

YESL represents Sri Lanka at the Global Entrepreneurship Congress 2011 in Shanghai

Young Entrepreneurs Sri Lanka (YESL), which hosts the **Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW)** in Sri Lanka, was represented by Suresh deMel, Director Nominee of YESL and Immediate Past Chairman of the Business for Peace Alliance (BPA), at the **Global Entrepreneurship Congress (GEC)** which was held in Shanghai, China, from March 28 to March 31, 2011.



This year, global leaders, entrepreneurs and intermediary organizations from more than 100 countries participated in the GEC, co-hosted by the Kauffman Foundation and the Entrepreneurship Foundation for Graduates in Shanghai, China. During this time, delegates were able to:

- Hear from world leaders, economists and other experts regarding programs, policies and research aimed at advancing entrepreneurship.
- Brainstorm about building on successes, overcoming individual challenges, and strengthening collaborative efforts for the future.
- Gain valuable insight from successful and experienced entrepreneurs on the key elements of an environment that encourages entrepreneurial growth and is conducive to innovation.
- Receive guidance on various critical capacity-building skills, from building awareness to deepening and widening national campaigns by catalyzing and leveraging partnerships.
- Celebrate and showcase the successes of each of the Global Entrepreneurship Week campaign and each of the national campaigns.
- Discuss featured events and activities being planned for Global Entrepreneurship Week in November 2011.

Each of the sessions were designed to allow a high level of live interaction among delegates to share their thoughts and experiences—either in large group settings or in more personal one-to-one discussions.

“So there I was in Shanghai at the Global Entrepreneurship Congress (GEC) as the Australian host with 100 hundred other country representatives, from Bermuda to Iceland. It was an eclectic bunch of amazing pioneers. Given the plethora of ‘conferences’ or ‘congresses’ – you may be forgiven for thinking that it is yet another re-hash of stale ideas or the ‘same old thing’. With the GEC, this was most definitely not the case. There is a global movement of entrepreneurs. And it is picking up pace rapidly. The GEC is funded by the Kauffman Foundation, a \$2 billion foundation based in the US, whose mission is to establish and advance entrepreneurship globally. The particular focus is on encouraging and supporting young entrepreneurs.”

-- Natasha Munasinghe, Host of GEW in Australia, General Manager of an educational company, The FRANK Team. FRANK's mission is to enable young entrepreneurs to unleash good stuff in the world.

Jonathan Ortman (Left), President, Global Entrepreneurship Week, Senior Fellow, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, and President of The Public Forum Institute, has been leading the development of GEW on behalf of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, and has worked to align more than 100 countries to inspire, connect, mentor and engage the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Suresh deMel (Right), Director Nominee of Young Entrepreneurs Sri Lanka, Immediate Past Chairman of The Business for Peace Alliance, and a Director of the Hambantota District Chamber of Commerce, the American Chamber of Commerce in Sri Lanka, and the Association of Small & Medium Enterprises in Tourism Sri Lanka, together with **Deshabandhu Patrick Amarasinghe**, President, Young Entrepreneurs Sri Lanka, will lead Global Entrepreneurship Week in Sri Lanka, to unite the country for entrepreneurship.



Global Entrepreneurship Week was co-founded in 2008 by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation in the United States and Make Your Mark, a business-led government-backed campaign in the United Kingdom. It was designed to harness the power of entrepreneurship in young people and prepare them to be innovators and business owners while increasing their networks through local, national and global activities and events. Students, educators, entrepreneurs, business leaders, employees, non-profit leaders, government officials and others participate in a host of activities that include virtual and face-to-face events, large-scale competitions and intimate networking gatherings.

With the goal to inspire young people to embrace innovation, imagination and creativity, Global Entrepreneurship Week honors anyone interested in, getting started in, pursuing and/or promoting entrepreneurship. This year, Global Entrepreneurship Week will be celebrated by more than 10 million people and 40,000 events in over 100 countries, from Nov. 14-20, 2011.

Thanks in part to Global Entrepreneurship Week, an entrepreneurial ecosystem has started to take shape around the world, connecting people across borders to unleash their ideas and transform innovation into reality—in turn growing economies and expanding human welfare. In three short years, approximately 20 million people have participated directly in activities and efforts designed to expand that ecosystem and shape the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship is the key to economic recovery, and the next generation of innovators holds that key. Now more than ever, we need to unleash the creativity and ingenuity of our youth by engaging them in the vast possibilities of entrepreneurship. A number of the events throughout Global Entrepreneurship Week are dedicated solely to educating young people and helping mold their ideas and plans into successful ventures.

“Any nation would benefit from a more entrepreneurial culture, and they all stand to gain from a more entrepreneurial world. But in order to do that, we have to work collectively to create a culture in which failure is a rite of passage, and we must allow entrepreneurs to learn quickly, pick up and start again. It’s the only way that the world will be able to embrace wealth creation as a forum that benefits all.”

-- Vivian Prokop, Host of GEW in Canada, CEO of the Canadian Youth Business Foundation, an organization dedicated to youth entrepreneurship, which provides character-based financing and business mentors to launch and sustain successful companies.

“Instead of changing the world through revolution, we can change the world through innovation.”

-- J.A. Fontaine, Chilean Minister of Economy.

