IN THE ZONE Conference
26-27 November 2012
UWA

Project initiated by Academic Co-ordinator, 7 Oct 2011
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Masterclass attendees with Vinay Venkataraman

- Daniel Ortlepp
- Rajiv Venkatraman
- Thea Lendich
- Michelle Larg
- Tania Loke
- Andrew Pham
- Gaeleen Perrone
- Emily Twigger
- James Panaretos
- Arash Arabshahi

Report by BPhil (Hons) participant, James Panaretos, 28 Oct 2012 [excerpt]

Thank you so much for the wonderful opportunity to attend this event. More than anything, it was an opportunity for networking and becoming immersed in the business world for the first time. A bonus was the insightful and varied perspectives on our future relationship with the Asia-Pacific. No doubt, this will influence many of our choices in the future, such as which language to study, which county to complete our study abroad requirement in and which units we should take.

DAY 1:
- China’s growth may in fact be 0% (or negative) when inflation of 10% is deducted. Colin Barnett and others stated that while these figures may be correct, growth is not the only factor that affects Australia. For example, many Chinese people have moved into the middle-class, making them demand more protein (as they can now afford it). China will soon not be able to meet the demand and that is where Australia must “jump on the dragon” (as opposed to the sheep) before the US and other countries get there. The ITZ focused on Aus’s "comparative advantage" (this term being used incessantly) as we are "in the [same] time zone as 60% of the world’s population" give or take 2 hours. It was also mentioned that much of our future expectations ride on the back of the assumption that this comparative advantage will actually have a profound effect . . .
- Gala dinner was fab-o! Was chatting to a country scholarship donor as well as a few Fogarty scholars :)

DAY 2:
Day 2 commenced with more talk on "Capacity Building". Vinay Venkataraman commenced with a highly engaging talk on "Innovation Dichotomies for the Zone". 3 catalysts were identified: Deal makers (biz acumen and connections), Supernodes (large connections) and Angel investors (recycle - his example is where computer monitors were thrown out by an Indian government office, and an organization refitted them at low-cost, turning them into TV's). Other notables in his speech were: [Developing new competencies and IP, based on by-products of a traditional industry (e.g. mining software)] [learning how to extrapolate market needs and adapt to different cultures] [a systematic policy driven approach to creating the right kind of ecosystem] . . .

Colin Barnett’s speech was a scathing review of the objectivity and key focus areas of the White Paper . . .

A Summary panel gave the following statement: 1 big issue: how crowded it is going to be on the back of the big Chinese "dragon". We won’t be competing against China but the rest of the world. So we need to fix government policy.

BPhil (Hons) students Alex Khor, Zac Molly-Mencshelyi and Gaelen Perrone In the Zone