Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation

# Project Final Report

# APEC Women in STEM Symposium 2025

# Empowering Women in AI for a Sustainable Future

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**APEC Policy Partnership on Science, Technology and Innovation**

**December 2025**

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**December 2025**

APEC Project: PPSTI 111 2025A

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# 1. Executive Summary

The APEC Women in STEM Symposium took place on 13 August 2025 in Incheon, Korea, jointly hosted by the Ministry of Science and ICT of the Republic of Korea and the Korea Foundation for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (WISET). The event, organized under the theme "Empowering Women in AI for a Sustainable Future," convened policymakers, academics, industry leaders, and emerging talent from APEC member economies. The symposium was closely aligned with Korea's APEC 2025 theme, '*Building a Sustainable Tomorrow*.'

The Symposium aimed to empower women in STEM and AI by fostering knowledge exchange and collaboration, while addressing persistent gender disparities in the digital era. It sought to reduce harmful gender bias in AI systems through the active involvement of women in design and development processes, and to build strong cross-economy networks of female professionals and stakeholders. Most importantly, it served as a platform for sharing policies and practices to empower women in AI and for promoting mutual learning among member economies, thereby strengthening their collective capacity. By focusing on women's role in the AI-driven transformation, the event underscored the importance of inclusive and sustainable technological progress that fully integrates diverse perspectives across the APEC region.

The program featured a Keynote Session on responsible leadership in the AI era, the necessity of inclusive innovation, and strategies for building sustainable ecosystems. Presentations and a panel discussion followed, bringing together diverse perspectives from across the APEC region on policy frameworks to foster women in STEM, risks of bias in AI systems, education programs to expand participation, digital platforms for public service innovation, and corporate approaches to responsible AI.

The Symposium concluded with a shared vision that empowering women in STEM is not only a matter of equity but a strategic imperative for sustainable growth and resilience. Experts and participants emphasized the need for cross-border cooperation, knowledge sharing, and actionable strategies to strengthen women's participation in STEM and AI. The outcomes are expected to guide future regional initiatives and contribute to building lasting networks of collaboration that extend beyond APEC to the global science, technology, and innovation community.

# 2. Background

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a defining feature of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, driving innovation, productivity, and growth across the APEC region. Its adoption is rapidly expanding across sectors such as healthcare, finance, manufacturing, and education, reshaping labor markets and future skills demand. Despite this transformative potential, women remain significantly underrepresented. Globally, women account for about 30 percent of the AI workforce, and in some APEC economies their participation falls below 20 percent. This not only restricts women's opportunities but also reduces the variety of perspectives essential for responsible AI development.

This disparity poses risks for APEC economies. Women with limited digital literacy and AI-related skills are more vulnerable to job displacement from automation, while their absence in AI design has contributed to systemic biases such as discriminatory hiring algorithms and misidentification in facial recognition. Without corrective action, these disparities risk deepening existing inequalities and undermining inclusive growth.

Expanding women's participation in AI and strengthening their leadership are therefore critical for both equity and regional resilience. Greater representation can mitigate bias, broaden the AI talent pool, and foster inclusive innovation. According to the Global Gender Gap Report (2024), gender gaps remain wide in technical skills vital for AI: AI and big data (30%), programming (31%), and cybersecurity (31%). Closing these divides is essential to ensuring that the benefits of digital transformation are shared equitably across all segments of society.

APEC has consistently recognized these priorities. The La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth (2019–2030), the APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions, and the Putrajaya Vision 2040 all highlight women's participation and leadership as central to achieving sustainable and inclusive growth. Expanding women's role in AI directly supports these commitments by ensuring that diverse talent shapes the region's digital future.

Against this backdrop, the APEC Women in STEM Symposium 2025 was convened to highlight opportunities and challenges, share strategies, and foster cross-economy collaboration. The Symposium's central aim was to expand women's participation in AI and strengthen their leadership, thereby advancing gender-responsive innovation and contributing to a more inclusive and sustainable APEC community.

