reach higher levels. This research concludes that the decentralization of digital innovation is not a utopia, but rather a necessity that can be achieved through adaptive technology and community-based	Endang Supriadi, M.A was born in Cirebon, West Java, on September 15, 1989. His current main occupation is as a lecturer in the Sociology Study Program, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP), State Islamic University (UIN) Walisongo Semarang. These academic interests are reflected in several scientific articles (journals) and textbooks as well as anthologies, including: journals: The Construction of Gated Communities: Changes and Challenges in Residential Societies (A Study in BSB Housing, Mijen, Semarang City) (2021); Religious Moderation at Pesantren Al-Hikmah 1 Benda–Brebes (2022); Women's Ulama Movement in Building Moderation of Islam in Indonesia (2023); Transformative Islam and Peasant Independence: Experiences from an Indonesian Village (2024); The Role of Social Workers in Improving the Welfare of the Elderly at Panti Wreda Omega Semarang (2025). And Textbook: Introduction to the Sociology of Religion: History, Theory, Method, and Study of Religious Communities (2021). Sociology of Islamic Boarding Schools: Islamic Boarding Schools, Islam, and Indonesian Identity (2022); Islam of Fishermen: Reconstruction of Islamic Rituals within the Framework of Islam and Local Culture of Cirebon Fishermen (2023); Intolerance, Radicalism, and Terrorism: Contemporary Socio-Religious Phenomena

		initiatives. NTB Mall shows that digital economic growth can develop from the periphery with a wide-ranging and transformative impact, not limited to major cities. The results enable the development of similar models elsewhere and encourage the implementation of more equitable and decentralized digital development policies.	in Indonesia (2024).
Suter	Martina	How is Intercultural Competence and Behavior applied in Hybrid Leadership? The shift to hybrid work, accelerated by digitalization and the COVID-19 pandemic, has transformed leadership and team dynamics (Mitchell, 2023). Post-pandemic, hybrid working evolves in many enterprises. However, hybrid models are yet to be developed and further optimized (Hopkings & Bardoel, 2023). A hybrid international leader faces two main challenges: leading a team whose communication, interactions and reactions are culturally different and influenced by language, geographical and time differences; and building trust and an inclusive collaboration culture within a team that partially works remotely and depends on technology (Grey, 2023). Managing intercultural behavior both face-to-face and virtually simultaneously extends intercultural leadership competence, which research shows has a substantial impact on team effectiveness and motivation (Lloyd & Härtel, 2010) (Schelfhout, 2022). How intercultural competence and behavior is applied in hybrid leadership has been explored as part of a recent study conducted by a university in collaboration with industry partners. Global leaders and employees of three international companies participated in an action research project to explore, evaluate, and develop hybrid leadership competences through scenarios and interventions. Focusing on intercultural competence and behavior the conceptual framework is based on the intercultural intelligence model of CQ by (Dyne, et al., 2012) and incorporates influencing hybrid competences such as psychological safety, trust and transparency, which are essential for empowering teams (Grey, 2023). Using the action research approach, the intercultural study applies iterative Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles (Moen & Norman, 2009) to develop and test intervention scenarios. These scenarios provide practical	Martina Suter: 30 years of practical experience in global organisations including 4 years of leadership in Asia Pacific based in China, Master of Advanced Studies in Service Marketing & Management, CAS International Leadership & CAS International Management at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts – Business, Switzerland, Doctor of Business Administration (in progress), Silpakorn University, Faculty of Management Science, Thailand, Member of SIETAR Switzerland

		methods for hybrid leaders to manage intercultural behaviors effectively and enhance team collaboration. The findings of the study contribute to hybrid intercultural leadership research by bridging theoretical models with practical applications, enriching empirical knowledge, and offering solutions for improving team effectiveness and motivation in international teams.	
Tan	Po Li	The Chinese Dao (道) to Coaching “知人者智，自知者明，胜人有力，自胜者强”。。。。老子 “Those who know others are intelligent; those who know themselves are truly wise. Those who master others are strong; those who master themselves have true power....” Lao Zhi. As a coach/facilitator, one is constantly practising self-reflection & self-cultivation to raise consciousness. Over the years, I have developed a deepened awareness of how my personal coaching/facilitating philosophy has been shaped by the Chinese ideology and values connected to Taoism. Some of the key practices of Taoism are 1) The Dao of Holding Space (Wu Wei, 无为), 2) the Middle Way Principles (中庸之道) and 3) the Holistic/Systemic thinking of the Tao. This presentation will delve into the wisdom and share how the principles reinforce my coaching/facilitation and support me in navigating my passion across cultures and nations. In this session you will learn about some Chinese wisdom and principles that can be adopted and adapted universally and how you can apply it to yourself and to your practice.	Po Li Tan has more than 35 years of providing professional adult development for adults from various backgrounds, cultures & countries, including in Malaysia, Singapore, UK, China and working as an educational developer for King's College London, UK. When in China, her work focuses on developing talents/leaders for multinationals in China & SEA. Her coaching philosophy is shaped by the Chinese Middle Way philosophy (中庸) as well as her diverse experience of living and working abroad. Originally from Malaysia, Po Li obtained her PhD, specialising in Adult Learning & Cross-Cultural Psychology from Faculty of Education, QUT, Brisbane, Australia. Her current interests range from 'Global Leadership/Team' 'Happiness & Well Being At Work'. 'The Best Way to find Yourself is to Lose Yourself in the Service of Others' -- M. Gandhi. Po Li founded a charity project called Inspiring Dance Project in Beijing in 2015 with a mission to empower youth in China with dance positive energy to develop self-confidence. During Covid lockdown, Po Li founded a virtual pro bono workshop, 'Project Me' for global participants to share uplifting dialogues.

