

Darla Deardorff:

Hello, everyone, and welcome to today's webinar entitled Exploring University Partnerships Models with ASEAN Institutions.

My name is Darla Deardorff. I'm Executive Director of the Association of International Education Administrators, host of today's webinar, along with our colleagues, and you'll hear from them shortly with the U.S. Department of State.

We are very pleased that you can join us today, and we are looking forward to the discussion during the webinar, and to the questions that you may have that come from the presentations that you hear today. As we begin the webinar, just a few words, if you do have questions please use the Q&A button at the bottom of your webinar and post questions that may occur to you throughout the presentations, and then we will have some time at the end for our panelists to be able to respond to those questions.

For now, though, I would like to introduce you to my colleague at the U.S. Department of State, Anthony Koliha, who has some words of welcome to share with you.

So Anthony Koliha is the Director of the Office of Global Educational Programs at the U.S. Department of State, where he oversees a portfolio of international teacher, professional and global mobility programs and services across four branches. Prior to his time, joining ECA at the U. S. Department of State, Mr. Koliha worked as the Director of International Programs in the College of Arts and Sciences at Indiana University, Wilmington, and as the Director of the Fulbright program in Russia and the International Director of the Russia Eurasia Office for the Institute of International Education. He also was at the Social Science Research Council and at American Councils for International Education, and he holds degrees from Kenyan College and Indiana University Bloomington. So we are very delighted that he can bring words of greeting to us today from the U.S. Department of State. So over to you, Anthony Koliha

Anthony Koliha:

Well, Darla, thank you so much for the kind introduction to our colleagues—most of our colleagues from across the United States, good morning. To our colleagues in Southeast Asia and around the world, good day, good evening, and good night. Thank you so much for being with us today.

And we can go to the next slide

So as was mentioned by Darla, I work for the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs here at the U.S. Department of State, based out of Washington, DC. And, as you can see from the slide at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, we basically conduct what we call public diplomacy or people-to-people diplomacy. So, while the U.S. Department of State conducts diplomacy, government to government relations, we support U.S. citizens from across the United States, and all walks of life; academic, cultural, sports, professional areas and allow them opportunities to engage with their foreign counterparts to meet one another, learn about one another, share their cultures, their ideas, their professional engagements and form connections and relations to support our broader diplomacy efforts at the people,-to-people level, and you can see we support over 55,000 direct exchange participants through our programs, including the flagship Fulbright program on an annual basis. And we are committed, absolutely committed, to ensuring that we represent the diversity from across the United States and all around the world through the programming that we do.

And if we can go to the next slide, please.

And then just very briefly, and the reason that we're here today is this is part of a White House initiative that was announced in May 2022, as part of the U.S.-ASEAN Special Summit, and the programming that we're doing right now is implemented through the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, through our IDEAS program, the work that we do with our colleagues at World Learning, and together with our colleagues, Darla and Company, at AIEA. So thank you for joining us today and really the goal is to bring together a diverse set of higher education leaders from across the United States as well as from across Southeast Asian nations to form relationships and partnerships and sustained engagements between our institutions and our countries.

Next slide, please.

And with that, it is really my pleasure to introduce our colleague, Kate Rebholz, who is the Deputy Chief of Mission, and the current Chargé d'Affaires at the U.S. Mission to ASEAN, and that is, for those that don't know, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and she is based out of Jakarta, Indonesia, and just a few words about Miss Rebholz background. So prior to arriving in Jakarta, she served as the Economic Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. Miss Rebholz has also previously served in India, in Indonesia, the office of Korean affairs on North Korea Policy, as the Economic Unit Chief in the office of India Affairs, as a Special Assistant to the Under Secretary for economic growth, energy, and the environment, and as a Foreign Policy Fellow in the Office of Senator Edward J. Markey. Before joining the State Department, Kate was the Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations at the University of Michigan Medical

Center. And as a graduate of Amherst College, Kate holds an MBA from the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan and is a fellow of the Thomas J. Watson Foundation. So please join me in welcoming Chargé Rebholz.

Kate over to you.

Bear with us a minute while we make sure we can connect with Chargé Rebholz.

Darla Deardorff:

Kate, I'm not sure we can hear you.

Apologies for the technical difficulties that we seem to be experiencing. We are so grateful that Chargé Rebholz can be with us here today. If we're able to get her back so that we can hear her, we will certainly try to make that possible, but at this point, we still can't hear the sound on Chargé Rebholz unfortunately. So I think we may need to continue on with the webinar at this point and come back if we're able to get the sound and the technology to work there. But thank you so much for joining us today, Chargé Rebholz, we very much appreciate that.

