APCICT
Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development
ESCAP

Incheon Metropolitan City

Ministry of Science and ICT of the Republic of Korea

APCICT Annual Digital Leaders Programme

Responsible AI for Trustworthy and Secure Digital Transformation

1-2 December 2026, Incheon, Republic of Korea

BACKGROUND

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping the way governments operate, make decisions, and deliver public services. Across the Asia-Pacific region, governments are exploring the use of AI to improve administrative efficiency, support decision-making, and develop more responsive and citizen-centred services. As AI systems become capable of generating content, analysing data, and increasingly undertaking complex, multi-step tasks, governments need to determine appropriate boundaries for their use, establish clear responsibilities, and ensure adequate human oversight. Fairness, transparency, privacy, inclusion, and accountability become particularly important when AI is used in areas that affect citizens, public services, rights, and entitlements.

Cybersecurity is another critical dimension. As governments become increasingly dependent on digital systems and data, they face a growing range of threats that can disrupt public services, compromise sensitive information, and affect critical infrastructure, national security, and economic stability. The increasing use of AI introduces additional risks for cybersecurity and digital safety. Strengthening cybersecurity governance, including policies, institutional arrangements, standards, capacity development, and mechanisms for prevention, response, and recovery, is therefore essential to building resilient digital government.

Effective data governance is equally fundamental. The effectiveness and reliability of AI systems are closely linked to how data is collected, managed, protected, shared, and used. Governments seeking to adopt AI therefore need strong arrangements for data quality, stewardship and custodianship, standards and metadata, interoperability and data sharing, privacy, security, and ethical data use, so that they can harness data for innovation while managing risks and maintaining public trust.

Responsible AI adoption cannot be addressed through technology alone. Public sector leaders and officials need to understand how responsible AI use, cybersecurity, and data governance interact and reinforce one another. They must be equipped to determine where AI can add public value, what safeguards and human oversight are required, and how the underlying data and cybersecurity environment can support its effective and responsible deployment.

The Asian and Pacific Training Centre for ICT for Development (APCICT), a regional institute of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), supports countries in the region in strengthening the capacities of policymakers and civil servants to harness digital technologies for sustainable development. Through its flagship Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders, APCICT has developed capacity-building resources on key dimensions of digital transformation, including digital government, AI, the ethics and governance of AI, and data governance, and continues to adapt its programmes to the rapidly evolving opportunities and challenges associated with AI.

The year 2026 marks the 20th anniversary of APCICT. Since its establishment in 2006, the Centre has worked with member States and a network of national partners to build the digital capacities of government leaders and officials across Asia and the Pacific. The anniversary is an opportunity to take stock of two decades of capacity building, recognize the partnerships that have sustained it, and consider how the Centre's programmes should evolve to meet governments' capacity needs as the adoption of AI grows.

Against this background, APCICT, in collaboration with the Ministry of Science and ICT of the Republic of Korea and Incheon Metropolitan City, will organize the 2026 APCICT Annual Digital Leaders Programme, bringing together government officials and policymakers from across Asia and the Pacific. The programme will provide a platform for participants to examine how governments can harness AI and data for public sector innovation while strengthening the governance, institutional, and security foundations necessary for responsible, trustworthy, and secure digital transformation.

OBJECTIVES

The programme aims to:

- Enhance awareness and understanding among policymakers and government officials of the opportunities, risks, and governance considerations associated with the growing use of AI in government, including the importance of accountability, human oversight, fairness, inclusion, and public value.
- Strengthen understanding of cybersecurity governance in the context of AI and digital transformation, including emerging cybersecurity risks and the policies, institutional arrangements, and capacities required to strengthen cyber resilience and digital safety.
- Build understanding of data governance as a foundation for trustworthy AI, including data quality, stewardship, standards, interoperability, data sharing, privacy, security, and ethical data use.

