Australian National University Mongolia Institute

2026 Mongolia Update: Cultural heritage in a changing world

Program booklet

Thursday 5 November 2026



The Update is organised by the ANU Mongolia Institute, the only dedicated hub for Mongolian studies in the Southern Hemisphere.

Mongolia Update is generously supported by the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, the Karakorum Heritage Foundation and the Embassy of Mongolia to Australia.

Australian National University
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EMBASSY OF MONGOLIA TO AUSTRALIA

KARAKORUM HERITAGE FOUNDATION

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General information

Location

Lecture Theatre 1(HB1),

Hedley Bull Building

130 Garran Road, ANU

Acton ACT 2601

Wi-Fi details

For the Update and the Symposium at Hedley Bull, please connect to the following Wi-Fi:

- **Wi-Fi:** ANU-Secure
- **Username:** MongoliaUpdate26
- **Password:** ANU2601!

ANU Mongolia Institute

Established in 2013, the ANU Mongolia Institute promotes Mongolian Studies at ANU, across Australia and throughout Australasia. It provides information and expertise on Mongolia to universities, government organisations and the wider public, while supporting a network of Australian researchers working on Mongolia. Through its research, teaching and public events, the Institute fosters greater understanding of Mongolia's history, cultural heritage, society and contemporary challenges.

To learn more about the Institute's activities, events and opportunities to engage with Mongolia, visit: mongoliainstitute.anu.edu.au.

Mongolian Studies at ANU

Mongolian Language

ANU is the only university in the Southern Hemisphere to offer a minor in Mongolian language. The program develops students' language skills to an intermediate level and is also available online through Open Universities Australia, making Mongolian language study accessible to students across Australia and internationally.

Courses on Mongolia

ANU offers courses exploring Mongolian history, society and contemporary challenges, including Modern Mongolia: Challenges to the Environment, Economy and Empire. This course is an intensive, four-week field course in Mongolia, offering students first-hand insights into contemporary life through engagement with local communities and industry stakeholders, visits to historical and cultural sites, and exploration of the mining sector.

Karakorum Heritage Foundation

The Foundation was created in 2014 with its primary goal to protect, preserve and promote Mongolian traditional nomadic cultural values, customs and heritage. It also aims to strengthen awareness of Mongolia's rich intangible cultural heritage and its importance to our way of life while ensuring that our traditions and customs are protected and passed on to future generations.

Program

TIME	PROGRAM
8.30am	Arrival and Registration
9.00am	Greeting with Mongolian Horse Fiddle Music Zorigtbaatar Batbayar, the Grand Theatre of Mongolian National Arts; Tsogtbaatar Batsaikhan, Mongolian State University of Culture and Arts
9.10am	Welcome and Opening Remarks Professor Helen Sullivan, Dean, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific His Excellency Davaasuren Damdinsuren, Ambassador of Mongolia to Australia Katie Smith, Director, South Asia and Mongolia Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
09.50am	Keynote: "Healing in Writing: Mongolian Medical Knowledge Across Time" Professor Bold Sharav, President, Mongolian Academy of Medical Sciences
10.30am	Morning Tea - Archery performance/demonstration "More than a Sport: Mongolian Traditional Archery as Living Heritage" (with Bow and Arrow demonstration), Bayartsetseg Yambiidonchir, Bayar Archery Coach, Sydney
11.15am	Keynote: "Kharakhorum -- Reconnecting Mongolia's Imperial Past with Its Cultural Future" His Excellency Nambaryn Enkhbayar, Former President of Mongolia
12.00pm	"Seeking Mongolia's Traditional Metaphors for the State: Gendering the Hearth and the Battle Standard in Prayers for Chinggis Khan-Worship" Associate Professor Dotno Dashdorj Pount, Waseda University, Japan
12.30pm	Lunch and Music Performance Starting at 1.00pm Enkhbaatar Gankhuyag; Zorigtbaatar Batbayar; Tsogtbaatar Batsaikhan and Indra Jozyef, Artists from the Grand Theatre of Mongolian National Arts and Mongolian State University of Culture and Arts
1.30pm	Memory and Living Heritage "Healing by Hands: Mongolian Bonesetting as Knowledge, Practice, and Heritage", Professor Li Narangoa, ANU "Back into Place" (Film Screening). Tulgur, Filmmaker, Director, Hanmu Cultural Media Co. Ltd., China "Pride and Cultural Transmission: The Case of Handicraft Practices among Kazakhs in Mongolia", Associate Professor Chieko Hirota, Future University Hakodate, Japan Chair: Dr Uchralt, Otede, University of New South Wales
3.00pm	Afternoon Tea **Book launch** of *Mongolian Healing: knowledge, transmission and practice across Inner Asia* by Li Narangoa, Natasha Fijn and Benedikte V Lindskog
3.45pm	Nomadic Pastoralism as Living Heritage "Nomadic Ethnoveterinary Healing Practices and Knowledge", Associate Professor Natasha Fijn, ANU "Children Learning through Nomadic Culture", Gerelmaa Altangerel, University of Canberra "Keeping Nomadism Alive: Education, Intergenerational Knowledge, and Cultural Change", Egshiglen Chuluunhuu, Program Curator, Education and Heritage Lead, New Nomadic Institute Chair: Chuluunkhuu Baatar, ANU
5.15pm	Closing Remarks Brian Thornton, Honorary Consul of Mongolia in New South Wales
6.00pm	Dinner (speakers & invited guests only)