Thank you, Anthony Koliha, for that warm welcome and for providing the overview for this wonderful initiative coming from the U.S. Department of State, and AIEA is very pleased to be a partner on this initiative.

So the learning outcomes for today's webinar, as you see from the screen, we hope that all of you, and thank you so much, all over 100 of you for joining us today. We hope you'll be able to gain a deeper understanding of higher education institutions and systems in the ASEAN region, as well as to gain insights from U.S. and Southeast Asian practitioners about developing different university partnership models between institutions in the U.S. and ASEAN countries.

So as--on the next slide--before we continue with this webinar today, AIEA would like to provide a land acknowledgment, and you'll see in the purple box the reason why we do that. But we do want to acknowledge that the AIEA Secretariat, is located on the ancestral lands of the Shakori, Occaneechi, and Catawba peoples. We want to honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit. In addition, we acknowledge the overlapping histories of this land, including past violence and ongoing harm produced by the legacy of racialized slavery and oppression.

Next slide, please.

So just a few words about the Association of International Education Administrators, for those who are joining us and may not be familiar with AIEA. The Association of International Education Administrators just celebrated its fortieth-anniversary last year, and it's the only association, a nonprofit organization, specifically focused on international education leadership and serving those leading comprehensive internationalization and we are delighted to be—

Anthony Koliha:

Darla

Darla Deardorff:

--Able to. Yes.

Anthony Koliha:

Excellent. I believe we have Chargé Rebholz with us now.

Darla Deardorff:

Wonderful, wonderful. Yeah, so let's go back to Chargé Rebholz then for words of welcome from her.

Kate Rebholz:

Great. I hope that you're able to hear me now.

Darla Deardorff:

Yes, we can thank you so much.

Kate Rebholz:

Okay. Well, wonderful. Well, sorry for those technical snafus.

So Darla, Anthony, thank you so much for this really tremendously kind introduction, and for more importantly, bringing together this panel to talk about exploring university partnerships with ASEAN institutions. And I'd like to thank everyone joining today and especially the panelists for your commitment to building partnerships with ASEAN.

As you know, this region is tremendously dynamic. ASEAN nations had a combined GDP of at least 3.3 trillion U.S. dollars in 2022, and the region is leading and building technology of the future. Just one example, the digital economy alone was expected to top 200 billion, a 100% increase since 2019, and now boasts 460 million internet users, an increase of 100 million in the past 3 years, with 650 million inhabitants in total, two-thirds of which are youth, the United States remains bullish about the region and the U.S.-ASEAN relationship as President Biden said, "The future of the twenty-first century is going to be largely written in the Indo-Pacific." It's no surprise then, that the United States has steadily deepened our partnership with Southeast Asia, across multiple sectors; political, development, trade, economic, health, security, and of course, education. The success of the U.S.-ASEAN relationship is ultimately anchored in the very special friendship shared by our combined 1 billion people. Each year the United States provides more than 70 million to support education and cultural exchanges that foster greater understanding, enhance cooperation and create lifelong friendships that build community, resilience, and create ballast in the relationship. As we mentioned this is a long-term commitment. Since 1951, the United States has been developing ties between the United States and Southeast Asian universities, and the list of accomplishments in myriad fields, including science, technology, engineering, security, economic policy, and education are robust. The United States is proud that more than 33,000 exchange participants from ASEAN member states have participated in U.S. government-funded academic endeavors, including Fulbright and our flagship, Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative, YSEALI. We are also thrilled that 50,000 students from Southeast Asian universities chose to study in the United States each year.

As mentioned before at the U.S.-ASEAN Special Summit in Washington last year, the United States announced an expansion of our cooperation in higher education. A new cohort of billion future scholars, a doubling of the Fulbright ASEAN scholars program, expanded English language training, and of course, the launch of U.S.-ASEAN University connections. And this doesn't even begin to describe the enthusiasm from ASEAN and their desire to further expand connections between academic research centers in the United States and in the ASEAN member states.

Accomplishing these targets will require partnerships between universities, both in the United States and across ASEAN, so I'm thrilled to be a part of the panel today. Your role is critical in

establishing the university partnerships between the United States and Southeast Asia that will build the next generation of leaders. These leaders, I am convinced, will be the ones who find solutions to the most pressing challenges in the twenty-first century, and leaders and scholars who will help write the future of the twenty-first century. Thank you so much for including us and I look forward to seeing what partnerships develop from the panel today. Thank you.

