# U3A Asia Pacific Alliance

## Setup Meeting

At the conclusion of India's first international conference at University of Chitrakoot in 2010, all foreign delegates met under the chairmanship of Tom Holloway, Secretary-General of World U3A – an internet service based in Hyderabad. The aim of that meeting was to decide a way forward, given the wide geographic distribution of the participants. It was agreed that membership of AIUTA, Association International des Universite de Troisieme Age, based in France, was not an answer, since this tended to be Europe-centred and also clearly favoured the 'French Model' of organisation (see appendix, note 1).

Another issue was the varied style of the different countries taking part. Some, Like Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, favouring the 'British Model' and some, such as India, wishing to adopt other styles, (see appendix note 2).

Therefore it was agreed that we would set up a separate entity for the Asia Pacific region that would meet by teleconference.

## Regular Meetings

Meetings of the APA Steering Group take place weekly or every 2 weeks, depending on activities, using the FLASHmeeting facility of the UK Open University teleconferencing system. Participants are Australia, Nepal, Japan, South Africa, Singapore, Mauritius and India, plus two Internet-based organisations U3A Online and World U3A. We are now engaged in recruiting new country representatives in Malaysia and Kazakhstan.

## Activities

Our two main projects are promotion of our Annual International Conference (see appendix note 3) and our 'Meet and Greet' project MY U3A which uses email and a website to encourage fraternal visits between groups at home or abroad.

U3A Asia Pacific Alliance is managed by the Steering Group of nine. It has no membership as such and it is not prescriptive.  New groups from countries in the Asia Pacific area are encouraged to adopt their own style of governance appropriate to local circumstances.

Preliminary planning is now taking place for a joint conference with AIUTA in Osaka, Japan, to be held in October 2016, under the auspices of Age Concern, Japan and its President Mrs Akiko Tsukatani, assisted by Tom Holloway.

## Appendix

**Note 1**

> **(1)** **French Model.** This generally uses established University facilities and speakers are often academics or qualified speakers. Courses are structured, although often only 'Certificates of Completion' are awarded rather than degrees.

> **(2)** **British Model.** This encourages all participants to be teachers as well as learners. It emphasizes the value of physical activity. For examples see http//myu3a.org and a more complete descrition may be found here >>> in the document "The UK/U3A Approach to Lifelong Learning".

> **(3)** **Indian Model.** Local groups tend to concentrate on health issues and spiritual matters. Service to disadvantaged families in the community is a common feature, e.g. distribution of blankets to street-sleepers and books to school children.

**Note 2**

**Indian U3A was set up as follow:**

"We are a group of loosely knit individuals - academicians and practitioners in the field of Ageing in India and we have come together for the purpose of spreading the U3A concept across India."

Indian members are usually educated and middle-class and such activities as 'cooking' and 'gardening' and 'rambling' do not have a large following due to local circumstances. Visits to holy places and running health facilities for the elderly in the community are popular.

**Note 3**

**Conferences**

These attract national delegates from among India's vast population of 1,200,000,000 but are always advertised via websites and newsletters.

- 2010 – University of Chitrakoot, India
- 2011 – Singapore Association of Continuing Education, Singapore
- 2012 – Chinmaya Vibhooti Ashram, Pune, India
- 2013 – U3A Victoria Network, Melbourne
- 2014 – Research Inputs and Development Association, Kathmandu
- 2015 – U3A Queensland Network, Brisbane, Australia
- 2016 – U3A Japan and AIUTA, Osaka, Japan (in plan)