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Announcement of Winners of the 5th Healthy Aging Prize for Asian Innovation

14 organizations from Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong SAR, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines were selected as best practices in Asia to address the challenges facing rapidly aging societies.

TOKYO, Japan and JAKARTA, Indonesia, October 8, 2026 – The Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) announced the winners today of the 5th Healthy Aging Prize for Asian Innovation (HAPI). This year marked the fifth round of the award, which has been reimagined to accept applications across three new categories of Care & Wellbeing, Social Engagement, and Supportive Environments to better reflect the diversity of actors and initiatives working to support older adults across East and Southeast Asia.

This round was the most competitive to date, with a high number of impressive applications received from across the region. From among these, 14 organizations were recognized for their innovative work in the field of aging, across the three new award categories. Selections were made by an international committee of six experts from throughout the region.

The applicant pool saw an increased number of organizations leveraging newly emerging AI technology to better improve healthcare delivery in a variety of contexts. In addition, a number of strong applications were focused on empowering older people themselves as contributors to their community, leveraging their unique assets to strengthen the community and provide older people with a sense of purpose themselves. Initiatives aimed at creating supportive environments for older people through universal and dementia-friendly design was another area addressed by several applicants.

This year, in addition to our Grand Prize, Second Prize, and Honorable Mention winners, the committee also selected three initiatives that did not make it to the final round, but which the committee felt merited commendation for the work that they are undertaking. These initiatives highlighted several priority areas in the field of aging: providing greater support for the professional and emotional needs of caregivers, nurturing and supporting the next generation of innovative leadership in the field of healthy aging and caregiving, and supporting local efforts to build resilience in communities that experience natural disasters.

The Grand Prize winners will receive their awards at an award ceremony on November 10, 2026, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The ceremony will coincide with the Silver Economy Forum (November 11–12), a major international conference on healthy longevity hosted by the Global Coalition on Aging (GCOA).



5th HAPI Grand Prize Winners

Care & Wellbeing

Frailty Prevention Team, The University of Tokyo | Japan

Community-Led Frailty Prevention: Empowering Older Residents to Become “Frailty Supporters” to Promote Health and Wellbeing

Social Engagement

NOLLUWA | Republic of Korea

Local Libero for Regional Revitalization and Sustainability

Supportive Environments

Fukuoka City | Japan

Fukuoka Dementia-Friendly Design

Second Prize Winners

Care & Wellbeing

DoctorTool | Indonesia

DoctorTool—AI-Powered Primary Care Digitalization for Healthy Aging in Indonesia

Social Engagement

Ginger Innovation | Hong Kong SAR

O'Ginger Storybites

Supportive Environments

Universal Design Center | Thailand

Universal Design Center Network: A Multidisciplinary System Innovation for Integrated Aging in Place

Finalists/Honorable Mention

Care & Wellbeing

Hirosaki University | Japan

Development of a New Health Checkup Program That Contributes to Improving the Well-Being of the Elderly and All Generations

Yasuragi Social Welfare Corporation | Vietnam/Japan

Project for Supporting Community-Based Preventive Care for Healthy Aging in Vietnam

Social Engagement

Busan Metropolitan City | Republic of Korea

Our Neighborhood ESG Center

The Social Farming Academic Society of Japan | Japan

The Social Farming Academic Society of Japan

Supportive Environments

Alternative Indigenous Development Foundation, Inc. (AIDFI) | Philippines

Upland Water Access for Healthy Aging

Special Commendations

Special Commendation for Caregiver Support

Kaigo Cafe—Creating the Future | Japan

Supporting the Well-being of Care Workers through Dialogue

Special Commendation for Next Generation Leadership

Non-Profit Corporation KOTOBUKI | Japan

KOTOBUKI Care Patterns: Supporting “Mutual Relationships” in Long-Term Care

Special Commendation for Addressing Disaster Resilience

Jikoukai | Japan

A New Small Town Created from a Disaster-Affected Area

More About the Grand Prize Winners

Care & Wellbeing

Frailty Prevention Team, The University of Tokyo | Japan

Community-Led Frailty Prevention: Empowering Older Residents to Become “Frailty Supporters” to Promote Health and Wellbeing

The University of Tokyo developed an evidence-based model that promotes community-led initiatives focused on frailty prevention. The program, now implemented in over 100 municipalities nationwide, offers early intervention to prevent sarcopenia (muscle weakness) through multifaceted improvements in people’s daily way of life, including not only nutrition and exercise but also social participation. Unlike medical care that may focus on managing symptoms, the frailty checks seek to *reverse* frailty—grounded in the understanding that various functions can be restored through self-awareness, personal effort, and appropriate intervention—to extend the independence of older community members. Moreover, by training thousands of Frailty Prevention Supporters and by providing them with a common uniform, values, and objective, the program allows older people regardless of age or disability to transition from being recipients of support to being “contributors to the community,” and it transforms “health” into “connections.”

This innovation was selected based on the importance of a university taking a community-based, bottom-up approach to addressing the specific challenge of frailty, ensuring the project’s sustainability through local ownership and a peer-to-peer model that allows it to reach underserved populations within Japan and with the potential to expand overseas.

