

Between Tradition and Reform: Universities in Asia and Europe at the Crossroads

# Working Group Discussions on Asia-Europe Higher Education Cooperation

Working Group F: The Future of ASEM Higher Education Cooperation



Br. Armin Luistro FSC  
De La Salle University  
Manila, Philippines

## Between Tradition and Reform: Universities in Asia and Europe at the Crossroads

*three tensions, six proposals:*

Knowledge Economy < > Collective Wisdom

Commercialization < > Democratization

Competition < > Coopetition

*perspective:* a third look at Asia

*strategy:* what WE can do NOW passionately



Br. Armin A. Luistro FSC



## Knowledge Economy <> Collective Wisdom

Asia offers an ancient history and an ancient wisdom in many ways virtually unknown and untapped in the West.

Collaborative research that brings the most senior European researchers to work with senior and junior Asian researchers should allow Europeans to live in Asia for periods of time.

**Proposal:** A Research Council funded by ASEF that will identify and propose to a Research Council of Rectors our Research Agenda.



## Knowledge Economy <> Collective Wisdom

This treasure trove of Asian wisdom contains profound values that could only be understood by living in Asia.

Scholarship grants for Asian students and Faculty Student and Faculty Exchange Program should allow Europeans to study and live in Asia on a backpackers' budget.

**Proposal:** Task the European Students' Union to create an immersion program that will be credited as part of the Bologna process curriculum. The faculty can also create a program that could be credited as part of their sabbatical. Target: 1000 students and 500 faculty in the next 5 years.





## Commercialization <> Democratization

Beyond Asian wisdom is also a pool of living talents among students and faculty who could not compete because they have no access to resources.

Scholarship grants for Asian students and doctoral grants or short updating programs for Asian faculty should include a service contract so they can return to Asia and create a multiplier effect.

**Proposal:** Task the ASEM Rectors' Conference to identify the mechanics that will allow 1000 Asian students and 500 faculty members to avail of such grants in the next 5 years.



## Commercialization <> Democratization

There is also a pool of excellent Asian institutional partners which may be beyond the radar screen of world university rankings (using Western or Ivy League standards).

Twining arrangements with Asian and European universities should aim at mutually beneficial institutional partnerships, and not one of dependency.

**Proposal:** Task the ASEM Rectors' Conference to identify the mechanics and match each member university of the Bologna process with at least two Asian universities to target 100 such institutional twinings in the next 5 years.





## Competition <> Coopetition

If we do not wish to play the game of the highly commercialized and competitive rankings that get media mileage, they will play us. Or, we could create a new game.

As an initial collaborative effort, the ASEM can include in its research agenda a pioneering project to profile member universities based on criteria identified by academicians which should highlight best practices and enhance diversity.



**Proposal:** Task the ASEM Rectors' Conference to identify the mechanics and create a research team of academicians for this pioneering project.

## Competition <> Coopetition

If the Bologna process were to review its *raison d'être* and be serious with its goal of borderless education, it should even now think of including some Asian universities as affiliate members.

Some Asian universities may be ready to begin seriously thinking of affiliating themselves with universities who are part of the Bologna process.



**Proposal:** Task the ASEM Rectors' Conference to identify the mechanics and define the status and corresponding benefits for these affiliate Asian universities.



## Working Group F: The Future of ASEM Higher Education Cooperation

Re-write the history of colonization  
and pave the way for new  
engagements between  
Asia and Europe.

Break the Berlin wall that divides us.

Create a new relationship  
of borderless education  
between our two regions.



*Salamat po!*