# 3. Introduction

The APEC Women in STEM Symposium 2025 was convened to address the urgent challenges and opportunities surrounding women's participation in AI and STEM fields. The Symposium aimed to empower women through knowledge-sharing and collaboration, while advancing inclusive policies and practices that reduce bias in AI and foster diverse leadership in innovation.

Aligned with APEC's La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth (2019–2030), the APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions, and the Putrajaya Vision 2040, this initiative directly supports regional commitments to strengthen women's economic participation and leadership in the digital era. It also builds upon the APEC agenda on digital innovation and inclusive growth, as endorsed at recent APEC Ministerial and Leaders' Meetings.

Through keynote sessions, policy dialogues, and panel discussions, the Symposium provided a platform for policymakers, researchers, industry representatives, and emerging leaders to explore solutions for:

- Examine barriers contributing to gender gaps in AI and advanced technology fields;
- Explore policy and institutional measures to promote equitable participation;
- Share best practices and experiences from across APEC economies; and
- Build cross-border networks to support women's leadership and sustained participation.

By facilitating international dialogue and collaboration, the Symposium reinforced the principle that empowering women in AI is both a matter of equity and a strategic imperative for inclusive and sustainable growth. The outcomes are expected to contribute to stronger regional cooperation, practical policy recommendations, and capacity building for women across APEC economies.

# 4. Symposium Summary

The APEC Women in STEM Symposium 2025 was a one-day event that brought together policymakers, experts, industry representatives, and emerging leaders from across the region to explore strategies for advancing women's participation and leadership in AI and advanced technology fields. The program was structured around four main sessions, each addressing different dimensions of women's empowerment and leadership in AI.

## Session Ⅰ. Policy Dialogue - Strengthening Women's AI Competencies across APEC

From this session, 31 senior representatives from APEC economies discussed policies and institutional practices to expand women's participation in STEM and AI. The dialogue reaffirmed political commitment to strengthen women's leadership and emphasized cross-economy collaboration.

- Speakers highlighted women's leadership in AI design and governance as essential to reducing bias and building trust.
- Representatives underscored the need to address career breaks through flexible work arrangements and reskilling opportunities.
- Participants called for encouraging girls' early engagement in STEM, supported by mentoring and joint initiatives across APEC.
- Speakers emphasized the importance of visibility and role models to inspire the next generation.

## Session Ⅱ. Plenary Session - AI Innovation and Women's Leadership

This plenary session examined the opportunities and challenges of AI through the lens of inclusive leadership, ethical use, and regional collaboration. Their talks provided both visionary insights and concrete strategies for ensuring that women play a central role in shaping the AI era.

**Prof. Cha (KAIST and the Max Planck Institute)** shared perspectives on "*AI for Good: A Journey of Leadership, Innovation, and Social Responsibility.*" She highlighted AI's potential to address pressing global challenges such as health crises, food security, and poverty. Drawing on real-world applications — including the use of AI for disease outbreak detection with the World Health Organization, real-time food price monitoring with UN Global Pulse, and poverty mapping with open-source data — she emphasized

that AI can produce tangible benefits when guided responsibly. Prof. Cha warned, however, that the critical question is not about the availability of data, but whether AI is applied ethically and inclusively.

- **AI as a tool for addressing global challenges**: Showcased applications of AI in epidemic detection, food price monitoring, and poverty mapping (WHO's epidemic detection, UN Global Pulse's food price monitoring, poverty mapping), demonstrating how technology can tangibly advance sustainability and equity.
- **Ethical use of AI**: Framed AI as a double-edged sword—empowering but also prone to misuse—underscoring the need for digital literacy, cybersecurity, and ethical frameworks to guide AI toward the public good.
- **Message to emerging leaders**: Urged young researchers to find their purpose ("Find your WHY"), break self-imposed limits ("Smash Mental Walls"), and set ambitious goals ("Aim 2x, 5x, 10x higher") to shape AI responsibly for society.

