



HIGHER EDUCATION IN HONG KONG

A thriving ecosystem to support
the further development of
One Country Two Systems and
further integration with the nation



香港中文大學
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

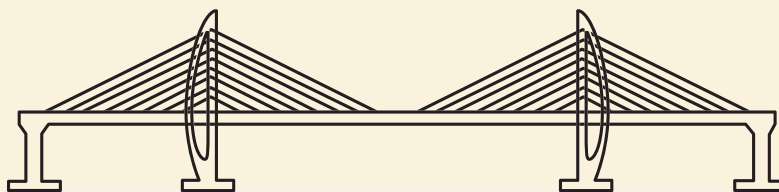
CUHK –

a boundless centre of
excellence serving Hong Kong
and our nation



A bridge between
China and the
world for **60 years**

In the Greater Bay Area for over
15 years with 18 active satellites and
partnerships



1997

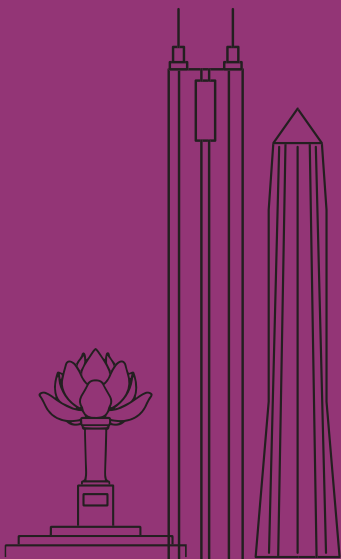
In 1997 became the 1st
university in Hong Kong to
admit mainland undergraduate
students - powering future
talent for the nation

Set up a Beijing Liaison
Office in 1997 to ensure
CUHK was relevant to
the national interest



Cultivated four unicorns to help
Hong Kong become synonymous
with innovation and technology





Launched Hong Kong's first university-wide co-operative work-study education programme to bridge the gap between university study and the workplace and forge new partnerships between young people and industry

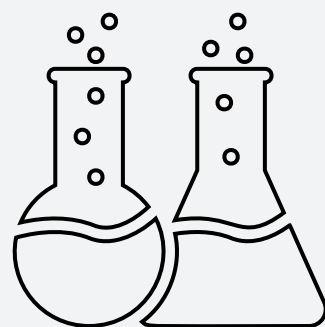


New Shanghai Centre established in 2022 to build bridges between the Greater Bay Area and the Yangtze River Delta

CUHK home to 5 State Key Laboratories ensuring Hong Kong is positioned as a powerhouse of world class research in the national R&D ecosystem

#1

CUHK Shenzhen ranked #1 international branch campus in China and the highest Gaokao score in all of Guangdong Province



Implementing rigorous, scholarly-based coursework to ensure students cultivate a sense of national identity, and awareness of the Hong Kong Basic Law, National Security Law and the HKSAR's place in the nation's wider constitutional order



FOREWORD FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

2022 marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and China's formal resumption of the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong. In this special year for our city, President Xi Jinping made a landmark speech where he emphasised One Country Two Systems as an unprecedented innovation that has given us profound inspiration and valuable outlook for the future.

Hong Kong's universities have been major beneficiaries of One Country Two Systems, and we have a responsibility to consider how we can contribute to this unique and innovative system in this next chapter of Hong Kong's history.

The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) is on the cusp of celebrating its 60th anniversary and commencing a renewal of purpose, mission, and institutional commitment. As CUHK gears up to celebrate this important milestone, we will redouble our efforts to ensure that we are ready to contribute further to national development and actively position our contribution within the wider context of One Country Two Systems.

Hong Kong's higher education system is the envy of many governments around the world. We have five universities ranked in the global top 100. With a population of just 7.5 million, the city thus has more top 100 universities on a per capita basis than any jurisdiction in the world. This fact suggests that Hong Kong can play a major role in building the higher education system across the Guangdong – Hong Kong – Macau Greater Bay Area and offer real competitive value to the nation.

