

**A very happy new year to you from the Universitas 21 Secretariat!**

Welcome to the January ebulletin with the latest news and items of interest to staff and students across the Universitas 21 network!

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#### Graduate Research Conference a great success

The second U21 Graduate Research Conference took place in December at University of Melbourne and the University of Queensland and attracted 55 delegates representing 14 universities, 12 nations, and diverse research disciplines. The conference provided an inclusive, multi-disciplinary context to examine topics including energy; water; the built environment; cultural, historical and social issues; human health; transport and the environment.

The conference concluded with a dinner at historic Customs House hosted by UQ's Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Greenfield. At the dinner Professor Greenfield presented prizes for the most outstanding presentation and best poster. As voted by fellow delegates the outstanding winner in both categories was Fiona Pienaar from the University of Auckland. Fiona's success testifies not only to a universal concern for her topic, *Ensuring sustainability: children's understanding and involvement*, but also the importance of communicating research findings effectively. Professor Greenfield reminded delegates that "As researchers, it is absolutely crucial to communicate the nature of our work and the importance of our findings to the broader community. I chair a scientific advisory group that employs a simple A-to-F report card on the health of our local waterways. Behind the report card is a lot of serious and complicated science but as a communication tool the report card has been remarkably effective. Politicians hate it!" he said.

The conference also provided delegates with opportunities for networking across academic, cultural and national boundaries. Professor Greenfield reiterated to delegates a point made earlier in the conference by key note speakers Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg and Professor John Quiggin about the valuable collaborative opportunities conferences offered to early career researchers. "Some of the relationships you've started at this conference will endure personally and through your career. You might meet a research collaborator or someone who will become your point of contact for a particular area of research".

A fuller report and conference papers can be downloaded at <http://www.universitas21.com/GradResearch.htm> and a press release can be read at <http://www.uq.edu.au/grad-school/u21-conference-awards-winner>

#### Water Futures for Sustainable Cities workshop

The Water Futures for Sustainable Cities group is holding a workshop in Rotterdam from 12 to 13 January to look at *Sustainable Waterfront Adaptation to Climate Change*. The overarching aims for the conference are to:

- write a position paper describing a U21-led team, its expertise, current best practice and the priority research questions.

- define fundable questions around this theme and identify who the funders are and the audience is for this research?
- identify sub groups of researchers and components of the research theme.
- identify industry and commercial interest groups.
- use ports (shipping and air) and their problems and locations as case studies. Who is doing this adaptation already? What can we learn?

This is one of a series of workshops being held around the group's seven key themes, which are being explored by teams from across the U21 network.

Further details about the workshop can be found at <http://www.universitas21.com/event/2010RotterdamWorkshop.pdf> and information about the WFSC project in general is available at <http://www.universitas21.com/water.html>

### Green IT technologies - call for information sharing

The University of Nottingham is currently undertaking a programme of 'Green IT' initiatives and projects in a bid to embrace the worldwide green agenda and use this as a springboard to improve services/facilities as a result. One such project is the Computer Room Desktop Review. This project aims to review how the university delivers computer desktops to its students, predominantly desktop delivery in computer rooms.

The project will investigate several areas;

1. Investigation of new technologies to deliver desktops such as VDI technology (Citrix, VMWare etc)
2. Investigate other methods of delivery such as issuing laptops to students
3. Cost and infrastructure implications of implementing the new methods identified
4. Are these new methods and technologies greener?

The next step will be to analyse the results and findings of this review, and make a decision as to what (if any) method of desktop delivery will be better for the University of Nottingham in terms of the green agenda.

Tony Wheatman, project manager for this at the University of Nottingham, would like to hear from any U21 colleagues who have undertaken similar initiatives, in particular focusing on how U21 universities deliver desktops to students/computer rooms, whether any university has conducted a similar review of the way they deliver computer desktops (specifically in respect to the Green IT agenda) and what, if any, were the lessons learned from that exercise.

The final project report and findings could be used by other U21 universities going forwards if there is a desire to review their computer desktop provision.

Any comments or information would be greatly appreciated. Please contact [tony.wheatman@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:tony.wheatman@nottingham.ac.uk)

### Student Services at NAPSA

Do you work in student affairs or student services and going to the NASPA conference in Chicago in March 2010?

U21 members attending the conference are invited for a casual get-together to network during the conference. If interested, please contact Colleen Doyle, University College Dublin, at [colleen.doyle@ucd.ie](mailto:colleen.doyle@ucd.ie) for more information.

### Papplewick Scholarship opportunity

Applications are invited for a three-year full-time ESRC CASE PhD studentship at the University of Nottingham to undertake postgraduate research offered by the Schools of Education and Geography and the Institute for Science and Society, to begin no later than 1 October 2010. The project forms

collaboration between the University of Nottingham, Severn Trent Water, the Papplewick Trust and QLM Ltd and is linked to U21's *Water Futures for Sustainable Cities* project.

This studentship is only open to candidates from the UK or EU, and will cover tuition fees, a research training support grant and an annual tax-free maintenance grant.

Further details can be found at <http://phdscholarship.co.uk/esrc-case-phd-studentship-university-of-nottingham.html>

### **BMEplanet: professional networking for bioengineers**

Colleagues at the University of Virginia launched BMEplanet, a new professional networking website for bioengineers in late-September 2009 to over 300 universities, corporations, governments, and non-profits with bioengineering interests spanning 44 nations around the world. The goal of BMEplanet is to bring the global bioengineering community together, connecting BME professionals and knowledge in a transformative way that will truly accelerate education, research, and innovation in the field. The website provides a unique collection of Web 2.0 tools enabling faculty, students, corporate representatives, entrepreneurs, etc., with bioengineering interests to share new and innovative ideas; create secure, personalized workspaces for team projects; and post job/internship/funding opportunities.

To learn more about BMEplanet, visit [www.bmeplanet.org/pages/index.php/49/VISION](http://www.bmeplanet.org/pages/index.php/49/VISION) or to start using the collaboration suite today to advance your ongoing research projects, go to [www.bmeplanet.org/index.php/users/register](http://www.bmeplanet.org/index.php/users/register)

If you have any questions about BMEplanet, contact Dr Erwin Gianchandani, Executive Director of BMEplanet as well as Director of Innovation Networking in the Office of the Vice President for Research at the University of Virginia [erwin@virginia.edu](mailto:erwin@virginia.edu)

### **OECD Quality in Teaching Report**

Following on from information in one of last year's ebulletin, the OCED has announced the completion of the second phase of the project on Quality Teaching in Higher Education <http://www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/qualityteaching/Phase2>

Details about the process, case studies and individual review can be found on line, along with material used for a recent 'What Works' conference on Quality Teaching in Istanbul in 2009. The whole project (Phase 1 and phase 2) and the brochure can be read at <http://www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/qualityteaching>