

Dear colleagues, partners and visitors – welcome to WSAVA 49th World Congress, taking place in Suzhou China.

In order to ease your travel and ensure a seamless experience, we have prepared this arrivals guide for your journey to Shanghai. We aim to provide you with all the essential information you need, from visa requirements to local customs, transportation options, and beyond.

We look forward to welcoming you and hope you have an enjoyable stay.

Safe travels and see you soon!

Welcome to WSAVA 2024: Your Essential Guide

Visa Information

We recommend reaching out to the congress registration office at suzhou@2024wsava.com to consult on the type of visa you should be acquiring.

In principal, there are several types of visas available for visitors that could be suitable for you:

(L) – Tourist Visa

(M) – Business Visa

(F) – Non-business visit Visa

For Committee members and speakers, we recommend obtaining either an M or an F type visa.

If you are in need of an invitation letter, please contact Ms. Zou Di at service@2024wsava.com.

We recommend using a visa agency to obtain the visa. However, you may apply for it directly with the Chinese embassy close to you via this link:

https://cova.mfa.gov.cn/qzCoCommonController.do?show&pageId=index&locale=en_US

Please note: From time to time China updates its list of visa exempt eligible countries, we recommend checking this as soon as possible so you can plan ahead.

Actions recommended prior to departing to China

Getting Connected: Roaming and Local SIM Cards

China has established certain regulations and restrictions on internet content and access. WIFI is available in multitude of locations (congress venue included), however, you may also obtain the following to ensure smooth connectivity:

- Roaming Package from your own provider
- VPN blocker (you may wish to install 2 in order to make sure one is always available)
- Local SIM Cards
 - o Available at airports, convenience stores, and mobile service provider shops.
 - o Major providers: China Mobile, China Unicom, China Telecom.

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- Required Documents: Passport for registration.
 - Recommended Plans: Choose plans with data packages, as internet services are widely used.

Money Matters: How to Pay in China

Currency: Chinese Yuan (CNY), also known as Renminbi (RMB).

China is primarily a cashless and cardless economy, with the vast majority of shoppers using their phones (digital wallets) to pay for items in person and online.

The two most popular payment methods are ALIPAY and WeChat. You would need to download them and update your bank card on them **before entering China**. Both applications can be downloaded from the relevant app store for your phone brand. Please note, WeChat might require you to be validated by a Chinese account, and as such ALIPAY could be more user friendly.

Please be aware, that payment in China is done via QR code scanning, and therefore your regular cardless payment methods such as Apple Pay/Google Wallet will only work in very rare occasions. We strongly encourage you to download the payment apps referred to above.

Credit/Debit Cards: Visa, MasterCard, and UnionPay might be accepted in international brand stores, but again, this is not guaranteed.

Arriving in Shanghai and departure to Suzhou

Upon entry you will go through customs and immigration. You will need to fill out an arrival card (available in the arrivals area) and provide your arrival and planned departure details as well as accommodation address during your stay. You will be photographed and will be asked to provide fingerprints by the agent.

Transportation from the airport to Suzhou

The local host committee has put in place a shuttle service to assist our international guests in traveling from Shanghai to Suzhou. The shuttle service will operate on September 1st and 2nd from Pudong airport to Suzhou expo center between 0700 to 2100; The return shuttles will operate on September 5th from 0700 to 2100. Look for congress volunteers that will help guide you to the bus waiting to pick you up.

[Full shuttle schedule is available here.](#)

Other transportation options are below:

Arrived at Suzhou Railway Station from Shanghai Pudong Airport.

Take Line 2 of the subway to Shanghai Hongqiao Station, then transfer to a high-speed train bound for Suzhou. The Suzhou High-Speed Railway Station is located within the city center of Suzhou. The journey time from Shanghai Hongqiao Station to Suzhou High-Speed Railway Station is approximately 30 minutes.

Taxi/Ride-hailing: You may also opt to take a taxi or book a ride-hailing service to directly reach Suzhou

Railway Station from Pudong Airport. This mode of transportation can be more convenient, albeit at a higher cost.

Arrived at Suzhou Railway Station from Shanghai Hongqiao Airport.

Within the confines of Shanghai Hongqiao Airport resides a high-speed railway station, providing direct access to Suzhou High-Speed Railway Station with a mere travel duration of 25 minutes.

Transportation service provider for hire: The journey from Suzhou Station to Suzhou International Expo Center takes approximately 20 minutes.

Taking Suzhou Rail Transit Line 4 and transferring to Line 1, it will take approximately 35 minutes to reach Cultural Expo Center Metro Station.

Arriving at Suzhou Railway Station from Wuxi Sunan Shuofang International Airport.

After disembarking from the airport, you have the option to embark on a taxicab or a ride-hailing service to transport you to Suzhou High-speed Railway Station. This journey typically spans approximately one hour.

Shuttle: The Wuxi Airport offers a shuttle service to Suzhou, directly connecting to the city center. The duration of the journey is approximately one hour.

The Wuxi Metro Line 3 can take you from the airport to Wuxi New District Railway Station, from where you can directly board a high-speed train or a bullet train to Suzhou High-Speed Railway Station. The journey from Wuxi New District to Suzhou Station takes approximately 11 minutes in total.

Accommodation

If you have not booked your accommodation yet, we suggest doing so at your earliest convenience. The local host committee has arranged several options at competitive rates, all can be found here: http://www.2024wsava.com/hotel_en.html

Useful Apps for your visit

Didi: Ride-hailing app.

WeChat: Messaging and payments.

Alipay: Payments and financial services.

Baidu: Search application with an excellent Chinese-English translation

If you are unclear on any of the topics above or wish to clarify any matters, please feel free to reach out directly to Liat Geller, the WSAVA Global Operations Manager, at +972 58 6597659 or via email at



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Safe travels and we look forward to greeting you in person in Suzhou for a memorable WSAVA World Congress!