

Tajuk : Bridging research, innovation, commercialisation

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KUCHING: Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) is organising its fifth 'UNIMAS R&D Expo 2012' from 21-22 March.

The theme for this year's Expo is "Progressing with research, innovation and commercialisation through academia and industry linkages", which is in line with the university's aspiration of becoming a research university.

The Expo is divided into three different clusters namely Pure Sciences, Technology and Engineering, and Social Sciences/Humanities.

The exhibits include creative designs utilising recycled materials, environmental engineering, robotic technology, medical tools, information and communication technology (ICT), augmented reality systems and soft sciences.

The main objective of the Expo is to publicise research and development (R&D) products and findings among UNIMAS staff and students, and the public at large.

It also aims to select research projects to represent UNIMAS at national and international R&D expositions and encourage its undergraduate students to pursue their postgraduate studies upon completion of their undergraduate studies.

In 2011, UNIMAS won 1 gold

and 7 bronze awards at the national level (PECIPTA 2011). It also bagged 7 gold, 2 silver and 3 bronze medals at the Seoul International Invention Fair 2011, an international Expo held in South Korea.

Associate Professor Dr Pang Suh Chem from its Faculty of Resource Science and Technology was awarded Advanced Materials Letters Scientist Award-2011, an international recognition for his notable and outstanding contribution entitled, "Conversion of cellulosic waste materials into nanostructured ceramics and nanocomposites".

UNIMAS secured 41 projects under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) Science Fund grant, with a total amount of RM7.15 million.

A further RM6.58 million was secured from the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) for 125 research projects.

Researchers from the university have also obtained numerous international research grants such as from the Global Environment Foundation, Asia Pacific Telecommunity, International fund for agricultural development (iFAD), The Toyota Foundation, The Japan Foundation and the University of

Southern Denmark.

Recently, it has set up the Centre of Excellence in Disability study (CoEDS), headed by Associate Professor Dr Ling How Kee and two research institutes, namely, the Institute of Social Informatics and Technological Innovations (ISITI) and the Institute of Design and Innovation (InDI).

With the birth of CoEDS, ISITI and InDI, UNIMAS now has eight centres of excellence and five research institutes.

In an effort to establish a strong research culture at UNIMAS, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor's (Research and Innovation) Office, together with the Research and Innovation Management Centre (RIMC), has been conducting various research workshops and seminars for academic staff to enhance their research capabilities.

This year's Expo will be a step towards achieving excellence in research for the university.

Professor Datuk Dr Khairuddin Abdul Hamid, the Vice-Chancellor of UNIMAS, will officiate at the opening ceremony on 22 March.

Members of the public are invited to visit the Expo to discover the wealth of research findings and innovative products generated by the university's researchers.