**Prof. Saxena (Columbia University & World Leaders in Data and AI, WLDA)** delivered a talk titled *"AI Innovation and Women's Leadership: Designing a Future that Works for Everyone."* She described AI as a "new superpower" capable of determining competitiveness at both individual and domestic levels. While AI can drive innovation and educational reform, she cautioned that its dual nature also allows for surveillance and manipulation, underscoring the importance of digital literacy and cybersecurity. Addressing young researchers in particular, Prof. Saxena encouraged them to pursue purpose-driven research, overcome internalized barriers, and set ambitious goals.

- **AI as a new superpower**: Described AI as the defining superpower of our time, shaping individual competitiveness and innovation. Urged educational systems to adopt AI as a tool for deeper learning, shifting students from rote answers toward conceptual understanding and problem-solving.
- **Women and diverse leadership**: Emphasized that AI is not neutral; male-dominated development risks reinforcing bias. Stressed that women's and inclusive leadership is essential for building accurate, fair, and inclusive AI systems.
- **Guiding principles for the next generation**: Encouraged young people to seize AI's opportunities by questioning its logic and applying it boldly to real-world problems. Reminded them that while AI is reshaping society, it is the next generation who will define its true purpose.

**Dr. Habib (Academy of Sciences Malaysia & APEC PPSTI)** concluded the keynote session with *"Empowering Women in AI: Strategies for Regional Collaboration in the Post-Normal Era."* She highlighted the persistent gender gap in AI, noting that women represent only a small fraction of researchers and leaders. Structural barriers such as caregiving burdens, lack of mentorship, and career interruptions continue to hinder women's progress. Dr. Habib emphasized the need to shift societal mindsets,

recognizing women not merely as consumers of technology but as creators and designers, supported by educational reforms and cultural change. She stressed that women's empowerment in AI is not a side mission but central to resilience and sustainable growth.

- **Gender gaps in AI**: Highlighted persistent disparities—women make up 22% of the global AI talent pool, fewer than 14% in senior leadership, and only 12% of AI researchers. Structural barriers, including caregiving burdens, lack of mentorship, career interruptions, and internalized self-doubt, continue to limit advancement.
- **Shifting mindsets and redefining women's Roles**: Urged a shift from fixed mindsets to growth and even "WOW" mindsets. Stressed that women must be recognized not only as consumers of technology but as its creators and designers. This requires cultural and educational change to expand scientific literacy into active scientific engagement.
- **Regional collaboration and policy responses**: Pointed to APEC platforms such as the Open Science Alliance to institutionalize cross-border data sharing and joint research. Advocated Mission-Oriented Innovation Policies (MOIPs) to address common regional challenges such as food security and public health.

Together, the speakers reaffirmed the importance of APEC-wide cooperation on data sharing, joint research, and policy frameworks to advance inclusive AI innovation.

## Session Ⅲ. Presentation & Panel Discussions - Empowering Women in AI: Policy, Collaboration, and Impact

This session featured presentations by Dr. Moon (Korea Foundation for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology, WISET, Korea) and Prof. Syms (Humber Polytechnic, Canada), followed by a panel including Prof. Harvey-Smith (UNSW Sydney, Australia), Mr. Stark (National Center for Artificial Intelligence, CENIA, Chile), Ms. Soo (Dell Technologies, Singapore), and Dr. Charoensiriwath (National Electronics and Computer Technology Center, NECTEC, Thailand). The speakers shared policies, institutional practices, and experiences demonstrating how women's leadership drives inclusive and sustainable AI innovation.

### Presentation

**Dr. Moon (WISET, Korea)** introduced Korea's experience in supporting women in STEM and AI through what she described as "A full-cycle approach: from outreach to leadership." She explained that this approach should follow the logic of Attract–Retain–Advance—beginning with outreach programs to inspire girls and young women, continuing with initiatives that help retain female talent in education and early career stages, and extending support into leadership development opportunities. She

noted that WISET's programs are designed with this perspective in mind, illustrating how such lifecycle efforts can generate social value and strengthen innovation capacity. Dr. Moon also proposed collecting sex-disaggregated data on STEM participation, holding regular APEC Women in STEM symposiums, and in the long term, establishing a regional hub to institutionalize support for women in STEM and AI.

