



Asian Ecumenical Institute — 2026

Theme: ‘Hope for Liberation Amidst the Groaning of Creation’

5 – 31 July 2026
Chiang Mai, Thailand

Background Information

The Asian Ecumenical Institute (AEI) is a month-long ecumenical formation training course organised annually by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) to develop the leadership capacities of prospective ecumenical and church leaders across Asia. The AEI is an opportunity to foster ecumenism rooted in Christian faith and witness, and to promote unity.

The AEI prioritises the formation of participants’ biblical and theological foundations to broaden and sharpen their perspectives on ecumenism. In an interdenominational and intercultural setting, participants will have opportunities to live in a spiritual atmosphere, learn together through interactive sessions and dialogue, and develop perspectives that enable them to understand contextual ecumenical responses to Asia’s emerging realities.

By the end of the programme, participants will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and values to actively engage in and contribute to their churches and the ecumenical movement.

Asian Ecumenical Institute - 2026

Theme: ‘Hope for Liberation Amidst the Groaning of Creation’

The theme of AEI – 2026, ‘Hope for Liberation Amidst the Groaning of Creation’ (Romans 8:19-21), invites deep, collective reflection on creation’s suffering—from bondage to decay—particularly in the Asian context. It will examine how this “groaning” manifests socially, environmentally, and spiritually, while pointing to the Christian hope that promises liberation for all creation.

The AEI will also underscore the vital role of the ecumenical movement, both throughout history and in our present time, in inspiring hope and fostering practical engagement that contributes to the alleviation of creation’s suffering. It seeks to challenge apathy, indifference, and neglect of situations that corrupt creation. It emphasises Christian hope that not only proclaims the promise of new creation but also faithfully participates in the liberation and renewal of creation.

AEI – 2026 will take place from **5 – 31 July 2026** (*arrival in Chiang Mai on 5 July and departure on 31 July*) **at the CCA Headquarters located on the Payap University campus in Chiang Mai, Thailand.** CCA member churches, councils, and ecumenical organisations are encouraged to recommend interested candidates from their constituencies to apply for AEI – 2026.

Admissions will be limited to twenty-four (24) applicants. Applications will be assessed and evaluated based on their commitment to ecumenism expressed in the statement, leadership potential, institutional endorsement, and willingness to transmit the learnings to churches and communities upon completing the course. Gender and confessional balances, and country/sub-regional representation will also be considered in the final selection process.

A team of distinguished theologians, biblical scholars, academicians, ecumenists, social scientists, activists, and educators will serve as resource persons for the training.

AEI – 2026 will aim at:

- training a new group of prospective ecumenical leaders in Asia – from the clergy, laity, youth, and seminary students who are committed to ecumenism and ecumenical values;
- equipping participants with sound theological, socio-political, and practical skills with a broader ecumenical vision, tools of analysis of the Asian reality, and the development of leadership skills;
- strengthening capacities for leadership and collaborative action in contemporary ecumenical contexts.

Who can apply?

- ✓ Young pastors, theological students, church workers, and lay persons nominated and recommended by their respective churches, ecumenical councils or ecumenical organisations in Asia.
- ✓ Asian youth between the ages of 25 and 35 years are eligible to apply.
- ✓ Persons interested in broadening their ecumenical perspectives and committed to promoting and actively engaging in the ecumenical movement in their respective countries.

Scholarship/Travel bursaries

The total cost for one student's participation in the month-long AEI – 2026, including registration, board and lodging, and tuition, is 3,000 USD.

Limited travel subsidies will be available, upon request, for candidates applying for admission from South and Southeast Asian countries. Churches from South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Aotearoa New Zealand, and Australia are encouraged to sponsor the travel costs of participants from their respective churches.

How to Apply?

AEI – 2026 applications will be accepted online via Google Forms: [AEI-2026 Application Form](#)

Application Deadline

Completed applications for AEI – 2026 should be submitted to CCA no later than **24 April 2026**.