



# ARC4 Students' Forum

**University-Business Partnerships:  
Asia and Europe Seeking 21<sup>st</sup> Century Solutions**

23-24 March 2015  
Hangzhou, China

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## OVERVIEW

### Background

The Students' Forum is organised in conjunction with the 4<sup>th</sup> ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC4). At the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting, the Education Ministers recognised the need to strengthen the involvement of students in the ASEM Education Process. In response, ASEM launched the Students' Forum back-to-back with the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEM Rectors' Conference in 2012 in Groningen, the Netherlands. The Forum brings forth student-proposed solutions to emerging challenges facing the higher education in Asia and Europe.

Reflecting the diversity of 51 ASEM<sup>1</sup> member countries, the Forum engages university students from Asia and Europe in a cross-cultural dialogue. Sharing good practices and exchanging ideas, the students are given the opportunity to influence the further direction of higher education in Asia and Europe.

### Theme

The Students' Forum mirrors the theme of ARC4 – “*University-Business Partnerships: Asia and Europe Seeking 21<sup>st</sup> Century Solutions*”. Directly benefiting from and affected by the cooperation between universities and enterprises, the students' opinions on related issues deserve to be heard and considered by both the education and business sectors. The participants of the Students' Forum will discuss how university-business partnerships can better prepare students for the increasingly competitive labour market, foster their entrepreneurial skills, and innovate their learning environments through information and communication technologies

### Outline

The Students' Forum consists of plenary and working sessions which are designed to stimulate knowledge sharing, problem-solving and consensus-building among the students. The plenaries serve the purpose of setting the frameworks for discussions and consolidating outputs, whereas the working sessions comprise three simultaneous focus groups. In addition, the Forum offers the unique chance to visit Alibaba Group, the world's largest online business-to-business trading platform for small businesses, headquartered in Hangzhou.

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<sup>1</sup> The Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) members include the ASEAN Secretariat, the European Union, and 51 Asian and European countries, namely: Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, the Lao PDR, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and Viet Nam.



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## Participants

The ARC4 Students' Forum is open to outstanding university students who are nationals of ASEM countries. Students involved in university-business cooperation, social entrepreneurship or start-up scene are highly encouraged to apply. Students can apply through an Open Call.

## Expected Outcome

The Students' Forum aims to mobilise the expertise and creativity from the future shapers of university-business partnerships. Selected student representatives will have the chance to attend the 4<sup>th</sup> ASEM Rectors' Conference to present key conclusions of the Student Forum directly to the university leaders. These conclusions will be further channelled to the ASEM Education Ministers as ARC4 recommendations at the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEM ME5). In this way, the Forum makes the students' voice heard by Asian and European education policy-makers.



# 4<sup>th</sup> ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC4)

## **University-Business Partnerships: Asia and Europe Seeking 21<sup>st</sup> Century Solutions**

26-27 March 2015  
Hangzhou, China

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## **OVERVIEW**

### **Background**

The ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC) is recognised as an Official Dialogue Partner of the ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEM ME). The 4<sup>th</sup> ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC4) delivers policy recommendations directly to the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEM ME5) to be held in late April 2015 in Riga, Latvia.

The 1<sup>st</sup> ASEM Rectors' Conference (ARC1) took place in 2008 in response to the ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting (ASEM ME) launched in the same year. Since then, ARC has been held biennially in Asia and Europe alternatively. As a high-level platform for inter-regional dialogue, the past editions of ARC have brought together hundreds of Asian and European university leaders for solution-oriented discussions on emerging higher education issues concerning both regions.

Another unique feature of ARC is the Students' Forum as its integral part. The Students' Forum takes place in conjunction with the Rectors' Conference under the identical theme. Students from various ASEM countries discuss the same topics as the Rectors yet from youth perspectives. Selected student-representatives will present the results of their discussions face-to-face to the Rectors.

The ASEM Rectors' Conference and Students' Forum have become one of the initial commitments to the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) which is the successor to the United Nations Decade of ESD (2005-2014). It is one of the few existing large-scale inter-regional projects aimed at advancing ESD-related policies.

### **Theme**

The collaboration between higher education institutions (HEIs) and the business sector is vital to socio-economic development. However, in today's fast-changing world, various emerging challenges to sustainable development require innovation in the HEI - Business relationship. It is against this backdrop that ARC4 is themed "*University-Business Partnerships: Asia and Europe Seeking 21<sup>st</sup> Century Solutions*". The specific topics to be addressed reflect the key issues facing the higher education sector in both Asia and Europe. These include how universities and the business sector can better cooperate to equip students with employability skills, to cultivate entrepreneurship, and to innovate learning environments through information and communication technologies.

