



19th Korea- America Student Conference

2025 Applicant guide

International Student conferences



Table of Contents

About	3-6
-------	-----

Program	7-12
---------	------

Eligibility	13
-------------	----

Application	14-15
-------------	-------

FAQ	16
-----	----

Contact	17
---------	----

About the Conference



A three-week long academic, cultural exchange and professional networking program

When

July 25 - August 12, 2026

Sites

San Francisco, USA, New Orleans, USA, & Washington D.C., USA

Who

Up to 10 Korean and 10 American delegates

Purpose

To promote peace by furthering mutual understanding, friendship, and trust through international student interchange

How to Apply

Complete your application by December 31, 2025 to be considered for the 19th Korea-America Student Conference



About ISC



International Student Conferences

To promote peace by furthering mutual understanding, friendship and trust through international student interchange.

International Student Conferences, Inc. (ISC) is a non-profit organization incorporated in Washington, DC. It facilitates three academic and cultural interchange programs organized by university students in the U.S., Japan, and Korea: the China-America Student Conference (ChASC), the Korea-America Student Conference (KASC) and the Japan-America Student Conference (JASC). Beginning in 1934, JASC is the first and oldest exchange between the two countries that is conceived and carried out by university students. Patterned after the JASC model of a student-run Conference, the first KASC launched in 2008 and the first ChASC launched in winter 2020.

ISC programs provide an intensive, up-to one-month experience in which equal numbers of students from the U.S. and a partner country live, gather, work, and study together in a conference-like setting. What makes ISC programs unique is that, ever since its founding in 1934, ISC Conferences are entirely planned and administered by the students themselves. The students host discussion groups, field trips, seminars, and distinguished speakers, working toward the goals of better understanding each other, forming friendships, gaining trust, and fostering international peace during their lifetimes.

Every ISC gathering is characterized by full and frank discussions, undertaken with a spirit of understanding each other's point of view.

About KASC19



The Korea-America Student Conference (KASC) is a 3 week-long academic and cultural interchange program that brings together an equal number of students representing the United States of America and South Korea for off-the-record discussions of the future of the bilateral relationship. The 19th Korea-America Conference will be centered around the following theme:

"Navigating the Future of the Korean-American Relationship in a Fracturing Global Landscape through Technology, Culture, Business, and Energy."

The program is **student-run** and **student-led**, allowing for full and frank conversations to occur between emerging young leaders from both countries. Over the course of this intensive and immersive exercise in people-to-people diplomacy, participants will form powerful friendships that will go on to serve as bridges across the Pacific for generations to come.

By empowering and inspiring the next generation of US-Asia leaders to value cooperation and dialogue, KASC aims to instill in participants a lifelong dedication to the pursuit of peace, openness, and regional stability.

The 19th KASC will hold a virtual orientation and three weeks of in-person programming and travel at the end of July and beginning of August. Students will participate in academic discussions and social events with other students, the Executive Committee, International Student Conferences Inc. (ISC), alumni, and guest speakers on special topics.

The conference requires a participation fee of \$2500 for host country delegates and \$3000 for visiting country delegates.

Executive Committee



Hyein Kim

KASC Chair and Korea Outreach Coordinator

RT: Shaping Tomorrow: Technology & Artificial Intelligence



Bahar Hassantash

Marketing and Recruitment Chair

RT: Navigating Interdependence in International Business & Economics



Gabrielle Drinkwine

Recruitment and Programming Chair

RT: Cultural Diplomacy, Art, Media, and Soft Power



Marco Infosino

Treasurer and Information Chair

RT: Powering Tomorrow: Energy Policy and Nuclear Cooperation



KASC Programming

Planning for additional activities is currently underway. To give you a sense of what to expect, please review the schedule below.

Accepted delegates will meet online with the Executive Committee in late June for a virtual orientation. Planned topics include what to pack, airport logistics, lodging information, and general group norms. We will also be getting to know each other through icebreaker activities.

Roundtable groups will meet 2-3 times during the month of July prior to the conference to brainstorm and solidify their conference roundtable topic, as well as to become familiar with each other.

The in-person Conference will begin in San Francisco with a tentative date of July 25th, 2026. The 2026 year of KASC will take place entirely in the United States, with legs in San Francisco, New Orleans, and Washington D.C. Delegates will attend lectures on US-ROK relations, cultural activities, and sightseeing.

Academic programming will be centered around roundtable topics and the larger theme of US-ROK relations as a whole, with cultural programming split between Korean cultural opportunities in the United States and American cultural programming across sites. By the Conference's conclusion, RT groups will create a written research abstract as a physical deliverable, which delegates can choose to expand upon in their future non-KASC academic endeavors. The Conference will end with a Final Forum presentation by each RT group and the delegation will part ways on August 12th to return home.



