

Seoul National University Asia Center

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Asia Center

SNUAC

Asia Research Center integrating regions and themes



Vision

The Seoul National University Asia Center (SNUAC) serves as a global hub for Asian Studies by integrating regional and thematic research on Asia. By creating and sharing future-oriented knowledge, SNUAC contributes to the harmonious development of Asia.



Introduction

The onset of a new Asian Era requires enhanced understanding of various Asian countries and the production of new knowledge about various regions in Asia. To cultivate professional manpower, a sustainable research network, and knowledge production, it is crucial to strengthen foundational research about Asia. The Seoul National University Asia Center continues its constructive efforts to achieve this pivotal goal.

The establishment of SNUAC was proposed in October 2007, and it was officially launched on February 3, 2009. Professor Lim Hyun-Chin assumed the role as its first Director. Since its establishment, SNUAC has sought to overcome the limitations of the 'research through Western eyes' model, and has taken the lead in independent, localized, and global research and education. In February 2013, SNUAC moved into a new six-floor building equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. In May 2013, the Center welcomed its second director, Professor Myungkoo Kang.

SNUAC has laid a strong foundation for its mission through a wide range of supporting activities. In addition to promoting excellence in research on Asia, the Center supports various academic events, including special lectures, workshops, and national and international conferences. It is also fully engaged in building a network for scholars, and supporting next-generation academics.

In support of its vision to serve as a premier hub for Asian studies, SNUAC has sought to closely integrate regional research centers and thematic research programs. As of 2014, it has run three Regional Research Centers—Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia—and is planning to set up more regional research centers – one for West Asia and another for South Asia. SNUAC's Thematic Research Programs consist of eight programs—Popular Culture, Transnational Flows and Networks in the East Asia Sea Areas, Democracy and Economic Development, US-China Relations, Civil Society and NGOs, Asia Census Lab, Global Economy, and Environmental Cooperation.

Words from Director



The fact that we now live in an Asian Era is no longer a novel idea. But we should not assume the Asian Era will automatically and necessarily bring a better life and a peaceful community to all people in Asia. We first need to ask: What kind of communities would we like to build, and how can the development of Asian communities contribute to humanity? Granted, the accumulation of modern knowledge, including modern advances in Euro-American science, humanities, and social science in the 20th century, has greatly contributed to the contentment of humanity, and has paved the way for a new civilization. At the same time, however, such modern developments have brought imperialism, war, discrimination, and poverty for many. The Asian Era is about going beyond the Western model of modernity to create a new, post-modernity that addresses the deficiencies of Western model.

Seoul National University Asia Center will respond to the contemporary needs of Asian Studies. The Center will help universities decide both what kind of knowledge they should produce and teach regarding Asia, and how such knowledge should be produced and taught. Established in February 2009 with a vision to build a global hub for Asian Studies, SNUAC has laid a strong foundation for Asian Studies, promoting excellence in research on Asia, and supporting various academic events and activities. SNUAC will continue to give voice to the growing undercurrents of vital Asian perspectives and make vibrant strides in the ongoing advance of the Asian Era.

Director of SNUAC
Kang Myung-koo



Building foundation of Asia research

Supporting its foundational mission to build a global hub for Asian Studies, SNUAC has formed three Regional Research Centers and eight Thematic Research Programs that have developed tight integration with each other and produced strong research outcomes.

Regional Research Centers

Northeast Asia Center

The Northeast Asia Center analyzes interrelations between Korea and the four superpowers around the Korean peninsula—the US, China, Japan and Russia—and carries out necessary research to construct a more peaceful order. The Northeast Asia Center is now conducting interdisciplinary research to integrate multiple aspects of the region, such as regional politics, economics, the military, and socio-cultural factors. Research topics include the Cold War in East Asia, de-/post- Cold War studies, Northeast Asia cooperation/community, Cross-Strait relations, and North Korea-South Korea relations.

Southeast Asia Center

The Southeast Asia Center attempts to serve as a focal institute to create knowledge about specific regions across national boundaries, and to widely circulate related information. The Center has engaged in research, teaching, and global networking regarding economic cooperation between Maritime Southeast Asia/Muslim countries and developmental cooperation between Mainland Southeast Asia/the Mekong River region. The Southeast Asia Center works on conducting intensive fieldwork, hosting informational sessions on the region for corporations, and publishing issue papers and policy reports.

Central Asia Center

The Central Asia Center seeks to enhance excellence in research about the countries in former Soviet Eurasia, and to establish an extensive research network for this region. Its goals include enhancing an understanding of the economics, politics and socio-cultural aspects of the region through multiple approaches to history and geopolitics. In support of its aims, the Central Asia Center hosts invited seminars and academic conferences, builds a collaborative network with various institutions, and sponsors fieldwork. This Center also actively engages in publishing research.

Thematic Research Programs

Popular Culture

Culture is a whole way of life. The Popular Culture research program pays special attention to the lived experiences, desires, values and worldviews of Asian people. In order to comparatively study the everyday life of ordinary people and popular culture in China, Japan, and South Korea, *the Dreams and Agonies of “Chung Nyun” (the Millennial Generation) in East Asia* was chosen as its first three-year research project. This research project employs multiple approaches, including big data, surveys, and qualitative analysis.



