



INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
& RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS:
BEST PRACTICE



Alliances
VARKEY FOUNDATION

PARTNERSHIP MODELS FOR UNIVERSITIES ALLIANCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building meaningful and sustainable educational and research partnerships among universities is becoming more and more critical to the success of institutions in higher education and to the economic and social development of countries and regions around the globe. The Alliance on Partnership Models for Universities was assembled to survey the landscape of international education and research partnerships, and share best practices and pitfalls to consider in international educational and research partnerships.

For this report, the Alliance on Partnership Models for Universities examined a myriad of educational and research partnerships that exist across multiple dimensions including structure, ecosystem, pedagogical means, and many others from around the globe. This includes international branch campus experiences with capacity-building collaborations between world-renowned universities and existing or startup universities in developing countries.

Our findings and recommendations are based on an extensive inventory collected over a period of time, interviews, case studies, and finally, by drawing from our experiences to identify the determinants of success and failures of partnerships.

We hope that the cases, best practices, and recommendations that are presented here will serve as a meaningful resource as you explore the possibility of engaging with or setting up in a new geography.

THE ALLIANCE ON PARTNERSHIP MODELS FOR UNIVERSITIES

- Soulaymane Kachani, Columbia University (USA), Co-Chair
- Arturo Condo, EARTH University (Costa Rica), Co-Chair
- Murali Chandrashekar, University of British Columbia (Canada)

- James Ryan, Harvard University (USA)
- Fikri Karaesmen, Koç University (Turkey)
- Remus Pricopie, National University of Political Studies & Public Administration (Romania)
- Alexa Glo Belli, EARTH University (Costa Rica), Ex officio
- Sandesh Tuladhar, Columbia University (USA), Ex officio

GLOBAL EDUCATION & SKILLS FORUM ALLIANCE

Global Education & Skills Forum Alliances are groups of experts brought together by The Varkey Foundation to think about how education can change the world. Alliance members are drawn from across the world and include leaders from academia, government, business, civil society and teaching.

Each alliance works on some of the key issues of our time: conflict, climate change, global citizenship and the status of girls' education. They also work on the future of education itself: teachers, universities, public-private partnerships and the use of assessment.

Together, these expert groups are breaking new ground on some of education's biggest issues – and showing us how education can help change the world.

FRAMEWORK

The members in the Alliance contributed to creating a detailed database that captures the type of partnerships their home institutions are involved in. Next, for assessing the successes and failures of partnerships, or of universities using them, the following framework and dimensions were considered for higher education institutions and partnerships:



Structure

Origin of participants: North/North – North/South – South/South

- Type of relationship: Advisory role, active foundational role, active foundational and operating role, capacity building, purpose-specific alliance, broad joint venture, etc.
- Value proposition to each party

Ecosystem

Geographic locus: global, regional, national, local (sub-national)

- Relationship with other relevant actors in the university 'ecosystem' such as:
 - Development finance organizations (World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, national governments)
 - Theme-specific development agencies (e.g. FAO)
 - Theme-specific organizations (e.g. Junior Achievement, Nature Conservancy, World Resources Institute, World Economic Forum)

“

ENVISIONED AS A LABORATORY FOR INNOVATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION, IN 2002, THE ALLIANCE PROGRAM WAS CREATED TO EXPLORE THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION BY EXCHANGE OF PEOPLE, KNOWLEDGE, BEST PRACTICES AND RESOURCES.

- National and local governments
- Research labs and corporate R&D departments
- Private sector
- Public-private partnerships

Pedagogical means/content

- Subject-specific: agriculture, business, management, etc.
- Leadership development: broader than specific subject, includes knowledge, skills and values

- Experiential learning
- Innovation, entrepreneurship and design
- Virtual/online learning, hybrid learning
- Research to scale and shared equipment
- Place / platform / means

The 'control group' for the analysis of partnership success would be different modes of "intra-university expansion" such as:

