

CommTECH Camp 2026

Stream 1 (Creative Design)

Post-Program Impact & Application Report

Prepared By:

Rica Mae Selagiora Palmaera

Master's Degree in Industrial Engineering

Institute of Engineering

Suranaree University of Technology

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Executive Summary & Program Overview

From July 20 to July 31, 2026, I had the opportunity to participate in the Community and Technological (CommTECH) Camp. The program was hosted by the **Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember (ITS)**. The camp is designed to bring together university students, professionals, and academics from around the world to explore global and community issues through an engaging mix of activities.

The core theme of the camp was “*Solving Local Problems with Global Knowledge*”. The program aimed to help participants understand how ITS implements technology in society, while also giving us the chance to experience Indonesia’s rich heritage and culture. To achieve this, the schedule included academic courses, discussions with various agencies, and cultural experiences like learning the Indonesian language, traditional dances, and visiting local tourist destinations.

I specifically joined Stream 1, which focused on Creative Design. This track offered a captivating exploration into design-oriented research and visual communication. Through hands-on workshops and seminars, the camp covered highly relevant topics such as design thinking, user-centered design, digital media, and sustainable design practices. Beyond the technical skills, the program placed a strong emphasis on building leadership abilities, encouraging innovative thinking, and deepening our understanding of creative design. The experience concluded with a Final Project and Presentation, which served as the requirement for earning the program certificate.



Core Academic Learnings

The academic track was incredibly hands-on, pushing me to look beyond surface-level aesthetics and understand the deeper mechanics of how design impacts human behavior.

Creative Thinking & Sustainable Design

The general course on Creative Thinking centered on practical problem-solving aligned with SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. We were specifically tasked with collaborating to find targeted solutions to reduce food waste generated by pre-packed individual meal boxes. This required us to examine user behaviors, map out where over-serving happens at events, and rapidly brainstorm concrete interventions.



During this course, I took the lead in designing and developing our group's final PowerPoint presentation, which allowed me to deeply process the methodologies we were taught. I learned that true innovation requires Human-Centered Design (HCD) not just for interface usability, but as a crucial safeguard for cognitive ergonomics. Instead of blindly letting technology prioritize statistical efficiency over human introspection, I realized we

must shift our foundational approach from asking "What can technology do?" to asking "What problem does the user want to solve?".

Media, Technology, and Laboratory Explorations

Our Media and Technology track provided a comprehensive look into how physical and digital mediums intersect. The university hosted us on an extensive site visit to the Interior and DKV laboratories, showcasing specialized rooms dedicated to t-shirt and packaging printing, 3D printing, textile printing, and Virtual Reality (VR) setups. We also explored a gallery filled with student competition posters and paintings, and spent time capturing our own images in their photography studio.



Experiencing these different mediums firsthand reinforced the concept that immersive ecosystems are the future of engagement. I learned that modern consumers increasingly reject passive consumption; they demand interactive environments where they have the agency to explore. By overlapping digital layers onto physical landmarks, designers can create participatory spaces that scale localized cultural and natural assets to a global market, all without diluting their authenticity.

IT Support for Media and Branding

The IT Support for Media and Branding course featured site visits to UKP and ITS media, where we analyzed the technical backbone required for modern media companies. We explored how legacy organizations, like the local broadcaster JTV, are transitioning their audience distribution to streaming and digital platforms to preserve local culture.



This session completely shifted my perspective on digital marketing. I learned that modern branding is no longer about generic visibility; it is fundamentally about leveraging customer data to build personalized, trust-based relationships. By using AI for precise customer segmentation, companies can replace generic ads with targeted strategies, such as offering loyalty discounts to students while directing premium memberships to mature buyers. Furthermore, I realized that this digital shift introduces heavy network vulnerabilities; therefore, companies must embed isolated cybersecurity simulation tools to safely train their workforce without risking their live production systems.

Final Project Application

The culmination of our academic journey was the Final Project, announced on July 29th. We were challenged to design a creative topic specifically tailored for the media platform JTV Rek.



This final task pushed me to synthesize all our previous lessons, from targeted, trust-based branding to immersive digital layer, into one cohesive pitch. It proved that applying theoretical design frameworks to a real-world regional organization requires a careful balance of aesthetic creativity, deep user empathy, and technological foresight.

