

Company: AECOM

Nomination Submitted by: AECOM Asia Company Limited

Company Description: At AECOM, we believe infrastructure creates opportunity for everyone – uplifting communities, improving access and sustaining our planet.

Nomination Category: Sustainability Categories

Nomination Sub Category: Sustainability Hero of the Year - in Asia (China, Japan and Korea)

Nomination Title: Shirley Chen, Vice President, Buildings + Places, Hong Kong

1. Which will you submit for your nomination in this category, a video of up to five (5) minutes in length about the achievements of the nominated organization since 1 January 2023, OR written answers to the questions for this category? (Choose one):

Written answers to the questions

2. If you are submitting a video of up to five (5) minutes in length, provide the URL of the nominated video here, OR attach it to your entry via the "Add Attachments, Videos, or Links to This Entry" link above, through which you may also upload a copy of your video.

3. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this first question: Briefly describe the nominated individual's organization: its history and past performance (up to 200 words):

Total 200 words used.

AECOM, the world's trusted infrastructure consulting firm, partners with clients to solve challenges and build sustainable legacies for future generations. Shirley Chen exemplifies this mission, having grown her entire two-decade career across various AECOM offices, evolving from landscape designer to executive leader driving sustainability transformation across Asia.

Founded in 1990, with predecessor firms dating back over 120 years, AECOM became publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange in 2007.

- #1 design firm globally by Engineering News-Record in 2025, leading in General Building, Transportation, and Water sectors
- #1 on Fortune magazine's "World's Most Admired Companies"
- 2025 World's Most Ethical Companies by Ethisphere
- #259 on the Fortune 500

AECOM launched its Sustainable Legacies strategy in 2021, among the first companies globally approved by the Science Based Targets initiative. The company has already reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 61% since 2018. In 2024, AECOM became the first company worldwide to receive PAS 2080:2023 independent verification for its ScopeX carbon management program, establishing it as the industry benchmark for systematic carbon reduction methodologies.

AECOM Hong Kong, the largest workforce in a single city within the organization, Shirley is leading comprehensive sustainability initiatives spanning climate adaptation, biodiversity enhancement, and digital innovation across Asia.

4. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this second question: Outline the nominated individual's achievements since the beginning of 2023 that you wish to bring to the judges' attention (up to 250 words):

Total 250 words used.

Shirley Chen has served as Vice President of AECOM's Buildings + Places (B+P) division in Hong Kong and Asia's digital innovation lead since 2023. Under her expanded leadership as B+P Strategy & Growth Lead for Asia since 2024, she currently oversees 800+ professionals in Hong Kong. Over 1,600 active projects are being delivered spanning 17 countries and regions, with a total contract value exceeding USD 1.325 billion.

A landscape architect by training, Shirley infuses nature-based thinking into every discipline, ensuring living systems underpin green-building performance.

As regional head of iLab, AECOM's R&D team, she has strategically aligned six exclusive digital sustainability tools with project delivery and invented LAdo (Landscape Architecture design optimization), a breakthrough platform automating landscape site analysis, carbon-cost benchmarking, and rapid scenario testing. Deployed on projects worldwide, the toolset has delivered an average 20% carbon reduction, highlighted by a remarkable 50% cut on a Taiwan project, all without incurring additional costs.

Under her leadership, AECOM was earned Finalist in Green Building Leadership at Hong Kong's Green Building Award 2023. Since 2023, her teams have been recognised with 134 prestigious awards, nearly 2/3 of which are related to ESG achievements, reflecting global acclaim.

To drive ESG in the built environment, over 12 lectures and mentoring sessions have been shared with university students and early-career professionals. She has also facilitated high-impact collaborations with governments, developers, and leading industry organizations almost every month on digital innovation, sustainable development, and carbon neutrality, which underscores her dedication to nurturing sustainability leaders.

5. If you are providing written answers for your submission, you must provide an answer to this third question: Explain why the achievements you have highlighted are unique or significant. If possible compare the achievements to the performance of other players in your industry and/or to the nominated individual's past performance (up to 250 words):

Total 250 words used.

Shirley Chen's unique trajectory from landscape designer to a strategic leader in Asia enables ESG principles to be embedded into over 1,600 active projects across unprecedented scales in Asia, with total contracting exceeding USD 1.325 billion. Her ability to navigate complex business challenges while fostering creativity and sustainability distinguishes her leadership approach.

Unlike conventional siloed approaches, her holistic strategy integrates resource efficiency, nature-positive principles, and social well-being throughout all project phases, achieving superior ESG outcomes. Her leadership at iLab has pioneered the industry's most comprehensive digital sustainability toolkit, offering customised decarbonisation strategies and innovative solutions to clients, including AECOMzero for lifecycle carbon assessment and nature-based solutions optimization platforms, setting AECOM apart in Asia's infrastructure sector.

She leads her team to reduce carbon early by targeting environmental capacity, optimizing designs, and integrating nature-based solutions. Her team delivered a 50% embodied-carbon cut for Tung Chung eco-shoreline in Hong Kong, the world's first, and a 40-tonne CO₂e operational-carbon abatement at Singapore's Founders' Memorial, surpassing industry standards. These projects prove sustainability need not incur premiums, directly challenging industry assumptions that sustainability demands premium expenditure.

Her influence extends to the regional governments, industry partners and public, an exemplary display of her influence and commitment. Her leadership has been recognized with prestigious awards, such as four TITAN Awards and one Stevie Award. Collaborations with leading organizations, like Urban Land Institute, American Institute of Architects, AmCham, the founder of the U.S. Green Building Council and others further amplify her influence on global carbon-management practices.

6. You have the option to answer this final question: Reference any attachments of supporting materials throughout this nomination and how they provide evidence of the claims you have made in this nomination (up to 250 words):

Total 237 words used.

The attached profile deck provides detailed evidence of Shirley's leadership and achievements in sustainability initiatives, including her role in organizing high-impact industry events such as the *ULI x AECOM Twin Cities Integration event in the Northern Metropolis*. Her CV documents progressive career growth and technical expertise across multiple disciplines, including specific projects where she achieved measurable carbon reductions.

LinkedIn documentation and other event website links, which detailed the event recaps and photo galleries, showcase her participation in major events, such as AmCham HK Women of Influence recognition and her leadership in *"The Third Wave of Green Building: Embodied Carbon"* seminar with David Gottfried, founder of the U.S. Green Building Council. The *ULI Dasha River Study Tour* materials demonstrate her commitment to cross-border collaboration on sustainable development initiatives.

The ULI x Innospace *"Green Future Innovation Think Tank"* and Rethink HK (the territory's best attended business event on sustainable development) are in the video link and press release links, which provide evidence of her expertise in digital innovation and sustainable development strategies. Her profile website contains detailed project portfolios including the award-winning Sanya Haitang River Ecopark, which received various awards worldwide.

A more detailed view of Shirley's projects is available in her attached CV and more of her achievements and career history are recounted in her attached profile website. These materials collectively demonstrate Shirley's comprehensive approach to sustainability leadership, from technical innovation to industry collaboration and policy influence.

Attachments/Videos/Links:

[Shirley Chen, Vice President, Buildings + Places, Hong Kong](#)

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