



SOUTHERN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION (SEA)

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Inaugural Annual Conference of the Southern Economic Association (SEA)

“Transforming Economies in the Digital and Green Era: Technology, Finance, Sustainability and Globalization”



Dates: 4–5 February 2027

Hosted by the
**Department of Economics,
The American College, Madurai, Tamil Nadu**

In Collaboration with
Southern Economic Association (SEA)



SOUTHERN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION (SEA) INAGURAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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**Call for Papers: Inaugural Annual Conference of the
Southern Economic Association (SEA) on
“Transforming Economies in the Digital and Green Era:
Technology, Finance, Sustainability and Globalization”
Dates: 4–5 February 2027
Hosted by the Department of Economics, The American
College, Madurai, Tamil Nadu**

About the Conference

The Southern Economic Association (SEA) invites submissions of original, unpublished research for its inaugural annual conference.

The discipline of economics faces a set of structural shifts unfolding simultaneously. Advances in artificial intelligence are altering the organization of work and the measurement of productivity. Digital public infrastructure is reshaping the architecture of payments, credit, and market access. The climate transition raises unresolved questions about the distribution of adjustment costs and the pricing of risk. And a more fragmented global order has brought industrial policy, supply-chain resilience, and fiscal federalism back to the center of policy debate.

India occupies a distinctive position across these transitions: as a large-scale adopter of digital public goods, as a labour-abundant economy exposed to automation, and as a federal polity negotiating the fiscal and political terms of a green and geoeconomic transition. Meeting in a region bordering the ecologically sensitive Western Ghats, the conference asks how economic theory and evidence can inform policy choices that are productive, inclusive, and sustainable.

The conference welcomes theoretical, empirical, and policy-oriented contributions across the five themes outlined below. Submissions that employ rigorous identification strategies, novel datasets, or comparative and interdisciplinary approaches are especially encouraged.

Conference Themes

Theme 1 — The AI Economy: Productivity, Labour and Disruption

Generative and agentic AI is now producing measurable economic effects. This theme invites research on how AI affects productivity, wages, skill premia, and the organization of work, with particular attention to India's services and information-technology sectors. Causal and empirical studies are especially welcome.

Indicative topics:

1. Labour displacement versus augmentation
2. Productivity measurement and growth accounting in the AI era
3. The future of India's IT and business services model
4. AI applications in agriculture, health, and public service delivery
5. The economics of data, compute, and platform concentration
6. . Skilling, education, and labor market adjustment policy

Theme 2 — Digital Public Infrastructure, Fintech and Financial Inclusion

India's digital public infrastructure — including Aadhaar, the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), the Account Aggregator framework, the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), and the e-rupee — has become a widely studied model of state-led digital infrastructure. This theme examines its welfare, competition, inclusion, and risk dimensions.

Indicative topics:

1. UPI and the economics of real-time payments
2. Central bank digital currency and its monetary implications
3. Access to credit, account aggregators, and MSME finance
4. ONDC and digital market design
5. Algorithmic lending and consumer protection
6. Measuring the welfare effects of digital public infrastructure

Theme 3 — Climate Finance, Energy Transition and the Green Economy

Questions of climate policy are increasingly questions of finance: who funds the transition, how climate risk is priced, and how carbon markets perform in practice. Contributors are encouraged to link macro-level climate-finance debates to local adaptation in hill, forest, and agrarian economies.

Indicative topics:

1. Climate finance, green bonds, and transition finance
2. Carbon pricing, carbon markets, and India's Carbon Credit Trading Scheme
3. The just transition and the distribution of decarbonization costs
4. Climate risk in banking and insurance
5. Renewable energy economics and grid integration
6. Valuation and resilience of mountain and forest ecosystems

Theme 4 — Macroeconomy, Trade and the New Globalization

A more fragmented global order has brought supply-chain resilience, industrial policy, and trade strategy back to the core of economic analysis. This theme brings together macroeconomic policy and India's strategic position in a reconfigured world economy.

