

Janet's Transnational Education (TNE) Support Programme

Transnational Education (TNE) is an area of significant and growing interest to the UK education sector. TNE activities, ranging from remote campuses to joint degree programmes, continue to grow rapidly, with significant growth expected in the coming years. TNE is also rising up the political agenda owing to its potential as a high earning export industry; 'Supporting Transnational Education' is one of the key policy strands in the UK Government's 'International Education Strategy' (2013)¹.

Historically, Janet's offerings have been delivered almost exclusively within the UK. However in response to growing demand from the community, we have made a strategic decision to enhance our support for the sector's developing TNE activities. Through our TNE Support Strategy and Programme we aim to address the community's requirements for cost-effective, appropriate and reliable connectivity services overseas, integrated with UK-based operations and other Janet services, to support TNE delivery on a global basis, positioning Janet as the go-to place for connectivity and related services, whether in the UK, or overseas.

Network connectivity and related services are just as critical to delivery of Transnational Education as they are for National Education, but the issues are more complex due to the wide spectrum of TNE models; the variable educational and technical infrastructure environment in host countries; and the inherent increased risk that remote partnership working attracts. Janet has taken this opportunity to use our experience in procuring and developing connectivity solutions in the UK to extend these to overseas providers, working with the community to facilitate the delivery of TNE, reducing the costs and risks and enabling integration of ICT across UK and overseas operations.

Janet TNE Support Strategy (2013/14)

Janet will help to enable its community to deliver its TNE activities within the global markets of interest.

We will achieve this by extending Janet to overseas locations through the development of new delivery partnerships and infrastructure, and by providing advice and promoting opportunities for collaboration.

Where possible we will leverage existing assets as far as possible, and particularly those operated by other international research & education networks, but we will always select the most cost-effective and appropriate mechanism to meet our customers' needs.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-education-strategy-global-growth-and-prosperity>

Janet set out its TNE Support Strategy in 2013, initiating a Programme of activities to develop a comprehensive understanding of the community's requirements, investigate models of delivery through pilot projects, and establish a case for Janet's on-going commitment to overseas TNE activities, from 2015 onwards. In order to do this effectively, Janet has prioritised the needs of Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) (due to the extent of TNE activities supported by HEIs) and focussed on addressing network connectivity. This work is still in its early stages, but has developed significantly over this short period of time across the following three workstreams:

Market Intelligence

Janet is working with HEIs and other sector bodies to establish the range of current TNE activities that exist and determine what activities are planned. This will enable us to identify how Janet can help in the short, medium and long term and to build this into our future prioritisation and planning. We have been working with the Observatory of Borderless Higher Education (OBHE), who have a recognised track record in TNE research and publishing, to gather information initially through focus groups and interviews. The findings from these activities helped inform the development of a questionnaire which was released to all Higher Education Institution International and IT/IS Offices on 2 July; the Survey will be open for the month of July. We will publish a summary of our findings in the autumn.

Dependent upon its success, we plan to re-run the survey, extending it to other parts of the sector in the coming months. We are also supplementing this commissioned activity with 1:1 discussions with those HEI customers heavily engaged in TNE activity; however we are very much in 'listening mode' and where there are specific needs, or advice is needed, customers should discuss these with us.

Delivery Models

Our preferred model of supporting TNE is to partner with the National Research and Education Network (NREN) of the host country. Janet successfully established a partnership, or 'Strategic Alliance' with CERNET, the local NREN in China in December 2013.

China has now become the most popular UK TNE host country in terms of TNE student numbers. A considerable number of HEIs have their own well-established campuses, such as Nottingham, Liverpool and Surrey, delivering their own degree courses, whilst others are in partnership with reputable Chinese institutions running joint degree programmes. By partnering with CERNET, Janet has enabled use of the high-speed London-Beijing ORIENTplus connection, improving the connectivity between universities in the UK and China, keeping costs low and reducing administrative complexity. This arrangement has been successfully used for Queen Mary's University of London (QMUL), operating a Flying Faculty model of TNE with sites in Beijing and Nanchang. Using CERNET, QMUL have reported improved latency and bandwidth.

Janet are currently discussing similar partnerships elsewhere, with NRENs in countries including Sri Lanka and Pakistan to ascertain whether this model could be adopted.

The second Pilot involves a bespoke model using the principle of Janet Global Connect, utilising commercial ISP connections overseas, procured and managed by Janet where there is no local NREN, or connectivity through the local NREN is insufficient for TNE needs in the host country.

Janet TNE Support Programme

This pilot project involves EduCity, a strategically important programme to develop a knowledge-based hub in Nusajaya, Malaysia. In this model, three UK HEIs have geographically co-located Branch campuses; Newcastle University opened a medical school in 2011, the University of Southampton opened their campus in 2012, and the University of Reading is due to be fully operational in 2015.

Janet has established a contractual arrangement with a local ISP provider, Telekom Malaysia (TM); as a result a local MAN has been established, connected to the local provider and supported by the 'anchor' NUMed campus. This Janet service, Janet Global Connect (JGC), is one of mutual cooperation and partnership between Janet and the HEIs involved to provide an efficient, resilient network across the EduCity Branch Campuses and back to the UK, and to the global internet.

As Janet now has a contractual relationship with TM, it has been possible to utilise the agreement to provide connectivity more cheaply to other locations in Malaysia, for example Heriot Watt's campus outside Kuala Lumpur.

We will continue to extend our projects in China and Malaysia, to the benefit of the sector, and are now determining new locations to establish further pilot projects in other parts of the world where there are demands from the UK education sector. Current concentrations of UK HE TNE activity are in UAE, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Singapore. Longer term, the developing markets in Africa (Botswana, Nigeria, Ghana) and South America (Mexico, Chile, Brazil) will be a focus, in addition to the increasing activities in SE Asia (Indonesia) and the Middle East (Saudi, Kazakhstan).

Business Plan 2015-onwards

We plan to extend the current Janet Product & Service Portfolio, where appropriate, to TNE activities, in addition to potentially developing new products and services as the need arises. Our plans will also include Further Education and other areas of the education sector where the demand arises. It is our intention that by mid-2015 we will have a clear and attractive TNE proposition across all of our product and service portfolio and will publish our plans for the future, informed by the community, in the form of a Business Plan.

We are very much in listening mode and it is critical at this stage in our planning that we get input from the sector. Our future approach will be guided by research into the community's plans and aspirations for TNE.

Further Information:

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[Janet Community Site](#)² 'Transnational Education Support Programme'

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² <https://community.ja.net/>