**Prof. Syms (Humber Polytechnic, Canada)** highlighted how biases in technology reflect systemic exclusion, citing examples such as the absence of menstrual tracking in early wearables and discriminatory hiring algorithms. He introduced Humber's proactive measures to raise female faculty representation from 20% to 40%, supported by mentoring programs, inclusive curricula, and events such as International Women's Day celebrations.

### Panel discussion

**Prof. Harvey-Smith (UNSW, Australia)** stressed that women's empowerment must not be treated as symbolic or superficial. She cautioned that progress could reverse if women's empowerment is approached only as a superficial indicator, and called for embedding gender inclusion into data-driven and systemic policy frameworks.

**Mr. Stark (CENIA, Chile)** emphasized that real transformation occurs when domestic strategies are linked with practical implementation across academia, industry, and government. He highlighted the importance of collaborative approaches that integrate these sectors to create long-lasting impact.

**Ms. Soo (Dell Technologies, Singapore)** drew attention to women's limited share of intellectual property rights, noting that women account for only 20% of patent applications and just 4% of solo patents. She stressed the need for systematic support to improve access to research, technology, and funding, and underscored the role of visible role models.

**Dr. Charoensiriwath (NECTEC, Thailand)** demonstrated how AI can address pressing social issues, such as childhood nutrition gaps. She noted that when women researchers lead such initiatives, outcomes are not only more inclusive but also more sustainable.

## Session Ⅳ. Networking - Next Generation Seminar: Future Leaders in AI

From this session, emerging women leaders and experts from across APEC shared experiences and visions for the future of AI, highlighting both challenges and opportunities for inclusive innovation. The discussion emphasized solidarity across generations and economies to prepare the next wave of women in STEM leadership.

- Speakers underscored that expanding women’s participation in STEM and AI is vital for fairness, transparency, and inclusive technology design.
- Experts emphasized the role of education, mentoring, and international networks in breaking structural barriers and enabling women’s leadership.
- Young participants shared powerful stories of applying AI to community challenges and sustainability issues, demonstrating both technical competence and social responsibility.
- The session highlighted the importance of cross-generational role models and visible success stories to inspire future women scientists and engineers.
- The session also provided networking opportunities, allowing participants to build meaningful connections and explore potential collaboration across economies.

# 5. Symposium Outcomes

## A. Overall Outcomes

Targeted outcomes of this project have been achieved, as evidenced by participant feedback from the post-event survey. Respondents indicated that the project set the clear objectives and successfully met its intended goals.

### 1. Increased International Dialogue and Cooperation on Women's Empowerment in AI

The symposium significantly advanced international dialogue and cooperation on women's empowerment in AI by convening policymakers, researchers, educators, and emerging women leaders from across the APEC region and beyond. Participants spanning at least 10 APEC economies established new professional networks and expressed strong willingness to sustain collaboration. These connections are expected to develop into bilateral and multilateral initiatives such as exchange programs, mentoring schemes, joint projects, and policy partnerships.

Keynote speeches and a panel discussion emphasized ethical AI, inclusive innovation, and the removal of structural barriers to women's participation, providing valuable policy guidance for APEC economies. Experts and participants also highlighted the importance of institutionalizing cooperation through networking platforms, mentoring opportunities, and APEC-level follow-up mechanisms—including funding support, joint research, and regular symposiums. These outcomes underscore both the immediate impact of the event and the growing demand for sustained regional cooperation to advance women's leadership in AI.

