

THE GLOBE

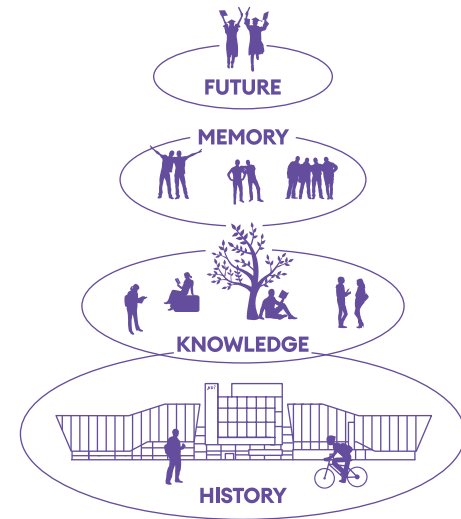
Vol. 28



KDI SCHOOL
YEARZINE 2025

Making KDI School Together

Making History
Making Knowledge
Making Memories



KDI SCHOOL YEARZINE 2025

KDI School



KDIS Students

KDIS Research & Education





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KDIS Message



Greetings, KDI School Family

As we welcome the new year, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your support and dedication throughout my first year as Dean. Thanks to the steadfast commitment of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni—along with the continued trust of our partner institutions and supporters—we have strengthened our academic excellence, expanded our global presence, and deepened our impact across research, education, and international development. Your collective efforts have made this first year truly meaningful and successful, laying a strong foundation for the milestones ahead.

Over the past year, KDI School achieved significant progress that reinforced our global standing and mission. We ranked 2nd worldwide in citations per paper in the 2025 QS World University Rankings by Subject (Social Policy & Administration), surpassing many of the world's leading institutions. This is an extraordinary accomplishment for a stand-alone graduate school and reflects the depth, rigor, and influence of our research community.

We also celebrated the graduation of the first EMPPM (Executive Master of Public Policy and Management) cohort in Saudi Arabia, expanded internship pathways with global organizations such as the World Bank, UNFPA, and UNIDO, and co-hosted major international events including the Joint Fiscal Policy Conference with the World Bank and the Asia Geopolitics Conference with the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. New MOUs with HKUST, UCL-IGP, Sussex, IDS, and Oxford BSG further strengthened our global academic partnerships and broadened opportunities for students and faculty.

In November, we deepened our engagement in Southeast Asia through the Alumni Capacity-Building Workshop in Ho Chi Minh City, co-organized with the Fulbright School of Public Policy and Management. We also launched the ADB-Korea

Fellowship Program, welcoming its inaugural cohort. On campus, two new AI chatbots enhanced digital accessibility and student services, and KDI School was recognized for the fifth consecutive year as an "Excellent Institution" under the Ministry of Education's IEQAS—affirming our commitment to high-quality global education.

The past year also marked an important step in enhancing our global visibility. We advanced in international rankings and expanded collaboration with leading policy schools, including the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (NUS), the Blavatnik School of Government (University of Oxford), and other leading institutions. Building on this momentum, we will strengthen partnerships with multilateral development banks and international organizations, developing more impactful platforms for policy education, research, and global engagement. We will also further strengthen our educational excellence, diversify outreach efforts, and intensify initiatives to attract outstanding students. Above all, we remain committed to ensuring that KDI School is a place where our students, alumni, and faculty can realize their full potential and seize new opportunities for growth and leadership.

As we step into 2026, I invite every member of our community to join me in shaping the next chapter of KDI School's growth. Together, we will honor our proud legacy, enhance our global role, and advance research-driven policy education that addresses the world's most pressing challenges.

I wish you a meaningful, healthy, and inspiring year ahead.

Happy New Year!

Joon-Kyung Kim

Dean, KDI School of
Public Policy and Management

KDIS TOP 10 NEWS

www.kdischool.ac.kr

Ranked 2nd Globally in Citations Per Paper in the 2025 QS Rankings by Subject 1

KDI School achieved outstanding global recognition in the 2025 QS World University Rankings by Subject, ranking 2nd worldwide in citations per paper in the Social Policy & Administration category—surpassing leading institutions such as Stanford University and UC Berkeley. This remarkable result underscores KDI School's strong research influence and global impact in shaping policy and administration studies.

The school was also ranked within the global Top 51+ tier and recognized as one of the Top 5 institutions in South Korea in the same field, an exceptional accomplishment for a stand-alone graduate school. These achievements highlight KDI School's commitment to producing high-impact research, fostering international collaboration, and advancing academic excellence in public policy and management.

TOP 2
SCHOOL WORLDWIDE
IN CITATIONS PER PAPER IN
SOCIAL POLICY &
ADMINISTRATION



Graduation Ceremony for 1st EMPPM Cohort (Saudi Arabia) 2

Late September marked a major milestone as the first cohort of the Executive Master of Public Policy and Management (EMPPM) program celebrated their graduation. Thirty senior Saudi officials completed this one-year custom program, a strategic collaboration with the Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Economy and Planning (MEP). The students visited Korea for the ceremony. The rigorous curriculum sharpened analytical and economic reasoning skills, strengthened problem-solving capabilities, and fostered leadership competencies crucial for advancing Saudi Vision 2030. The blended format, with on-site faculty sessions and applied research, reinforced KDI School's commitment to cultivating the next generation of global policy leaders.



New Internship Opportunities with Global and National Institutes 3

KDI School is significantly expanding its global engagement through key internship collaborations, highlighted by the planned launch of a new partnership with UNIDO in 2026. Building on established programs with the World Bank and UNFPA, KDI School continues to bridge theory and practice. The domestic KDI Internship further strengthens this connection. By proactively integrating students into these diverse international and domestic initiatives, the school is effectively boosting their practical competence and cultivating the next generation of global leaders essential for steering development policy worldwide.

Joint Fiscal Policy Conference with the World Bank 4

The two-day "Fiscal Policy Conference: Enhancing the Effectiveness of Subsidies and Fiscal Rules" was co-hosted by KDI School and the World Bank on October 29–30. The first day explored the conceptual and structural aspects of subsidies, policy effectiveness, reform cases from emerging markets, and policy discussions on Korea's major subsidy areas and practical reform strategies. The second day introduced the fundamental principles of fiscal rules, global reform experiences from EMDEs, and Korea's long-term improvement directions considering its economic outlook. The conference served as a platform for sharing insights and best practices.



5 Joint Conference with the Lee Kuan Yew School, Singapore

A collaborative conference with the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP), National University of Singapore, took place on November 17–18 under the theme “Challenges and Policy Responses of Asian Countries Amid U.S.–China Geopolitical Conflicts and the Trump 2.0 Era.” Leading scholars and policymakers from across Asia gathered to discuss industrial policy, supply chain dynamics, and regional cooperation. The event strengthened academic collaboration between the two institutions and offered a platform to explore Asia’s policy directions in a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape.



6 New MOUs with Leading Global Universities

In 2025, KDI School signed new MOUs with leading universities around the world to strengthen global learning opportunities. Students can now join exchange programs at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) or pursue dual degrees with University College London – Institute for Global Prosperity (UCL–IGP) and the University of Sussex – Institute of Development Studies (IDS). The school also launched a partnership with the Blavatnik School of Government (BSG), University of Oxford, to enhance case-based public policy education.

7 Alumni Capacity-Building Program with FSPPM, Fulbright University Vietnam

On November 25–26, KDI School hosted a Workshop on Smart Cities and K-Culture in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Co-organized with the Fulbright School of Public Policy and Management (FSPPM), the event celebrated the partnership established earlier this year between the two institutions. The workshop brought together 23 KDI School alumni from eight Southeast Asian partner countries and around 15 FSPPM students and alumni to strengthen human resource networks and promote ongoing collaboration across the ASEAN region.



8 New Scholarship Program with the Asian Development Bank (ADB)

KDI School launched a new scholarship program with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) under the ADB–Korea Fellowship Program (ADB–KFP), offering opportunities for talented individuals from ADB member countries to pursue graduate studies in public policy, development policy, and public management. The scholarship is available only for the fall semester, and the first cohort of four scholars—one from the Philippines and three from Indonesia—joined in Fall 2025, beginning their studies as part of KDI School’s global community.

9 Launched AI Chatbot Services on Campus

Two new AI chatbots are now live on campus, designed to make student life easier and more accessible. The Student Handbook AI Assistant provides instant answers to academic and campus-related inquiries, while the Library Chatbot offers quick guidance on borrowing procedures and available resources. Both are available anytime, anywhere—enhancing convenience and digital accessibility. Users are encouraged to select their program affiliation, avoid sharing personal data, and provide feedback to improve the service. This initiative reflects the school’s dedication to student experience.

10 Certified ‘Excellent Institution’ for 5th Consecutive Year under ‘IEQAS’

For the fifth consecutive year, the Ministry of Education has recognized KDI School as an “Excellent Institution” under the International Education Quality Assurance System (IEQAS). Among 158 degree-granting universities certified in 2024, only 27 achieved this top-tier status, underscoring the rigor of the evaluation. KDI School is also the only international graduate school to maintain this recognition for five consecutive years, reflecting its consistent excellence in global education. The distinction highlights the school’s strong performance in maintaining zero illegal stay rates, low dropout rates, and exceptional support for international students—reaffirming its leadership in internationalization and student-centered institutional management.



Global Recognition

KDI School in the QS World University Rankings 2025



KDI School has made its debut in the QS World University Rankings 2025, marking a remarkable milestone in its pursuit of global academic excellence. This achievement not only highlights the school's growing research impact but also underscores its commitment to evidence-based education and international collaboration.

Now, let's hear what this achievement means to the KDI School community and explore some of the groundbreaking research that earned international attention.

By the Numbers



2nd

Ranked 2nd Worldwide in Citations per Paper for Social Policy & Administration

5th

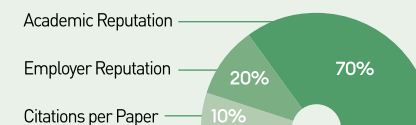
Ranked 5th Domestically for Social Policy & Administration

What is the QS Rankings?

The QS World University Rankings is an annual university evaluation index published by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) in the UK. It enjoys high global recognition and evaluates universities based on key indicators such as academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty-to-student ratio, citations per faculty, international faculty ratio, and international student ratio.

QS publishes various types of rankings applying different criteria and scopes. *The QS World University Rankings by Subject* is a global evaluation that assesses universities worldwide based on indicators such as academic reputation, employer reputation, citations per paper, H-index (which measures research productivity and impact), and international research network.

Indicators for the Social Policy and Administration Ranking



Excellence Beyond Rankings



01

NASPAA* Accreditation

for MPP, MDP and MPM

* Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration



02

5 Consecutive years

Certified as Excellent University for IEQAS* by Ministry of Education

* International Education Quality Assurance System



What This Milestone Means to Us



Associate Dean,
Office of Academic
and Student Affairs



Professor
Dong-Young Kim

Director,
Department of
Academic and
Student Affairs



Gi-Sang Kim

Students



Rio Avicenna Syamil,
2025 MPM, Indonesia



Andrea Joyce Arbues,
2024 MDP, Philippines

Behind every achievement are the people who make it meaningful. Hear from KDI School's faculty, staff, and students as they reflect on the school's growing global presence and standing.

Being ranked #2 in the "Citations per Paper" category in Social Policy and Administration in the QS World University Rankings clearly demonstrates the excellence of our faculty's research and scholarly contributions. As KDI School is a stand-alone graduate institution, this achievement is especially remarkable. This strong QS result will further enhance our global visibility and competitiveness in attracting future leaders in public policy.

Our ongoing efforts to expand international research collaboration and strengthen global networks with alumni and partner institutions will continue to boost KDIS's academic and professional influence in public policy, as well as its performance in the QS Rankings. KDIS is also expected to be ranked in Development Studies by the QS in the near future. This anticipated recognition aligns with our core mission and underscores the school's growing global presence.

This achievement represents the culmination of 28 years of collective effort by all members of the KDI School community to pursue academic excellence and deliver world-class educational programs both in Korea and abroad.

The QS Ranking reflects the collective dedication of our faculty, students, and staff, whose sincere and excellent work makes such recognition possible. When each member of our community continues to do their best with a long-term perspective, it will drive individual growth and further strengthen the school's global reputation.

This is an impressive achievement. This gives me a lot of confidence that the qualifications I will earn at KDI School will be highly respected around the world. This will be a significant advantage for my future career in public policy.

As someone working in government and pursuing research in agriculture, One Health, and development policy, KDI School's achievement strengthens my confidence that I'm being equipped to contribute meaningfully to policymaking in the Philippines. It reassures me that the methods, perspectives, and policy frameworks I'm learning are aligned with global standards of excellence. This recognition motivates me to deepen my evidence-based research and affirms that I'm in the right environment to grow into the researcher I aspire to be.

KDI School's Public Administration Research Highlights



Professor Soonhee Kim

Professor Soonhee Kim's extensive body of work (1998–2024) has earned her recognition among the world's top 2% of career-long social scientists in 2023, 2024, and 2025, as ranked by Elsevier and Stanford University. In the areas of public administration and management, her annual citation impact has also remained within the top 2% globally for seven consecutive years (2019–2025).

Q You were recognized among the World's Top 2% of Social Scientists for 2023–2025 in Political Science and Public Administration. What does this recognition mean to you personally and professionally?

I am truly honored and deeply moved by this recognition. I would like to dedicate this honor to my colleagues at KDI School in Korea and my former colleagues at the Maxwell School of Syracuse University in the United States, whose collaboration has been integral to my academic journey. I am also grateful to the graduate students who have continually inspired impactful research in the field of public administration.

