

SEED-Net *News*

Quarterly Newsletter of the ASEAN University Network/Southeast Asia Engineering Education Development Network



AUN/SEED-Net Secretariat

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Coordinator Meeting 2009

The AUN/SEED-Net Coordinator Meeting has been held annually since 2007 as a venue for coordinators who are deeply involved in AUN/SEED-Net program implementation at all MIs to meet and discuss operational problems and share experiences among each other. For 2009 the meeting was held on May 22, 2009 in Bangkok, with 45 participants from Member Institutions (MIs), JICA Headquarters and Thailand Office, AUN Secretariat, and AUN/SEED-Net office attending. Main agenda included graduate program promotion, progress and plan of supporting programs, interdisciplinary activities, alumni activities, and joint activities from MOU.



For Graduate Programs promotion, the meeting agreed to have Affiliated Institutions joining the programs and to adopt direct PhD and PhD upgrade schemes under the PhD Sandwich Program from next year. To improve supporting programs and interdisciplinary activities, MIs proposed to have a forum where they can share information and good practices as well as connection to industries, and to work on accreditation system taking into consideration the Erasmus Mundus model. The Secretariat might also survey alumni's feedbacks on alumni activities provided by the Project to find any room for improvement/adjustment.



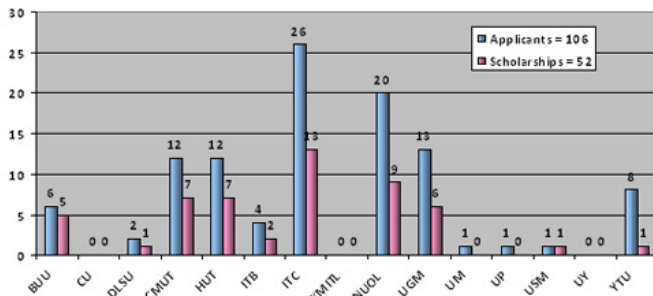
For the topic of joint activities from MOU, the meeting discussed extensively on journal and academic society establishment, and finally requested the Secretariat to discuss with any interested MIs on the journal issue.



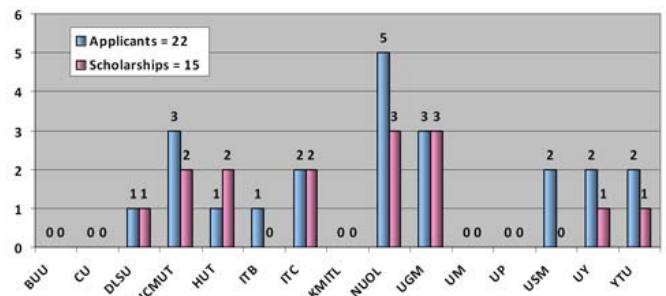
Project Review for 2008

Year 2008 was the beginning of the second phase of the AUN/SEED-Net Project. Many programs were modified while some programs were newly introduced to respond to demands of the network members.

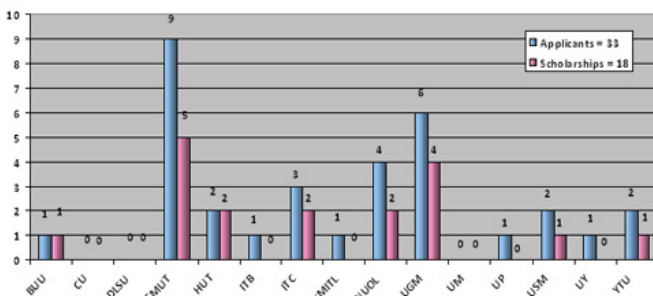
Last year AUN/SEED-Net awarded 92 scholarships in total, comprising 52 master's, 15 PhD Sandwich, 18 PhD in Japan, and 7 PhD in Singapore. The master's scholarships were awarded more than the original quota due to remaining slots from the PhD Sandwich Program. Top application senders for the master's level were Institute of Technology of Cambodia (ITC), National University of Laos (NUOL), and Gadjah Mada University (UGM); while top senders for the doctoral level were NUOL, UGM, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology (HCMUT).