Update Speakers

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Professor Helen Sullivan
Dean, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific

Helen Sullivan is a public policy researcher, teacher, advisor, and senior university leader. A political sociologist, she was educated in the humanities and social sciences and holds degrees in Modern History and Political Science (BA Comb. Hons, University of Birmingham, UK), Women's Studies (MA, University of York, UK), and Public Policy (PhD, University of Birmingham, UK). She currently serves as Dean of the College of Asia and the Pacific at the Australian National University.

His Excellency Davaasuren Damdinsuren
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Mongolia to Australia

His Excellency Davaasuren Damdinsuren was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Mongolia to the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand in 2021. He holds a degree in International Economy, a Master's degree in Economic Science from the Moscow University of International Relations and an MBA in International Business from Seoul National University, and completed executive and professional studies at Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore and the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (DKI APCSS) in Hawaii, United States. A career diplomat, Ambassador Davaasuren has held notable positions, including Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister of Mongolia, the Minister Counselor and Deputy Chief of Mission in Washington DC, USA, State Secretary and Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia.

Katie Smith
Director of the South Asia and Mongolia Section, DFAT

Katie Smith is a former Australian Ambassador to Mongolia, serving from 2022 to 2025. She is now the Director of the South Asia and Mongolia Section at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), overseeing regional development and bilateral relations with Bhutan, Nepal and Mongolia. She has previously served in Lao PDR, Timor-Leste and Indonesia, and held various DFAT roles in Canberra. She holds degrees from the London School of Economics and the University of New South Wales.

Keynote: "Healing in Writing: Mongolian Medical Knowledge Across Time"

Professor Bold Sharav
Mongolian Academy of Medical Sciences

Bold Sharav is the President of the Mongolian Academy of Medical Sciences and professor at "Ach" Medical University and the Mongolian University of Pharmaceutical Sciences, has authored 110 books and textbooks and published over 1,000 scholarly works in 8 languages since 1990. He has supervised 2 ScD, 21 PhD, and 90 MSc students. In 2024, he led the national project "108 Volumes of Traditional Medicine", publishing 50 volumes of historical medical sources and scholarly works. In 2025, he led research on *A Complete Record of the Body by Imperial Order*, a mid-18th-century Manchu-translated medical manuscript, contributing to Mongolia's first inscription of an ancient medical work on UNESCO's Memory of the World International Register.

Archery performance/demonstration: "More than a Sport: Mongolian Traditional Archery as Living Heritage" (with Bow and Arrow demonstration)

Bayartsetseg Yambiidonchir
Bayar Archery Coach, Sydney
Bayartsetseg Yambiidonchir is a Mongolian traditional archer, educator, and cultural heritage advocate with over 25 years of experience in traditional archery. She began practising in 1999 and has represented Mongolia internationally since 2007. Based in Sydney, she is the founder of Bayar Archery Coach and an instructor at Macarthur Traditional Archers. She serves as Risk & Safety Officer on the National Executive Committee of Traditional Archery Australia and chairs the International Cooperation Committee of the World Traditional Archery Federation. Her work focuses on cultural transmission, education, and international cooperation, promoting Mongolian traditional archery as a living heritage that connects generations and cultures.

Keynote: “Kharakhorum -- Reconnecting Mongolia's Imperial Past with Its Cultural Future”

His Excellency Nambaryn Enkhbayar
Former President of Mongolia

Nambaryn Enkhbayar is former President of Mongolia, serving from 2005 to 2009. He previously served as Prime Minister (2000–2004), Speaker of Parliament (2004–2005), and Minister of Culture (1992–1996). A graduate of the Maxim Gorky Literature Institute in Moscow, he worked as a writer and translator, translating literary works between Mongolian, Russian and English. His interests include philosophy, comparative religion, human rights, constitutional studies, education and technology. He currently serves as Chairman of the City Council of Kharkhorum, Mongolia’s ancient imperial capital, where he is actively involved in the city’s restoration and redevelopment.

