

NEWSLETTER

Introducing New Faculty Members for Spring 2025, Part 3

【September Edition】 The fall semester begins!

With graduation and opening ceremony behind us, the fall semester begins! The summer research period for professors has also ended, and preparations for this semester's classes are well underway.

This month's newsletter concludes our faculty members' introductions for those that joined us this past spring. Thank you for your contributions to the newsletter!

Self-Introduction :

During my time as graduate student, I studied abroad in Vietnam and while performing investigations of rural areas, have followed NGOs and cases of social reform. Like this, for around 25 years, I have pursued a career in international cooperation. Until now, I have been involved with teacher education in Vietnam, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Myanmar, and Palestine. The current situation in Palestine is utterly shocking, and I pray daily for my friend and his region.



Associate Professor

TSUKUI Atsushi

Education Development and Learning Support Center

Research Topic(s):

My main focus is Vietnam; however, I am also involved with Japanese and Asian national school reform. I visit schools, interview principals and teachers, and observe classes and come to know the student's individual personalities. Through this, I work with teachers to create democratic schools and high-quality learning. I am researching ethnography, autochthonous history, etc. based on qualitative research methods.

Messages to Students:

Undergrad:

I am in charge of all subjects' SSW and MCW; together, we'll think about how to learn at a university. APU does not have a department of education, but please speak up if you are interested in education and learning. Let's discuss not only education policy in Japan and every country, but also the reality of teachers and students at schools.

Graduate:

I think the best part of graduate school is, while learning research conduct, looking into specific organizations outside of school and in society. I have personally conducted fieldwork in various countries and would like to assist students interested in study abroad, rural research, and qualitative research methods.

Prospective Students:

After arriving at APU, I had the chance to return to Tokyo. However, I noticed that APU had even more foreigners than Tokyo Station or Shinjuku Station. Moreover, through dorm activities, you can make friends with foreigners. Many APU students go abroad during breaks, but their accommodations are free because they stay at the homes of friends they made at APU. I don't think there's another university like APU in Japan.

Self-Introduction :

I am a Professor of Practice from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Japanese international development agency, and I have around thirty years of experience working for them. My overseas experience includes Vietnam, Tanzania, Nigeria and the United Kingdom (2022–2024). Before joining APU, I worked at JICA Kyushu in Kita-Kyushu. My hobbies have expanded each time I have stayed abroad. Cantering on horseback in Tanzania and Nigeria is a good memory, as well as horseback trails in Mongolia, Hungary, and Iceland, which I will never forget.



Professor
AMATSU Kuniaki
College of Sustainability and Tourism

Research Topic(s):

My research topic is the vision of state leaders and its impact on the performance of industrialisation, based on my experience observing state leaders launch ambitious visions of industrialisation in early industrialising countries. I am also observing UK international development, as I have kept in touch with it. I have also built personal connections with some academics and researchers based in the UK.

Messages to Students:

Undergrad:

I expect all students to be able to experience and enjoy different cultures and, ultimately, to develop their thinking and sense of value with agility. However, everyone is different. I also expect each student to find their way through campus life.

Graduate:

Doing doctoral research means pursuing your research topic independently, whereas studying at an undergraduate programme means learning something. The master's programme is somewhere in between. In the postgraduate programme, obtaining a rigorous research method, becoming accustomed to conducting research with others and gaining insight into various researchers and areas of knowledge via the network of APU professors in Japan and abroad.

Prospective Students:

Beppu is blessed with beautiful natural scenery, including mountains, the ocean, and steam from hot springs. The town is compact and quiet, making it a very comfortable place to live. APU is an integral part of the local ecosystem in Beppu and creates a valuable space. For Japanese students, it opens up the world, and for international students, it opens up Japan and other countries. You will be able to make new discoveries that will lead to learning, research and future careers.

Self-Introduction :

My academic and professional journey began in Bogotá, Colombia, where I earned a degree in Industrial Engineering and a Specialist Graduate Degree in Production Engineering and Logistics from Francisco José de Caldas District University. After working in the manufacturing sector, I moved to Brazil to pursue a Master's in Production Engineering at the Federal University of Pernambuco. There, I developed a passion for supporting strategic decision-making through research.

Returning to Colombia, I combined academic teaching with consulting, helping real companies solve operational challenges. Later, I moved to Japan to pursue a Ph.D. in Technology Management for Innovation at the University of Tokyo, where I was also part of the Science, Technology, and Innovation Governance Program. Before joining APU this April, I worked as a researcher at UTokyo, deepening my interest in sustainable systems and global collaboration.

As an Associate Professor at APU, I enjoy contributing to a global learning environment where teaching, cultural exchange, and academic growth go hand in hand.

