

BatStateU-The NEU successfully sets off to stage the Inclusive Innovation Conference 2022

Hosted by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC), and Batangas State University-The National Engineering University (BatStateU-The NEU), the Inclusive Innovation Conference (IIC) 2022 was set off to stage on May 26, 2022.

The event brought together science, technology, and innovation leaders to discuss the theme, "Leadership in Innovation: Key to Sustained Competitiveness and Economic Growth." The conference also assembled high-level officials from government, C-level industry executives, university presidents and chancellors, their vice-presidents and vice-chancellors in research extension and innovation.

"Always our historic challenge as leaders is to manage the crisis while building the future", Batangas State University - The National Engineering University President, Dr. Tirso A. Ronquillo, expressed as he welcomed the guests and participants with the message of gratitude in joining BatStateU for their first biggest face-to-face gathering.

"Let us continue working together; strengthen leadership and value orientation towards entrepreneurship and innovation."



Representing Undersecretary Blesila A. Lantayona of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), OIC Regional Director Marissa Argente graces the event with her welcome message that highlights the objectives of IIC 2022.

Served as a platform for key academe, industry, and government stakeholders to take stock of the country's programs and initiatives in innovation and entrepreneurship, IIC 2022 reset innovation goals and strategies and launched collaborative programs on innovation and entrepreneurship among stakeholders in the public and private sectors. It was the biggest physical gathering of innovation leaders in the country and provided a great opportunity for networking and exploring potential partnerships.

The conference featured keynote speakers who shared their insights and experiences on various topics related to innovation, including technology commercialization, inclusive innovation, and sustainability. There were also several panel discussions and workshops where participants had the opportunity to engage in discussions and share their perspectives on various issues related to innovation.

1. Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Usec. Rafaelita M. Aldaba discussed the need for digital transformation to accelerate our economic recovery towards more inclusive and sustainable growth in a plenary session she led during the IIC 2022. She outlined her presentation into three parts: (1) the current state of technology used in the country, (2) issues and constraints affecting technology adoption, and (3) policies and programs of DTI to address these issues and achieve digital transformation.

2. "We really need to invest in science and technology. We need to invest in Research and Development (R&D). And we need to invest in human resources." Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Secretary Fortunato T. de la Peña said as he talked about the elements of the innovation ecosystem that covers the programs, policies, and proposals of DOST, such as the preparation for the future of research and development in the country.

3. Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Usec. Rowena Cristina L. Guevara shared her insights, through a recorded video, on expanding the frontiers of Philippine science and technology as levers for social change and economic transformation. She emphasized the evolution of the role of R&D as a part of social change to make a difference in solving developmental challenges. She also reiterated

the importance of science and technology as a driver of economic transformation in terms of education and technology-based enterprises.

4. “USAID played multiple roles as an enabler, convener, and a broker of trust and relationships. The hard work was done by all of you - the progress you have made working together to drive innovation forward. The network of colleagues that have emerged for the past decade is a legacy of this partnership. And for that, I am very grateful for our shared success.”

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission Director Ryan Washburn expresses his message of support to all the participants and organizers of the Inclusive Innovation Conference 2022 (IIC 2022). He recognizes all efforts and commitment of partner SUCs and other industry partners towards transformative innovation. In line with this, he also emphasizes that partnerships are a 'strong foundation' to push for the agenda and purpose of inclusive innovation.

5. Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary William D. Dar, in his keynote speech, introduced a strategic plan in order to alleviate the country's agricultural problems. Dubbed as the *National Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization and Industrialization Plan 2021-2030*, it promotes the improvement of the Philippine agri-fishery sector.

Moreover, he encouraged SUCs to be at the forefront of battling the agricultural sector's new challenges. He also commended SUCs for their innovations and inventions, which generally helped Philippine society. Additionally, he reminded us that research should 'scale up' to further lessen, or best, provide long-term solutions to the country's most pressing problems.



Another highlight of the conference was the signing of the Batangas Innovation Manifesto, which aims to boost the country's innovation strategies. Also, it targets to sustain cohesive innovation programs at the local, regional, and national levels, which outlined their commitment to promote and support innovation and entrepreneurship in the academic sector.

Led by the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC) President Dr. Tirso A. Ronquillo, Department of Agriculture (DA) Secretary William Dar, Department of Industry (DTI) Usec. Rafaelita Aldaba and DTI Asec. Napoleon K. Juanillo, Jr., signing the manifesto was a significant step towards creating a more conducive environment for innovation and entrepreneurship in the country.

As the IIC 2022 ended, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Undersecretary Rafaelita M. Aldaba left a challenge as she delivered her closing remarks. Undersecretary Aldaba reiterated that "innovation is only 5% inspiration and 95% perspiration." She explained that invention becomes an innovation only when the idea is commercialized." As pointed out in the panels, we celebrate failure. For each failure, there is a learning. But let's fail fast, learn fast, and improve fast," she added.

Overall, the Inclusive Innovation Conference 2022 was a success, providing a platform for knowledge sharing and networking among key stakeholders in the innovation ecosystem. With topics ranging from the latest trends and developments to best practices in technology and business, participants had the opportunity to engage in thought-provoking conversations, establish valuable connections, and uncover new opportunities.