Roundtable Topics

An indispensable component of all KASC gatherings are the Roundtables (RTs). During the Conference, delegates conduct original, peer-reviewed research in tight-knit academic cohorts. Each RT is made up of an equal number of Korean and American delegates to ensure a balanced exchange of cultural perspectives.

Through these intensive discussions, participants gain a more nuanced understanding of their international counterparts and actively develop real world policy solutions in the context of the U.S.-ROK relationship. Final research will then be presented to an audience during the Final Forum.

The RT topics for the 19th Korea-America Conference are:

- Cultural Diplomacy, Art, Media, and Soft Power
- Navigating Interdependence in International Business & Economics
- Powering Tomorrow: Energy Policy and Nuclear Cooperation
- Shaping Tomorrow: Technology & Artificial Intelligence

Cultural Diplomacy, Art, Media, and Soft Power



RT Leader: Gabrielle Drinkwine

Soft power is the ability to influence others with attraction, culture, and values, rather than military or economic might and persuasion. Cultural diplomacy is a form of soft power, and may be defined as the deliberate and strategic exchange of ideas, values, traditions, and other cultural elements with the aim of fostering mutual understanding, strengthening relationships, advancing socio-cultural cooperation, and promoting national or international interests. It may be conducted by governmental bodies, private entities, or civil society organisations, each contributing to the broader objective of building trust and dialogue across cultural divides. This roundtable will specifically look at cultural diplomacy in the form of art, media, and popular culture.

Both the United States and South Korea are strong examples of nations that actively benefit on the global stage from the proliferation of their culture, their art, and their media. Recent examples of popular cultural diplomacy from South Korea include films such as K-Pop Demon Hunters and Parasite, K-Pop music such as Blackpink and BTS, and the overall Hallyu wave. The United States has long used cultural diplomacy as a method of soft power proliferation across the globe. Delegates in the Cultural Diplomacy, Art, Media, and Soft Power roundtable will look at how art and media increase understanding and interest in nations, and specifically how cultural diplomacy has benefited the Korean-American relationship.

RT Application Questions

1. Why are you interested in joining this roundtable?
2. What is an example of art or media that has changed or improved your impression of a nation, or changed your interpretation of a nation's values and culture?

Navigating Interdependence in International Business & Economics



RT Leader: Bahar Hassantash

In this era of economic transformation defined by evolving trade agreements, this roundtable delves into the critical dynamics of business relationships among interdependent nations. For instance, the longstanding economic partnership between the U.S. and Korea—previously consolidated in KORUS—was recently tackled as the U.S. adopts a more guarded approach to trade. Similar trends signal shifting supply chains, intensifying technological rivalry, and policy realignments; hence, participants in this roundtable will focus on the broader repercussions of global trade and economic cooperation in today's ever-changing globalization landscape.

Does economic interdependence compromise strategic autonomy, and what does this tension mean for businesses? In conversations on U.S.-ROK relations, we explore the rise of emerging industries and shifting strategies for multinational corporations as they navigate uncertainty. By unraveling these transformations, our roundtable discussions work in tandem with our programming to foster a deeper understanding of how both nations confront policy challenges in an increasingly complex global economy.

RT Application Questions

1. Why are you interested in joining this roundtable?
2. If you were the CEO of a multinational corporation that relies on trade between the U.S. and Korea, how would you adapt your business model to confront a growing trend of economic protectionism?

Powering Tomorrow: Energy Policy and Nuclear Cooperation



RT Leader: Marco Infosino

Energy is the lifeline of a modern economy, shaping not only economic prosperity but also national security, environment sustainability, and public health. This roundtable will explore how energy policy governs the production, distribution, and consumption of energy resources. As both nations navigate the challenges of energy transition, their collaboration, or lack thereof, will play a pivotal role in determining regional and global outcomes.

Delegates in this roundtable are invited to examine how the Korea-U.S. relationship can be strengthened through deeper cooperation in energy and nuclear policy. Discussions may explore themes such as energy security, climate change mitigation, technological innovation, and the ethical implications of nuclear power. By considering these issues through economic, political, and environmental lenses, participants will identify opportunities for joint leadership in building a sustainable and secure energy future.

RT Application Questions

1. Why are you interested in joining this roundtable?
2. How do differing energy policies in the U.S. and/or in the ROK reflect each nation's economic priorities, security needs, and environmental goals?

