

Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network (ProSPER.Net)

CHARTER

Preamble

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly has declared 2005-2014 as the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) based on the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and following the resolution and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the United Nations University, through the Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS), launched the Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (EfSD Programme);

Whereas the major components of the EfSD Programme are advocacy and dissemination of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and DESD principles, promotion of regional or local approaches through regional centres of expertise on ESD, strengthening ESD activities of higher education institutions, developing online learning for ESD, and training teachers and trainers on ESD;

Whereas the Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED) and ECO ASIA (Environment Congress for Asia and the Pacific) have recognised the importance of networks of higher education institutions for integrating sustainability in higher education in response to the challenges resulting from rapid and uneven growth in the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas there is a moral imperative for higher education institutions to be actively engaged in promoting, integrating and mainstreaming sustainability concepts and actions into teaching and research, hinging primarily on the notion that the satisfaction of present needs should not compromise the fulfillment of needs of future generations, which require explicit consideration in a holistic manner of the three pillars of sustainability, namely Economy, Environment and Society;

Whereas an effective way to address the issues of sustainability by higher education institutions is through strategic alliance by working together within the network and with other existing networks;

Therefore, the higher education institutions listed hereunder, under the auspices of the UNU-IAS, with the affixed signatures of the authorized representatives, do enter into a covenant to network and work together to promote and mainstream sustainability paradigm into teaching and research under the spirit and principles of cooperation in accordance to the following specific provisions:

Article 1 – Name and Purpose

- 1.1 The alliance shall be called “Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network” (hereinafter called “ProSPER.Net” or “The Network”).
- 1.2 ProSPER.Net is a network of committed higher education institutions that pursue curriculum reform to integrate the sustainability agenda into postgraduate courses, curricula and programs as well as research in the area of sustainable development.
- 1.3 The focus of ProSPER.Net is the Asia-Pacific region.

Article 2 – Membership

- 2.1 ProSPER.Net is comprised of leading academic institutions with strong education and research programs in sustainable development and related fields and offer postgraduate courses in these fields.
- 2.2 Members of ProSPER.Net are located in Asia and the Pacific region.
- 2.3 There may be higher education institution affiliate members of ProSPER.Net located outside the region who intend to work together with the network for the benefit of the region.

Article 3 – Principles of Engagement

- 3.1 Members share a common commitment to uphold the vision and aspiration of creating a sustainable world for all of the global society.
- 3.2 Members subscribe to the notion that creating a sustainable world requires acceptance of universal responsibility for advancing and disseminating knowledge on sustainable development in respect and care for the community of life, ecological integrity, social and economic justice, good governance, nonviolence, and peace.
- 3.3 Members share the conviction that in order to attain a sustainable world, education and research for sustainable development is a pathway that involves the active participation of higher education institutions.

Article 4 – Governance and Management

- 4.1 The governance and management of ProSPER.Net shall be designed to enable flexibility and agility of operation.
- 4.2 There shall be a General Assembly comprising of representatives of all member institutions, nominated by the heads of those institutions.
- 4.3 The General Assembly elects member institutions to be represented in the Board. The ex-officio Secretariat will be one of the Board members.

- 4.4 The governance and management functions are vested upon the Board, which comprises of the representatives of member institutions.
- 4.5 The policies and procedures with regard to membership, governance, management and any other aspects required in the functioning of the network shall be devised by the Board.
- 4.6 The Board may form committees and task forces to undertake specific functions on needs basis.
- 4.7 UNU-IAS shall serve as the Secretariat of the network. The Secretariat may be relocated to another member institution upon the decision of the General Assembly.

Article 5 – Activities

- 5.1 ProSPER.Net shall engage in joint activities in education, research and outreach among the members.
- 5.2 ProSPER.Net shall build linkages with similar networks.
- 5.3 The specific activities of the network shall be developed and implemented with the consent of the Board.

Article 6 – Duties and Responsibilities

- 6.1 Members shall aspire to uphold and promote the purpose and objectives of the network.
- 6.2 Members shall actively participate in all or part of the activities of the network.
- 6.3 Members shall attend meetings of the network.
- 6.4 The network shall endeavour to raise funds for its activities.

Article 7 – Validity, Amendment and Interpretation

- 7.1 The Charter shall take effect upon ratification by the founding members and shall remain valid for as long as the network exists.
- 7.2 Amendments on specific provisions of the Charter can be made at meetings of the General Assembly.
- 7.3 The network may be dissolved by the decision of at least two-thirds of the members.
- 7.4 Any member can choose to withdraw from membership by a six-month advanced notification in writing.
- 7.5 Interpretation on any provision of the Charter is a matter for the Board to decide.