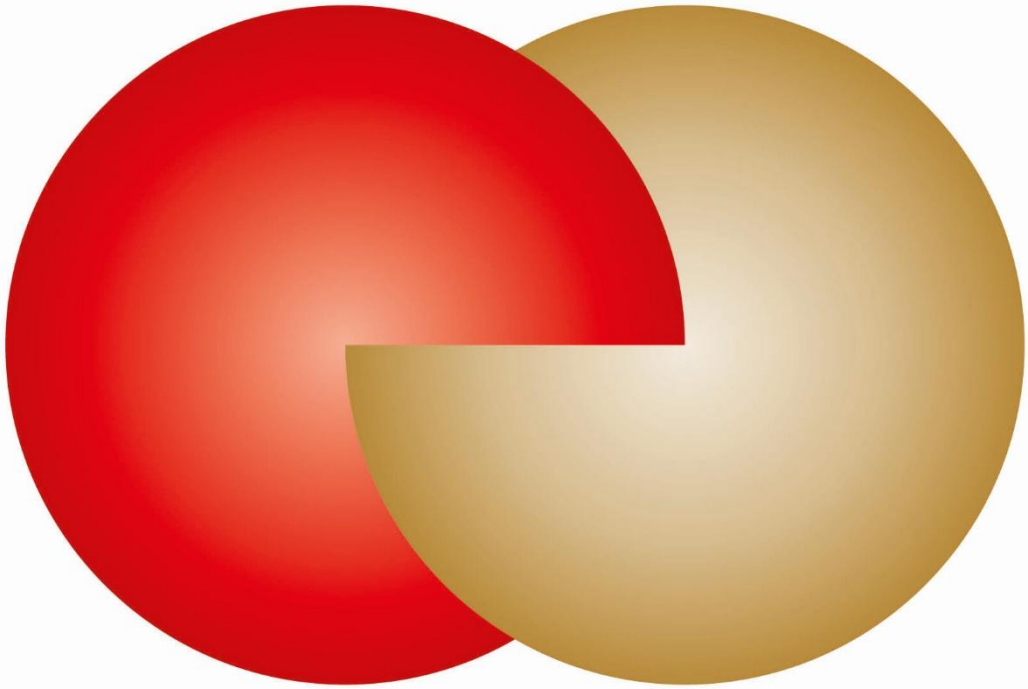
AUSTRIA

AUSTRIA CONNECT SOUTHEAST ASIA 2026

FUTURE AT THE CROSSROADS
NAVIGATING ASEAN'S NEW ECONOMIC PLAYBOOK

SINGAPORE, 05. - 06.11.2026



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Federal Ministry
Economy, Energy
and Tourism
Republic of Austria
WKO

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PROGRAMME

THU 5 NOV 2026	ARRIVAL & WELCOME RECEPTION
	INDIVIDUAL ARRIVAL Participants are kindly requested to arrange their own transportation to Singapore.
	OFFICIAL CONFERENCE HOTELS Mondrian Singapore Duxton 16A Duxton Hill, Singapore 089970 Frasers House Singapore 80 Middle Road, Singapore, 188966
18.00	**SHUTTLE SERVICE TO WELCOME RECEPTION** A dedicated transfer service will be provided from both conference hotels to the event location for all participants. Please gather in front of the hotel, shuttle to depart promptly.
18.30 – 21.00	**WELCOME RECEPTION** Executives and senior representatives from Austrian companies in Southeast Asia and Austria, alongside leaders from Singaporean businesses and authorities, come together at the iconic LeVeL33. Enjoy an evening of meaningful connections and conversations at the world's highest urban microbrewery - a unique setting that celebrates Austrian innovation and heritage. Venue: LeVeL33, 8 Marina Boulevard Downtown Core 018981
19.00	**THE PROLOGUE** • Jürgen Mandl | President, Economic Chamber of Carinthia • Vera Maier | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Singapore
21.00	**SHUTTLE SERVICE TO OFFICIAL CONFERENCE HOTELS** A dedicated transfer service will be provided from the event location back to the conference hotels for all participants. Please gather in the tower lobby, shuttle to depart promptly.