### 2. Enhanced Capacity to Nurture Female Talents in AI and STEM

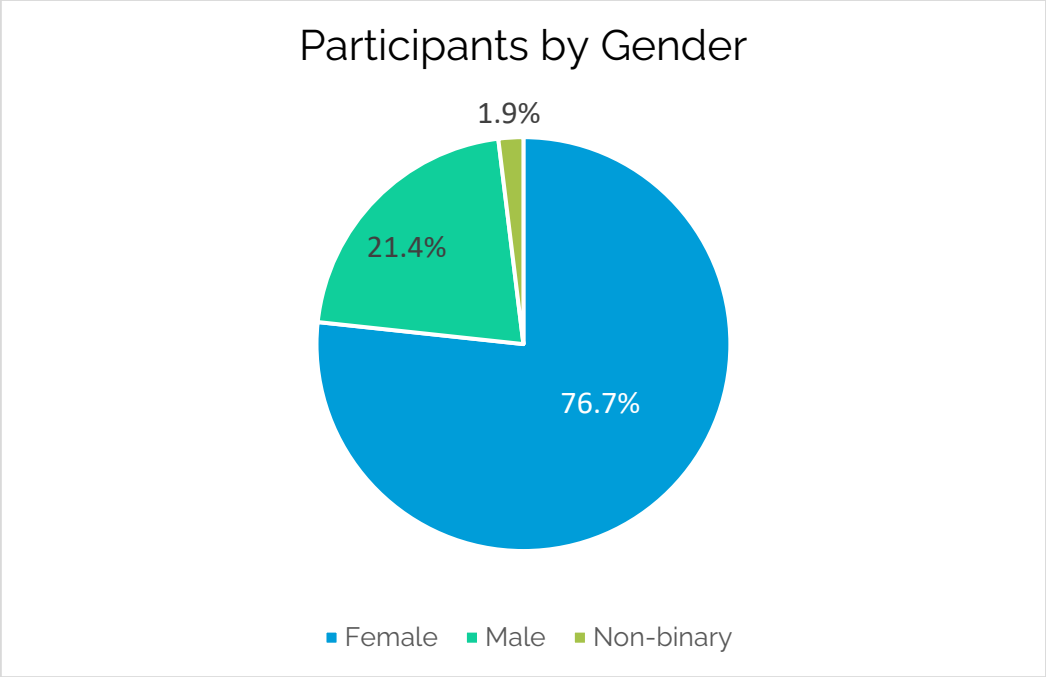
The symposium strengthened participants' ability to promote women's participation in STEM and AI through keynote addresses, panel discussions, and case-sharing. Attendees gained practical strategies to support women in STEM, including policy reforms, mentoring initiatives, and education programs aimed at nurturing the next generation of female talent. In addition to practical strategies, discussions also tackled systemic gender bias in AI technologies such as hiring algorithms, speech recognition, and facial recognition, reinforcing that women's leadership in AI design and governance is essential for ensuring inclusive and ethical innovation. By combining technical insights with policy recommendations, the symposium not only deepened understanding but also built momentum for collaborative action across APEC economies to create sustainable pathways for women in STEM.

## B. Attendance

In line with APEC's commitment to inclusivity and broad representation, these outcomes were supported by broad participation across the region. The symposium

successfully achieved its target of 300 participants, drawing a total of 309 attendees. The audience consisted of a diverse range of public sector stakeholders, including representatives from government, public institutions, academia, NGOs, the private sector, and experts from international organizations.

To support APEC's effort to integrate women into economic activities, the project team prioritized gender balance among speakers and participants, with a particular emphasis on encouraging female participation from developing economies. As women's empowerment was the central theme of the symposium, higher female participation was expected, but efforts were also made to encourage men's participation through a 70:30 gender balance target. The final composition—237 women (76.7%), 66 men (21.4%), and 6 participants (1.9%) who selected "rather not to say."—approached this target, though encouraging higher male participation continues to be a challenge.




The symposium demonstrated broad participation, reflecting strong regional and international interest in its theme. Particular efforts were made to encourage active engagement from APEC member economies, resulting in successful representation from 15 members. At the same time, the event attracted a significant number of participants from 12 non-member economies. This broad representation enriched the discussions and allowed non-member participants to benefit from APEC's experiences and share their perspectives, contributing to a more inclusive and impactful dialogue.

| Economy | Participants | Economy | Participants |
|---|---|---|---|
| Australia | 3 | Canada | 3 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chile | 6 | China | 5 |
| Indonesia | 3 | Japan | 1 |
| Republic of Korea | 227 | Malaysia | 9 |
| Mexico | 4 | Papua New Guinea | 1 |
| Peru | 4 | Chinese Taipei | 13 |
| Thailand | 1 | United States | 7 |
| Viet Nam | 5 | Non-APEC Members * | 17 |
| **Total Participants** | **309** | | |

