

Intervarsity Student Creativity and Digital Competition (ISCDC 2025)

Theme: **ASEAN Reimagined – Essays, Stories, and Creative Narratives about Alor Setar, Kedah**

Date: **25 November – 1 December 2025**

Venue: **Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Kedah**

Organizers: **Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) and Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII)**

1. Introduction

The ISCDC 2025 is a seven-day interdisciplinary event, bringing 70 students and staff from Universitas Islam Indonesia together with participants from various faculties at Universiti Utara Malaysia. The event fosters cultural exchange, creative collaboration, and academic development through immersive fieldwork, mentoring, and seven competition categories centered on ASEAN heritage and identity.

2. Objectives

- To strengthen institutional partnership and student interaction between UUM and UII.
- To enhance interdisciplinary learning through cultural immersion and creative expression.
- To develop participants' skills in research, writing, multimedia production, design, and culinary arts.
- To promote Alor Setar's rich cultural and historical landscape as a reflection of ASEAN values.

3. Participants

The primary delegation consists of 70 students and staff from UII, engaging with UUM students and faculties including Communication, Creative Industry, Psychology, Islamic Studies, Architecture, Culinary Arts, and International Affairs under the coordination of UUM's SCIMPA, SOIS and STHEM.

4. Fieldwork Immersion

Participants will visit key cultural and historical sites in Alor Setar to gather materials and inspiration for their competition entries.

Key locations include:

- Balai Besar and Zahir Mosque, showcasing Islamic architecture and cultural diplomacy.
- Pekan Rabu, highlighting the multicultural trading hub known for its culinary heritage.
- Kuala Kedah Fort, representing the region's colonial and maritime history.
- Local communities, where participants will document oral traditions and everyday stories emphasizing ASEAN unity.

5. Competitions

The event features seven competition categories designed to tap into varied talents:

1. **Essay Competition: "ASEAN Identity Through Alor Setar"**
Participants write analytical essays integrating field observations and ASEAN-related theoretical frameworks.
2. **Creative Writing Competition: "Tales of Togetherness"**
This category invites short fiction or reflective narratives centered on cultural diversity and unity, embracing bilingual expression.
3. **Digital Narrative Competition: "ASEAN in Motion"**
Multimedia stories combining original footage, sound, and narrative techniques to portray ASEAN culture dynamically.
4. **Reel Challenge: "Faces of Friendship"**
Short, social-media-friendly vertical reels capturing spontaneous intercultural moments during the exchange.
5. **Short Video Competition: "Sustainable Story Challenge"**
Mini-documentaries exploring themes of sustainability and innovation in cultural contexts.
6. **Poster Design Competition: "Designing Harmony"**
Visual designs depicting architectural and cultural symbols symbolizing faith and unity.
7. **Cooking Showcase: "Taste of ASEAN"**
Culinary teams prepare fusion dishes that reflect Malaysian and Indonesian heritage, accompanied by storytelling and recipe presentation.

6. Event Schedule

- **Day 1 (25 Nov):** Arrival and welcome orientation.
- **Day 2 (26 Nov):** Field visits in Alor Setar for cultural immersion and data collection.
- **Day 3 (27 Nov):** Workshops on writing, storytelling, multimedia production, and cooking techniques.
- **Day 4 (28 Nov):** Production and mentoring sessions for competition submissions.
- **Day 5 (29 Nov):** Cultural and culinary exchange night featuring performances, cooking competition, and group dinner for 140 participants.
- **Day 6 (30 Nov):** Presentation of competition entries followed by award ceremony.
- **Day 7 (1 Dec):** Reflection, feedback session, and departure.

7. Judging Criteria

The criteria for judging will focus on creativity, technical quality, thematic relevance, cultural insight, and presentation effectiveness. For the cooking competition, specific attention is given to taste, presentation, creativity, and narrative integration.

8. Budget Breakdown

- **Accommodation:** RM 160 per twin-sharing room, 35 rooms for 6 nights (RM 33,600).
- **Meals:** RM 70 per person per day for 70 people over 7 days (RM 34,300).
- **Transportation:** Two buses at RM 2,000 each per day for 7 days (RM 28,000).
- **Cultural and Culinary Dinner:** RM 70 per person for 140 guests (RM 9,800).
- **Program materials (certificates, prizes, banners):** RM 5,000.
- **Event setup and culinary supplies:** RM 4,500.
- **Performance (cultural shows):** RM 1,000.
- **Contingency (5%):** RM 5,900.

Total estimated budget: **RM 122,100.**

9. Expected Outcomes

- Production of publishable and exhibitable works that combine academic rigor and creative storytelling.
- Enhanced intercultural competence and academic networks between Malaysia and Indonesia.
- Promotion of Alor Setar as a vibrant cultural hub within ASEAN.

10. Organizing Structure

The event is managed by UUM SCIMPA, SOIS and STHEM academics. Academic mentors from participating faculties will facilitate workshops and judging. Student volunteers (from school's clubs) will provide logistics and coordination support. The performance unit from UUM will coordinate cultural programs.

11. Conclusion

ISCDC 2025 promises a rich blend of academic, creative, and cultural exchange reflecting ASEAN's unity through multiple art forms and disciplines. Executed over seven days, it showcases collaborative spirit and heritage appreciation, reinforcing sustained partnerships between Universiti Utara Malaysia and Universitas Islam Indonesia.