Trilogy I
From WURI Rankings To WURI Research

Opening Remarks

2026. 11. 18

Dong-Sung Cho

Founding Chair, WURI Foundation (https://www.wuri.world/)

Professor Emeritus, Seoul National University

dscho123@gmail.com, +82-10-8133-8888


WURI
The WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS for INNOVATION
2026 WURI International Research Conference
Innovating Education for Tomorrow — AI-Enabled, Inclusive, and Sustainable Futures
November 18–20, 2026 · University of Makati, Manila, Philippines
Register Now
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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A Word from the University President

> *"We are pleased to invite you to submit and present your research papers at the Inaugural WURI International Research Conference 2026 (WIRC-26). This inaugural international conference serves as a dedicated platform for scholarly paper presentations on university innovation, higher education transformation, artificial intelligence in education, and related themes aligned with the WURI Global Rankings ecosystem."*

— President Elyxzur C. Ramos
University of Makati, Manila, Philippines
Chairperson, World University Network Innovation for Presidents (WUNI-P)

Read Full Message And Invitation (PDF)

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

About WURI-IRC 2026

The **WURI International Research Conference – 2026 (WIRC-26)** is the inaugural dedicated academic forum of the WURI ecosystem — a distinct yet complementary platform to the annual WURI Global Conference. WIRC-26 is jointly organized with the **University Ranking Forum of Knowledge Sharing – 2026 (URFK-26)**, creating a two-day academic symposium at the University of Makati.

WIRC-26 builds on 31 peer-reviewed papers presented at WGC-2025 in Busan, Korea — now constituting the inaugural volume of the *Journal of Innovation and Education (JIE)*. Papers presented at WIRC-26 will be published in **JIE Volume 2 (2027)**, Guest-Edited by Prof. Yung-Ping Tseng of National Chi Nan University, Taiwan.

View the Announcement | View the Full Details (PDF)

ORGANIZED BY

WURI The WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS for INNOVATION

LUNGSOD NG MAKATI PILIPINAS 1995

UNIVERSITY OF MAKATI A.D. 1972

THIS YEAR'S INAGURAL TOPICS

Conference Topics

Explore the conference's key research topics on university innovation, higher education transformation, and AI integration. Theme: *Innovating Education for Tomorrow: AI-Enabled, Inclusive, and Sustainable Futures.*

Cluster 1: AI-Enabled Inclusive Learning
Personalization & Inclusion

- AI-Driven Personalized Learning
- Inclusive Education & Assistive Technologies
- Ethical & Equitable AI in Education
- Smart and Hybrid Learning Ecosystems

Tap to View Research Areas →

Cluster 2: Sustainability in Education
Responsibility & Impact

- Sustainable & Green Education Models
- Curriculum for Sustainable Development
- Ethical Technology & Responsible Innovation
- Education for Societal & Global Impact

Tap to View Research Areas →

Cluster 3: Future-Ready Education & Workforce
Future-Focused Skills & Workforce Readiness

- Future Skills & Workforce Readiness
- AI & EdTech Innovations for Skills
- Transformative Curriculum Design
- Global & Cross-Cultural Competence

Tap to View Research Areas →

View Submission Page | Verify via Submission Code | Submit Abstract Revision | Submit Full Revision

Already received your decision email? Submit your Full Paper (Accepted) or Submit your Revised Abstract (Conditionally Accepted / Invited for Resubmission).
Revised abstract deadline: **October 15, 2026**.

★ HOST UNIVERSITY

University of Makati

The University of Makati (UMak) is a premier public university in the City of Makati, Metro Manila, Philippines. Established to provide accessible and high-quality education, UMak is known for its strong programs in business, engineering, technology, and the arts — empowering students to become globally competitive professionals.

As a WURI-recognized institution and the host of WURI-IRC 2026, UMak exemplifies the values of innovation, inclusivity, and transformative academic leadership that the conference celebrates.

30+
Academic Programs

13K+
Students Enrolled

 # 136
WURI Global Top Innovative Universities Ranking 2026



Makati
Business Capital, Metro Manila

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 # 1
WURI Global Top Innovative Universities Ranking 2026