* Angola, Finland, Ghana, Honduras, India, Ireland, Italy, Mongolia, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Türkiye, United Kingdom

# 6. Participants' Feedback

Building on this broad participation, the evaluation results confirmed that the symposium effectively achieved its objectives. To assess the success of the project, participants were invited to complete a post-event survey evaluating the effectiveness and outcomes of the symposium. The survey examined whether the objectives were met, whether the information shared prompted any changes following the event, and how participants' knowledge levels compared before and after attending. It also assessed satisfaction with the organization and content of the program. Additionally, the survey explored potential mid-term effects of the project, including how participants planned to apply the insights gained.

In total, 111 participants responded to the survey. Satisfaction levels were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "1 – strongly disagree" to "5 – strongly agree." The survey was conducted anonymously and collected only basic participant information, including their sector (e.g., academia, industry, government), economy, and sex.

| Evaluation Criteria | Average Score |
|---|---|
| 1. The objectives of the training were clearly defined | 4.58 |
| 2. The project achieved its intended objectives | 4.52 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 3. The agenda items and topics covered were relevant | 4.56 |
| 4. The content was well organized and easy to follow | 4.49 |
| 5. Gender issues were sufficiently addressed during implementation | 4.59 |
| 6. The speakers/moderators were well prepared and knowledgeable about the topic | 4.59 |
| 7. The materials distributed were useful | 4.32 |
| 8. The time allotted for the event was sufficient | 4.16 |

Participants expressed a strong sense of satisfaction with the symposium, noting that its objectives were clearly defined and successfully achieved, with the focus on women's empowerment in STEM and AI providing a clear framework that guided the sessions and made their engagement more meaningful. The agenda and topics were regarded as timely and highly relevant, addressing critical issues such as ethical AI, structural barriers to women's participation, and inclusive policy design. Attendees emphasized that these themes resonated with their professional responsibilities and their economy's priorities, making the symposium directly applicable to their work. Also, the analysis showed clear improvements in participants' knowledge and skills. About half of all respondents (50.5%) reported more than a 1-point increase, and this pattern was consistent among women (50.5%) and participants from travel eligible economies (52.6%). These findings demonstrate the symposium's effectiveness in enhancing participants' capacities, as well as its potential for broader impact as participants apply these insights in their work.

In terms of organization and delivery, the program was also praised. Participants appreciated the logical flow of sessions, from keynote speeches to panel discussions and case-sharing, which made the content accessible and easy to follow. Some suggested that additional time for Q&A and interactive dialogue would have further enriched the experience. Gender considerations, central to the symposium's purpose, were consistently recognized as being effectively addressed. Respondents valued the integration of gender perspectives across discussions, particularly in relation to women's leadership in AI governance and STEM careers, while also suggesting that future events might explore ways to encourage greater male participation in women-centered initiatives.

Speakers and moderators received commendation for their expertise and preparedness. The broad range of perspectives—from policymakers and researchers to practitioners—was highlighted as a major strength that enriched the dialogue and enhanced its credibility. Participants also found the materials provided useful for consolidating lessons learned and sharing insights with colleagues, though some indicated that more detailed resources such as case studies or toolkits could further support practical application. Although the time allotted for the event was generally considered sufficient, several respondents recommended extending the program or

creating more space for networking and interactive exchange to maximize cross-economy collaboration.

Overall, the feedback confirms that the symposium successfully met its objectives, delivered relevant and high-quality content, and served as a valuable platform for advancing inclusive perspectives in AI and STEM. The insights gathered from participants will provide constructive guidance for enhancing the design and impact of future APEC initiatives.

# 7. Overall Impact and Lessons Learned

These positive evaluations reinforce the significance of the symposium, and the lessons learned provide guidance for shaping future APEC initiatives. The APEC Women in STEM Symposium 2025 demonstrated the transformative role that women's leadership can play in shaping the future of AI. By convening a diverse group of stakeholders, including policymakers, researchers, educators, private sector leaders, and emerging young professionals, the event reaffirmed a key principle. Women's empowerment in STEM is not merely a matter of equity, but a critical driver of innovation, trust, and sustainability in the digital era.

