

Convening of the 10th International Academic Forum

Asian Research Institute for International Social Work
Shukutoku University
The 10th International Academic Forum

Exploring the Global Potential of Buddhist Social Work: Spirituality as a Bridge Between Theory and Practice

On January 31, 2026 (Saturday), the Asian Research Institute for International Social Work of Shukutoku University convened the 10th International Academic Forum with “Exploring the Global Potential of Buddhist Social Work: Spirituality as a Bridge Between Theory and Practice” as its theme.

Held at Building 9 on the Tokyo Campus of Shukutoku University, the event was a great success. Participants included 45 persons both from and outside the university, as well as 120 online participants.

The morning’s keynote speeches were by Professor Edward R. Canda (Professor Emeritus, University of Kansas), an international leader in researching spirituality and social work, and Professor Susumu Shimazono (Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo), speaking from the perspective of Japanese religious history and thanatology. Together, they showed that a spiritual perspective emphasizing human dignity and relationships may provide critical clues to enhancing contemporary social work.



Professor Edward R. Canda



Professor Susumu Shimazono

Dr. Yosuke Imai



Ven. Dr. Karma Sangbo



Dr. Tatsuya Imamura



Discussion

According to the report of the afternoon's Practice Session, practitioners and medical professionals from Japan and abroad presented on Buddhist knowledge and care, including free-education initiatives for Himalayan children, palliative care practices based on Buddhist principles in Vihara units, and the application of Naikan therapy in psychiatric clinical settings, leaving a strong impression on many participants.

In addition, the panel discussion by the speakers and the lively discussions with online guests were well received.

This forum meaningfully attempted to demonstrate the importance of the proper application of Buddhist knowledge and religious resources in the increasingly professionalized world of contemporary social work—a key topic when considering comprehensive care and community support for people—and highlighted specific possibilities.



[Inquiries]

Asian Research Institute for International Social Work (ARIISW)
Shukutoku University
200 Danganji-cho, Chuo-ku, Chiba-shi, Chiba 260-8701
asiainst@soc.shukutoku.ac.jp