

# UK-ASEAN Partnerships and Exchanges Baseline Research

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## Concept Note

### Overview of British Council

The British Council has set out strategy for development to 2025 which focuses on build connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language.

We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Each year we reach over 20 million people face-to-face and more than 500 million people online, via broadcasts and publications. Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body

The British Council employs over 10,500 staff worldwide. It has its headquarters in the UK, with offices in London, Manchester, Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh. Further information can be viewed at [www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org).

### Introduction and Background of the Project

Many UK and ASEAN higher education institutions (HEIs) have a long history of strategic partnerships that bring mutual benefit, create joint academic offerings, new research collaborations, international mobility and generally, people-to-people exchanges. Increasing emphasis of UK and ASEAN on internationalisation agenda has heightened these links even more in the past few years. Our European Union Support to Higher Education in ASEAN Region (EU SHARE) experience suggests that there is opportunity for even wider, deeper impact if the UK-ASEAN higher education relationship is to be brought to a systems-level engagement. Currently much of UK-ASEAN higher education partnerships are developed at institutional levels, rather than as regional, sector-wide movement.

For the UK to remain competitive and to be a significant education and research partner of ASEAN over the next decade, there is a need to propel our engagement to a new level that is driven by mutual interests and shared priorities between UK and the ASEAN bloc. Our proposition to be a Dialogue Partner to ASEAN must be anchored on deeper understanding of the scope and breadth of UK-ASEAN interactions in the tertiary education space; the scale and focus of UK-ASEAN government education cooperation; and the identification of opportunities that will bring mutual

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benefits and value to ASEAN and also to the UK sector . A reliable, up-to-date evidence base will inform both the UK and British Council positioning in tertiary education sector in ASEAN.

The aim is for the project to produce a research and evidence base to flesh out and validate our initial proposal set out in the ASEAN Dialogue Partner Proposition: UK-ASEAN PEOPLE (Partnership for Education Opportunities – Providing Learning and Exchange) paper (Annex 1). In doing so, be able to develop partner initiatives on tertiary education (higher and further education, skills, science and research), supportive of equity and inclusion in ASEAN, as UK's propositions to support our bid to become a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN.

## About the Project

### Project Objectives

The Project seeks to produce research report that establishes the:

1. Quantity and quality of partnerships and exchanges between UK and ASEAN countries<sup>1</sup> in the tertiary education sector, particularly those taking place at the following levels:
  - a) government-to-government including:
    - bilateral agreements
    - bilateral MOUs
    - engagement with and membership to regional bodies and supranational agencies
    - other trilateral or multilateral cooperation agreements
  - b) institution-to-institution including consortia or cooperative arrangements between group of universities/colleges/institutions on the following:
    - teaching partnerships/transnational education
    - research and innovation partnerships and collaborations
    - staff and academic mobility and exchanges
    - non-academic partnerships
  - c) individual-to-individual, individual-to-institution linkages including those that resulted from:
    - UK scholarship programmes
    - UK-ASEAN mobility schemes
    - Projects/programmes funded by the UK or British Council
2. In each type of partnerships above:
  - a) Identify the quantity of existing partnerships and exchanges using desk research and existing database systems (e.g. Scopus, Web of Science etc)

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<sup>1</sup> Include ASEAN countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam)

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- b) Provide a profile of the partnerships and exchanges in terms of:
- Duration of the partnership/cooperation
  - Purpose, agenda or themes of the partnerships and how was it formed?
  - What is its funding model?
  - What are the successes? (e.g. immediate and long-term outcomes) and challenges?
  - How does it support equity and inclusion in tertiary education? What are the barriers?
  - How it is being sustained and what are its future aspirations?
  - How are the partnerships and exchanges contributing towards trust building between governments-to-government, institutions-to-institutions and people-to-people?

In addition to the assessment of ASEAN countries, assess the quantity and quality of existing partnerships and exchanges between UK and +3 countries and territories <sup>2</sup>:

- a) Identify the quantity of partnerships and exchanges by types of partnerships
  - b) Provide an overview of profile of partnerships and exchanges in terms of:
    - Duration of the partnership/cooperation
    - Purpose, agenda or themes of the partnerships and how was it formed?
    - Funding model
    - Successes (e.g. immediate and long-term outcomes)
3. Identify changes (brought by the impact of Covid-19) in ASEAN national policies and emerging priorities on partnerships and exchanges in tertiary education particularly on teaching-learning, skills, research and mobility.<sup>3</sup>
4. From analysis of the baseline data and updated view of ASEAN policies and priorities:
- a) Identify the landscape of UK-ASEAN partnerships and exchanges particularly on higher education and science
  - b) Determine what types or models of UK-ASEAN partnerships and exchanges work best
  - c) Recommendations on UK-ASEAN partnership initiatives on tertiary education
  - d) Recommendations on trilateral education partnership initiatives that UK can pursue with Japan, Korea, and China (including its territories) which will deliver social and economic development outcomes to at least one ODA country in ASEAN.
  - e) Recommendations to British Council on partnerships initiatives in higher education and science that can be pursued with ASEAN

