

## **Call for Participants**

### **International Network for Government Science Advice East Asia Capacity Building Workshop on Non-Communicable Diseases 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2019 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

In collaboration with our national and regional partners, the International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA) Asia, is organising the International Network for Government Science Advice East Asia Capacity Building Workshop in Kuala Lumpur between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2019.

Many of the challenges facing modern societies cannot be adequately addressed by solely using common sense, experience, ideological principles, or basic analytical methods. Whether it is climate change, renewable energy, natural disasters, food security, or disease pandemics, policymakers need scientific advice to inform their decisions. Obtaining rigorous and useful science advice in a timely manner is not a trivial matter and taking careful account of such advice in complex policy areas of interest to many different stakeholders is not always straightforward. The interface between science, politics and society at large is a minefield for both policy-makers and scientists. While, science advice training may not be in the mainstream training of scientists, there is an increasing need for scientists to have science advice and communication skills to ensure that evidence-based policies result in positive impact to all stakeholders.

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) account for at least 60% of deaths globally and the Asia region makes up more than half of the global deaths due to NCDs. Cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases are the four most prevalent NCDs in the region with cardiovascular diseases accounting for the most deaths. NCDs are often associated with older age groups but recent development estimates that 30% of attributed deaths due to NCDs occur in the younger generation, between the ages of 30-69 years. These premature deaths are from preventable heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer and asthma. Unhealthy lifestyle habits such as using tobacco, unhealthy diets, lack of physical activities and excessive use of alcohol are the main risk factors for premature deaths by NCDs. NCDs are therefore complex and multifaceted; addressing NCDs will require multisectoral approaches and policies involving commitment from multiple stakeholders. NCDs are also affected by other uncontrollable external forces such as globalization and urbanization that change the population lifestyle at large. Thus, NCDs are not merely a health issue, but also political, trade and economic issues.

This INGSA East Asia Workshop will be a great platform for participants to become aware of the importance of science advice as well as gain skills relevant to effective science advice; all within the context of addressing NCDs.

## **Objectives**

- To promote science advice in the region;
- To strengthen capacity for science advice in leadership, governance and multi-sectoral action for prevention and control of NCDs;
- To promote dialogues between researchers and policy-makers on the underlying social determinants to address NCDs;
- To build regional networks for science advice among health practitioners, health science researchers and national health authorities.

## **Theme**

Science Advice and Non-Communicable Diseases

## **Date and Venue**

20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2019, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

## **Programme Structure**

The INGSA East Asia Capacity Building Workshop is developed as a highly interactive workshop that includes training, application, peer support and mentorship. Participants will attend a 3-day intensive on-site programme in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (exact venue to be determined). Throughout the 3-day workshop, participants will be involved in:

### ***A. Skills-training:***

- Elements of effective (collective) science advice
- Strategies towards effective collaboration and network building
- Creative and systems thinking
- Problem solving and decision-making skills
- Effective communication skills
- Stakeholder engagement skills
- Overcoming cultural inhibitions
- Monitoring and assessment of programme impact

### ***B. Best practices, experiences and opportunities:***

- Reflections
- Insights from experienced science advisors
- Opportunities for participants to apply the skills that they have acquired

## **Expected commitment**

The INGSA East Asia Capacity Building Workshop is seeking ambitious and values-driven scientist or policy makers who are committed towards actively contributing to or establishing Science Advice as well as promoting greater collaboration within the region. Selected participants will be expected to:

- Apply the acquired skillsets in existing or new initiatives in the 12 months following the initial training and share their skillsets and experience with fellow researchers in their respective countries.
- Continue interacting with other participants via events and/or online means of communication.

## **Costs**

Training and meals during the workshop will be provided for free to all participants. Airfare and accommodation costs will be supported for only a **selected** number of participants. There will be some costs that will not be covered by the programme, such as visas and vaccinations; for which participants will need to seek support from their local institutions and/or personal funds.

## **Selection criteria and application process**

Applicants will need to display compelling evidence of their interest in science advice. This potential can be demonstrated in areas such as research excellence, talent development, advocacy, connection, outreach, education etc. The selection process will not only consider individual qualities but also focus on ensuring diversity of culture, subject background (natural and social sciences, engineering, arts, humanities etc.) and gender among the participants. Where possible, the programme will also attempt to create small nodes of leadership; multiple strong applicants from the same centre or country will thus be considered. The following criteria are used as a guide for the nomination and selection of fellows:

- Working in East Asia or on East Asian-related issues with Asian partners;
- Having at least 2 years of work experience within the themes non-communicable diseases OR health OR relevant Sustainable Development Goals;
- Interest in translating and communicating the results of their work to create positive impact in society;
- Interested in how to use scientific research and evidence to inform policymaking;
- Demonstrated leadership ability in research and beyond;
- Having an active interest in interdisciplinary working to solve global problems;
- Being proficient in English;
- Commit to take part the whole duration of the workshop;
- Commitment towards engaging in the activities of the region;
- Intent to share what is learned in the programme with their broader networks.

All applicants have to fill up the registration form and provide one recommendation letter from their proposed referee and brief curriculum vitae from this link <https://goo.gl/forms/wPxbhBbVPGa21Xif2> .Please ensure that the support letters are sent using accredited institutional letter heads. The referee has to commit to be involved in future communications should the need arise.

***Application must be received before the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019***

***Please contact: Ms Farah Ismail (Tel. No.: +6 0102762123 )***

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