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The QS-APPLE 2018 conference and exhibition under the theme of Future Universities in The Asia-Pacific: The Changing Face of Higher Education took place over a three-day period from 21-23 November 2018 in Seoul, South Korea.

This year's conference gathered a total of 475 academics from 209 institutions in 40 countries.

Participants gained valuable insights and shared their knowledge through the innovative and engaging conference programme. They also expanded their professional network through various meaningful interactions at this annual event. In addition, a total of 85 papers were presented during plenary and parallel sessions and 57 exhibitors had the opportunity to showcase their universities' offerings to participants at the QS Hub – Exhibition.

One of the keynote addresses was delivered by Dr. Daniel Donghoon Ko, Vice-President, Pyongyang University of Science & Technology, DPR Korea. Dr Ko's presentation addressed the Higher Education System of Democratic People's Republic of Korea: The Case of Pyongyang University of Science & Technology and pointed out that PUST was established with the objective of not only conducting high quality research and education but also to promote peace on the Korean peninsula through education.

In another keynote Professor Judy Lam (Tsui), Board Member and Chair of the Board's Education Strategy Commitee, Wuhan College (Tencent), China, discussed on the Themes of Future Universities in Asia Pacific: Innovation, Interdisciplinarity and Internationalization. Professor Lam noted that the effective and efficient implementation of various initiatives would allow future universities in the region to contribute to reshaping global higher education and ensuring its relevance in a social political context.

Two further keynotes were delivered by speakers from Singapore: Professor Steven Miller, Provost (Research), Singapore Management University and Professor Subra Suresh, President, Nanyang Technological University.

The QS Squared Debate, moderated by Dr. Kevin Downing and with the motion: Rankings are the Best Overall Measure of a University's Global and Regional Standing, started with a poll in which a

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majority of the participants expressed their support for the rankings. Despite passionate arguments from both sides, the audience remained in agreement with the motion.

In addition to debates, two important plenary forums were held on topics that are followed closely by many participants the higher education sector. The QS Forum sessions, namely Focus on Innovation and Entrepreneurship moderated by Professor Albert Chau and Focus on Higher Education For Fast Growing Economics moderated by Professor Kitti Prasirtsuk provided an opportunity to gain an Asia Pacific insight into these important topics.

In conjunction with this annual conference, QS Asia also organised the QS-APPLE Creative Awards 2018 in recognition of the importance of creative and compelling designs in effective communication and brand building by universities. This year, submissions for the award was judged by the UCSI University.

The list of creative awards winners:

Countries	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Hong Kong	2	0	1
Malaysia	1	2	0
Singapore	1	0	0
Indonesia	1	0	0
Korea	0	1	0
Taiwan	0	1	0
Brunei	0	0	1
Philippines	0	0	1
UAE	0	0	1

Best International Print Advertisements Nanyang Technological University, Singapore – Gold Winner Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysia – Silver Winner Universiti Teknologi Brunei, Brunei – Bronze Winner

Most Creative Corporate Institution Video
Binus University, Indonesia – Gold Winner
University of Malaya, Malaysia – Silver Winner
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong – Bronze Winner

Best International Student Recruitment Brochure Universiti Teknologi Petronas, Malaysia – Gold Winner Chung-Ang University, Korea – Silver Winner Ajman University, United Arab Emirates – Bronze Winner

Best International Website Page Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong – Gold Winner Taipei Medical University, Taiwan – Silver Winner University of Santo Tomas, Philippines – Bronze Winner

Most Creative Booth Design City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong – Grand Winner

The QS Stars Rating medals were awarded to several outstanding institutions as well.

QS Stars Ratings

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Sunway University, Malaysia Awarded overall 5 stars With 5 stars in these categories

- Teaching
- Employability
- Facilities
- Social Responsibility
- Inclusiveness

Universiti Malaysia Pahang, Malaysia Awarded overall 5 stars With 5 stars in these categories

- Teaching
- Employability
- Internationalization
- Facilities
- Innovation
- Inclusiveness

Universiti Teknologi Brunei, Brunei Awarded overall 5 stars With 5 stars in these categories

- Teaching
- Employability
- Internationalization
- Facilities
- Social Responsibility
- Inclusiveness

QS-APPLE also included a QS Rankings Workshop conducted by expert speakers such as Ms Selina Griffin, Mr John O'Leary and Ms Sarah Huggett.

The QS-APPLE 2019 conference and exhibition will be held in Fukuoka, Japan in November next year, in partnership with Kyushu University as joint organising partners. If you are interested to be a speaker, why not submit your proposal now.