

APRICOT 2026 Fellowship Experience Report

When I received the acceptance email from the APRICOT Fellowship Committee, I felt both excited and honored. It was wonderful news, but it also came with a great sense of responsibility. From that moment, I began preparing myself by improving my technical knowledge, English skills, and networking readiness.

APRICOT 2026 was my second APRICOT conference and workshop. My first was APRICOT 2025 in Malaysia. In addition, in the fall of 2025, I had the opportunity to be a speaker on the Open-Source Technologies panel at APNIC 60 in Vietnam. However, being selected as a fellow was a completely different and meaningful experience. The fellowship provided a valuable opportunity to improve both my hard and soft skills, as well as my communication and leadership abilities.

Workshop:

(Instructors: Hervey Allen, Carlos Armas, Brian Candler, Patrick Okui, Paul Ooi Cong Jen)

I attended the **Practical Virtualization with Hybrid Strategies** masterclass workshop. It included 17 lectures and 15 hands-on lab sessions. At first, I thought that three days would not be enough to cover all the material. However, by the end of the workshop, we successfully completed all lectures and labs — and even had time to explore additional topics.

The workshop topics were highly relevant, practical, and essential for my current role. I am responsible for managing systems that include private and public cloud environments, along with their security. The knowledge I gained directly supports my daily responsibilities.

For example, before attending the workshop, my team and I were facing challenges with PROXMOX and CEPH storage configuration and automation. After participating in the workshop, I now feel confident to move forward with configuring CEPH properly and gradually migrating our services to PROXMOX. This will help us reduce operational costs and improve efficiency. These improvements are directly connected to the opportunity provided by APRICOT.

Conference:

During the conference days, I had many valuable networking opportunities with engineers and specialists working in the same field. Exchanging experiences and ideas with professionals from different countries was incredibly inspiring.

I also attended many excellent presentations that showcased successful deployments, improvements, and research projects. I heard that there were 1,056 participants — a new record. I feel that my fellow participants and I were very fortunate to attend such a large and impactful conference as fellows while building meaningful professional connections.

Fellows' Skills Workshop:

(Tutors: Aftab Siddiqui, William Stockbridge, Terry Sweetser, and the ISOC team)

The Fellows' Skills Workshop was another outstanding experience. The sessions were engaging, interactive, and enjoyable. We learned many important skills — from how to introduce ourselves professionally to delivering well-structured presentations and working effectively in a team.

At the end of the workshop, hearing encouraging words from our mentors about why APRICOT selected us and what they expect from us in the future was deeply motivating. It gave me the confidence to continue growing and contributing to the community.

Impact on My Current Job:

This fellowship will have a strong positive impact on my professional career. I am now more confident in scaling and improving our systems infrastructure. I plan to share my newly acquired knowledge with my team and contribute to the engineering community through MNNOG by sharing practical experiences and lessons learned.

Conclusion:

I am truly grateful and honored to have been selected as an APRICOT 2026 Fellow. The entire experience was incredibly helpful, challenging, and rewarding. It strengthened both my technical expertise and interpersonal skills.

Thank you to APRICOT and everyone involved for providing such a meaningful and life-changing opportunity.

Best Regards,

Sukhbaatar E from Mongolia

Sukhbaatar.e@skytel.mn