- Satellite campuses
- Remote programs
- Virtual and hybrid education

FINDINGS

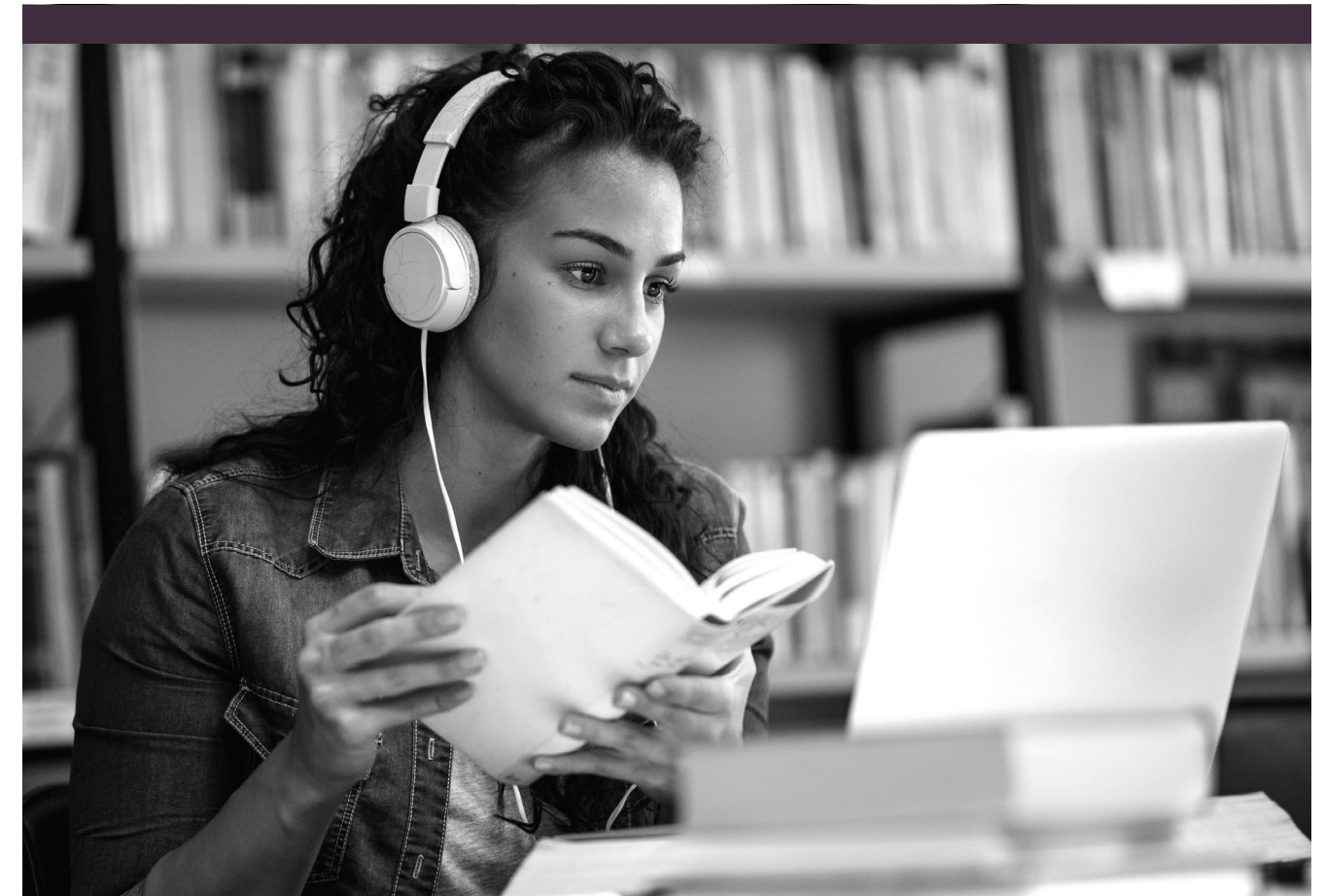
Universities function in the context of political, social, and economic transformations in their home countries as well as against a background of global challenges. They are required to play an important role in the management of wider societal changes, to rationalize resources, and to deliver services that contribute to the social, economic, and political needs of their home countries and abroad. Strategic leadership, curricula changes, diversification, and policy execution are but a few of the dynamics facing universities while producing highly skilled professionals, increasing research output, and training leaders who can achieve new social and economic goals to meet expectations of society. Seeking partnerships and opportunities abroad, directly or indirectly, have become critical avenues for universities to remain competitive and relevant globally.

As we examined each case and partnership type in detail, we found that institutions of higher education get involved in them for a variety of reasons: global impact, providing opportunities for its students, institutional learning, and establishing a strategic geographic presence.

GLOBAL IMPACT

We found that the main motivations for universities to get involved in global impact are clustered around outreach and establishing a presence abroad.

EARTH University plays an advisory role on Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), which is a vibrant network of more than 60 universities in Africa. In this south-south partnership, the objectives include fostering innovative and responsive research, advocating agricultural higher education, and creating university transformation for staying relevant. In its advisory capacity, EARTH is able to provide oversight and monitor RUFORUM's activities and progress as the member institutions try to adopt and replicate programs based on EARTH's model.