### 1. Women's Leadership in STEM and AI as a Driver of Inclusive Innovation

A clear lesson from the symposium is that women's active participation in AI development is essential to correcting algorithmic bias, enhancing transparency, and building public trust. Experts and participants highlighted examples where women researchers and leaders introduced more inclusive perspectives into AI design, ensuring that technologies serve diverse communities rather than reinforcing existing inequalities. However, data continue to show that women remain underrepresented in AI-related fields, with only 22% of the AI talent pool being women, fewer than 14% holding senior leadership roles, and only 12% of AI researchers globally identifying as women. These imbalances underscore the urgency of policies to support retention and advancement, including flexible work structures, childcare support, and opportunities for reskilling and upskilling. The symposium also emphasized the importance of celebrating women's achievements and creating visible role models whose success can inspire the next generation of women to pursue careers in STEM and AI.

### 2. Ensuring Ethical and Responsible Use of AI

Another major outcome of the symposium was a strong consensus that while AI holds immense potential to address critical global challenges—including public health, food security, and poverty reduction—it also carries significant risks of bias, surveillance, and manipulation. AI is not neutral; it reflects the values, assumptions, and biases of its developers. This makes it essential to strengthen ethical frameworks, global

standards, and accountability mechanisms that ensure AI systems are transparent, fair, and inclusive. Experts and participants emphasized that building digital literacy and cybersecurity awareness is crucial, particularly for women and girls who remain disproportionately excluded from access to technology. Economies must work to embed a broad range of perspectives—across gender, background, and perspective—into the entire AI ecosystem to ensure that innovations are not only technically robust but also socially responsible and trusted by citizens.

### 3. Building the Next-Generation Talent Pipeline

The symposium also highlighted the importance of investing in the next generation of women leaders in AI. Early engagement is critical: girls should be given opportunities to explore STEM pathways from primary and secondary education, supported by inclusive curricula and accessible resources. Strengthening APEC-wide mentoring networks and leadership programs was identified as a key strategy for expanding access to education and career opportunities for young women. Universities, research institutions, and industry have a shared responsibility to create inclusive ecosystems where women can thrive as innovators and leaders. The youth pitch talks at the symposium demonstrated that young researchers across APEC economies already possess both the technical expertise and the social responsibility to drive AI innovation. However, they require support to transform their ideas into real-world solutions, through funding, mentorship, and cross-border exchanges. By enabling young women to turn their creativity into action, APEC economies can secure a sustainable talent pipeline that will shape the future of AI in the region.

### 4. Removing Structural Barriers through Policy and Systemic Change

The discussions at the symposium made it clear that women's empowerment in STEM cannot be achieved through surface-level interventions alone. Real progress requires structural change, supported by evidence-based, data-driven policies. Women's access to intellectual property rights, research funding, and international opportunities must be guaranteed in order to deliver tangible and lasting results. Structural barriers such as unequal pay, lack of representation in leadership, and limited access to career advancement opportunities must be tackled through systemic, coordinated interventions across academia, industry, and government. Such systemic changes are essential to ensure that women do not simply enter AI fields temporarily but are empowered to remain and lead across their careers.

### 5. Advancing Regional Collaboration and Joint Policy Frameworks within APEC

Finally, the symposium reaffirmed the importance of regional collaboration and joint policy frameworks in driving inclusive growth. Platforms such as the APEC Open Science Alliance were highlighted as mechanisms to institutionalize cross-border data sharing, joint research, and policy coordination. The adoption of Mission-Oriented Innovation Policies (MOIPs) was also identified as a way to tackle shared regional

challenges—including food security, public health, and digital transformation—through collaborative action. By sharing best practices and scaling successful models across economies, APEC can ensure that women are not only included but empowered as leaders in AI-driven innovation. Strengthening collective initiatives will maximize impact, avoid duplication, and ensure that resources are directed toward sustainable and inclusive growth.