“Seeking Mongolia’s Traditional Metaphors for the State: Gendering the Hearth and the Battle Standard in Prayers for Chinggis Khan-Worship”

Associate Professor Dotno Dashdorj Pount
Waseda University, Japan

Dotno Pount received her PhD from the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations department of University of Pennsylvania in 2023, where she wrote her dissertation under Professor Christopher P Atwood’s direction on the Cult of Chinggis Khan, with a special focus on the period before 1636. She worked as an adjunct professor of History at the University of Delaware, and as a lecturer her alma mater, the University of Pennsylvania, from 2023-2025. During the academic year of 2025-26, Dr Pount was a Research Associate at the Women’s Studies in Religion Program at the Harvard Divinity School, and since 2026, she has been working as an Assistant Professor at Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan. She continued to work on her monograph on the history of the Cult of Chinggis Khan, as well as the critical edition of its liturgical tradition, the Altan Bichig (“Golden Notes”).

"Healing by Hands: Mongolian Bonesetting as Knowledge, Practice, and Heritage"

Professor Li Narangoa
Director, ANU Mongolia Institute

Professor Li Narangoa is a historian at the Australian National University’s School of Culture, History and Language, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, and the founding director of the ANU Mongolia Institute. She specialises in modern Japanese and Mongolian history and society, and before joining ANU she was a researcher at the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies in Copenhagen. She recently led an international, multidisciplinary team of researchers, funded by the Australian Research Council, on Mongolian medical knowledge, resulting in the edited volume Mongolian Healing which is being launched at this Update. In 2023, the President of Mongolia awarded her the Order of the Polar Star, the country’s highest state honour, for her contributions to Mongolian studies. That same year, she was elected vice president of the International Association of Mongolian Studies.

“Back into Place” (Film Screening)

Tulgur
Filmmaker, Director, Hanmu Cultural Media Co. Ltd., China

Tulgur is a highly experienced photographer, videographer, and creative director, he has worked across television, media, and cultural production for more than 15 years. A graduate of Hohhot Minzu University in Journalism, Photography, and Videography, he has built a distinguished career in live broadcasting, documentaries, commercials, music videos, and cultural events. Since founding Hanmu Cultural Media Co., Ltd. in 2018, he has led a wide range of productions for government, corporate, and international clients, while also serving as cinematographer on several acclaimed ethnic film projects.

“Pride and Cultural Transmission: The Case of Handicraft Practices among Kazakhs in Mongolia”

Associate Professor Chieko Hirota
Future University Hakodate, Japan

Chieko Hirota is a cultural anthropologist specializing in craft traditions and nomadic culture

among Kazakh communities in western Mongolia. Her research examines how craft knowledge and traditions are transmitted across generations in Inner and Central Asia. She has conducted fieldwork in Mongolia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Her co-authored publications include *Kazakh Embroidery* (2019), *The Dynamics of Nomadism in Central Asia* (2023), and *Rural Transitions in Mongolia and Central Asia: Pastoralism, Wellbeing and Economic Relations* (2026). She holds a PhD in interdisciplinary studies and is currently an associate professor at Future University Hakodate and a visiting researcher at the Australian National University.

Book launch of *Mongolian Healing: knowledge, transmission and practice across Inner Asia* by Li Narangoa, Natasha Fijn and Benedikte V Lindskog

"Nomadic Ethnoveterinary Healing Practices and Knowledge"

Associate Professor Natasha Fijn
ANU

Associate Professor Natasha Fijn is part of the Australian National University's Mongolia Institute and an ARC Future Fellow. For over twenty years, she has combined multispecies ethnography with visual anthropology through employing photography and observational filmmaking as field research methods in Mongolia. Her seminal work, *Living with Herds: Human-Animal Coexistence in Mongolia* (2011) offers an in-depth multispecies ethnography of co-existence with herd animals. Currently, she leads an ARC project titled "A Multispecies Anthropological Approach to Influenza" (2022–2027). She co-edited the volume *Mongolian Healing: knowledge, transmission and practice across Inner Asia* (2026).