PROGRAMME

FRI 6 NOV 2026	CONFERENCE DAY

CONFERENCE VENUE
A*STAR Biopolis
Matrix Building | Theatrette (2nd floor)
30, Biopolis Way, Singapore, 138671

ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA

The following ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA heads will be available for individual talks throughout the day:

- Igor Lukic | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Bangkok
- Herwig Neuper | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Ho Chi Minh City
- Sigmund Nemeti | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Jakarta
- Andrea Kubista | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Malaysia
- Arnulf Gressel | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Manila
- Vera Maier | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Singapore

08.00 – 08.30	**SHUTTLE SERVICE TO THE CONFERENCE VENUE** A dedicated transfer service will be provided from both conference hotels to the event location for all participants. Please gather in front of the hotel, shuttle to depart promptly.
08.30 – 09.00	**REGISTRATION & WELCOME COFFEE** Get your conference pack and enjoy a cup of coffee while connecting with fellow participants before the conference.
The Emcee	**OFFICIAL WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS** Join us for the formal opening of the conference, featuring a warm welcome and introductory remarks that set the stage for the day's discussions: • Vera Maier | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Singapore • H.E. Peter Storer | Austrian Ambassador to Singapore • H.E. CHAN Heng Wing | Singaporean Ambassador to Austria • Suresh Sachi | Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate) and General Counsel, A*STAR • Jürgen Mandl | President, Economic Chamber of Carinthia

09.30 – 10.00	**KEYNOTE I	TECH, TRADE, AND WARS – RESILIENCE AND REALIGNMENT** Despite wars and inflation, tech bubble fears and AI disruption, Asia's core strength in manufacturing, trade, and commerce remains undiminished. The region is trading and investing more, growing in line with or above trend, and undergoing substantial wealth accumulation. There is however considerable regional heterogeneity in resilience and realignment. Taimur Baig | MD & Chief Economist, DBS Bank | SG
10.00 – 10.30	**LEADERSHIP DIALOGUE	AUSTRIA AND ASEAN IN A SHIFTING GLOBAL LANDSCAPE** Amid shifting economic and geopolitical realities, Austria and ASEAN have new opportunities to strengthen their ties. This dialogue explores the future of cooperation in trade, investment and innovation. • Taimur Baig | MD & Chief Economist, DBS Bank | SG • Norbert Haslacher | CEO, Frequentis AG | AT • Suresh Sachi | Deputy Chief Executive Corporate and General Counsel, A*STAR | SG In conversation with Vera Maier | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Singapore
10.30 – 11.05	**PANEL DISCUSSION	STRATEGIC CHOICES AT THE CROSSROADS** Building upon the keynote, explore how businesses and policymakers can navigate uncertainty and seize opportunities in a rapidly changing world. • Priyanka Kishore | Director, Asia Decoded & Columnist, Nikkei Asia | SG/IN • Pavida Pananond | Professor, Intl Business Thammasat Business School | TH • Josef Ullmer | Regional Executive Asia & Oceania, ANDRITZ | ID • Maarten de Vries | Regional Director Asia Pacific, Julius Blum GmbH | MY • Elaine Marie Collado | Country Director, Vriens & Partners | PH Moderator: Sigmund Nemeti | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Jakarta
11.05 – 11.25	**NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK**

