



**STRENGTHENING THE VIETNAMESE
HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM
TO IMPROVE GRADUATES' EMPLOYABILITY
AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS**

National Conference on Graduate Employment and Entrepreneurship –Agenda

WP5 POLICY & LABOUR MARKET NETWORKING FOR STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

**Ho Chi Minh University of Social Sciences and Humanities –
Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam**

October 30-31, 2019



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1. BACKGROUND

Our youth are our future, thus it is imperative that we support their development and provide them with the opportunities to make that future bright. Globally countries that meet their youth's needs will be in a better position in the second half of the century with more educated, healthier populations, more productive workforces & growing economies (State of the World Population, 2014). In Vietnam, despite a low unemployment rate overall, youth unemployment is 3,5 times higher than that of the general population, particularly for graduates (MoLISA). The General Statistics Office and International Labour Organisation report that graduates struggle to find suitable work, appropriate to their experience and education (ILO 2015). The director of the Institute of Labour Science has said that a lack of work experience and a gap between training and market demand are major reasons for high unemployment among new graduates (Viet. News 18/08/16). There is both a "skills shortage" and a "skills gap" making recruitment difficult for employers (World Bank, 2014). Graduates lack employability skills. It is therefore clear that it is crucial for Vietnam to invest in its youth to further the national equitable and sustainable development, and this should be facilitated through cooperation between the labour and education sectors.

It must be noted that employment is not the only path open to a young graduate. He or she could also decide to launch their own business venture and through its successful development and growth could help further develop the country's economy and create new jobs. In fact, a higher percentage of young people in Vietnam say they have an intention of starting up a business, than older people (24,2% vs 18.2%, GEM Vietnam 2014). Entrepreneurs are well respected, and Vietnam is an increasingly attractive country for business start-ups, although more support for the development of entrepreneurial activities is needed, in particular training programs aimed at younger people.

Within this context, the Erasmus+ project V2WORK *"Strengthening the Vietnamese Higher Education System to improve graduates' employability and entrepreneurship skills"* was launched in October 2017 with the objective of strengthening the capacities of the Vietnamese HE System to improve the employability & entrepreneurship skills of its graduates, and to reinforce its relationships with the labour market, in line with the Vietnamese government's priority of improving graduate employment at a national level. By the active cooperation between eight Vietnamese universities, MOET, VCCI, student association AIESEC and 3 European universities, V2WORK will:

- Modernise career support services of & Vietnamese HEIs by building institutional & human capacities in employability and entrepreneurship skills so they can become efficient & dynamic instruments to promote & support employment & entrepreneurship among HEI students & graduates.
- Reinforce university-enterprise relationships through the development of mechanisms to foster active involvement of enterprises in the Career Centres.

2. OBJECTIVES & EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The National Conference on Graduate Employment and Entrepreneurship will take place at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (USSH) in Ho Chi Minh City on October 30th and 31st, 2019.

The objective of this national conference is to stimulate dialogue and debate at the national level in Vietnam on the current situation of employment of university graduates, as well as on the entrepreneurship ecosystem present in Vietnam for young entrepreneurs. This will be done through the discussion of the results of forums held in 8 different provinces in Vietnam over the past summer, panels bringing together employers and graduates to discuss expectations vs reality in the transition from higher education to the labour market, the sharing of experiences of successful young Vietnamese entrepreneurs and various keynote speeches to the topics at hand.

The national conference will also include the final phase of the V2WORK Enterprising Ideas Competition – Be Green!, sponsored by Vinacacao, that will bring together students from around the country to share the ideas they have for a green enterprise. These students are the winners of similar competitions organized by the career centres in their universities, as part of the V2WORK Network's efforts to inspire Vietnam's youth. The V2WORK Enterprising Ideas Competition (or EIC) is targeted at the first stage of the entrepreneurial process, ideas generation, and aims to increase the confidence and creativity of the participants, inspiring them to think and act entrepreneurially. The competition is designed to build up the entrepreneurial skills of participants, providing them with real life experience in development and implementation of innovation concepts with limited resources and based on market viability. All conference participants are highly encouraged to engage with these future young entrepreneurs during a specially dedicated networking session, to share in their energy and inspiration, and provide them with any feedback that could be helpful for their own development. Participants will also be invited to vote on their favourite project to help select the winner of the popular "People's Choice Award".

3. PARTICIPANTS

The National Conference is aimed at the university community (managers, professors, career centre staff, students), graduates, employers, policy makers and employment agencies. This will be a unique opportunity for different voices to come together to discuss issues such as mismatch between graduates' competences and employers' needs, the transition from higher education to the labour market, or the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Vietnam.

The National Conference is open to the public, but as there are limited spaces available anyone interested in attending should request an invitation from the organisers at USSH.