Q KDI School ranked 2nd worldwide in citations per paper and 5th in South Korea in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025 for Social Policy & Administration. How do you feel about these achievements, and what do they mean to you as part of the KDI School community?

I believe this QS Ranking result reflects the KDI School faculty's strong commitment to producing high-quality research in public policy and public administration. Since joining KDI School in the fall of 2014, I have aspired to advance research in public policy and management through collaboration with scholars around the world. The school's supportive research environment has been instrumental in helping me achieve this goal.

Featured Paper

JOURNAL *Public Administration Review*, vol. 82, no. 2, pp. 362–368, 2022

TITLE Platform Government in the Era of Smart Technology

AUTHOR Kim, Soonhee / Andersen, Kim Normann / Lee, Jungwoo

Read More ▼



Professor Cheol Liu



Q What are your thoughts on KDI School's achievement in the 2025 QS World University Rankings? What does this mean to you and to the school?

KDI School's 2nd-place global ranking in citations per paper is especially meaningful because we are a small and relatively young institution competing against far larger and long-established universities. Achieving this result under such constraints shows that the impact of our research far exceeds our size and reinforces our strategic goal of building global visibility. For a school with a shorter history, strong recognition through a respected system like the QS is a powerful way to elevate our international presence, demonstrating both the quality of our scholarship and our growing role in global conversations on social policy and public administration.

Q Many of your works are also widely cited internationally. In your view, what distinguishes research that gets cited and influences others?

Influential research in social policy and administration begins with identifying issues society truly cares about and translating them into clear, evidence-based questions. Conceptual tools—such as indices or measurement frameworks—tend to gain wide influence because they offer foundations others can build on. Given the challenges of publishing in top international journals from Korea, collaboration with global scholars is essential. Looking ahead, a long-term project like a “KDI School Index of National Development,” developed with international partners, could deepen our academic contribution and enhance the school's global visibility.

Featured Paper

JOURNAL *Public Administration Review*, vol. 74, no. 3, pp. 346-359, 2014

TITLE The Impact of Public Officials' Corruption on the Size and Allocation of U.S. State Spending

AUTHOR Cheol Liu / John L. Mikesell

[Read More ▶](#)



Professor Junesoo Lee



Q As a faculty member in the field of Public Administration, how would you reflect on KDI School's recent achievement in the QS World University Rankings by Subject?

The QS Ranking achievement can be attributed (though not limited) to KDIS's excellence in the following areas: (1) overall research quality that extends beyond public administration, (2) a strong research support system, and (3) continuous efforts to enhance its reputation. This achievement implies that (1) we have been on the right track, and (2) our greatest strength lies in our commitment to constant innovation.

Featured Paper

JOURNAL *Government Information Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 2, pp. 226-236, 2019

TITLE Collaborative Accountability for Sustainable Public Health: A Korean Perspective on the Effective Use of ICT-Based Health Risk Communication

AUTHOR Lee, Tae Jun / Park, Hyojung / Lee, Junesoo



[Read More ▲](#)

Professor Angela Y.S. Park



Q As a faculty member in the field of Public Administration, how would you reflect on KDI School's recent achievement in the QS World University Rankings by Subject?

It's only been a few years since I joined the school, so I understand this achievement comes from the long-term efforts of many colleagues who have built and strengthened the school over time. For me, this ranking reflects KDI School's strong research culture that values interdisciplinary and collaborative work. It's inspiring to be surrounded by people who deeply care about research, and I hope to continue contributing to this momentum going forward.

Q Publishing in top-tier journals is often challenging. Looking back on your research journey, what has helped you publish successfully, and what advice would you give to aspiring researchers at KDI School?

When I was a doctoral student, one of my professors often reminded me that our work stands on the shoulders of intellectual giants and that theory matters because it builds on decades of scholarship. Keeping that perspective—engaging with existing frameworks and trying to extend even a small part of them—has benefited me the most. To aspiring researchers, I would say: read widely and don't shy away from theory, even when it feels abstract. Think about how to make it relevant. Research can also feel daunting, and criticism is inevitable, but it's what pushes you to think deeper and grow. You never fully get used to criticism, but you do learn to value it.

Featured Paper

JOURNAL *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, vol. 31, no. 2, pp. 434-450, 2021

TITLE Institutional Mechanisms for Local Sustainability Collaboration: Assessing the Duality of Formal and Informal Mechanisms in Promoting Collaborative Processes

AUTHOR Park, Angela Y.S. / Krause, Rachel M / Hawkins, Christopher V



[Read More ▲](#)

Professor Taejun Lee



Q From your perspective as a Public Administration faculty member, what does this year's QS World University Rankings result mean for KDI School?

Public management is no longer confined to a single disciplinary domain. It has evolved into an interdisciplinary field that engages in philosophical reflection, theoretical inquiry, methodological innovation, policy and strategy development, the creation of innovation ecosystems, governance reform, and the production of knowledge and discourse on sustainable development, particularly in response to complex social challenges. Within this expanding intellectual horizon, KDI School has built a distinguished record of academic excellence and reputation, while actively contributing to the formation of a knowledge ecosystem in the global society.

Featured Paper

JOURNAL *Government Information Quarterly*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2021

TITLE A Validation of the Modified Democratic E-Governance Website Evaluation Model

AUTHOR Lee, Tae Jun / Lee-Geiller, Seulki / Lee, Byung-Kwan



[Read More ▶](#)

KDIS at Sejong Common Campus

Building a Collaborative Future in Korea's First Shared Campus



In the heart of Sejong City, an innovative academic initiative is taking shape, the Sejong Common Campus, an innovative educational hub jointly used by seven leading universities including KDI School. More than just a physical space, the Common Campus represents a bold step toward fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, community engagement, and a shared vision of education for the future.

A New Model of Learning and Collaboration

The Sejong Common Campus was designed to embody the principles of cooperation and knowledge sharing among institutions that traditionally operated independently. Here, universities come together not only to share infrastructure but also to encourage intellectual exchange and innovation. For KDI School, this model aligns naturally with its mission to cultivate global leaders who combine academic rigor with practical policy insight.

Students arriving for the first time are immediately

struck by the campus's modern architecture, clean design, and functional layout. As KDIS student Dilara Zharmagambetova (2024 MPP) described, "When I first entered the Sejong Common Campus, I was surprised by how modern, clean, and well-organized everything looked. It has everything needed for a comfortable student life, from the gym and classrooms to cafés and study spaces."

The facilities are indeed state-of-the-art: spacious lecture halls equipped with the latest technology, inviting lounges that encourage collaboration, and a library designed to support both focused research and group work. Fawzia Rahimi (2025

MDS) highlighted the appeal of the campus for students: "The facilities are impressive, especially because everything feels new and thoughtfully designed. I often use the gym, which even has a personal trainer twice a week, and the library and study rooms make it easy to focus or collaborate."

Interdisciplinary Learning and Growing Community

One of the key objectives of the Sejong Common Campus is to enhance interdisciplinary learning across institutions. Students from different academic backgrounds and universities are encouraged to share perspectives and approaches to policy and development challenges. As Dilara noted, taking courses in a second concentration at the Common Campus helped her realize "how important interdisciplinary learning is today. It allows me to combine knowledge from different fields and view modern issues from a broader perspective."

Despite being new, a sense of community is beginning to take root. Students have created spaces for informal learning and support beyond the classroom. Fawzia shared one example that captures this collaborative spirit: "Every Friday, MDS students and professors gather in the student meeting room for reading, writing, and coding



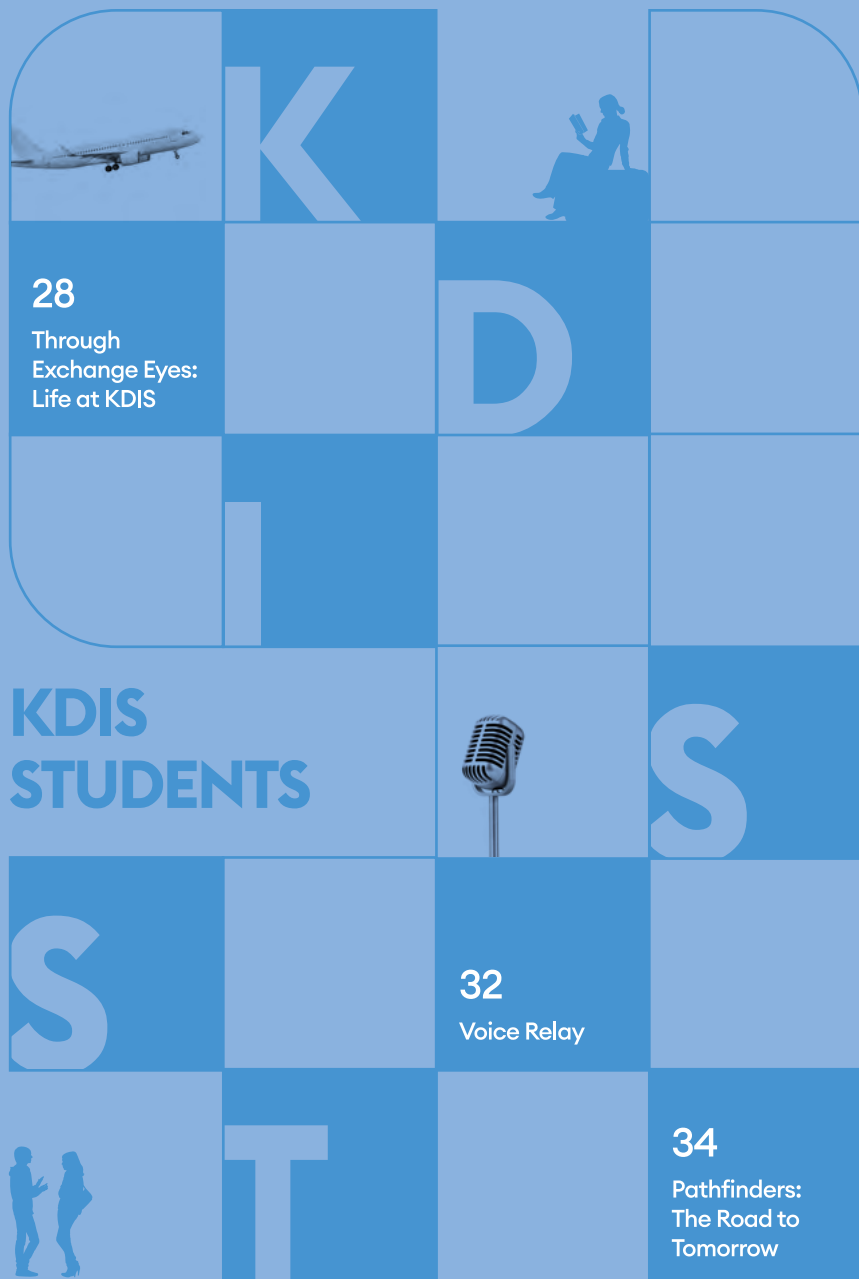
sessions. It's a relaxed atmosphere where we can chat about challenges, ask questions, or simply dive into our tasks. The professors even treat us to coffee; it feels friendly and motivating." These moments of connection, along with small details like the presence of Duri, a friendly campus dog, contribute to a warm and inclusive atmosphere.

Looking Ahead: Toward a Truly Shared Future

Students unanimously agree that the Sejong Common Campus has immense potential to become a dynamic hub of knowledge exchange and collaboration. Their main hope is to see more inter-university activities, seminars, research forums, and cultural events, that bring together the diverse student body and faculty from all seven institutions. As Habib Raza (2025 MPP) put it, "Joint workshops, shared research projects, or inter-university discussion forums could create valuable spaces for interdisciplinary exchange."

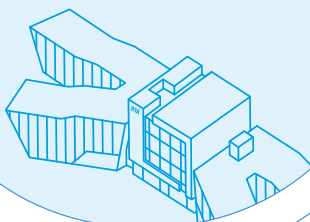
Still evolving, the Sejong Common Campus is already shaping a new kind of academic ecosystem. For KDI School students, it's not only a place to study but a living laboratory of collaboration and innovation, a vision that mirrors the future of global education.





Through Exchange Eyes: Life at KDIS

This year, KDI School welcomed a new wave of exchange students from partner universities around the world. As they immersed themselves in life at KDI School, these students experienced not only rigorous academics but also the warmth of a truly global campus. To reflect on their journeys, we spoke with two exchange students who shared how studying and living in Korea have shaped their understanding of policy, culture, and connection.



KAZAKHSTAN



Name
Kanat Islambekov

KDI School Program
2025 MPP

From

KAZ → **KDIS**

To


Home University Program

Public Policy, 2024-2026,
Nazarbayev University (NU),
Graduate School of
Public Policy (GSPP)

BOARDING PASS



CHINA



Name
Mingwei Ma

KDI School Program
2025 MDS

From

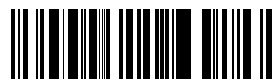
BEL → **KDIS**

To

Home University Program

Social and
Culture Anthropology,
2024, KU Leuven

BOARDING PASS



Kanat Islambekov



Why did you decide to come to KDIS?

I was particularly drawn by the fact that there is a lot of work with data analysis and programming software here. Additionally, I was especially drawn to the diverse student body and the opportunity to learn in a truly global environment, where I could exchange perspectives with peers from many different countries.

What was your most memorable experience at KDIS?

Firstly, even though it has only been a month, lectures have been the most memorable part of the experience at KDI School because they require a lot of attention to detail and policy-oriented solutions. I truly think that the knowledge acquired here will be foundational for me. Secondly, participating in different clubs at KDIS was one of my most memorable experiences. The international community and facilities create a friendly environment for social activities.

