



Government of Nepal

# 1st NRN Global Knowledge Convention



GoN Regd. No. 01-2070/71

*12-14 October 2018  
Kathmandu, Nepal*

*Expanding Nepal's Knowledge Pool through Diaspora*



The **1st NRN Global Knowledge Convention** will be held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 12 to 14 October 2018. The convention is organized by the Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) in partnership with the Government of Nepal (GoN). Nepal's education and research institutes, private sectors and various stakeholders are the convention supporters. The convention aims to bring together experts of various disciplines from Nepal and Nepali diaspora and explore Nepal's needs for expert assistance to help the country move towards knowledge-based economy. The Rt. Honorable Prime Minister of Nepal **Mr KP Sharma Oli** is scheduled to inaugurate the convention on 12 October.

## OBJECTIVES

- Discuss GoN's science and technology policies, and ways to update them for encouraging global knowledge investment.
- Understand Nepal's science and technology state-of-the-art, and identify knowledge gap in comparison to nation's developmental aspirations.
- Identify expertise pools in diaspora community, and explore modalities of transferring such expertise to address Nepal's needs.
- Enhance nation's confidence by aligning diaspora's skill, knowledge and innovation to development projects of national priorities.

High profile global experts who have played a key role in the field of science and technology (S&T) development and technology transfer, and made significant contributions to their country's economic transformation will be invited to deliver talks at the Convention. The Convention is organized in two parts: Plenary and Symposium sessions.

## PLENARY SESSIONS

### Science and Technology Policy



Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) are universally recognized as key drivers for achieving the development goals. To make STI work for the society, prudent STI policy frameworks are essential. This plenary session is designed to discuss: lack of adequate STI policy in Nepal and modalities to integrate STI in development mainstream; options for development of an STI research institute of international standard in Nepal; the need for and modalities of increasing R&D investment from its present low state and role of STI policies to accelerate transition to innovative systems.

*Coordinator: Dr Dinesh Raj Bhujju, Nepal Academy of Science and Technology, Nepal*

### Knowledge-based Economy and Developmental Pathways



With the advent of the new era of federal system of governance and expected political stability, Nepal's aspiration for knowledge-based economy has been growing. Although intrinsic human capital is rising, tremendous knowledge gaps still exist which are impediments to long-term development goals. A large population of diaspora is capable and willing to fill some of these gaps. In this context, this session will discuss alternative development pathways that can utilize both in-house and diaspora knowledge and expertise pool to move towards knowledge-based economy.

*Coordinator: Dr Shobhakar Dhakal, Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand*

## Knowledge and Technology Transfer



Knowledge and technological advancement are the key driving forces to economic growth of a country. This plenary session will review the government strategy and policy direction towards knowledge investment and technology transfer. It will cover areas such as federal funding to research and development, and role of research enterprises, start-up companies, intellectual property rights and diaspora expertise, and innovation and technology transfer. The session will also focus on the importance of strategic partnership among universities, industries, private and public financial sectors, entrepreneurs and diaspora community in above areas.

*Coordinator: Dr Raju Adhikari, RMIT University, Australia*

## Role of Nepali Diaspora for Development Policies



Diaspora's participation in development process of their county of origin has gained prominence worldwide. Nepal can also benefit by establishing an efficient link with growing population of its diaspora and harnessing the diaspora expertise. In this regard, NRNA is considering a Policy Institute to channel diaspora expertise for improving the country's long and short-term development policies. The session will focus on identifying Nepal's needs and areas of collaboration. It will also explore viable means for maximizing diaspora contribution to Nepal's development policies.

*Coordinator: Dr Khagendra Dhakal, King Mongkut's University of Technology, Thailand*

## SYMPOSIUM SESSIONS

### Agriculture and Food Security



Agriculture has been the main stay of Nepal's economy and livelihood of majority of its people. Despite previous emphasis on agriculture development in its long-range development plans, the country is increasingly dependent on the imports of food and agriculture inputs. This session will discuss agricultural education, investment on agriculture technology, use of natural resources, production of food and livestock, and marketing and distribution of agricultural commodities to secure sufficient, safe and healthy food throughout the country.

*Coordinators: Dr Drona Rasali, Provincial Health Services Authority, Canada*

*Dr Keshav Adhikari, IAAS, Tribhuvan University, Nepal*

### Disaster Risk Reduction



Nepal's geological setup and meteorological factors make it prone to many natural disasters such as earthquakes, landslides and flood. The country needs to seriously improve on disaster mitigation and implementation policies. Disaster reduction will require enhancing public awareness on disaster preparedness, understanding policy issues, and identify post-disaster reconstruction challenges. This session will discuss disaster related issues from

policy and implementation perspectives and suggest disaster mitigation measures.

