

FIDIC CONTINUED...

2016 Future Leader Award Winner Experience

Each year, ACENZ selects a winner of the Future Leader Award for emerging Young Leaders. Part of the prize package includes entry fees into the FIDIC Young Professional Management Training Programme. Other parts of the prize include conference registration, travel and accommodation to attend the FIDIC Infrastructure Conference, and more.

Our 2016 winner, Jenson Varghese joined ACENZ in Jakarta for the FIDIC conference and has included a summary of his experience as the Future Leader Award Winner to inspire others.

“This year I was fortunate to have the opportunity to attend the FIDIC Young Professionals Management Training Programme (YPMTP). This is an online course over 5 months with the final 4 days being completed in the city which hosts the FIDIC International Infrastructure Conference. This year the conference was held in Jakarta. The in-person meeting with the other course participants was the highlight of the course for me and probably one of the highlights of my career. The map below shows the countries represented at the course.



The range of cultures and calibre of attendees was truly humbling – 17 countries and 6 continents were represented. Most of these attendees were selected by their respective companies and national organisations.

While in Jakarta, I learnt how FIDIC has been a valuable resource for some of my colleagues from other countries. For some, the FIDIC guides and documents have supported them through difficult decisions around procurement processes and general business management. Having not known much about FIDIC before attending the course, it was great to hear that through our association with ACENZ and FIDIC, we are supporting the development of the consulting profession throughout the world.

The final task of the programme was to jointly develop a presentation at the FIDIC Conference. Needless to say, this many leaders, cultures and personalities in the same room was not without its challenges. (Let’s just say it was an intense couple of days but I do believe we all grew personally and professionally through the process.)

As a group we agreed that the “engineering consulting profession” faced increased challenges to its relevance and its future. Some countries were struggling with people leaving the profession, lack of community support and understanding, increased insourcing of technical expertise back to government or bypassing the consulting design service to go straight to contractors for design services.

While the specific challenges differed, as a group we almost unanimously agreed that as an industry we would need to continue to evolve and stay relevant or run the risk of being replaced. This included the need for diversity, particularly gender, which was agreed by all. We developed the following actions that we presented to the broader conference attendees:

The 2017 YPMTP commit to the following actions to enhance engineering and our collaboration with other professionals to improve society:

- 1. Facilitate international exchange programs for young professionals*
- 2. Collaborate between our companies, member associations and universities to promote consulting engineers*
- 3. Pursue the development of an Innovation Committee to facilitate access to funding for innovation through our Member Associations*
- 4. Champion equal opportunities for under represented groups*
- 5. Support FIDIC’s pilot project for accredited engineers*
- 6. Be proactive as professionals within our companies and associations*
- 7. Invest time in improving the public perception and recognition of our industry, and marketing of our profession.*
- 8. Develop stronger ties between FIDIC (and member associations) and other organizations (regulators, client groups, etc.)*
- 9. Tell the human story behind engineering*
- 10. IPromote engineering to demonstrate the social and environmental benefits to our communities*

Many of us left Jakarta motivated about getting involved in our respective member organisations to try and support these actions. Personally, I will be looking to do this through my role on the ACENZ Board for the upcoming year. (I’ve put it in writing and you have all read it!)

I would like to thank ACENZ and Tonkin + Taylor (sponsors of the ACENZ Future Leaders Award) for this opportunity.”

Jenson Varghese is the MRCagney’s New Zealand Regional Manager and was the recipient of the 2016 Future Leader’s Award. As part of the award, he will be sitting on the ACENZ Board with a specific focus on ACENZ Young Professionals.