

Asian Shark Conservation, Research, and Leadership Workshop 2025

Application Information Packet

About the workshop

From **14–19 July 2025**, James Cook University (Australia and Singapore), in collaboration with local partners and global experts, will host a five-day workshop for Asian shark and ray researchers and conservation practitioners. Fully funded travel and accommodation expenses will be provided for successful applicants to travel **from Asian countries** to the workshop location at **Palawan State University** in the city of Puerto Princessa, **Palawan, Philippines**.

Building on the success of the 2023 introductory workshop at James Cook University Singapore, this workshop will take delegates on an in-depth exploration of learning in three core areas that including the following topics:

- (1) Conservation planning and practice including:
 - a. Conservation strategy and goal setting
 - b. Communications and story-telling, translating science to conservation
 - c. Stakeholder and community mapping and engagement, running effective workshops
 - d. Strategy and impact monitoring and evaluation
 - e. Fundraising and grant writing

- (2) Critical research and technical skills including:
 - a. Fisheries monitoring and assessment
 - b. Tagging, telemetry, and data visualisation
 - c. Species risk assessments and conservation prioritisation
 - d. Social, cultural, and economic data collection

- (3) Leadership and professional development including:
 - a. Strategic thinking and decision making
 - b. Negotiation and communicating with influence
 - c. Leading others
 - d. Scaling up your organisation

The 2025 workshop will be highly interactive and founded in the real-world challenges faced by delegates. Each delegate will bring a specific challenge they need to address to the workshop and through small group learning, coaching, and peer-to-peer collaboration, delegates will develop a personalized 12-month action plan to work on this challenge with follow-up support from trainers.

Please note that all successful applicants will need to **arrange their own travel** to the workshop in Puerto Princessa, Palawan, Philippines. The travel costs from destinations **in Asia**

will be reimbursed to each **delegate after the workshop** and after we receive copies of your ticket receipts and an invoice to us for your travel costs (we will supply you with invoice template to use). Delegates will also be responsible for the cost of dinner each night.

Submitting your Application

The application must be submitted online by clicking [THIS LINK](#). Applications must be submitted by **23:59 Monday, 31 March Singapore time (UTC + 8 hours)**.

The application questions are described below. We strongly suggest you prepare your answers to these questions on your local computer/device and then copy and paste your answers into the online form to avoid losing your work should there be a loss of connectivity or website malfunction. Also note that the assessment rubric that we will use to assess applications is included on page 5 of this information packet.

The questions are as follows:

1. First name [text]
2. Last name [text]
3. Email [email]
4. In which country do you live? [text]
5. What is the nationality of the passport you would use to enter the Philippines?
6. I have visited the [Philippines Immigration website](#) and I confirm that:
(1) I see no reason why I would be unable to enter the Philippines; and
(2) my passport will be valid for a period of at least six (6) months beyond 31 July 2025.
[YES/NO answer]
7. What best described the organisation you work with [multiple choice - choose from Gov, university, NGO, independent, other]
8. Your current role (pick the role that fits you best) [multiple student, researcher, academic, government worker, NGO worker, other]
9. How long have you been working in research/conservation [multiple choice 1-3 yrs, 4-6 yrs, 7-10 yrs, 11-15 yrs, 16-20 yrs, >20 years]
10. Did you attend the previous Asian shark conservation, research, and leadership workshop held at James Cook University Singapore in 2023? (*Note: attendance at the previous workshop is not required, the 2025 workshop is open to all and delegates will be selected on their merit and need*) [YES/NO answer]

11. Tell us about yourself and your background in research and/or conservation [text limit 3000 characters including spaces]
12. Why do you want to attend the Asian shark conservation, research, and leadership workshop? [text limit 3000 characters including spaces]
13. How do you think this training could benefit your work, your organisation, or your local community? [text limit 4000 characters including spaces]
14. Tell us about a specific challenge you anticipate facing in the next 12 months related to your research, conservation work, or professional development—one that you would like support in overcoming. This could be either a **technical problem*** or an **adaptive challenge***.