Personal Experience & Cultural Immersion

Entering this camp, I wrestled with a genuine fear that my natural shyness would keep me isolated. For almost 24 years, I have been on a quiet journey of learning to know myself, and stepping forward into the spotlight is rarely my first instinct. I fully expected to struggle with making friends. However, to my complete surprise, those personal barriers broke down the moment I landed. I connected with three incredible people right at the airport on our very first day. We went out to eat, and that initial meal sparked a continuously growing bond. As we spent the week talking and navigating a foreign environment together, our circle became bigger and we created a safe, comfortable space that allowed me to open up in ways I had not anticipated.



Note. A photo with Sam, Albert, and Kathy, eating and sharing a meal in the food court of Tunjungan Plaza.

The cultural immersion organized by ITS provided a brilliant, multi-layered experience that went far beyond typical tourist activities. Treating language learning as a personal hobby made the "Fun Bahasa" session especially engaging, and the friendly competition brought out everyone's collaborative spirit. I am immensely proud that my group, Team Rawr, won the Bahasa Indonesia crossword puzzle challenge!



Note. This was a photo of us and my group “Rawr” during the Fun Bahasa.



We also gained hands-on context for local creativity through various excursions. We attended a workshop at DusDukDuk, a creative agency focusing on sustainability, where we learned the intricacies of crafting structures out of cardboard.



Note. This was a photo of me, receiving the full anniversary package from Dus Duk Duk as a prize.

Visiting Frateran to connect with local high school students was another standout moment; together, we crafted eco-printed bags and learned the delicate process of cooking a traditional Indonesian dessert, allowing for a genuine cross-cultural exchange.



Note. This was a photo of me, making the eco-print in the hand bag. I went with the butterfly design by using flowers and leaves.



Note. This was a photo of me, making the indonesian dessert, “klepon” (also known as onde-onde in some regions).



***Note.** This was a photo of me, giving a short insight about my experiences during our visit in the school.*

We also dove deep into regional heritage, exploring the distinct cultures of East Java and Kalimantan. A major culinary highlight was tasting Sate Banjar, a traditional chicken satay originating from South Kalimantan. Its smoky flavor from the charcoal grill, paired with a unique, savory, and slightly tangy red sauce made from chilies and tomatoes, offered a completely different and delicious profile compared to the satay we have back home in Thailand.



Note. This was a photo of me, tasting a snack from Kalimantan.

All of this was perfectly capped off by our excursion to Mount Bromo. Standing in that breathtaking, volcanic landscape was a profoundly moving, once-in-a-lifetime experience that provided a perfect mental reset before our final tasks.



Note. This was a photo of us, with Mount Bromo in the background.

The most intellectually demanding part of the camp was our final presentation, where we were tasked with designing a creative media campaign for JTV, East Java's iconic local television network. Truthfully, this was incredibly difficult for our group. JTV is already a highly successful standalone broadcaster; they are deeply community-centric, authentic, and do a fantastic job of reflecting the character of East Javanese citizens. Trying to find a gap to "fix" felt nearly impossible because they already shine so brightly on their own. We had to dig deep, pushing past surface-level ideas to conceptualize a campaign that genuinely added value without disrupting the great work they were already doing.

The pressure was intense, but navigating that complex problem-solving process together was incredibly rewarding. I am thrilled and incredibly proud to report that our hard work paid off, and our group won second place overall!



Note. Awarding ceremony for the final presentation, we are the second winner.

Ultimately, this camp did not shift me into a completely different person; rather, the connections, the cultural depth, and the academic challenges refined me into a much better, more confident version of myself.

Strategic Applications for Future Engagement and Internationalization

To maximize the value of this international camp, the following strategic recommendations apply the principles of creative design to the institution's future global engagement initiatives.

Launch an "Eco-Industrial & Heritage" Experiential Camp

While standard semester-long exchange programs are highly valuable, introducing a specialized, 14-to-16-day intensive camp captures a different demographic of international students who seek high-impact, short-term mobility.

Concept: Differentiate from typical cultural camps (which often focus solely on community media or language) by leaning into our core identity of science, technology, and applied engineering. The camp could challenge international students to apply Human-Centered Design (HCD) to optimize sustainable practices within local SMEs, smart city infrastructure, or regional agricultural systems.