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<sup>2</sup> ASEAN +3 countries and territories are Japan, Korea and China, Hong Kong, Taiwan.

<sup>3</sup> Note that an assessment and overview of national policies for all ASEAN countries (and China) was made as part of the 'Shape of global higher education' study.

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The research is expected to build on existing knowledge of British Council in this area. [In 2016 and 2018 the British Council ran an assessment of the existing policy and regulatory environment for higher education in ASEAN.](#)

## **Project Outputs**

The project is expected to produce:

1. Final reports
  - Comprehensive Report
  - 2-3 Page Executive Report

The Report should have a Recommendations section:

- Recommendations to UK on partnership initiatives on tertiary education to support its bid to become a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN
  - Recommendations on how UK-ASEAN partnerships and exchanges can support equity and inclusion in tertiary education in ASEAN
  - Recommendations to British Council on partnerships initiatives in higher education and science that can be pursued pursue with ASEAN
2. Report dissemination plan which covers plan on:
    - how to best present the research outputs to key audience/stakeholders (including innovative visualisations of research data/findings)
    - creative platforms for promotion of the research and engagement of stakeholders

## **Project Duration**

The project is expected to run for eighteen (18) months from 5 February 2021 to 6 August 2022.

## **Project Governance**

This project will be supported by a Project Management Group (PMG) in the British Council who will play strategic advisory role to the lead researcher (Lead Institution) to be engaged to carry out the research.

## **UK-ASEAN Partnerships and Exchanges Baseline Research Grant**

A grant amounting to £250,000 is available for a UK higher education institution to carry out the research<sup>4</sup>. This is a one-time grant to be awarded to a single UK institution.

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<sup>4</sup> We define research as original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding.

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(higher and further education, skills, science and research) between UK and ASEAN + 3 countries and territories<sup>5</sup>.

Through this grant scheme, we aim to facilitate the production of research in the Official Development Assistance (ODA) context to benefit the international education sector. Resulting articles will be published as part of the British Council Research Papers series online.

The Call for Application for this research grant will be issued in November 2020. The research grant is expected to be delivered for eighteen (18) months from February 2021 to August 2022.

### **Further Reading and Examples of Similar Studies**

- [\*The Shape of Global Higher Education: Understanding the ASEAN Region\*](#)
- [\*Opportunities, Models and Approaches for UK-East Asia Higher Education Partnerships to Deepen University Collaboration with Industry and Business Enterprise\*](#)
- [\*Social Innovation and Higher Education in East Asia: A Comparative Study\*](#)

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<sup>5</sup> Include ASEAN countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam) and +3 countries Japan, Korea and China, along with territories Hong Kong, Taiwan.

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## Annex 1

### ASEAN Dialogue Partner Proposition UK-ASEAN Partnership for Education Opportunities – Providing Learning and Exchange (UK-ASEAN PEOPLE)

DRAFT 1.0  
Date: July 2019

#### Introduction

1. This paper proposes a strategic partnership framework for UK and ASEAN collaboration on education and research to underpin our application for Dialogue Partner status. The proposed title is “UK-ASEAN Partnership for Education Opportunities – Providing Learning and Exchange” (UK-ASEAN PEOPLE).
2. UK-ASEAN PEOPLE will cover all aspects of tertiary education (higher and further education, skills and science & research) and will foster institutional collaboration, inclusive access and opportunity for young people across the ASEAN region. It builds on a number of existing programmes between the UK and ASEAN countries.
3. While the primary objective is the promotion of economic development and social welfare in the developing and emerging countries in the ASEAN region, the programme should also deliver strong and sustainable relationships between UK and ASEAN institutions leading to wider collaboration in a number of areas. This will benefit both ASEAN countries and the UK as international collaboration supports research and teaching excellence.

