

Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Conference 2025
Geo-Social Connection: The Continuing Journey of Critical Inquiry
Walailak University, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand
23–25 July 2025

Inter-Asia Cultural Studies’s vocation to reconnect political and cultural societies in Asia must be understood as an active resistance to the powers that sever the ties between them. Such powers may take forms of colonial expropriation, capitalist dispossession, or Cold War partitioning. This year’s IACS Conference theme, "Geo-Social Connection: The Continuing Journey of Critical Inquiry," reiterates interconnectedness as an Inter-Asian key concept while highlighting the importance of geography and society as material sites of knowledge production at a continental level. We intentionally experiment with a neologism “geo-social” in this CFP as a conceptual heuristic that may encapsulate Inter-Asian connections defined by, yet being forged beyond, the “geopolitical.” Since 2025 marks two anniversaries meaningful to the IACS: the 15th Anniversary of Chen Kuan-Hsing’s *Asia as Method* and the 70th Anniversary of the Afro-Asian Bandung Conference, we propose to take these occasions to reflect on Inter-Asia’s past accomplishments, present challenges, and future aspirations. One tactical way to foster existing and emerging geo-social connections is through “inter-referencing,” which assists in illuminating shared problematics, political processes, and societal dynamics that have otherwise been concealed. Our theme reinforces the idea of Inter-Asia as an intellectual movement that continues to ask and grapple with critical questions relevant to Asian publics. We conceive of the IACS Conference 2025 as a space where scholars, cultural workers, and activists come together to collaborate on the following spotlight subthemes:

1. Forging Geo-Social Connections, Reimagining Inter-Asia Cultural Studies
2. Translating and Teaching Inter-Asia Knowledge through the Lenses of Gender and Indigeneity
3. Bandung Spirit and Asian Anticolonial Relations with the Third World/Global South
4. Political Economy of Intra-Regional and China-US Interactions
5. Navigating the Digital Future(s) Amidst Authoritarian and Illiberal Challenges
6. Rethinking Rituals and Sacred Sites as Avenues of Knowledge Production
7. Global Dimension of Asian Media, Popular Culture, and Intellectual Production
8. Designers, Musicians, and Filmmakers: Creative Expressions and Social Transformation
9. Activism, Youths, and New(est) Social Movements in Asia and Beyond
10. Cultural Mobilities and Migrations within Gendered Geographies

11. Eco-cultural Studies, Transoceanic Imaginaries, and Planetary Extractivism in Inter-Asian Contexts
12. Peace Movements and Anti-War Thoughts

We promote these subthemes because they reflect the interests of the organizers and IACS Society members. The Program Committee indeed welcomes every critical inquiry related to Asia from all (inter)disciplines, especially sessions that creatively and innovatively advance knowledge production from/about Asia. We particularly encourage proposals that engage with **Inter-Asian** and **cultural studies frameworks**.

We are pleased to invite colleagues to submit proposals for **Organized Clusters** (3-hour workshop session of 6-10 participants), **Organized Panels** (90-minute session of 3-4 panelists), **Roundtables** (90-minute session of 3-6 contributors), and **Individual Papers**. We strongly encourage organized sessions rather than individual submissions.

Proposals for the first three formats must designate the roles of **Organizer** (can be the same person as Chair or Presenter), **Chair** (can be the same person as Organizer or Presenter), and **Presenter**. Including a **Discussant** is *optional*. For *Organized Clusters*, we do not yet require a complete list of presenters. Once your *Cluster* is accepted, we will have another 1.5-month window for you to organize your own Call for Panelists. *Double sessions* can be requested for *Clusters* (6-hour session of more than 8 participants) and *Panels* (3-hour session of more than 6 participants). Please briefly explain in the description how you will utilize the double sessions. We will approve the request on a case-by-case basis.

An individual may *not* present more than one paper (special sessions such as Plenary or Keynote do *not* count as a paper) but may serve more than one role in the Conference. The Conference is **in-person only** as we do not have the capacity to afford online participation.

We support **innovative proposals** that will stimulate lively discussions beyond conventional paper presentations. Here are some examples: a focus on a single major paper, film, or book as the subject of attention, a performance or reading of a creative work followed by a discussion, a workshop of works-in-progress with commentators, a debate on interpretations or methodologies, an exploration of Inter-Asian teaching materials, or a discussion with activists, curators, exhibitors, or filmmakers.

We are committed to **diversity** and **equity**. We expect our panel submissions to demonstrate diversity in **gender, institution, nationality, and professional role** (i.e., graduate students, junior and senior scholars, and other professionals). We strongly urge **Asia-based young scholars from diverse backgrounds** to reach out, get organized, and apply.

While we ask the proposal to be submitted in English, our language of operation, we accommodate a presentation in an Asian language with the following conditions: 1) the scholar has difficulty presenting in English, 2) the scholar's research significantly enriches the conversation, 3) a summary of the presentation will be made available in English, and 4) the Organizer or Chair is prepared to facilitate the exchange of ideas through translation and interpretation. This option is **not applicable to Individual Papers*.

The deadline for application is November 1, 2024. Please submit the following through [this portal](#), and expect to spare 10-15 minutes to complete the form.

- 1) proposal title
- 2) preferred format (i.e. Organized Cluster/Panel/Roundtable or Individual Paper)
- 3) session abstract/description (250 words maximum)
- 4) paper title & abstract (200 words maximum) *Not required for *Roundtables* and *Innovative Panels* without paper presentations
- 5) personal information (first and last name, email address, affiliation, position, gender, nationality, and current location *Not full address).

Please direct any questions to the IACS Secretariat at iacs2025wu@gmail.com.

We will notify the *Organizer* of the results by **February 15, 2025**. *Cluster Organizers* will receive an additional set of instructions about the confirmation of participants required by April 30, 2025.