Darla Deardorff:

Thank you again so much Chargé Rebholz. We're so appreciative of your remarks and so glad that you can join us here today, and glad that the technology finally was able to work for us. So thank you so much.

Kate Rebholz:

Thank you.

Darla Deardorff:

So now we're going to go to our panel and we're going to start with—from our colleague in the ASEAN region., so we are joined today with three panelists. We'll hear first from Ethel Agnes Pascua-Valenzuela and that will be followed by two, what we call Senior International Officers, SIOs, CK Kwai and Jeff Riedinger, and they will introduce themselves each a bit more as they begin their remarks. You'll hopefully find that each brings a very unique perspective to what we're discussing today related to partnerships and then hopefully, there will be a little bit of time at the end for some Q&A. I'm delighted to see we already have one question there, and as questions occur to you, please do type those into the Q&A during these presentations.

So it is my pleasure now to introduce to you the Director of the SEAMEO Secretariat and Advisor to the Future of Education of ASEAN, Dr. Ethel Agnes Pascua-Valenzuela, and we look forward to hearing what you have to share with us.

Ethel Agnes Pascua-Valenzuela:

Thank you very much. Dr. Darla and good morning to all of you from the U.S., our distinguished officials from U.S.-ASEAN organizations, university officials, and our panelists for this morning.

I'm very glad to join you from Bangkok, Thailand. It's evening here, almost midnight, and first, let me go to the next slide. I come from the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education

organization. It's composed of 11 member states, and we also have associate and affiliate members.

Next slide, please.

Our highest policy-making body's actually the Council of Ministers, and we convene annually, and this coming February Ministers of Education will convene again in the Philippines. And after more than five decades of helping one another to promote regional cooperation and understanding and working with other countries and in ASEAN language we use dialogue partners, and we have support that higher education mobility, and of course, exchange programs and even internships overseas.

So I would like to go to my next slide.

So in our region, in Southeast Asia, we really have experienced rapid economic growth, as was related to us earlier in the opening session. And here we can see that there's really a vigorous effort among member countries of ASEAN to really focus on human capacity development, on human resource development, so that's why there are plenty of opportunities to assist in, you know, enhancing programs to develop capacities, not just in higher education but we start from the foundational learning, and there are a lot of opportunities for teachers exchange that we're supporting. And I'm also very excited to inform you that right now I'm quite busy doing the future of education. Looking at the digitalization, the way countries, you know, solve all the problems of disruptions and how they are able to bounce back. You know, we're all just emerging out of the pandemic.

So with all of this, for the past 3 years, we tried to, you know, stop the inbound and outbound programs for students but we did virtual mobility. So as you see in the map, we have close relationship in terms of mobility with countries near ASEAN, countries near us. So we have expanded not just inter-ASEAN mobility programs, we have also included internship programs and mobility programs with plus three of ASEAN, Japan, Korea, and China.

So now let me share with you a bit on where we are quite busy at on the reforms of education.
Next slide.

So in the last Congress, the biggest summit that I have ever convened, because it's virtual, 35,000 participants, who joined us and we have figured out how we can really do a reset mode for Southeast Asia, because all of us then were in lockdown. So we were able to transition to digitalization but let me tell you, it's 11 countries, so some other countries are more advanced,

and the others are really struggling to digitize. So we use digital media and different partners really helped and chipped in in order to promote better access to education during the pandemic. We are really building our new generation of ASEAN.

Next slide, please.

I would like to share with you that within our goal, and the scope, the sustainable development goal is our main aspiration, that everybody would have access to education, and, of course, of good quality. So we promote higher education mobility, harmonization of higher education, so we can promote mutual recognition agreements between and among countries in the region and supporting scholarships.

Next.

Where can we partner with ASEAN universities? So we have over 7,000 universities and colleges in the region. So many of them are in Indonesia, around 4 million students, 3.5--7 million students in Indonesia, 3.5 million students in the Philippines and we have also for, you know, a big number of students in Thailand and Vietnam, and the others have lower than a million. But the focus is internationalization of higher education. That we will be able to provide international dimension, that only not an academic program, courses of study, but also in teaching, faculty exchange, joint, collaborative research, and student services. Like, you know, we also promote extension programs, mobility. And all of this, we would like to secure quality, assurance, and qualifications recognition. So qualifications framework is very important in our region. Each and every country should work on qualifications framework for easy mobility of students.

Next, I would like to share with you the currently--next slide, please--that currently, you know, the way I look at all the information, many of our students are going to Australia, and second, is U.S. is still a preferred destination. UK, Japan, and Malaysia for inter-ASEAN. So this is really very good to figure out that, you know, Australia because it is quite close and they also offer a lot of scholarship programs for ASEAN students on a year-to-year basis, but we can also see the preference for U.S. institutions.