#### Background

4. South East Asia is benefitting from rapid economic growth, arising, at least in part, from increasingly knowledge-based economies and access to international markets. Government strategies in most ASEAN emerging economies are focussing on avoiding the ‘middle-income trap’ and the region is still facing problems common to many developing countries. Governments and academia are concerned with the fourth industrial revolution, and the impact this will have on education and employment. The English language is increasingly important with significant growth of English medium instruction at all levels in many education systems, and as the official language of ASEAN.

#### The Vision

5. Through UK-ASEAN PEOPLE, the UK will create a positive platform for government to government, institution to institution and people to people links between the UK and the ASEAN nations. The aim is for the UK to become ASEAN’s partner of choice in education, skills and research.
6. It will support education institutions in all the countries involved to achieve their internationalisation ambitions – becoming more competitive and attractive. At the same time, it will have a focus on inclusive growth, supporting the desire of UK and ASEAN nations to develop inclusive societies that offer opportunity for all.

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7. This will be achieved by:

- Building education and research partnerships with emerging and high-growth developing economies of the ASEAN region.
- Strengthening educational opportunities and connections between tertiary education institutions, education sector bodies, academics, researchers and students in the UK and ASEAN countries
- Creating international opportunities and connections for young people in ASEAN and in the UK
- Building English language capability as the language of international engagement.

### The platform

8. UK-ASEAN PEOPLE will be overseen by the FCO and ASEAN Secretariat. The day to day management will be done by a programme Secretariat, working with education and research sector organisations in the UK and the 10 ASEAN member states.

9. The programme will include seven strands – each which should support the ASEAN Secretariat's objective of working with the more developed ASEAN region country partners (Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei) to support the less developed nations (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam). The strands are:

1) **Internationalisation of the tertiary education sector in ASEAN.** This strand focuses on the enhanced mobility of students across ASEAN through improved qualification frameworks, quality assurance, and an ASEAN-wide credit transfer system and scholarship scheme. It will complement and bolster the work of EU SHARE. The main components are:

- Developing scholarship and PhD placement opportunities for ASEAN students in the UK
- Developing a programme of scholarships for UK students to ASEAN bloc countries (via the ASEAN University Network and partnering with the AIMS programme, building on the success of British Council's *Generation UK* programme).

2) **Improved skills and employability outcomes for ASEAN young people.** This strand builds on the success of TNE Partnership programmes in Thailand and the Philippines and draws on the support of established TNE hubs in Malaysia and Singapore. The main components are:

- Support to identify and close the growing gap between graduate skills and market needs.
- Support for Knowledge Exchange activity between industry and enterprise and tertiary institutions.
- Support for the development of UK joint / dual degree programmes in ASEAN countries and Quality Assurance of TNE.
- Addressing regulatory frameworks, recognition of international qualifications and credit design.
- Promotion of collaborative TNE, as opposed to independent models, to ensure capacity building.

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- 3) **Improved institutional capacity.** This strand focuses on capacity building for systemic change. The components are:
- The creation of knowledge outputs from joint partnerships to inform innovation in mutual areas – through CPD in leadership built on the success of leadership and governance training in Myanmar and Vietnam
  - Principal shadowing programme – built on the success of FE College Principal Shadowing in China, funded by DfE and designed and delivered by the British Council.
- 4) **Increased research and innovation collaboration** with the ASEAN region around priority themes such as: climate change, renewable energies, low carbon economy; health and medical sciences; automation and robotics, big data; agriculture and food security; disaster and emergency management; future cities and urbanisation; digital, innovation and creative economy. The main components are:
- Promotion of multi-country and multi-disciplinary research collaboration with the UK and at least 2 ASEAN countries priority ASEAN science and research themes building on the success of the ASEAN regional Researcher Links programme under the Newton Fund.
  - International experiences for ASEAN researchers which allow them to bring new knowledge and ways of working back to the academic environment, supporting innovation and Higher Education institution-industry links.
- 5) **Research management structures** – Development of effective research governance and management systems to maximise the impact of research in the ASEAN region. The main components are:
- Capacity building for ASEAN research management structures in ASEAN institutions to develop research excellence to international standards building on the success of the Newton Fund innovation programme in Malaysia.
  - UK-ASEAN Innovation forum and collaboration with industry partners in Research translation, commercialisation and technology transfer.
- 6) **English Language training for enhanced communications and international cooperation.** The main components are:
- English Medium Instruction (EMI) strategy and teacher/ lecturer training and course development and in HE/ FE, including building on the successful experience of English for Academic Purposes.
- 7) **UK-ASEAN Dialogue Forum on Policy and Practise** building on the EU SHARE programme of support to ASEAN in though regional Policy Dialogues.