Social Engagement

NOLLUWA | Republic of Korea

Local Libero for Regional Revitalization and Sustainability

South Korea’s Hadong County faces a serious population crisis (older adults now account for more than 42% of the population) that has reduced community vitality. To address this, a community organization,

NOLLUWA, created a collaborative, intergenerational model. It is a bottom-up approach that strengthens community resilience and supports healthy aging. NOLLUWA's slogan is “The Libero of Local Communities”—like the defensive playmaker role of a libero in soccer, they connect villages, residents, culture, tourism, education, and local resources to create greater social impact and stronger community collaboration. Their work includes a Village Community Fellows program that offers three-month training programs and then assigns fellows to work with village leaders and residents; a Rice Paddy Football Festival; a Seomjin River Moonlight Gathering; an autobiography writing program for older residents; a village art museum, and a village hotel. The activities promote tourism and economic revitalization and are driven by the needs and leadership of the residents. At the heart of NOLLUWA’s work is a simple belief: healthy aging begins in a healthy community, and the village is the core unit of that change.

This innovation was selected thanks to its success in engaging residents of a depopulated and very aged rural community in cultural and tourism-promotion projects designed to revitalize the community and promote local economic development; the capacity-building fellowship program was also considered an important tool for sustained community revitalization.

Supportive Environments

Fukuoka City | Japan

Fukuoka Dementia-Friendly Design

To address the rise in residents living with dementia, Fukuoka City launched the Dementia-Friendly City Project in 2018 and drew up “Guidelines for Design That Is Accessible to People with Dementia,” which sets out 30 key design principles. Based on those guidelines, they began implementing the design at more than 100 facilities, including city subway stations and ward offices, and also extended it to outdoor spaces. Furthermore, the city worked on developing products and services in collaboration with people with dementia and businesses, with some of these initiatives leading to commercialization. The initiative aims to design social systems that lead to the resolution of challenges in collaboration with people with dementia, through their active participation. They also created a Dementia-Friendly Center, which serves as a design showroom. People living with dementia play an active role at reception and other areas of the center, sharing their experiences. The guide is available free of charge on their website, and a case study collection was published featuring numerous photographs of completed projects, thereby enhancing the reproducibility of these designs.

This project was selected as exemplifying the importance of strong local government commitment to creating spaces that allow everyone to age in their own communities safely, including the growing number of people who are living with dementia. That commitment has ensured the sustained momentum of this important project, including the creation of guidelines and a center to help disseminate their best practices.

More About the Second Prize Winners

Care & Wellbeing

DoctorTool | Indonesia

DoctorTool—AI-Powered Primary Care Digitalization for Healthy Aging in Indonesia

DoctorTool is a major primary care digital health ecosystem in Indonesia, an AI-powered SaaS, IoMT, and patient app deployed across 2,500+ healthcare facilities in 37 provinces, that strengthens preventive care, chronic disease management, and equitable access for older adults, especially those in remote and underserved communities relying on national insurance (BPJS).

This project stood out for the strong integration of a private sector software solution into public sector health systems through close public-private partnership, avoiding the issue of fragmented health data across multiple systems.

Social Engagement

Ginger Innovation | Hong Kong SAR

O'Ginger Storybites

This program creatively tackles ageism and loneliness by empowering older adults to become storytellers. Through training in storytelling and public speaking, participants transform real-life experiences into compelling stories, which they share at universities, schools, and community venues to connect generations and challenge stereotypes about aging. They also co-create multimedia content with students to promote more diverse images of older adults.

This project was recognized for its unique approach to both empowering older adults and addressing ageism through an intergenerational education model that emphasizes older adults as valuable contributors, helping to shift mindsets about aging among both older and younger people.

Supportive Environments

Universal Design Center | Thailand

Universal Design Center Network: A Multidisciplinary System Innovation for Integrated Aging in Place

The Universal Design Center (UDC) Network, spearheaded by Chulalongkorn University, is a multidisciplinary national network of architectural faculties providing evidence-based “system innovation” through collaborative sandboxes with local authorities to scale safe, accessible environments and integrated aging in place for older people and persons with disabilities across Thailand.

This project was considered to be an excellent example of the translation of academic expertise into direct changes in the built environment to improve the safety of older adults and allow for aging in place.

<i>Information about award winners will be available on the AHWIN website (www.ahwin.org).</i>
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About the Award

HAPI is an award program designed to recognize and amplify innovative policies, programs, services, and products that address the challenges facing aging societies. This prize is an initiative of JCIE and ERIA, carried out under the auspices of the Japanese government’s Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative (AHWIN). Awards are given in three categories:

- **Care & Wellbeing:** Innovations that support caregivers, as well as health and welfare service providers, to improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of older people.
- **Social Engagement:** Innovations that keep older people engaged in their communities and that connect generations.
- **Supportive Environments:** Innovations that make homes, neighborhoods, and transportation more accessible and age friendly.

The award is unique for its breadth of coverage, allowing a wide range of organizations—including community organizations, NPOs, associations, local governments, businesses, and others—across the region to apply and enabling them to showcase how they are innovating on a diverse set of interconnected issues. HAPI was introduced at a pivotal time as Asia now faces unprecedented demographic changes: according to UN data, East and Southeast Asia are expected to have 590 million people aged 65 or over by 2050—meaning that in less than 25 years, **1 in 4 people in East Asia** will be considered elderly.

About the Organizers

HAPI is an initiative of the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE, www.jcie.org) and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA, www.eria.org), created under the auspices

of the Japanese government's Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative (AHWIN). AHWIN was launched in 2016 to promote bilateral and regional cooperation on a range of issues related to fostering vibrant and healthy societies where people can enjoy long and productive lives, to develop sustainable and self-reliant health care systems in Asia, and to contribute to the region's sustainable and equitable development and economic growth. As part of that initiative, ERIA and JCIE are focusing on the promotion of healthy aging in Asia, supporting research, dialogues, and information sharing that can benefit people and policymakers throughout the region. For details about HAPI, visit our website at <https://www.ahwin.org/award/>.



HAPI Supporters