### **Outline**

ARC4 consists of 3 plenaries and 3 working sessions. Each of the working session comprises 3 simultaneous focus groups tackling the above-mentioned issues. A side-event of ARC4 is the visit to the Headquarters of the Alibaba Group, the world's largest online business-to-business trading platform for small businesses, headquartered in Hangzhou. In addition, there will be a special



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session for networking and partnership-development among Asian and European universities and enterprises.

### **Participants**

ARC4 invites Rectors of renowned universities from the current 51 ASEM countries. Business and industry representatives, senior officials of Ministry of Education and related government agencies of ASEM countries, delegates of international and non-governmental organisations are also among the dialogue partners.

### **Expected Outcomes**

ARC4 is an excellent occasion for solution-oriented university-business dialogue and Asia-Europe exchange. Based on focused group discussions, the attendees will jointly develop policy recommendations for ASEM Education Ministers. In addition, the participating-universities and organisations will benefit from the networking, partnership-building and profile-enhancing opportunities provided by the Conference.



## 4<sup>th</sup> ASEM Rectors' Conference & Students' Forum (ARC4)

**University-Business Partnerships:  
Asia and Europe Seeking 21<sup>st</sup> Century Solutions**

### Co-organised by



The **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** promotes understanding, strengthens relationships and facilitates cooperation among the people, institutions and organisations of Asia and Europe. ASEF enhances dialogue, enables exchanges and encourages collaboration across the thematic areas of culture, economy, education, governance, public health and sustainable development. ASEF is a not-for-profit intergovernmental organisation located in Singapore. Founded in 1997, it is the only institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). Together with about 700 partner organisations ASEF has run more than 650 projects, mainly conferences, seminars and workshops. Over 17,000 Asians and Europeans have actively participated in its activities and it has reached much wider audiences through its networks, web-portals, publications, exhibitions and lectures.

For more information, please visit [www.asef.org](http://www.asef.org)

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs** of the People's Republic of China

**Ministry of Education** of the People's Republic of China

### Hosted by



**Zhejiang University** is a comprehensive research university with distinctive features and a national as well as international impact. Research at Zhejiang University spans 12 academic disciplines, covering philosophy, economics, law, education, literature, history, art, science, engineering, agriculture, medicine, management and etc. With 7 faculties and 37 colleges/schools, Zhejiang University has 14 primary and 21 secondary national leading academic disciplines.

For more information, please visit [www.zju.edu.cn/english/](http://www.zju.edu.cn/english/)

### In Partnership with



Created in 1950 under the auspices of UNESCO, the **International Association Universities (IAU)** brings together more than 650 institutions and organisations worldwide for exchange and action on common concerns in the area of higher education.

For more information, please visit [www.iau-aiu.net/](http://www.iau-aiu.net/)



The main objective of the **ASEAN University Network (AUN)** is to strengthen the existing network of co-operation among leading universities in ASEAN. This is done by promoting co-operation and solidarity among ASEAN scholars and academicians, developing academic and professional human resource, and promoting information dissemination among ASEAN academic community. The network has brought together the ASEAN countries' individual quest for academic collaborations in the identified priority areas that would deepen understanding of the dynamic ASEAN, and accordingly hasten regional identity and solidarity.

For more information, please visit <http://www.aunsec.org/>



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### Supported by



**Chulalongkorn University**, the oldest higher education institution in Thailand, was founded in its present form in 1917 by King Vajiravudh (Rama VI). It is named after his father, King Chulalongkorn (Rama V), who laid the foundations for modern education in the country. In keeping with the shared vision of both kings, it has maintained a reputation for academic excellence and been a pillar of the kingdom ever since. Today, it consists of 19 faculties, two teaching institutes, three colleges and 10 institutes, with a total enrolment of more than 40,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

For more information, please visit [www.chula.ac.th/](http://www.chula.ac.th/)



**Office of Higher Education Commission, Thailand**

### In the Framework of



The **Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)** is an intergovernmental forum for dialogue and cooperation established in 1996 to deepen relations between Asia and Europe, which addresses political, economic and socio-cultural issues of common concern. ASEM brings together 53 members: Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, the Lao PDR, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and Viet Nam plus the ASEAN Secretariat and the European Union.

For more information, please visit [www.aseminfoboard.org](http://www.aseminfoboard.org)