Compared to your home university, how do you find the academic environment at KDIS different?

The biggest difference is the internationality of the classmates within courses. Although GSPP also has many international students, KDIS has a bigger scale. Classes often revolve around discussions, debates, and case studies, where students are encouraged to share insights from their own countries. The diversity of culture allows us to understand more perspectives on policy-driven solutions.

If you had to introduce one person you met here to your friends back home, who would it be and how would you describe them?

It is hard to highlight only one person. I would probably introduce professors with whom I have taken courses this semester. They all have different backgrounds and styles. I think it would be fun to introduce them to Kazakh culture and Nazarbayev University in particular.



Mingwei Ma

Why did you decide to come to KDIS?

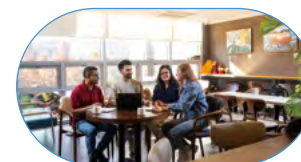
KDI School's connection to the KDI Think Tank further amplifies my interest. Access to its extensive body of research and policy expertise will enhance my understanding of comparative development strategies and their socio-cultural implications. Additionally, engaging with KDIS's international student body will allow me to exchange insights with peers from diverse backgrounds, broadening my global perspective on development challenges and solutions.

Furthermore, I am interested in Korean culture and enthusiastic about advancing my Korean language skills, which I have been developing through self-study and foundational coursework.



What was your most memorable experience at KDIS?

It's hard to say specifically, because everything is going smoothly. The most surprising part is that the cafeteria is extremely good.



Compared to your home university, how do you find the academic environment at KDIS different?

Compared to the academic environment at my home university, the presence of TAs and CAs is crucial for me to stay engaged in class and keep up with the lectures through out-of-class discussions. Moreover, attendance is a significant part of evaluation, which is not considered in the lecture classes at KU Leuven.

If you had to introduce one person you met here to your friends back home, who would it be and how would you describe them?

Well, that's a hard question. I have made a lot of new friends here. If I have to choose one person, that must be Jeongmin Lee, an MDS student. We experienced several memorable moments. Her tenacity, kindness and bravery impressed me and it's my pleasure to be her friend.

Voice Relay

In this interactive feature, ten students pass the mic from one to another. Each student answers a question and then passes a new one forward. Together, their voices weave a story of student life, reflections, and inspiration.



We begin with the first question

Ⓢ What's one moment this semester that made you feel proud or reminded you why you enjoy being part of this school?



Jongsu
2025 MDP, Republic of Korea

Ⓢ I chose KDIS for its diversity, where learning from classmates is as valuable as lectures. Language barriers can be challenging, but staying curious helps. For example, Koreans on public transport may seem unfriendly, but it's about respecting others' rest—understanding context deepens mutual respect.

Ⓢ How do/did you manage to live here in Korea where most people do not speak English?



Jafar Ali
2024 MDP, Pakistan

Ⓢ I'd like to start a project for the Food for Thought Lounge to expand its menu with two or three dishes inspired by different countries. Since KDIS is a global community, it would be great to make the dining experience more inclusive and help students explore each other's cultures through food.

Ⓢ How do you find the diversity here in KDI School?



Donn
2025 MDP, Philippines

Ⓢ Sharing Filipino dishes with friends at KDIS makes me proud of my culture. Cooking and eating together feels heartwarming, especially when international friends join. That sense of community beyond the classroom is just as meaningful as what we learn in class.

Ⓢ What's one of the most memorable experiences you've had so far here in Korea?



Settie
2025 MPM, Malawi

Ⓢ During Chuseok in Seoul, I helped an elderly man who nearly fell as the subway doors closed. He looked at me, surprised—perhaps not expecting a foreigner's help—and with teary eyes said, “감사합니다.” That simple moment became one of my most heartwarming experiences in Korea.

Ⓢ Are you enjoying the food here in Korea?



Qingbing
Exchange Student, China

Ⓢ First, I try to understand my own academic limits so that I can do my best without unnecessary pressure. When I feel overwhelmed, I remind myself that “it's okay, everyone learns differently” and just pay attention in class to study efficiently. Lastly, I take time to relax to make my day feel meaningful.

Ⓢ If you were to implement a project in KDI School, what would it be?



Urooj
2025 MPM, Pakistan

Ⓢ Being away from home, I honestly crave and miss the food from Pakistan. There is a huge difference in the taste and flavor of the food here compared to back home, but I guess I can get used to Korean food the more frequently I try and eat it.

Ⓢ How do you relieve your stress from academics?



Jonas
2024 MPM, Philippines

Ⓢ I managed to get by with just a basic grasp of the language! I mimicked phrases I heard from friends and strangers, often used 파파고 to check words I wanted to say, and most importantly, I just tried to speak with locals. It was scary but nothing beats learning a language by actually using it in real life.

Ⓢ Where's your favorite place to order fried chicken?



Priyanka
2025 MIPD, India

Ⓢ My favorite chicken is Goobne Chicken. It's oven-baked, healthier, and reasonably priced. I'd recommend the original flavor—it's subtly seasoned, not too spicy or sweet, which really makes it stand out.

Ⓢ If you could give one piece of advice to a new student, what would it be?



Priscilla
2024 MPP, Guatemala

Ⓢ Study hard and do your best, but don't forget to enjoy your time in Korea. With this opportunity, you can learn, grow, and discover yourself and the world better. Time flies fast, so make every moment count, take lots of pictures and create memories that will stay with you long after you leave.

Ⓢ If your time in Korea were a drama, what would the title be and why?



Nana
2024 MPM, UK

Ⓢ The title would be *Family Away from Home*. Coming from a senior role in England, what began as a teaching job led me to the KDIS scholarship and program, each step taking me into the unknown. At KDIS, classmates from around the world became friends who feel like family, and professors challenged me to think deeply about policy. By the end, Korea no longer feels like just a place to study—it feels like home.

FINISH!!

Pathfinders

The Road to → Tomorrow



At KDI School, students come from all walks of life—each on a unique journey to define their own path in the world of development and policy. With such a diverse community, conversations about careers and purpose are never far away. Among these aspiring leaders, a few stand out for their unwavering sense of direction and dedication. This feature highlights two such students who are confidently charting their courses, balancing ambition with passion as they navigate their studies and future goals.



Hyuk An
2024 MPP



Could you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what you are currently studying at KDIS?

Hello, my name is Hyuk An, and I am a 2024 MPP student. I majored in economics at Korea University, and after completing my military service, I entered KDI School directly. I am currently studying macroeconomics, experimental economics, and antitrust, and I am also considering pursuing a Ph.D. program in the near future.

What inspired you to pursue your chosen field of study?

For now, I'm interested in behavioral macroeconomics. I majored in economics as an undergraduate and really enjoyed courses on macroeconomics and monetary policy, so I initially hoped to continue with similar topics in graduate school. Professor Jeong Yeol Kim at school works on antitrust and experimental economics, and learning under his guidance sparked a new interest for me. I'd like to connect these areas and work on behavioral macro, which has seen a surge of research activity in recent years.



Are there any role models, mentors, or experiences that influenced your career direction?

Professor Jeong Yeol Kim gave me the opportunity to work as an RA, through which I have come to understand what research truly means and received invaluable guidance on my papers. Passing his office late at night and seeing the light still on reminds me that if my professor works with such dedication, I too must always give my best.

Professor Seohyun Lee introduced me to the fundamentals of macroeconomics, my original area of interest. Her sharp insights during paper-guidance sessions helped me overcome challenges I couldn't solve alone, and this semester I am honored to serve as her TA for *Time Series Econometrics*.

Through my first Industry and Labor reading group with Professor Changkeun Lee and Ph.D. student Sehoon Kim, I learned not only how to use Stata and Overleaf but also how to frame research hypotheses and develop academic writing skills.



Was there ever a moment when you questioned your path? How did you regain focus?

During my military service, I had a lot of time to think on my own. When I saw professors and others at my school who genuinely enjoy research, I realized that it would be untrue to say that I find research "enjoyable" in the same way. Still, if I must dedicate myself to one pursuit in life, I feel that research suits me better than anything else—and that is why I chose to come to this school. The way I regain my energy is by reminding myself that I am not drifting alone; there are other students walking the same path alongside me in our school. I also try to keep a regular daily routine.

What specific steps are you taking now to prepare for your future career?

I intend to pursue a Ph.D. in economics and build a career as a researcher. To that end, I am learning how to conduct research under the guidance of faculty at our school. Also, I have been learning a great deal through my work as a research assistant (RA). Serving as a teaching assistant (TA) has also helped me communicate ideas more clearly and effectively. I am also taking Ph.D. core coursework to strengthen my analytical toolkit, and in the short term I am preparing for quantitative requirements such as the GRE and math requirements.

What picture do you see of yourself 5 or 10 years from now?

I don't really know what will happen even next month, so I can't say much about the distant future. I don't know exactly where I will be, but I hope to continue doing research.



Jiyong Kim
2024 MDP



Could you briefly introduce yourself and tell us what you are currently studying at KDIS?

Hello, I'm Jiyong Kim, a former engineering officer in the Republic of Korea Army who recently got discharged after completing mandatory service as a lieutenant. I'm currently in my last semester of the Master of Development Policy program with keen interests in sustainable development and green finance. For my thesis, I'm working on capturing the geopolitical impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on the Korean green bond market through empirical analysis, which I believe ultimately reflects the growing importance of energy transition in an energy security context. Extending from my studies at KDIS, I hope to continue working in the field of energy transition, especially for developing countries, reinforcing key drivers and resolving key barriers to energy transition.

What inspired you to pursue your chosen field of study?

Graduating from an engineering and statistical background, I always dreamed of realizing sustainable development through accelerating energy transition with a focus on energy infrastructure development. However, as I gained more experience in this sector, I recognized that political and financial resources play a more crucial role in closing the gaps for many projects with green initiatives.



Are there any role models, mentors, or experiences that influenced your career direction?

Growing up in Cambodia, Canada, and Korea, I have long questioned how I can contribute to closing the gaps between developing countries like Cambodia and developed countries like Korea. Among many sectors, I developed a keen interest in energy and finance from my undergraduate studies in energy engineering and applied statistics. Through years of learning inside and outside of school, I recognized the significant impact that both energy and finance can have on developing countries, which naturally made sense for me to pursue a career in energy project development.

Was there ever a moment when you questioned your path? How did you regain focus?

Most recently, I had many doubts about completing the thesis while working as a company commander in the military engineering battalion. As a commander responsible for more than 50 young people's well-being and combat level, I would often work late nights, receive urgent calls during class time regarding the company status or provincial crisis. Under pressure, I often questioned my capabilities to manage both roles as an officer and a student. I'm certain that I got back on track by learning to trust the process even at times when results are not revealing or even disappointing. Although I often had to start from scratch due to data or methodological issues while developing my thesis, I came to realize that the more I failed, the closer I came to success.



What specific steps are you taking now to prepare for your future career?



As I'm in my last semester at KDIS, I'm preparing for the next phase of my career in which I'm hoping to continue in an international development bank in near future. I expect a few milestones prior to reaching that phase. Nevertheless, the most important step is to graduate without any regrets. Thus, I'm spending most of my time refining my skills on research through finalizing my thesis as well as supporting research projects led by Professor Yeong Jae Kim. I'm also attending research seminars that interest me, knowing that such opportunities may be scarcer once I leave the school environment. The next step would be to gain relevant work experience that converges my interests in sustainable development, energy, and finance, so I'm currently seeking relevant opportunities to apply for.

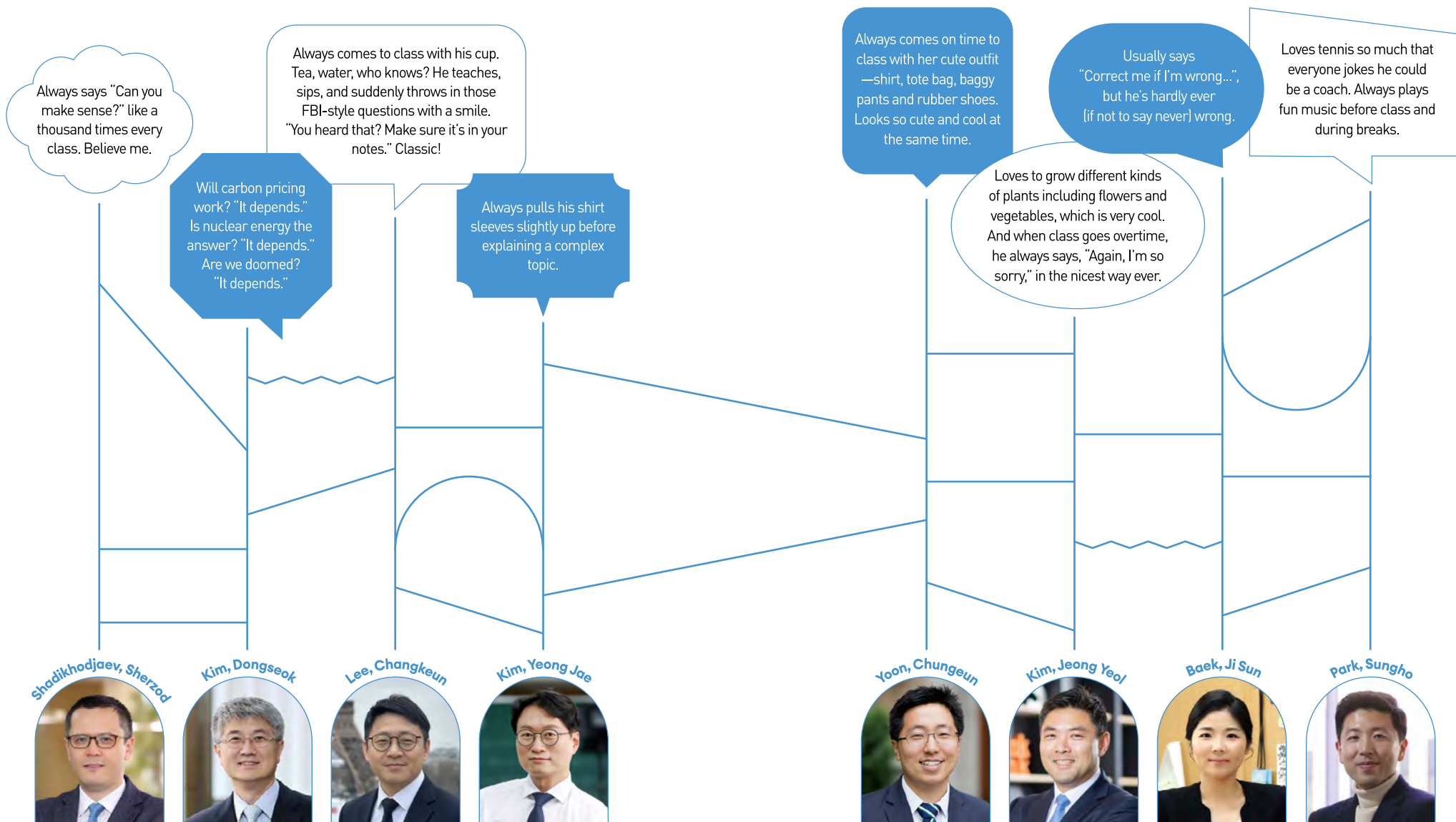


What picture do you see of yourself 5 or 10 years from now?