Next, I would like to inform you that currently in the future of higher education, we're looking at the rise of micro-credentials and this will really help us in the recognition of our young professionals and mobility within the region. So we are trying to look at the possibility of certifying competencies and qualifications, and, you know, pushing for the UNESCO recognition of higher education qualifications, ratification. So at--this is really something that's growing and

we would like to develop some sort of declaration of ministers in the future on digital economy and micro-credentials.

Next we--next slide, please.

We would like also to inform you that we really need strong science, technology, engineering, mathematics, education. And I think U.S. is one of the best countries that can provide strong STEM programs from higher education and even internship or the first five years of their professional life. So we look into this in terms of research, in terms of future exchange, in terms of scholarships.

Next. Yes.

Now I would like to zero in on the fast urbanization happening in the ASEAN region. So even our greater mega sub-region, Laos, Cambodia, and then, if we also have, you know, other countries that are emerging and developing. So they are already equipping the schools with internet connectivity and accessibility. And you know, they're also from our Digital Kids Asia-Pacific research, more and more students are becoming adept in using their cell phones, their mobile phones, for teaching and learning. It's really, very, very striking that many of them have this digital innovation and digital creativity, even at, you know, at a high school level.

So it's really a different ASEAN, as I see it, because there are now more and more, you know, generations of learners who are very quick to really learn in a different way, and we also see the rise of learning cities like, you know, each city would provide learning hubs, learning and they are really connected much with good governance.

So I'm not giving you the picture that's really perfect. We are also struggling in terms of connectivity in terms of digital transformation, but what is good is that in the recent, ASEAN Education Ministers meeting, which was held in Hanoi, you know, digital transformation has also been adapted as our focus.

And next slide, please.

In our region, there are two big organizations helping member countries. So ASEAN is in terms of trade, political, and we also now are starting with the education component. In ASEAN, they have the education youth sports division now helping the countries, and SEAMEO was there since 1965, and I remember the first meeting of SEAMEO, it was organized with the U.S., Mr. Black, in our history. So the Ministers of Education work together to really look at the

development in ICT, in, you know, health, science, and even culture. So there are two organizations helping out.

And next.

Well, I don't have a lot of time to give you each detail for each country, so at SEAMEO, our president now is Singapore, and our flagship is really on reset learning, recovery, and digital transformation and of course, this is the future. Our higher education will be more digital. We can easily access courses and classes from the U.S. I'm also enrolling in Coursera in different universities in the U.S. and I like it, I don't have to travel, and we still prioritize our regional integration aspiration. And I think all countries have already embedded twenty-first-century skills and competencies in the curriculum and STEMED will always receive the highest budgetary priority. And existing now are non-traditional qualifications and maybe, you know, decreases that are emerging are really different from what we have 20 years ago. So we need to really retool our higher education students and even our teachers and higher education recognition is really very important validation, accreditation, and lifelong learning. This is the focus, recognition of prior learning, so they can bring their credentials and in your country, you already have digital credentials and have that recognized for a prosperous ASEAN in 2050.

So I think this is very, timely that we are talking about the U.S.-ASEAN relation, and I have met some of you in previous meetings in ASEAN and we must continue to explore partnerships and alliances for the future of education we want

So good morning, and thank you very much, for inviting me. This is my short sharing, other questions you can ask me later. Thank you very much.

Darla Deardorff:

Thank you so much. Ethel, we really appreciate your sharing this wonderful and very helpful, contextual information with all of us. And again, please post questions you might have in the Q&A, and hopefully, we'll have some time at the end.

At this time it's my pleasure to introduce to you CK Kwai who is the Senior International Officer at Cleveland State University, Director of the Center for International Services and Programs.

Over to you, CK.

CK Kwai:

Thank you very much. Darla. And the same thing, you know, good morning, good afternoon, good evening, wherever you are. I'm very, very honored to have the privilege to share some of my experience in working with ASEAN institutions. A little quick back--a bit about my background. Currently, you know, I have an adjunct--I'm an adjunct professor at Vietnamese-German University in Vietnam. And I spent a few years in Malaysia, attending high school, and also, I think, a call to fame, and some of you that don't know, I actually spent a few months in Indonesia learning the gamelan, you know, at some point in my life. Of course, you know, I have a huge interest in the education system, you know, around the world but specifically, you know, with ASEAN countries, and I'll talk a little bit more about it because to me it's such a unique area of the world.

