



35th ASIA BUSINESS CONFERENCE



AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
STEPHEN M. ROSS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

OFFICIAL CONFERENCE GUIDEBOOK



Asia Business Conference

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HOW WILL THE CONFERENCE BE STRUCTURED?

Each year, the conference hosts 25-30 speakers from Asia and the United States. The first day features a keynote speaker, followed by panel discussions on the following day. Panels include regional discussions on Northeast Asia, South Asia, China, and ASEAN, as well as industry panels regarding Finance, Technology, and Consulting. This year, our discussion will be centered around the topic of **“Reshaping Trade, Policy, and Innovation in New Asian Markets”**.

WHO ARE THE SPEAKERS?

Past conferences have featured leaders from multinational corporations including Google, Ford Motor Company, Merrill Lynch, Morgan Stanley, Citi, Nomura, PwC, and BCG. Prominent government officials such as the United Nations Singapore Ambassador, Finance Minister of India, and Hong Kong Commissioner for Economic and Trade Affairs to the United States have all given keynote addresses at the conference. Through networking sessions and panel Q&As, the conference provides an excellent opportunity for attendees to interact with the speakers. You'll find a more detailed guide of past speaker profiles on page 4.

Dear Prospective Participant,

The Asia Business Conference (ABC) is the longest student-run conference in North America focused on Asia business. For 34 years, the landmark conference has brought leaders of multinational companies and organizations to the University of Michigan's Stephen M. Ross School of Business to discuss issues facing the Asian markets. Organized by ABC, this year's conference (**March 20-21, 2026**) will provide students and local professionals with a unique glimpse into the environment and business trends in Asia.



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Logistics

LOCATION

University of Michigan,
Stephen M. Ross School of Business
701 Tappan Street, Ann Arbor 48109-1234

DATE

March 20th - 21st, 2026

PANELS

- Regional Panels:

 - South Asia
 - Northeast Asia
 - ASEAN
 - China
- Industry Panels:

 - Consulting
 - Finance
 - Technology

EVENT SIGN-UP

Event Sign-Up:



<https://abcross.eventbrite.com>

Email List Sign-Up:



<https://forms.gle/hR62AFERdDfU9D5DA>



Conference Agenda (Tentative)

All listed times are in EST

Friday, March 20th

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 4:00PM - 5:00PM | CHECK-IN @Ross Winter Garden |
| 5:00PM - 5:15PM | INTRODUCTION @Robertson Auditorium |
| 5:15PM - 6:00PM | KEYNOTE SPEECH @Robertson Auditorium |

Saturday, March 21st

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 8:30AM - 9:30AM | BREAKFAST @Ross Winter Garden |
| 9:30AM - 10:20AM | PANELS 1&2 @Tentative |
| 10:30AM - 11:20AM | PANELS 3&4 @Tentative |
| 11:30AM - 12:20PM | LUNCH @Tauber Colloquium |
| 12:30PM - 1:20PM | PANELS 5&6 @Tentative |
| 1:30PM - 2:20PM | PANEL 7 @Tentative |
| 2:30PM - 4:00PM | NETWORKING @Tentative |



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Please reach out to conference co-chair,
Tiger Wu, tigerwu@umich.edu for more
detailed information on this year's logistical
information.



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Opening Remarks



Cheng Gao is an Assistant Professor of Strategy and Research Director of the Zell Lurie Institute for Entrepreneurship at Michigan Ross. His research focuses on innovation strategy, entrepreneurship, and nonmarket strategy. His research examines how firms navigate and shape nascent innovation industries, particularly those characterized by institutional and regulatory uncertainty.

Gao's research is published in Administrative Science Quarterly, Strategic Management Journal, and Organization Science, and received the Academy of Management's Best Dissertation Award (Technology and Innovation Management Division) and the Heizer Doctoral Dissertation Award (Entrepreneurship Division). He has received the Neary WMBA Teaching Excellence Award, the Neary BBA Teaching Excellence Award, and the Harvard University Certificate of Distinction in Teaching. He was also named by Poets & Quants as a "Top 50 Undergraduate Business Professor".

Prior to academia, Gao was a management consultant at Oliver Wyman in the firm's New York office. Earlier, he served as principal research assistant to a former U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state at CSIS, a nonpartisan Washington think tank. Gao holds a doctoral degree in strategy from Harvard Business School and a bachelor's degree in economics with high honors from Harvard College. He is a recipient of the HBS Dean's Award for Service to the School and Society. He serves on the board of directors of Barton Malow.