The strength of Hong Kong's higher education system would not be possible without One Country Two Systems. It is a great example of the system in practice, and is a uniquely Hong Kong story worthy of being told on the global stage.

The education we provide is essential in empowering Hong Kong and the nation with the skills needed to transform economies, create wealth, and supply the talent for industrial transformation. This document sets out a range of ideas for how we can build on these foundations and ensure that Hong Kong's universities equip students with the well-rounded development that President Xi called for during his recent visit to Hong Kong.

Whole-person education has been a distinguishing feature of the CUHK experience since our establishment, and as we prepare for our next six decades, we are blazing a new trail with courses on national security, national identity, social responsibility, sustainable development, and service learning.

As the Chief Executive prepares for his Inaugural Policy Address, this document articulates the value of higher education to our global positioning and suggests ideas for how Hong Kong's universities can contribute further to the nation, and the critical role we can play in bridging China and the world under the framework of One Country Two Systems.

Professor Rocky S. Tuan
Vice-Chancellor and President
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

1 INTRODUCTION

The successful implementation of One Country Two Systems has provided the building blocks for Hong Kong's higher education system to be a bastion of innovation and world-class research generating enormous value to the nation, and a magnet for talent connecting China with the world. The education provided across the sector is an engine room for tomorrow's economy, and ensures Hong Kong provides the nation with an endowment of social and knowledge capital to power the nation's growth over the decades to come.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is home to five of the world's top 100 universities. With a population of just 7.5 million, the city has more top 100 universities on a per capita basis than any jurisdiction in the world. This offers the mainland a unique opportunity to leverage the Special Administrative Region's strengths to enhance and enrich the quality of higher education in the Guangdong – Hong Kong – Macao Greater Bay Area and elsewhere in the country. Hong Kong's achievements are the envy of governments around the world, and its performance in higher education tells a compelling story about the city's status as a diverse and inclusive global metropolis.

Hong Kong is not only home to outstanding universities but is the best city for students in Greater China (ranked 15th globally compared to Beijing 25th, Taipei 27th and Shanghai 37th). This offers direct and indirect benefits to the nation, and provides a highly desirable, internationally oriented yet regional destination for mainland students, and a beacon for the world to study in China.

One Country Two Systems: The foundations of our world-class university system

Hong Kong's universities should respond to President Xi Jinping's call to fully and faithfully implement the principle of One Country Two Systems, and promote it as a good system to power our future.

Case Study of One Country Two Systems in practice in Hong Kong's higher education: State Key Laboratories in Hong Kong

1. Hong Kong's State Key Laboratory system leverages from its renowned national counterpart, but is administered and funded locally by the Innovation & Technology Bureau according to Hong Kong's research funding mechanism

2. Funding provided by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region but reviews jointly conducted by the Ministry of Science & Technology and the HKSAR Innovation & Technology Bureau
3. All research, faculty recruitment and activity done in accordance with established practices, policies and procedures used in Hong Kong to ensure the State Key Laboratories function as an integrated part of the local Hong Kong system

This ecosystem is already highly international with Times Higher Education ranking two of Hong Kong universities in the top ten of the world's most international universities – an remarkable track record reflecting Hong Kong's proud and successful commitment to global engagement.

A higher education response to President Xi Jinping's 'Four Proposals'

1. Improving Hong Kong's governance

Hong Kong's universities have a unique role to play in training future generations of the city's leaders. Our universities need to respond by elevating the quality of our education and research expertise to help contribute to ensuring future administrators understand and fulfil their commitments, materialising the One Country Two Systems principle with concrete actions, upholding the authority of the Basic Law, and devoting themselves to the region.

2. Continuing Hong Kong's strong impetus for growth

The higher education sector is very well positioned to support the Special Administrative Region's future growth. It is actively driving economic transformation and building capacity in innovation & technology via research excellence, commercialisation of research, and training new talents. Hong Kong's five top 100 universities can become the scientific engine room of the Guangdong – Hong Kong – Macao Greater Bay Area, and are supporting exchanges with Belt and Road countries via student recruitment, and innovative partnerships and alliances. Initiatives such as the Global STEM Professorship Scheme are seeing Hong Kong's universities carrying out extensive exchanges and attracting world-class researchers to realise their ambitions in Hong Kong.

