

PNIRSA^{Asia-Pacific} Annual Committee Report

June 1, 2025—May 31, 2026

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2025-2026

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The more we engage, the more we learn.

If you have an interest in helping us organize symposia throughout the Asia-Pacific region or joining in our other activities, contact Keith W. Kelley as Chair of the PNIRSA^{Asia-Pacific} committee or any of our committee members.











Introduction

Throughout 2025-2026, **PNIRASia-Pacific** continued its rich tradition of sharing knowledge with universities in Asia. With the recent recognition that eight out of the top ten global universities call China their home (<https://traditional.leidenranking.com/ranking/2025/list>), the work of **PNIRASia-Pacific** is more important now than ever. From 2006 to 2009, seven out of the top ten leading universities were in the USA with none from China. Fourteen years later, the rankings almost reversed. The most recent data from 2020-2023 show only one university from the USA now ranks in the top ten, being replaced by eight out of ten from China. These results document the movement of top-notch scholarly recognition from the West to the East. They are especially relevant to our society's founding professional journal, *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity*, and its newest official journal, *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity Integrative*. At the turn of this century, less than a handful of papers had been submitted to BBI from China. Today, Chinese institutions submit five times more papers to BBI than those in the USA, and these papers are cited nearly two times more frequently (see figures below).

Leading Global Universities Have Moved From West to East

[CWTS Leiden Ranking Traditional Edition—Ranking 2025](#)

2006–2009

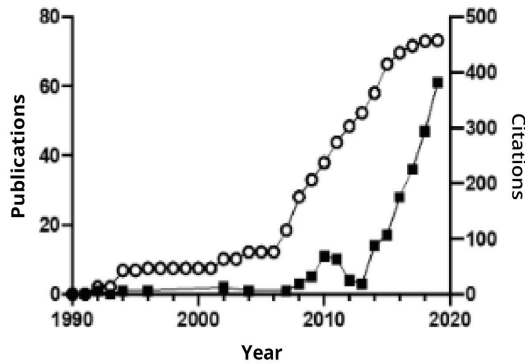
	University	
1	Harvard Univ	
2	Univ Toronto	
3	Univ Michigan	
4	Univ Tokyo	
5	Univ California - Los Angeles	
6	Univ São Paulo	
7	Johns Hopkins Univ	
8	Univ Washington - Seattle	
9	Univ Penn	
10	Stanford Univ	

2020–2023

	University	
1	Zhejiang Univ	
2	Shanghai Jiao Tong Univ	
3	Harvard Univ	
4	Sichuan Univ	
5	Cent S Univ	
6	Huazhong Univ Sci & Technol	
7	Sun Yat-sen Univ	
8	Xi'an Jiaotong Univ	
9	Tsinghua Univ	
10	Univ Toronto	

The CWTS Leiden Ranking Traditional Edition is based on bibliographic data from the Web of Science database of Clarivate, Philadelphia, PA, U.S.A.

Drilling Down on the Contribution of China to *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity*



2025 Submissions:

China 1,470
USA 325

2025 BBI Citations:

China 2016
USA 1081

Prior to 2005, only 8 papers from China had ever been submitted to *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity*.

Kelley, KW. 2017. To boldly go where no one has gone before 66:1-8. doi.org/10.1016/j.bbi.2017.08.013

We have a lot to learn from our Asian colleagues. Indeed, there is a growing appreciation and realization that psychoneuroimmunology shares a similar foundation with Asian medicine. As one example, the centuries-old concept of Yin-Yang that espouses balance is entirely consistent with brain-body communication and regulatory feedback systems, a principle that is taught in all systemic physiology classes around the world. As such, studying the role of systemic inflammation in Asian populations is growing, as is the potential of Asian medical approaches to treat the multiple psychological and physical maladies that are now known to be associated with it.