The relationship is also a vital source for facilitating multicultural exchanges between the two continents.

It is getting harder to ignore the challenges brought forth by globalization, and the impact and potential of distance and online education in opening up home institutions' influence, brand, and reach around the globe.

Columbia University, which is based in New York City, has invested in nine centers around the world. Interestingly, the Columbia Global Centers (CGCs), which are located across South America (2), Europe (2), Africa (2), and Asia (3), do not serve as satellite campuses where learners go to earn degrees. Rather, they are designed to promote and facilitate the collaborative and impactful engagement of Columbia's faculty, students, and alumni with the world, to enhance understanding, address global challenges, and advance knowledge and its exchange via the CGCs. This global initiative has a robust governance and engagement model, and commitment and support from the senior administration of the University.

However, partnerships for global impact are not without their challenges. Maintaining partnerships that involve multiple stakeholders, operating across time zones over long periods of time can be costly, time-consuming, and there exist many other barriers such as language, technological, and budget constraints that may keep the relationship from becoming a successful and sustainable one.

INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING: JOINT PROGRAMS

Another motivation for universities to get involved with collaborations and partnerships has to do with providing networked learning opportunities. Such collaborations exist due to various reasons: creating more opportunities to engage with learners in different geographies, expanding the programming portfolio, and institutional learning.

Envisioned as a laboratory for innovation in higher education, in 2002, the Alliance program was created to explore the future of global education by exchange of people, knowledge, best practices and resources. Through the innovative academic joint-venture between Columbia University and three major French institutions: École Polytechnique, Sciences Po, and Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University, the Alliance provides a range of challenging and selective dual degrees and joint programs in all disciplines, offered for undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students coming from all over the world to study in the United States and France. Besides the four institutions, the Alliance is further supported by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the French Ministry for Higher Education, the Regional Council of Île de France.

In 1963, U.S. president, John F. Kennedy, visited Costa Rica and met with Central American presidents.



Together, they recognized the need for professional management training in the region. At the time, Harvard Business School (HBS) was looking for global impact by spreading of the case method and came to talk to business leaders in the region to understand their needs. They decided to build a school with a residential MBA program that focused on writing cases focused on how to do business in the region. INCAE (The Central American Institute of Business Administration), adheres to the Harvard Case Study Method and curriculum, which allows students to examine past and current business situations, giving them indirect, real-world experience across industries and regions. Fifty years later, INCAE offers a full time MBA program, executive MBAs and a portfolio of executive education programs, clearly tailored and focused on Latin America.

Launched in 2012, the Global Network for Advanced Management (GNAM) includes 29 leading business schools from diverse regions, countries, cultures, and economies in different phases of development. A common motivation of member schools to connect is to position their students, faculty, staff, alumni and other constituencies so that they can deepen their understanding of differences and commonalities in their economies and increase their effectiveness. Member schools recognize that leaders in all sectors will be required to contribute to address the complex challenges facing humanity. Representing a shift beyond traditional partnership models of business school collaboration, the GNAM enables the development of innovative initiatives that leverage the schools' comparative advantages. What makes GNAM unique is that the program is delivered fully online, which reduces startup and infrastructure costs, and gives learners great flexibility, and the ability to scale the membership to new geographies and or time zones.

Since 2015, the University of British Columbia (UBC) and the Chongqing Municipal Education Commission has been involved in the Chongqing-UBC Higher Education Exchange. This agreement grew out of an individual connection between UBC's Faculty of Medicine and Chongqing Medical University and a shared desire by senior university officials to create short-term study opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. The partners included Sichuan International Studies University (SISU), Chongqing University, SouthWest University of Political Science and Law (SWUPL), Southwest University, Chongqing Medical University, and UBC.

This partnership provides excellent international learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. For students from the Chongqing universities, UBC offers great disciplinary breadth at a world-class research institution where students can participate in term-based exchange, research, and the Vancouver Summer Program (VSP). The VSP is unique

in its professional program offerings which is very appealing to students in medicine, dentistry, business and education, including those whose English language proficiency isn't yet strong enough for term-based exchange. For UBC students, the six partner universities in Chongqing offer very unique academic and socio-cultural experiences. And while all the Chongqing partners have some courses taught in English, UBC students can also immerse themselves in Mandarin through course-work and daily interactions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From examining the various types of collaborations and partnerships, it is evident that the demand for global engagement is growing fast, from universities and learners, and making strategic partnerships can be beneficial. The challenge now is to be able to meet this growing demand to learn from peers in other countries and cultures, and to collaboratively work on addressing the complex challenges facing higher education.