Beyond academics, I have a deep appreciation for diverse cultures and movement. I practiced Capoeira—a vibrant Brazilian mix of martial arts, dance, and music—for many years. I also love connecting with nature and staying active through outdoor sports like hiking, snorkeling, and kayaking. I also like dancing a lot.



Associate Professor
RICO LUGO Sinndy Dayana
College of International Management

Research Topic(s):

Focused on sustainable management and strategic decision-making in circular economy contexts, I study how businesses, governments, and communities can collaborate to create circular systems that are economically viable, socially inclusive, and environmentally efficient.

I specialize in designing frameworks and incentive mechanisms that help stakeholders make better decisions, especially in complex supply chains. My approach blends mechanism design, game theory, and multi-criteria decision analysis with real-world case studies, fostering collaboration across academia, industry, and government (Figure 1).

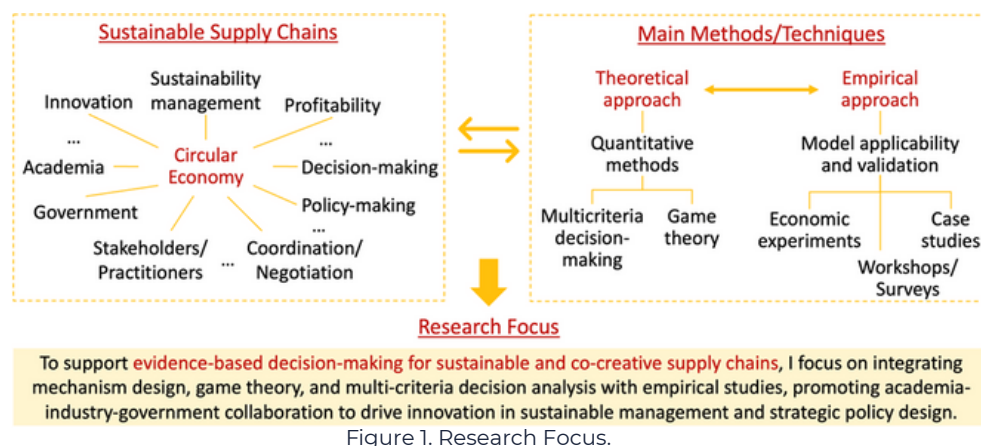


Figure 1. Research Focus.

A key area of interest is the Circular Food Economy (CFE), a holistic approach to redesigning food systems by minimizing loss and waste, enhancing biodiversity, and promoting regeneration across the entire supply chain. CFE aims to go beyond donations and composting, incorporating digital tools and stakeholder alignment to create viable, sustainable food loops (Figure 2).

Despite its potential, CFE implementation is difficult due to trade-offs, stakeholder conflicts, and a lack of effective incentives. That is where my research steps in: exploring how to align diverse interests through thoughtful system design.

Recent research projects include:

- Modeling stakeholder participation in CFE projects using biform games
- Studying voting rules in circular economy decision-making
- Analyzing food bank allocation strategies
- Investigating stakeholder preferences using interactive trade-off methods

Through my research, I aim to connect rigorous theory with practical solutions to guide real-world sustainability transitions.



Figure 2. Circular Food Economy. Rico Lugo S.D., Kimita K., & Nishino N. (2023).

Messages to Students:

Undergrad:

Your undergraduate years are an exciting chapter of your life, full of discovery, growth, and transformation. Be curious. Try new things. Learn not only in the classroom but also through experiences, friendships, and challenges. Use this time to explore your interests and passions, you may be surprised where they lead you. And remember: every obstacle you face today will help shape a stronger version of yourself tomorrow.

Graduate:

Graduate school is a key step toward becoming an expert in your field. With your foundation of knowledge already in place, now is the time to focus your interests, ask meaningful questions, and develop the skills needed to turn ideas into impactful research or projects. Use this opportunity to build your academic and professional identity with intention. Be proactive, stay reflective, and embrace collaboration—it will open doors you never imagined.

Prospective Students:

Studying at APU means joining a truly global community where cultures meet, ideas flow, and diversity is celebrated. As a faculty member here, I see firsthand how our students grow through international exchange, academic challenge, and supportive learning. APU offers a unique environment in Japan, where you will be encouraged to think critically, act conscientiously, and connect with people from all over the world. If you are ready to learn and grow in a place that is both intellectually vibrant and culturally rich, APU is waiting for you!



For APU Faculty interested in publicizing research or media activities:

The APU Research Homepage's "What's New" page and Facebook are regularly updated to feature noteworthy achievements and media involvement by APU Faculty members.

If you are interested in having your work or achievements featured, please don't hesitate to contact the APU Outreach and Research Office PR Team at the following email: ropa@apu.ac.jp

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