During the past year, nine **PNIRASia-Pacific** scholars traveled to the Taiwan region, Hong Kong SAR, Shenzhen and Guangzhou, China as well as Hanoi, Vietnam to present their newest results.. A summary of their work as **PNIRASia-Pacific** scholars is presented below:

PNIRSA^{Asia-Pacific} & PNIRSI^{Ibero-America} Gathering in Bordeaux, France



As **PNIRSA^{Asia-Pacific}** has done since its inception in 2012, we met as a group at the annual PNIRS meeting that was held in Bordeaux, France from June 9-12, 2025. This gathering has grown substantially since the **PNIRSI^{Ibero-America}** network joined us three years ago in Boulder, Colorado. Professor Kuan-Pin Su from Taichung, the Taiwan region, presented an overview of the value of global biomedical research networks, particularly as applied to Asia. All participants introduced themselves which provided a ~5 minute opportunity for attendees to share their background and research interests. The enthusiasm was substantial.

Mind-Body Interface (MBI) Meeting Taiwan Region

For the past seven years, this meeting has been held in Taichung, the Taiwan region, an hour train ride south of Taipei. This year, our **PNIRASia-Pacific** group was fortunate to meet with the International Society of Nutritional Psychiatry Research in Taipei, a major sponsor of the annual MBI meeting. Our session in Taipei was on Sunday, October 19, with the meeting hosting 150-200 registrants from 19 countries. The invited **PNIRASia-Pacific** Scholars were Professors Leah Pyter (The Ohio State University), Jacob Allen (University of Illinois Urbana Champaign), Marie-Eve Tremblay (University of Victoria, Canada) and Adrienne Antonson (University of Illinois Urbana Champaign).



Sunday, October 19, 2025		Room 603
MBI Symposium: Stress and Microglia (S25)		
Time: 10:20 AM - 12:00 PM (100 min)		
Chair:	Keith W. Kelley (USA)	
S25-1	<i>The Role of the Gut Microbiome in Chemotherapy-Induced Nervous System Side Effects</i> Leah Pyter (USA)	
S25-2	<i>From Brain to Gut: Mechanisms of Stress-Induced Microbiota Dysbiosis and Immune Dysfunction</i> Jacob M. Allen (USA)	
S25-3	<i>The Roles of Dark Microglia in Health and Disease</i> Marie-Eve Tremblay (Canada)	
S25-4	<i>Priming During Pregnancy: How Maternal Viral Infection Regulates Transplacental Trafficking, Fetal Brain Macrophage Function, and Cortical Development</i> Adrienne Antonson (USA)	
<i>Panel Discussion</i> Leah Pyter (USA), Jacob M. Allen (USA), Marie-Eve Tremblay (Canada), Adrienne Antonson (USA)		

We then moved on to Taichung on Monday, October 20, where lectures continued as we enjoyed tea from the Taiwan Region at a special cultural gathering at a tea plantation. Our long-time hosts, Professors Kuan-Pin Su, Hui-Chih Chang and Jane Chang, were responsible for organizing this joint event. We are truly grateful for all the support they have given to **PNIRASia-Pacific** during past years.



PNIRSA^{Asia-Pacific} Hanoi, Vietnam

The College of Health Sciences at Vin University in Hanoi, Vietnam is a private medical school that offers Medical Doctor and Nursing degrees, as well as six residency programs (<https://chs.vinuni.edu.vn/>). **PNIRSA^{Asia-Pacific}** was again hosted by Michelle Hermiston, Dean of the College, and Professor Huynh Dinh Chien, Director of Teaching Laboratories. Professor Leah Pyter was a special guest because she had provided teaching materials a year earlier for Professor Kelley's classes at Vin Uni on developing successful NIH grant writing skills. Professors Antonson and Allen joined in presenting lectures on some of their newest data to Vin Uni faculty and students. The afternoon session was devoted to the broad topic designated, "Manuscripts and money: Views from the West." All of us then enjoyed a wonderful dinner hosted by the Vin Uni College of Health Sciences, as well as some of the local cuisine in Hanoi. And, of course, the Asian practice of enjoying an hour-long foot massage was mandatory.



PNIRSA ASIA-PACIFIC COLLOQUIUM
VinUniversity - College of Health Sciences

Manuscripts and Money

VINUNIVERSITY **PNIRSA**

Date	Time	Topic
October 22, 2025	AM: 09:30-12:15 PM: 14:00 - 17:30	Updates in Psychoneuroimmunology Grantmanship: Tips and Tricks for Getting Your Work Funded.