Below are some observations, takeaways, and recommendations based on our findings:

Minimizing overhead

A guiding principle that has underpinned the success of the Global Network for Advanced Management (GNAM) network has been the evident minimal overhead – there is no secretariat, there are no membership fees or revenue sharing, and no definition of academic credit to govern actions. Members make in-kind contributions with faculty time and engagement, and GNAM motivates their engagement by solving problems and smoothing the way so that the partnership can thrive and be successful.

Clear business plan

Any such alliance or partnership needs to have realistic fundraising goals and a clear business plan that can sustain it beyond the initial startup phase.

Value proposition

There needs to be a thorough assessment, understanding, and setting of expectations of what the value proposition of a partnership is to all parties involved.

Given today's greater access to information and open educational resources, there are questions that need to be considered such as: What is the value added by entering a partnership in higher education? Do

“ LAUNCHED IN 2012, THE GLOBAL NETWORK FOR ADVANCED MANAGEMENT (GNAM) INCLUDES 29 LEADING BUSINESS SCHOOLS FROM DIVERSE REGIONS, COUNTRIES, CULTURES, AND ECONOMIES IN DIFFERENT PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT.



the adjustments and investments that are needed to be made to start, integrate, engage, and sustain a partnership with a foreign institution justify the outcome?

Asymmetry

In certain partnerships, unintended asymmetric outcomes may become inevitable, and may cause long term damage to a partnership.

In the UBC-Chongqing partnership, there has been more student flow from Chongqing to UBC, to the disappointment of Chongqing partners, who have very generously offered even more incentives to UBC students to encourage them, such as low-cost accommodations.

Therefore, special consideration needs to be paid to the level of asymmetry that partners are willing to tolerate as things may not always go according to plan, and a partnership may not work out to a perfect 50-50 split.

Localization of content and context

In terms of institutional learning, getting involved in exchange programs like these have a lot to contribute to all partners involved, such as:

- Localization and adaptation of content and context: In the HBS-INCAE partnership, the cases were written to focus on topics that were relevant to the region.
- There was a deliberate process and finite resources from the giving side. That way, there was no long-term dependency on the founder, which made the project sustainable and successful.

- Global perspective for both institutions
- High positioning on rankings (INCAE has been ranked as one of the top 10 international business schools in the world)
- HBS was involved in the creation of the school and follow-up processes (faculty training in teaching and writing cases, etc.), but overall governance was left to the locals.
- Promoting world-class degree programs for students in multiple geographies
- Exchange of not only learners, but also the expansion of opportunities to participate in events, meetings with policy makers, and more informal gatherings throughout the academic year
- Creating opportunities and pathways for intercontinental exchange of students and programs, as well as sharing of resources and regional expertise

Resources

Another factor that challenges program development across multiple partners is the limited involvement of administrative staff and commitment to resources as partnerships are conceived.

“

THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS COMING FROM FRANCE TO THE UNITED STATES FAR OUTWEIGHS THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS GOING IN THE REVERSE DIRECTION.

For instance, the senior UBC and Chongqing officials who first came together saw the strong research connections and the institutional and government funding available in both countries to support student mobility, but they didn't have the practical understanding of student mobility and the processes required for implementation. For example, most universities require Student Mobility Agreements to be in place (which outline the specifics of student support, transfer credit articulation, etc.) before student travel can begin; because these agreements require Senate approval at UBC and senior review in Chongqing, the

negotiation and approval process took more time than originally expected, delaying the start of student travel. As well, administrators had limited knowledge about the full range of student mobility opportunities at the various partner universities, so in February 2017 two staff members from UBC Go Global travelled to Chongqing to meet with staff and faculty from five of the six participating universities, as well as the lead official from the Chongqing Municipality.

The trip allowed a sharing of information about opportunities at all universities, the development of staff connections between the various international offices that support student mobility, the identification

of faculty at all campuses who were already collaborating and who could help develop student mobility pathways, and some collective thinking about ideas for new programs. On reflection, all agreed that these meetings should have happened earlier as the partnership was being developed.

We hope that through consideration and implementation of these recommendations, our report can help facilitate how you decide to enter a partnership, or that it can help to make the experience more engaging, meaningful and effective for both you and your partner institutions.