Makati
Business Capital, Metro Manila

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30+
Academic Programs

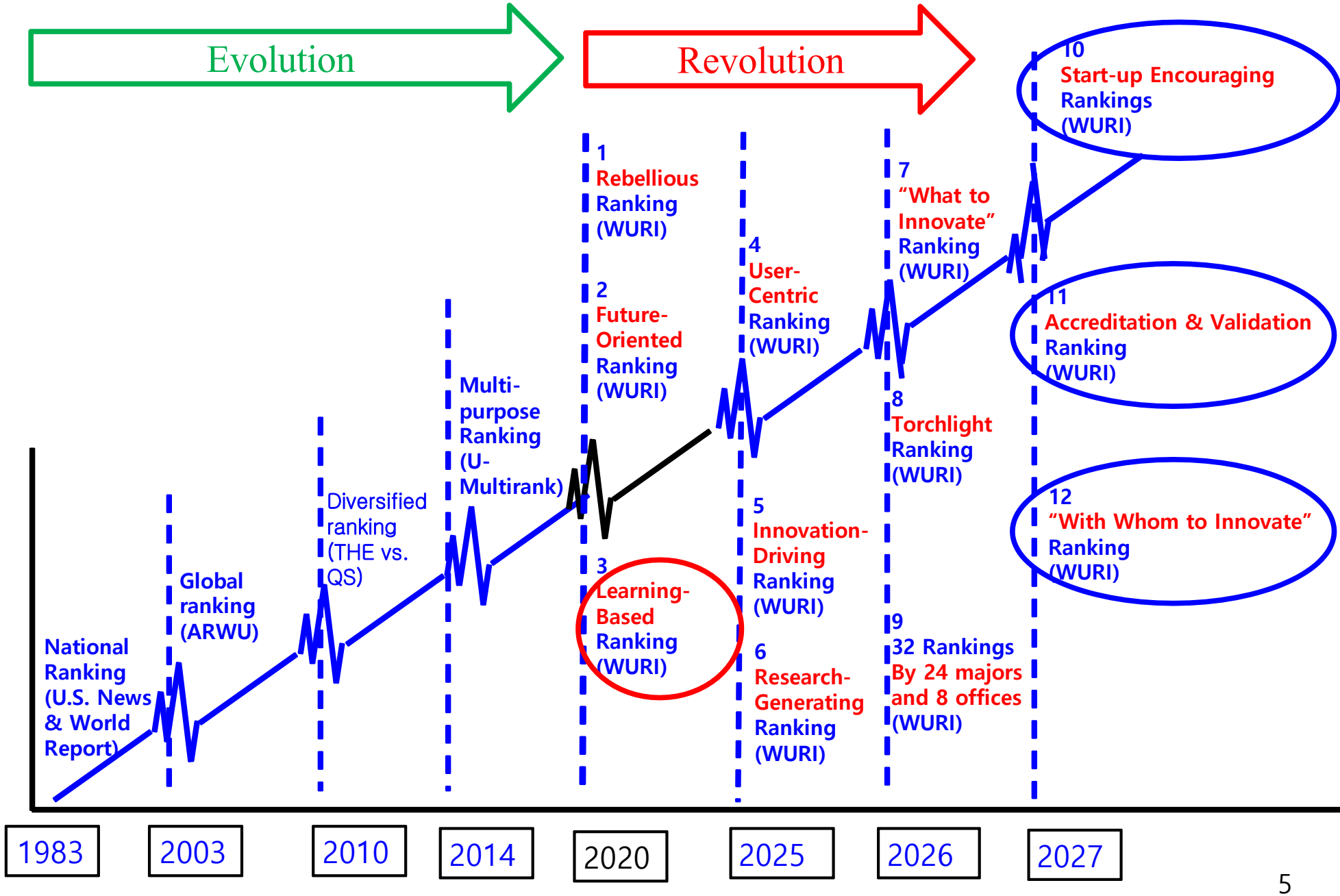
13K+
Students Enrolled

 # 1 by 2030
WURI Global Top Innovative Universities Ranking 2026

Makati

Business Capital, Metro Manila

Evolution and Revolution in Global University Rankings



2025-3: Research papers and academic journals

Eric Santos Parilla

Northwestern University

Vice President for Research, Community Social Development and Internationalization

Philippines



rfhaydenjr@aims.edu.ph

+632 917 8514732

WURI Rankings as a Catalyst for Transformative Education at NWU: A Focus on Internationalization and Entrepreneurship

Institutional Change | Global Engagement | Transformative Education | Internationalization | WURI Rankings | Entrepreneurial Education | Higher Education Innovation

The paper introduces the digital transformation initiative led by the Asian Institute of Maritime Studies (AIMS) to modernize maritime education and training. Recognizing that traditional maritime education is lagging behind rapid technological changes, AIMS proposes a curriculum that integrates virtual reality (VR), digital twins, and online learning platforms. This initiative aligns with the Maritime Industry Development Plan (MIDP) 2019–2028 of the Philippines and aims to enhance digital competencies, ensure regulatory compliance, and produce globally competitive maritime professionals while promoting sustainability in the maritime sector.

