

GDRC wins a €1million grant

Mon, 30 Nov 2015 09:11:00 GMT

GDRC has recently won a project entitled ASCENT (Advancing Skill Creation to ENhance Transformation), funded by the European Commission. It is for a three years duration with 16 international partners with GDRC leading it.

GDRC team includes Professor Dilanthi Amarasinghe, Professor Richard Haigh and Dr Kaushal Keraminiyage.

ASCENT aims to address R&I capacity strengthening for the development of societal resilience to disasters - supporting training, skills, leadership development, international collaboration and university-industry partnerships. It will strengthen the ability of partner HEIs to respond to their research needs in disaster resilience. ASCENT will be empowering individuals and organisations with the skills, competencies and credentials needed to continue to pursue research, and to lead research at institutions in partner countries, aimed at reducing the impact of disasters. It will enhance the capacities of the partner HEIs in Asia to meet (match) the challenges and specific needs that characterize with R&I within the context of disaster resilience.

ASCENT will achieve this aim by:

1. Identifying research and innovative capacity needs across partner country HEIs to tackle the development of societal resilience to disasters;
2. Developing research infrastructure to support implementation of the project and provide sustainable capacity development within the partner HEIs ;
3. Preparing researchers in the identified Asian countries to undertake advanced, world-class and innovative, multi- and inter-disciplinary research that will contribute to increased societal resilience to disasters;
4. Increasing international cooperation by partners HEIs on research programmes that tackle ways to increase societal resilience to disasters;
5. Exploring, promoting and initiating opportunities for fruitful university / industry partnerships to increase societal resilience to disasters; and
6. Publicising the project progress, successes and outcomes as far as possible, and raising awareness across the field of HE about capacity building for disaster resilience research.

Planned outcomes and impact:

In doing so, the project will increase the research and innovative capacity of partner HEIs to tackle the challenges associated with developing societal resilience to disasters. There will be greater internationalisation across each HEI's research and innovation activity, including improved intra regional cooperation and inter regional cooperation. The project will also strengthen the relationship between HEI activity in the region, and the wider social and economic environment. With the emergence of a knowledge economy, investment in knowledge production has become a highly rewarding activity, and hence it has become an important corporate concern. Enhancing research capacity in HEIs is becoming increasingly needed so that they can adequately play their role as incubators of knowledge and ideas. Making HEIs the center for innovation and generation of ideas is critical for development. In ASCENT, we argue that the knowledge divide is deep and our target countries and suffer from a lack of human resources in R&D. They need to improve their capacity to produce knowledge domestically and absorb knowledge produced elsewhere.

Our partners include: University of Central Lancashire, UK; Lund University, Sweden; Mid Sweden University, Sweden; Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Lithuania ; Tallinn Institute of Technology, Estonia; University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka; University of Colombo , Sri Lanka; University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka; University of Naresuan, Thailand; Chiang Mai University, Thailand ; Dhaka University, Bangladesh; PSTU University, Bangladesh; and BRAC University, Bangladesh. There are 2 associate partners : Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities, Sri Lanka (associate partner - industry), and Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, Thailand (associate partner – industry)

Further information including the project launch will be available in the coming weeks

[Back to news index - November \(/news/2015/november/#d.en.135203\)](#)