

International Institute of Forecasters Announces Pacific Asia Travel Association as Winner of the 2026 IIF Forecasting Practice Competition

(Bruges, BE – March 2, 2026) – The [International Institute of Forecasters](#) (IIF) is pleased to announce Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) as the winner of the [2026 IIF Forecasting Practice Competition](#). The winner, PATA, receives the prestigious IIF Award for the Impact of Forecasting in Practice, along with a \$10,000 prize.

The IIF Award for the Impact of Forecasting in Practice recognizes businesses and institutions that demonstrate significant impact through the application of forecasting and contribute to the forecasting community.

Entries were open to companies and institutions, with teams of up to five contributors. Finalist teams were required to attend the [Foresight Practitioner Conference](#) in person for the Final Round and will submit details of their methodology and impact for publication in a special issue of [Foresight: The International Journal of Applied Forecasting](#). An impact statement from an executive of the organization was also required.

Applications were evaluated based on five key criteria:

- Impact to the business or institution, including quantifiable value-add and cost considerations.
- Impact on the forecasting community through advancing technology, sharing best practices, and publications.
- Degree of technical and/or organizational challenge overcome.
- Role of forecasting in the solution and the portion of value-add attributable to forecasting.
- Style and quality of the application and presentation.

The competition included a call for submissions on October 6, 2025, initial applications due on December 15, 2025, and finalists announced on January 9, 2026. The four finalists selected were Pacific Asia Travel Association, Optiwiser AI Solutions, Fusteka Group, and Unilever. Final applications were due January 31, 2026, with finalist presentations held on Sunday, March 1, 2026. The winner, PATA, was announced on Monday, March 2, 2026 at the [Foresight Practitioner Conference](#) in Bruges, Belgium, and a reprisal of the winner's presentation is scheduled to take place at the conference on Tuesday, March 3, 2026. Unilever was recognized as the Second Place Runner-Up.

PATA's application was based on the impact of their [Asia Pacific Visitor Forecasts](#) publication, developed in partnership with Hong Kong Polytechnic University, which predicts quarterly travel demand over a 3-year horizon to 39 Asia Pacific destinations spanning 1400+ origin-destination pairs. Their scenario-based model incorporates geopolitical risks, exchange rate movements, public health developments, macroeconomic recovery trajectories and other factors, with review

and adjustment by a panel of industry experts. Through their efforts, forecast error declined from 40.2% (2021) to 2.1% (2024), enabling precise capacity, staffing and marketing optimization across airlines, hotels, and tourist attractions in the region. Recent forecasts informed US\$240M targeted investment decisions in China, enabling US\$1.4B incremental tourism revenue in 2023 alone.

The 2026 Competition Committee was chaired by Chris Fry. The Adjudication Panel included Chris Fry, Matthew Schneider, Stephan Kolassa, Spyros Makridakis, and Nikos Kourentzes.

About the International Institute of Forecasters

The International Institute of Forecasters (www.forecasters.org) is dedicated to promoting and improving the science and practice of forecasting. The IIF provides resources, conferences, and publications for forecasters worldwide.