So I want to approach this by sharing with you my own way or my own personal approach to partnership, or working along--getting, you know, working on a partnership, you know, with institutions. So I call it my three "Ms", but I'll talk more about it. So I always start off with, you know, what I call meticulous planning, because to me it's very important to have very intentional and clear purpose, you know, especially in your proposal. So for example, we'll take example of exchanges, right? So if the intention is really to increase exchanges, I'll give you an example of a current program that is being worked on. I don't have an update. I don't know where they are at this point, but it's a very unique kind of approach to increasing exchange, and is actually a three-way exchange, for example. So it is actually with RMIT in Vietnam and the original RMIT in Melbourne, with a U.S. institution because the U.S. institution knows that they have a lot of interest of students that would like to go to Australia, but they don't have a lot of interest in terms of students going to Vietnam. And so that was how this partnership with this three-way exchange is being negotiated at all, it's being discussed at this point. So, for example, they could have a U.S. student going to Australia, RMIT in Australia, and the Australian student, in RMIT Australia, would go to the RMIT campus in Vietnam, and then the student in Vietnam will actually end up going to the U.S. institution because there's a lot of interest, well, for Vietnamese student to have the exchange experience in the U.S. So again, if I know the intention and the purpose is really to increase exchanges, then that works.

So you know, and that example of enrollment and direct enrollment is, you know, working with, for example, there are a number of college universities, I think that's what they are called, in Malaysia, for example, and it's to work out some kind of a transfer agreement, right? If the goal is direct enrollment, all--if we talk about, you know, research specific, an example is actually came from a research project between the University of Maine and I think it's officially called the University of Agriculture and Science in Indonesia and from that because they have a

forestry similarity in terms of program, you know, an exchange was developed through that research initiative.

The other thing that I want to kind of quickly touch upon is about goals. So related to, you know, the intentional and clear purpose it's also very, very important to be very—to have very intentionally clear goals of what you want to accomplish. This is actually a personal example I'll share with you. So you know, so, for example, you know, make sure that your goal is achievable, and you know, and it's--and there is real interest in terms of, you know, going on with this particular program, right? So for this particular example, the goal initially is to really to get students to travel or to study abroad in less traveled countries, right? So outside of Western Europe, for example. And so the plan was to develop an exchange program with an institution in Malaysia, and so that's how it started off, and then very quickly students actually found out that it's going--it's actually a lot cheaper for them to actually enroll directly at this institution. The cost of attendance per semester, including airfare, because of the cost of living and the exchange rate, it was actually cheaper for them to actually direct enroll at this particular institution in Malaysia, as compared to the cost of attendance in the U.S. And so then over time that exchange got developed and changed, and became more of a direct enrollment of the U.S. students going to Malaysia. But again the reason is again going back because you know, the intention is to encourage students to travel right, to study a broad in a less traveled country. And so then, if that is the main goal, and that is the purpose, then that is kind of what things will have to, and sometimes will evolve into.

The other “M” that I talk about is to be very mindful because it's a one of the I think big myths, sometimes, you know, I have to remind myself, is that ASEAN is not a one-size fit all, because there are different countries, and they have very different education systems. For example, you know the median of instruction is, you know, really can be very, very different, right, between if you compare, you know, Thailand, to Malaysia, to Indonesia, to the Philippines, the median of instruction and note can be very different between those countries. And also government policies, are very different. Specifically, you know, there are certain policy that deals with actual courses, and what courses are required if you have a student that is studying at those institutions and I'll talk a little bit about that later, too.

But the other thing to also always pay attention to is the academic calendar. I always say that I know myself included a lot of times, you know, I'm always thinking of the way U.S. institutions in terms of our semester system, right, when term starts and when they end, or our academic year. Well, it's not always the same everywhere around the world, especially, it's not necessarily always the same, you know, within those ASEAN countries, and even between countries in ASEAN. So that's another thing that we all gotta always be mindful about.

And of course, the other thing, you know, that I say that we have to be really really mindful about is the local regulations and policies. There are some countries that still have restrictions in terms of foreign exchanges. And so again, whether it's students coming to the U.S. or students from the U.S. going, we got to be very mindful about that.

Then the other big thing is really about, I mentioned briefly earlier, there are countries, that have required courses or classes that every student are required to take, and they are a lot of times related to local civic engagement and things like that. So if we are planning, you know, a course equivalency, you know, then you got to be very, very careful to make sure that that is all built-in, and that students are aware, and those are the things that need to be negotiated way ahead of time. And of course, the other big thing, you know, that comes up in the U.S. a lot of the time is FERPA or students' rights, right? That could be very, very different in different parts of the world.

