

CASE STUDY

FAST FACTS



Event
Asia-Pacific Association for
International Education
(APAIE 2019)

25 – 29 March 2019

Venue
Kuala Lumpur Convention
Centre



Host Organisation
Universiti Teknologi
Malaysia (UTM)



Attendance
2,500 delegates



**Economic Contribution
to Malaysia**
RM13.8 million

GLOBAL EDUCATION ISSUES DISCUSSED AND TACKLED AT 14TH EDITION OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC ASSOCIATION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION (APAIE) HELD IN KUALA LUMPUR FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 2019



INTRODUCTION

The Asia-Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE) was established in Seoul, South Korea in 2004 by a Founding Committee consisting of thirteen university representatives from across the Asia-Pacific region, and has since expanded to become a thriving association. First held in South Korea in 2006, APAIE aims to encourage greater cooperation between institutions, to enrich and support international programmes, activities and exchanges, and to promote the value of international education across the region and beyond. In doing so, APAIE devotes itself to the principles of mutual respect, diversity and collective progress.

On average, the APAIE Annual Conference and Exhibition attracts around 200 exhibitors and 1,500 delegates each year. The Conference brings together international education policy-makers, practitioners and experts from across the globe to the Asia-Pacific to network, improve professional skills and learn about new developments in international education. The growing attendance each year at the Conference reflects the burgeoning interest in the region and recognition of the Asia-Pacific's important role in international education.

MISSION OF APAIE

- To achieve a greater cooperation amongst those responsible for international education and the standardisation in Asia-Pacific.
- To promote the quality of international programs, activities and exchanges for the harmony and advancement of the Asia-Pacific region.
- To bring together Asia-Pacific educators who are active in higher academics to promote communication, networking and professional development.

APAIE 2019 IN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

Themed 'Diversity and Inclusivity of Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific', APAIE 2019 attracts a record-breaking 2,500 delegates comprising of professors, international relation officers, academic officers, scholars and ambassadors from 60 countries and 1,111 institutions across the globe. Held at the purpose-built Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC) from 25 to 29 March 2019, the first ever APAIE organised in Malaysia also witnessed the gathering of more than 2,200 international delegates, who came to share about new developments in international education and internationalisation in Asia-Pacific and global higher education institutions.

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) was selected as the lead organiser this year in the largest academic non-medical conference in Malaysia.

UTM AS HOST

Malaysia provides the ideal setting to gather and discuss diversity and inclusivity in tandem with the theme of the Conference. While geographically close to the location of the successful 2018 APAIE conference (Singapore), Kuala Lumpur offers delegates a very different experience.

UTM is an innovation driven entrepreneurial research university in Engineering, Science and Technology. Established in year 1904, UTM is one of the top universities with large number of international students from 80 nationalities and ranked third in Malaysia. The university managed to solicit support from a comprehensive group of 20 universities in Malaysia for this bid which means that APAIE 2019 was also co-hosted by Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Malaya (UM), Management and Science University (MSU), Universiti Teknologi Petronas (UTP) and Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN).

Prior to APAIE, UTM has been involved as partner or even a part of international conferences such as South East Asia Technical Universities Consortium (SEATUC) in Japan in 2007. For the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE), UTM brings together engineering educators from all of the engineering technology fields to collaborate on solutions to promote excellence in engineering education.



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Prof Nordin Yahaya



Prof Nordin Yahaya, APAIE 2019 Director and Pro Vice-Chancellor of UTM stated that, the participation in APAIE 2019 would provide opportunities for institutions of higher education in Malaysia to expand international networks and increase global visibility in line with Shift 8 Global Prominence of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education). He added, the hosting also benefits UTM and other local institutions in terms of research collaboration, academic exchange, joint publication, recruitment, student mobility program and rankings and these would enhance the quality of education in Malaysia as a whole.

“UTM submitted its bid to host APAIE for the year 2017 and 2018 but we were unsuccessful. With the help of Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB), we improved our bid submission and our proposal was considered. We received news back in 2016 that we will be hosting the 2019 conference. Undoubtedly, this (hosting) will increase UTM’s global prominence and branding in (the) higher education landscape throughout the world”, says Prof Nordin.

UTM also intends for APAIE 2019 to become a platform for all public and private universities in Malaysia to gain insight and ideas from all around the world to be implemented at university level for better education. With more than 2,500 delegates from 60 countries and over 330 booths sold out, APAIE 2019 is the biggest ever academic conference and exhibition in Malaysia and surpasses the number of delegates of APAIE 2018 held in Singapore (2,200 delegates).

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Participating institutions included University of Calgary Canada, Samara University Russia, ENSCL National Graduate School of Engineering Chemistry of Lille France, Columbia University School of Professional Studies USA, Universitat Internacional de Catalunya Barcelona (UIC) Spain, Konkuk University Korea and Murdoch University Australia.

