

U.S.-D.P.R.K. Scientific Engagement Consortium



The U.S.-DPRK Scientific Engagement Consortium was formed in 2007 to promote academic science collaborations between the U.S. and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). Founding members of the Consortium are the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), CRDF Global, the Pacific Century Institute (PCI), and Syracuse University (SU). In December 2009, a six person Nobel Laureate led delegation representing the Consortium visited Pyongyang and facilitated and promoted a series of academic research exchanges in areas of mutual interest, resulting in the signing of an Agreement in March 2010. In February 2011, the Consortium hosted a reciprocal State Academy of Sciences (SAOS) delegation visit to Atlanta, Georgia and signed a second agreement. The agenda focused on health meetings at the Carter Center with scientists from Emory, Stanford, and Johns Hopkins Universities on such topics as nutrition and TB as well as meetings with scientists from Georgia Institute of Technology and Syracuse University to discuss a variety of subjects including science policy, sustainable cities, and health informatics. The Consortium received presentations from NGOs on watershed management and crane restoration, and had meetings on agricultural research with scientists from the University of Georgia and University of Missouri.

Briefings and Activities

The Consortium has hosted several meetings with U.S. and DPRK stakeholders over the past five years including key officials from the U.S. State Department, Congress, U.S. technical agencies, U.S. scientists, and briefings for the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, the U.S. Institute of Peace, a workshop at Stanford University, and others. Numerous meetings have been held with the DPRK United Nations Mission in New York City and at the annual AAAS meetings

(2008, 2009, and 2010 in Boston, Chicago, and San Diego). The purpose of these various stakeholder meetings was to show key decision makers and interested parties in the U.S. and in the DPRK that a coordinated approach is being taken to leverage the diverse resources and capabilities of several unique and complementary institutions.

Moving Forward

The Consortium has built upon the success of its two delegation visits by hosting two follow on technical delegations to Pyongyang in August 2011 and in March 2012 to develop assessments and launch pilot initiatives in English language training for scientists and develop a digital/virtual science library as called for in the agreements, with the goal of building capacity to expanding academic research exchanges. This programming is being carried out with generous support from the Henry Luce Foundation.

In spring 2012, with support from The Rockefeller Foundation, the Consortium hosted a conference for 17 stakeholders from the US and DPRK addressing "U.S.-DPRK Relations through Science Engagement and Cooperation" at the Foundation's Bellagio Center in Northern Italy. The focus of this meeting was on developing connections between diverse stakeholders and funders in support of sustained long term academic science engagement between both countries.

History of the Consortium

On May 22, 2007 approximately fifty participants took part in a workshop held at the CRDF Global headquarters in Arlington, VA. They discussed shared experiences, lessons learned, successes and challenges regarding scientific collaboration with the DPRK, building on the success of the Syracuse University—Kim Chaek University collaboration that was developed with the facilitation of The Korea Society. Funded by the Richard Lounsbery Foundation, the workshop demonstrated a strong interest by a number of U.S. universities to work towards collaboration with DPRK academics in a variety of key areas of scientific exchange. As a result, the Consortium was formed in May 2007.

For more information, Please contact Frederick F. Carriere, Syracuse University, Secretariat, US-DPRK Science Engagement Consortium, at ffcarrie@syr.edu.



“The U.S. and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea now have a scientific opportunity, by engaging scientists, to bridge friendships that may bring our countries closer together.”

—Peter Agre, former president of the AAAS
Science Writers

US scientists step up their efforts at Diplomacy. With recent visits to North Korea...US scientists are seeking interactions with their peers to open channels of communication... In an effort in the mold of US-Soviet cold war science diplomacy, the US delegation, led by Nobel Laureate biochemist Peter Agre, broke new ground as the first attempt at scientific outreach to the politically isolated nation.

—Physics Today/physicstoday.org

“We are hopeful that these meetings will show decision-makers and interested parties in the U.S. and in the DPRK that progress in science engagement can be made by leveraging the diverse resources and capabilities of several unique and complementary institutions.”

—Cathleen A. Campbell, president and CEO of CRDF Global
Eureka Alert

Forging links and making introductions between scientific communities in the United States and North Korea was the focus of the 5-day trip, a first step toward encouraging lasting collaborations between researchers in the two countries. This is the organizing principle of the US-DPRK (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea) Scientific Engagement Consortium.

—TheScientist.com

Building Trust Through Science Networks: While in Pyongyang we met with university and science policy officials as well as science researchers. We were delighted with the openness of the discussions and the mutual agreement that science is a global enterprise in which all scientists benefit from cross-border cooperation and sharing of scientific information. This was especially meaningful to us, as many said we were the first U.S. scientists they had ever met.

—Stuart Thorson, Syracuse University
JoinsMSN.com