11.25– 11.55	**KEYNOTE | WELCOME TO THE AGENTIC ECONOMY – NAVIGATING THE NEXT COMMERCIAL FRONTIER** Beyond efficiency and automation, artificial intelligence is beginning to reshape the very nature of commerce. AI agents are increasingly making decisions, conducting transactions, and influencing purchasing behaviour on behalf of consumers and organizations. As this non-human layer of economic activity expands, businesses face important questions around access, influence, governance, and control. In this evolving landscape, establishing the terms on which machines interact with brands, products, and services may become a critical determinant of future competitiveness. Katja Forbes | Author of Machine Customers, Advisor, Keynote Speaker | AU
11.55 – 12.30	**PANEL DISCUSSION | NAVIGATING THE NEXT AI FRONTIER: FROM HYPE TO IMPACT** As AI becomes increasingly integrated into customer experiences, business operations, and decision-making processes, organisations are entering a new era of transformation. Following the keynote on the emerging agentic economy, this panel examines how businesses are already putting AI to work today, creating measurable value while preparing for a future shaped by intelligent systems and AI-driven interactions. Panellists will share real-world experiences, key lessons, and perspectives on where the greatest opportunities and challenges lie in the years ahead. • Katja Forbes | Author of Machine Customers, Advisor, Keynote Speaker | AU • Oranuch Lerdsuwankij | CEO and Cofounder, Techsauce | TH • Ali Tabatabaei | Founder & CEO, SoftwareQ | MY • Jaya Balaji V | Vice President IT, Scoot | SG • Phuong (Aurora) Nguyen Thi Dan | VP/Head of Global, CX FPT Software | VN Moderator: Andrea Kubista | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Kuala Lumpur
12.30 – 14.15	**NETWORKING LUNCH** Enjoy a relaxed lunch and informal networking with fellow participants before the afternoon sessions.

AFTERNOON PROGRAMME

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<tr><th></th><th colspan="2">TRACK 1</th><th colspan="2">TRACK 2</th></tr>
<tr><th></th><th>OPTION A</th><th>OPTION B</th><th>OPTION A</th><th>OPTION B</th></tr>
<tr><td>14:00
14:30</td><td>EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT
CUSTOMS & TRADE COMPLIANCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA</td><td>TRANSFER &
INTRODUCTION TO A*STAR AND THE INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM</td><td rowspan="2">EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT
BUILDING & MANAGING TEAMS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA DEEP DIVE</td><td rowspan="2">EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT
THE WORLD IN FLUX: STRATEGIC SECURITY BRIEFING (Part I)</td></tr>
<tr><td>15:00
15:30
16:00</td><td rowspan="2">EXCLUSIVE SITE VISIT
INSIDE IMRE | ADVANCED MATERIALS DRIVING TOMORROW’S INDUSTRIES</td><td rowspan="2">EXCLUSIVE SITE VISIT
INSIDE SIMTech & ARTC | MANUFACTURING THE FUTURE</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK</td></tr>
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17:00</td><td>EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT
BUILDING & MANAGING TEAMS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA</td><td rowspan="2">TRANSFER TO NETWORKING RECEPTION</td><td>EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT
CUSTOMS & TRADE COMPLIANCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: A PRACTICAL DEEP-DIVE</td><td>EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT
THE WORLD IN FLUX: STRATEGIC SECURITY BRIEFING (Part II)</td></tr>
<tr><td>17:30</td><td>TRANSFER TO NETWORKING RECEPTION</td><td colspan="2">TRANSFER TO NETWORKING RECEPTION</td></tr>
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TRACK 1	**EXCLUSIVE SITE VISITS | Innovation unlocked: Inside Singapore's R&D Powerhouse** Innovation in Singapore is built on close collaboration between government, research institutions and industry. This exclusive track offers participants rare access to some of the country's most advanced R&D facilities, providing first-hand insights into how cutting-edge research is translated into commercial applications and industrial solutions. Through guided site visits, expert briefings and direct exchanges with leading researchers, participants will gain a deeper understanding of Singapore's innovation ecosystem and its role as a global hub for technology, advanced manufacturing and scientific excellence. Limited availability; pre-registration required. Off-site track.
OPTION A	**ADVANCED MATERIALS & FUTURE TECHNOLOGIES** **Site Visit to A*STAR Institute of Materials Research and Engineering (IMRE)** Explore how advanced materials research is shaping the technologies of tomorrow. This visit to A*STAR's Institute of Materials Research and Engineering (IMRE) offers insights into Singapore's capabilities in areas ranging from next-generation materials and electronics to sustainability and advanced manufacturing. Participants will gain first-hand exposure to IMRE's cutting-edge facilities, including the MARVEL Lab (Materials Accelerator for Research, Venture and Enterprise Launchpad), where AI and automation are accelerating materials discovery, and the Characterization Lab, where advanced analytical techniques are used to understand, validate, and optimise material performance for real-world applications.
14.15 – 15.00	**EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT | CUSTOMS & TRADE COMPLIANCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA** Doing business across Southeast Asia requires companies to navigate different customs regimes, trade agreements and complex regional supply chains. This practical workshop will examine how Free Trade Agreements, special customs regimes, Free Trade Zones and export controls affect market access and cross-border business. It will also look at the region's transport infrastructure, connectivity and evolving trade flows, providing practical insights for companies moving goods to, from or across Southeast Asia. Conference room: • Armin Sonnauer | General Manager Thailand, MIC Customs Solutions | TH • Cristian Predan | Director South-East Asia, Gebrüder Weiss | SG
15.00 – 15.10	**TRANSFER TO IMRE** Participants travel by dedicated shuttle service to A*STAR's Institute of Materials Research and Engineering.
15.10 – 16.30	**INSIDE IMRE | ADVANCED MATERIALS DRIVING TOMORROW'S INDUSTRIES** Gain insights into Singapore's Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE) strategy and discover how A*STAR bridges the gap between scientific discovery and industry application. Experience first-hand how breakthrough materials research is creating new opportunities across advanced manufacturing, electronics, healthcare and sustainability. The guided tour highlights how cutting-edge science is translated into real-world applications through close collaboration with industry.
16.30	**TRANSFER TO A*STAR BIOPOLIS**