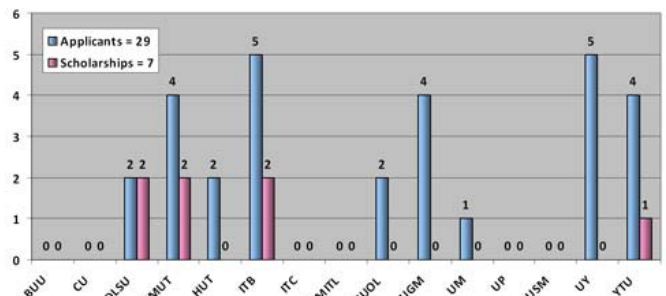
Master's Applicants and Scholars 2008



PhD Sandwich Applicants and Scholars 2008



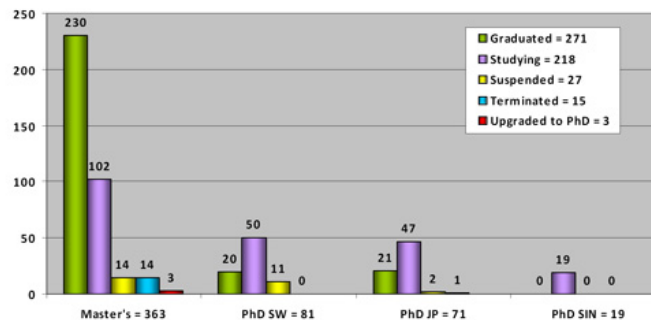
PhD in Japan Applicants and Scholars 2008



PhD in Singapore Applicants and Scholars 2008

The remarkable fact for the year 2008 and beyond is that the Project successfully imposed cost-sharing policy to Graduate Programs and some Supporting Programs.

Until the end of the fiscal year 2008, the AUN/SEED-Net Project has given a total of 537 scholarships to ASEAN students. As of March 2009, 271 scholars completed the study whereas 248 are still on the course, including three master's students in Singapore who were upgraded to PhD level. In 2008 two students were terminated unfortunately, resulting in 15 termination cases altogether. Research publications by our scholars have amounted to 544 papers so far, mostly in form of international proceedings.



Status of AUN/SEED-Net Students

Collaborative Research (CR) support for students enrolling in 2008 onwards has been adjusted to USD 3,500 per master's student per year and USD 5,000 per doctoral student per year, as a result of reduced budget. Nevertheless, as many as 124 CR projects involving 105 master's and 51 doctoral students still

enjoyed the support of USD 618,673 last year. Importantly, the scope of CR in Phase II has been extended to five interdisciplinary areas identified as the region's critical issues: Biotechnology, Disaster Mitigation, Global Environment, Natural Resources and Materials, and New/Renewable Energy.



In Phase II, field-wise seminars have upgraded to regional conferences or workshops with larger number of participants and wider scope of topics covering regional agenda. One regional conference/workshop for each fundamental field or interdisciplinary area would be held annually in various ASEAN countries. In 2008 there were 13 regional conferences/workshops, which attracted almost 1,400 participants and 600 papers. From these, 10 conferences were supported by ASEAN Foundation and three by JICA.

The Project attempts to promote collaboration within the region as well as between ASEAN and Japan, and at the same time to sustain the academic network. Especially from 2008 on, the CR Program requires staff of non-host institutions to be co-advisors in order to strengthen academic network in ASEAN. Many programs have been utilized to facilitate research collaboration and network strengthening. In 2008 Japanese professors were dispatched to ASEAN for 92 times under the Japanese Professor Dispatch Program and the Faculty Staff Dispatch Program. Sixty-eight came under the quota of nine fundamental fields whereas 24 came under the quota of five interdisciplinary areas, mostly to join regional conferences. In contrast, only five faculty staff from the member institutions visiting other member institutions under the Short-term Training/Research Program in ASEAN and the Faculty Staff Dispatch Program.

Alumni become one of the most valuable assets for the AUN/SEED-Net Project. To equip them with teaching and research skills and to keep them involved with the network, we offer a lot of programs and activities, i.e. Short-term Training/Research Program in Japan, Research Program for Alumni Members, and a chance to attend one AUN/SEED-Net regional conference/workshop. Last year 13 alumni were dispatched to Japanese supporting universities for one-month research activities, seven received research grants from the Project, and 17 attended the regional conferences/workshops. The numbers, however, were rather lower than expected especially in the Research Program for Alumni Members, probably because most alumni are yet new staff concentrating more on teaching duty.

The remarkable fact for the year 2008 and beyond is that the Project successfully imposed cost-sharing policy to Graduate Programs and some Supporting Programs. This owes to generous contribution from the member institutions and the governments of the member countries. With the cost-sharing, we are now moving closer towards sustainability although concrete mechanism is yet to be formulated.