Tartakovsky	Eugene	Language Acculturation among Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union in Israel: Language Use, Group Relations, and Psychological Well-Being This study investigates language use and its connection with group relations and psychological well-being among immigrants from the former Soviet Union in Israel. We operationalized language use as using the native (Russian) and the new (Hebrew) languages in everyday life outside of work (talking with relatives and friends, reading books and internet articles, and watching movies). We measured both positive (social support from immigrants and locals) and negative aspects of group relations (perceived discrimination). Method: The study used a stratified sample of first-generation immigrants from the former Soviet Union to Israel (n=848, 45% male, 60% with tertiary education, average age 45 years, average time in Israel 28 years). Results: In general, immigrants used more Hebrew than Russian. However, the usage varied across the fields: Hebrew was more used for book reading, internet and movie watching, while Russian was more used for talking with relatives and friends. Using one language was negatively correlated with using the other, in general and separately, in different fields. The older age, the older age on arrival to Israel, and less time in Israel were associated with more Russian and less Hebrew use. Using Hebrew was directly positively connected to well-being. In addition, using Hebrew was positively connected to support from locals and immigrants and negatively connected to discrimination. Also, using Hebrew was indirectly positively connected to well-being through its positive connections with social support from immigrants and locals. Using Russian was positively connected to support from immigrants and perceived discrimination, and it was not connected to well-being. Discussion: The study results are discussed in light of the acculturation theory, focusing on the bi-dimensional model of acculturation and the integration hypothesis.	Eugene Tartakovsky is a Full Professor at the Tel-Aviv University School of Social Work. He received an M.A. in clinical psychology from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and a Ph.D. from the School of Social Work at Ben-Gurion University in Beer-Sheba, Israel. Professor Tartakovsky's research focuses on values as determinants of attitudes and behavior, immigration psychology, and the relationships between ethnic minorities and majorities. Professor Tartakovsky has published over 80 articles and book chapters and has presented his works extensively at international conferences.
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Tartakovsky	Eugene/ Evgeny	AccultTesting the Support and Discrimination Model in Three Largest Minority Groups in Israel This study investigated the acculturation strategies and tested the integration hypothesis and a support and discrimination (SAD) model, which was suggested as an alternative to the rejection-disidentification and rejection-identification models, in three minority groups in Israel. The study used stratified samples of immigrants from the former Soviet Union (n = 848), Palestinian Israelis (n = 631), and ultra-Orthodox Jews (n = 940). The connections between and relative strengths of ethnic and national identifications differed across the three groups. Minority group identification and social support from the minority group positively affected the psychological well-being of all groups. In addition, a positive effect of social support from the minority and the majority groups on identification with these groups was found in all groups. However, the effect of discrimination on minority and national identifications and the effect of majority support and national identification on well-being varied across the three groups.	Eugene Tartakovsky is a Full Professor at the Tel-Aviv University School of Social Work. He received an M.A. in clinical psychology from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and a Ph.D. from the School of Social Work at Ben-Gurion University in Beer-Sheba, Israel. Professor Tartakovsky's research focuses on values as determinants of attitudes and behavior, immigration psychology, and the relationships between ethnic minorities and majorities. Professor Tartakovsky has published over 80 articles and book chapters and has presented his works extensively at international conferences.
