

## Call for Papers

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Australia-Bhutan Research Conference**

“Bridging Knowledge, Innovation and Policy: Harnessing the Power of Research”

---

#### **Overview**

The Royal University of Bhutan, in partnership with the Royal Bhutanese Embassy of Canberra, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australia, is pleased to announce the **3<sup>rd</sup> Australia–Bhutan Research Conference 2025**, to be held in Thimphu, Bhutan from **3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> December 2025**.

The *ABRC 2025* aspires to connect Bhutanese Higher Degree Research (HDR) students and academics in Australia and elsewhere with scholars, policymakers, entrepreneurs, thought leaders, and institutions in Bhutan and Australia to reflect on the transformative power of collaborative research that integrates cultural depth, technological innovation, and holistic development paradigms. The Conference particularly aims to leverage the collective expertise and experiences of scholars to address pressing national and global challenges while fostering academic and cultural exchange and partnerships not just between Australia and Bhutan but globally.

The ABRC 2025 also celebrates Bhutan’s global leadership in pioneering *Gross National Happiness (GNH)* and the visionary development of the *Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC)*, as a model for contemplative innovation and urban transformation, positioning Bhutan as a unique location for global research and intellectual discourses.

The conference is being organised as part of the commemoration of the 70<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of His Majesty The Fourth Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuck.

---

**Venue** : RUB Convention Hall, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Royal University of Bhutan, Thimphu, Bhutan

**Dates** : **3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2025**

---

#### **Objectives**

Specifically, the ABRC 2025 aims to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) **Promote Knowledge Exchange:** Provide a platform to discuss research that aligns with Bhutan’s developmental priorities such as GNH, mindfulness, sustainability, innovation, good governance, and technology.

- 2) **Build a Research Community:** Strengthen networks among Bhutanese HDR students in Australian universities with higher education academics and students in Bhutan for a sustained collaboration beyond the Conference.
  - 3) **Enhance Capacity Building:** Share best practices, research methodologies and research findings to strengthen Bhutan's research ecosystem.
  - 4) **Foster Academia-Policymaker Engagement:** Strengthen collaboration to foster research-informed policy-making, initiatives and innovations to address emerging challenges and achieve long term national goals.
  - 5) **Strengthen Bilateral Relations:** Strengthen partnerships between Australia and Bhutan through academic and cultural exchange.
- 

## Sub-Themes

The Conference will focus on the following thematic areas relevant to Bhutan's developmental goals, including but not limited to:

- 1) **Innovation in Higher Education.** Reimagine higher education as a transformative space for the development of enlightened and world ready citizens in the face of rapid global changes.
  - 2) **Happiness and Wellbeing in Cross-Cultural Contexts.** Explore diverse philosophical, cultural, and scientific approaches to wellbeing—integrating mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and community health within and across cultures through Bhutan's global reputation as a blueprint for happiness and social thriving.
  - 3) **Climate Resilience and Sacred Ecology.** Highlight the moral, spiritual and scientific dimensions of environmental stewardship, emphasising sacred ecological relationships, indigenous knowledge and climate resilience in Bhutan and beyond.
  - 4) **GNH-driven Economic Futures.** Promote research into entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems that balances economic prosperity with sustainability, social wellbeing, ethical growth, and other GNH-inspired measures of progress.
  - 5) **Digital Mindfulness and the Future of Human–Technology Relations.** Explore the role of mindful design and ethical digital integration, promoting human flourishing, deep learning, and balanced human–technology interaction.
  - 6) **Integration of STEM for Societal Impact.** Encourage research to demonstrate how interdisciplinary STEM solutions addresses real world challenges and drive progress in communities, industries and national development.
  - 7) **Governance, Public Policy, and Leadership.** Deliberate on how governance systems and leadership models can be reimaged to prioritise professionalism, effectiveness and productivity.
-

## Guidelines for Submission of Paper

### Stage 1: Abstract

We invite **abstracts (400-500 words)** recently completed research work or papers in advanced stages will be accepted. for papers aligned with the main theme or sub-themes. Submissions should include:

- Title of the paper
- Author(s) name, affiliation, and contact details
- 5-6 keywords
- Brief bio of the author(s) (100–150 words)

The abstracts submitted shall go through double-blind peer-review process by an expert Technical Committee formed to assess the relevance of the abstracts to the Conference theme and sub-themes.

- 1) Deadline for the Submission of Abstracts: **31<sup>st</sup> July 2025**
- 2) Review & Acceptance of Abstracts: **6<sup>th</sup> August 2025**

Submit your abstracts to [\[Web Portal\]](#)

### Stage 2: Full Paper

The full papers shall undergo double-blind peer-review process for relevance, quality and standards, in terms of depth of research knowledge, appropriateness of research methods, data collection tools, data analysis, and research findings by the Technical Committee for the final selection. The following dates will be the timeline followed for the submission of Abstracts and Final papers:

- 3) Deadline for submission of Full Papers: **1<sup>st</sup> October 2025**
- 4) Review and Acceptance of Final Papers: **10<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

Submit your Full Paper to [\[Web Portal\]](#)

**Note:** The selected papers will be published as a special issue in the *Bhutan Journal of Research and Development (BJRD)* of the Royal University of Bhutan.

---

### Who Should Attend?

- Academics, researchers, curriculum developers across disciplines
- Education leaders and practitioners
- Policy makers and development practitioners

- Students and early-career scholars
  - Business leaders and professionals/researchers from think tanks, NGOs, and innovation hubs
  - Members of the Bhutanese diaspora and Australia–Bhutan research collaborators
  - Any other international scholars with research on Bhutan.
- 

### **Why Bhutan? Why Now?**

Bhutan stands at a pivotal moment, offering the world a developmental alternative rooted in values of **wellbeing, sustainability, and spiritual integrity**. The emergence of the **Gelephu Mindfulness City** as a model for humane urbanism, coupled with Bhutan's emphasis on GNH, makes this Conference a timely and meaningful platform for dialogue and discovery.

---

### **Contact and Further Information**

For inquiries, submissions, or partnership interests, please contact:

abrc2025@rub.edu.bt

---

***Come! Bridge worlds, ideas, and values in the Land of the Thunder Dragon.***

---

Last revised 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025