

THE AWARDS ASIA 2019

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جامعة خليفة
Khalifa University

WINNERS

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Introduction



Universities are extraordinary institutions that transform the life chances of their students, produce research that changes the world, and deliver untold benefits to society and economies.

This is true wherever in the world they happen to be, and *Times Higher Education* is proud to have played an integral role in recognising, supporting and incentivising excellence for five decades.

One of the ways we do this is through the *THE* Awards, which spotlight truly exceptional achievements of universities, teams and individuals in some of their most critical areas of focus, holding them up as beacons of best practice.

This year, we are delighted to be in Abu Dhabi to launch the inaugural *THE* Awards Asia, which attracted entries from across the continent in five fiercely fought categories.

The winners include institutions from China, Singapore, Iraq, South Korea and the Philippines; they include names that will be known to all as among the best in the world, and others that have performed near-miracles in times of great hardship.

All are worthy winners, and it is *THE*'s great honour to be able to shine a light on their achievements — our congratulations to all who made it on to the shortlists, and our sincere thanks for everything you do.

John Gill
Editor, *THE*



17-19 July 2019, Hong Kong

Managing universities in the 21st century: strategies and innovations

Join us at the inaugural *THE* Leadership and Management Summit, held in partnership with City University of Hong Kong, to identify and discuss strategies and innovations for managing universities in the 21st century.

Top university leaders will explore what it means, and takes, to be a high-performing institution. Is it right that leaders are appointed rather than elected? How can universities modernise their financial models to stay adaptive and responsive to future challenges? And how can institutions engage and mobilise their stakeholders to reach their goals?

SPEAKERS INCLUDE



DAWN FRESHWATER

Vice-chancellor,
University of Western
Australia



BIN YANG

Provost, Tsinghua
University



WOLFRAM RESSEL

Rector, University
of Stuttgart, and
president, TU9

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Leadership and Management Team of the Year

National University of Singapore

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As Asia's top-ranked university for many years, the National University of Singapore is a beacon of excellence that many others have sought to emulate. Yet its leadership has never lapsed into complacency and has instead constantly challenged the institution to raise its standards in all areas. It was this ambition from its strategic leadership that impressed our judges, who praised its "bold initiatives across core areas in education, research and entrepreneurship, all with clear, successful results".

It was the university's truly groundbreaking policy for lifelong learning — providing its graduates with industry-relevant courses throughout their fast-changing careers — that really underlined its determination to innovate and advance. Extending student enrolment to 20 years was a "genuine world first" that "redefines the relationship between a university and its students", our judges said. It is a commitment likely to benefit 40,000 students and 300,000 alumni in Singapore and across the world.

The university's record on entrepreneurship is also formidable. To date, more than 2,800 alumni based in NUS' 12 overseas colleges — from Toronto to Jakarta — have established some 370 companies. The overall NUS ecosystem has generated more than S\$2 billion (£1.13 billion) since 2013, of which a staggering S\$800 million was raised in 2018. Last year also saw the creation of the NUS Graduate Research Innovation Programme, which is designed to encourage postgraduate students and researchers to form start-ups.

Research at NUS has only gained in strength, with outputs more than doubling since 2007. Meanwhile, the number of "home runs" — papers cited more than 20 times more often than the average — tripled over this period. And all the while, the university's global reach has expanded greatly, encompassing collaborations with almost 2,500 institutions in 150 countries.



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International Strategy of the Year

Zhejiang University

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Partnerships with 187 institutions in 37 countries and a newly built international campus helped to secure the International Strategy of the Year award for the “truly globally networked” Zhejiang University.

In 2018, Zhejiang launched its international strategy, “Global ZJU: CREATE”, to promote a global approach across teaching and research. The initiative includes scholarships to attract international students, supported by an outlay of some Rmb50 million (£5.6 million). Another Rmb150 million has been invested in talent programmes and recruitment for high-calibre researchers from around the world.

One highlight of the effort is the Zhejiang University-University of Edinburgh Joint Institute. This is a teaching and research collaboration across biomedical sciences and biomedical informatics, based at Zhejiang’s international campus, that recognises the value of bilingual graduates and an emerging international academic community for regional development.

Also noteworthy is the Haining International Campus, which includes interdisciplinary and translational research partnerships with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Imperial College London.

