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Great Wine Capitals Announces 2025–2026 International Research Grant Recipients

Bordeaux, France [15 September 2025] – The Great Wine Capitals Global Network (GWC) is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2025/2026 International Research Grant, awarded to two outstanding projects that will bring new perspectives to wine tourism strategy, consumer engagement, and destination development. The grants were awarded through a competitive international selection process, recognising academic excellence and practical relevance.

Award Recipient 1: Ms Chia Chia Koay – University of Verona, Italy

Ms Chia Chia Koay, from the Department of Management at the University of Verona, will lead a project exploring **the impact of wine tourism awards on visitor experience and winery reputation**. The research, conducted via market surveys in France, Italy, and the UK, will assess wine tourists' preferences and willingness to pay for various award types and experiential activities, with a focus on wineries in Bordeaux and Verona.

"I am grateful to the GWC Global Network for awarding me the GWC International Research Grant to pursue research on how people value wine tourism awards," said Ms Koay.

The project is designed to help wineries better understand the strategic value of awards, guide more effective tourism experiences, and support destination marketing collaboration among regional stakeholders.

Award Recipient 2: Dr InHaeng Jung – Sonoma State University, USA

Dr InHaeng Jung of the Wine Business Institute at Sonoma State University will lead a cross-national study on **cultural intelligence and consumer segmentation in wine tourism**, focusing on emerging markets in China, South Korea, and India. Drawing on Consumer Culture Theory, the research will investigate how cultural and psychographic factors influence expectations around authenticity, sustainability, personalisation, and symbolic consumption.

"I'm thrilled to receive the 2025/2026 Great Wine Capitals International Research Grant," said Dr Jung. "Wine tourism is no longer a one-size-fits-all experience, and this project will highlight how culture shapes what people value in the glass and beyond. I'm excited for this opportunity to help wineries and wine regions design experiences that feel meaningful, relevant, and exciting for diverse global audiences."

By moving beyond traditional demographic segmentation, the study will offer culturally informed strategies that wineries and tourism boards can apply to more effectively connect with international visitors.

Dr Armando Maria Corsi, Coordinator of the GWC International Research Grant, highlighted the strategic value of the winning proposals: *"The selected projects offer a rare combination of academic depth and real-world application. They will help the wine tourism sector respond more effectively to changing visitor expectations and global market dynamics."*

Both projects will culminate in presentations at the 2026 Annual Conference of the Great Wine Capitals Global Network, where their findings will be shared with leading wine tourism professionals, regional authorities, and academic partners from across the GWC member cities.

About Great Wine Capitals

The Great Wine Capitals Global Network is an international alliance of renowned wine regions and their cities, founded in Bordeaux in 1999. It brings together leading destinations where wine and wine tourism shape culture, economy, and community life, offering a unique platform for cooperation, innovation, and global promotion. Through joint projects and shared values, the Network showcases the excellence of its members and strengthens the visibility and competitiveness of great wine regions worldwide.

The Network currently consists of 11 world renowned wine regions from the northern and southern hemispheres, spanning the old and new worlds of wine including: Adelaide, South Australia; Bilbao-Rioja, Spain; Bordeaux, France; Hawke's Bay, New Zealand, Lausanne, Switzerland; Mainz-Rheinhessen, Germany; Mendoza, Argentina; Porto, Portugal; San Francisco-Napa Valley, USA; Valparaiso-Casablanca Valley, Chile and Verona, Italy.

For more information about the GWC Global Network's involvement in upcoming events, visit www.greatwinecapitals.com. Also follow them on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#) and subscribe to their [YouTube](#) channel.

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