The Asia Open RAN Academy Officially Incorporated in the Philippines

April 2023

The Asia Open RAN Academy (AORA) was officially incorporated in the Philippines under the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) as an international non-governmental organization (INGO) on March 30, 2023. The Academy is an alliance of academic, government, and industry stakeholders who share a common goal to advance, promote, and maintain standards in capacity building for Open RAN. It is the only institution of its kind to offer a full complement of the training needed to produce engineers and computer scientists in Open RAN, the technology which will enable the Internet of Things (IoT). Its incorporation allows the Academy to operate as a platform to mobilize public-private-partnership collaborations, educate the next-generation of engineers, offer on-site enrichment activities such as internships, bootcamps, and access to interoperability labs and industry opportunities, and ultimately facilitate job placements.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) launched the Academy in June 2022 to advance an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure internet and vibrant digital ecosystem through increased cooperation, competition, and choice. "USAID's support for AORA is a tangible measure of America's commitment to work with our allies and partners to build a free, open, connected, prosperous, resilient, and secure Indo-Pacific region," said USAID Assistant Administrator for Asia Michael Schiffer.

Workforce development is a major challenge to the adoption of Open RAN Technology. The Academy provides skills-based training, formal education, and stackable certification to in-field and in-school electronic and ICT engineers with the goal to improve access to the skilled workforce mobile networks operators' (MNOs) need to deploy Open RAN across the Indo-Pacific. "Any investment in Open RAN needs to consider investing not only in the technology, but in the future workforce. With its incorporation, AORA will be going full blast in its advocacy and capacity building efforts towards workforce development, including forging partnerships with academia-industry-government and other organizations, and setting up testbed laboratories." Dr. Franz de Leon, AORA Interim Chair and Director of DOST-Advanced Science and Technology Institute.

Open RAN has the potential to positively disrupt the current proprietary legacy network systems that keep the market closed and internet access constrained. The Asia Open RAN Academy provides a space for education, research, and development to support this movement.

Clearance Page

USAID/Philippines	Clear w/comments	3/17/23
Asia/TS: BBarcelo	Clear	3/31/23
Asia/Outreach		
Asia/FO	Clear	