The judges said that they were impressed by Zhejiang’s “exceptionally broad and advanced international strategy, which has bold ambitions but equally impressive achievements already on record. From the scale of its financial investment to support its international student population of 7,000, to its bilateral exchanges and research collaboration, Zhejiang has led the way as a truly globally networked Chinese university.

“Whether it is the dual degrees, institutional partnerships or international campus with its fusion of Eastern and Western pedagogies, Zhejiang has shown that it backs up its strategy with action, and has set out a clear road map for the future in its new strategy launched in 2018.”

Teaching and Learning Strategy of the Year

Yonsei University

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Yonsei University has embarked on a mission to make digital literacy central to all it does. Among a number of initiatives, the university has opened the Yonsei Digital Creative Campus and rolled out a new undergraduate liberal arts curriculum for creative digital literacy education, underlining just how essential digital literacy skills are in academic life and for students' future careers. And its comprehensive effort has now been recognised with victory in the Teaching and Learning Strategy of the Year category.

Key achievements in 2018 included the welcoming of Yonsei's first graduate students on its digital-based intelligence design programme, created to equip students with the digital, business and artistic skills needed for the future. The university also opened the Yonsei Digital Experience Centre and signed memoranda of agreement with Adobe, Samsung Electronics, Korean media and content company CJ E&M and telco KT to ensure that digital innovation was a key part of students' learning.

Keen for everyone in the university community to participate in and benefit from the digital literacy ecosystem, Yonsei has provided programmes to help faculty incorporate new techniques into their teaching and to recognise those who develop innovative teaching methods with its annual Outstanding Teacher Award.

The judges said that they were "impressed by the deep and far-reaching measures" taken by the university to put digital literacy at the heart of its strategy, "with the clear aim of equipping its students and graduates to excel in their studies and their future careers".

"The combined effect has been to bring to life the university's stated ambition to 'educate future leaders of social innovation'," the judges said.

Outstanding Support for Students

University of Kirkuk

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Years of fierce fighting to free Iraq from the control of Islamic State meant that many students were unable to pursue their education in their home provinces. Throughout the extended crisis period, the University of Kirkuk stepped into the breach and opened its doors to displaced students from seven other institutions: the University of Mosul, Tikrit University, the University of Anbar, the University of Fallujah, Ninevah University, the University of Al-Hamdaniya and Tel-Laefer University.

This required Kirkuk to coordinate support from governmental and civil society organisations in order to provide food and accommodation, as well as facilities such as laboratories and libraries, for tens of thousands of extra students. The university ensured that students' experiences were considered in academic events about national identity, "the crisis of displacement" and the role of legal initiatives in relieving suffering. It also explored ways of building harmony and fellowship between local Kirkuk and displaced students, and seeing that the latter took part in the full range of extracurricular activities.

Over and above all this, the University of Kirkuk strived to alleviate the wider humanitarian crisis by organising blood donation programmes for members of the many military groups who were wounded in the struggle against IS.

"Sometimes, extraordinary circumstances bring about extraordinary acts of humanity," the judges said. "Kirkuk University won this category against strong competition simply for its response to extreme adversity – for four years, the university provided not just education but housing, food and emotional support for thousands of students displaced from terrorist-occupied and war-torn areas of Iraq."

Technological Innovation of the Year

Asian Institute of Management

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The award for Technological Innovation of the Year goes to a project hailed as “exemplary” by the judges for its multifaceted approach to engagement within research.

Set up in March 2018 to complement its existing academic programmes, the Asian Institute of Management’s Analytics, Computing and Complex Systems (ACCeSs@AIM) laboratory seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practice for research-led teaching in higher education.

ACCeSs@AIM boasts a multidisciplinary team of experienced scientists working with a 500-teraflop supercomputer – optimised for artificial intelligence technology and said to be the fastest in the Philippines – and has led to the publication of more than 200 papers to date.

The impressive resources provided through the laboratory extend to support the teaching of 42 master’s students in data science, providing them with “real-world” scenarios and direct links with industry partners.

Above all, ACCeSs@AIM has made possible collaboration across private industry, government agencies and other third-party research organisations.

The judges were impressed by the scale of ambition and the impact already achieved by AIM, and they praised the project for its support of the national development of the Philippines.

ACCeSs@AIM “has given students a vital ability to learn with leading-edge technology that they can take into their future employment”, the judges said, adding that the project was an “exemplary initiative that perfectly illustrates strategic vision and technical innovation, creating positive opportunities for advancement”.



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