Then I want to quickly, because of time. I want to quickly than talk about the third "M" that I use. You know, I call it manage, in a sense, it's really about managing the program more than anything else I probably could have used it with assessment because that is kind of what this is all about. It's about setting, first of all, setting the assessment right, I mean, what is it that you want to assess so very—got to be very, very clear what are your goals, you know, what you want to accomplish and then have a way of measuring or assessing it. And there are, of course, you know, some easy things that you can assess, and there are some less easy way of assessing. So some of the easy things, you know, is basically, you know, how is the, you know, if you're goal is for exchange increase. If it's to travel to less-traveled countries, were you able to actually manage that? Some of the others are a little harder. For example, if you have a goal of increasing the prestige of your institution, right? Or to basically enhance the reputation of your institution in that region of the world. Then that is a little harder to assess and so that is something that you have to kind of take into consideration.

The other big thing that that I always try to make sure, you know, that whatever program, you know, whatever partnership that we plan to work on is how sustainable it is. So I always ask myself whether, you know, what is the lifespan of this program? Right so, or at least what is my intended life span of this program, because we know that nothing lasts forever because of numerous reasons, right? Like change of leadership, change in the education system, goals, and objectives, so on and so forth. So it's important to have a sense of how long you think this program is going to last.

And then, of course, you know, to always build in a post what I call post agreement or post assessment in the sense you gotta have continuous review of how the program is working or

not working. You know, if it's working great, you know. Fine, right? If it's not, what is it that is not working?

So those are some of, you know, the techniques or just a strategy that I use but at the same time, I also want to share a couple of other resources. You know one, of course, one resource is that there's actually a chapter on partnership in the second edition of the *Handbook on International Education*. There's also a chapter on partnership from the book, *Leading Internationalization Hand Book*. So those are some, but the other kind of resources, the other ways that you can actually get a lot of great information is, for example, engaging with Education U.S.A., you know, the advising centers. The advisors are an amazingly, you know, great resource, right? The REACs, right? APAIE, I mentioned it briefly, you know, the Asia-Pacific Association for International Education, it's another great conference. Of course, AIEA conference, you know, it's always attended by people from all around the world, especially countries--from ASEAN countries. So there are definitely a lot of other resources.

So I'm going to stop here and then I will say, I am definitely available for questions later on. And I will pass it on to Jeff and probably Darla will introduce Jeff.

Darla Deardorff:

Yeah, thank you so much, CK, and thanks for sharing your lessons learned and especially the resources there at the end, very, very valuable, and we're getting some questions around resources as well. So thank you so much for sharing that, and now we will go to our last panelist for today's webinar, and that is Jeff Riedinger, who is Senior International Officer, the official title being Vice Provost for Global Affairs at the University of Washington. And so over to you, Jeff, we look forward to hearing what you have to share with us today.

Jeff Riedinger:

Well, thank you very much, Darla, and great appreciation to AIEA and to the U.S. Department of State, both for this webinar, but also Economic and Cultural Affairs in the Department of State for its longstanding commitment to what my university president describes as knowledge diplomacy. Even when political leaders may find it challenging to talk to each other universities can remain in and sustain and expand partnerships. So delighted to be a panelist for today.

I want to acknowledge that even at the large research-intensive university that I currently work at, and the many years I worked at Michigan State University, large research universities have

to be strategic in their focus and their partnerships. They simply cannot be all things to everyone.

And, moreover, as both a full professor and as a senior administrator, I'm acutely aware that top-down, command and control, is not a viable approach for how you're gonna operate a university. Tenured full professors find it too easy to ignore whatever the edict is from on high, so my approach has always been to build from the bottom up and to do so--next slide, please.

I focus on an inventory of our existing networks because across the decades and disciplines, your faculty have built a network of partners in Southeast Asia, whether you know it or not. They partnered with university colleagues, in some cases with government agencies, with corporations, with small and medium enterprises, with foundations, with non-governmental organizations. You want to be strategic in building up and out from those partnerships, but first, you need to inventory them. So if you aren't already tracking, with whom are your faculty co-publishing, where are your area studies faculty doing their research, and the like, that's a first order of business. Figure out with whom you are already partnered and build out from there. At the University of Washington, as at Michigan State University, part of my charge was to institutionalize those networks, connect our partners' networks, and build a network of networks that is problem and opportunity-focused, community-based, and impact-driven.

Next slide, please. Oops. There we go. Thank you.

