

Professor Dr Farida Habib Shah



Prof Dr. Farida Habib Shah is the Founder and Managing Director of a new biotechnology- based company “The Natural Story Sdn Bhd” which produces herbal and aromatic products.

She is a Fellow and Council member of The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) and is the Vice President of the Organization of Women in Science for Developing Countries (OWSD). In 1984 she obtained her Ph.D. in Molecular Biology from the University of New South Wales, Australia. Prof. Farida Shah has pioneered and contributed significantly towards research in the field of molecular biology and genetic engineering of oil palm. She was also involved in developing molecular marker

techniques for determining genetic diversity and phylogenetic relationships of oil palms and she has recently developed DNA markers for medicinal plants.

The professor has developed a platform for DNA Marker Technology Bioinformatics for authentication, verification techniques and identification of medicinal and herbal plant species and varieties, together with a Bioinformatics Database Platform. She is also involved in the development of medicinal plants for functional foods, nutraceuticals and cosmeceuticals and now is in the field of Biobusiness.

Prof. Farida has written and translated several works relevant to her courses and she has authored over 200 papers and presented more than 250 papers throughout her career.

From 2003-2006, she was involved in the setting up of Biotechnology initiatives at the State level of Melaka, Malaysia. She established the Melaka Biotechnology Corporation with two entities, under its umbrella, the Melaka Institute of Biotechnology and the Melaka Biotech Holdings Sdn Bhd.

She founded two biotechnology companies - Tropical BioEssence Sdn Bhd and Novel Plants Sdn Bhd. Novel Plants Sdn Bhd is a Biotech Start-up company involved in facilitating translation of research into commercial ventures, providing consultancy and organizing Biotechnopreneur Training Modules (BioTrainersTM).

She was Adjunct Professor to Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia.

She has been involved and has chaired many international training workshops on Molecular Biology and other areas of science with International agencies such as Asian Molecular Biology Association (AMBO), UNESCO and IAEA. She was involved in International Agencies for projects and seminars, relating to gender issues of science with the APEC taskforce (Canada , North-

South Institute), Member of taskforce and think tank UNSTAD and COMSTECH, Biotechnology and gender perspective in Islamabad, member of task force and think tank for Workshop “ Science in the Muslim Countries”, Italy, organized by Rockefeller Foundation and Nature Publication.

She is the founder and President of the Malaysian Molecular and Biotechnology Society in 1988, and the founding treasurer of the Malaysian Genetics Society in 1996.

She is also a Founding member and executive member of Malaysian Biotech Industry Organisation (MBIO) since 2002 and was the President from 2009-2011. She was elected to the scientific board member of the UNESCO International basic science programme (UNESCO-IBPS) from 2009 and still holds the position.

Apart from her scientific activities, she has been active in areas of advancement of women scientists and women in science since 1990 (formerly TWOWS) and sits on the S&T Commission under the Malaysia National Council of women’s organization (NCWO) which acts as a consultative and advisory role to the government on gender issue. Prof Farida is a member of GenderInSite, an organization dedicated to establishing a Campaign for Advancement of Women in Science, Technology and Innovation. She has been the member of PSWM since many years ago and has made significant contribution in terms of running several programmes including motivating seminars for women undergraduates.

She was also one of the co-authors of the book written on biography of our Patron, Tun Siti Hasmah entitled “Siti Hasmah - Women of Two Era” published in 1997.

Recently, she co-founded the association of Voices of Peace Conscience in Reason (PCORE) in her continuing effort towards the development of society and is the Vice President.

She was appointed as Technical advisory Panel For COMSAT (Commission for Sustainable development in S&T), based in Pakistan

She participated in an International Workshop in Bangladesh organized by OWSD and BAS and initiated the “Mentor- Mentee Programme” in Sept 2011. She was invited as a speaker at a women’s workshop in India organized by the Indian National Academy of Science, India in 2013. She is a member of the steering committee for women in science for Asian Academy of Science since 2012.

She was invited to present a paper and workshop on Women in Science in Azerbaijan organized by Azerbaijan Academy of Science in 2012 in May 2012.

As Vice President of Organization of Women in Science (OWSD), she is involved in organizing a conference on “Women in the modern world” with UNESCO in Tashkent to be held in June 2014 and is involved in setting up focal points for women in the Asian region.