



Research Office Newsletter



Interviews with APU Alumni Who Became Researchers at APU

Many APU graduates are actively working as researchers all over the world. In this issue we focus on the current APU faculty members who are also graduates from APU, and interviewed three of them.

Professor Kazem Vafadari
College of Asia Pacific Studies

APU Study History:

Year Graduated	Degree Obtained
2008	PhD in Asia Pacific Studies

Current Research Grant Project Title:

Rural Development and Community Resilience
Through Agriculture Heritage Tourism



Faculty Database Profile

Field(s) of Specialization: Tourism
Agricultural Heritage

What made you decide to become a researcher? How did studying at APU contribute to your current career as a researcher?

I strongly believe that **useful research benefits both the researcher and society**. It brings insights to researcher and increases the quality of life of the community. I don't think someone needs to be a professional researcher to conduct research, but everybody should benefit from the power of research to create knowledge. The need for knowledge is endless and we need to continue researching to better understand and solve problems. My study results at APU and my post-doctoral research proposals were accepted by United Nations University, and I was invited to continue my research on Japanese Satoyama landscapes and rural development through tourism. I joined the Japan Satoyama-Satoumi Sub-global Assessment (JSSA) team and had the chance to contribute to Japan's first Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) site in the Noto peninsula of Ishikawa prefecture. I joined APU again as faculty in 2011 and brought my research results and experience to Oita by conducting research on the agriculture heritage of the Kunisaki peninsula and the Usa City area. I used the results of my study at APU to contribute to Oita prefecture and Japan and would like to share these with the world through my current research grants from the government of Japan.

Do you have any advice for aspiring researchers?

Research methodology and research ethics are more useful than anything else when deciding on a research topic. If you believe your research is useful and that it will benefit people, you should continue working on it, even if it might be difficult to get results or get published. It is also important to focus your efforts on specific fields and become expert in a few areas rather than conducting many different kinds of research. **We should try to implement new research methods and explore new possibilities to overcome new challenges.**



*Check out Professor Vafadari's most recent pandemic-era
'Smart Community Tourism' initiative at www.scotwebinars.org*



Associate Professor Pajaree Ackaradejruangsri
College of International Management

APU Study History:

Year Graduated	Degree Obtained
2009	Bachelor of Business Administration
2011	Master of Business Administration
2014	Doctor of Philosophy in Asia Pacific Studies



Faculty Database Profile

Field(s) of Specialization: Business Administration, Consumer Behavior, Digital Marketing, Entrepreneurship

What made you decide to become a researcher? How did studying at APU contribute to your current career as a researcher?

As part of my working philosophy with a goal to be a vigorous learning facilitator, active researcher, and collaborative institution's service supporter, I always apply different teaching and learning methods into my classes, such as active learning, case teaching, project-based learning, experiential-based learning as well as evidenced-based learning. Doing so, students feel engaged and benefit from the learning process, especially during evidence-based learning which I can apply research to my teaching. I personally find being active in research has helped me in broadening while also deepening my views in specific areas with evidence supports. I could easily incorporate parts of the research process and finding to learning and discussions in the classroom. In addition, I was fond of research when I was a PhD student. Research makes me think systematically and critically, and sometimes differently, helping me to find the potential answers. Research also opens up new opportunities and allows me to meet new people, particularly during research interviews, surveys, or presentations at conferences. I still remember the time when I was a PhD student and my PhD supervisor, Professor Yokoyama Kenji, encouraged and supported me to attend international conferences in the Netherlands, Malaysia, Japan, and Australia. It was a challenging but eye-opening experience, where I had an opportunity to learn from experts in the field. Since then, my perspective regarding research has been changed, I have learned that **research can be fun!**



Do you have any advice for aspiring researchers?