2025-3: Research papers and academic journals

1. Maria Kathleen June J. Mariño
2. Maricar Flores

St. Paul University Dumaguete

- Maria Kathleen June J. Mariño – ICT Head
- Maricar Flores – Dean, College of Arts, Sciences and Education

Philippines



maricar.flores@spud.edu.ph
mariakatejune@gmail.com

+639175403313
+63 917 100 3803

SPUD's Digital Leap: A WURI-Guided Framework for Innovation and AI Integration in Higher Education

Technology-enhanced processes | WURI framework application | Educational technology | AI-driven educational management | Artificial Intelligence Integration in education | Digital transformation

This proposal presents SPUD's transformation through a WURI-aligned innovation framework called TESIO (TechEvolve: SPUD's Innovation Odyssey). It highlights the institution's strategic integration of AI via the GENIuS program, supporting academic, administrative, and student services. Emphasizing ethical, inclusive, and future-ready education, the paper explores SPUD's use of digital tools, AI applications, and immersive technologies to improve institutional processes. The study aims to demonstrate how a mid-sized university can enact impactful and replicable innovations aligned with WURI categories like crisis management, SDG-based responses, and industrial application.

2025-3: Research papers and academic journals

Rosanna Sambile Generato

Bukidnon State University (BukSU)

Chief Administrative Officer

Philippines



rosannagenerato@buksu.edu.ph

Innovation-Driven Governance: How WURI Participation Transformed Administrative Systems at Bukidnon State University

Philippines | Innovation-Driven Governance | Administrative Reform | Strategic Transformation | Public HEIs | WURI

This paper presents a case study of FEU Institute of Technology's long - term strategic framework , ASPIRATION 2028 , which integrates innovation into the heart of university governance. The framework is built on four pillars : Digital Transformation , Sustainability Leadership , Financial Stability , and Global & Academic Excellence. Using AI tools like predictive analytics and generative AI, FEU Tech redefines decision-making and academic delivery. The study highlights how innovation-centric governance elevates institutional performance — not just as a response to rankings like WURI, but as a proactive transformation. The paper aims to provide a replicable governance model for other institutions in the era of AI and sustainability.

2025-3: Research papers and academic journals

1. **Melanie C. Convento**
2. **Noemi P. Rivera**
3. **Clarence Robas**
4. **Fannie Marie M. Flores**
5. **Alleli R. Navato**

1. Angono Private High School / World Citi Colleges - Antipolo Campus

2~5. World Citi Colleges - Antipolo Campus

1. Dean, College of Business Administration & Accountancy
2. Campus Manager
3. Principal, SHS Department / Administrative Consultant
4. Program Head / Faculty
5. Academic Secretary

Philippines

melanieconvento@gmail.com

Innovating for Impact: The Transformation Journey of World Citi Colleges through the WURI Lens

Qualitative Case Study | Higher Education Transformation | WURI Rankings | Institutional Innovation | Organizational Culture | Philippines | Education Policy

This study explores how the World Citi Colleges (WCC) and WCC Aeronautical and Technological College (WCC-ATC) in the Philippines have been transformed through their participation in the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI). It examines the impact of WURI's 16 innovation categories on institutional policies, academic programs, development efforts, and organizational culture. Using a qualitative case study approach with interviews, observations, and document analysis, the study investigates both the process and challenges of transformation. The findings aim to inform other higher education institutions on how global innovation benchmarks can drive meaningful internal reform.

2025-3: Research papers and academic journals

Angelito P. Bautista Jr.

Research Management Office, Quezon City University

Director, Research Management Office

Philippines

apbautista_jr@yahoo.com.phap
bautistajr2020@gmail.com

Navigating Innovation: The Role and Impact of WURI Rankings on the Strategic Management of Local Universities and Colleges in the Philippines in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

WURI Rankings | Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) | Strategic Management | Artificial Intelligence (AI) | Innovation | Higher Education | Real-World Impact

This research proposal explores the role and impact of the WURI Rankings on the strategic management of local universities and colleges (LUCs) in the Philippines, particularly in the age of artificial intelligence (AI). It examines how these institutions respond to global demands by integrating AI into academic and administrative practices while maintaining strong ties to local communities. The study seeks to assess LUCs' awareness of and alignment with WURI's criteria, their innovation strategies, and the challenges they face in achieving real-world impact. By employing qualitative methods such as interviews and case studies, the research aims to evaluate whether WURI offers a more inclusive and context-sensitive alternative to traditional rankings, ultimately promoting meaningful national development and educational reform across Southeast Asia.