GRAND OPENING CEREMONY AND KEYNOTE SPEECH BY HER MAJESTY RAJA ZARITH SOFIAH BINTI ALMARHUM SULTAN IDRIS, PERMAISURI OF JOHOR AND UTM CHANCELLOR

APAIE 2019 was launched in a grand Opening Ceremony by the Deputy Minister of Education, YB Teo Nie Ching in Plenary Hall, KLCC on 26 March 2019. There was also a Keynote Speech delivered by the Permaisuri Johor, Her Majesty Raja Zarith Sofiah binti Almarhum Sultan Idris Shah during the ceremony. Her Majesty Raja Zarith Sofiah Binti Almarhum Sultan Idris Shah called for all parties to do more in improving diversity and inclusivity in higher education. While delivering her keynote address, Her Majesty also emphasized on the importance of embracing those who may be physically or mentally challenged.

“The increasing emphasis on diversity and inclusivity in higher education around the world is due partly to our roles as global citizens,” she said. “Diversity and inclusivity in higher education should not be just about embracing racial and religious differences, but should also include those who may be physically or mentally [disabled].”

Malaysian Deputy Minister for Education Teo Nie Ching said education was key to fostering a “culture of happiness, love, and mutual respect”. “As educators and agents of international education, we have the world’s best interests at heart. It is our duty and obligation to ensure that today and tomorrow are tinted with colours of progress and peace,” she said. Speaking on the fourth industrial revolution and its impact on global outlooks, Teo added that education “cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future”. Far-right nationalism was also a key talking point throughout the conference, which was held shortly after the terrorist attacks on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, and several speakers highlighted the need for international education to engage with all parts of the community.

TOPICS DISCUSSED

The ceremony was followed by APAIE 2019 Presidents’ round-table and multiple sessions throughout the duration of the event to discuss a myriad of topics regarding global issues in education. Among the sub-themes are ‘Mobility And Diversity: Developing Global Citizens’, ‘Transnational Higher Education and 21st Century Education’, ‘Harmonizing Regional Higher Education’ and ‘Inclusion, Equality And Diversity In Higher Education’. This exclusive event is for Presidents of universities and invited guests. The Presidents’ Roundtable included keynote addresses and panel discussion to deliberate on the role of higher education in nation building from a wide range of standpoints, including but not limited to the effects on higher education traditions, practices and policies, short and long-term impacts to the ASEAN region and strategies that make partnerships work.

Another session was entitled “Which Universities Will Lead In Asia-Pacific in 2030?”, featured Russian Far Eastern Federal University (FEFU) International Relations Vice-President Dr. Viktoria Panova, University of Sydney Pro-Vice-Chancellor (global engagement) Professor Kathy Belov, and QS Enrolment Solutions Managing Director Andy Nicol as speakers. Panova said educational developments were driven by internationalisation, performance management and close cooperation with employers. Other drivers included digitisation, acquisition of modern facilities and talents to conduct breakthrough research and strong government support. She said to succeed in the Asia-Pacific education market, universities must show flexibility and readiness to customise learning and research.

“Many of us work in international education every day and understand and appreciate the benefits and strength a diverse and inclusive society delivers,” said APAIE President Sarah Todd. “However, the events of 15 March reinforce the need for us to look beyond the campus. I believe it is both our responsibility and our obligation to ensure everything we do, be it with partner institutions or cohorts of students, touches the wider community within which we each live and encourages not only tolerance but appreciation of diversity.”

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**Her Majesty Raja Zarith Sofiah
Binti Almarhum Sultan Idris
Shah**



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Lily Kong, President of Singapore Management University, agreed with Todd’s comments, pointing to a need to promote global citizenry in the face of populist ideologies and to broaden the conversation to outside of those directly advocating for student mobility. “For many of us in the room, it would be a no-brainer, in education as we are, to think that you need to develop global citizens, not just national citizens,” she said. According to Kong, first-hand experience of student mobility is needed to benefit fully, and she added the sector must advocate social responsibility beyond personal and career advancement. “This is the fundamental appreciation that we are all part of a larger community to and for which we are responsible,” she said.

To develop those aspirations, President of Taiwan’s National Cheng Kung University, Jenny Su, advocated a deeper understanding of institutional identity. “Institutional identity, namely its characteristics and culture, is probably far more critical than ever when the international education becomes increasingly diverse,” she told delegates at the Presidents’ Roundtable. “Actions responding to the global challenge can only be properly taken based on the true understanding of inner attributes.”

IMPACTS AND LEGACIES OF APAIE 2019 TO MALAYSIA AND THE REGION

- Hosting the Conference aligns to the initiatives outlined under the Malaysia Education Blueprint for Higher Education 2015 – 2025 and to encourage more local higher education institutions to embark on joining APAIE network. It is also in line with the government’s aspiration to position Malaysia as a world-class higher education hub.
- With every past APAIE events, many positive outcomes have been produced such as Winning Education Papers and Competition Papers that will encourage more participation from the higher education institutions in Malaysia.
- The APAIE will contribute to stronger ties and opportunities between institutions in higher education in Malaysia. The collaboration amongst Universities will further strengthen higher education standards in sharing the best practices for higher education students.
- This conference will become a benchmark to demonstrate on how the Government, universities and industry to work together to scale up international education.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

This four days conference recorded a contribution close to RM13.8 million in estimated economic impact to Malaysia and generated around RM6.8 million from visitor expenditures.

