



Top left: Opening parade to the Hooglandse Kerk official opening and ICAS Book Prize awards ceremony.

Top right: Volunteer handing ICAS 11 bag to an attendee.

Above: Some of the winners of the ICAS Book Prize 2019.

Left and below: Attendees gathering at the Hooglandse Kerk for the ceremony.

ICAS 11 Embracing Leiden

Paul van der Velde

“How the weather will be, nobody knows!” is how I ended my article ‘ICAS at 21 – ICAS 11, Leiden’ in the previous edition of *The Newsletter* (<https://www.icas.asia/the-newsletter/article/icas-11-leiden>) Now we do know! The sun started to shine the very moment the ICAS 11 parade was set in motion, and it stayed with us for the duration of the convention.

The parade led the 2300 ICAS participants to the Hooglandse Kerk where they were welcomed by the sounds of the 17th century church organ, culminating in Beethoven’s *Alle Menschen werden Brüder* (*Ode to Joy*). In the church’s luminous atmosphere the opening ceremony played out, in which welcome words and the ICAS Book Prize (IBP) ceremony were interchanged by the musical composition *Wind Flow between Asia and Europe* in which musician and singer Enkhjargal Dandarvaanchig carried us to the steppes of Mongolia on the waves of his unbelievable tonal register.

This special composition by Henri Tournier was one of the contributions of our co-organiser GIS Asie, the French Academic Network for Asian Studies, but certainly not the only one, because for the first time more than two hundred academics from the Francophone world participated at ICAS. We were also happy to welcome a fairly big delegation of Asia scholars from the Russian Federation. Likewise the presence of many colleagues from Africa and Latin America was new. This was partly a result of ICAS’s involvement in the organisation of conferences in those continents, with the University of Ghana, the University of Dar es Salaam and the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, during the past four years. This cooperation also resulted in the foundation of the Africa-Asia Book Prize and the addition of the Spanish/Portuguese edition of the IBP, which had a flying start with no less than 66 submissions. (<https://icas.asia/en/icas-book-prize>).

Embedded in a wide variety of cultural events the 550 sessions of ICAS 11 went smoothly, bringing together academics and professionals from 75 countries against the background of Leiden city, which, with the cooperation of the Mayor’s office, was turned into one great big conference space (ICAS 11 programme book: <https://tinyurl.com/ICAS11programmebook>). Steffen Rimner, president of the IIAS Alumni Association wrote: “I have talked with numerous colleagues all of whom told me just how impressed they were with the conviviality and the unique community brought together throughout the conference”. The conviviality was certainly enhanced by the 120 student volunteers who wisely spent part of their holiday assisting us in creating such a youthful and enthusiastic atmosphere.

When contemplating ICAS 11, I am reminded of Paul Gauguin’s *D’où venons-nous/Que sommes-nous/Où allons-nous* (1897), which shows the embrace of the Pacific culture and people, not as the other but as the human. That’s the direction in which we are moving, no matter where we come from. Join us and find out what and who we are at the next edition of the International Convention of Asia Scholars in Kyoto in 2021.

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Left: Setting up the ICAS 11 signage for the day.
 Right: Film screening room and attendees.
 Below left: Entrance lobby of the Kamerlingh Onnes building.
 Below right: Discussions taking place in the ICAS 11 Academic Freedom Space.



“Through ICAS 11 I gained much more connection with scholars from worldwide [...] moreover, the awards winners during the Opening Ceremony motivated me to do my work the best to become like them in the coming future”

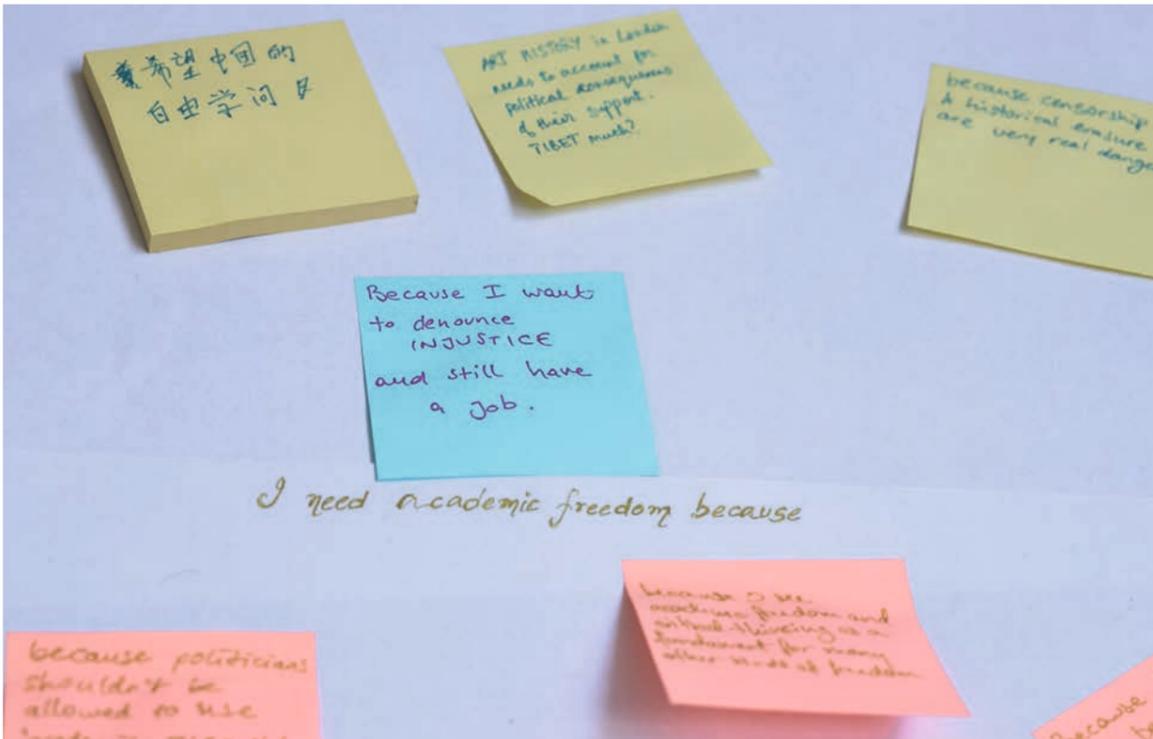
Su Sandy Htay





Top: Food market at Pieterskerkplein.
 Above: Thomas Voorter and Sonja Zweegers of IIAS at the IIAS exhibition booth.
 Far right: IIAS-SASS joint forum at ICAS 11.
 Right: Paul van der Velde, ICAS Secretary with Aurélie Varrel, GIS Asie Director.





“I would like to say that you did a fantastic job with ICAS! It was the first conference I ever attended where I thought, “Wow! I am really getting my money’s worth!” I also really appreciated the student volunteers [...] always ready with a smile to direct me in the right direction. Thank you again for all of your hard work in making this ICAS a big success!”

Thomas Patton



Top left: Closeup of the 'ICAS 11 Academic Freedom Space' comments board.

Top right: Conference participant taking a selfie with an ICAS 11 volunteer.

Above: Participants at a reception in the IIAS garden.

Right: Panel session.

Below left: IIAS Director Philippe Peycam and Professor Oussouby Sacko signing the MoU for ICAS 12, to be hosted by Kyoto Seika University (Japan) in 2021.

Below right: Professor Phan Le Ha, founder of 'Engaging with Vietnam' (its 11th edition took place during ICAS 11) at the opening reception, dressed in traditional costume in honour of a special performance during the opening.