In 10 years from now, I wonder if I will be living in Korea or not. Regardless, I picture myself further along in my career, where I'll be responsible for implementing energy development projects in many developing countries.

Faculty Fun Facts by Students

Behind every inspiring lecture is a professor with a story; a unique habit, a trademark phrase, or a charming quirk that makes them unforgettable. Here are some delightful facts shared by students, highlighting the professors who bring both wisdom and warmth to KDI School.



Beyond K-Culture: Reading Korea through K-Pop Demon Hunters

International students reflect on
the depth of Korean identity
through *K-Pop Demon Hunters*

K-pop has long been celebrated for its rhythm, style, and global influence, a cultural wave that transcends language and borders. Yet, beneath the glamour of synchronized choreography and dazzling visuals lies a deeper reflection of Korean identity. Through *K-Pop Demon Hunters*, international students at KDI School discovered that this colorful world of pop idols and fantasy hides profound messages about teamwork, resilience, and the harmony between tradition and modernity.

During a recent field trip organized by KDI School, students had the opportunity to watch a short K-pop video presented by the Global Knowledge Exchange and Development Center (GKEDC). The experience sparked thoughtful discussions about Korea's creative industries and how entertainment has evolved into a form of soft power, merging innovation, policy, and culture.



Anicia Sunille Antoine
2025 MPP, St. Lucia

For Anicia Antoine (2025 MPP), the event was more than just entertainment; it reflected Korea's ingenuity. "The K-pop video was captivating and full of energy," she said. "It showed how Korea has merged creativity with innovation to build a global cultural brand. From a policy perspective, I was impressed by how the creative industry serves not just as entertainment but also as a strong economic driver influencing trade, tourism, and Korea's soft power."

Her words echo the broader theme of "Beyond K-Culture," a reminder that to understand Korea is to look beyond the stage, to the values, history, and collective spirit that fuel its artistic expression. "Going beyond K-culture," Anicia added, "means appreciating the balance between innovation and heritage."

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Anicia added, “means appreciating
the balance between innovation
and heritage.”
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Pooja Ashok Kanojia
2025 MPP, India

While some students experienced K-pop's creative world for the first time, others had already explored it deeply through music and media.

Pooja Kanojia (2025 MPP), shared that her connection to K-pop began years ago in Mumbai, India. "In 2016, I first heard BTS on VH1. Over time, I became fascinated by the creativity, precision, and emotional storytelling in their performances," she said. Her appreciation grew when she watched *K-Pop Demon Hunters* for the first time.

"The movie was colorful, energetic, and full of cultural symbolism," she recalled.



“

It symbolized how togetherness is central to Korean society. The message that one's talent and spirit can protect both people and culture was deeply inspiring.

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"It goes beyond the glamorous image of idols by connecting them to Korean myths and traditional beliefs. The hanbok-inspired costumes and traditional music in the battle scenes beautifully highlight Korea's cultural heritage."

For Pooja, the film's most memorable scene was when the group used teamwork and music to defeat demons, a metaphor, she said, for unity and collective strength. "It symbolized how togetherness is central to Korean society. The message that one's talent and spirit can protect both people and culture was deeply inspiring."



Elena Elizabeth Dimas Jimenez
2024 MDP, El Salvador

Meanwhile, Elena Dimas (2024 MDP), reflected on the emotional core of *K-Pop Demon Hunters* and how it reshaped her understanding of Korean values. Beyond being an attentive viewer, Elena was also part of the organizing team behind the *K-Pop Demon Hunters* dance performance, presented by KDIS students at the Sejong Heung-inayut TENTEN Club. This experience deepened her appreciation for Korean creativity and collective expression.

"I had already watched the movie with my friends before the event, but this time I saw it differently," she said. "It blends fantasy, teamwork, and friendship with traditional symbols and myths. It shows that Korean culture isn't only about entertainment but also about identity, community, and balance between modernity and tradition."

Elena was particularly moved by the story's empowering message. "It reminded me that it's okay not to be perfect; what truly matters is shining in your own way. I think that captures something very Korean: resilience, harmony, and finding confidence in who you are."

These reflections reveal that behind the glitter of K-pop lies a deeper cultural

“

It shows that Korean culture isn't only about entertainment but also about identity, community, and balance between modernity and tradition.

”

narrative, one that bridges past and present. From the gat (the traditional Korean hat) and grim reapers (saja) that appear in folk stories, to the modern reimagining of these symbols in animation and pop music, students discovered a dialogue between history and creativity that defines Korea's identity today.



As the credits rolled and conversations continued, many students agreed that *K-Pop Demon Hunters* offered more than catchy songs and vibrant visuals. It became a window into the soul of a country that harmonizes innovation with tradition, where every beat and brushstroke tell a story of perseverance, beauty, and shared humanity.

Beyond K-culture, they found not just idols or melodies, but the spirit of Korea itself: resilient, expressive, and endlessly inspiring.



2025 KDIS STUDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

The Students' Choice Awards is one of the most exciting annual traditions at KDI School, celebrating amazing members of our community who make campus life and learning even better. Students get to nominate and vote for the most deserving individuals in each category, making it a true community event. This year's ceremony was held right here on campus, and the External Affairs Division teamed up with our Student Ambassadors to chat with the award winners and hear their thoughts.



Most Inspiring Professor Award

★
Christopher Plumb
Professor

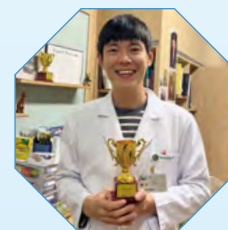
Thank you for this unexpected honor. I wouldn't call myself inspiring, but I think KDIS students are an inspiration to me. Their commitment to education and public service makes teaching here rewarding and interesting.



Fitfluencer Award

★
COLLEY, Mustapha B
2025 MPP, Gambia

I'm honored to receive the Fitfluencer Award. KDI School offers amazing fitness facilities: two gyms, a football pitch, basketball and volleyball courts, and table tennis. I encourage every student to find what they love and make the most of these spaces. Finally I want to thank everyone who voted for me. It means a lot to know that people recognize my impact and I'm truly grateful. Stay healthy and keep being fit.



Favorite Staff Award

★
KIM, Taesub
School Nurse

I am so grateful and honored to receive this award. Let me humbly accept it on behalf of all KDIS staff. Thank you always for your kind and encouraging words!



Kitchen Alchemist Award



HASHIM, Lily Marini Binti
2025 MPM, Malaysia

Cooking has always been my passion. My way to unwind, connect, and express myself. Through it, I've made new friends, learned about different cultures, and discovered countless new recipes. Thank you to everyone who nominated and voted for me as The Kitchen Alchemist!



KDISunshine Award



Lawun Cho
2024 MPP, Myanmar

I feel truly honored to receive the KDISunshine title. Thank you to everyone who nominated and voted for me! You may see me as sunshine, but I'm really shining from all the positive energy I receive from you. Thanks for the love!!



Caffeinator Award



LOKOTUI, Piula Atu Tui Kehe Mei Moana
2024 MDP, Tonga

I'm truly grateful to KDI School and my colleagues for this appreciation award. It means a lot because it celebrates one of the many things I love which is COFFEE!!! I don't drink it to stay awake, but I simply enjoy its aroma and taste so much that I'll even have a cup before bed. This is definitely the coolest award I have ever received!



Future Leader Award



FOSU, Richmond Kwadwo
2024 MPP, Ghana

Being selected as a Future Leader is a pleasure and an honor. It shows how people believe in your potential and I will do my best to live up to that expectation.



Campus Glam Award



PAREJAN, Harshanisha
2025 MDP, India

Dressing up is my personal therapy, it truly sets the tone for my day. Grateful to all my supporters who appreciate both my style and me.



Study Warrior Award



CEESAY, Alieu
2025 MDS, Gambia

Thank you to the students for nominating and voting for me for the "Study Warrior" award. Let's keep building a culture where learning is normal. Make the library your home and knowledge will be your closest companion.

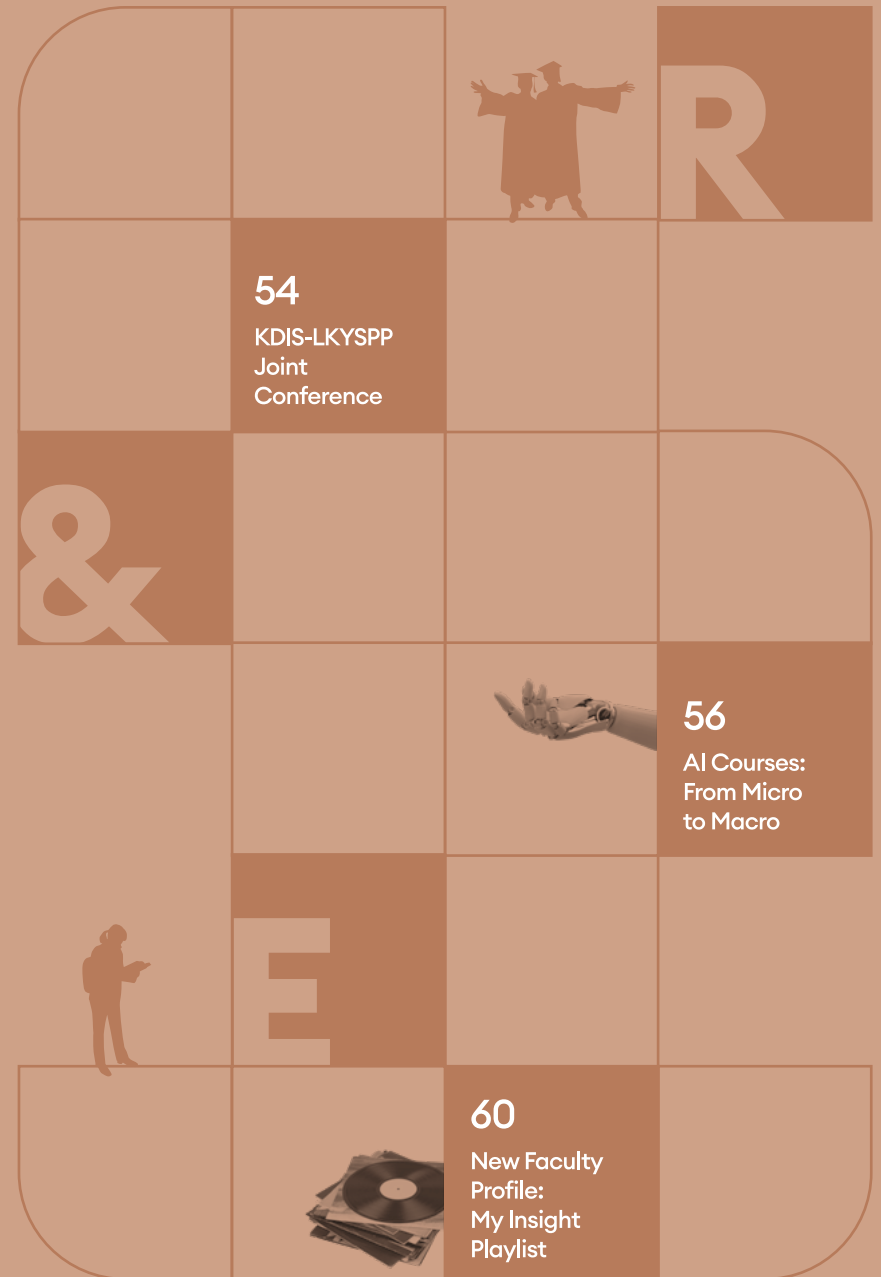
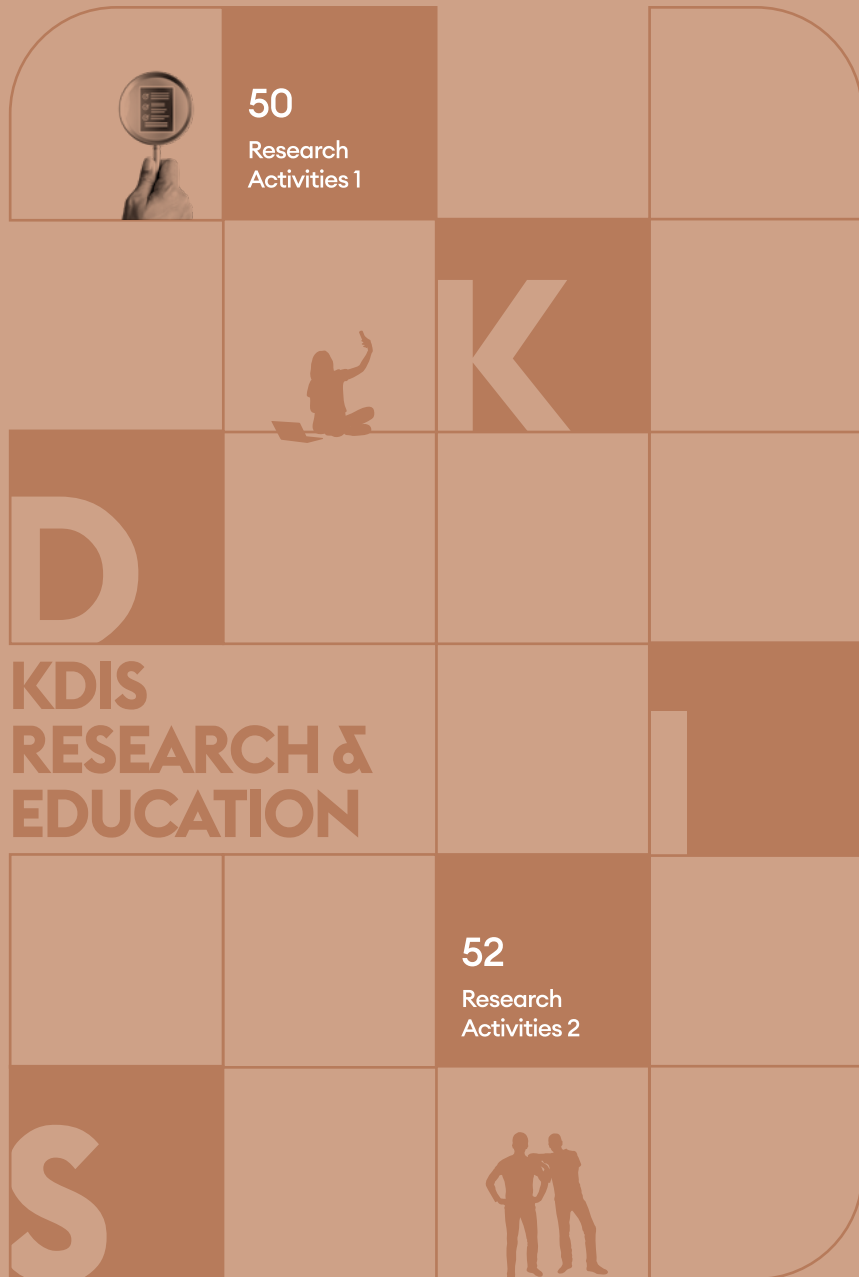