- Provide a platform for regional dialogue and exchange of experiences and good practices among policymakers, government officials, experts, and practitioners on advancing responsible, secure, and trustworthy AI adoption in the public sector.
- Mark the 20th anniversary of APCICT by reflecting, with member States and partners, on two decades of digital capacity building in Asia and the Pacific and identifying priorities for the Centre's future programmes.

PARTICIPANTS

The programme will be attended by policymakers and government officials from Asia and the Pacific who are engaged in digital transformation efforts in their countries and organizations, including representatives of APCICT's network of partners from ICT-related ministries, government agencies, and civil service training providers.

TENTATIVE AGENDA[1]

Day 1 – Tuesday – 1 December 2026	
09:00 – 09:30	*Registration*
09:30 – 10:00	**Opening and Introduction** • Mr. Kiyoung Ko, Officer-in-Charge, APCICT/ESCAP **Special Messages** • Ministry of Science and ICT, Republic of Korea • Incheon Metropolitan City **Group Photo**
10:00 – 10:30	**Special Presentation:** **Governing AI for the Public Good:** **Regulatory and International Perspectives**
10:30 – 11:30	**Panel Session** **APCICT@20: Building Digital Capacity for the AI Era**
11:30 – 11:40	*Coffee Break*
	Academy Module on Responsible AI
11:40 – 12:30	**Session 1: AI opportunities and risks in government** *The session aims to build participants' understanding of how AI can improve administrative efficiency, decision-making and public services, and of the risks that come with its use. It will look at where AI can add public value and why fairness, transparency, privacy and inclusion matter when AI affects citizens' rights and services.*
12:30 – 14:00	*Lunch*
14:00 – 14:50	**Session 2: Governing AI responsibly** *The session aims to strengthen participants' capacity to put responsible AI into practice within their institutions. It will examine the boundaries, accountability and human oversight AI use requires, and how to assess institutional readiness and identify the safeguards needed to maintain public trust.*

[1] A more detailed programme will be shared in due course.

14:50 – 15:40	**Session 3: Country Experience Sharing**
15:40 – 15:55	*Coffee Break*
15:55 – 16:25	**Group Discussion**
	Academy Module on Cybersecurity and AI
16:25 – 17:15	**Session 1: Cybersecurity threats and risks in the age of AI** *The session aims to build participants' understanding of the growing range of cyber threats facing governments as they rely more heavily on digital systems and data. It will look at how these threats can disrupt public services, compromise sensitive information and affect critical infrastructure, and at the new risks AI introduces for cybersecurity and digital safety.*

Day 2 – Wednesday – 2 December 2026	
	Academy Module on Cybersecurity and AI (continued)
09:00 – 09:50	**Session 2: Governance for cyber-resilience** *The session aims to strengthen participants' understanding of the governance arrangements needed to make digital government resilient. It will examine the policies, institutional arrangements, standards and capacities governments need for prevention, response and recovery.*
09:50 – 10:40	**Session 3: Country Experience Sharing**
10:40 – 10:55	*Coffee Break*
10:55 – 11:25	**Group Discussion**
	Academy Module on Data Governance for Trustworthy AI
11:25 – 12:15	**Session 1: Data governance as a foundation for trustworthy AI** *The session aims to build participants' understanding of why data governance underpins the responsible and trustworthy use of AI. It will look at how the way data is collected, managed, protected, shared and used affects how well AI systems work and how far they can be relied on.*
12:15 – 13:15	*Lunch*
13:15 – 14:05	**Session 2: Strengthening data governance arrangements** *The session aims to strengthen participants' capacity to put effective data governance in place within their institutions. It will examine data quality, stewardship and custodianship, standards and metadata, interoperability and data sharing, privacy, security and ethical data use, so that governments can use data for innovation while managing risks and maintaining public trust.*
14:05 – 14:55	**Session 3: Country Experience Sharing**
14:55 – 15:10	*Coffee Break*
15:10 – 16:40	**Group Discussion**
16:40 – 17:10	**Closing and Evaluation**