

SIU-AIU Conference on Internationalization of Higher Education 2017

'The Changing Landscape of Internationalization' *Internationally valued and locally relevant education for all*

9th and 10th April 2017, SIU Lavale Campus, Pune, India

Concept Note

Overview: The SIU-AIU Conference will be held in the city of Pune, Maharashtra, India, from 9th to 10th April 2017. A Curtain Raiser in the form of a Round Table Discussion will be held on 8th April 2017.

The Conference is titled “The Changing Landscape of Internationalization” and is organized jointly by the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) and the Symbiosis International University (SIU).

It is fitting that the event is being held in the city of Pune, which has rightly earned the sobriquet of “Oxford of the East”. Pune has been in the vanguard of international education—the most prominent evidence of which is that it has traditionally been the city to draw the most international students in India.

The Conference marks the beginning of a new stage in the initiatives on internationalization of higher education in India. The theme of the event and the scope of its reach make the Conference a most extraordinary event, without previous instance. It is hoped that the event will advance new dialogues around the subject and emerge as the wellspring of as yet unexplored perspectives and opportunities.

Hosts: The collaboration between the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) and the Symbiosis International University (SIU) for the purpose of convening this event is an opportune alliance.

The AIU, founded in 1973, is a Government of India organization, which oversees important monitoring and advisory functions and facilitating-coordinating services amongst higher education institutions, the Government of India, and allied agencies. The Association functions as a common platform on which institutions collaborate in cross-exchange of ideas and initiatives and as a leading bureau of information and communication pertaining to higher education. It is of note that the AIU serves an important representative role for institutions: It speaks for and acts on behalf of institutions in India and neighboring countries. (It is relatable that the AIU grants associate membership to many universities in neighboring countries.) The idea of bringing together institutions on a common platform emerged from the deliberations of “Conference of the Vice Chancellors of Universities” in 1924.

The Association is specifically entrusted with the task of promotion of internationalization of higher education in India through multiple pathways. The AIU is responsible for coordinating institutional initiatives, collecting and disseminating data on international students, and making recommendations to other Government of India bodies on internationalization. It routinely convenes symposia on

internationalization on behalf of the Government and institutions in India (and neighboring countries).

The Symbiosis International University, Pune, India, is a premier institution in India. The University boasts a sterling academic record, which is consistently vouched for by the NAAC and premier ranking publications. It was established with the express mission to “promote international understanding through quality education”. The University is part of the larger family of Symbiosis, which was set up in 1971 to champion the cause of welfare of international students in Pune.

The University includes constituent institutes/departments in faculties as diverse as management, law, engineering, design, media and communications, computer studies, health sciences, and humanities and social sciences. The University’s physical presence reaches across the country to campuses in Pune, Nashik, NOIDA, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad.

The University, its life-force being internationalization, counts amongst its proudest achievements the fact that the number of international students is on a steady ascent, as is the record figure of academic collaborations with foreign institutions. The University has on its grounds students from eighty-five countries! The curriculum, teaching-learning processes, research, and academia-industry interface are at the forefront of global advances, designed with the view to bring home an educational experience that is authentically international.

Above all is emphasized the significance of preparing students for global stewardship. At Symbiosis, global citizenship is an ideal that is intertwined with social responsibility and volunteerism. The students, indeed all members, are encouraged to see themselves as responsible contributors to civic life on the global platform.

Background: Internationalization has long been considered an unquestioned, self-evident goal in higher education. Nonetheless, the emergence of globalization necessitates that internationalization be seen not merely as an extraneous “nice to add” advantage but a persuasive intention to thrive in the global higher education landscape, which has unique occupational and entrepreneurial interests.

Accompanying the emergence of globalization is the phenomenon of “massification” in higher education—increase in the base of higher education cohorts—and the attendant phenomena of “tertiarisation” and “differentiation”. All of these signify a metaphorical movement away from elitism, towards egalitarianism and the ideal of education as *collective good*.

This proposition is uniquely relevant to developing countries, which are afflicted with a common set of systemic challenges. Higher education, the core of human resource development, must embrace the “global knowledge economy” model if a country aspires to succeed in nation-building exercises and scale the global value chains.