Never Stay In Award



CHAE, Jongsu
2025 MDP, Republic of Korea

Feeling grateful for this award, all thanks to my fellow students. I've tried to spend my time actively, so that students can connect and explore new experiences. I'll keep trying to help students feel the beauty of each season and every changing day more deeply.



Research Activities

2025 Publications by
KDIS Faculty

1



Prof. Kim, Byungkoo

Democracy and Clustered Models of Global Economic Engagement
• International Studies Quarterly. 68(4). 2024-10.



Prof. Kim, Dongseok

Labor input in Korea: 1963–2023
• Journal of Economic Research. 30(1). 2025-05.



Prof. Kim, Joeun

Male Victimhood Ideology Among Korean Men: Is It Economic Hardship or Perceived Status Decline?
• Sex Roles. 91(1). 2025-01.



Prof. Kim, Yeong Jae

The Impact of the Twin Transition on Firms' Business Performance: Empirical Evidence from Korean Manufacturing Firms
• Energy Economics. 149. 2025-09.



Prof. Lee, Dongil

Targeting coethnic voters, elites, or both? Evidence from aid allocation in Malawi
• World Development. 188. 2025-04.



Prof. Choi, Seulki

Muggle, Juggle, Snuggle, and Struggle: profiles of parenting experiences of mothers and fathers in South Korea during the COVID-19 pandemic
• Journal of Family Studies. 31(1). 2025-01.



Prof. Joo, Yu Min

Slow Cities and Local Development in South Korea: From Entrepreneurial Cities to Progressive Localism
• Journal of Governmental Studies. 31(1). 2025-04.



Prof. Kim, Dong-Young

Policy Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic: An International Comparative Approach
• Routledge. 2024-12.



Prof. Kim, Jeong Yeol

Delegation and strategic collusion under antitrust policies: An experiment
• China Economic Review. 90. 2025-04.



Prof. Kim, Seungjun

Paying taxes for favor: the deterring effects of industrial policies on innovation in South Korea
• Socio-Economic Review. 2025-08.



Prof. Lee, Changkeun

Paying It Forward: Vaccine Provision and Generalized Reciprocity in Foreign Policy Opinion
• Public Opinion Quarterly



Prof. Lee, Jongyeon

Determinants of the Durations of Reconstruction Project Stages : A Case of Southeast Seoul
• Korea Real Estate Review. 2024-12.



Prof. Lee, Junesoo

Sustainable Paradise Lost: Competing and Complementary Discussions on Sustainability
• Environment, Development and Sustainability. 27(8). 2025-08.



Prof. Lee, Taejun

Potential and Development Strategies of Korean Cultural Cities from the Perspectives of Local Diplomacy and Cultural Diplomacy
• The Journal of International Relations. 28(3). 2025-09.



Prof. Liu, Cheol

Are Competitive Public Service Exams Counter-Productive? A Survey Experiment From Two East Asian States
• Public Administration. 2025-07.



Prof. Park, Jaehyuk

Social signals predict contemporary art prices better than visual features, particularly in emerging markets
• Scientific Reports. 14(1). 2024-12.



Prof. Park, Sungkyu

A continuous real-world dataset comprising wearable-based heart rate variability alongside sleep diaries
• Scientific data. 12(1). 2025-08.



Prof. Shadikhodjaev, Sherzod

Environmental Impact Assessments and Trade Agreements: An Analysis of US, Canadian, and EU Practices
• Transnational Environmental Law. 14(2). 2025-07.



Prof. Yang, Dongkyu

Did war mobilization cause aggregate and regional growth?
• Explorations in Economic History. 97. 2025-07.



Prof. Lee, Seohyun

KDI Economic Outlook (The Financial Sector chapter)
• KDI Economic Outlook. 42(1–4). 2025-11.



Prof. Lim, Wonhyuk

New Global Dynamics: Managing Economic Change in a Transforming World (Chapter: Globalization and the Asian Century)
• Brookings Institution Press. 2024-11.



Prof. Park, Angela Y.S.

Explaining the Use of Influence Tactics to Achieve Intraorganizational Collective Action Around Local Sustainability
• Public Administration Review. 2025-03.



Prof. Park, Sungho

Private but Misunderstood? Evidence on Measuring Intimate Partner Violence via Self-Interviewing in Rural Liberia and Malawi
• World Bank Economic Review. 2024-11.



Prof. Pham, Thi Tuyet Trinh

Mentoring, educational preferences, and career choice: Evidence from two field experiments in Bhutan
• Journal of Policy Analysis and Management. 2025-08.



Prof. Sohn, Wook

Central Banks' Support for Climate Action: A Literature Review and Key Issues
• Journal of Economic Surveys. 2025-06.



Prof. Yoon, Chungwon

The impact of terrorism on education: Evidence from the death of Osama bin Laden in Pakistan
• Labour Economics. 2025-08.

Research Activities

2

As a leading institution in global knowledge sharing and policy innovation, KDI School continues to host diverse conferences, seminars, and training programs that connect research with real-world development practice. Bringing together experts and policymakers from around the world, these activities strengthen KDI School's role in advancing evidence-based policymaking and international cooperation. Let us take a look at some of the key events and initiatives that highlighted this year's journey.



Jan - Dec

Continuous Alumni Reconnection and Engagement



Apr - Dec

Developing Comprehensive Strategies to Promote Foreign Direct Investment in Local Regions



May 11 - 23

Specialized Course on Data Analysis & Policy Design for Labor Market



Jul - Oct

Lab Seminars (Migration Lab, GSPE Lab, BEE Lab, SD Lab, IEP Lab)



Aug 26

State Capacity and Institutions: Korea and Beyond



Sep 18 - 19

2025 KDIS Development Cooperation Roundtable



Oct 29 - 31

KDI School-World Bank 3rd Conference on Fiscal Policy: Enhancing the Effectiveness of Subsidies and Fiscal Rules



Sep 1 - 26

Capacity Building Program for Kurdish Experts of Iraq on Advanced Training in Economic Studies and Policy Practice



Sep 29 - Oct 2

Fiscal Policy Forum and International Conference



Nov 6 - 7

World Bank-KDI School 6th Development Impact Conference

KDIS-LKYSP Joint Conference



Korea–Singapore Intellectual Bridge:
Policy Schools Unite Amid Global Tensions



KDI School and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP), National University of Singapore, co-hosted a two-day conference on November 17–18 in Seoul on “Challenges and Policy Responses of Asian Countries Amid U.S.–China Geopolitical Conflicts and the Trump 2.0 Era.” The event gathered scholars, practitioners, and students to examine how Asia should navigate rising geopolitical rivalry and economic fragmentation.

Industrial Policy in a Time of Strategic Competition

Session 1 examined how industrial policy is being reshaped by geopolitical pressures. KDI Research Fellow Minho Kim presented micro-evidence showing how Korea’s national-champion model supported regional development but yielded uneven productivity gains. Later, LKYSPP Professor Danny Quah argued that industrial policy must now serve not only growth but also economic statecraft.



Professor Shiro Armstrong (ANU), the final speaker in the first session, stressed the need for transparent, accountable industrial policy. Panelists agreed that clearly defining national security and its objectives is central to designing effective industrial policies.

Supply Chain Resilience and Fragmentation

Session 2 turned to supply chain restructuring amid U.S.–China decoupling. The session started with KDI Research Fellow Sunghoon Chung. Chung argued that reshoring alone is insufficient without parallel investments in productivity and innovation. KDIS Professor ByungKoo Kim’s empirical work showed that global value chain dependence is asymmetrical across countries. LKYSPP Professor Yongwook Ryu described semiconductors as the core battleground of geopolitical strategy, where U.S. export controls meet China’s self-sufficiency drive and rare-earth weaponization. As global public goods shrink, he said, “club goods” among allies will rise. Professor Yuqing Xing from GRIPS proposed a comprehensive framework for calculating Sino-U.S. trade imbalance by integrating value-added goods, services, and factoryless manufacturers.

Shifting Alignments Across Asia

Day 2 opened with foreign policy alignment. KDIS Professor Seungjun Kim presented



evidence that U.S. counties with higher FDI-driven employment showed lower support for anti-globalization sentiment in 2016. He further argued that globalization in Asia has broadened local economic opportunities, strengthening support for openness. LKYSPP Professor Khong Yuen Foong introduced the Anatomy of Choice Alignment Index, showing Southeast Asia’s diverse and shifting alignment patterns shaped by geography, politics, and security needs.

Professor Kanti Bajpai of Ashoka University explained that Asian countries selectively embrace elements of the liberal order rather than adhering to a single model. When asked whether today’s shifting world order is temporary, the panel noted that while Trump-era dynamics may fluctuate, long-term great-power competition is likely to persist, pressuring middle nations to continue strategic balancing.

Reimagining Regional Cooperation

In the final session, Professor Chin-Hao Huang of LKYSPP underscored the need for flexible forms of regional coordination amid fluctuating U.S. credibility. ADB Director Jong Woo Kang reported rising trade agreements but narrowing scopes in Asia, declining green-transition FDI, and rapid investment growth in AI, e-commerce, and fintech. KDIS Professor Byoung-Joo Kim closed the session by highlighting the deepening Korea–



Singapore strategic partnership, challenging geographic assumptions about regional cooperation, and emphasizing shared interests in the digital economy, finance, and security.

Students Reflect with New Clarity and New Questions

The conference gave students new perspectives on how global tensions shape national strategies. Gbadebo Adeniyi Kuye (2025 MDP) was initially worried about great-power conflict hurting low-income countries. The conference, however, revealed how such countries—especially in Sub-Saharan Africa—might leverage rivalry to attract investments from competing powers. “I came with questions,” he said, “and left with new ones that will shape my research.” Jan Mohammad Faez (2025 MPM) said Professor Byoung-Joo Kim’s presentation changed his assumptions about East Asian partnerships, showing how Korea–Singapore cooperation could influence the region’s strategic future.

Across two days, the KDIS–LKYSPP conference emphasized that Asia must craft updated strategies in the face of renewed geopolitical rivalry. Countries must rethink industrial policy, strengthen supply chain resilience, remain flexible in foreign alignments, and build cooperative regional frameworks. The overarching message was clear: middle and smaller powers are not passive actors.

