

**ASEAN AUSTRALIA SMART CITIES WEBINAR SERIES:
PROMOTING SMART TOURISM RECOVERY VIA VIRTUAL REALITY
2 March 2021, 1:00 – 2:00 PM GMT+8, VIA ZOOM**

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



**Moderator
Steven Schipani**

Project Administration Unit Head, Southeast Asia Department, ADB

Steven Schipani is the Project Administration Unit Head at ADB's Viet Nam Resident Mission, where he manages a large portfolio of public investment projects, technical assistance, and knowledge work covering many sectors. Mr. Schipani also leads ADB's tourism program in the Greater Mekong Subregion. A United States national, Mr. Schipani has been promoting sustainable tourism in Southeast Asia for more than 25 years, starting his career as a US Peace Corps Volunteer in Thailand. He holds a Master of Public Health from Emory University and BS in Public Health from Southern Connecticut State University.



Raquel Perez Wong
Chief Marketing Officer, iACADEMY (Philippines)

Raquel is a Public Administration graduate from the University of the Philippines. She obtained her Master's Degree in Public Administration and Policy from The Catholic University of Korea. She began working in the Philippine Senate in 2009 under the Office of Senator Edgardo J. Angara where she headed Media Relations and Operations, which provided her rich experience in managing and promoting the Senator's advocacies, projects, initiatives and legislative plans.

In 2014, Raquel joined iACADEMY as Assistant Vice President for Corporate Communications and became Vice President for Corporate Communications in 2015. She started the rebranding of the school launching the "Dare to be Different and be a Game Changer" Campaign. She also spearheaded milestone events such as the first public student exhibition in Rockwell, 24 hour gaming and development competition - Battle League, Creative Camp, TEDxiACADEMY and the 15th year anniversary program which led to the very first outdoor music and film festival held in Ayala Triangle Garden Makati - iACADEMY became the very first school to hold a stand alone event in The Garden.

Raquel was Chief Operating Officer from 2017-2020 where iACADEMY experienced its highest growth of student population and enabled the rise of the new campus, iACADEMY Nexus. She also led the project partnership with the Philippine Department of Tourism to launch the very first AR Tourism campaign and comprehensive travel guide app for tourists as well as developing the country's first physical distancing app, MAZE at the onset of the global pandemic. She now serves as iACADEMY's Chief Marketing Officer to drive the company's growth through both the core and non-core products and businesses by providing a strategic vision and leading innovation.

Raquel aims to continue making waves in the private sector while continuing efforts to contribute to nation building.



Erik Champion

Honorary Professor, Australian National University Centre for Digital Humanities Research

Erik is an Honorary Professor at the Australian National University's Centre for Digital Humanities Research; an Honorary Research Fellow of the School of Social Sciences, FABLE, at University of Western Australia; and Emeritus Professor at Curtin University. He was previously UNESCO Chair of Cultural Heritage and Visualization, and Professor at Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia. He was also CIC Visualization Theme Leader and Steering Committee member at the Curtin Institute for Computation (CIC).

He is a chief investigator on four Australian Research Council grants (involving research infrastructures and cultural heritage), and an Australian Research Data Commons Platform Grant. He trained as an architect, an architectural historian, received a second masters (with honors) in philosophy, and his ARC Scholarship PhD was from two Faculties (Geomatics-Engineering and Architecture-Melbourne School of Design) with Lonely Planet as industry partner. He has been teaching multimedia since 1990. He specializes in virtual heritage and serious games.



Marceline Girol

Chief Strategy Officer, VRWORLD.TV

Dr. Marceline Girol is a French national based out of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She holds an MBA and a PHD in Marketing and Strategy.

For the past 10 years, she works in the field of innovations applied to industries. She is the founder and the strategist behind VRworld.tv and it's new product awty.travel. Prior to taking her entrepreneur leap she was the Country CEO of France and then Head of Development Asia for a Top 5 world out-of-home company from Germany.

She speaks fluently 7 languages. She sees the proverbial half-full glass and infects those who work with her with the same insatiable appetite for perfection and going the extra mile – for her Clients, the causes she champions, friends and the co-workers she inspires.



Jens Thraenhart

Executive Director, Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office

Jens Thraenhart has over 25 years of international travel, tourism, and hospitality experience. In 1999, he founded Chameleon Strategies, an Affiliate Member of the World Tourism Organization, advising tourism organizations and travel businesses how to leverage digital engagement to drive sustainability. Previously, he co-founded leading [People’s Republic of] China] travel marketing agency Dragon Trail and headed up the marketing strategy and digital departments at Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, Canadian Tourism Commission, and Dusit International. Jens currently leads the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office as its Executive Director, where since 2014 he has spearheaded several award-winning sustainable tourism initiatives. Mr. Thraenhart has been recognized by Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association as one of the Top 25 Most Extraordinary Minds in Travel and Hospitality. An MBA graduate of Cornell University, he is currently a Doctorate in Tourism candidate at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.