In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful
Internationalization of Higher Education in Iran Despite Sanctions

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Three Main Policies of Current Iranian Ministry of Science, Research & Technology (MSRT)

• Bringing science & technology into the society
• Promoting/developing technical vocational training
• Internationalizing higher education
Preparing/implementing a comprehensive strategic plan for internationalizing the institute

Bi- or multi-lateral international student exchanges

Bi- or multi-lateral international professor exchanges

Research collaborations with foreigners and non-resident Iranians

Teaching collaborations with foreigners and non-resident Iranians

Essential Science Indicators (ESI) Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and contracts with foreign universities

Hosting international events, conferences, seminars, etc.

Developing joint and double/dual and multiple degree programs with foreign partner institutions

Outgoing mobility opportunities / learning experiences for students (study abroad, international internships, etc.)

Outgoing mobility opportunities for faculty/staff

Recruiting fee paying international undergraduate students

Sabbaticals and post-doc opportunities

Recruiting foreign faculty

Spin-off companies, incubators, KBOs, science and technology parks, etc.

Transnational education provision (academic courses/programs abroad, branch campuses, overseas joint venture, franchises)
Iran is top of the world in science growth

By Andy Coghlan

Which country’s scientific output rose 18-fold between 1996 and 2008, from 736 published papers to 13,238? The answer – Iran – might surprise many people, especially in the western nations used to leading science. Iran has the fastest rate of increase in scientific publication in the world.

And if political relations between Iran and the US are strained, it seems that the two countries’ scientists are getting on fine: the number of collaborative papers between them rose almost fivefold from 388 to 1831 over the same period.

A rapid rise in Middle Eastern science stands out from a report published this week by the Web of Science. It compared citation rates between 1993 and 2003 with those between 2003 and 2007 for journals that publish research papers.
US-led Sanctions

- Nuclear industry
- Energy/petroleum industry
- Banking
- Central Bank of Iran
- Missile/arms industry
- Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps
- International trade

- Shipping industry
- Insurance
- Foreign firms dealing with Iran
- Muslim Ban
- Washington’s general imposition of unilateral sanctions on Iran in violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2231
And yet ...

There is life behind the wall.
Internationalization of Higher Education: Definition

•“The intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff and to make a meaningful contribution to society”

Source: de Wit et al, 2015, European Parliament Study
Some questions to ask ourselves:

• Do we have a unified, comprehensive strategy?
• What are we looking to gain out of internationalization?
• Who are the main stakeholders?
• Who are the true partners of our institute/community/country?
• Does internationalization in Iran have to look like internationalization in other countries?
• Does internationalization in one Iranian institute have to look like internationalization in other Iranian institutes?
• What will be the impact of our strategy in 3, or 5, or 10, or 15 years? On the students, on the staff, on the institute, on the society?
• Have we developed the required international competencies in those people who are supposed to shoulder the burden of our plan?
• Will our plan truly enhance the quality of education?
• Will our plan truly enhance the usefulness of our research?
• Which problems of the society and the community at large will it help resolve?
• Is it in line with our values?
Some things which do not require foreign currency or visas

- **Internationalization at Home** (including Internationalization of the Curriculum, joint programs, etc.)
- **Quality assurance** (Focusing on excellence in teaching and research, useful knowledge production and transfer, graduate employability and generic skills, lifelong learning, etc.)
- **Increased flexibility** (increased electives, increased interdisciplinary education, dual degrees and double majors, etc.)
- **Developing the required skills and competencies in students and staff** (intercultural understanding, technology skills, international languages, how to go about an international project, etc.)
- **Enhancing the lifestyle of our existing students and staff** (including health issues, economy, surroundings, attitudes, simplifying bureaucratic procedures, and yes, just plain having fun)
- **Playing to our own strengths and valuing the potential contribution of our knowledge, skills, culture and values to the international community**
- **Encouraging collaboration instead of competition** among national institutes
- **Online networking**, videoconferencing, e-learning, webinars, MOOCs, etc.
Developing **mutual trust** between the upper and lower levels of the system (e.g. the ministry and the universities and institutes, the university and the staff/students, etc.)
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CALL (computer assisted language assessment) and research

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Iran’s scientists uncrushed by decades of sanctions

Shahin Akhondzadeh

US President Donald Trump’s unilateral withdrawal from the Iran Nuclear Agreement (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action; JCPOA) in May attracted international condemnation. As vice-dean for research in the Faculty of Medicine at Tehran University of Medical Sciences, I stand behind Iran’s scientists, who have resolved to work even harder to progress (see also Nature 557, 287–288; 2018).
THIS WALL WILL SOON FALL

Thank you for your attention!