

from missions such as South Korea, Poland, Hungary, Switzerland, Malaysia, and Austria were in attendance to kick off the Year of the Horse. The reception provided a spirited platform for global researchers to connect and celebrate Taiwan's hospitality.

Secretary General Daniel Kuo-Ching Chen of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presided over the gathering, celebrating the 16th year of the Taiwan Fellowship. He noted that the program has successfully hosted over 1,600 scholars globally since 2010, with 130 attending this year. Chen called upon the fellows to become 'ambassadors' for Taiwan, using their research and digital platforms to present a real and vibrant Taiwan to their home countries, ultimately strengthening Taiwan's international ties.



Group photo of the attendees

Professor Elizabeth Larus, a Taiwan Fellowship recipient and Pacific Forum Senior Fellow, shared her insights on living and researching in Taiwan. She discussed incorporating the Taiwan perspective into international relations and her experience studying Taiwan-related topics in Poland. Her story served as an inspiration for other scholars to explore Taiwan's history, culture, and social diversity from various academic angles.



Group photo of the lucky draw prize winners among the visiting fellows

Timed with the Lantern Festival, the reception welcomed international scholars with a lucky draw and traditional Taiwanese refreshments. Cultural experience booths offered hands-on sessions in dough figurine making, lantern painting, and calligraphy. Attendees also engaged with an interactive wall showcasing mythical beasts from the library's Southern Branch, providing a deep dive into Taiwan's festive traditions alongside their professional networking.

■ **The Center for Chinese Studies Holds Academic Seminars for Global Chinese Studies Lectures**

The Center for Chinese Studies (CCS) promotes academic exchanges in order to increase interaction between the local and overseas Chinese Studies communities. To this end, the CCS established the Research Grant for Foreign Scholars in Chinese Studies, which every year assists 20 overseas scholars in coming to Taiwan to conduct research for periods of between 1 to 6 months. Besides hosting Academic Seminars for Global Chinese Studies from time to time at which these scholars can present the fruits of the research, the center also often invites renowned scholars from around the world to visit and deliver lectures. Between January and March, 2026, 1 scholar gave his presentation. Topics and speakers for each session are as follows:

On January 23, 2026, Prof. Hyun-Sun Lee, Seoul National University, South Korea, gave the lecture on "Two Neo-Confucian Interpretive Trajectories of the Taijitu shuo: Zhu Xi and Luo Qinshun, Yi Hwang and Yi I."

News from Taiwan Libraries

■ **Inauguration of Taitung County Library: Featuring "Mountain Mist" Book Walls and "Rift Valley" Reading Zones**

The newly opened Taitung County Library, currently in its trial operation phase, was designed by renowned architect Chang Shu. Centered on the concept of "Mountain Mist," the architectural lines mirror the rolling mountain ranges of Taitung. Incorporating wooden slats and sloped geometries, the structure emerges as a cultural landmark that appears

to "grow from the earth." The interior emphasizes high ceilings and abundant natural light, integrating the original building structure to create an open, multi-layered reading environment.

The interior layout is thoughtfully curated with distinct regional themes: the "Rift Valley Collection Area" utilizes a staggered spatial design to evoke the landscapes of East Rift Valley, with floor-to-ceiling windows inviting natural light to create a focal point for readers. The multimedia center incorporates oceanic elements, offering a rich audiovisual experience. Spanning 11,400 square meters after expansion, the facility adopts an all-age design approach. The children's reading room features grassy motifs and a shimmering starry ceiling—symbolizing the boundless extension of knowledge—while the youth section includes a dedicated manga area to meet diverse community needs. This library seamlessly blends architectural aesthetics with public art, harmonizing local natural scenery with a refined cultural atmosphere.

■ **Groundbreaking of the Taipei Music and Library Center: Taiwan's First Integrated Cultural Landmark for Literature and Music**

Construction has officially commenced on the

"New Main Branch of the Taipei Public Library and the Taipei Concert Hall." As the first dual-structure complex in Taiwan to integrate reading and musical functions, the project occupies a 2.6-hectare site and will feature nine stories above ground and three below, with a total floor area exceeding 90,000 square meters. The architectural exterior is masterfully designed, weaving the imagery of ancient "Bamboo Slips" with Western "Musical Staves" to symbolize the cross-disciplinary fusion of literature and music. Upon completion, it is poised to become a signature cultural landmark for Taipei City.

In terms of library functionality, the new main branch will serve as the core of the city's library system, housing over 700,000 volumes and providing more than 3,000 reading seats. It specifically includes a 2,000-square-meter dedicated space for children to accommodate readers of all ages. The concert hall is being built to world-class specifications, featuring a 1,500-seat symphony hall with a "vineyard-style" seating arrangement modeled after the Berliner Philharmonie. Additionally, the facility will provide a 600-seat multimedia rehearsal space as a permanent home for the Taipei Symphony Orchestra and the Taipei Chinese Orchestra. This development addresses the long-standing demand for professional music venues in Taipei, further enriching the city's profound cultural heritage.



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