3. Addressing difficulties in daily life

Hong Kong's universities are uniquely placed to help the Special Administrative Region address difficulties encountered by residents in daily life. Widening access to higher education will further raise the city's overall wealth, which will ensure a higher quality of life for all. Hong Kong is also home to a United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network, an operational infrastructure that can utilise the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals as a framework to address many issues across society, and apply research and education outcomes from our universities to provide practical and pragmatic solutions to issues such as alleviating poverty, improving health and wellbeing, reducing inequalities, and stimulating work and economic growth.

4. Working together to safeguard harmony and stability

Hong Kong's universities need to work hand-in-hand to ensure that they contribute to cultivating national identity, and a sense of belonging to the nation. President Xi highlighted that Hong Kong's development will only thrive when young people achieve well-rounded development. Universities should focus on whole-person education, ensuring that students are connected to the nation, providing work-integrated learning opportunities, and increasing entrepreneurial awareness to prepare students to contribute to the national economy.

Hong Kong can aim higher and recast itself as more than just a financial powerhouse. Its economic clout, rule of law, cosmopolitanism and role as a gateway to the mainland, can make it one of the world's great education and technology hubs, global in outlook yet intimately interconnected with Asia's most ambitious and exciting economy.

This document offers a blueprint for how Hong Kong's higher education system is a tremendous strength to the city standing alongside the city's other "jewels in the crown" as a defining feature of Hong Kong's dynamism, its potential and its future role in the national and global economies.

2

KEY TALKING POINTS

- Hong Kong should do more to integrate with the nation's development, and the story of the city's universities reminds us that we are truly China's science and technology gateway to the world. We bring another dimension and we are not competitors with the rest of the country – we add dynamic value and bring something distinctive to the nation
- Hong Kong's global standing in science and technology attracts the world's best and brightest researchers, high technology industries and universities to the city – this enables Hong Kong to be a conduit to facilitate international collaborations with the mainland, ensuring that the nation continues its rise as a powerhouse of science and technology
- Universities are not just about creating knowledge – they are sharing and translating research into solutions to address societal needs, create new jobs and transform the economy
- Hong Kong is the scientific engine room for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, providing a world-class research ecosystem that connects the GBA into a network of global expertise which will be essential for industrial transformation and realising the benefits of economic integration across the Pearl River Delta
- Knowledge is a competitive global business – the world is rushing to build capacity in the knowledge industries that will transform economies. While Hong Kong starts from a position of strength, it can take nothing for granted and must continually invest and remain nationally and globally connected in the race for talent

3

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Boosting research and innovation capacity for the knowledge economy

- Hong Kong can be bold in building its research infrastructure – invest in next generation quantum computing that will revolutionise technology; invest in satellite and remote sensing capability that will be essential for the environment; we can build new biosafety research facilities to leverage the city’s health expertise and tackle emerging infectious diseases; continue with Hong Kong’s transformation as a global biotechnology hub by strengthening our focus on building a fertile ecosystem for biomedical research and therapeutics industries
- Build research and education capacity in areas linked to the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals so that Hong Kong is globally recognised as a centre of excellence in sustainability-advancing, global collaborations in these crucial areas
- Phased increase in investment in research and development to a minimum of 1.5% of GDP (most recent World Bank data shows Hong Kong is at 0.99% vs Singapore’s 1.89%) to boost the development of Hong Kong as an innovation & technology powerhouse
- Renew and scale up the Global STEM Professorship Scheme and also invest in initiatives to attract elite post-doctorates and early career researchers to ensure Hong Kong is at the forefront of the global race for STEM talent and is driving the breakthrough discoveries and translations to build the foundations of future economic growth
- Launch a scheme to attract mainland research institutions, technology companies and universities to establish bases in the Northern Metropolis, in partnership with Hong Kong universities