And in--as part of that I'm never going to tell faculty where they need to go in the world or what they need to be doing, but I will encourage deans, chairs, and directors to in turn encourage, not require their faculty, and particularly their new hires, to crowd into the existing partnerships, rather than go through all the laborious process of creating brand new partnerships to align their research around the strategic partnerships and community platforms in which the institution is investing.

Next slide, please.

And in turn, we want our deans, chairs, and directors to align opportunities for their students to engage in study, research, internships, experiential learning abroad, around the strategic research and community partnerships. We want to reciprocate for students from our strategic partner universities around the world and we want to offer opportunities for degree students from the ASEAN countries to network, in our case, in Seattle and across the State of Washington, with companies and organizations, particularly a lot of non-profit organizations that are engaged in ASEAN countries to build those networks to serve them well when they return to their home country.

Next slide, please.

So I'm mindful of the time, and I do want to reserve time for questions for all of us panelists. So the next series of slides are ones that largely speak for themselves, but just a couple of remarks.

I talked a bit about the scope of the strategic partnership. Is it whole of university or organization? Is it multi-college or department? Or is it a single discipline? Single department? All of those are valid approaches to partnership, and I will note that in my world, full of university is that three or four of my 16 schools and colleges are involved in the partnership. I can't imagine a world in which all 16 of the schools and colleges would be involved in a single partnership. That's just sort of beyond the capacity to organize when it's purely on a voluntary self-selected basis in terms of faculty. I'm looking at institutional characteristics. Hardly about, is there an alignment around the research priorities because the faculty are the folks that will be here the longest so let's focus first on their research. And yes, we're mindful of rankings, but I don't just look at the institution-wide ranking, I'm interested in the rankings of a specific unit or a program. We can find gems even in universities that might not otherwise strike us and the world as top-ranked. So, finding those domains for possible connections, looking at what are the respective accesses to funding, and then, in our case, this won't apply for those of you not on the West Coast, but there is an association of 61 research universities around the Pacific Rim, including ASEAN, that are in the Association of Pacific Rim University. So, all other things being equal, I'm happy to build out relationships with those universities and countries.

Next slide, please.

Strategic criteria largely speak for themselves, let me just talk about--and CK in particular, but Ethel, as well, talking about, ASEAN is not some united block where they share everything in common, so respecting the diversity, the differences of the various countries, and the institutions in them is important, but when I think about institutional values, that's really the core of successful long-term strategic partnerships. It's not the research theme of the moment and in American higher ed, we privilege academic freedom, freedom of expression, and shared academic governance. That's not uniformly the case around the world, and you just need to be mindful when you're engaging in partnerships where those values are not shared. But in our case, my president, wants the University of Washington to be the world's leading public university in terms of our scholarly and societal impact. Really, how are we making a positive difference in the world? And so we're looking for institutions that share that value, that commitment to not just scholarly but societal impact.

I'm going to skip--the rest of these criteria here largely speak for themselves, and in the lessons, I'll pick up some of the points that CK made. You've got to be aggressively and candidly managing the expectations of both institutions or if it's a trilateral, multilateral partnership of all of the partner institutions. You need to be very explicit in identifying what is expected of each partner and be in a position where each partner can hold each other accountable, including communicating tough messages to the U.S. institutions about the ways in which they're not holding up their end of the bargain. Support faculty champions on the research side, but also identify support administrative champions. And I noticed in the Q&A one of the things about capacity development, I've got professional staff at both Michigan State University and the University of Washington, that want to be every much as engaged in international partnerships as do our students and faculty, and too often we forget the professional staff, and yet there's learning opportunities, professional development opportunities for them to go visit and meet with their counterparts at our partner institutions, and similarly for us to host professional staff from those institutions. Things go a lot smoother when your accountants know their accountants and can figure out how to work out the administration of joint research grants, for example. And finally back to my network of networks metaphor, it's about connecting the strategic partners. Not just the bilateral ones, but finding out with which other universities in ASEAN, in East Asia, in South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, with which institutions and those other world regions are your ASEAN partners working and finding those overlaps, and then thinking about how you build this multi-continent strategic research partnership will stand you in good stead. With that, I'll leave a handful of minutes for questions.