- **A technical problem** is easy to identify and has a clear, simple solution, such as analyzing an existing dataset or designing a sampling methodology for local fish landing sites.
- **An adaptive challenge** is more complex, with multiple possible solutions or approaches that may require changes in attitudes, values or relationships. For example, increasing fisher compliance with a Marine Protected Area, or strengthening an NGO's financial sustainability and impact.

Describe your challenge and what kind of support would be most helpful to you [text limit 3750 characters including spaces].

15. If you have a second technical or adaptive challenge you would like help with, please describe this challenge below [text limit 3750 characters including spaces].
16. Lastly, tell us about your thoughts and/or vision for shark and ray conservation and management into the future [text limit 3000 characters including spaces].
17. Please upload your CV [file upload]

Contact the organisers

If you have any questions regarding your application, please contact:

- Andrew Chin: andrew.chin@jcu.edu.au
- Neil Hutchinson: neil.hutchinson@jcu.edu.au
- Mina Hatayama: mina.hatayama@my.jcu.edu.au

*The difference between a technical problem and an adaptive challenge

TECHNICAL PROBLEMS VS. ADAPTIVE CHALLENGES

The single biggest failure of leadership is to treat adaptive challenges like technical problems.

TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

1. Easy to identify
2. Often lend themselves to quick and easy (cut-and-dried) solutions
3. Often can be solved by an authority or expert
4. Require change in just one or a few places; often contained within organizational boundaries
5. People are generally receptive to technical solutions
6. Solutions can often be implemented quickly—even by edict

ADAPTIVE CHALLENGES

1. Difficult to identify (easy to deny)
2. Require changes in values, beliefs, roles, relationships, & approaches to work
3. People with the problem do the work of solving it
4. Require change in numerous places; usually cross organizational boundaries
5. People often resist even acknowledging adaptive challenges.
6. "Solutions" require experiments and new discoveries; they can take a long time to implement and cannot be implemented by edict

EXAMPLES

- Take medication to lower blood pressure
- Implement electronic ordering and dispensing of medications in hospitals to reduce errors and drug interactions
- Increase penalty for drunk driving
- Change lifestyle to eat healthy, get more exercise and lower stress
- Encourage nurses and pharmacists to question and even challenge illegible or dangerous prescriptions by physicians
- Raise public awareness of the dangers and effects of drunk driving, targeting teenagers in particular

Adapted from Ronald A. Heifetz & Donald L. Laurie, "The Work of Leadership," *Harvard Business Review*, January-February 1997; and Ronald A. Heifetz & Marty Linsky, *Leadership on the Line*, Harvard Business School Press, 2002



Assessment Rubric

Questions and Criteria

Questions 1 to 10 are administrative and are not assessed

Experience in Research & Conservation (Q11)

This is also **not assessed**. This information will help us understand the background and experience level of people who might be attending. We would like delegates to represent different levels and experience and diverse backgrounds, but this is not a criterion we will use in assessing applications.

Motivation & Passion (Q12) – 30%

This question explores your motivation for attending the workshop, your personal and//or professional reasons for wanting to attend.

Potential Impact of Training (Q13) - 40%

This question explores how you think the workshop will benefit your work, your organisation and/or your own professional development, and what you think the impact will be on your conservation efforts.

Understanding & Explanation of Challenges (Q14-15) – 20%

This question helps us understand the specific conservation challenges the delegates may bring to the workshop. This will help us structure and identify the peer-to-peer facilitated learning groups and the workshop content, but will also help us understand the potential impact of the workshop and how it will benefit actions and outcomes over the next 12 months.

Commitment and vision for Shark & Ray Conservation (Q16) – 10%

This question will help us understand your vision for shark and ray conservation in Asia, what you believe to be the future directions that conservation needs to move towards, continue doing, or perhaps leave behind. We want to understand how you see your role in making this happen.