



**Report of Study Tour Abroad (International
Conference)**

**International Conference on Destination
Management (ICDM) 2026**

**Empowering Next-Gen for Responsible
Development**

**Service Organization: National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and
Tourism**

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Countries Dispatched to: Thailand

Period of Study Tour Abroad: 2026/06/12 to 2026/06/14

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Abstract

This report documents a study tour to Phuket, Thailand from June 12 to June 14, 2026, supported by the National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism's International Academic Conference Subsidy. The central purpose of the trip was to participate in the *International Conference on Destination Management (ICDM) 2026*, jointly hosted by Phuket Rajabhat University (PKRU) and the 2nd National Research Conference of the Southern Universities Graduate Studies Network, held at Phuket Rajabhat University and Thavorn Beach Village Resort & Spa, Kamala Beach, Phuket, Thailand.

At the conference, the research paper titled “*Why Da Lat, Vietnam? Couples’ Perspectives on Factors Shaping Wedding Destination Choice*” was presented, contributing to the growing body of knowledge on destination branding and wedding tourism in emerging Southeast Asian markets.

The conference, themed “*Empowering Next-Gen for Responsible Development*,” provided a stimulating academic platform for emerging researchers and postgraduate scholars across the Asia-Pacific region. The three-day programme included workshops on high-impact research publishing, keynote addresses by leading tourism scholars, paper presentation sessions, and a field trip to Bangrong Community and Phuket Old Town. Key outcomes include deepening knowledge of destination management theory and practice, receiving constructive peer feedback on the presented research, and establishing connections with international academics for potential future collaboration. This integrated academic experience significantly enriched the researcher’s scholarly development and strengthened the university’s international academic presence.

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1. Purpose

The primary objectives for attending the ICDM 2026 conference were as follows:

- **To Present Research:** To present the academic paper, “*Why Da Lat, Vietnam? Couples’ Perspectives on Factors Shaping Wedding Destination Choice*,” co-authored with Prof. Liwei Hsu and Prof. I-Yin Yen (National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism), contributing to scholarly discourse on wedding tourism and destination decision-making.
- **To Conduct Field Observation:** To engage in experiential learning through the conference’s field trip to Bangrong Community and Phuket Old Town, gaining first-hand insights into community-based tourism practices and cultural heritage management in Thailand.
- **To Represent the University:** To represent the National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism (NKUHT) at a prestigious international conference, enhancing the university’s visibility and academic standing within the global tourism research community.
- **To Gain Knowledge and Insights:** To learn about the latest research trends and policy directions in destination management, responsible tourism development, and next-generation approaches to sustainable tourism governance—aligned with the conference theme.

- **To Network and Collaborate:** To engage with international academics, postgraduate researchers, and industry practitioners, fostering professional relationships that could lead to future research collaborations and joint publication opportunities.

2. Process

The study tour followed a structured chronological plan:

- **Pre-Conference Period (June 11 – Morning June 12):**
 - Travelled from Taiwan to Bangkok, Thailand.
 - Explored key cultural and tourism landmarks in Bangkok as part of structured field observation. A campus visit to Chulalongkorn University was also conducted to gain comparative insights into how leading Thai institutions approach hospitality and tourism education, particularly regarding curriculum design and industry-linked training models.
 - On the morning of June 12, 2026, took a domestic flight from Bangkok to Phuket to settle in and prepare for the conference.
- **Day 1 – June 12, 2026 (Venue: Thavorn Beach Village Resort & Spa, Kamala Beach):**
 - Arrived in Phuket and completed conference registration (13:00–14:00).
 - Attended a Workshop and Panel Discussion on “Mastering High-Impact Research: A Roadmap to Top-Tier Publication by Reviewer Perspectives” (14:30–15:30) and a parallel workshop in English on “Reframing the Graduate Study for the Modern Workforce: Balancing Bite-sized Learning with Deep Academic Integrity” (15:30–16:30).
 - Participated in a Site Share session from Thavorn Beach Village’s Resort & Spa on “Sustainable Hotel Management: From Concept to Practice” (16:30–17:20).
 - Attended the Welcome Ceremony including speeches by the PKRU President, Director of Southern TCEB, Head of Southern Thailand Graduate Studies Network, and Dean of Faculty of Management Science (17:30–18:00).
 - Attended the Best Paper Recognitions and Welcome Dinner Gala (18:00–20:30).
- **Day 2 – June 13, 2026 (Venue: Phuket Rajabhat University):**

