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## Partnership with Durham University Announced



Durham University

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Tony Blair today announced a partnership with Durham University as part of a new drive to create a global network of twelve leading research universities teaching Faith and Globalisation over the next two years.

Durham will become the third partner university, following Yale & the National University of Singapore. The course will develop greater understanding of the impact of faiths and cultures on the world and the inter-relationship between faith and globalisation.

Speaking at Durham University, Tony Blair announced that the faith foundation will focus on building and developing the Faith and Globalisation course which started at Yale - creating a tight

network between the twelve partner universities, and ensuring that this is recognised globally as a leading teaching, research, and social action orientated initiative.

Specifically, Tony Blair issued an appeal for universities in the Gulf, India, China, Africa, Australia and South America to come forward and take on the Faith and Globalisation course.

The programme at Durham University is being funded by a new University donor programme and will be run by Durham University. It will bring together leading academics from across the faculties of humanities, social sciences and science to carry out global research that will help inform international policies in the future.

The initiative will draw on the University's strengths as a multi-cultural institution and its world class teaching and research in areas such as Theology and Religion and Government and International Affairs.

The programme ultimately aims to increase understanding of different faiths and cultures so people from a variety of backgrounds can work closely to tackle the cultural, economic, ethical and political challenges faced by a globalised world.

Tony Blair, who made the announcement as part of a lecture at Durham University, said: "I am delighted to be partnering with Durham. The purpose is to create a course that deals with these crucial issues of faith and globalisation, and takes people through them in a structured, informative and educative way.

"But I also want to take this further and establish a group of twelve universities worldwide, from Asia to Europe, from the Middle East to America, so that we can have a network of real benefit, which works together to produce high quality research and publications while exploring these fascinating and fundamental questions of faith and globalisation."

Under the programme Durham will also produce an inter-disciplinary Masters degree programme in Faith and Globalisation, to run from September 2010, alongside the full research programme.



Durham University

Professor Chris Higgins, Vice-Chancellor of Durham University, said: "Durham has a long tradition of leadership in developing new ideas at disciplinary interfaces which are critical to shaping all

our futures, including politics, law, social geography and international affairs and, of course, we have one of the world's pre-eminent Departments of Theology and Religion.

"We are therefore proud to be the lead UK University in this global initiative.

"This Faith and Globalisation programme allows us to create a world-class forum to explore the inter-relationships between the faiths and those from non-faith backgrounds, and provide linked, research-led postgraduate education.

"Our findings and expertise will then be used to inform the work of politicians, business leaders, opinion formers and others to help tackle some of the pressing issues faced by the world today."