

IATSS Forum

“Focus on Leadership” Proposal

The IATSS Forum was established in 1985. At first, the Forum began with a single participant country, Malaysia, but has since grown to include nine different countries, accumulating a history of nearly a quarter of a century.

Up to now, IATSS Forum has primarily served as a means for ASEAN participant countries to learn from Japan’s developmental experience. However, we are now reexamining what our vision should be in terms of educating participants in the future. For the last few years, both the IATSS Forum Steering Committee and Program Committee have been considering ways to transition the program, from mainly lectures in which participants learn from past case studies in Japan, to a curriculum that provides participants with a place to foster their *leadership* abilities. **The proposed “focus on leadership at IATSS Forum” will be termed “producing new value from diversity.” IATSS Forum considers a “leader” to be “a person who, in striving towards a goal, is capable of bringing out the strengths of a group to their fullest.” Therefore, “leadership” is “the ability to maximize a group’s potential by effectively applying its strengths to their utmost, leading to the attainment of a goal.”**

Although IATSS Forum does not offer sessions on leadership skills where participants can acquire particular leadership skills directly from trainers, the Forum does provide participants with an opportunity to obtain leadership skills naturally, on their own, through a variety of programs such as “Group Study,” “Seminars,” “Field Study” and “International Exchange Activities.” The role of IATSS Forum is to empower young professionals from ASEAN countries to cultivate leadership knowhow, by giving them a place to practice it.

Our motto, “Thinking and Learning Together,” has served as the core concept of the Forum since its foundation. It is our hope that participants will be able to actualize this motto through engaging in these programs where they will have the opportunity to act, take in information and learn on their own. We believe they will be able to make many new discoveries through their experiences and observations and, in the end, come to a mutual understanding on matters through discussions with other future Asian Leaders.