

The International Telecommunications Society (ITS) recently concluded its 16th Asia-Pacific ITS Conference in Bangkok, Thailand, November 26-28, 2023.

The conference was jointly hosted by the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NTBC) of Thailand and the [International Telecommunications Society](#). The conference attracted communications policy/ICT scholars, policy-makers and practitioners from more than 25 countries. The conference included 55 presentations of original research papers on ICT topics as well as 10 panel presentations. There was also a very impressive level of student participation – about 45% of the presentations were by student researchers.

The conference provided a fascinating window into Thailand – including its digital progress; its impressive human capital of policy-makers and scholars; and its vivid and beautiful culture. Participants were especially fortunate to experience the *Loy Krathong* festival – a festival that is held annually on the full moon night of the twelfth lunar month, usually in November, where people gather to express their gratitude and release floating baskets made from banana leaves, decorated flowers, and candles (called Krathong) onto rivers.

In a broader sense, the conference also impressively showcased the energy and vitality of Asian ICT (including digital platforms, AI, OTTs+) as well as the innovative scholarship being originated, across the region, on questions of ICT and communications policy.

The highlight of the conference, in many ways, was the impressive level of student participation. These early-in-career scholars presented some of the most interesting and innovative research in the conference. There was a rigorous, refereed student paper award process (supported by the NTBC, ITS and TELUS Communications) that awarded a total of eight (8) prizes to promising student researchers, as follows:

TELUS Communications, 1st Prize - Seungyeon Ha

Barriers to Playing Digital Games: Why Do Some People Choose Not to Play Digital Games?

TELUS Communications, 2nd Prize - Jaeyoung Park

What would make users perceive digital platforms as indispensable to their lives?

TELUS Communications, 3rd Prize - Ornicha Boonpanya

The Impact of Information Exposure on Bridging the Gap between Environmental Concern and Pro-Environmental Behavior: A Psychological Perspective

NBTC Prize - Chaeun Ko

Avatar Creation of Adolescent Female Users in Social Virtual Worlds

NBTC Prize - Nicolle Manuelle Bahia Bittencourt

Brazil's National Museum and ICT Strategies: aftermath of the fire and the reconstruction processes.

ITS Student Paper Committee Award - Alphoncina Lyamuya

Digital Inequalities and Inclusion in Sites of Forced Displacement: The Case Study of Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) Programs

ITS Student Paper Committee Award - Seoungmin Han

Examining Regret in Excessive Short-Video Consumption: A Focus on Content and Individual Attributes

ITS Student Paper Committee Award - Chaeyun Jang

Factors influencing the trade balance in intellectual property of Korean media industry

We look forward to many more great accomplishments from these early-in-career researchers and their colleagues!

Many thanks to my ITS colleague, Hitoshi Mitomo (Vice-Chair, Asia, ITS), for his pivotal role in organizing the conference and to NBTC Commissioner Suphat Suphachalasai and his colleagues at the NTBC for their generous support and amazing organizational prowess. Many thanks, as well, to my ITS Board colleagues who made the journey to Bangkok to attend in person (including Bronwyn Howell, Seongcheol Kim, Yu-Li Liu, Jason Whalley, Xu Yan, and Sandy Levin).

We look forward to welcoming the world, again, to our next International Telecommunications Society conference, which will take place in Seoul, South Korea, from 23 June 2024 through 26 June 2024.

Kind regards,

Stephen Schmidt
ITS, Board Chair