*Coordinators: Mr Ajaya Dixit, Institute for Social and Environmental Transition, Nepal  
Dr Netra Prakash Bhandari, Ehime University, Japan*

## Education



Education plays a crucial role in supporting the process of sustainable development of a country. Nepal has made significant progress in the education sector over the last five decades. However, quality of education at all levels is low and in particular, the higher education sector lacks capacities in research, knowledge production and innovations. This session will focus on improvement in educational governance in federalism, and increased thrust on vocational education, research, innovation and entrepreneurship through local and global partnership.

*Coordinators: Dr Pramod Dhakal, NRNA Academy, Nepal  
Dr Tejendra Pherali, University College London, UK*

## Environment Pollution



Environment pollution is of rising concern to thriving cities of Nepal. Rapid but unplanned urbanization is adding polluting agents to environment in an alarming rate. Unsafe disposal of hazardous and biomaterials is also worsening the cleanliness of the environment. City inhabitants are already experiencing nontrivial impact of geometric growth of contaminants in air and water. Negative consequences of pollution is now spilling over to sub-urban and village areas. The symposium will mainly discuss the current state of pollution in air and water resources, environmental policies of the government of Nepal and effective environment restoration mechanisms.

*Coordinators: Dr Maheswar Rupakheti, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, Germany  
Dr Durga Poudel, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, USA*

## Financial Policy and Investment



Investment of Nepali diaspora for economic growth of Nepal is accelerating every year. Diaspora population is actively investing in hydropower, hospitality, information technology, banking, health and education sectors. These investments are happening despite some unfriendly investment policies and taxation system. In order to attract more financial and human capitals for investment, Nepal's financial policies need to be revamped. In this session, we will discuss how investment environment for Nepali diaspora can be made conducive by improving on existing legal and administrative structures of the financial system of Nepal.

*Coordinators: Mr Keshab KC, Nepal Rastra Bank, Nepal  
Mr Ranjeet Mahato, Neapolis University Paphos, Cyprus*

## Health Education and Policy



Nepal has made impressive progress in some health care sectors. Nonetheless disparities exist across wealth quintiles, social groups and geographic locations. Numerous challenges remain in strengthening

the domestic, financial, policy and human resource base for providing universal health coverage irrespective of citizens' socio-economic background. The symposium will mainly focus on current health disparity in Nepal, medical education, and health and drug policy of government and its improvement. Public-private partnership in bearing health care cost will also be discussed.

*Coordinators: Dr Archana Amatya, IOM, Tribhuvan University, Nepal*

*Dr Binod Shah, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York, USA*

### **Hydropower, Transportation and Utilities**



The GoN has prioritized construction of major infrastructure in the next five years. Nepal's record of delivery of larger infrastructure projects is less than encouraging. Improvement in the performance of future projects will require understanding the causes for failure of these projects from policy, project planning and procurement perspectives. This symposium will explore existing project execution and GoN's technical capacities, and recommend policy changes and technical capacity building modalities moving forward.

*Coordinators: Dr Arun Timalsina, IOE, Tribhuvan University, Nepal*

*Mr Naresh Koirala, Nepal Library Foundation, Canada*

### **New Frontiers in Physical Sciences and Prosperity**



Without putting serious efforts into advancement of Science Education, Research and Innovation, Nepal's technology-based future cannot be secured. This symposium will focus on how best to utilize Diaspora's diverse expertise pool to overcome the knowledge and science & technology policy gaps that are currently hindering national prosperity. It will discuss, in particular, GoN physical science policies, knowledge sharing, funding and experts exchanges, networking and research collaborations, and transforming research to industrial applications.

*Coordinators: Dr Hari Dahal, American Physical Society, USA*

*Prof Narayan Adhikari, Central Department of Physics, Tribhuvan University, Nepal*

### **Social Security**



Nepal lacks a comprehensive social security system. The issue of social security is shadowed by other development priorities. Due to high unemployment, only a small fraction of population is covered under security options such as pension and retirement funds. Despite a short history and limited experience on hand, Government of Nepal is trying to refocus its attention to this issue. The central desire is to make social security more accessible and sustainable to a wider population. This symposium will bring in the first-hand experience of Nepali diaspora living under diverse forms of economy around the world, and discuss optimal social security models that are suitable for the socio-economic structures of Nepal.

*Coordinators: Mr Prakash Dahal, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Nepal*

*Mr Kiran (Ron) Sitoula, Department of the Treasury, USA*

## Sustainable Energy Generation



As Nepal seeks to increase the income levels for its citizens, making clean and affordable energy available for industries, firms, commercial establishments and households will be an important task for the government and private sector. Production of clean and sustainable energy requires broad knowledge of engineering, economics, management, policy and environmental conservation approaches. This symposium will assess Nepal's existing policies and technical capacities related to clean energy generation and management, and recommend technologies, economics, policies and mechanisms for ensuring sustainable energy for the country.