- o Attended registration and the Opening Ceremony, including the VDO Presentation, Welcome Speech by the Phuket Governor, Opening Report by the Conference Chair, Opening Address by the PKRU President, and Presentation of Certificates of Appreciation (09:00–10:30).
- o Participated in Keynote Speech (1): “Policy Shift: Transitioning from Mass Tourism to Regenerative Destination Management” by Prof. Dr. Therdchai Choibamroong, Doctor of Philosophy Programme Director, NIDA, Thailand (10:30–11:15).
- o Participated in Keynote Speech (2): “The Next Gen Catalyst: Redefining Responsible Tourism for a Sustainable Future” by Prof. Dr. Hiram Ting, President of Responsible Borneo (REBORN), Malaysia (11:15–12:00).
- o Attended the Paper Presentation sessions (13:30–16:00), during which the research paper on Da Lat wedding destination choice was formally presented to an international audience, followed by a Q&A and peer discussion.
- o Attended the Certificate Ceremony (16:00–16:30).
- **Day 3 – June 14, 2026 (Field Trip: Bangrong Community – Phuket Old Town):**
 - o Participated in the full-day field trip (09:00–16:30) to Bangrong Community and Phuket Old Town, exploring community-based tourism initiatives, local cultural heritage sites, and sustainable destination practices.
 - o Departed Phuket at the end of the day, concluding the study tour.

3. Experience

- o Participation in ICDM 2026 was a multidimensional and highly rewarding academic experience. Key areas of learning and professional development are reflected below:
- o **Professional Development:** The keynote sessions offered rich theoretical perspectives on the evolution of destination management—from mass tourism to regenerative models—and the responsibilities of the next generation of tourism researchers. The workshop on research publishing provided practical, actionable guidance on navigating the peer review process and developing

manuscripts for top-tier journals, directly applicable to the ongoing publication pipeline stemming from this conference paper.

- o **Research Presentation and Feedback:** The formal presentation of “Why Da Lat, Vietnam? Couples’ Perspectives on Factors Shaping Wedding Destination Choice” was received positively. The Q&A session yielded thoughtful feedback from scholars with expertise in destination branding and consumer decision-making, which will inform further revisions for journal submission. The experience strengthened both presentation skills and the ability to respond to critical academic inquiry in a cross-cultural setting.
- o **Integrated Field Learning:** The field trip to Bangrong Community and Phuket Old Town provided valuable first-hand exposure to community-based tourism in practice. Observing how local stakeholders navigate tourism development, heritage conservation, and visitor management offered a comparative lens directly relevant to ongoing research interests in community-based and participatory tourism governance.
- o **Academic Networking:** Meaningful connections were established with researchers and faculty members from universities across Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, Vietnam and other participating institutions. These interactions lay the groundwork for potential international collaborations and create avenues for co-authorship, joint grant applications, and future conference participation.
- o **Institutional Visibility:** Presenting under the affiliation of the National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism at an ASEAN-recognised conference helped strengthen NKUHT’s presence in the Southeast Asian academic community. The co-authorship with faculty supervisors Prof. Liwei Hsu and Prof. I-Yin Yen further consolidated the collaborative research identity of the graduate programme.

4. Suggestions

- o Begin the conference registration and funding application process as early as possible to ensure timely approval and avoid logistical complications.

- o Tailor presentations for a diverse, international audience—prioritising clarity, cross-cultural accessibility, and strong visual communication.
- o Take full advantage of all networking opportunities, including workshop sessions, gala dinners, and field trips, as informal interactions often yield the most valuable professional connections.
- o Prepare a concise set of research talking points and bring professional contact information to facilitate post-conference follow-up and correspondence.
- o If the conference includes a field trip component, approach it with clear learning objectives and document observations systematically—these insights can feed directly into future research projects.

5. Photos from the Conference



*Presenting at Paper Presentation Session, ICDM 2026
(June 13)*



*Attending Keynote Session – Prof. Dr. Hiram Ting,
ICDM 2026*



Receiving Certificate of Presentation (June 13)



***Gathering with VietNam team at the ICDM
2026***



***Networking with conference delegates, ICDM
2026***



***Field Trip – Bangrong Community & Phuket
Old Town (June 14)***



***Welcome Dinner Gala, Thavorn Beach Village
Resort (June 12)***