16.30 – 17.15	**EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT | BUILDING & MANAGING TEAMS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA** Building and managing successful teams across one of the world's most dynamic Regions require an understanding of very different labour markets, cultures and employee expectations. This workshop explores regional workforce trends and differences, as well as proven practical approaches to attracting, developing and retaining talent. Combining a regional talent perspective with first-hand management experience from across Southeast Asia, the session will provide practical insights into building effective teams in the region. Conference room: • Hannes Saurug | Managing Director, voestalpine Railway Systems Asia | TH • Ricky Foo | Partner and Board & CEO Practice APAC Lead, Mercuri Urval | SG
17.30 – 18.00	**TRANSFER TO NETWORKING RECEPTION** Dedicated shuttle service from the research facility to the evening reception venue.
OPTION B	**FACTORY OF THE FUTURE** **Site Visit to A*STAR Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SIMTech) and A*STAR Advanced Remanufacturing and Technology Centre (ARTC)** Discover how Singapore is shaping the future of manufacturing. This immersive site visit provides exclusive access to two of A*STAR's flagship manufacturing innovation centres, where cutting-edge technologies in automation, robotics, AI, digitalisation and advanced production are developed and deployed in partnership with industry. Participants will gain first-hand insights into how companies, researchers and government work together to build competitive, resilient and sustainable manufacturing ecosystems.
14.15 – 15.30	**TRANSFER & INTRODUCTION TO A*STAR AND THE INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM** Transfer to the site by dedicated shuttle while gaining an overview of Singapore's Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE) strategy and A*STAR's role in strengthening industrial competitiveness through technology development, industry partnerships and innovation deployment.
15.30 – 16.30	**INSIDE SIMTech & ARTC | MANUFACTURING THE FUTURE** Explore how Singapore translates advanced manufacturing research into real-world industrial solutions. Through visits to A*STAR SIMTech and ARTC, participants will gain first-hand insights into emerging technologies, industry-led innovation programmes and collaborative testbeds that are shaping the future of production, automation and sustainable manufacturing.
16.50 – 17.30	**TRANSFER TO NETWORKING RECEPTION** Dedicated shuttle service from the research facility to the evening reception venue.

