

Summary of PA-Visit for the fiscal year 2019

Thursday, 10 January 2019, 08.00 - 10.15 a.m.

A108 Conference Room,

Institute of Molecular Biosciences, Mahidol University Salaya

.....

Professor Banchong Mahasavariya, Acting President of Mahidol University, along with Mahidol University administrative board visited the Molecular Biosciences Institute to follow up on the Institute's performance (PA-Visit) for the fiscal year 2019. The Acting President discussed the University current situation, as framed in Mahidol University 20-Years Strategic Plan (2018 - 2037). The Plan aims for excellence in research and innovation at the international level, advanced teaching and learning methods that produce highly skilled students equipped with 21st Century skills. In term of research and innovation, four strategies for enhancement are (1) New Frontier Research—to expand the research and innovation scope that will reveal new discoveries or development of new theories, (2) Research/Innovation with significant impact on the industry, (3) Research/Innovation with significant cultural Impact and (4) Research/Innovation with significant social Impact. These four strategies must be executed concurrently to strengthen the University position in research and innovations. To implement these strategies, an interdisciplinary research group have been established to collaborate with University's external partners, forming a collaborative network. The network will have the potential to develop into a Mahidol University Multidisciplinary Research Center (MU-MRC), which will focus on technology transfer, regulations modification, and academic service center. MU-MRC is intended to facilitate transition into entrepreneurship, beginning with plans to create co-working and maker spaces that will serve as a research and innovation center for a variety of disciplines in the future.

To achieve the goal of becoming one of the Top 100 World Class University, the University recognizes the need of young staff who lack experience and related skills such as lecturing or building exams, etc. To respond to such needs, the University has lecturers/researcher development projects, in which Human Resources Division, Education Administration Division and Research Management Division will assist and advise on the matter

in form of co-projects. The goal is for staff to be able to compete on a global level, with which the University will be able to rely on themselves.

Then Prof. Dr. Narattaphol Charoenphandhu, Director of the Institute of Molecular Biosciences, presented the progress of Institute's Performance Agreement in the fiscal year 2018. The Director related the Institute's accomplishment in biochemistry and molecular biology research, whose publication scored full marks (TRF Index 5.0) in the Thailand Research Fund (TRF) Academic Excellence Award. He also informed of the Institute's success in the production of vaccine for Zika virus that is transferred to human by mosquitoes, in the licensing of Japanese encephalitis vaccines granted to the Government Pharmaceutical Organization, in the number of patents and petty patents that accounted for the one of the top 3 University organization with most patents. The Institute student has also recently received the 2018 Outstanding Thesis awards. In addition, the Institute also focuses on targeted academic services that can generate income to support the operation of the Institute. In term of personnel development, the Institute has the MB Currency project, in which staff with outstanding performance—works that are beneficial to the Institution or the University—can be matched up with research publication and used to increase the salary or, in case of supporting staff, for job promotion.

Furthermore, the Director informed of the Institute operational approach, which uses ISO standards as guidelines. These include research laboratory operation, Mosquito Culture Building renovation, Research and Innovation Development Building renovation, and library and co-working space improvement. It is noteworthy that the Institute's strategies adhere to the National strategy, especially the First Strategy—National Security. This is because the Institute research and innovations are directly related to life and human health. Therefore, the Institute strives for new discoveries or improvement, encourages research that are applicable to the society, and initiates staff career development, as well as staff satisfaction in the workplace (Happy Workplace). Nevertheless, the Institute still faces certain problems and obstacles. For example, the Institute requires an introduction of an IT system that manages data and could integrate all of the Institute data in a manner that can be linked to the University data pool. The Institute have also incurred higher utility expense.

From the Director's report, Mahidol University administrative board commented were as follows:

- 1) The Institute should revise and continue to operate on the path Professor Emeritus Dr. Professor Emeritus Natth Bhamarapravati, the Institute's founder (formerly, Science and Technology Research and Development Institute), had conceptualized. It should base on the intent to put together research that cannot be operate in any other University organizations or may face certain impediment in doing so. Also, the Institute should serve as a research incubator that nurtures researchers with high potential and provide opportunities for them to display their competence in conducting research that is beneficial to humankind;
- 2) Mahidol University Amnat Charoen Campus has research projects related to rice and herbal medicine for diabetic patients. This may present a good opportunity for the Institute to form collaborative projects;
- 3) Regarding, the University data collection, an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system has been constructed. In ERT, only a single University account can access the ERP system (Single sign-on), and the University will introduce the system in another occasion;
- 4) Focus on neuroscience discipline and develop specialized fields in molecular biology research in order to distinguish the Institute strength;
- 5) Work toward independent research management and funding that is beyond funding derived from National Budget or research services for private companies;
- 6) Devise a strategic plan that specifically targets its strength, for example, vaccine-related research and innovation;
- 7) Develop and promote the Center for Biomedical Instrument to become a comprehensive medical instrument research center;
- 8) Increase the number of engaging alumni. It is suggested that the Institute should aim for 22% increase by 2020;

- 9) Assemble and analyze records involving with the Institute interaction with external agencies, for example, memorandum of understanding (MOU) or activities related to international relations;
- 10) Regarding international relations, the Institute should increase the number of visiting professors, research-related publicity, and double degree-Ph.D. program for personnel development and additional income;
- 11) Aim for higher number of social engagement activities;
- 12) Decrease the travel expense in the Joint Research Unit proposal that the Institute previously proposed;
- 13) The National Budget proposal must be explicit and detailed;
- 14) The Institute should be the example in laboratory management, which conforms to standard operations established by COSHEM and by the National Research Management System.

Summarized by

Sansanee Hiranchan, Public Relations Officer

Natthanit Srimaserm, Institute Secretary and Acting Assistant Director of Human Resources