Benefit: This positions the university not just as a traditional academic destination, but as a dynamic hub for experiential, interdisciplinary research. It attracts global talent, boosts international visibility, and provides incoming students with a unique immersion into our exceptional facilities and local culture.

Gamify Cultural and Linguistic Immersion for Inbound Students

Integrating into a new culture can be intimidating for inbound international students. Expanding how we welcome these students can significantly improve their overall experience and retention.

Concept: Incorporate gamified language learning and cultural problem-solving during international orientations. Utilizing interactive challenges, similar to a localized crossword puzzle or a scavenger hunt that encourages immediate collaboration, transforms cultural acquisition from a standard lecture into a highly engaging, low-pressure social activity.

Benefit: It accelerates the ice-breaking process, ensuring inbound exchange students feel comfortable, welcomed, and integrated into the community from day one.

Integrate Human-Centered Design (HCD) into STEM Curricula

Technical and engineering programs often prioritize mechanical or statistical efficiency over the end-user's cognitive experience, which can limit a product's real-world adoption.

Concept: Host cross-disciplinary workshops that introduce international frameworks like SCAMPER (Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to another use, Eliminate, and Reverse), rapid prototyping, and "shadowing" techniques. This encourages students to merge analytical engineering logic with divergent, creative thinking.

Benefit: Equipping students with these methodologies ensures that the technological solutions developed here are not only structurally sound but intuitively designed around real human needs. This directly supports the goal of producing world-class, globally minded innovators who are prepared for international collaborations.

Data-Driven International Recruitment and Partnerships

Modern branding requires treating outreach as a targeted system rather than casting a wide, generic net.

Concept: Apply the customer segmentation and data-driven branding strategies utilized by modern media agencies to our international recruitment. By analyzing interaction data and regional interests, we can tailor our promotional materials. Messaging for specific exchange programs can be distinctly segmented to appeal directly to the specific academic goals and cultural interests of different partner universities across Asia and beyond.

Benefit: Replacing generic visibility with highly personalized, trust-based communication will significantly increase engagement and conversion rates for inbound exchange programs and foster stronger, more specific faculty research partnerships.

Key Contacts & Networking Directory

The following directory outlines key professional and academic connections established during the program. These contacts offer strong potential for future cross-institutional collaborations, guest lectures, and knowledge exchange.

Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember (ITS) – Surabaya, Indonesia

Muhammad Wahyu Islami, PM, S.T., M.Hub. Int

CommTECH and Mobility Program Manager, ITS Global Engagement

Email: commtech@its.ac.id ; studyabroad@its.ac.id ; wahyuipm41@gmail.com

Notes: Primary contact for coordinating future student mobility programs, short-term camps, and institutional partnerships.

Octaviyanti Dwi Wahyurini, Ph.D. (Ibu Oyn)

Assistant Professor & Deputy Director for Promotion and International Mobility

Notes: Expert in Visual Communication Design and Rhetorics in UX/UI. Excellent academic connection for collaborative research in design thinking.

Saint Louis College – San Fernando, La Union, Philippines

Vivienne Asha G. Baker

Head, College Information and Marketing Office

Email: gugolva@slc-sflu.edu.ph

Notes: Valuable connection for understanding regional marketing strategies and establishing student exchange or collaborative branding initiatives.

Nueva Vizcaya State University – Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines

Ma. Julie Anne C. Gajes

Assistant Professor II

Email: mjacgajes@nvsu.edu.ph

Notes: Academic contact for potential cross-border faculty collaborations.

University of Northern Philippines

Caesar Ziggy Q. Perlas, PhD

Program Head, Bachelor of Fine Arts, College of Fine Arts and Design

Email: caesarziggy.perlas@unp.edu.ph

Notes: Peer connection in fine arts and design. Excellent contact for cross-cultural creative collaborations, student-led projects, and sharing regional design perspectives.

Karya Kita – Industry and Creative Agency

Iki Adfi Nur Mohamad

Founder & CEO, Ini Karya Kita (Branding Agency)

Email: ikiadfi15@gmail.com

Notes: An excellent industry resource for understanding how to integrate technology, branding, and event management. Potential guest speaker for student entrepreneurship and creative design application.