Past Speakers



CHERIE R GARTNER

*Partner, Global Lead Partner for Microsoft
KPMG*



BRADLEY LALONDE

*Managing Partner and Co-Founder Vietnam
Partners LLC*



DAO JENSEN

*CEO
Oak Rocket*



ABHIJEET BRAHMANDAM

*MD & Partner
BCG*



GEORGE SVIGOS

*Executive Director, Global Markets
Communications
General Motors*



SHILPA WADHERA

*MD
Goldman Sachs*



SAM BARRETT

*Managing Director, Asia Pacific Business Group
EY*



CATHERINE ZHANG

*VP, Portfolio Manager
Morgan Stanley*



SHARON KO

*VP Product Management
Armor Defense*



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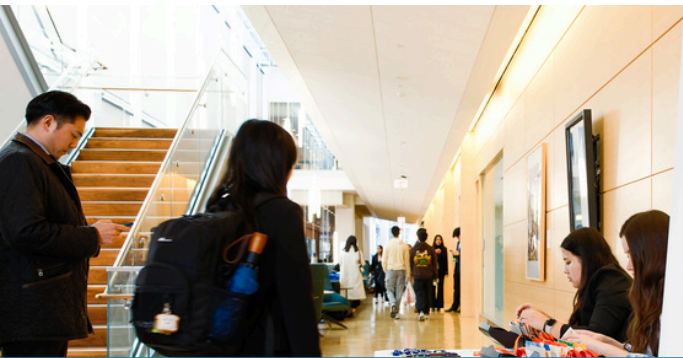
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Please reach out to panel-side co-chair, **Jaryl Shao**, qbshao@umich.edu for more detailed information on this year's panels and speakers.



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Restaurants:

Several local favourites put together by members of ABC.

Sit-Down/Business-Casual

Mani Osteria & Bar, Knight's Steakhouse, The Chop House, Aventura, Pacific Rim, Vinology, and Restaurant, Mediterraneo, Gandy Dancer

Casual/Quick

Rich JC, Fritas Batidos, Zingerman's Delicatessen, Sava's, Zingerman's Roadhouse, The Hen, Slurping Turtle, Tomokun Korean Barbeque, Cardamom, Bandito's Fresh Mexican

Cafés/Creameries/Bakeries/Other

Blank Slate Creamery, Ondo Bakery, Moka & Co, Argus Farm Stop Cafe, Lab Cafe, Comet Coffee, Möge Tee, Jasmine Bubble Tea & Eatery

Other Things To Do:

Several additional activities for downtime.

UMS Performances

1. Martin Hayes & The Common Ground Ensemble @Hill Auditorium (March 20th 7:30PM)
2. Sheku & Isatah Kanneh-Mason Performance @Hill Auditorium (March 21st 7:30PM)

Spots to Visit

Michigan Stadium, Nichols Arboretum, Main Street & Kerrytown

Drinks/Venues

The Last Word, Rabbit Hole, Blue Llama Jazz Club, The Blind Pig, Rabbit Hole, The Grotto, The Habitat, Corner Brewery

Additional Logistics (For Non-Local Participants)

Transportation

*The distance from DTW to Ann Arbor spans 29.1mi, primary options to travel include **Uber/Lyft**(~\$60-\$90, 30min), **Michigan Flyer**(\$15, 1hour), and **rental vehicles**(~\$80-120/day). Please plan accordingly to your schedule and needs.*

Accommodations (For Non-Local Students)

Hotel options are listed according to distance to the Ross School of Business. Please plan ahead as prices rise closer to scheduled conference dates.

1. AC Mariott Hotel: \$229/night, 0.66mi
2. Graduate by Hilton: \$403/night, 0.7mi
3. Residence Inn: \$229/night, 0.81mi
4. Vanguard Hotel: \$219/night, 1.0mi
5. Homewood Suites by Hilton: \$333/night, 1.6mi
6. Holiday Inn & Suites: \$99/night, 2.19mi
7. Home2Suites: \$155/night, 2.22mi
8. Sheraton: \$143/night, 2.25mi
9. Courtyard by Marriott: \$116/night, 2.27mi
10. The Kensington Hotel: \$184/night, 2.34mi

Contact & Support:

*If you have any questions or difficulties with accommodations, transport, or other logistics, please reach out to our VP of Operations, **Jonathan Lou**, huylou@umich.edu.*



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YOUR CONTRIBUTION MATTERS

Dear Prospective Participant,

As a non-profit student organization, the Asia Business Conference relies on financial contributions from companies and organizations to make the conference possible. Our past sponsors include Tencent, Deloitte, Ross Global and China Initiatives, Mitsui Life Financial Research Center, BBA Council, and Erb Institute. Your contributions will help us **create opportunities for intellectual discussion and invaluable networking**, and will make a tremendous impact on our community.

As an official event sponsor, your company/organization will be **featured on the conference marketing materials distributed online, around campus, and during the conference**. The conference will also provide a great opportunity for your representatives to network with our speakers and other members of the local business community.

For more information regarding our sponsorship system please visit www.abcross.org or contact ABC's Director of Corporate Relations (**Phu Le**, phule@umich.edu).

Please join us in continuing the legacy of this conference. Your contribution will not only make this event possible but will also make an impact on the community. Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to seeing you at the 35th Asia Business Conference.

Best regards,
Asia Business Conference Board



Map View: Ross School of Business

1. Ross Buildings Map:



2. Ross Building – First Floor

Robertson Auditorium: 1A
Classrooms & Study Rooms 1D & 1E
Ross Winter Garden: 1C



3. Ross Building – Sixth Floor

Tauber Colloquium: 6A