AI Courses: From Micro to Macro

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming economies, industries, and the way we work. At KDI School, two courses—*Microeconomics of AI* and *Digitalization and Policy Problems*—help students understand this transformation from both microeconomic and macroeconomic perspectives. In this feature, Professors Changkeun Lee and Seohyun Lee share how their courses address the intersection of economics, technology, and policy.



Professor Changkeun Lee
Course: *Microeconomics of AI*

Q Could you kindly introduce yourself and tell us what you do at KDIS?

My name is Changkeun Lee. I am an economist specializing in economic history, focusing on industry and labor markets. I started my career at the Korea Development Institute (KDI), which led me to teaching and researching about Artificial Intelligence. I teach *Korean Economic Development*, *Economic History*, *International Development in Practice*, and *Microeconomics of AI*.

Q What inspired the development of this course at KDIS? From your perspective, what attracted the school to offer it?

Many people talk about AI, but in most cases, it's at a surface level—there are both hypes and fears that AI will take people's jobs. But looking at the history of technological development, we see that when a new technology emerges, people are often afraid or overly expectant. We have a good framework called 'General Purpose Technology' (GPT), which describes technologies that transform the entire economy. So the fundamental question is whether AI can be classified as a GPT. I didn't see courses that tackled these fundamental issues, so I designed a course that would focus on the economic perspectives of AI.



Q What key concepts or policy issues do students explore when examining AI in your class?

We start with history and theory because by looking at history we can understand how fast technology affects everyday life, production, and the labor market. This gives us a guide to interpret AI's impact. We then focus on the basics of AI, especially the fact that modern AI is data-driven, meaning that it performs many calculations and makes predictions. This allows us to explore issues like competition and monopoly: who owns and collects data, and how that affects market dynamics.

Q In your view, why is it important for students of public policy and economics to study AI?

People in the public sector often feel a sense of urgency when a new technology emerges, which sometimes leads to policy failure. For example, initiatives to "strengthen AI skills among citizens" might not address deeper structural issues. With new technologies, early-career workers are sometimes hit hardest, leading to inequality. These are issues we should anticipate and prepare for in advance. Economists are also interested in how working cultures evolve over time because of AI.

Q What teaching methods or case studies do you find most effective in helping students understand AI?

The course is lecture-based because AI trends change so quickly that I need to teach emerging ideas in real time. Students begin with research questions to choose suitable methods. Since we can't yet see long-term impacts, we often use surveys, even though what organizations mean by "using AI" remains unclear. This uncertainty creates many research opportunities, and organizational culture still shapes how effective AI can be. Because surveys are costly, I help students design feasible projects and refine them through discussion.



Q What is your advice to KDIS students?

Many of our students come from the public sector and are mid-career professionals. I like to emphasize that your time at school is like a "career gap year," an opportunity to step back and think big. Consider how AI will change the rules of the game. Think about the future, position yourself strategically, and build the tools and skills that will give you leverage in your career.



**Professor Seohyun Lee****Course: Digitalization and Policy Problems****Q Could you kindly introduce yourself and tell us what you do at KDIS?**

I am Seohyun Lee, a macroeconomist exploring new ways to measure the unknowns—such as uncertainty, sentiment, and risk—and to understand their causal impact on the economy. I completed my Ph.D. at University College London (UCL) and have worked at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Central Bank of Korea. Since joining KDI School, I have taught one master's course, *Digitalization and Policy Problems*, and two Ph.D. courses—*Macroeconomics* and *Time Series Econometrics*. While the Ph.D. courses are mathematically intensive, the digitalization course provides an overview of how new

data and methodologies can enhance our understanding of macroeconomic and financial issues.

Q What inspired the development of this course at KDIS? From your perspective, what attracted the school to offer it?

During the COVID-19 period, while working at the IMF in Washington, D.C., I observed how macroeconomists became more open to non-traditional data and innovative methods. With many statistical agencies shut down, we turned to alternative data sources like Google Mobility to track economic activity. This experience made me realize that economics, a traditionally conservative field relying on century-old methods like linear regression, could benefit from new analytical approaches. After the pandemic, macroeconomics started embracing these innovations, and I saw potential to introduce them to students at KDI School, especially valuable for developing countries facing capacity gaps in data collection. My goal is for students to apply these methods in their future work.

**Q How does this course approach Artificial Intelligence (AI)?**

AI has become a part of our day-to-day experience, and it's much broader than ChatGPT. Machine learning is a part of AI. It has different methodologies, such as supervised and unsupervised learning, including text analysis techniques like Large Language Models (LLMs), which underpin ChatGPT. From a macroeconomic perspective, the course starts from forecasting using real-time data and then moves to a text-based approach. These are all included in the course. Overall, digitalization affects the entire economy and financial systems, so we also cover technologies such as cryptocurrencies and central bank digital currencies.

**Q What key concepts or policy issues do students explore when examining AI in your class?**

The course covers a wide range of topics reflecting the fast evolution of AI. Students interested in areas like crypto investment actively share new insights, making discussions dynamic. Key themes include how big tech companies provide loans to small and medium enterprises compared to banks; examining their data use, competitiveness, and related regulatory responses. We also compare traditional econometric models with machine learning methods, exploring concerns about the "black box" nature of AI and its implications for public policy. Case studies help students understand these issues in practice.

Q In your view, why is it important for students of public policy and economics to study AI?

We cannot live without AI nowadays. We didn't really expect it to advance this fast. I've seen several interviews from leading scholars in this field, and they didn't expect this rapid change either. At KDIS, many of our students are government officials or from the public sector, so it's even more important for them to understand what's going on. Without a deep understanding of the context and technology itself, we might not adopt it appropriately. Most students at KDIS have both the interest and the need to lead policy dialogues on technology and its societal impact.

Q What is your advice to KDIS students?

Try to think about the impact of AI on society, macroeconomics, finance, the labor market, and beyond. You should also consider how to incorporate this technology into your research.

New Faculty Profile My Insight Playlist

Through their favorite music, books (webtoons), and films, we would like to introduce the personalities and inspirations that shape them as new members of the KDIS faculty.

Dongkyu Yang



Favorite List

Music

Take Five

By The Dave Brubeck Quartet

Fix You

By Coldplay

Clair de Lune

By Claude Debussy

Take Five reminds me to balance rhythm and spontaneity.



Listen Now

Book

Guns, Germs, and Steel

By Jared Diamond

Thinking, Fast and Slow

By Daniel Kahneman

The Great Escape

By Paul Brickhill

Guns, Germs, and Steel pushed me to study how history shapes economies.



Read Now

Film

There Will Be Blood

By Paul Thomas Anderson

Moneyball

By Bennett Miller

Interstellar

By Christopher Nolan

Moneyball – how economic thinking can improve the completely unrelated field of baseball.



Watch Now

Music



What was your favorite music during your school days?

Jazz. I came to love it the moment I first visited a jazz bar in Chicago during the summer of 2022. I was drawn to how it blended structure and freedom. It kept me both focused and creative.

Have you ever gained ideas or inspiration through music?

Yes. Jazz teaches that creativity comes after discipline.

If you could choose one song as the soundtrack of your life, what would it be and why?

Fix You by Coldplay - hopeful, steady, and empathetic.

If you could meet one musician today, who would it be and why?

None. I'm happy with just listening to them.



Fix You

By Coldplay

Books



Is there a book that has influenced your research or teaching direction?

Guns, Germs, and Steel - it shaped how I see geography's role in economic history.

Is there a line or passage you can never forget?

"History followed different courses... because of differences among peoples' environments." (Guns, Germs, and Steel)

What is your most important criterion when choosing a book?

I like books that connect economics with history or psychology.

If you could meet one author, who would it be and why?

Angus Deaton, for his mix of rigor and compassion.



Guns, Germs, and Steel
By Jared Diamond

Films



Is there a film that has inspired your research or teaching?

There Will Be Blood - ambition, greed, and transformation in one story.

Which movie character do you think resembles you the most?

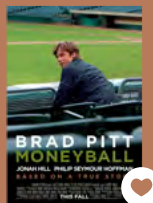
Forrest Gump - unassuming but finds meaning through sincerity and persistence.

Is there a film you'd like to watch with your students or discuss in class?

Moneyball - a great lesson in data-driven thinking.

Is there a movie you watch repeatedly or one that reflects your life philosophy?

The Secret Life of Walter Mitty - reminds me to keep exploring.



Moneyball
By Bennett Miller

Joonho Oh



Favorite List

Music

I Don't Care

By Ed Sheeran & Justin Bieber

Waiting For Love

By Avicii

Missing You Today

By Davichi

Waiting For Love - a song that always gives positive energy to me, with beautiful and lovely lyrics.



Listen Now

Book (Webtoon)

Castle

By Jungyeon

Gift

By Jungiriiri

If Thou Must Love Me

By Team Poongkyung

Gift - it vividly portrays the obstacles that ordinary high school baseball players must encounter as they grow and the ways that they deal with those barriers.



Read Now

Film

Begin Again

By John Carney

One Win

By Shin Yeon-shick

Mamma Mia!

By Ol Parker

One Win - I was touched by the protagonist's remark about recognizing others' strengths—it reminded me of my advisor's encouragement.



Watch Now

*"We will find a way, as we always have."
(Interstellar)*

It reflects the persistence and collective commitment that drive real regional development, which is why it has stayed with me for so long.

Music



What was your favorite music during your school days?

The band 'Buzz' (버즈) was one of the most influential K-pop bands during my teenage years. I still remember singing songs like 'Thorn' (가시), 'Journey to Myself' (나에게로 떠나는 여행), and 'My love' at karaoke.

Have you ever gained ideas or inspiration through music?

I have been influenced by some K-pop artists, such as Nell and AKMU. Their relentless experimentation with new approaches and instruments has inspired me to keep exploring new things.

If you could choose one song as the soundtrack of your life, what would it be and why?

I would like to choose 'Waiting For Love' by Avicii. The line, "Every night has its day, so magical," is something I have often held onto during challenging moments in my life.



Waiting For Love
By Avicii

Books (Webtoons)



Is there a toon that has influenced your research or teaching direction?

I would like to say the webtoon 'Gift (기프트)' is the one that most significantly shaped my doctoral dissertation.

Is there a line or passage you can never forget?

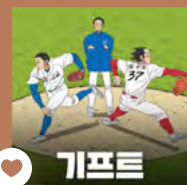
The pitcher once muttered to himself, "Would the game be easier if I could throw faster balls?" It resonated with me for a long time.

What is your most important criterion when choosing a toon?

There is a saying that you can tell the quality of a song within 10 seconds. I believe the same applies to choosing webtoons as well.

If you could meet one author, who would it be and why?

Kian84, absolutely. He is one of the most innovative webtoon authors. One of his works, Fashion King, is one of the most innovative webtoons ever.



Gift
By Jungiriiri

Films



Is there a film that has inspired your research or teaching?

I'd choose 'Begin Again', which inspires me to stay creative and true to what I love throughout my Ph.D. and even on my way to KDI School.



Mamma Mia!
By Ol Parker

Which movie character do you think resembles you the most?

People often joked that I'd survive on Mars like 'The Martian' because I'm so talkative.




Is there a film you'd like to watch with your students or discuss in class?

If there is a chance, I would like to watch the film 'Mamma Mia!' together with students who are working on their dissertations.

Is there a movie you watch repeatedly or one that reflects your life philosophy?

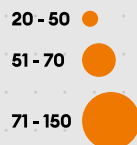
I often return to 'Mamma Mia!'—what started as enjoying ABBA grew deeper after my mentor said a dissertation should be more like a Meryl Streep film than a Tom Cruise one. Her sincerity taught me to express emotion with authenticity, which continues to inspire my work and life.

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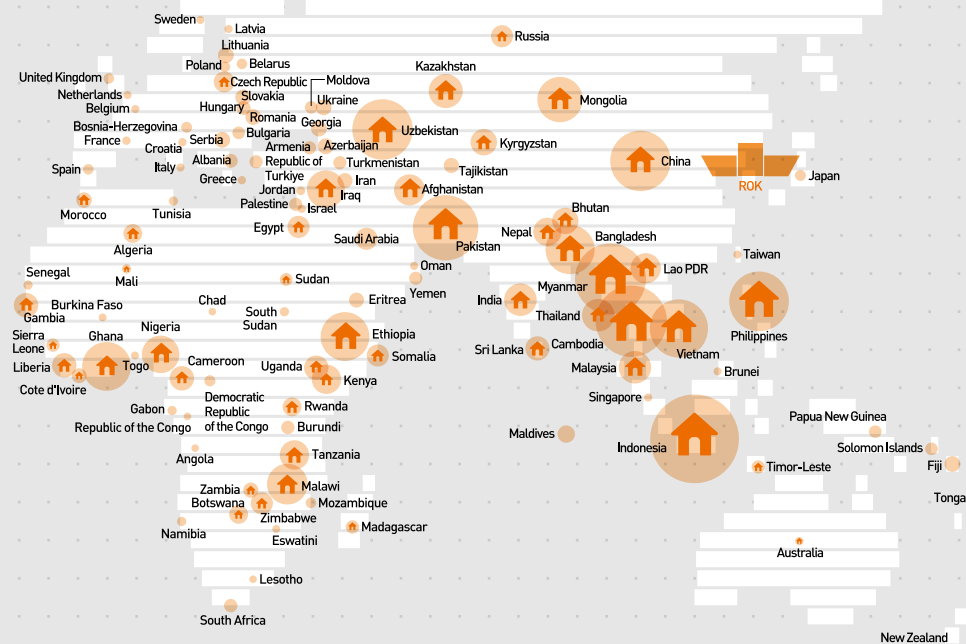
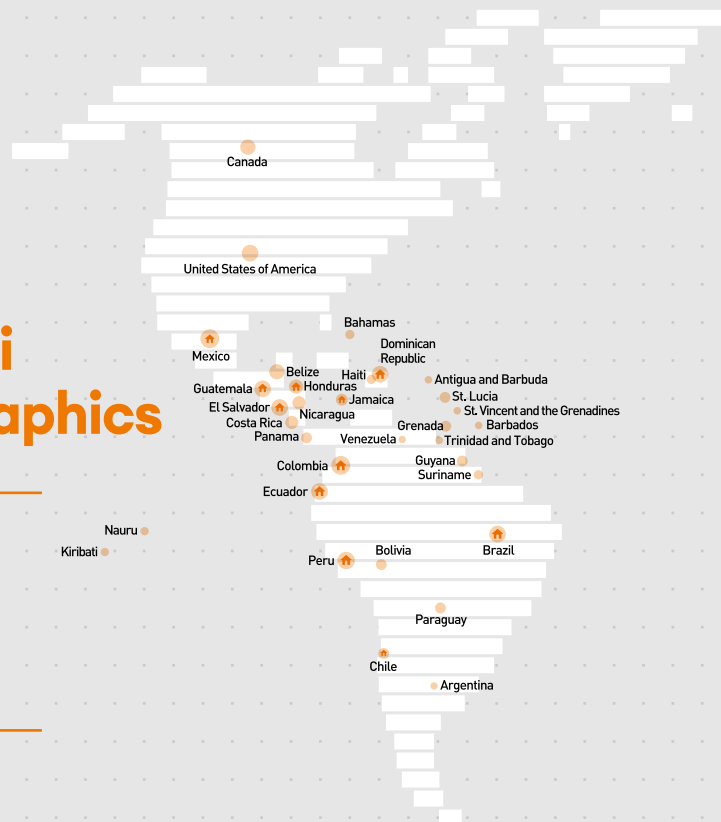
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Alumni Infographics

