

UKIERI HE Leadership Development Programme: Framework and Implementation

UKIERI had commissioned Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE) to deliver a framework for a leadership programme for Higher Education institutions in India. With support from Ministry of Human Resource Development and University Grants Commission, over 30 participants from leading Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across central universities, state universities, IITs and IITs were chosen to be a part of this pilot programme.

The pilot project aimed at:

- Enabling policymakers and university leaders to work together to identify priorities for leadership development in National, State and private universities and diagnose the needs of senior institutional leaders
- Through institutional visits and supported by informal mentoring with senior leaders in UK universities and institutions, initiating a dialogue on how leadership and management evolves and key process of institutional management.



The pilot was launched in early this year with the first Module delivered through a workshop organised in New Delhi. The representatives from the nominated Indian HEIs interacted with the representatives from Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE) to discuss aspects of leadership and management.

The Module was delivered by **Prof Mike Smith (Emeritus Professor of Medical Science, Retired Pro Vice Chancellor and International Associate), Glyn Jones (International Associate) and Alison Johns (Chief Executive), Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.**

The style of delivery did not concentrate on formal lectures but instead included interactive lectures, expert sessions, group discussions, self-assessment tools, sharing personal practice experience, examples of good practice and incorporated different styles of feedback and interaction.



Module 2 of the programme focussed on the participants visiting the UK to understand the UK HE system including flat structures, develop personal leadership strengths and skills, focussing on the strategic issues of governance and building internationalisation and competitive research system. The Module included visits to 4 UK universities - University of

Coventry, the University of Warwick, the University of Wolverhampton and Birmingham City University and a detailed session with senior UK academics across themes.

The last activity of this pilot was recently organised in New Delhi on Friday, 8 July with participation from the existing participants, policy makers, leaders from Indian and UK HEIs and representatives from Ministry of Human Resource Development and University Grants Commission.

Dr Manju Singh, Joint Secretary, University Grants Commission provided a very valuable



context to the discussions. She remarked that the growing challenges of Higher Education system in India can only be effectively addressed by developing leaders who will lead the institutions. She also hoped that the participants from the Module 1 and 2 will share their learnings and how do they intend to bring about a change in themselves and in their institutions. She also stated that under UKIERI 3, a focussed strand on Higher Education Leadership Development is being envisaged and the discussions would help in planning the programme with the right scope, participants and context.



Professor Nora H. de Leeuw, Pro Vice-Chancellor, International & Europe, Cardiff University provided the UK experience of how UK institutions and universities support leadership development internally and through programmes. Prof Nora also provided an insight on how the UK institutions are adapting to the growing challenges of mobility, internationalisation, quality and access. She shared perspective on the significance of clear management structures, transparent performance review systems and the importance of developing aspiring leaders in the system.

The session was then led by **Ms Vijaya Nath, Director of Leadership Development, Leadership Foundation for Higher Education** who tried to capture key aspects of a leadership development programme best suited for India through the participants reflections.



The views provided an **interesting mix of ideas which included:**

- Good understanding of Leadership-what needs to be 'taught'
- Structure of the Program as per requirements
- Have a flexibility for diversity
- Understanding of academic nuances
- Implementing a differentiated training program for new, middle and senior leaders
- Ongoing evolutionary process through setting SMART goals
- Focussing on continual learning basis and quality improvement
- Scalability and inclusion



The discussions also reflected on the feedback from the existing participants. The majority of the participants felt that the learnings from Module 1 and 2 have been positive and the pilot has met its objective of being an initiator to developing a more comprehensive programme. Representatives from Ministry of Human Resource Development and University Grants Commission complimented for this pilot programme which has provided some useful insights on designing a more effective framework for leadership development programme relevant to Indian HEIs.

Some of the **key reflections** included:

- Any leadership program requires contextualisation to Indian systems and processes including focussed sessions on compliance and process orientation

- Sessions should focus on experiential learning
- Learning group has to be homogenous to ensure common learning outcomes
- Indian experts and institutions to be involved
- Design an appropriate Assessment Framework (for research and teaching)
- Case Studies on Contextualization and customization



The session concluded with discussions on how the future programme should be designed and key aspects of participant profile, institutions, scope etc were looked at.

Some of the key **recommendations** that emerged from the group have been summarised below.

- The programme could have a blend of individual and organisational delivery involving at least 2- 3people from the same organisation to bring internal change in thinking. This would also help in developing second line of leaders in the institutions.
- The programme could be through a competitive process and act as a qualification or motivational tool.
- The programme should only be for participants who already have a position of seniority or is an aspirant in recent future.
- The programme could include sector components like research, teaching, industry engagement etc which could focus on organisational objectives.
- The programme should focus on common learning but evaluate action learning separately.
- The programme requires contextualisation for levels of leadership and appropriate learning outcomes linked to the role.
- The programme requires Indian institutions and facilitators to provide the right context and the UK component should focus on internationalisation and sharing of the UK experiences
- The programme should include representatives from regulatory bodies, policy makers and government to provide motivation and encourage learning.

As next steps, UKIERI Secretariat will discuss these key recommendations with Ministry of Human Resource Development and University Grants Commission to agree on the model for systemic leadership development in Indian HEIs.