2025-3: Research papers and academic journals

1. **Diana Mae Dulnuan-Pimentel**
2. **Marah Joy Alsiken-Nanglegan**

Department of Extension and Training, Ifugao State University (IFSU)

1. School Farm Demonstrator
2. Professor III / University Director

Philippines



ifsu.det@gmail.com

Catalyzing Innovation and Societal Impact: The Transformative Impact of WURI on Ifugao State University"

Ifugao State University | WURI Rankings | Sustainable development goals (SDGs) | Societal Impact | Innovation | Entrepreneurial Spirit | Smart Technology

This paper explores how the WURI Rankings served as a catalyst for transformation at Ifugao State University (IFSU), a regional institution in the Philippines. Through its international recognition—such as top global placements in Entrepreneurial Spirit, Crisis Management, and Symbol (Promotion) categories—IFSU has intensified its commitment to innovation, societal impact, and alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (e.g., Zero Hunger, Gender Equality, Peace & Justice). The university has launched various initiatives, including community extension programs, industry partnerships, smart technologies, and student-led business incubation. WURI's influence has helped IFSU emerge as an agent of change, emphasizing real-world impact, entrepreneurship, and collaboration.

2025-3: Research papers and academic journals

Mark Chris Maglanque Lapuz

School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, National University – Baliwag

- Dean

Philippines



lapuz_mc@yahoo.com.ph

WURI Recognition for the Common Good: Ethical and Comparative Analysis of HEI Practices for University Ranking and Recognition on Innovation

Common good | Innovation | Internationalization | WURI Rankings | Higher education institutions (HEIs) | Comparative analysis | Ethics | Sustainability | Stakeholder involvement

This special issue proposal examines how WURI recognition contributes to the innovation, sustainability, and social impact of higher education institutions (HEIs). It highlights the need for ethical and comparative analysis of HEI practices using the common good framework. The study aims to explore stakeholder involvement, regional differences, and best practices in achieving WURI rankings, addressing current research gaps in innovation-focused university evaluations.

2025-3: Research papers and academic journals

Hafiiz Azeem H. Abduraup

Sulu State College

Instructor I, Department of Criminology

Philippines



hafiizazeem@gmail.com

+63 936 474 3504

A proposal that supports the transformative vision of the WURI Foundation and the AI Business Academy. I am particularly drawn to the journal's focus on innovation-centric governance and the strategic implications of ranking systems in higher education.

2025-3: Research papers and academic journals

1. **John Carlo Hamelon**
2. **Noemi P. Rivera**

World Citi Colleges – Antipolo

1. Coordinator, Community Extension and Services Office
2. Campus Manager

Philippines



hamelonjohncarlo@gmail.com

A Comparative Analysis of the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI) and Traditional University Ranking Models: Methodological Insights and the Position of Philippine Institutions

Higher Education | University Rankings | Philippines | WURI | Comparative Analysis | Innovation Metrics

This study compares WURI's innovation-driven university ranking model with traditional systems like QS, THE, and ARWU. Using mixed methods, it analyzes differences in evaluation criteria and institutional representation, especially of Philippine universities. It finds that innovation-based rankings may offer more equitable recognition for developing countries.

Academic journal:

Journal of Innovation and Education

Volume 1, No. 1

Editing completed
By Guest Editor Di-long Huang

1. Navigating Innovation: The Role and Impact of WURI Rankings on the Strategic Management of Selected Universities and Colleges in the Philippines

(Theresita V. Atienza & Angelito P. Bautista, Jr.)

Exploratory quantitative study (n=50 respondents from 13 Philippine HEIs) examining how participation in the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI) influences strategic management. Findings show moderate-to-strong awareness of WURI, institutional actions to align innovation programs/strategic plans with WURI categories, and strong perception of WURI as a catalyst for reform, SDG alignment, partnerships, and more equitable benchmarking than traditional rankings (QS/THE). Gaps remain in formal coordination, dedicated coordinators, and internal evaluation. WURI functions as both external governance pressure and internal strategic tool, especially useful for Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) and State Universities and Colleges (SUCs).