Darla Deardorff:

Thank you so much, Jeff, and thanks so much to all of our panelists for sharing these amazing insights today into partnerships, and building partnerships between U.S. and ASEAN higher education institutions. We do have just a few minutes left. There have been so many great questions asked and huge thanks to Ethel and others who've been answering those in writing, so do take a look at written answers. I just want to throw out a handful of questions to you all in our remaining minutes, and see who would like to answer which ones, but I'll just script them together. There was a question on how to build sustainable partnerships beyond one person. There was a question around what are some of the risks involved in managing these partnerships? A specific question around are MOUs always needed or not? A question around how to attract U.S. partners into partnerships with ASEAN institutions beyond the funding piece and what does success look like? Those are a lot of questions and you would each have maybe one minute to choose one to respond to and so I'll turn those questions over to the three of you and see who would like to jump into any of those questions and which one you like to take.

CK Kwai:

I can take a stab at the, you know, attracting U.S. partners. So I will say that one of the important things is to understand the different types of institutions in the U.S. and is to find the right match. You know, that is going to be very important, to be sustainable. So, you know, because not all U.S. institutions say, for example, has a medical school, has a law school, or has an engineering program, and so you know, but a lot of Asian ASEAN universities, you know, have a lot of those programs. So if the intention is, you know, that then you know you got to find the right partner. That is just kind of an example. So, knowing your partner, you know, doing some research, and here again, Education U.S.A. advising centers are great to be able to get some quick information about a particular institution, but you got to do some research.

Darla Deardorff:

Thank you so much, CK. Jeff, which question would you like to respond to there?

Jeff Riedinger:

Well, I'll actually tackle a couple of them. So one, as a member of the faculty of law, I'm always mindful about these agreements, and so most MOUs we sign are somehow needed to free up funding from our partner institution or the government of that country, or something like that. But MOUs in my world are not—explicitly non-binding, not legally binding. They're basically saying, we agree to collaborate in the like, but there's no financial or other commitment. Our Attorney General's Office reviews those routinely, but it's, you know, most of the time that just a we agree to play nice together. Legally binding memorandum of agreements where there's contractual obligations, money, balances, and student exchanges, other things, those are a bit more complicated, the least of it being what will be the legal jurisdiction. Are, you know, all the decisions going to be made based on U.S. law or on the law of Malaysia, the Philippines, and the like, so tricky things there, but there are ways of addressing those. The other thing I will say what success looks like to me is our biggest, most impactful partnerships, both from a scholarly standpoint and from a societal impact standpoint, have been ones that have stood the test of time, haven't died because a single faculty member retired or left the university, but instead, we've built it over the decades and two, three, four, five decades later success looks like not just that you've stood the test of time, but that the students you trained in the early decades have now taken leadership roles in the partnership and in the scholarly work, and it's that kind of exponential growth that comes out of something that started just with a handful of faculty decades ago that I'm privileged to sustain, nurture, and in some cases to start new ones.

Darla Deardorff:

Thank you so much, Jeff. And Ethel, you have the final word, anything you would like to conclude with from today's panel?

Ethel Agnes Pascua-Valenzuela:

Thank you very much, Darla. I've been busy answering all the questions and there are a lot of them.

Darla Deardorff:

Indeed very much so thank you

Ethel Agnes Pascua-Valenzuela:

Yes, from my side, I would just like to inform you that, you know, really enhancing collaboration between U.S. institutions and ASEAN, this is really the way forward, because I have experience already for my own personal journey that when I have received the U.S. IVP Award, I have seen very, very remarkable institutions in the U.S. and I was so inspired, it was 2000, and now we have the U.S.-ASEAN scholarship programs and you are giving capacity to many of our teachers, our educators, our policymakers, our artists, it's really a big, you know, turn in expertise developed by U.S. institutions and it's like something that will lead us forward to a new journey, to a new, stronger partnership. We invested on STEM education. We've been inviting professors and lecturers from MIT, and we have convened many of our innovators. We do incubation of many laboratories in ASEAN and it's really amazing.

So I really encourage you to work with us and to have relationships with ASEAN institutions so that, you know, we can support our business and industries and really contribute to HR development, human capacity development in our region and that's all.

Darla Deardorff:

Thank you so much, Ethel. So to all of you, please join me in thanking again our wonderful panelists for today, Ethel, CK, and Jeff. And thanks to all of you for joining us today. We tried to answer as many questions as we could, and Ethel, especially in the writing, thank you, and we hope that all of you will join us for our last and final webinar in the series on February 2, where we hope to be able to continue to address many of the questions that you were asking today.

This webinar was recorded and will be available. We will make that link available on the respective websites and really appreciate this opportunity to be able to partner with the U.S. Department of State and other colleagues, in making today's webinar possible.

So we look forward to having you join us on February 2, and also possibly at the upcoming AIEA Conference next month in Washington, DC where we will be welcoming an ASEAN delegation at the conference, we're so excited about that.

So thank you again, everyone. Have a good day.