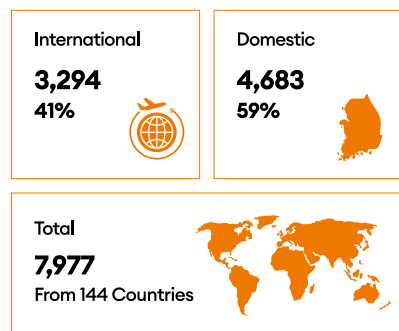
Number of Alumni



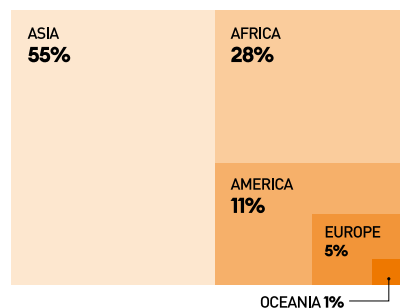
Alumni Association



Alumni Body



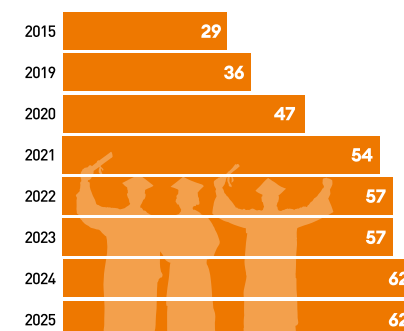
International Alumni by Continent (%)



Countries with Most Alumni

AFRICA	Ethiopia 95	Ghana 92	Malawi 72
AMERICA	Colombia 32	Mexico 29	Peru 28
ASIA	Indonesia 202	Cambodia 138	Myanmar 124
EUROPE	Russia 25	Czech Republic 21	Georgia 12
OCEANIA	Fiji 12	Papua New Guinea 5	Solomon Islands 4
	Australia 3	New Zealand 3	

Number of Alumni Associations



From KDIS to the World

Inspiring Alumni Shaping Global Development

Their journeys began at KDIS,
but their work is transforming
lives across continents.

KDI School's mission has always been clear: to equip global leaders with the skills, mindset, and values to drive meaningful change around the world. Yet this vision becomes real through the lived experiences of alumni who apply their academic foundation, professional training, and global perspective to complex and rapidly evolving international environments.

Finding Purpose Through Lived Experience: From Rural Cambodia to the United Nations

For Kongchheng Poch, the desire to work in international development began long before he entered a classroom. Growing up in rural Cambodia following the devastation of the Khmer Rouge regime, he witnessed poverty not as an abstract concept but as a daily reality shaping his family's and community's reality.



Kongchheng Poch
2010 MPP/ED, Cambodia

Economist,
UN Resident Coordinator's
Office, Vietnam

analysis, quantitative methods, and evidence-based decision-making.

Eager to learn, he completed 16 courses, two beyond the program requirement, and built a strong foundation in development economics that later prepared him for his role as an Economist at UNDP Cambodia in 2014. Since then, his career with the UN has taken him to Cambodia,

A turning point came during his undergraduate years at the National University of Management in Phnom Penh, when an economic research report on poverty changed the course of his life. "I knew firsthand what poverty felt like," he recalled. "That report opened my eyes to how much research and policy could do to make people's lives better."

Indonesia, and now Vietnam, where he advises UN agencies and national governments on policy priorities, macroeconomic trends, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Poch attributes much of his effectiveness to the lessons learned at KDIS:

"The courses in *Economic Growth and Institutions*, *Quantitative Analysis of Development Policy* and *Quantitative Methods* have given me the tools to generate evidence for decisions that impact millions." He also highlighted that studying in a multicultural environment also shaped him into a global citizen.

This realization sparked a determination to pursue a career dedicated to improving socio-economic conditions in his country, and eventually beyond. A scholarship to KDI School in 2010 provided him with the opportunity to deepen his understanding of economic development through rigorous training in policy

Today, his work includes leading major initiatives such as macroeconomic modeling for Vietnam's long-term development strategy and contributing to the country's 2045 vision. His trajectory reflects a powerful lesson for aspiring development professionals: lived experience, coupled with strong analytical skills and an open mind, can shape a meaningful career in global development.



Transforming Evidence into Impact: Policy Innovation from Uzbekistan to the United Nations

For Nargiza Khamidova, the path toward international organizations emerged from a blend of public- and private-sector experience, where she observed firsthand how policy decisions affect real people and businesses. However, it was her time at KDI School, and her exposure to applied research, that crystallized her vision for a career in development.



Nargiza Khamidova
2019 MPP, Uzbekistan

Programme Analyst on
Inclusive Growth,
UNDP

While completing her MPP, Nargiza worked with the Korea Institute of Public Administration (KIPA), discovering how rigorous research can directly inform policy reform. Her academic journey gained international momentum when she was selected as an intern at the UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG). The experience allowed her to apply analytical tools gained at KDIS to real-world governance challenges and understand how international cooperation drives policy innovation.

Since graduating, she has worked at UNPOG, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and now UNDP, where she plays a central role in designing inclusive growth strategies and strengthening social protection systems.

She emphasized that KDI School equipped her with a powerful combination of analytical, technical, and communication skills. She learned to evaluate interventions through cost-benefit analysis, and gained an understanding of project design and risk management in Professor Kang

Soo Kim's appraisal seminar. She also developed clear and structured professional writing under Professor Christopher Plumb.

Nargiza contributed significantly to Uzbekistan's first National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), developed by UNDP with government and academic partners. The MPI introduced a more comprehensive approach

to measuring poverty, and she supported the project by coordinating consultations, refining indicators, and aligning the work with national priorities. Now a key policy tool for social protection and budgeting, the MPI also informs the simulation models she leads to assess how policy interventions impact poverty.

Her message for future KDIS students is clear: "Stay curious, stay grounded, and use every opportunity to connect theory with practice. KDI School gave me the tools to think critically, the confidence to work globally, and the network to stay connected wherever I go."



Advancing Gender-Responsive Climate Solutions in Asia

Jinha Kim discovered her passion for international development during an internship at the United Nations in New York. Observing multilateral coordination firsthand, she saw how global policy frameworks could shape tangible improvements in people's lives. Motivated by this experience, she pursued studies at KDI School to deepen her understanding of development policy and global governance.

Her time at KDIS exposed her to negotiation, evidence-based policymaking, and the complexities of governance across different regions. But equally important was the multicultural learning environment, which taught her how to work across cultures, communicate with empathy, and understand diverse national contexts, skills she now uses every day at the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Throughout her career, Jinha has worked in Vietnam, Lao PDR, Uzbekistan, and now the Philippines. Her projects often operate at the



Jinha Kim
2011 MPP, Republic of Korea

Gender Specialist
(Climate Change),
Asian Development Bank

intersection of gender equality, climate resilience, and digital inclusion, emphasizing the need for solutions that reflect the realities of vulnerable populations.

One of her most meaningful initiatives focuses on helping women adapt to extreme heat in Cambodia, where female agricultural workers are disproportionately affected. The

project introduced a solar-powered misting and irrigation system that not only protects crops from heat damage but also helps women work in safer, cooler conditions. Combined with leadership training and financial literacy programs, the initiative strengthens women's resilience, economic stability, and long-term wellbeing.

Her advice to students aspiring to work internationally is to embrace mobility, empathy, and adaptability. "Step outside your comfort zone," she says.

"Engaging with diverse communities will teach you more than textbooks ever can."

Although their paths vary widely, all three alumni emphasize the same core lessons: KDI School builds a strong global foundation through rigorous training, a diverse student body enhances cultural awareness for international work, and practical experiences turn theory into real impact; and above all, success in global development requires purpose, perseverance, and the ability to seize opportunities.

For current and future KDI School students dreaming of careers in international organizations, their message is clear: Your journey begins here, but your impact can reach the world.

That Day's Scene

Every photo tells a story, and our alumni have plenty to share. From classroom moments to campus hangouts, these snapshots capture the everyday memories that made life at KDI School so special. Let's look back and relive a few of those unforgettable days.

One of my favorite memories is from 30th November 2022, when my friends and I from the KDIS Music Club and KDIS Women Leaders Forum organized a Café Busking event to support the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.



Anete Beinartoviča
Latvia | 2022 MDP

An afternoon stroll around the KDI School campus.



Ruzanna Mohd Zaki
Malaysia | 2018 MPM

This photo was taken at the KDI School main library on the day of our commencement ceremony in December 2021. We dedicated it to a dear batchmate who returned home early, holding his course completion certificate to show that he remained part of our journey and was never forgotten.



Syed Hasan Raza
Pakistan | 2021 MDP



Wesam Hamdi Elmarzouki
Egypt | 2018 MPP

For me, the life at KDI School campus was perpetually bustling and energetic. Even though my days were absolutely packed with activities and events, they passed by in a flash. How I long for those days to come back.

This photo was taken on our MPP course completion day.



Theingi Nyein
Myanmar | 2006 MPP



Nalanda Bala Murugan
India | 2023 MIPD

This photo was taken after one of our sessions. It was my turn to present that week, and I'd asked everyone to come in black and white for a themed presentation. I was so happy to see everyone join in, and we girls just had to capture the moment!

This photo capture one of the most unforgettable moments of my time at KDIS—the pure joy of our African team as we won First Prize at the 2019 Song and Dance Festival. Our team was a beautiful blend of energy and diversity, representing the vibrant spirit of Africa.



Mostafa Hamdy Elsaid Ahmed
Egypt | 2018 MDP



Mariama Touray
Gambia | 2024 MPP

This day marks one of the most remarkable moments of my life—a day that reminded me once again that there is nothing I cannot achieve as long as I remain hopeful. After so much hard work and perseverance in pursuing my master's degree, I have finally made my family and my country proud.

Korean Economic Development Course, Class of Fall 2018, with Professor Joon-Kyung Kim.



Sarai Covarrubias Olguin
Mexico | 2018 MPP



Lesbi Elizabeth Cardona Orantes
Guatemala | 2012 MDP

In 2012, our group of Latinos won second place at the KDIS Food Festival... and we wore the traditional outfits from our countries. It was a wonderful opportunity to share and enjoy different foods.



Bright Chalwe
Zambia | 2021 MPP

A birthday surprise from my classmates during an offline class session. It was during COVID-19, and meeting in person felt like a privilege.



Alejandra Carolina Vasquez Sosa
El Salvador | 2018 MDP

It was a moment after class, shared over coffee at one of the campus cafés. Those afternoons were more than breaks; they were spaces where ideas and friendships took shape, leaving memories that have lingered through the years.

That day at KDI School was more than a series of snapshots—it was a moment where cultural exchange, warm support, and genuine friendship came together.



Redar Amjed Abdulsalam
Iraq | 2013 MDP

This photo was taken during one of our unforgettable matches with the KDI FC United team. Leading this amazing group and being a key player and top goal scorer made my time at KDI School truly special.



Sugianto Irdawansyah
Indonesia | 2022 MPP

Summer 2023's final frame: the professor sat smiling, students gathered on screens and in seats, and I—somewhere in the middle—felt a quiet pride as a class assistant, watching it all come full circle. This photo is a bookmark for a chapter I'll never forget.

Celebrating 5 Years of the KDIS Alumni Working Partner Program

This year marks the fifth anniversary of the KDIS Alumni Working Partner Program, one of the KDI School's flagship initiatives designed to empower global collaboration among its alumni community. Since its launch, the program has grown into a dynamic platform where KDIS graduates join forces to design and implement projects that advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and address urgent global challenges.

Over the past five years, the program has not only connected alumni across continents but also nurtured a network of practitioners who translate shared knowledge into meaningful action. With participation expanding each year, the initiative continues to demonstrate how the KDI School community can drive change far beyond the classroom.