2. Teaching on the Margins: Transformative Learning in NSTP Students' Community Service in Cavite Public Schools

(John Moses Chua & Reynald Alfred G. Sy)

Critical ethnographic study of ~170 FEU Cavite undergraduates' weekly reflective journals from NSTP community service (literacy/numeracy tutoring) in Cavite public elementary schools. Using Mezirow's transformative learning theory, the paper maps a clear trajectory: disorienting dilemmas (overcrowded classrooms, poverty, resource gaps) → self-examination and critical reflection (questioning deficit views of children) → recognition of shared struggles → experimentation with new roles/strategies (games, *Ate/Kuya* cultural identities) → perspective transformation (service reframed from compliance/charity to ethical/civic responsibility). Extends Mezirow by highlighting emotion, cultural kinship, and systemic inequality in the Philippine context. Argues structured reflection turns mandatory NSTP into an incubator of transformative adult learning.

3. Leveraging Global Rankings for Institutional Innovation: The Way Ahead for Higher Education Institutions

(Deepti Sinha & Theresa Nithila Vincent)

Qualitative case study of Christ University (India) using sentiment analysis, keyword frequency, mind-mapping, and interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) of institutional documents, leadership interviews, and 13 stakeholder responses. Shows how engagement with QS, THE Impact, THE Asia, and WURI has driven strategic alignment, research–curriculum integration, internationalization, SDG-linked initiatives, better documentation, and governance improvements. Rankings act as external catalysts that, when mediated by strong institutional values and governance, produce constructive innovation rather than mere metric-gaming. Proposes a process model: Global Rankings → Governance/Strategic Alignment → Innovative Practices → Institutional Outcomes. Notes remaining needs in research quality, international collaborations, entrepreneurship, and industry engagement.

4. St. Paul University Dumaguete's Digital Leap: A WURI-Guided Framework for Innovation and AI Integration

(Maria Kathleen June J. Mariño & Maricar Flores)

Convergent parallel mixed-methods case study (n=200 administrators, faculty, staff, students) of St. Paul University Dumaguete (SPUD). Analyzes the TESIO (TechEvolve: SPUD's Innovation Odyssey) Framework and GENIuS

(Generative AI for Education and Next-Level Innovation in SPUD) Program against WURI categories (Technology Development & Application, Crisis Management, Ethics & Integrity, SDG responses, Visionary Leadership). High stakeholder agreement that SIS/LMS and GenAI tools improved teaching, student services, and administration, with strong alignment to WURI. Gaps identified in infrastructure, digital adaptability, change management, and equitable AI access. Demonstrates that small, mission-driven (Catholic) universities can achieve global innovation impact through coherent ethical-technological frameworks even with limited resources.

5. Toward an Ethical Integration of AI in Impact-Driven Pedagogy: A Conceptual Framework for Lecturer Capacity Building

(Seng Hansen & Adhi Setyo Santoso)

Conceptual/qualitative literature-based study proposing a lecturer capacity-building framework for ethical AI integration into impact-driven (real-world, socially meaningful) pedagogy, with President University (Indonesia) as illustrative context. Identifies four challenge dimensions (ethical, technological, pedagogical, institutional). The framework has three pillars: (1) AI ethics literacy, (2) ethical AI integration into impact-driven learning design, and (3) alternative/reflective assessments emphasizing originality and critical thinking. Institutional support (policies, training, culture) is a cross-cutting enabler. Emphasizes human-centered, values-driven use of AI rather than pure efficiency.

6. Ensuring Research Ethics: A Comprehensive Examination of Review Practices in Local Universities

(Henry Gabriel Magat & Michael Angel M. Lacanilao)

Descriptive qualitative study of research ethics review practices in 19 LGU-funded Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) in Metro Manila (~95 participants: REC members, faculty researchers, support staff). Reveals major disparities: only a few institutions have formal, functioning Research Ethics Committees/Boards (RECs/REBs) aligned with PHREB standards; most rely on informal or absent mechanisms. Challenges include resource shortages, prolonged timelines, limited training (especially on digital/AI issues), documentation weaknesses, and biomedical-centric frameworks poorly suited to social-science research. Recommendations: standardized SOPs, sustained capacity building, digital platforms, broader geographic studies, and stronger institutional/government support.

7. Creating Ethical Guidelines and a Responsible AI Integration Framework for Baguio Central University
(Genevieve Balance Kupang et al.)
Exploratory sequential mixed-methods study (24 qualitative interviews + 394 quantitative surveys; total ~418–430 stakeholders) developing values-driven ethical guidelines and a responsible AI integration framework for Baguio Central University (BCU). Grounded in Kantian deontology and BCU's core values (Veritas, Equitas, Libertas, Justitia). Identifies six core principles (Accountability, Educational Goals Alignment, Beneficial Use, Human Agency, Reflection & Awareness, Transparency). Framework includes eight components covering governance, data privacy, bias mitigation, risk strategies, phased faculty development, boundaries, and digital citizenship. Strong stakeholder consensus on data control, academic integrity safeguards, and regular policy review. Emphasizes participatory, values-aligned implementation over pure technological sophistication.

