Workshop for Sri Lankan academics

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Professors Dilanthi Amaratunga and Richard Haigh led a workshop for Sri Lankan academics on International collaborations ("Benefits, challenges and enablers for international research partnerships") at the Sri Lanka National Science Foundation (NSF), in collaboration with our CADRE project. They were invited to be the lead facilitators by Dr Thamara F. Dias, Director General of NSF for this work.

There were discussions around why are international research partnerships important: to society; to your University; and to you?

Global challenges are important drivers for research and innovation. Our planet has finite resources which need to be cared for sustainably; Climate change and infectious diseases do not stop at national borders, food security needs to be ensured across the globe; Research and innovation are increasingly interlinked internationally, aided by rapidly developing information and communication technologies. There is an increased need to strengthen internationalisation through strategic policy action was emphasized and also the need for linkages with Asian countries was particularly highlighted given the region's rapidly growing research and innovation capacities and the urgency to address global challenges . further the need for an '*intensification of international cooperation*' activities focused on '*engaging with partners outside of Europe on equal terms and in programmes and activities of high mutual interest*' were discussed.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is Sri Lanka's Key Research Funding Council which is committed to generate knowledge, dissemination and transfer of knowledge and, more importantly, to ensure the effective utilization of knowledge, for the greater benefit.

NSF is mandated to serve and strengthen the Science and Technology sectors in Sri Lanka, and its activities conform to the National Science & Technology Policy. Accordingly, the National Science Foundation facilitates research, development and innovation to create a knowledge economy. It also facilitates capacity building, infrastructure development, technology transfer, knowledge creation and sharing in all fields of science and technology to improve the quality of life of the people.

Several working committees have been set up within NSF including:

- Working Committee on Technology
- Working Committee on Library and Information Services
- Working Committee on Social Sciences
- Working Committee on Indigenous Knowledge
- Working Committee on Science and Technology Policy Research
- Working Committee on International Liaison
- NSF National Committee on MAB Programme
- Working Committee on Agriculture & Food Science
- Working Committee on Basic Sciences
- Working Committee on Environment & Biodiversity
- Working Committee on Biotechnology & Bioethics
- Working Committee on Engineering Sciences & Architecture
- NSF National Committee on Ocean and Marine Sciences
- Working Committee on Health Sciences
- Steering Committee on NSF National Thematic Research Programme (NTRP) Climate Change & Natural Disasters
- Working Committee on UNESCO Participation Programme (Water Security)
- Research Advisory Board
- NSF Working Committee on Science Popularization (WCSP)
- NSF Working Committee on Science, Mathematics & Engineering Education

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