Shaping Tomorrow: Technology & Artificial Intelligence



RT Leader: Hyein Kim

As artificial intelligence (AI) transforms how societies innovate, govern, and connect, the Korea–U.S. alliance faces a moment of redefinition. Beyond trade and defense, technology now shapes the very language of trust between two nations—linking innovation to shared responsibility. From Silicon Valley’s startup labs in San Francisco to policy dialogues in Washington D.C. and the cross-cultural creativity of New Orleans, delegates in this roundtable will explore how AI cooperation can bridge innovation and integrity at every level: economic, ethical, and human.

Through scenario-driven discussions and on-site exchanges, participants will engage directly with the ecosystems shaping global technology—debating how Korea and the U.S. can co-create frameworks for responsible innovation, secure and fair data use, and democratic digital governance in an age defined by generative AI. Together, we will ask not only what technology can do, but how it can serve people—and how Korea and the United States can build that future, side by side.

RT Application Questions

1. Why are you interested in joining this roundtable?
2. When did you first realize that technology could change not only how we live, but how we think? Describe a moment that shaped your philosophy toward AI.



Eligibility

KASC 19 seeks a diverse delegation to represent the academically accomplished student populations of the United States and South Korea. Undergraduate and graduate students are encouraged to apply.

KASC welcomes applications from students of all academic majors to foster a deeper, interdisciplinary exchange. As the official language of the conference is English, no prior experience in Korean language or Korean Studies is required. KASC does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, marital status or sexual orientation.

Please note that applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Applicants will be notified within two weeks of a completed application on whether they have been selected for an interview.

Those interested in serving as a member of the KASC delegation should be comfortable with actively contributing to scholarly discussions conducted entirely in English.



Application

Applicants will utilize English for the first portion of the application form, but the following RT topic questions and prepared materials can be written in either English or Korean. Please keep in mind that KASC 19 interviews and the conference itself will be held entirely in English.

Application Deadline: December 31, 2025 at 11:59 p.m. ET

[Online Application](#)

The application requires:

- Name and Contact Information
- University Transcript (official or unofficial)
- Optional Resume/CV
- Optional Documents (Letters of Recommendation, etc.)

Short response prompts:

1. Why are you interested in joining the 19th Korea-America Student Conference? (500 words max.)
2. Specific questions chosen by RT leaders (1000 words max per RT section)

**The Executive Committee recommends drafting your short responses in a separate document, and then copying and pasting them into the application once you are finished.*



Application

Payment

Delegates must submit the \$20 application fee through PayPal on the Jotform application. The form will redirect you to PayPal to pay the application fee once you press 'SUBMIT'.

Your application will not be considered complete until you pay your invoice at this step.

If applicants apply attend an info session, they may have their application fee waived with a KASC code given at the session.

If you have issues with payment, please contact us at kasc@iscdc.org.

Once you submit your application:

Within two weeks, you will hear from the 19th KASC Executive Committee regarding your application status. At this time, you may also be contacted by an EC member for a short Zoom interview.

Next Steps

If you are selected as a delegate, you will receive an email notifying you of your acceptance. The email will provide additional information.

To accept your spot in the delegation, you will need to pay a \$500 deposit within two weeks of acceptance or arrange a payment plan. The deposit will be subtracted from your total participation fee.



FAQS

This section covers some of the most relevant information for applicants and accepted Delegates.

Q: Does ISC or KASC provide any financial aid?

Yes. ISC offers need-based scholarships to selected delegates. The Plant a Diplomatic Tree Scholarship fully covers the participation fee for one delegate per conference. Most delegates receive partial or full funding through ISC, their universities, or partner organizations.

Q: What is the participation fee, and what does it cover?

American Delegates: \$2,500

This fee covers online programming, two domestic flights between sites, ground transportation during the in-person Conference, accommodations, meals, and programming. Delegates are responsible for personal expenses (extra food, gifts, etc.) as well as domestic transportation to San Francisco and home from Washington D.C.

KASC (Korean Delegates): \$3,000

This fee covers online programming, two international flights, two domestic flights between sites, ground transportation during the in-person Conference, accommodations, meals, and programming. Delegates are responsible for personal expenses (extra food, gifts, etc.) as well as domestic transportation to Seoul Incheon Airport at the beginning and end of the conference.

Q: How are Executive Committee Members selected?

EC elections will occur at the end of each Conference, during which any of the American and Korean delegates can choose to nominate themselves to run for one EC position and be elected by their peers.

Q: Do I have to know Korean to apply?

No. The official Conference language is English.



Contact

To stay up-to-date on KASC recruitment, please visit our Instagram
www.instagram.com/kasc_usofficial/

To learn more about KASC and ISC, please visit our website at www.iscdc.org

Should you have any questions, please email:

Gabrielle Drinkwine, KASC's Recruitment & Programming Chair
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