**In summary,** the symposium's overall impact was twofold: it both highlighted the urgency of closing persistent gender gaps in STEM and AI, and built momentum for cross-economy collaboration to sustain women's leadership in the digital age. The lessons learned make it clear that empowering women in AI requires action on multiple levels—strengthening ethical standards, removing structural barriers, investing in youth, and advancing regional cooperation. By embedding women's perspectives and leadership into every stage of AI development and governance, APEC economies can ensure that AI innovation is inclusive, sustainable, and beneficial for all.

# [Appendix Ⅰ. Program]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ***13 August 2025,*** **12:00–20:30 KST(GMT+9)** | | |
| **11:30-12:00** | Registration / Networking | |
| **Session 1 - Policy Dialogue: Strengthening Women's AI Competencies across APEC** | | |
| **12:00-14:30** | **Welcome Remarks** | • Hyuk Chae Koo, The 1st Vice Minister, Ministry of Science and ICT of Korea |
| | **Roundtable Discussion** | • 31 high-level representatives from APEC economies |
| **14:30-15:00** | Coffee Break | |
| **Session 2 - Plenary session: AI Innovation and Women's Leadership** | | |
| **15:00-15:10** | **Opening Remarks** | • Aree Moon, President, Korea Foundation for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (WISET) |
| **15:10-15:30** | **Congratulatory Remarks** | • Dato' Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri, Minister of Women, Family and Community Development of Malaysia<br>• Min-hee Choi, Chairperson of the National Assembly's Science, ICT, Broadcasting, and Communications Committee |
| **15:30-16:30** | **Keynote Speeches** | • Meeyoung Cha, Professor, School of Computing, KAIST & Scientific Director, Max Planck Institute for Security and Privacy<br>• Asha Saxena, CEO, World Leaders in Data and AI & Professor, Columbia University<br>• Hazami Habib, Chair, APEC PPSTI & CEO, Academy of Sciences Malaysia |
| **16:30-16:40** | Coffee Break | |
| **Session 3 - Empowering Women in AI: Policy, Collaboration, and Impact** | | |
| **16:40-17:00** | **Presentations** | • Aree Moon, President, Korea Foundation for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (WISET), Korea<br>• Francis Syms, Associate Dean, ICT, Humber Polytechnic, Canada |
| **17:00-17:40** | **Panel Discussion** | • (Moderator) Soonmin Bae, AI Future Lab Director & Chief Responsible AI Officer (CRAIO), KT, Korea |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | • Lisa Harvey-Smith, Professor, UNSW Sydney & Former Australian Government Women in STEM Ambassador, Australia<br>• Juan Ignacio Stark, Head of Technology Transfer and AI Consulting, National Center for Artificial Intelligence (CENIA), Chile<br>• Mei May Soo, Chief of AI Global Solution Specialist, Dell Technologies, Singapore<br>• Supiya Charoensiriwath, Principal Researcher, National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC), Thailand |
| **17:40-18:10** | Coffee Break and Networking | |
| **Session 4 - Next Generation Seminar: Future Leaders in AI** | | |
| **18:10-20:30** | **Networking** | • Yoko Nameki, Professor, Chuo University & Chair, Japan Women Engineers Forum (JWEF)<br>• Jasmine Begum, Chairperson, Malaysian Institute of Microelectronic Systems (MIMOS)<br>• Ching-Yi Liu, Vice Chair, AI Center of Excellence (AICoE), Chinese Taipei<br>• Eveling Gloria Castro-Gutierrez, Professor, National University of San Agustin of Arequipa<br>• Silvia Arámbula, Founder & CEO, Creative Labs STEAM Education<br>• Francisca Contreras, Millennium Nucleus for Galaxies (MINGAL)<br>• Liz Quispe Santos, Founder & CEO, HUARMIS FOUNDATION<br>• Aimy Lee, Chief Operating Officer, Penang Science Cluster<br>• Nguyen Ha, Professor, School of Chemistry and Life Science, Associate Professor, Hanoi University of Science and technology<br>• Pratiwi Kusumawardani, Team Leader, BRIsat, PT. Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero) Tbk - Spaceid |