Powering the skills and knowledge for tomorrow’s prosperity

- Scale-up programmes designed to integrate undergraduate education with industry, and private and public sectors to enable students to work full-time embedded in local companies and across the Greater Bay Area (such as CUHK’s Co-Operative Education Programme), thereby ensuring that students gain real-world experience and graduate “career ready” to maximise the competitiveness of the local economy
- Build an environment with the enabling structures, policies and incentives to enhance community-engaged education and service learning across the university experience ensuring that young people are empowered to make positive contributions to society

- Boost the availability of Taught Postgraduate degree quota as a flexible platform for career upskilling and lifelong learning with the opportunity to pursue postgraduate education as a “rite of passage” for people to thrive in their careers
- Leverage the success of initiatives such as the Artificial Intelligence for the Future Project funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club, which will transform AI education in Hong Kong schools, to engage and scale up philanthropic partnerships with universities to invest in initiatives designed to harness university-based research for application in the wider community

Building Hong Kong’s global reputation through international education and attracting international talent

- As the nation’s super-connector to the world, invest in scholarships and financial aid to widen access to a Hong Kong education to young people from emerging economies and Belt and Road countries
- Establish a tax-deductible scheme for industry to sponsor students to undertake university study ensuring that Hong Kong’s business community play a major role in cultivating and empowering the talent pipeline and advancing corporate social responsibility
- Co-invest with the private sector in a new and ambitious elite global scholarship scheme to enable Hong Kong to compete alongside flagship initiatives such as the Rhodes Scholarship, and to collaborate with EU/UK mechanisms such as the Erasmus Programme/Turing Scheme, to attract the world’s best and brightest to pursue university study in Hong Kong
- Benchmark immigration policies in major international education destinations such as the UK, Canada and Australia and review opportunities to offer the best and the brightest international students the right to gain work experience in Hong Kong after graduating from university
- Launch equivalent of the Financial Secretary’s finance leaders’ forum and invite 200 global scientific, university and philanthropic leaders to “re-acquaint” the world with what Hong Kong represents
- Establish new “Global Greater Bay Area 2+2” degree programme with students spending two years studying in Hong Kong, and two years at a GBA mainland university leading to a student graduating with two degrees – a major initiative designed to provide students with an education offering “the best of both worlds” and building higher education capacity in the region

APPENDICES —

DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The value of a student experience to society and why we need a stronger national and global outlook

Hong Kong not only has outstanding universities but is also by a long way the best city for students in sinophone Asia (#15 in QS 2022; Beijing 25, Taipei 27, Shanghai 37). This confers a huge advantage that the city should exploit. It offers both direct and indirect local and regional benefits from which the city, mainland universities, and other mainland institutions can all gain both educationally, economically, and culturally, as it contributes something quite unmatched. We can carefully structure suitable collaborative initiatives to make this work.

- It offers a highly desirable, internationally orientated yet regional, destination for mainland students
- English language instruction makes it accessible to international students, as well as additionally educational for mainland students
- International talent attracted to Hong Kong arrives at a window into China, whence it is easy and natural to explore the wider region and gain experience with mainland institutions – it's a much higher barrier to ask students to go directly to the mainland
- Hong Kong offers two-way routes for global exchanges – both inward (immensely assisted if residential facilities are offered) and outward – broadening educational experience and creating both career opportunities and potentially lifelong networks
- Joint programmes, whether degree-bearing, research placement, or educational exchange, plus well-constructed internship and Co-op opportunities should underpin these deeply strategic aims
- We could combine this connectedness and Hong Kong's desirability to enable a newly ambitious extension of the HKSAR scholarship scheme, reimagined to provide an elite Rhodes scholarship-like stream for Hong Kong – perhaps connected through to the mainland alongside a Schwarzmann style programme for added benefit all round

