



17th ASEF University
20 June – 01 July 2011 | Penang, Malaysia

“Cultural Heritage: Challenges and Opportunities”

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Cultural Heritage as seen by youths from Asia and Europe

The need to educate and actively involve the youth in heritage-related issues was highlighted by the 4th ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting (CMM) in Poland (September 2010). To avoid losing the link with the past, the Ministers encouraged all member countries of the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) to foster the awareness of common cultural heritage among the youths in their national education systems.

In support of this, ASEF is co-organising the 17th ASEF University (AU17) with Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) and in coordination with the Centre for Policy Research and International Studies (CenPRIS), that will soon be starting a new research cluster focussing on Youth, Education and Heritage.

ASEF University (AU) is an annual 2-week residency programme that aims to promote cross-cultural exchanges among youth from Asia and Europe. This year is the 17th edition and is themed, “*Cultural Heritage: Challenges and Opportunities*”. AU17 will engage 41 students and young professionals from 31 ASEM countries. They will stay in Penang and over 2 weeks, engage in rigorous academic discourse, workshops and site visits.

Participants of AU17 will produce a photo exhibition entitled “*Shared Heritage: As we see it*”, which will be held on 30 June 2011 at the Muzium dan Galeri Tuanku Fauziah. It will feature photographs taken by the participants which best represents what cultural heritage means to them. The exhibition may then travel to several countries in Asia and Europe as a lead up to the 5th ASEM Culture Ministers' Meeting in Yogyakarta in 2012.

With its capital, George Town, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008, Penang serves as a fitting environment for AU17. Malaysia is currently vying for a seat at the World Heritage Council. USM and CenPRIS are at the forefront of this initiative by actively hosting programmes, including well-known academics in the field of heritage, such as Datin Paduka Dato' Professor Emeritus Zuraina Abdul Majid and Professor Dr A Ghafar Ahmad.

Malaysia has been an active supporter of ASEF. Since 2002, ASEF has conducted over 30 projects, engaging 34 partners and 688 alumni in the country.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

Members of the media are invited to attend the **press conference** of the 17th ASEF University:

Date and time: **20 June 2011 (Monday); 2:00 PM**

Venue: **Dewan Persidangan Universiti (DPU), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Penang**

You can view the programme for the 2-week project [here](http://www.asef.org/images/stories/projects/documents/au17_programme%20%28as%20of%2013june2011%29.pdf) (URL: http://www.asef.org/images/stories/projects/documents/au17_programme%20%28as%20of%2013june2011%29.pdf). If you or your representatives wish to attend the press conference, or to conduct interviews with any of the organisers, please contact:

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About the organisers:



The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) promotes greater mutual understanding between Asia and Europe through intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. Through ASEF, civil society concerns are included as a vital component of deliberations of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM*). ASEF was established in February 1997 by the participating governments of ASEM and has since implemented over 500 projects, engaging over 15,000 direct participants as well as reaching out to a much wider audience in Asia and Europe. www.asef.org

* ASEM now brings together 46 member states (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam) plus the European Commission and the ASEAN Secretariat. www.aseminfoboard.org



The Centre for Policy Research and International Studies (CenPRIS) is a transdisciplinary research centre serving as the focus of USM's efforts in research, consultancy services and graduate supervision related to public policy and international studies. Established in 2007, it combines the existing expertise and skills residing in the two Centres, Centre for Policy Research (CPR) and Centre for International Studies (CIS). The research policy areas focus on socio-political development and rural modernisation, public-private sector collaboration, cultural, communication and ethnic studies and international political economy.

Special attention is focussed on Melayu Pulau Pinang Heritage, Endangered Languages, Malay Diaspora and Ocean Research. www.cenpris.usm.my



Established as the second university in the country in 1969, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) was first known as Universiti Pulau Pinang. USM was given the mandates to provide, promote and develop learning in the fields of Pure Sciences, Applied Sciences, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Building Science and Technology, Social Sciences, Humanities and Education as well as to conduct research and foster the dissemination of such knowledge. To date, the University has not departed from these terms of reference and has made significant progress in meeting its academic, social, and national obligations.

Since its establishment, it has adopted an innovative approach to higher education and departed significantly from the traditional faculty system of an academic organisation. In its place, the University introduced the school system that allows for a multidisciplinary approach. The aim was to combine subjects and to organise programs in such a manner that a degree of specialisation in a chosen subject was possible.

In the field of research, the emphasis is on function-oriented or interdisciplinary research. The focus is on areas that integrate academic interest and practical relevance, thus directing scientific thrusts towards breakthroughs in problem areas crucial to the quality of life and national development. www.usm.my