Life is all about learning, un-learning and re-learning, and in order to be able to (un/re)learn, we all go through some kind of self-(re)search. Just like everyone else, I often struggle to collect data, produce results which do not support the hypotheses, or get rejected by journals. These are all common experiences and I believe that I am not alone. In fact, this is all part of learning, which leads to further improvement. **When you struggle, reach out for help!** Conducting research in a team of people where different research skills and expertise can be combined is another way in which research can become fun and fruitful!



Associate Professor Jung Jonghee

Center for Language Education

APU Study History:

Year Graduated	Degree Obtained
2011	Bachelor in Asia Pacific Studies

Current Research Grant Project Title:

A case study of inclusive class development based on UDL concept: Improving the 1st year seminar and mandatory language subjects at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

(Center for Inclusive Leadership Research into Teaching Methods Aid)



Faculty Database Profile

Field(s) of Specialization: Linguistics
Foreign Language Education



Universal Design for Learning & Language Learning

Universal Design for Learning Guidelines



CAST (2018). Universal Design for Learning Guidelines version 2.2. Retrieved from <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>

- ▶ A Framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all
- ▶ The UDL concept can be used by educators, curriculum developers, researchers, parents, and anyone else who want to implement the UDL in a learning environment
- ▶ All learners can access and participate in meaningful, challenging learning opportunities

What made you decide to become a researcher? How did studying at APU contribute to your current career as a researcher?

To be honest, I never thought I would become a researcher. As a student I wanted to work with music and/or art. I wondered whether I should choose to work at something I was good at, or something I liked. In the end, I decided to go with what I was good at and went to Graduate School, leading me to where I am today: working hard as a researcher. This does not mean that I have no passion for my work, working as a researcher can be incredibly fun and rewarding. I have a particular interest in researching the links between language, and thoughts and emotions and am always excited to work on this topic. Thanks to the curriculum of Asia Pacific Studies, I gained a lot of invaluable knowledge and experience in various disciplines, and developed a particular interest in language and culture. I became interested in linguistics after I read "Course in General Linguistics" by a Swiss linguist called Ferdinand De Saussure.



Do you have any advice for aspiring researchers?

It is such a privilege to be a researcher, and a teacher. You can bury yourself in your favorite research, and grow as a person through your interactions with your students and fellow researchers. The results of your research will become a small part of the history of humanity. It is a worthwhile profession, with the opportunity to experience things you wouldn't be able to otherwise. I hope many of you will choose to become researchers and teachers! I wish you the best of luck!



Asia Pacific Conference

Asia Pacific Conference 2021

December 4 (Sat) – December 5 (Sun), 2021

Diversity and Inclusion

What is the Asia Pacific Conference?

The Asia Pacific Conference (AP Conference) started in 2003, and is held by the Ritsumeikan Center for Asia Pacific Studies (RCAPS). Every year, presentations and panel sessions by scholars and researchers encompass a wide range of topics. Well-known researchers are invited to give keynote speeches. The conference is one of the largest conferences held in English in Japan, with a focus on humanities and social sciences. This year's conference will be the 19th Asia Pacific Conference, and will follow the theme of **Diversity and Inclusion**.

How the Conference will be Held and How to Register

This year's conference will be held in a hybrid format. While some conferences may be held in-person, others will be held solely using an online format. However, in-person conferences will be held in such a way that online attendance is also possible.

(Depending on the situation, the conference may change to being only online)

Registration for attendees will be open from mid-November.

For more information, see the AP Conference website <https://en.apu.ac.jp/apconf/>



AP Conference Website

2021 Session Titles (Examples)

- Challenges of the Trans Community: Multiple Gender and Bodies
- Asian Resilience to Climate Change, Disaster, and Social Transformation
- Linguistics Studies
- Realizing Islamic Values in the Contemporary Muslim Communities in Asia
- Asia as a Theater of Cultural Communication
- Asian Medicine: Tradition and Innovation
- Challenges in Implementing Muslim Friendly Hospitality Services (MFHS) in Japan [APU-RCMA Session]



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