*Coordinators: Dr Ambika P Adhikari, City of Tempe, and Arizona State University, USA  
Dr Subodh Sharma, Kathmandu University, Nepal*

## Technology Transfer and Innovation



Technological innovation is the foundation of knowledge-based economy. A country's technological advancement is achieved through domestic innovation and learning from technologically more advanced countries through the mechanism of technology transfer. Nepali diaspora has a significant experience in technological innovations and their industrial application. This session will explore how diaspora expertise can be applied in supporting innovation in Nepal. It will also discuss on basic infrastructure needed for technology transfer such as intellectual property patenting and protection.

*Coordinators: Dr Raju Adhikari, RMIT University, Australia*

*Dr Rameswor Adhikari, RECAST, Tribhuvan University, Nepal*

## OTHER SESSIONS

### Scholarship

There are many international scholarship and fellowship programs currently available for Nepali citizens. This session will focus on their role in helping education and research of Nepali scholars.

*Coordinator: Dr Nabin Aryal, Aarhus University, Denmark*

### Returnee Professionals

This session will showcase how Nepali professionals who have returned from their overseas training are contributing to the development of Nepal. Opportunities seen and challenges faced by returnee professionals will also be shared.

*Coordinator: Dr Devi Basnet, Medytox Inc., South Korea*

### Innovation and Private Investments

One of the focuses of knowledge and technology transfer is to use them for creating innovative products and services for the use of general public. This is going to be a closed-door session in which entrepreneurs with innovative ideas will pitch their ideas to NRN and local private sector investors to explore mutual investment opportunities.

*Coordinator: Dr Hari Dahal, American Physical Society, USA*

## **Agro-food Innovation Supercluster**

Government-facilitated strong network of industrial clusters linked through their shared reliance on locally available inputs can harvest innovation. This symposium will focus on potential establishment of Agro-food innovation gateway and role of diaspora in supporting innovation consortium.

*Coordinators: Mr Mahabir Pun, National Innovation Centre, Nepal*

*Mr Narayan Ghimire, Flavorcan Inc., Canada*

## **ORGANIZING COMMITTEES**

### **Chairs**

Mr Kumar Panta, NRNA, Germany

Dr Hem Raj Sharma, the University of Liverpool, UK

### **Member Secretary**

Dr Hari Dahal, American Physical Society, USA

### **Nepal Government's Liaison Officer**

Dr Damaru B Paudel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kathmandu, Nepal

### **Scientific Advisory Board**

Dr Ambika P Adhikari, City of Tempe, and Arizona State University, USA

Prof Bhagawan Koirala, Institute of Medicine, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

Prof David Gellner, University of Oxford, UK

Dr Dinesh Bhujju, Nepal Academy of Science and Technology, Nepal

Dr Drona Rasali, Provincial Health Services Authority, Canada

Er Ganesh Shah, Nepal Science Olympiad, Nepal

Dr Kayo Devi Yami, Former Chief of NAST Science Faculty, Nepal

Prof Kedar Bhakta Mathema, Former VC, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

Mr Mahabir Pun, National Innovation Centre, Nepal

Prof Michael Hutt, University of London, UK

Mr Naresh Koirala, Nepal Library Foundation, Canada

Dr Pramod Dhakal, NRNA Academy, Nepal

Dr Raju Adhikari, RMIT University, Australia

Dr Shobhakar Dhakal, Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand

Dr Yub Raj Pokharel, South Asian University, New Delhi, India

### **Program Committee**

All Plenary and Symposium Coordinators

### **Management Committee**

Mr Kumar Panta, Vice President, NRNA

Dr Badri KC, General Secretary, NRNA

Mr Ram P Thapa, Patron, NRNA

Dr Hemanta Dabadi, CEO, NRNA Secretariat

Mr Shreeram Ghimire, Secretariat liaison

## CALL FOR PAPERS

The convention organizing committee invites all interested participants and/or contributors to register and submit their abstracts via the convention website (<https://www.knowledge-nrna.org>). Please submit your contributions to a specific symposium session listed above. These contributions will be considered for contributed talks or rapid-fire presentations in the symposium sessions, or poster presentations. The registration fees will be waived for invited speakers and discounted by 50% for student presenters. The deadline for abstract submissions is 31 August. Decisions on acceptance will be made by 15 September.

## TENTATIVE PROGRAM

**12 October:** Inauguration and welcome dinner (5:00 pm)

**13 October:** Plenary sessions (9:00 am – 6:00 pm)  
Poster sessions

**14 October:** Parallel symposium sessions (9:00 am – 6:00 pm)  
Poster sessions

## REGISTRATION FEE

NRs 10,000 for international participants

NRs 6,000 for national participants

NRs 4,000 for national students

*The registration fees will be waived for invited speakers and discounted by 50% for student presenters. All participants must register online and pay the registration fees on cash at the venue.*

## CONFERENCE VENUE

Hotel Soaltee Crowne Plaza,  
Tahachal Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal

## CONTACT

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## CONVENTION WEBSITE

<https://www.knowledge-nrna.org>

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