

Education Futures Mini Conference: Higher Education Partnerships Webinar Series 2020

Reimagining the future of Higher Education Partnerships

Context

Since the emergence of Covid-19, universities in the UK, East Asia and globally have been grappling with multiple issues which are critical to ensuring their viability and sustainability. Several key issues are emerging as the higher education sector begin to focus on the future: funding and financial implications; managing digital teaching and learning; student recruitment and pastoral care, and how to respond to critical research and innovation needs locally and globally.

Amidst this struggle for survival, there is a significant risk that the higher education sector will not have the capacity or ability to deliver on the aspiration to develop international partnerships, thus losing out on a wide range of opportunities that international collaborations can offer during these times.

Many UK and East Asia higher education institutions (HEIs) have a long history of strategic partnerships that bring mutual benefit, create new research opportunities, enhance students' cultural awareness, develop joint curricula and quality assurance, and upskill faculty. As the world emerges from the pandemic, there is a risk that forming and maintaining these valuable links between UK and Asia HEIs will be deprioritised. Now is a critical time to raise awareness of the vital purpose of higher education partnerships in supporting the UK's and East Asia's plans for economic and social recovery and stability, and to engage in discourse that supports and creates an enabling environment for UK-East Asia higher education partnerships to take root and flourish.

Higher Education Partnerships (HEP) Webinar Series 2020

This forms part of British Council's Education Futures initiative, a series of in-depth discussions on key topics of global implications for the international education industry. Our aim is to support the UK and East Asia's strategic action planning and decision making, allowing the education sectors to better anticipate challenges, manage risks and respond to opportunities.

This inaugural HEP webinar series aims to bring together leaders from the UK, East Asia and globally relevant government agencies, sector bodies and universities to explore the priorities, challenges and future opportunities for UK-East Asia Higher Education Partnerships. It comprises education policy events that cover a wide range of HEP themes such as research collaborations, teaching and learning, social impact and innovation and widening participation as the higher education sector navigates challenges and reimagines the landscape of partnerships moving forward. Key considerations will pivot around the following questions: What will UK-East Asia higher education partnerships look like in a landscape impacted by Covid-19? How has the appetite for internationalisation been impacted? What will be the key drivers of government and institutional policies for higher education partnerships? How can the current challenges present opportunities for the higher education sector to recover and reimagine collaborations? How are governments and institutions supporting faculty and students to ensure equitable access? What would the indicators of success be for higher education partnerships moving forward?

Aims

- To convene UK and East Asia higher education leaders and practitioners to discuss policies and priorities for internationalisation in a landscape impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- To explore emerging challenges that can translate into innovative partnership opportunities that support the UK's and East Asia's plans for economic and social recovery and stability.
- To encourage continuous strategic engagement and collaboration between higher education institutions in the UK and East Asia moving forward.

Speakers

Leaders of higher education institutions and ministries, policymakers, industry and community-based organisations, sector bodies (regional/global) and practitioners from the UK and East Asia will be invited to share perspectives and steer discussion.

Audience

Representatives from higher education institutions, ministries, think tanks on higher education, research organisations, corporate sectors and relevant civil society practitioners from the UK and East Asia.

Themes

Theme 1: Research Collaborations

Title: Beyond the pandemic: The future of international research collaborations

Date: 26 June 2020

Time: 09:30 – 10:30 (UK)

Registration: [HEWebinar1Link](#)

Overview:

According to a recent New York Times article, never before have so many of the world's researchers focused so urgently on a single topic – Covid-19. While politicians are closing national borders to try and halt the pandemic, scientists have continued to collaborate at an exceptional scale. This international cooperation is likely to have a long-term legacy for international research collaboration beyond the development of any vaccine or therapeutics for Covid-19.

- What will the impact be on the development of the wider collaborative research agenda in the future?
- Will there be greater international academic collaboration on other key global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss or over population?
- Are innovative collaborative models emerging?
- What are the key challenges and risks associated with international collaborations?
- Is this international collaboration likely to influence the decisions governments, policymakers and funders make about research priorities and allocation of resources?

Theme 2: Teaching and Learning

Title: Reimagining equitable access – Challenges and opportunities in online teaching and learning

Date: 10 July 2020

Time: 09:30 – 10:30 (UK)

Registration: [HEWebinar2Link](#)

Overview:

Covid-19 has forced every higher education institution (HEI) to hastily shift teaching and learning into virtual delivery modes to ensure continuity. With this disruption, ministries and university leadership have realised that online instruction needs to be recognized as core to every university's plan for institutional resilience and sustainability in the post pandemic future. Whilst HEIs race to embrace technology to ensure their survival, there is an emerging need to consider the broader implications of embedding online teaching and learning into ministerial policy and higher education institutional strategies as we move forward.

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- Challenges: What are governments, universities and other relevant stakeholders doing to ensure widening participation amidst the threat of widening the digital divide?
 - Priorities: How are faculty being supported to effectively adapt curriculum, redesign pedagogy and deliver quality content in the immediate and long terms?
 - Opportunities: How can teaching and learning partnerships and collaborations help to shape the evolving landscape within a framework of equitable access?

Theme 3: Social Innovation

Title: Social innovation and entrepreneurship across boundaries

Date: 17 July 2020

Time: 09:30 – 10:30 (UK)

Registration: [HEWebinar3Link](#)

Overview:

It is increasingly important for universities to fast-track their role as global hubs of innovation by harnessing their knowledge, resources, people and facilities to address the socio-economic and technological challenges of COVID-19. This session will present the results of British Council's mapping study of social innovation and social entrepreneurship in higher education across Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, South Korea and Vietnam, and re-examine the learnings from the British Council's Building Research Innovation for Community Knowledge and Sustainability (BRICKS) initiative in Hong Kong. Panellists will respond to the findings from the study and key learnings from BRICKS and explore how partnerships and multisectoral collaborations can foster social innovation and social entrepreneurship for wider societal impact in a landscape impacted by the Covid-19. Key discussions will include:

- What can governments and universities can do to create an environment where social innovation and social entrepreneurship can respond in an agile and timely manner to current societal needs?
- How would governments and universities partner with CSOs and NGOs to engage students and communities to generate innovative solutions that tackle the challenges of Covid-19?
- What are the opportunities for a multisectoral collaboration approach (governments, universities, CSOs/NGOs) that can fast track social innovation and entrepreneurship initiatives for greater societal impact?

Webinar sharing

Webinar follow-up reports and Q&As will be shared online.
A blog feature will be posted on the IES website.