"Children Learning through Nomadic Culture"

Gerelmaa Altangerel
University of Canberra

Gerelmaa Altangerel is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Canberra from Mongolia. She served as a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant at Indiana University and was an Australia Awards scholar while completing her Master's degree in Education Studies at the University of Canberra. Her research focuses on young children's self-regulated learning (SRL). Drawing on ethnographic methods, her doctoral study examines how young Mongolian nomadic herder children develop and demonstrate SRL within their home environments and during their transition to compulsory schooling. Through this work, she contributes to a more culturally responsive understanding of children's learning and development across diverse contexts.

"Keeping Nomadism Alive: Education, Intergenerational Knowledge, and Cultural Change"

Egshiglen Chuluunhuu
Program Curator, Education and Heritage Lead, New Nomadic Institute

Egshiglen Chuluunhuu is a curator, educator, and founding member of the New Nomadic Institute, a research and action NGO based in Mongolia. Working across climate education and biocultural heritage, she turns to nomadic ontologies as a response to the metacrisis, asking what nomadic life reveals about the assumptions behind escalating ecological and social crises. As Education and Heritage Lead, she designs novel land-based programs that reconnect the increasingly urbanized youth with herder communities, where land, season, and elders serve as co-teachers. She holds a BA in Environmental Science and Engineering from Harvard University.

Closing Remarks

Brian Thornton
Honorary Consul of Mongolia in New South Wales

Brian Thornton is a graduate in Economics from the ANU with over 30 years' experience in the minerals sector in Australia and North Asia. He is the Managing Director of Hawthorn Resources Limited (ASX: HAW) which owns & manages the Anglo Saxon gold mine at Pinjin in WA. He is the former Chairman of Xanadu Mines Limited (ASX: XAM) which he founded in 2004. Xanadu, a pioneering explorer and developer in Mongolia, was acquired by Zijin Mining of China and Bastion Resources in July 2025. Brian is the Honorary Consul for Mongolia in New South Wales, appointed in December 2020

Chairs

Dr Uchralt Otede
University of New South Wales

Dr Uchralt is a language teacher in Adult Education at UNSW Canberra, teaching Japanese and Mandarin at the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Diplomatic Academy. His research focuses on environmental politics and activism in Mongolia. He also promotes Mongolian language and cultural heritage through community teaching and YouTube videos on classical Mongolian script. "YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/@Mongolian.Script".

Chuluunkhuu Baatar
ANU

Chuluunkhuu Baatar is a Mongolian climate policy and finance expert with over a decade of professional experience advancing climate action across government, banking, and international development. She has served as Green Climate Fund Liaison Officer for Mongolia, an advisor to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, and Head of Green Funding at the Trade and Development Bank of Mongolia. As co-founder of OLOLT, she has led initiatives on carbon markets, climate finance, and renewable energy certification. She holds an MSc in Carbon Finance from the University of Edinburgh and is currently pursuing a PhD in Science Communication at the Australian National University.

Performers

Greeting with Mongolian Horse Fiddle Music in the Morning: Zorigtbaatar Batbayar, and Tsogtbaatar Batsaikhan

Zorigtbaatar Batbayar

Zorigtbaatar Batbayar is a professional horse head fiddle player and a throat singer. He is one of the masters of traditional praise singer and performs at the Grand Theatre of Mongolian National Arts. He is one of the great talents who preserves and promotes Mongolian cultural heritages and performs on domestic and international stages including venues across Australia, Germany, France, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, Japan, China and Czech Republic.

Tsogtbaatar Batsaikhan

Tsogtbaatar Batsaikhan is a professional music lecturer and concertmaster specialised in Mongolian traditional long song and horse head fiddle at the Mongolian National University of Arts and Culture. He is also a throat singer and musician who performs at venues across Taiwan, China, Germany and Russia.

Music Performance at Lunch: Enkhbaatar Gankhuyag, Zorigtbaatar Batbayar; Tsogtbaatar Batsaikhan and Indra Jozyef

Enkhbaatar Gankhuyag

Enkhbaatar Gankhuyag is a renowned Mongolian long song singer (urtiin duuch) and Honored Artist of Mongolia, performing with the Grand Theater of Mongolian National Arts. He is celebrated for preserving traditional nomadic vocal arts on domestic and international stages including venues across Kazakhstan, China, Russia, Qatar, Kuwait, France, Germany, Japan, Bulgaria, Hungary and South Korea.

Indra Jozyef

Indra Jozyef is a talented Mongolian horse head fiddle player and singer. As a recent graduate of Badmaarag Music and Art School, a subsidiary of Mongolian National University of Arts and Culture, she is an emerging young artist dedicated to preserving and sharing Mongolia's rich traditional music heritage