8. Participation, Framing and Agenda Setting on the World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI) of Bangladeshi Higher Education Institutions
(Jude William R. Genilo & Md. Kamal Uddin)
Study of Bangladeshi HEIs' engagement with WURI (2020–2025). Tracks rising participation (from 1 to 8 universities), performance across categories, media/social-media agenda-setting, and framing of WURI results. ULAB dominates media visibility and framing (global presence, innovation, ranking performance). Most communication is event-based and press-release driven; digital strategies and sustained agenda-setting remain underdeveloped. Categories such as Ethics & Integrity and Industrial Application are better represented than Brand/Reputation or Funding. Recommends broader participation, diversified framing (impact, learning-based ranking), stronger digital strategies, and institutionalization of WURI-related communication.

9. Provincial yet Pioneering: Innovation-Centric Strategy and Governance in a Philippine Private University
(Shiela B. Navasca, Samantha Aira C. Alonzo & Eizen John C. Humilde)
Qualitative-dominant mixed-methods case study of Northwestern University (NWU), a provincial Philippine private university, after joining WURI (2023 onward). Data from 12 key-informant interviews and a survey of 315 stakeholders.

Four themes: Global Repositioning (identity shift from local to globally aspiring), Innovation and Institutional Change (expanded student support, crisis protocols, innovation programs), Impacts and Outcomes (reputation, pride, partnerships), and Challenges (resources, documentation, framework alignment—addressed via task forces and collaboration). Anchored in Institutional Theory and Resource-Based View. Shows WURI as a strategic lever for legitimacy and capacity-building in resource-constrained settings.

10. Digital Culture and Sustainable Tourism: Examining Digital Engagement, Environmental Identity, and Educational Governance at Antong Falls

(Noel L. Guevara)

Descriptive-correlational study (n=312 eco-tourism stakeholders at Antong Falls, Pangasinan) examining relationships among digital engagement, digital environmental literacy, online environmental identity, digital barriers, and sustainable tourism practices. Grounded in Network Society Theory, Participatory Culture Theory, and Theory of Planned Behavior. Digital environmental literacy (β=0.41) and online environmental identity (β=0.36) are the strongest predictors of sustainable practices; digital engagement is moderately positive; digital barriers are negative. Model explains 58% of variance. Proposes a Digital Environmental Governance Framework linking cognitive, identity, behavioral, and institutional dimensions. Highlights educational and governance roles in fostering digital literacy for sustainability.

11. How Artificial Intelligence Is Changing What It Means to Be a Professor Today: Evidence from a Christian Higher Education Context

(Manuel Arable Ocampo Jr.)