Chairs
Keith W. Kelley, PhD
Chien D. Huynh, MD, PhD

About
Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) explores mind-body-immune communication. This colloquium brings Western scientists to share new findings and discuss practical strategies for sustaining research funding. Morning: NIH-funded discoveries on gut-immune-brain interactions. Afternoon: grant writing and lab sustainability.

Highlights

- Gut-brain-immune system connections
- Stress, diet, and behavior
- Viral infection during pregnancy
- Grant writing strategies and challenges

Co-Chair
VinUniversity College of Health Sciences
www.vinuni.edu.vn

Attendees are encouraged to ask questions and engage with investigators during both sessions.

Time	Session
9:30	Welcome, Dean Michelle Hermiston, MD, PhD, College of Health Sciences, VinUniversity
9:45	Kevin Grant Olson, MD, PhD, NIH Grant Writing Coordinator, College of Health Sciences, VinUniversity
10:00	Keith W. Kelley, PhD, Introduction to the Manuscript Section of Colloquium
10:15	Leah Pyter, PhD, The role of the gut microbiome and inflammation in cancer treatment-induced behavioral side effects
10:35	Jacob Allen, PhD, From brain to gut: Mechanisms of stress-induced microbiota dysbiosis and immune dysfunction
11:35	Adrienne Antonson, PhD, Firing during pregnancy: How maternal and infection regulate transcriptional reprogramming of brain macrophage function, and cortical development
12:15	Lunch
14:00	Universitay Tour of Research Teaching Facilities
15:30	Keith W. Kelley, Roundtable Discussion About Successful Grant Writing Section of Colloquium
16:40	Leah Pyter Comments
16:50	Jacob Allen Comments
16:55	Adrienne Antonson Comments
16:10	Speaker for NIH Grant Writing Class of 2024/2025 Comments
16:20	Open Discussion, Comments, Questions, Answers
17:00	Closing Remarks, Dean Michelle Hermiston



An Asian Tour Through Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, and Hanoi

Five scientists were invited to lecture as **PNIRSA**Asia-Pacific Scholars on a week-long trip between January 15-23 to China and Vietnam. The speakers were: (1) Professor Caroline Cao, Dean of the College of Engineering at the University of Ottawa, Canada. (2) Yong-Ming Li from New Jersey, USA representing the American Traditional Chinese Medicine Society. (3) Professor Gang Chen from Jinan University in Guangzhou, China (4) Tamara Schimmele from the University of Ulm, Germany. and (5) Keith W. Kelley from the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign. This trip began at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, where Professors Cao and Kelley presented lectures. Dean Cao then took the short train ride to Shenzhen, China, to present a lecture in the neurolinguistics laboratory of Professors Luo Shuo and Jingwen Wang at Shenzhen University. The entire **PNIRSA**Asia-Pacific Scholar group then gathered in Guangzhou. We were hosted by Professors Gang Chen at Jinan University and Qiang Liu at Sun Yat-sen University. A full day of lectures followed, joined by expert scientists from Jinan and Sun Yat-sen. The lectures, of course, were followed by the delicious Guangzhou cuisine at a large table with the typical Lazy Susan turntable. This trip continued with a 2-hour flight to Hanoi to lecture at Vin University College of Medicine. We thank Dean Michelle Hermiston and Professor Chien for again hosting both the lectures and a welcoming dinner on January 22.



Stay Informed With PNIRS Events in Mandarin

For our Chinese-speaking colleagues, I am delighted to share that you can keep up with the latest developments in PNIRS by reading it in Mandarin. This accomplishment is the good work of Weiwen Wang in Beijing, Rachel Jin in Hong Kong and Sisi Li in Shanghai. A big thank you to these scientists for helping spread the word about PNI in China, which is now open to followers. This WeChat site will foster academic exchange and facilitate the dissemination of findings within the field of psychoneuroimmunology, the official Chinese-language account for PNI Research (PNIRS). The account's core content encompasses in-depth profiles of leading journals in the field, announcements regarding authoritative calls for papers, notifications for national and international academic conferences, and updates on cutting-edge research developments. We warmly invite researchers to follow this account and encourage you to actively share and promote it among your colleagues, peers, and collaborators, thereby collectively advancing the development of this discipline. Thank you for your support and for helping to spread the word!