Indicative topics:

1. Monetary and macroeconomic policy
2. Deglobalization, friend-shoring and supply-chain resilience
3. The return of industrial policy, including Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes
4. Trade fragmentation, critical minerals and India's strategic positioning
5. The demographic dividend, migration and the global care economy

Theme 5 — The South Indian Development Experience: Growth, Demography and Federalism

The southern states occupy a distinctive place in India's development trajectory, combining strong human-development outcomes, an early demographic transition, extensive decentralization, and growth driven by both services and manufacturing. These same characteristics — higher incomes, older populations, and slower population growth relative to much of the country — now shape their position in debates over fiscal transfers and political representation.

Two recent developments frame these debates. The Sixteenth Finance Commission (award period 2026–31) retained the states' share of the divisible pool of central taxes at 41 percent, despite demands from several states for a higher share, and introduced a new 10 percent weight for states' contribution to GDP in the horizontal devolution formula. Separately, the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, which proposed expanding the Lok Sabha and enabling fresh delimitation, did not secure the required special majority in April 2026, leaving questions about inter-state representation open.

This theme treats South India not merely as a location but as an analytical category.

Indicative topics:

1. The "southern model" of human development, public provisioning and decentralized governance
2. Early demographic transition, population ageing and the economics of a shrinking workforce
3. Fiscal federalism after the Sixteenth Finance Commission: devolution, the GDP-contribution criterion, and cesses and surcharges
4. Delimitation, representation and the political economy of Union–State relations
5. Manufacturing and electronics growth (including electronics supply chains in Tamil Nadu) alongside the Bengaluru–Hyderabad–Chennai services cluster
6. Migration and remittances, including Kerala's Gulf economy and intra-regional migration

Submission Guidelines

- **Abstracts:** 200–300 words that state the research question, data and method, and principal findings, and clearly indicate the relevant theme. Please include three to five keywords and up to three JEL classification codes.
- **Full papers:** not exceeding 4,000 words (excluding references, tables, and appendices). [Confirm: required for all accepted abstracts / only for award consideration.]
- **Referencing:** a consistent author–date style (e.g., APA, 7th edition).
- **Language:** English.
- **Originality:** Submissions must be original, unpublished, and not under review elsewhere. Papers may be screened for similarity.
- **Publication:** Selected papers may be invited to be considered for publication in the South India Journal of Economic Policy and Development (SIJEPD), subject to the journal's peer-review process.



**QR Code to Open Google
form for Registration**

**Best Paper
Presentation Award
will be given with
appreciation certificate
& Cash Award**

- **Submission portal:** <https://forms.gle/PiQyEj7GndPMx8kS6>

Important Dates

Milestone	Date
Abstract submission deadline	10 December 2026
Notification of acceptance	15 December 2026
Full paper submission	30 December 2026
Conference	4–5 February 2027

Registration Fees

Category	SEA Life Members	Non-Members
Faculty members/professionals	₹. 2,500.00	₹. 3,000.00
Research scholars/students	₹. 2,000.00	₹. 2,000.00
Accompanying person	₹. 2,500.00	₹. 2,500.00
Registration without accommodation	₹. 2,000.00	₹. 2,000.00

Payment Details

Bank Particulars	
Account name	M/s Southern Economic Association (SEA)
Bank	Union Bank of India
Branch	Gagan Mahal Road, Domalguda, Hyderabad
Account number	013911010000132
IFSC	UBIN0801399

About the Southern Economic Association (SEA)

The Southern Economic Association (SEA), founded in 2026, is a professional academic body dedicated to advancing economic research, policy dialogue and institutional collaboration, with a particular focus on the southern states of India. The Association brings together scholars, researchers, policymakers and practitioners to engage with contemporary economic questions.

