

BRIEF BIODATA



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Prof. Vik Nair, as he is fondly known, is currently the President of DISTED College in Penang, Malaysia, and an adjunct professor at Wawasan Open University that fully owns DISTED. He was the former Dean of Graduate Studies and Research at the University of The Bahamas (UB). Prior to joining UB in 2017, Prof. Vik Nair was at Taylor's University, Malaysia, for 19 years as a full Professor of Sustainable Tourism, at the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Culinary Arts; Programme Leader for the Responsible Rural Tourism Network; Research Fellow of the Centre for Research and Innovation in Tourism (CRiT) and the founding Director of the Centre for Research and Development at the University.

Prof. Vik Nair earned his Bachelor of Science in Horticulture (1994), Master of Science in Systems Engineering with a specialisation in Environment (1998) and a Ph.D. in Systems Engineering with a concentration in Ecotourism (2003) from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). He also holds a Diploma in Personnel Management and Industrial Relations from the College of Professional Management (1997), Jersey, UK, and a Licensed Environmental Auditor (EMS-14001).

His research specialisation is in Sustainable and Responsible Tourism, Rural Tourism, Ecotourism Management, Environmental Management, Community-based Tourism and Green Tourism.

A consultant with many national and international projects, Dr. Nair's exceptional research achievements with more than 350 publications to his credit have earned him many awards including the Taylor's Chairman's Staff Excellence Award for Academic and Research Excellence in 2002, 2007 and 2013. In addition to that, he has won numerous best paper awards for his publications internationally and gold medals for innovations in his research. In 2006 and 2009 he received the Merit and Honorary Award respectively as the Outstanding Young Malaysian Awards for Academic Leadership and Accomplishment from the Junior Chambers International. In 2014 he was awarded the Jewel of India award by the Government of India for his outstanding research achievement. In 2018, he was awarded as one of the 51 "Awesome Scholars in Tourism" of the World by the Women Academics in Tourism (WAIiT). In 2021, he was accorded the "Awards for Excellence in Research, Leadership, Academic Excellence, Innovation and Community Engagement (RACE)" at the 2nd Asian Tourism Research Conference (ATRC) 2021 in the Philippines.

In his last assignment before coming to the Bahamas, Prof. Vik Nair led one of the biggest national research grants that was awarded to a private university worth US\$3million for a 5-year project (2011-2016) entitled, "Multidimensional Responsible Rural Tourism Capacity Framework for Sustainable Tourism" under the Ministry of Education's Long-Term Research Grant Scheme. The project outcome surpassed the key performance indicators (KPIs) set by the funding body, where his project published more than 120 highly indexed journal articles, 15 books and graduated 19 PhD students. His last consultancy project in Malaysia was when he developed a toolkit for community-based tourism for Myanmar in June 2017.

Prof. Vik Nair was also the past Vice President of the Malaysia Ecotourism Association (MEA), past President of the Asia-Pacific Council for Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education and the past Secretary of the Tourism Educators Association of Malaysia. He is a well sought-after keynote speaker across the globe and visiting professor for universities in Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, India, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Japan, Myanmar and France.