DAY 1: October 30 th , 2019		VENUE HALL D
08:00 – 08:30	ARRIVAL & REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS	
08:30 – 09:00	<p>OPENING CEREMONY</p> <p>Prof. Ngô Thi Phuong Lan, President of Ho Chi Minh University of Social Sciences and Humanities</p> <p>Mr. Bùi Tiến Dũng, Principal Official of department of political and student affairs, MOET</p> <p>Ms. Cristina Beans, Project Manager, University of Alicante</p>	
09:00 – 09:30	<p>Introduction to V2WORK project</p> <p><i>Ms. Cristina Beans, Project Manager, University of Alicante</i></p>	
09:30 – 10:15	<p>Results of in-depth analysis report on “Graduate Employment and Entrepreneurship in Vietnam</p> <p><i>Mr. Victor Climent, University of Alicante</i></p>	
10:15 – 10:45	COFFEE BREAK	
10:45 – 11:30	<p>Keynote on youth employment in Vietnam</p> <p><i>Ms. Selena Le, Co- Founder No Waste Vietnam</i></p> <p>Following Q&A session with audience</p>	
11:30 – 13:00	<p>Panel "Employability of Vietnamese Graduates"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USSH – Ho Cam Nhung • TVU - Nguyen Thi Ngoc Van • TDMU - Truong Thi Thuỷ Tien • NTU - Do Quoc Viet • TNU - Tran Trung Dung • IUUV - Tran Huynh Quang • HUST - Tran Van Hiep • UD – Ngo Thi Ngoc Hoa <p>Moderator: VO Trung Hung, University of Danang</p>	
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH	
14:00 – 15:30	<p>Panel "Transitioning from Higher Education to the Labour Market"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Doan Huu Duc – Managing Partner, Vietnam Consulting Group • Mr. Phan Quoc Tuan – President, Song Binh group, Agency of Fedex in Vietnam • Mr. Le Vinh Truong - Vice president, JUST IN TIME • Vo Hieu Nghia - MC, alumni of Education Department 	

DAY 1: October 30 th , 2019		VENUE HALL D
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ngo Minh Nhut - alumni of Sociology Department Trinh Lam Thi Thien Kim, Head of Business development, FPT University <p>Moderator: Truong Thi Thuy Tien, Thu Dau Mot University</p>	
15:30 – 16.00	<p>Summary at the end of the day to reach conclusions & recommendations on main issues related to employability</p> <p>Mr Vo Trung Hung, UD</p>	

DAY 2: October 31 st , 2019		VENUE HALL D
08:15 – 08:45	ARRIVAL & REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS	
08:45 – 09:30	<p>Keynote on the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Vietnam</p> <p><i>Mr. Francesco Tran Van Lieng, Chairman /President, VINACACAO'S GROUP</i></p> <p>Following Q&A session with audience</p>	
09:30 – 10:30	<p>Be Green! V2WORK Enterprising Ideas Competition – Elevator pitch session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introducing the N-EIC and the Jury members (HUST) Elevator pitches by winners of V2WORK EIC from 11 Vietnamese HEIs. Competition to choose Grand Prize winner. 	
10:30	COFFEE BREAK & NETWORKING	
10:30 – 11:30	<p>Be Green! V2WORK Enterprising Ideas Competition – Poster Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poster presentations by winners of V2WORK EIC from 11 Vietnamese HEIs. Public vote to select "People's Choice Award" winner. 	
11:30 – 13.00	<p>Panel "Entrepreneurship Ecosystem in Vietnam"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> USSH – Tran Le Hoa Tranh TVU – Nguyen Thi Ngoc Van TDMU - Truong Thi Thuỷ Tien NTU - Do Quoc Viet TNU - Tran Trung Dung IUV - Tran Thi Bich + Nguyen Thanh Hoang HUST - Pham Tuan Hiep UD – Le Vu <p>Moderator: Dinh Van Hai, Hanoi University of Science and Technology</p>	
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH	

DAY 2: October 31 st , 2019		VENUE HALL D
14:00 – 15:15	<p>Panel "How I became an Entrepreneur"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Vo Thi Phuong Lan, CEO, Amerasian Shipping Logistics Corporation, Chairwoman of the Advisory Council for Supporting the National Business Start-up Program in the South • Mr. Francesco Tran Van Lieng, Chairman /President, VINACACAO'S GROUP OF COMPANIES • Ms Selena Le, Founder, No Waste Vietnam • Mr. Dinh Minh Quyen, CEO, Talkcafe 100% English • Nguyen Quang Nhut, Director, Shojiki Advertising JSC <p>Moderator: Nguyen Phuong Thao, Bureau for Employers' Activities, VCCI</p>	
15:15 – 15:45	<p>Summary at the end of the day to reach conclusions on main issues & recommendations related to entrepreneurship ecosystem</p> <p>Mr Dinh Van Hai, HUST</p>	
15:45– 16:15	<p>Closing session – Enterprising Ideas Awards Ceremony</p> <p>Speech by N-EIC winner</p>	
16:15 – 16:30	<p>CONFERENCE CLOSING REMARKS</p>	