The International Conference “Creative Business and Creative Education: Cross-cultural Features” jointly organised by the American Creativity Association (ACA) and Singapore Management University took place in Singapore from 23 February to 1 March 2008.

More than 200 scientists, lecturers, representatives of the States and commercial organisations from 35 countries took part in the conference. Amongst the participants were Nobel Prize laureate of year 1985, who is also the current President of Modern Medical and Biological Technologies Research Institute (USA) Prof. H.Hauptman, Director General of Lego Company J.Knudstorp, Deputy Directors and leading Specialists of companies such as Microsoft, Johnson&Johnson, Intel, Adobe and other “business tycoons”; leaders from ministries and departments of the Government of the Republic of Singapore (Foreign Affairs, Labour etc.), leaders and business consultants of the leading global consulting companies; scientists and lecturers from universities of USA, Great Britain, Japan, China, South Korea, India, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Spain, Germany and many other countries. It is very remarkable that participants of the Conference were mostly representatives from countries with a developed and innovative economy.

The objectives of the conference were to provide the participants with a platform to share experiences in research, teaching and practical work in the field of creativity and innovation and also to “build the bridge” between the results of research and practical applications. The growing interest of these themes from the most advanced and innovative companies of the world is not sporadic. Today, the creativity of personnel is considered as an economic resource and also one of the major prerequisites and conditions of intensive business development. The problem is how to use and manage this resource in the most effective way.
The conference was organised under 4 themes: Education; Business/Entrepreneurship; State and Municipal management; Non-commercial sector. More than 150 papers and presentations were presented at the Conference. Major focus was given to topics that range from the problems of stimulation and effective usage of the creative potential of companies, to methods and technologies of non-standard tasks search decision and to the generation of new ideas. The principles lay in the basis of creative thinking and problem solving, and the role of personnel’s creativity in the innovation activity of companies was discussed. Leaders from the leading global companies shared on their approaches towards creative and innovation activity management. Leaders from consulting agencies presented the methods that they used for the estimation and improvement of the organisational climate for creation and innovation, formation of effective teams designed for collective work in new projects, working out new and effective solutions to problems.

By the invitation of the Organising Committee, Deputy Dean of Economics on Research and International Collaboration, docent of the Chair of Information Systems in Economics, I.N.Dubina (who was coincidentally the only participant from Russia) received a grant equivalent to the registration fee and cost of hotel accommodation to participate in the Conference. The Economics Department of Altai State University sponsored the transport expenses (many thanks to the Dean of Economics Department, Prof. O.P.Mamchenko and First Pro-rector of Economics and Finance, Prof. V.V.Mishchenko).

Two reports of I.N.Dubina were presented at the Conference: “Development of tools for the evaluation of organisational climate for creation and innovation in Russian companies” and “Approaches to the development of educational courses ‘Personnel’s Creativity Management’ and “Creative Solutions in the Innovation Business”. Presented reports induced tremendous interest from participants due to several reasons. Firstly, Russia is considered as the growing market of contemporary technologies including organisational technologies of innovation management; therefore both global leading companies and consultants – specialists in the field of management are interested in the extended entrance into this market. Secondly, Russia is known not only as a consumer of innovation technologies including organisational and managerial, but also as a generator of such technologies. For example, the world knows the approach to the solution of non-standard problems based on the theory of solution of invention tasks (TRIZ), and it was developed as far back as in the USSR and successfully applied by leading foreign companies today. Thirdly, in the presented report that was devoted to the evaluation of organisational climate for creation and innovation, which is distinguished by “intuitivist” approaches to climate evaluation applied by most foreign managers based on experience and intuition, another more systematic and methodical approach was proposed based on the theory of measurements. As a result of the discussion of such an approach, an agreement was reached to perform joint research project dedicated to the development of tools for the evaluation of innovation climate with Singapore Management University and Center for Organisational Effectiveness, Singapore. Furthermore, 12 specialists from companies in Singapore, USA, Great Britain, Finland, Australia and China also expressed their readiness to test this tool of organisational climate evaluation for creativity and innovation in their companies.
Agreement concerning the development of research programme for evaluation of the impact of innovation products on the economical and social development of the region (in collaboration with Erehwon Innovation Consulting, India and Singapore Management University) is considered in perspective. Also, ways of scientific-practical collaboration in the field of development and application of techniques for effective innovation team formation were traced (in collaboration with Performa Consulting, Cyprus).

Besides the joint research, work directions of the collaboration in the field of education were also discussed; in particular, the preliminary arrangement between Altai State University and Shanghai University on the preparation of the draft contract to perform the joint educational programme for the students of Altai State University.

I.N. Dubina

Docent of the Chair of Information Systems in Economics at Altai State University
Department of Economics