QR Code

■ WeChat Official Account name: **PNI Research**

■ Article links for the first two posts:

1) BBI-I Special Issue Call for Submissions:

<https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/E-d-EIYZXullnSuxqFQ3yg>

2) 2026 Annual Meeting Registration:

https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/sOx22oTuWsvq1J_rL3b7hw

PNI Research 心理神经免疫学学会 (PNIRS) 中文官方账号

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- 学术会议资讯

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- Call for Papers
- Annual Meeting Information

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- Interdisciplinary Knowledge Sharing

Significance of this Platform

Authoritative & Official: First-hand information
Academic Hub: Connecting basic research and clinical applications
Discipline Promotion: Advancing the development and application of PNI in China
Inspiring Collaboration: Promoting interdisciplinary knowledge exchanges



PNIRSA_{Asia-Pacific} Plans for 2026–2027

This past year has been very successful in bringing **PNIRSA_{Asia-Pacific}** Scholars to Asia. But the more we do, the more we are offered new opportunities for advancing knowledge sharing between the East and West. At the beginning of this year, Professor Sarah Spencer at RMIT University in Melbourne and Professor Weiwen Wang at the Institute of Psychology at the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing submitted a symposium proposal to the Chinese Society for Neuroscience, the largest gathering of these experts in China. I'm pleased to report her proposal has been approved. Professors Spencer and Wang will co-chair this symposium. Another Associate Editor of *Brain Behavior and Immunity Integrative*, Professor Gang Chen at Jinan University, is a committee member and speaker. The title of this symposium is "Psychoneuroimmune Plasticity Across the Lifespan: Brain–Body Communication in Health, Stress, and Disease." It will be held from September 10-13, 2026 in Fuzhou. We encourage PNIRS members to take advantage of this meeting to meet and learn from Chinese academia.

PNIRSA_{Asia-Pacific} will once again co-host and organize a symposium at the annual Mind-Body-Interface meeting. This year, this gathering will be held in the southwest at Tianan, the Taiwan region, from October 16-18. The theme of this meeting will be a new initiative called **TRANSLATE** (**TRANSL**ational Life-sciences, **AI**, and **TE**chnology). Professor Kuan-Pin Su is the Deputy Superintendent of Annan Hospital in Tianan, which is affiliated with the China Medical University in Taichung. This will be followed on October 20 by a **PNIRSA_{Asia-Pacific}** symposium at the Wuhan Sports University. We will then travel to Jinan University for another colloquium on October 22, courtesy of Professor Gang Chen.

Two months later, **PNIRSA_{Asia-Pacific}** Scholars have been invited by Professors Quentin Liu and Gang Chen to return to Sun Yat-sen and Jinan Universities for a full-day session in early January, 2027, focusing on East-West approaches to understanding and treating cancer. This group of **PNIRSA_{Asia-Pacific}** Scholars has also been invited to lecture at either Hong Kong University or the Hong Kong Baptist

PNIRSA^{Asia-Pacific} Plans for 2026–2027 (Continued)

University. That is because Keith has established a new partner with Professor Anlong Xu. As Dean of the Sun Yat-sen University Institute of Advanced Study Hong Kong, he has long promoted East-West collaboration. His experience for eleven years as President of the prestigious Beijing University of Chinese Medicine will promote more connections of **PNIRSA^{Asia-Pacific}** Scholars with leading scientists throughout China.

Next will be our annual symposium at the 2027 meeting of the Chinese Association of Physiological Sciences, to be held on the mainland in May. The dates for this meeting are generally the first weekend after the May 1 Labor Day holidays, which for 2027 will likely be from May 9-11.

Finally, Professor Kelley and Professor Man-Sau Wong of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University are submitting a grant application to the Chinese Medicine Promotion Funding Scheme of Hong Kong. This request is aimed at organizing a fully-funded international conference, tentatively scheduled for May 10-12, 2027, and entitled “Chinese Medicine Solving Global Health Problems.”