

## **Pakistan Chapter of TN Holds Organizing Conference at National University of Sciences and Technology**

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Pakistan Chapter of Talloires Network was created at National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013. Professor Rob Hollister (Director TN), Ms. Susan Stroud (Head of ICP) & Mr. Shamsh Kassim-Lakha (member of TN executive committee) were also present on the occasion. It was suggested by heads of all member institutions to convene a conference to decide the way forward. The First PCTN member universities' VCs' Rectors' Conference was held at NUST, H-12,

Islamabad on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2013. Heads and representatives of 17 member universities attended the conference. The conference was chaired by Rector NUST, Engr. Muhammad Asghar and ED Higher Education Commission (HEC), Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad.

The conference opened with the welcome remarks by rector NUST who welcomed the guests. ED HEC in his opening remarks emphasized the importance of community service especially in the present circumstances that our country is facing. Focal Person PCTN, Dr. Irtiza Ali Shah gave an overview of Talloires Network and PCTN. Chief Coordinator PCTN, Mr. Mahmud Bajwa moderated the discussion on the agenda points. It was decided to set up a steering committee of 6 members headed by Chair PCTN, Engr. Muhammad Asghar (Rector NUST). The 6 members elected for a two year term included:

- Dr. Mansoor Akbar Kundi (VC Gomal University, DI Khan),
- Dr. Talat Naseer Pasha (VC University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore),
- Dr. Zakir Hussain (VC Government College University, Faisalabad),
- Vice Admiral Shahid Iqbal (Rector Bahria University),
- Dr. Nisar Ahmad Siddiqui (Director Sukkur Institute of Business Administration, Sukkur)
- Dr. Najma Najam (VC Karakoram International University)

During the conference participants agreed to:

- Hold steering committee meeting every six months to review programs, activities and policies of PCTN
- Establish a PCTN secretariat at NUST
- Expand the membership of PCTN
- Exchange faculty & students for training/ participation in civic engagement activities
- Publish a quarterly newsletter and an annual journal of civic engagement

- Hold conferences, seminars and workshops to train students, faculty and staff in the area of civic engagement
- Give out recognitions and awards to the best community engagement project of member universities, detailed modalities of which will be decided by the steering committee in their next meeting
- Maintain a website similar to TN <http://www.nust.edu.pk/pctn/Pages/default.aspx>

Each university was asked to designate a focal person (in charge of community service/ civic engagement department) who could be the point of contact for PCTN secretariat. The conference attendees resolved to expand community service in their respective universities. It was decided to forge a collective vision and to advance in the fields of community engagement. Emphasis was laid on strengthening the community-university relationship by undertaking projects of use to communities in close locality of the university and by making the project sustainable. Many of the attendees present told about the exceptional community service work being carried out by their respective institutions and how community service has been made an essential part of the curriculum at some member universities.

Specifically at NUST a formal curriculum of community service has recently been designed in the form of a two credit hour course. The course was first run in Spring 2013 semester with 200 registered students from various schools of NUST including students from diverse backgrounds e.g Business students, Biosciences students, Electrical, Mechanical, Civil and Chemical Engineering students and arts and architecture students. Students not only attended various seminars and workshops, but also did field work of 30 hours each on leadership, patriotism, human rights, health and hygiene, blood donation, eye donation, first aid, fire safety, disaster management, environment protection, working for special children, orphanages and hospitals etc. After due improvements and feedback from spring session, the course has now been embedded in NUST curriculum as a compulsory course. This semester 550 students are registered for the course and are involved in various such community service activities.

In his concluding remarks ED HEC, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad told the participants that HEC and British Council are working together to make civic engagement a part of curriculum in all universities of Pakistan. He also informed the house about HEC's plan to allocate funds of Rs.500,000 to universities with exceptional community engagement proposals. He emphasized the importance of universities sharing their resources with local communities to make a difference.

As decided in the conference, the PCTN secretariat has been established at NUST. It is getting in contact with all member institutions to get information about activities of civic engagement and community service at their respective institution. It will serve as a point of contact between all Pakistani member universities of TN and Talloires Network. Member Institutions will share ideas and prove



to be an inspiration for each other to achieve excellence in social work and university-community engagement, using the platform of PCTN.

At present the following 39 Pakistani universities are members of Talloires Network:

- Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan
- Aga Khan University
- Bahria University
- Beaconhouse National University
- COMSATS Institute of Technology
- Dow University of Health Sciences
- Fatima Jinnah Women University
- Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology
- Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology
- Gomal University
- Govt. College University, Faisalabad
- Indus University
- Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture
- Institute of Business and Technology
- Institute of Space Technology
- Iqra University
- Islamia University of Bahawalpur
- Karakoram International University
- Khyber Medical University
- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Agricultural University, Peshawar
- Kinnaird College for Women
- Lahore University of Management Sciences
- National University of Sciences and Technology
- NWFP University of Engineering and Technology
- Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi
- Riphah International University
- Shah Abdul Latif University
- Sindh Agriculture University
- Sukkur Institute of Business Administration
- University of Agriculture, Faisalabad
- University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Muzaffrabad
- University of Faisalabad
- University of Health Sciences, Lahore
- University of Lahore
- University of Sargodha
- University of Sindh
- University of the Punjab
- University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences
- Virtual University of Pakistan