

News Release
1 May 2012

Building productive partnerships at the English UK Fair, Panama 2012

The English UK Fair, Panama 2012 took place at the InterContinental Playa Bonita Resort & Spa from Tuesday 24 to Friday 27 April 2012. The workshop was organised by English UK in partnership with and supported by the British Council, UK Trade & Investment and VisitBritain.

The fair brought together 80+ delegates, including representatives from English UK member centres and agents from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Venezuela.

Also attending the fair were representatives from the British Council Colombia and Venezuela, and from UK Trade & Investment in Panama and Venezuela.

The programme of social events, seminars, and one-to-one appointments in a luxurious, tropical, secluded resort on the Pacific Ocean gave educators and agents the opportunity to really get to know each other and develop long-lasting productive partnerships.

The Pelican Grill, with its beach-side ambience surrounded by azure infinity pools, provided the perfect setting for the welcome reception. Guests relaxed and networked while enjoying a buffet of typical Panamanian cuisine.

An engaging interactive networking session started the second day. Delegates had the opportunity to put names to faces in a game of business card bingo and discussed questions such as 'if studying English in the UK was a animal, what would it be'. Answers included an owl (wise), a dog (loyal) and an elephant (slow but reliable!).

A seminar programme followed with market information sessions for educators on Panama, Colombia and Venezuela. A parallel programme for agents included presentations from English UK, the British Council and Study UK. The morning was completed with a Q&A with Jennifer Manuel from the International Group at the UK Border Agency.

After a productive afternoon of appointment sessions, delegates enjoyed an evening tour and dinner at the Miraflores Locks at the Panama Canal. Located on the east side of the locks, the Miraflores Visitor Centre allows the visitor to observe transiting vessels from a distance of only a few metres and learn first-hand about the various operations of the Panama Canal: the history of its construction, its role in the world markets, and the importance of its watershed.

Once all the hard work was over on the final day, delegates relaxed in style at the at the Convento de las Monjas in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Panamá Viejo.

Founded in 1519 by the conquistador Pedrarias Dávila, Panamá Viejo is the oldest European settlement on the Pacific coast of the Americas. Today, the ruins of the Convento are well preserved, and beautifully lit with coloured lights set against the night sky, provided the perfect setting for the gala dinner.

Peter Brown, the British Council's Regional Lead for English and Director Venezuela, welcomed delegates and spoke of the importance of English as an international language and the quality of a British education.

Delegates praised the overall organisation and programme, convivial atmosphere and business networking opportunities of the fair.

Steven A'Barrow from Harrow House International College commented, 'Simply the best event of its kind and the best way to establish quality contacts in the region. You can't fail to do business at these fairs.'

Peter Niklewicz from INTO University Partnerships said, 'A well organized, enjoyable and potentially very useful event. Definitely the friendly one'.

The study abroad agents were equally impressed. Cecilia Cavalie de Toledo of Students Partners in Peru remarked, 'Thank you for everything. You helped us to grow as people and as agents'.

The next English UK Fair for the Latin American region will be held in Lima from Tuesday 07 to Friday 10 May 2013 at the Swissôtel. The programme will include an optional overnight tour to Cusco and Machu Picchu.

Full details and registration will go live online at www.englishukfairs.com in late May 2012.

Notes to Editors

1. English UK is the world's leading language teaching association, with more than 450 accredited centres in membership. It covers university and further education college language departments, international study centres in independent schools, educational trusts and charities, and private sector colleges. English UK is a UK registered charity (www.englishuk.com).
2. English UK organises the English UK Fairs in partnership with the British Council, UK Trade & Investment, and VisitBritain, which together form the English Language Promotions Group (ELPG).
3. For more information, please contact Jodie Gray (Senior International Manager, English UK) on jodie@englishuk.com.

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