

## **International Science Partnership Fund (ISPF) Malaysia Launch**

**Date:** 9 January 2024

**Time slot:** 5.45pm – 6.30pm

**Speaker:** Professor Dato Dr Zulfigar Yasin

**Topic:** Open Floor – Way Forward for UK Malaysia Science, Technology, and Innovation Partnership.

### **Key takeaways:**

#### **Theme 1: The importance of ISPF and international collaboration**

- **ISPF's role:** The ISPF's role was highlighted as a critical platform for fostering international engagement in science and technology, especially between Malaysia and the UK.
- **Historical context:** There was an acknowledgement of the UK's longstanding history in science and technology, providing a model for Malaysia's growth post-independence.
- **International engagement:** The need for increased international cooperation and engagement, with a focus on leveraging the ISPF.

#### **Theme 2: Challenges and opportunities in fund applications**

- **Fund application experiences:** There was mixed experiences with fund applications, including success stories and challenges particularly in aligning proposals with on-ground realities.
- **Community focus in proposals:** There was an emphasis on the need for proposals to be more community-focused and grounded in practical realities, especially in areas like agriculture and food security.

#### **Theme 3: Partnership building and collaboration**

- **UK-Malaysia partnerships:** Emphasis was made on the importance of finding compatible partners in the UK and leveraging their expertise.
- **Successful collaborations:** Examples of successful collaborations in waste bioremediation and renewable energy were shared. There was also discussion of the value of integrating two approaches for stronger applications.
- **Technology transfer and implementation:** The need for effective technology transfer to stakeholders and the communities post-research was highlighted.

#### **Theme 4: Impact and societal relevance**

- **Research impact:** Concerns were raised about the societal impact of research projects, stressing the need to focus on socio-economic development and social impact.
- **Cultural and indigenous knowledge:** Suggestion to incorporate value culture and indigenous knowledge into research to enhance international cooperation.

- **Science and technology studies:** Proposal for grants and opportunities in science and technology studies, focusing on the impact of technology on society.

#### **Theme 5: Enhancing grant applications**

- **Incorporating community needs:** Discussions on incorporating bottom-up issues into research, such as community work and specific local challenges.
- **Mentorship and support:** The need for mentorship and support for new grant applications, especially early career researchers, to navigate the complexities of large grants.
- **Bridging gaps in research and business:** Addressing the gap between scientific research and practical business applications.

#### **Other discussions:**

- Suggestions for more efforts in promoting STEM subjects among youth to develop a high-tech society.
- Calls for a holistic approach in moving Malaysia's agenda in science and technology forward.