It is inferred that the concept of internationalization, as it has traditionally been understood, is due a review. The salience of higher education systems in developing countries warrants perspective alteration to facilitate workability in the higher education sector and the graduate labour market.

Rationale: The Conference will make an appeal for internationalization of higher education, while placing emphasis on “internationalization at home” and the specific context of Indian institutions.

In its ordinary acceptance, the concept of internationalization refers to academic cross-border mobility, which includes student and faculty mobility, program mobility, and institutional mobility. Indeed, mobility has been shorthand for internationalization for quite some time. The cases that mobility is conditional upon substantial investment and that the traditional direction of mobility has been from South to North make it an elitist proposition, carrying the risk of promoting inequitable selectiveness. It has been demonstrated that only two percent of the total higher education demographic across the globe is internationally mobile. It is the remaining ninety-eight percent of students for whom the conversation on internationalization at home assumes particular significance.

In divergence from the reference on mobility, “internationalization at home” denotes those aspects of higher education that operate outside the realm of cross-border mobility. This is a paradigm shift, which encourages institutions to look *inwards* at re-defining institutional-academic processes and practices such that they are “internationalization-informed”.

Purpose: The Conference is organized to explore internationalization in a comprehensive and multi-level framework. It will focus on elaborating an analytic outline that challenges institutions and educationists to open the opportunities for international education to all those who comprise the higher education cohort. The discussions are planned with a definitive focus to emphasize operability by delving into grounded practices to infuse a *home-grown* ethos of internationalization across all common institutional spaces.

The sub-themes are anchored in a context that does not assume generous resources or extra-institutional policy incentives. The track sessions are designed around the idea that institutions must be introspective as they devise strategy to re-define academic and other spaces resourcefully.

Highlighted in the sessions will be the significance of creating an institutional ecosystem for internationalization. This will include wide-ranging subjects such as the varied theoretical concepts in understanding internationalization of higher education, internationalization in respect of the regulatory framework and public policy, internationalization as an institutional mission and organizational practice, “best practices” across institutions, limitations of cross-border mobility, and inter-cultural integration. Also explored will be the academic practices that serve the goal of positive student learning outcomes, including elements of curricular and co-curricular learning environments, the role of technology, cross-cultural proficiencies, global competencies in “high-skills,” modern advances in pedagogy, and student success and retention.

The Conference will also explore the contribution of internationalization to the reinforcement of global “knowledge networks” and “knowledge diplomacy”.

Participants: The Conference is expected to harness strategies, expertise, and resources in internationalization across the widest spectrum of the higher education community in India and abroad.

The Conference will host educationists, institution leaders, academics, and researchers from around the world. Renowned Indian policy makers, legislators, civil servants, and members of civil society organizations will participate in the discussions. Members of many international and regional organizations devoted to internationalization will join in, as will representatives of foreign embassies, including consuls and education attaché. It is relatable that delegates from organizations engaged in global academic rankings will share their views in the discussions and workshops. Vice Chancellors of institutions in India and neighboring countries and subject experts in the field of internationalization will lead the discussions. A robust network of delegates, committee members, and enthusiastic volunteers from AIU and Symbiosis will ensure smooth functioning of the scheduled programs.

Programs and Format: The Conference will provide an engaging forum to widen the attendees' knowledge base and revitalize networking opportunities with peers. The organizing committee is responsible for conducting the many programs of the two-day Conference, which will be preceded by a Curtain Raiser to the conference on 8th April; a Round Table Discussion on 'Building World Class Universities' especially for the vice chancellors, senior faculty/administrators and representatives from educational agencies and government departments.

Day One on 9th April will offer an inaugural function and two track sessions. The first session is titled "Creating an Ecosystem for Internationalization" and the second "Cross-border Higher Education".

Day Two on 10th April will comprise two track sessions titled "Internationalization at Home" and "Building Successful Partnerships".

Amidst these will be presentations on select research papers and artistic posters related to the theme of the event as well as an illuminating documentary, which will present the students' experiences and opinions on the subject.

The panel discussions are designed to be highly interactive. The track sessions, keynote lectures, roundtable discussions, workshops, and poster and paper presentations are all designed to present as comprehensive a collage of information and ideas as a two-day event could possibly afford. The ensuing pages highlight in detail all the information related to the event.