Top left: Dr. Filemon A. Uriarte, Jr., Executive Director of ASEAN Foundation, opening the Regional Conference in Chemical Engineering. Top right: Japanese professors joining the Regional Workshop in ICT under the Japanese Professor Dispatch Program.

Below: Dr. Pinyo Meechumna, Head of Mining and Petroleum Engineering Department, Chulalongkorn University, giving special lecture at National University of Laos under the Faculty Staff Dispatch Program.



Staff Change



Mr. UMEMIYA Naoki



Mr. OHASHI Yuichi

Mr. UMEMIYA Naoki ended his service term in the position of Program Coordinator for the AUN/SEED-Net Project in June 2009. His duties have been taken over by his successor Mr. OHASHI Yuichi since July 2009.

Previously the AUN/SEED-Net Project had an activity called Promotional Trip Program, which supported host institutions (HIs) to travel to member institutions (MIs) to promote graduate programs and scholarships. After five years the name AUN/SEED-Net and the HIs have been more well-known among staff and students at the MIs, resulting in more applications coming to the HIs whether or not through the AUN/SEED-Net channel. However, because of limited budget in Phase II, this activity was discontinued and the Project needed to think of a more cost-efficient way for network promotion and student recruitment.



AUN/SEED-Net Open House

"AUN/SEED-Net Open House" was initiated in 2007, originally for utilizing alumni as a resource to promote AUN/SEED-Net. After the pilot open house at National University of Laos (NUOL) in November 2007 turned out successful, owing to active cooperation of the university and the alumni, the activity has been suggested to be a substitute of the promotional trip. Unlike the promotional trip, however, it is organized on voluntary and cost-sharing basis by the MIs.

In 2008, six MIs in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos and Vietnam were encouraged to host the open houses. Despite the first time for them except NUOL, the events were carried out successfully with considerable number of attendants due to great effort and contribution from the organizers, the joining HIs, plus the alumni. Now the open house becomes a forum where staff and students keen on pursuing higher degrees can acquire comprehensive information about AUN/SEED-Net scholarship programs through experiences of the alumni and presentations from the HIs. It also provides a chance for prospective candidates and the HIs to meet face-to-face and interview.



Effects of 2008 open houses were obvious at Institute of Technology of Cambodia (ITC) and NUOL, of which applicants to Master's Program for 2009 increased by 40% and 26% respectively when compared to last year. On HI-side, Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB) could improve the number of master's applicants to fill up five slots under AUN/SEED-Net and seven extra slots under the Indonesian Government Scholarship Program.

From the past success, the Project stimulates the MIs to hold open houses during October - December each year, which is the optimal period for graduate program promotion. Some open houses may take place back to back with other activities of AUN/SEED-Net to facilitate participation of the HIs. Schedule and invitations would be settled 2-3 months in advance for the organizers to promote the event and the HIs to prepare for traveling.

Track the open house schedule from AUN/SEED-Net web site at <http://www.seed-net.org/calendar.php>.



Upcoming Events

Find latest schedules and more details at <http://www.seed-net.org/calendar.php>

July 30-31, 2009	The 1st Regional Conference in Biotechnology: Biofuels 2009 @ Manila, the Philippines
August 6-7, 2009	The 2nd Regional Conference on Natural Resources & Materials: Sustainable Society Development in ASEAN through Strengthening Network in Interdisciplinary Research on Natural Resources & Materials (in conjunction with the 2nd National Conference on Earth Sciences and Technology) @ Yogyakarta, Indonesia (http://www.fws.ugm.ac.id/2nd-regconf.html)
August 27-28, 2009	The Earth Sciences International Conference (ESIC): The 2nd AUN/SEED-Net Regional Conference on Geological and Geo-Resources Engineering and the 2nd Taiwan-Philippines Earth Sciences Conference @ Manila, the Philippines
September 28-29, 2009	The 2009 ASEAN Symposium on Power and Energy Systems (ASPES 2009) @ Hua Hin, Thailand
October 23-24, 2009	The 2nd Regional Conference on Chemical Engineering: Chemical Engineering for Sustainable Development and Collaboration in the ASEAN Region @ Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
November 2-3, 2009	The 2nd Regional Conference on Global Environment @ Bandung, Indonesia
November 6, 2009	The 16th AUN/SEED-Net Steering Committee Meeting and Year 2009 Annual Meeting @ Hanoi, Vietnam