TRACK 2	**EXECUTIVE WORKSHOPS | Practical Strategies for Southeast Asia** Hands-on sessions designed to tackle critical operational challenges and equip participants with practical strategies. Gain actionable insights from experts on geopolitical developments, workforce management and trade compliance to navigate Southeast Asia's dynamic business environment. Limited to 20 participants per session; pre-registration required.
14.00 – 15.15	**EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT | BUILDING & MANAGING TEAMS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA DEEP DIVE** Building and managing successful teams across one of the world's most dynamic Regions require an understanding of very different labour markets, cultures and employee expectations. This workshop explores regional workforce trends and differences, as well as proven practical approaches to attracting, developing and retaining talent. Combining a regional talent perspective with first-hand management experience from across Southeast Asia, the session will provide practical insights into building effective teams in the region. Conference room: • Hannes Saurug | Managing Director, voestalpine Railway Systems Asia | TH • Ricky Foo | Partner and Board & CEO Practice APAC Lead, Mercuri Urval | SG
14.00 – 15.15	**THE WORLD IN FLUX: STRATEGIC SECURITY BRIEFING (Part I)** How will geopolitical shifts reshape business in Asia? This interactive briefing examines the forces transforming the international landscape, from great-power competition and regional security dynamics to economic fragmentation and supply-chain realignment. Participants will gain practical insights into emerging risks, strategic opportunities and the implications for companies operating between Europe and Southeast Asia. Please note: This is a three-hour workshop requiring participation in both Part I and Part II. Conference room: • Hannes Nussgraber | Expert Geopolitics and Security Policy in the Indo-Pacific | JP/SG/AT
15.15 – 15.45	**NETWORKING COFFEE BREAK**
15.45 – 17.15	**EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT | CUSTOMS & TRADE COMPLIANCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: A PRACTICAL DEEP-DIVE** Doing business across Southeast Asia requires companies to navigate different customs regimes, trade agreements and complex regional supply chains. This practical workshop will examine how Free Trade Agreements, special customs regimes, Free Trade Zones and export controls affect market access and cross-border business. It will also look at the region's transport infrastructure, connectivity and evolving trade flows, providing practical insights for companies moving goods to, from or across Southeast Asia. Conference room: • Armin Sonnauer | General Manager Thailand, MIC Customs Solutions | TH • Cristian Predan | Director South-East Asia, Gebrüder Weiss | SG

15.45 – 17.15	**THE WORLD IN FLUX: STRATEGIC SECURITY BRIEFING (Part II)** How will geopolitical shifts reshape business in Asia? This interactive briefing examines the forces transforming the international landscape, from great-power competition and regional security dynamics to economic fragmentation and supply-chain realignment. Participants will gain practical insights into emerging risks, strategic opportunities and the implications for companies operating between Europe and Southeast Asia. Please note: This is a three-hour workshop requiring participation in both Part I and Part II. Conference room: • Hannes Nussgraber | Expert Geopolitics and Security Policy in the Indo-Pacific | JP/SG/AT
17.30 – 18.00	**TRANSFER TO NETWORKING RECEPTION** Dedicated shuttle service from the research facility to the evening reception venue.
18.00 – 18.15	**ARRIVAL & WELCOME** Take the opportunity to unwind after an intensive day of discussions and exchange. Enjoy a welcome drink while reconnecting with fellow participants and continuing conversations in a relaxed setting.
18.15 – 18.30	**THE EPILOGUE | REFLECTIONS & LOOKING AHEAD** A brief wrap-up to highlight key takeaways from the conference and set the stage for continued dialogue and collaboration. • Vera Maier | ADVANTAGE AUSTRIA Singapore
18.30 – 21.00	**NETWORKING RECEPTION** Join fellow executives and senior representatives from Austrian companies in Southeast Asia and Austria for a relaxed evening at Empress, located along the historic Singapore River in the heart of the city. As AUSTRIA CONNECT draws to a close, take the opportunity to reflect on the day's discussions, exchange ideas, and strengthen valuable connections while enjoying contemporary Chinese cuisine and views across the river towards the vibrant Boat Quay district. Venue: Empress, 1 Empress Pl, Singapore 179555
20.30 21.00 21.30	**SHUTTLE SERVICE TO OFFICIAL CONFERENCE HOTELS** Dedicated shuttle services will depart from Empress to the official conference hotels at 20.30, 21.00 and 21.30.