SEA promotes academic excellence through conferences, seminars, and workshops that provide a forum for the exchange and dissemination of research and contribute to

evidence-based policy discussions on regional and national development challenges. Through an interdisciplinary approach, it fosters collaboration among universities, research institutions, and development organizations. The Association publishes the South India Journal of Economic Policy and Development (SIJEPD; ISSN 3139-9509).

About the Host Institution: The American College, Madurai



The American College was established in 1881 at Pasumalai by Rev. G. T. Washburn under the auspices of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. It moved to its present campus in Madurai in 1909 under the leadership of Rev. W. M. Zumbro and came under the governance of an independent Governing Council in 1934. Originally affiliated with the University of Madras, the College came under Madurai Kamaraj University in 1965. It was granted autonomous status in 1978 and was among the pioneers of college autonomy and the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in India. The College's mission is to provide liberal Christian higher education to students of all faiths. It currently offers 32 undergraduate, 20 graduate, and 9 doctoral programs, along with vocational and community-oriented courses. It's Study Centre for Indian Literature and Translation (SCILET) has earned international recognition, and a satellite campus at Chatrapatti, established in 2006 and fully operational since 2015, serves rural communities.

The College was re-accredited by NAAC with an 'A+' grade (CGPA 3.47, third cycle) in 2022 and ranked 59th in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025. Its extension and outreach programs — including NSS, NCC, SLP, GMP, GNS, ACH

and LIB — reflect a sustained commitment to pluralism, inclusion and service to marginalized communities.

About the Department of Economics

Established in the early 1930s, the Department of Economics is among the College's earliest full-fledged undergraduate departments; it initially served as a composite department encompassing Commerce and History. It has since grown into one of the College's largest departments, with 15 faculty members and more than 300 students, and was among the first in Tamil Nadu to offer economics instruction in Tamil.

The Department introduced its postgraduate program in 1984–85. In recognition of its academic standing, Madurai Kamaraj University designated it a Research Centre in 1996–97. It also introduced an M.Phil. program in Economics in 2005–06.

Organizing Committee

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About Madurai

Madurai, popularly known as the Temple City of Tamil Nadu, is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in India. It is renowned for its cultural heritage, historic monuments, Tamil literary traditions and distinctive cuisine. The city is home to the famous Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple and the historic Thirumalai Nayakkar Mahal. Madurai also serves as an important centre for education, commerce, healthcare and regional economic activity.



Visiting Places in and near Madurai



1. Meenakshi Amman Temple

A Celebrated Temple Known for its Colourful Gopurams, intricate sculptures and Dravidian architecture.



2. Thirumalai Nayakkar Mahal

A historic palace famous for its monumental pillars, arches and heritage architecture.



3. Gandhi Memorial Museum

A museum dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, India's freedom struggle and the country's modern history.



4. Vandiyur Mariamman Teppakulam

A large historic temple tank and a popular place for an evening visit.



5. Azhagar Kovil

A well-known temple situated amid scenic hills, approximately 21 km northeast of Madurai.



6. Thirupparankundram Temple

An important Murugan pilgrimage site located south of the city.



7. Keezhadi Museum

A Worthwhile Excursion for Delegates Interested in Ancient Tamil Civilisation, Archaeology Cultural History.



8. Kumbakkarai Waterfalls

It is one of the Popular Waterfalls in Tamilnadu.

Other Places near Madurai

- | | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a. Munnar | : Distance from Madurai: 160 Kms | f. Tiruchirappalli | : Distance from Madurai: 134 Kms |
| b. Kodaikanal | : Distance from Madurai: 117 Kms | g. Vaganom | : Distance from Madurai: 185 Kms |
| c. Rameshwaram | : Distance from Madurai: 171 Kms | h. Thanjavur | : Distance from Madurai: 170 Kms |
| d. Dhanushkodi | : Distance from Madurai: 181 Kms | i. Idukki | : Distance from Madurai: 173 Kms |
| e. Srirangam | : Distance from Madurai: 140 Kms | j. Thirumoorthy Hills & Waterfall : | |
| | | Distance from Madurai: 167 Kms | |





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