Dr. Tungli	Zsuzsanna	Global Leadership and Asian Voices in Western Multinationals How real is the “bamboo ceiling” today – and what can be done about it? This session explores the underrepresentation of Asian leaders in Western multinational corporations. We will examine recent data and look at the underlying reasons for the persistent “bamboo ceiling.” We'll discuss how this leadership gap affects not only individual career trajectories, but also the broader business potential of organisations operating in Asia. The session will also address the following question: Is the Asian voice being heard in today's global DEI programs? Join an open and thought-provoking discussion on what's holding Asian talent back, and how companies and individuals can drive meaningful change.	Dr. Zsuzsanna Tungli is an expert and passionate advocate of global and inclusive leadership, gender equality and cultural intelligence. Over the past 30 years, her work has spanned Asia, US and Europe in consulting, research and executive education. She has designed and run most of her programs as the Managing Partner of Developing Global Leaders and as an invited faculty member at the following business schools: INSEAD, IMD, London Business School, University of St. Gallen, National University of Singapore and Singapore Management University. She is the author of the books <i>The Culture Key between Asia and the West</i> (2020), and <i>The Roadmap to Gender Equality in Organisations</i> (forthcoming).

Dr. Vegh	Judit	Multi-Level Strategies for Sustained Family Well-Being and Integration in Global Mobility Successful adjustment in transnational contexts requires a multi-level approach that integrates both organisational support and family-centered strategies. Transnational families, particularly trailing spouses, often encounter challenges such as social isolation, career disruptions, and the need to establish a sense of belonging in unfamiliar environments. Family-level strategies are essential for promoting sustained well-being and long-term integration. These include cultivating meaningful social ties that can evolve into quasi-familial relationships, dedicating time and energy to supportive connections, and preserving transgenerational bonds that maintain identity, cultural continuity, and emotional security across generations. Organisational practices provide important structural and social support, but they are insufficient alone; recognising the family unit as an active participant in the adjustment process is critical. By emphasising the interplay between organisational responsibility and family-level strategies, this perspective highlights the importance of intentional social engagement, coordinated support, and proactive family-centered interventions for achieving enduring well-being, integration, and stability in transnational contexts.	Dr Judit Vegh, following her professional background in Human Resources, has for several years specialised in working with transnational families as an intercultural psychologist. Her work focuses on supporting families in understanding how international relocation and living abroad affect their family dynamics, and in developing strategies to provide effective mutual support. Alongside her practice, her research examines the functioning of expatriate families in both everyday contexts and crisis situations, which was also the subject of her doctoral dissertation in psychology. She is an active member of several international professional associations and has held leadership roles as co-chair of working groups and as subgroup leader in multiple COST Actions addressing the future of work and transnational families. Furthermore, she is a co-founder of SIETAR SEA.
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Venkatesan & Krishnan	Pooranasou ndari & Usha	Contemporary Cultural Understanding Based on Amartya Sen's Cultural Identity Pluralism This paper explores identity pluralism, focusing on the elements of cultural identity and how Sen's theory can help us understand cultural identifications in Asia. While cultural identity in Asia has traditionally been rooted in inherited traditions, contemporary societal changes and the increasing intersection of diverse cultural affiliations have made identity more fluid and relative. Cultural identities are not fixed systems solely based on an individual's origin. In today's interconnected world, every person engages in close cultural interactions with multiple nationalities and traditions, making identity dynamic and continuously evolving. No single classification—whether based on religion, nationality, or ethnicity—can fully define an individual's cultural identity. Instead, identity is shaped by various cultural elements that people encounter according to their interests and opportunities. This flexible, dynamic, and inclusive view of cultural identity helps overcome the potential destructiveness of mono-dimensional systems, which, particularly in collectivist societies, could lead to political, regional, or communal conflicts. In this regard, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory—specifically the dimension of Individualism vs. Collectivism—is relevant to Sen's concept of identity pluralism. In today's multicultural societies, the contrast between individualism and collectivism can sometimes foster prejudice. An individual's inclination toward individualistic or collectivist values is not solely determined by race, nationality, or gender, as culture within a country is no longer homogeneous. This study aims to analyse the multiple identities of individuals in Asia, considering both their cultural exposure and traditional values in the context of modern multicultural societies. References • Sen, A. (2006). Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny. Norton, New York, London. • Hofstede, G. (n.d.). The 6D Model of National Culture. Retrieved from https://geerthofstede.com/culture-geert-hofstede-gert-jan-hofstede/6d-model-of-national-culture/	Pooranasoundari Venkatesan: I'm a language and intercultural coach with a deep passion for creating meaningful, learner-centered experiences. With over eight years of teaching experience, I've had the privilege of working with diverse learners across age groups and cultural backgrounds, and of presenting at national and international platforms on topics such as intercultural learning, storytelling, and inclusive education. I'm committed to designing learning spaces where curiosity, cultural exchange, and critical reflection come together in engaging and impactful ways. I believe that learning becomes truly transformative when it fosters empathy, nurtures identity awareness, and promotes a deeper understanding of our interconnected world. I aim to build spaces that spark curiosity, celebrate diversity, and foster dialogue across cultures—because I believe that learning languages is ultimately about learning to see the world differently. Usha Krishnan: Certified intercultural trainer and facilitator - certified from the Intercultural Training Academy Hamburg. Dedicated German language trainer with more than 11 years of experience in teaching A1 to B2 levels at various MNCs, Universities, Schools and Goethe Institute. Has conducted courses and workshops together in various multinational companies, schools and for Goethe Institute. Presented papers in international conferences and has four paper publications as well on innovative teaching methodologies. Presented on various intercultural and Diversity topics in international forums.
