

New Faces, Shared Spaces

ICAS 13 Volunteers

Muhammad Fuad Izzatulfikri

Working with a small, familiar team is certainly more desirable. But what if we're paired with names we've never known, faces we've never seen, and have no clue how we'll work together in between? Here's a little story about my experience as the volunteer coordinator for ICAS 13.



One month before, I met the committee and they just gave me a short briefing and some volunteer data. Since I had not met them personally, I needed to explore the data and discuss it with my teammate. It gave me a big challenge, ensuring the ideal number of volunteers for every section is a big deal. But I had great optimism for this event.

The day that the event started, I was a little bit worried, until a notification hit my

phone: So far, this has been my favorite committee, someone shared with me in a message, quietly. Perhaps it's due to a Main Committee that's so committed, joyful, and passionate. Many things were done wholeheartedly, with smiles and sincerity. That was where all my big optimism came from.

For me, volunteering isn't just about filling time or seeking distraction. At the very least, I learn about myself, about others, and about the world's interaction.

It's not merely about what is allowed or what is not, but understanding "the why" of something. Serving is noble, but don't stop there – learn and grow, embrace the dare.

When their names were chosen, we accepted whatever would come. Little sparks and whispers did arise, but fostering a positive, appreciative, and cohesive vibe was the key to thriving.

Lastly, my heartfelt thanks to everyone involved in ICAS 13, especially the Inter-

national Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), AIIOC, and Universitas Airlangga. Like "The Waiting Room" in the main lobby of the Avenger Tower – the students refer to ASEEC Building Tower as "The Avenger Tower" because its design resembles the letter A on Marvel's Avengers movies – the vibrance of this event brought reflections, friendships, bittersweet moments, and glimpses of a future unknown, yet serene.

ICAS 13 Volunteer Testimonials



"The same opportunity won't come twice." I've always held onto that quote, which keeps me taking my next step towards a new opportunity when it comes. I used to be afraid of new things, afraid about the what ifs: "What if I fail? What if I disappoint my team?" But now I realize self-doubt won't take me anywhere. So here I am, taking another step towards another opportunity ahead of me. It's truly been an honor to be a part of the ICAS 13 Volunteer Team. Despite all the obstacles, I enjoyed my whole experience here – having a great team, meeting a lot of new people with different backgrounds, and being in a very supportive environment. I've learned a lot from them. Lastly, I'm very grateful to have an experience together with ICAS, and now I can also proudly say that I have my new family, that is, ICAS Team.

Aaliyah Fidela Hartono

Volunteering as part of the conference panel team at ICAS was an incredibly rewarding experience. Over the seven days, I found myself thoroughly enjoying the behind-the-scenes work. Coordinating directly with the session chairs and ensuring that each panel session ran on time and smoothly helped me sharpen my organizational and communication skills. I'm especially proud of UNAIR and the entire volunteer team for making the event flow seamlessly.

One of the highlights of my time was the opportunity to interact with so many individuals gathered to discuss pressing issues in Asian culture. Hearing their diverse perspectives, even as a business student with a basic understanding of the topics, I was able to broaden my viewpoint. I was also excited to make small talk in Mandarin and Dutch with native speakers, two languages I've been dabbling in learning. It was a personal achievement that added to the richness of the experience.

I left with a deeper appreciation for both Asian Studies and international collaboration.

Viggo Akbar Nasafra



Yesi Rahma Mustika, a Political Science student at Airlangga University, volunteered at the 13th International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) from July 28 to August 1, 2024. Assigned to the registration division, I worked with students from different faculties, forming strong bonds and learning the importance of teamwork. It was my first time interacting with participants from various countries, and although I struggled with different accents and cultural nuances, it helped me improve my English and communication skills.

The event offered rich experiences, from attending academic sessions and book fairs to cultural exhibitions, which broadened my understanding of global knowledge and heritage. Observing friendships form and ideas exchanged among participants was inspiring.

This transformative experience boosted my confidence in cross-cultural communication and event management, showing me the value of collaboration across borders. It has prepared me for future challenges and inspired me to seek similar opportunities.

Yesi Rahma Mustika