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Transnational Flows and Networks in the East Asia Sea Areas

This is a research initiative to re-imagine Asia as a region understood, not in terms of nation-states or territories, but instead based on flow and movement. By studying flows and interchanges among various units—individuals, groups, cities, etc.—and their cross-boundary interconnections around the East Asia Sea Areas, this project aims at constructing a creative new conceptual framework to understand East Asia, one that could serve as a practical guide to peaceful community building in the region.

US-China Relations

The US-China Relations Program is engaged with both theoretical study and policy research on the complex relationship between the United States and China—the so-called G-2 of the 21st century—and research on the global and regional implications of their shifting relations. Ongoing projects include the Monthly Seminar on US-China Relations, the Academic Workshop on US-China Relations, Bibliographic Database of US-China Relations, the Project on the Mutual Understanding Between the US and China, and the Shifting Relations: From the 19th Century to the 21st Century. The Studies on US-China Relations (SNU Press, 2014) has come out of this research program.

Democracy and Economic Development

This research program comparatively analyzes the development model of late industrializing countries in Asia, including South Korea, and the development trajectory of advanced industrialized countries. It also seeks to strengthen understandings of diversity within Asia in order to provide theoretical and practical research regarding sustainable economic development and democracy. It organizes international exchanges and offers related education. It has invited experts on cooperatives from overseas; has hosted co-organized international workshops, special lectures and colloquium; has run an exchange program and visiting researcher program for civil-society experts and scholars; and has published research.

Civil Society and NGOs

The Civil Society Program traces how civil society in various Asian countries has shifted and adapted under globalization. It conducts comparative studies on civil society in terms of movement, location, and strategy. As of 2014, ongoing research projects include mapping South Korea's civil society, building databases, comparing the civil societies in South Korea, China and Japan, and basic research on movements for alternative globalization and transnational cooperation. The long-term goals of this program include making suggestions for policy-making and education.

Asia Census Lab

The underlying mission of the Asia Census Program is to discover, collect, and provide various types of empirical data about Asian countries. A survey is under development to measure social changes and trends in major regions in Asia.

Grobal Economy

The Risk Management Program focuses on analyzing risks that might be arising from the shifting order of the world economy and the emerging economies of Asia. This program strengthens research on international economic policy. It also offers related education and international exchange programs.

Environmental Cooperation

The Environmental Cooperation Program conducts research and organizes international collaborative projects to understand the fundamental causes of major environmental issues, and to suggest solutions needed for Asia's sustainable development. Ongoing projects include research on desertification in Asia, a project to cultivate an Asian perspective on the environment and land use, and a network-building project to bring experts together for the sustainability of the system.

Externally Sponsored Programs

Key Research Institute

SNUAC was selected for the Key Research Institute Program by the NRF (National Research Foundation) in 2010. Its research project 'Economic Cooperation and Integration in East Asia' suggested a new theoretical framework and method tailored to Asian particularities. It also conducted policy-driven research on building an East Asian economic community with sustainable growth. Currently, the ongoing project examines the possibility of building a sociocultural community in East Asia.

Emerging Economies Research

The research project on Emerging Economies aims at providing information about marketing strategy and business administration in emerging economies to Korean corporations that are hoping to expand their business into Southeast Asia. Focusing on Indonesia and Malaysia, this project has hosted sessions on local information, and published several issue papers and policy reports to deliver in-depth knowledge.

Global e-School Program

The Global e-School Program is an innovative education program providing Korea-related courses to overseas students in real time employing teleconferencing system. Since 2011, it has offered twenty-eight lectures to nine universities across six European and Asian countries. Supported by the Korea Foundation, it has developed creative and experimental lecture formats.

SNUAC Projects

Basic Asian Studies Support Initiatives

SNUAC has supported foundational research. Its Publication Support Project helps to publish excellent research on Asia in book form. Its Emerging Agenda Project supports studies on new issues and themes. Also, the Translation and Publication Initiatives engages in translation and publication of outstanding academic books from various Asian countries.

Academic Events

SNUAC holds various academic events, such as the SNU Asia Forum and the Open Lecture Series, various special lectures, workshops, colloquia, and national and international conferences. By these means, it shares findings and discusses their implications for further research on Asia as part of an effort to build a robust research network.

Special Projects

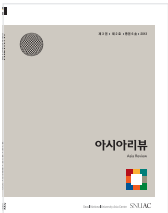
SNUAC attempts to enhance the public understanding of Asia and an improved awareness of the importance of Asian Studies. For this purpose, SNUAC publishes special reports on featured themes, and organizes the 'Asian Cultural Awareness Program' on a regular basis.

Support for Next-generation Scholars

SNUAC offers SNUAC Dissertation Writing Fellowship and SNUAC Dissertation Award to support the next-generation of Asian Studies scholars. Also, we support the overseas fieldwork of graduate students and invite outstanding scholars from various countries. Graduate forums and an internship are offered in order to support research and network building for next-generation scholars.

Publications

SNUAC publishes Asia Review (biannual journal) and collections (Korean/English) such as the SNUAC Series and the Asia in a Globe Series.



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