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Vongswasdi	Pisitta	Thinking Gender, Rethinking Self: Cultural Perspectives from Future Business Leaders This working paper explores the gender beliefs of master’s students from diverse cultural backgrounds—including European, Asian, and U.S. contexts—at a leading European business school. It examines how students perceive gender in their everyday lives across multiple domains and investigates their aspirations and perspectives on gender roles. The paper begins with a review of key literature on gender role beliefs, cultural influences on gender identity, and the development of gender diversity and inclusivity cultures in business schools. Employing a qualitative methodology, it analyses reflection papers written by 86 students. These reflections draw on both students’ personal experiences and insights gained through interviews they conducted with others—peers, family members, or colleagues. These interviews served as reflective prompts, enabling students to critically examine, question, and contrast their own gender assumptions. Initial findings suggest a gradually shifting culture of gender inclusivity within the business school context. While gender parity has not yet been fully realized, many students express increased awareness of gender-based challenges and a desire to promote equity. At the same time, the data reveals the persistence of unconscious biases and subtle forms of discrimination, often shaped by students’ cultural backgrounds and early socialization. Students report experiencing their lives as “gendered” across various spheres, including education, work, and family life. The paper also examines other factors that shape these differing beliefs and experiences. Ultimately, this working paper aims to demonstrate the value of reflective and dialogical learning in surfacing latent gender assumptions and fostering cultural change in management education. It contributes to the growing body of literature on gender in business education by encouraging critical engagement with implicit stereotypes, structural inequalities, and the reproduction of gender norms within academic institutions, especially within the business schools context.	Dr. Pisitta Vongswasdi is a professor, researcher, and speaker specializing in leadership development, organizational behaviour, and mindful management. Based in Germany, she currently holds the Chair of Leadership & Society at WHU – Otto Beisheim School of Management, where she teaches, writes, and consults internationally. With a global academic background from Thailand to the UK and the Netherlands, Dr. Pisitta brings both cultural fluency and academic rigor to her work. She has advised leaders across sectors and continues to share her insights through lectures, workshops, and publications.
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Wiśniewska	Lidia	Korean Wave and its impact on the societies and culture in South East Asia The Impact of the Korean Wave on Society and Culture in Southeast Asia The Korean Wave (Hallyu) has significantly influenced Southeast Asian society, shaping cultural identity, consumer behavior, and social norms. This presentation examines its impact through historical, economic, and political contexts, incorporating theories from education, cultural studies, and social learning. Hallyu emerged in the 1990s due to media liberalization, chaebol restructuring, and government support. It now serves as a tool of soft power, promoting cultural diplomacy and economic growth. Social Learning and Proximity Theories explain how audiences adopt Korean behaviors and ideals through media exposure. Key areas of impact include: • Cultural Identity: K-dramas foster regional pride by presenting a modern Asian image, one one side and on the other side global culture is becoming part of the Koreanisation process. • Language & Education: Interest in learning Korean and studying in Korea has increased. • Tourism: K-drama locations attract Southeast Asian visitors. • Beauty & Fashion: Korean skincare and fashion trends dominate regional markets. • Social Media & Fandoms: Online communities amplify Korean entertainment's influence. • Local Entertainment: Southeast Asian media integrates K-drama themes. • Representation & Diversity: International perspectives in Korean media enhance discourse. Despite its benefits, Hallyu raises concerns about unrealistic beauty standards, excessive alcohol consumption, and cultural homogenization. This discussion will reflect on the balance between Koreanization and globalization, questioning Hallyu's role in shaping perceptions of Asia. Grounded in research and expert discussions, this presentation explores the long-term influence of the Korean Wave and its evolving role in global	Dr. Lidia M. Wiśniewska is an international educator, evaluator, International Doctor of Science in Education from the University of Granada, Spain. Born in Poland, currently based in Paris. She is a Research Professor at the CENTRUM Catholic Graduate Business School and Pontifical Catholic University of Peru in Lima. She is president of SIETAR Polska and the vice-president (interim) of SIETAR France. Dr. Wiśniewska has a background in history and philosophy and is an alumna of the Erasmus MUNDUS. She conducted an international, interdisciplinary doctoral research across the Faculty of Education and Dentistry Schools, at the University of Granada, Spain, Chonnam National University in South Korea, Sorbonne University in France, and Michigan University in the USA. She specializes in the evaluation of the internationalization of education, intercultural competence and institutional context, as well as the interdependencies between interculturalism, education and culture in South Korea, the Indo-Pacific, Europe and globally.
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