As we celebrate this milestone year, we highlight key achievements—including participation trends, project outcomes, and this year's award-winning teams—and share reflections from the alumni who have shaped the program's journey. Their voices and experiences reflect the collective spirit that has fueled five years of impact and will continue to guide the program into the future.



◀ Learn more about the KDIS Alumni Working Partner Program here.



Stage 1 February

Project Promotion and Needs Assessment

- Promote cooperative initiatives led by domestic and international alumni working across relevant organizations.
- Conduct a needs assessment for participation and receive proposals for cooperation.

Stage 2 February - March

Team Matching and Program Implementation

- Offer comprehensive guidance on the timeline and procedures for alumni matched for collaboration.

Stage 3 March - August

Mid-term / Final Report Submission and Evaluation

- Collect mid-term and final reports.
- Conduct evaluations and announce results.
- Invite selected teams to the Capacity-Building Workshop.

Stage 4 October

Capacity-Building Workshop

- Hold a Capacity-Building Workshop with participation from domestic and international alumni.
- Share best practices and strengthen international cooperation through the involvement of alumni working in related organizations.

Status of the Alumni Working Partner Program Over the Past 5 Years

Year	Applications	Selected Teams	Final Submissions	Final Awardees
2025	69	68	51 teams (119 participants)	3 teams (13 participants)
2024	66	57	43 teams (90 participants)	4 teams (14 participants)
2023	60	47	37 teams (104 participants)	3 teams (8 participants)
2022	56	36	17 teams (50 participants)	4 teams (13 participants)
2021	70	26	12 teams (33 participants)	5 teams (14 participants)



★ 1st place ★
Team #59

👑

I4S- Ideas for Sustainability 2025
“Decoding ODA: Unlocking Global Cooperation for Impact”

Ivonne Andrea Ramos Héndez
2020 MPM, Colombia

Janaina Alejandra Villacis Alomoto
2021 MDP, Ecuador

Ushena Buinwi
2022 MPP, Cameroon

Zulfiqar Ali
2020 MPP, Pakistan

Mohammad Solgi
2021 MPP, Iran

Sheyda Karimova
2020 MPP, Azerbaijan

2025 Top 3 Awardees

★

★ 3rd place ★
Team #20

Migration Trends, Drivers, and Anti-Immigrant Sentiments from and within Latin America and the Caribbean: Comparative Analysis

Alexandra Karina Eras Lisintuñá
2022 MDP, Ecuador

Andres Betancur Rodriguez
2023 MPP, Colombia

María Belén Guerrero Pesantez
2023 MDP, Ecuador

Milagros Del Pilar Trujillano Quispe
2022 MDP, Peru

Ranci Yanel Danis Veras
2022 MDP, Dominican Republic

★ 2nd place ★
Team #48

Exploring Happiness Economics in Developing Countries

Glenny Jr. Alawag
2016 MPP, Philippines

Jisu Kim
2016 MDP, ROK



Insights from Team #20



“Migration isn’t just a global issue—it’s something unfolding within our own countries. We wanted to start this discussion from a place of empathy.”

“Our research reminded us that public policies often fail when they overlook the cultural dimension needed to truly integrate migrants.”

Alexandra Eras (2022 MDP)

“We found three key trends: dangerous migration routes are increasing, post-COVID economic crises have intensified migration, and public policies remain uncoordinated across the region.”

“This project helped us see how differently our countries treat both incoming and outgoing migrants—and how urgently we need regional cooperation.”

María Belén Guerrero (2023 MDP)



“Research becomes more powerful when you hear directly from someone living that reality. This collaboration connected us as a region in a meaningful way.”

“Programs like this open doors for future partnerships and real impact beyond academia.”

Milagros Trujillano (2022 MDP)



KDIS GLOBAL LEADER



International Alumni

**KHANSIRI, Chalee**

2001 MPP
Thailand

Ministry of Industry
Executive Director

**NGUYEN, Thi Thu Ha**

2007 MPP
Vietnam

Vietnam Institute of Culture,
Arts, Sports and Tourism
Director of the Centre for
Cultural Industries and
Contemporary Art Development

**JAMMEH, Fabba**

2013 MDP
Gambia

Ministry of Trade, Industry,
Regional Integration and
Employment
Director

**ASANTE, Jacob**

2018 MPM
Ghana

Office of the President, Ghana
Director

**BUKONE, Richard
Sajjabi**

2008 MPP
Uganda

Ministry of Local Government
Chief Administrative
Officer (CAO)

**URUNOV, Azizbek
Allaberganovich**

2010 MPP
Uzbekistan

The Administration of the
President of Uzbekistan
Representative of President
of Uzbekistan on WTO,
Chief Negotiator

**KIADII, Boima Charles**

2018 MPP
Liberia

Liberia Land Authority
Director

**USHER, Francis
Michael**

2019 MPM
Belize

Ministry of National Defence
and Border Security
Chief Executive Officer

**PEOUV, Polinel**

2011 MPP
Cambodia

State Secretariat of Civil
Aviation
Secretary of State

**NASIR, Farsat Mamil**

2011 MPP
Iraq

KRG Department of Foreign
Relations
Head of U.S. & Canada Desk

**OMER, Ashti Abdulla**

2020 MPM
Iraq

Ministry of Higher
Education and Scientific
Research / KRG
Director

**MENDEZ, Lanny Isser**

2021 MPP
Belize

Ministry of Finance
Director



Korean Alumni



LEE, Jae-Sung

1999 MBA

LG Electronics Inc.
President



CHANG, Sang Sik

2002 MBA

Korea International
Trade Association (KITA)
President of Institute for
International Trade



JUNG, Yong Sik

2005 MPP

Korea Transportation
Safety Authority (TS)
President



KIM, Yong Soo

2005 MPP

Office for Government
Policy Coordination
Second Vice Minister



LEE, Yujin

2004 MPP

Office of the President
Secretary for Climate,
Environment, and Energy



CHO, Sung-Joo

2004 MPP

Office of the President
Senior Presidential Secretary
for Personnel Affairs



EOM, Ju-Sung

2008 MFDI

Kiwoom Securities Co., Ltd.
CEO



KIM, Neung-Sik

2011 MPP

Gyeonggi Free Economic
Zone Authority (GGFEZ)
Commissioner



KANG, Gi-Lyong

2004 MPP

Ministry of Strategy and
Finance
Vice Minister



KIM, Jeong Kag

2005 MPP

Korea Securities Finance
Corporation (KSFC)
President & CEO



KIM, Yong-jin

2013 MPP

Gyeonggi Housing & Urban
Development Corporation (GH)
CEO



JU, Daeyoung

2017 MPP

Korea National Park
Service (KNPS)
CEO

KDIS Top Feeds

Search



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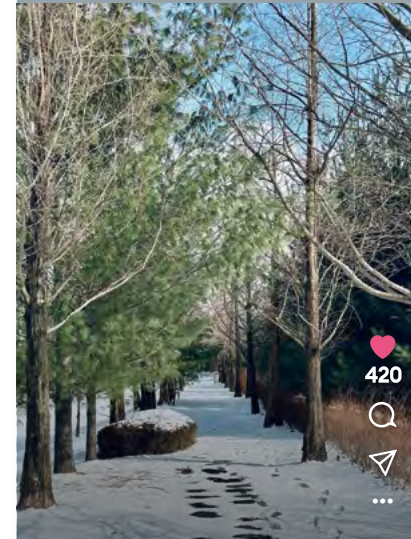


Every scroll told a story of inspiration, friendship, and achievement. Across social media, KDI School's community came together to celebrate what makes our campus truly special. Here's our curated look at the posts that captured it all!



1

February 13



420



As KDI School kicks off the Spring Semester, the campus is still wrapped in the beauty of winter. Snow blankets every corner, turning familiar paths into something straight out of a postcard. From the chilly breeze to the snow-covered paths and the quiet beauty all around, winter at KDIS always feels special.

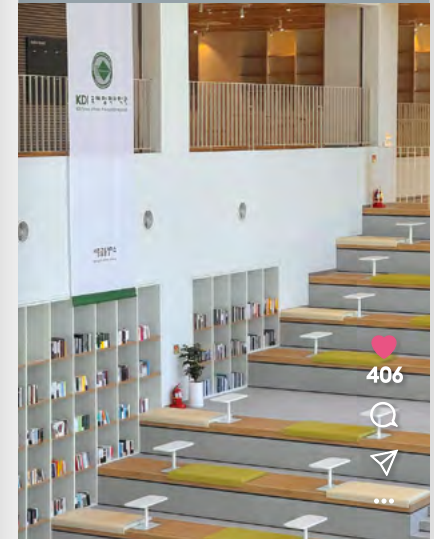
Who else is enjoying the last bit of winter before spring fully arrives?

#kdis #kdischool #snow #winter

Comment

2

February 28



406



Sejong Common Campus – a new academic space for future policymakers. Designed for collaboration, deep thinking, and relaxation, this campus features spacious study rooms, a grand library, seminar halls, and a cozy student lounge - a perfect blend of aesthetics and functionality for the leaders of tomorrow! Have you been able to visit the Sejong Common Campus yet? If not, this is your sign!

#kdis #kdischool
#SejongCommonCampus
#FutureLeaders #CommonCampus
#세종공동캠퍼스 #캠퍼스라이프

Comment

3

< February 3 >



Welcome aboard, Class of 2025!
Excited for the journey ahead!

#kdis #kdischool #NewBeginnings
#2025

Comment

4

< April 17 >



This season was way too beautiful not to capture, right?
Big shoutout to our Spring Photo Contest winners: SHIBLI, Muhammad Jafor Sadek, Pheng Leanghorng, Kim Kunvuthyka, and Kim Ji Tae!
Thanks to everyone who joined in. Keep sharing and enjoy the beauty all around!

#kdis #kdischool #spring
#photocontest #winners

Comment

5

< March 19 >



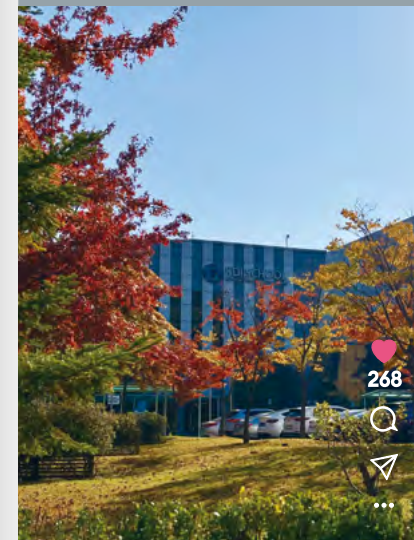
KDI School has achieved a remarkable milestone, ranking 2nd worldwide in citations per paper in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2025 for Social Policy & Administration!
In the overall rankings, KDI School placed within the 51+ range globally and secured a Top 5 position in Korea.
A huge thank you to our incredible faculty and students for making this possible!

#kdis #kdischool #QSRanking
#Top5inKorea #GlobalImpact
#SocialPolicy #PublicAdministration
#QS2025

Comment

6

< November 14 >



A Glimpse of Fall Season in KDIS & Sejong


Fall has always been a beautiful season, beautiful trees, weather and sunset.
The sky turns golden, leaves dance in the breeze with beautiful colours—fall in KDIS and Sejong always finds a way to make hearts fall again.

#kdis #kdischool #fall #sejong
#beauty #foliage

Comment

7

September 22



267

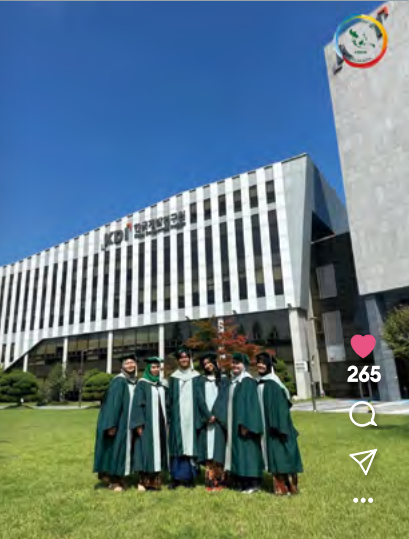
The fall semester has finally started, and the school is buzzing again! Between classes and busy schedules, students can find plenty of cozy corners to study, read, or just catch up with friends. From curling up on bean bags by the big windows, relaxing on the comfy chairs and bunk beds at the Female Student Lounge, to grabbing a quiet nook at the library—there's always a perfect spot to pause and recharge. Which spot is your favorite?

#kdis #kdischool #CampusLife #StudySpots #CozyCorners

Comment

8

August 14



265


Big congrats and Hats off to our ASEAN friends on your graduation. So proud to see your hard work and passion pay off. Here's to new beginnings, big dreams and making ASEAN even brighter together!

#ASEANStudentForum #kdischool

Comment

9

November 19



255

Winter is just around the corner, but the campus is still beautifully wrapped in warm autumn colors. What's your favorite fall memory on campus?

#kdis #kdischool #fallvibes #campuslife #autumn

Comment

10

July 7



254

Vivaldi's Four Seasons in Sejong
Last Saturday, KDI School Music Club was honored to be invited to the "Sejong's Four Seasons" performance by the Sejong Chamber Orchestra, held at Sejong Arts Center. With stunning arrangements of Tchaikovsky's Waltz of the Flowers and Vivaldi's The Four Seasons, it was an evening of timeless classics and breathtaking musical storytelling. Thank you for having us! We're still humming along.

#KDIMusicClub #Vivaldi #SejongChamberOrchestra

Comment









Autographs

Fill this page with autographs from
your colleagues and classmates.

THE  GLOBE