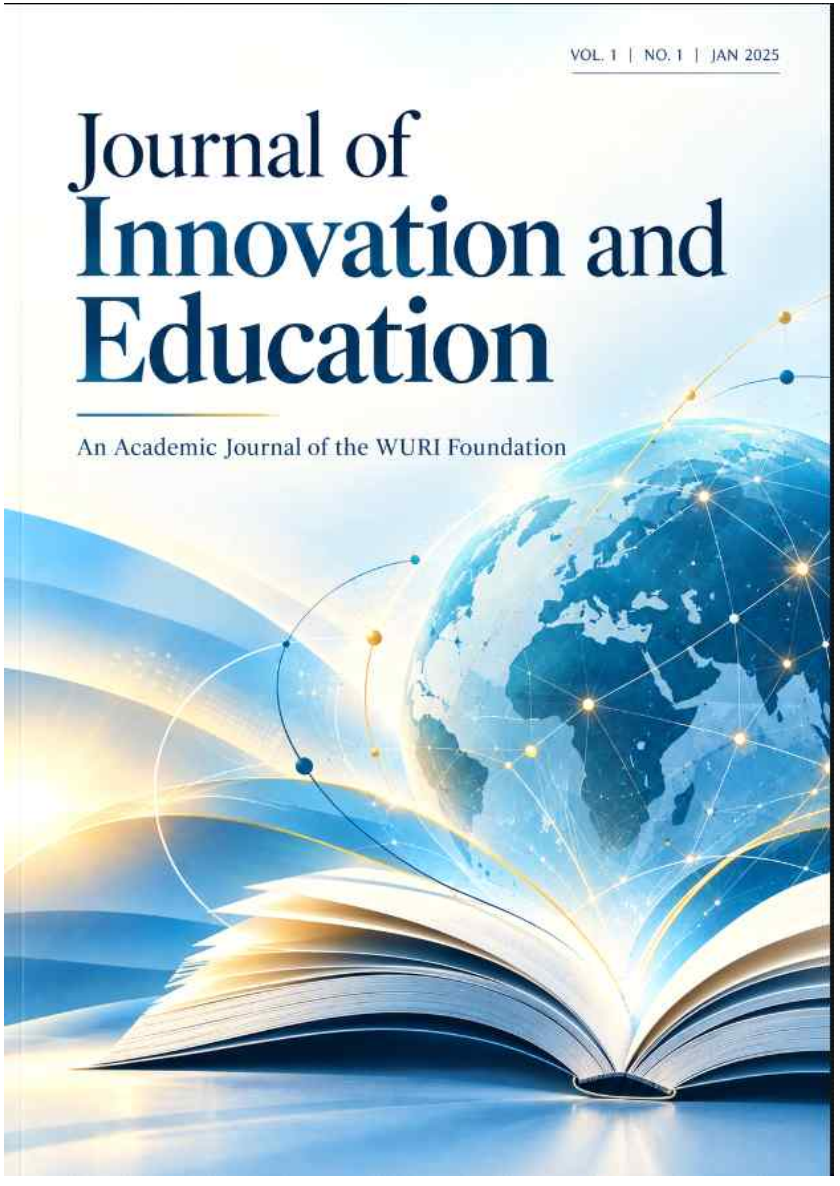
Descriptive-correlational survey of faculty at a Philippine Christian college examining AI use in teaching, assessment, and administration, and its relationship to professional identity, ethical concerns, and readiness. Faculty view AI positively for preparation, efficiency, and administrative tasks but remain cautious about evaluative/relational functions. Strong professional identity (educator, mentor, moral guide) is not threatened by AI; ethical concerns (integrity, privacy, over-reliance, alignment with Christian values) strongly shape readiness. Positive correlation between AI utilization and professional identity when AI is framed as a supportive tool. Calls for values-centered, ethically guided AI integration that preserves human presence and vocation.

12. WURI Rankings and AI-Driven Innovation in Higher Education: A Case Study of MIT ACSC's Holistic Programs

(B.B. Waphare & Abhijit Netke)

Mixed-methods case study of MAEER's MIT Arts, Commerce and Science College (MIT ACSC), India, examining three WURI-aligned flagship programs through Innovation Diffusion Theory: Inspire+ (AI adaptive learning + mental-health support → higher satisfaction/placements), Entrepreneurship Development Cell (AI tools for start-up evaluation/mentorship → more start-ups and partnerships), and Naadbrahma (AI/VR for cultural heritage preservation → large growth in digital engagement). Compares WURI's innovation/societal-impact focus favorably with traditional rankings' research/reputation emphasis. Offers practical strategies (AI roadmaps, faculty training, industry partnerships, incubators) while acknowledging subjectivity, resource inequalities, and risks of performative innovation in WURI itself.

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GUEST EDITOR
Dilong Huang
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Research Conference:

WURI INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2026

Time: November 18-20, 2026

Venue: University of Makati, Manila, Philippines

Host: President Elyxzur C. Ramos

Guest Editor: Professor Henry Magat

Research Conference:

