

**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. We’re committed to managing our business with the upmost responsibility and to always strive for better — be that reducing emissions, delivering social value or creating a welcoming workplace. We understand both the urgency of the challenges facing our society

**Nomination Category:** Individual Awards Categories

**Nomination Sub Category:** Female Executive of the Year in Asia, Australia or New Zealand

**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, explaining the achievements since July 1, 2023 of the nominated woman, OR written answers to the questions? (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 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. If you are submitting written answers to the questions for this category, provide them in the spaces below:

3. Briefly describe the nominated individual: history and past performance (up to 200 words):

**Total 193 words used.**

Over two decades in AECOM, the world’s leading infrastructure consultancy and Fortune 500 firm, she grew from landscape designer to holding the trio of leadership roles — Asia Strategy & Growth Lead, Asia’s Digital Innovation lead, and Head of Hong Kong in Buildings + Places. This rare combination, especially for a woman in construction, highlights her exceptional influence.

#### **Adept at Navigating Challenges**

She evolved from leading projects in China to overseeing Asia headquarters’ operations, and directing Asia-wide practice spanning design, engineering, and economic disciplines. Adept at navigating challenges, driving complex projects, relating with clients, and managing business through strategy, operations, and finance, Shirley fosters creativity and sustainability, and drives cross-regional collaboration, delivering landmark schemes acclaimed globally, including Shenzhen Airport landscape upgrade, and the world’s first eco-shoreline in Hong Kong.

A pioneer in digital innovation, she spearheaded AI-powered tools which delivered an average 20% carbon reduction, without extra costs.

#### **Diversity & Talent Development**

Committed to diversity and talent development, she mentors through The Women’s Foundation, ULI, and AECOM’s Womentoring initiative and engages governments, developers, and academia to champion sustainable, inclusive urbanism. Her strategic impact and inspirational leadership have been honoured with seven international awards.

4. Outline the nominee’s achievements since July 1 2023 that you wish to bring to the judges’ attention (up to 250 words):

**Total 248 words used.**

Since 2023, Shirley has risen from leading Urbanism + Planning team to helm broader services for Buildings + Places in Hong Kong, and in just over a year, to steer Strategy & Growth across Asia in the same sector, an accelerated promotion rare in the industry, underscoring her outstanding capability. Leveraging regional and global resources, she drove Hong Kong B+P to a 3% increase in FY24 NSR to USD91.5 million and 27% EBITA growth since FY22. She oversees 800+ professionals and drives strategic growth for talents across Asia, delivering 1,600+ active projects spanning 17 markets, totalling USD1.325 billion in contract value.

#### **Digital Sustainability Leadership**

As Asia’s Digital Innovation lead, Shirley championed cutting-edge digital sustainability tools and led development of the AI-driven LAdo platform and deployment of AECOMzero, achieving average 20% carbon reduction, peaking at 50% on a Taiwan project, without additional costs, setting new industry benchmark.

#### **Award-winning**

Her leadership has earned her team 130+ prestigious industry awards, including Gold and ESG honours, reflecting global acclaim. Her influence extends beyond AECOM: as panellist for ReThink HK for two consecutive years—elevated this year to represent HKILA, reflecting her growing role as industry-wide thought leader. She is also the expert at ULI×InnoSpace’s “Green Future Innovation Think Tank.”

#### **Inclusive Leadership**

As a passionate equality advocate, she frequently speaks at prominent events—AmCham HK, ULI, AIA HK—and women-focused leadership events convening government, industry, and community stakeholders to encourage diversity and inclusion. She also mentors for young generations and female professionals.

5. 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 227 words used.**

Reference materials substantiate every claim across four categories.

First, a bespoke profile deck (attached PDF) charts Shirley’s rise from landscape designer to triple-hatted executive. Every milestone is corroborated by her detailed CV and a rich mosaic of endorsements on LinkedIn and her personal website.

Second, her reputation as a thought leader shines through videos, press releases, and corporate social channels documenting her contributions to premier industry forums. Highlights include ULI×InnoSpace’s Green Future Innovation Think Tank, two-year panellist roles at ReThink HK, and ULI’s Northern Metropolis integration and Dasha River Study Tour events—all preserved in archived web pages and LinkedIn posts.

Third, her unwavering commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion is evidenced by program brochures from The Women’s Foundation Mentoring Programme (2023–24) and AECOM’s Womentoring initiative, which detail her securing of executive sponsorship for emerging female talent. Event flyers and minutes from International Women’s Day and Women in Engineering Day forums further chronicle her role in uniting senior leaders around a shared inclusive agenda.

Finally, the tangible impact of her visionary leadership is affirmed by certificates from HKILA Awards (2021–24), Muse Design Awards (2024–25), IFLA-APR AAPME (2024), and seven international leadership distinctions. Testimonials and case studies woven through her profile deck bring to life the human stories behind landmark sustainable projects—proof that Shirley’s strategic vision and creative passion have shaped healthier, more livable communities across Asia and beyond.

6. 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 nominee’s past performance (up to 250 words):

**Total 248 words used.**

Since her last Stevie Women in Business Award win in 2023, Shirley’s scope of responsibility has grown from leading a single Hong Kong business line of 130 professional to overseeing all B+P disciplines across Asia—a twelve-fold increase to 1500+ staff. She directs every project stage, from economic studies and master-planning to landscape architecture, structural and “Program, Cost, Consultancy,” who design and engineer healthy and liveable communities in Asia, Middle East and globally.

#### **Overcoming Economic Decline**

The trajectory is rare for a landscape design professional and unprecedented for a woman in engineering. While many competitors retrenched post-pandemic, Shirley’s teams sustained overall growth by bridging AECOM’s best global practices with Asia teams and clients — from strategic masterplans for Hong Kong’s Northern Metropolis and landmark projects in the Middle East — she has elevated the Asia teams onto the global stage. Despite the management roles, she remains hands-on with award-winning landscape architecture projects, keeping her passion for design alive. This uncommon blend of strategic leadership and creative direction keeps her at the forefront of sustainable, people-centred urban development.

#### **Making Women More Visible**

She has also built momentum in advocating for more women leaders in Asia. This is illustrated by her consistent participation in and organization of women-focused events, particularly around International Women’s Day and International Women in Engineering Day, and bridges AECOM’s global executives with regional teams to create mentoring and sponsorship pathways. Her advocacy has established networks across Asia, embedding diversity and inclusion into every project and decision.

### **Attachments/Videos/Links:**

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

[REDACTED FOR PUBLICATION]