

The **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** is organising the **8th Asia-Europe Classroom Network (AEC-NET) Conference**, which will be held in Sønderborg, Denmark on 26 - 30 October 2009. With the theme *"The Impact of Climate Change and Sustainable Development Within the School Community in Asia and Europe,"* the Conference specifically aims to raise the environmental awareness of teachers in Asia and Europe, thus enabling them to initiate concrete action for protecting the environment in their own school community. The 8th AEC-NET Conference is organised by ASEF in collaboration with the Sønderborg Municipality, and with support from the Danish Ministry of Education, Hørup Centralskole, Nyborg Friskole and Herfølge Skole. Please refer to **Annex A** for the full details of the Conference programme.



The 8th AEC-NET Conference falls under the greater framework of the **Asia-Europe Classroom Network (AEC-NET)** programme.

ABOUT AEC-NET

Launched in December 1998, the **Asia-Europe Classroom Network (AEC-NET)** is the Asia-Europe Foundation's (ASEF) flagship programme which aims to foster collaborations among secondary and high school teachers and students in Asia and Europe. It was formerly called the Asia-Europe Classroom (AEC), which was conceived at a brainstorming session attended by secondary and high school teachers and educators from Asia and Europe held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in May 1998.

The original challenge was to harness the potential of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in connecting secondary and high schools of Asia and Europe and construct the framework for a "cyber classroom" that would promote intellectual and inter-cultural exchanges among secondary and high school teachers and students of Asia and Europe. The AEC has since evolved to encourage more active interactions between secondary and high schools in Asia and Europe.

The AEC-NET comprise a Co-ordinating Committee, which works as a provider of academic criteria in order to evaluate the different activities of the project as well as to assess and advise on the best direction, action plans and strategies for the future.

There are two principal activities held under the AEC-NET framework:

- The various **Asia-Europe Classroom (AEC) online collaborative learning projects** involving different groups of students from secondary and high schools of Asia and Europe; and
- The annual **Asia-Europe Classroom Network (AEC-NET) Conference**, attended by secondary and high school teachers and educators from Asia and Europe.

AEC PROJECTS

The AEC Projects are online collaborative projects developed by members of the Asia-Europe Classroom Network. Each project incorporates a component of intercultural exchange and learning through the use of ICT. Developed during the annual AEC-NET Conference, these projects are based on the framework that educators have worked out at these conferences. After the conference, educators then go back to their respective schools to further develop and execute their projects, with the involvement of their students, during the course of the academic year. To date, over 150 AEC Projects have been successfully implemented as a result of these collaborations.

The six most outstanding AEC Projects are then shortlisted every year for the AEC Award, which recognises the most innovative, effective and sustainable online projects. Please refer to **Annex B** for more information about the AEC Award and the 2009 finalists.

AEC-NET CONFERENCE

The AEC-NET Conference an annual meeting that gathers secondary and high school educators from Asia and Europe who take a keen interest in fostering collaborations among their students through innovative and interactive collaborative online learning and inter-cultural exchanges.

The Conference is usually held over a period of four days, and comprises four essential components:

- **Professional Enrichment for AEC-NET members.** Internationally-recognised experts are invited to give presentations on topics related to the conference theme.
- **Review of past AEC Projects, and presentation of new AEC Project proposals.** Participants review the results of the AEC on-line collaborative learning projects that had been developed in the preceding year, the most outstanding of which are then shortlisted to contend for the AEC Awards (please see **Annex B**). Participants are also encouraged to submit proposals for on-line collaborative learning projects that teachers and students could develop over the course of the next 12 months. These proposals are presented and further developed in different Working Groups during the conference. At the end of the working group session, each Project Group should have finalised the discussion on the project implementation plan.
- **Introduction to Host Country.** Activities including visits to places of cultural and historical significance in the host country are organised to give the participants a better understanding of the different aspects of the host country. The host country might also take the opportunity to organise activities to better acquaint the participants with its approach to secondary and high school education, which may include visits to schools or specialised training centres for teachers.
- **Networking.** Participants are given adequate opportunities to interact with one another at the social level, outside of the plenary sessions and the working groups. This is to engender camaraderie among participants, thereby fostering the creation of networks that could form the foundations of future and further contacts and collaborations.

More details about the Asia-Europe Classroom Network (AEC-NET) are also available on AEC-NET's official website:

<http://aec.asef.org>

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