WURI INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE 2026

Time: November 18-20, 2026

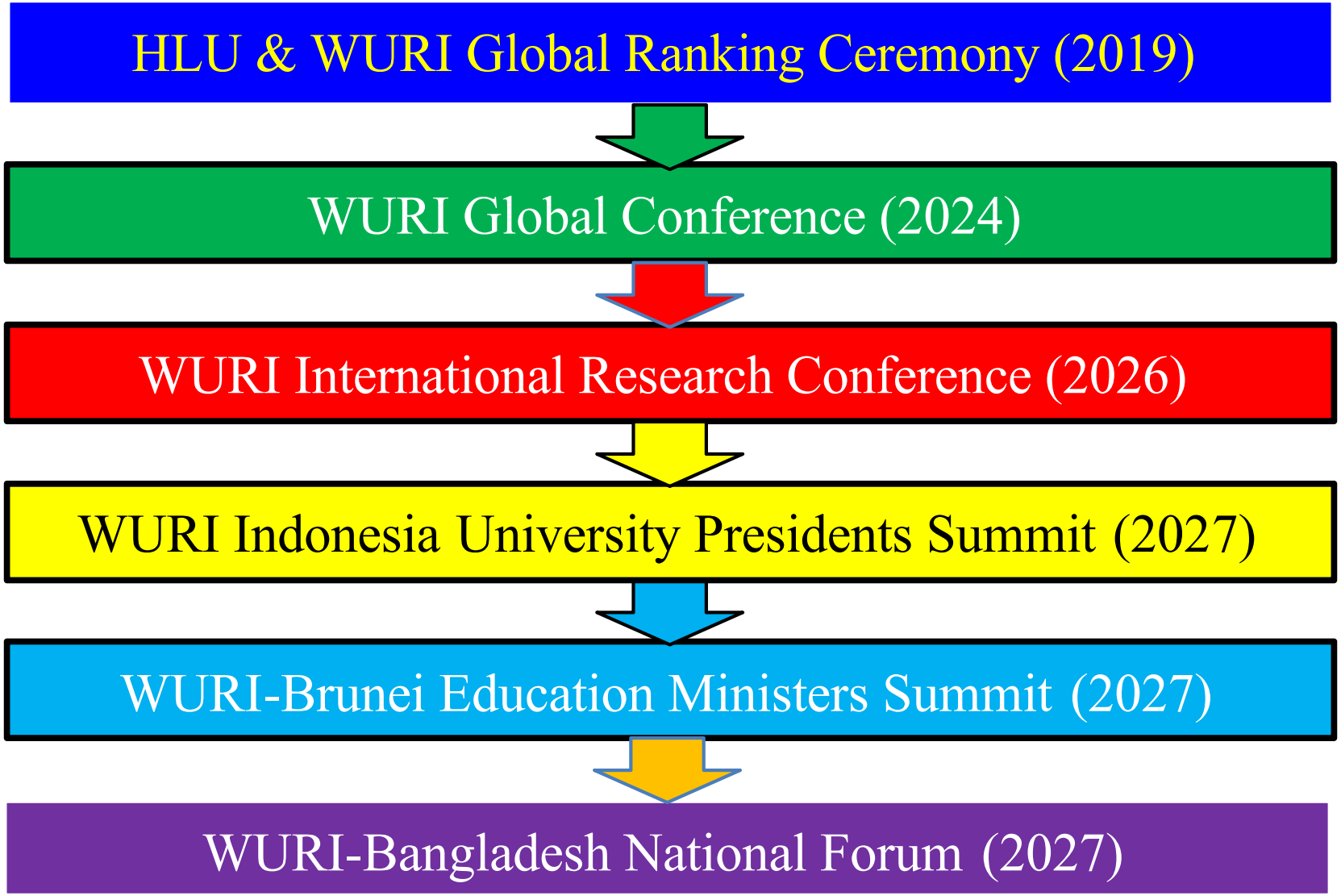
Venue: University of Makati, Manila, Philippines

Host: President Elyxzur C. Ramos

Host Editor: Professor Henry Magat

Number of abstracts and papers submitted: **174**

Expansion of the HLU into WURI Meetings



Host Universities for WURI-related Events

Year	WURI Ranking Release HLU & WURI Global Ranking Ceremony (Spring)	With Whom to Innovate (Year-round)				Global Networking WURI Global Conference (Autumn)	Research & Sharing WIRC & URFK (Winter)
		With Government	With UF, IGO	With Partner Universities			
2018	Groningen, Netherlands Hanze U of Appied Science						
2019	Incheon, Korea, Incheon NU (July 5-7)						
2023	Fort Myers, USA, Florida GCU (May 15-17)					-	-
2024	Lugano, Switzerland Franklin U Switzerland (Jun 6-7)					Seoul, Korea aSSIST (Sep 24-26)	-
2025	Dumaguete, Philippines Negros Oriental State U (July 9-11)					Busan, Korea Tong Myeong U (Sep 24-26)	-
2026	Taiwan National Chee-Nan University (May 6-8)		AUAP-WURI Impact Summit: Bangkok, Thailand (July 9-10)			Deggendorf, Germany Deggendorf IT (Sep 23-25)	Manila, Philippines University of Makati (Nov 18-20)
2027	Cairo, Egypt Badr University of Cairo (May 5-7)	Brunei Brunei–WURI 196 Education Ministers' Summit (August)	Thailand WURI-AUAP University Innovation Summit	Indonesia U of Indonesia & Asia Cyber U (July)	Bangladesh American Int'l U of Bangladesh (Dec)	San Francisco, USA Minerva University (Sep 22-24)	Bangalore, India Christ University (Nov 17-19)
2028	Sao Paulo, Brazil, Inteli (May)	Abu Dhabi, UAE. BURJEEL & UAE univerties, (July)				Quito, Ecuador, UIDE (Sep 20-22)	Maloros City, Philippines Balacan State U
2029	Seoul, Korea, aSSIST University (May)						

Thank you!