

PRESS RELEASE

Asi@Connect project launched at national level in Vietnam to help bridge the digital divide across the Asia-Pacific region

15 August 2019, Hanoi – Over 55 million researchers, academics and students across the Asia-Pacific, including Vietnam, are set to benefit from a new phase of dedicated research and education (R&E) networking - Asi@Connect - which was inaugurated today at the Asi@Connect National Launch ceremony in Vietnam to seamlessly extend and build on the successful Trans-Eurasia Information Network (TEIN) initiative.



Asi@Connect National Launch Event in Vietnam on 15 August 2019, Hanoi

Asi@Connect is the successor project to TEIN4, the most recent phase of the TEIN initiative. It currently supports 24 countries/economies by providing a regional high-capacity internet backbone for R&E collaboration within the Asia-Pacific region and, its interconnection with the pan-European GÉANT network, and with other parts of the world.

Asi@Connect is the continuation of a strong partnership between the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development and the Korea-based regional networking organisation TEIN*CC. Asi@Connect is a living example of "digital connectivity".

With EU co-funding of up to € 20 million until 2021, Asi@Connect supports capacity building and network-enabled applications with high societal impact, particularly in the least developed countries in the region. The project meets

these objectives through Call for Proposals open to the wider R&E and networking community.

Following the formal inauguration of the project at regional level in February 2017 in New Delhi during the 1st Asi@Connect Governors Meeting, this national launch event in Vietnam was hosted by the Asi@Connect partner in Vietnam NASATI/VinaREN, with representatives from the EU Delegation to Vietnam and Government officials who welcomed the national kick-off of the Asi@Connect project in Vietnam and encouraged the R&E network community to build on achievements to date and further strengthen cooperation between Asia and Europe.

Talking about the significance of this new project, Mrs. Axelle Claude Nicaise, First Counsellor, Head of Political, Press & Information of the EU Delegation to Vietnam, commented: *"The EU has long recognized the potential of promoting people-to-people connectivity. Asi@Connect is an excellent example of regional integration, with the R&E communities of 23 Asia-Pacific countries inter-connected by powerful high-capacity, high quality Internet links. Asi@Connect is a vehicle for promoting a peaceful, secure, open and cooperative ICT environment between Asia and Europe, and benefit society as a whole. There are unlimited fields of world-class research which can profit from the powerful links we have created together. Sharing data and working together on astronomy, meteorology, climate change monitoring, or early warning for natural disasters are just a few examples."*

"The official launch of Asi@Connect marks the opening of a major new chapter in research networking across Asia-Pacific," Dr. Tran Dac Hien Director General of NASATI/VinaREN said *"Building on the considerable achievements of the predecessor phases, Asi@Connect will enable the connection of more countries at higher speeds, roll out advanced network services and contribute to achieving development goals through improved access to education and research resources, thus bridging the digital divide in the region."*

VinaREN connects to the regional TEIN backbone at speeds of 1Gbps, enabling closer collaboration between its researchers and educators and their colleagues around the globe. The launch event showcased projects across the region that are benefiting from Asi@Connect.

High-speed research and education networks, such as TEIN, were originally developed as tools for scientists and academic institutions – to enable them to share data and co-operate in real time. For example, the researchers of Hanoi University of Science and Technology (HUST) and Vietnam National University (VNU) in Vietnam are relying on the advanced high-speed TEIN research network to collaborate with their colleagues in OF@TEIN+ project at Korea, Thailand, Malaysia and Taiwan in the field of future Internet.

However, the power of these networks lies also in enabling an entirely new way of collaborating on a wide variety of cultural projects – building bridges between different cultures.

At the Asia-Pacific Advanced Network 47 Conference in Daejeon, Korea, guests were treated to a performance with a difference. Sitting in a conference centre in Korea in front of a giant screen, they watched a live performance. But the singers and musicians were not physically in Korea, or even together in one place. They were in six separate locations across the globe – in Vietnam, Korea, India, Malaysia, Bangladesh and Pakistan. The three live performances were being streamed in real time to Korea, where they were brought together and synchronised to give one seamless show.

TEIN has created a pan-Asia-Pacific regional network with the largest geographical footprint in the world, and with a user community of over 50 million. This is of equal scale to Europe's user community served by the GÉANT network.

About NASATI

The National Agency for Science and Technology Information (NASATI) is a subordinate body under the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), with the function of advising and assisting the Minister in implementing state management and organization of information and statistics activities on science, technology and innovation; build and exploit the national database on science and technology; organize and implement the national science and technology library activities

About VINAREN

VinaREN (Vietnam Research and Education Network) is a result of the project implementation named Trans-Eurasia Information Network, phase II in Vietnam (TEIN2 VN). The backbone of VinaREN connects 3 network operation centers (NOC) spread across all regions of the country. VinaREN currently has more than 80 members, including the research institutes, universities, major hospitals, the science and technology information centers in 63 provinces and cities over the country.

VinaREN has been internationally connected to TEIN4 (Hanoi - Hong Kong) with a bandwidth of 1 Gbps since March 2015. Through this connection, VinaREN has connections to GEANT (EU), Internet2 (US), APAN and so on. Based on VinaREN, the scientific and technological organizations, and researchers in Vietnam have had many opportunities to participate actively in collaborative research programs of the region and the world. The advanced applications of telemedicine, E-learning, E-culture, climate change and information exchange over the network have been implemented and bring practical benefits to the socio-economic development of Vietnam.

About Asi@Connect

Asi@Connect marks the 4th phase of EU funding to the Trans-Eurasia Information Network (TEIN) programme which was launched as an Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) initiative in 2000; it successfully established a regional research and education internet network from scratch in 2004 and

progressively expanded its geographical footprint over the years. During this new phase, greater emphasis will be placed on delivering the project with increased involvement of additional partners within the Asia-Pacific R&E community.

Asi@Connect takes over the R&E backbone from TEIN4, the most recent phase in the TEIN initiative and will continue to connect regional researchers with their counterparts in Europe via GÉANT, the world's most advanced international research and education network, providing the Asia-Pacific countries with a gateway for global research collaboration. Asi@Connect receives €20 million funding from the EU for 5 years with additional financial contributions from the Asian partners. GÉANT transferred responsibility for the TEIN programme to TEIN*CC in 2012 and has since provided consultancy advice. This advisory role will continue during Asi@Connect. To find out more visit www.tein.asia

The Asi@Connect partners are the National Research & Education Network associations (NRENs) of Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, The Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, and Vietnam.

About TEIN*CC

Asi@Connect is managed by the regional networking organisation TEIN*Cooperation Center (TEIN*CC). TEIN*CC was endorsed by the ASEM8 Summit in Brussels in October 2010. It was established in Seoul, Korea in August 2011 as a non-profit Foundation Corporation to take responsibility for the 4th phase of the TEIN project which started in April 2012. The Korean Government, the Ministry of Science and ICT, supports TEIN*CC operation and management, and the Seoul Metropolitan Government is providing office facilities. TEIN*CC actively collaborated with other regional R&E network organisations around the world to provide better opportunities for research and education to TEIN community. For more information, please visit www.teincc.org, follow us on Twitter @AsiaConnectNews and Facebook @AsiaConnectProject

About GÉANT

GÉANT is Europe's leading collaboration on network and related infrastructure and services for the benefit of research and education, contributing to Europe's economic growth and competitiveness. The organisation develops, delivers and promotes advanced network and associated e-infrastructure services, and supports innovation and knowledge-sharing amongst its members, partners and the wider research and education networking community. For more information visit www.geant.org, follow us on Twitter @GEANTnews and read our latest blog posts at <https://blog.geant.org>