2. Powering the skills and knowledge for tomorrow's economy

The high quality of education offered by Hong Kong's universities has been one of the city's greatest strengths. The wide spectrum of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are greatly valued by local, regional, national and global young talents. Riding on high-quality research, universities continuously enhance their education with reference to the ever-changing environment to nurture graduates to become competent leaders with aspirations to make lifelong contributions to society. To meet the challenges of tomorrow, the Government, public and private sectors as well as universities should work in a concerted effort to enrich students' learning with community-engaged experience such as internships and new initiatives designed to embed students with industry full-time to develop the pipeline of right talents. The Government, via UGC, should enable universities to establish a robust network with Government, NGOs and other organizations to engage students to provide services to the needy, to facilitate students to learn through the service experience, and to inspire students and other people to build a better world together. The active involvement of Government in building an environment with enabling structures, policies and incentives is a critical requirement for such community-engaged university education that benefits many stakeholders to flourish.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, brought about by advances in information technologies have massively disrupted traditional industries and have changed the future of work. Universities must keep pace with these rapid changes to ensure their students emerge equipped with the skills to adapt to these unprecedented new ways of working.

The strong support of Government in the long-term development of taught postgraduate programmes is crucial in fostering Hong Kong as an education hub for nurturing multinational talents, sustaining the prosperity of Hong Kong and contributing to the development of the country.

Key takeaways:

- Nurture graduates to become competent leaders with aspirations to make lifelong contributions to society.
- Co-op work-study and service learning programs
- Enhance University Education for community engagement
- Empower students to make contributions to society
- Prepare students for the new knowledge economy
- Foster Hong Kong as global education hub and gateway to mainland China
- Government's crucial support and involvement

3. The role of higher education in our community

Institutional Advancement supports the University to achieve its vision in creating a better future through education, research and service for the people of Hong Kong, China and the world. It takes a leadership role in community engagement; fostering connections with alumni, volunteers, patrons and donors of the University to help develop and refine its aims, and articulating the value of philanthropic endeavors to bring about a broader participation in excellence. The financial support secured helps the University to fuel its strategic initiatives and priorities; diversify its resource streams thereby promoting sustainable development; sharpening the competitive edge of Hong Kong as an international city on the global stage.

The recent success of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Future Project funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust to CUHK is testimony to the significant contribution of the dual Advancement roles of community engagement and fundraising. Piloted in 2019, the AI for Future Project pioneers AI-education at local secondary schools and aspires to bridge to the Greater Bay Area; benefiting students with diverse needs and from different social background. The Education Bureau has made plans to incorporate the deliverables of this Project into formal pedagogical curriculum; a governmental endorsement for the University efforts to foresee societal needs, develop evidence-based solutions and amplify its impact through synergies.

4. Diversifying the Hong Kong economy and building an innovation and technology powerhouse

Ever since the call on the development of the Greater Bay Area in 2017 by the Central Government, as witnessed by President Xi Jinping in the signing of the “Framework Agreement on Deepening the Collaboration amongst Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, and Furthering the Construction of the Greater Bay Area” 《深化粵港澳合作 推進大灣區建設框架協議》, the role of Hong Kong as the centre of international innovation and technology, nurturing ground of global collaborations, active participant of the belt and road initiatives and engine of the development of the Greater Bay Area, were clearly defined. Universities, as the centres for nurturing talents and the breeding ground of innovation, have the important duty of supporting Hong Kong to fulfil these responsibilities.

Hong Kong universities have consistently enjoyed high global ranking, with 4 universities in the top 50, the highest of any metropolitan city in the world! Our universities are thus the most powerful instrument to answer to the call of the nation

to Hong Kong. Strategically, we are well positioned geographically and functionally, to facilitate talent development by collaborating with significant institutions in the GBA and the Mainland and connecting them with outstanding institutions overseas. The dual degree and other joint education programs between CUHK, Tsinghua University, Peking University, Stanford University, and universities in the UK and Japan are successful examples of such endeavour. To facilitate research, innovation and technology development, Hong Kong universities can identify partners with complementary expertise in the mainland and overseas to set up joint entities in Hong Kong as well as in the mainland. Other highly successful university-based programs, include The InnoHK R&D Centres, State Key Laboratories, and various Joint Laboratories between Hong Kong universities and mainland/overseas universities and research institutions in Hong Kong and the newly planned CUHK-led Joint Green Energy Institute in Dongguan with GBA University, Qianhai Fintech innovation development, Business School in Lo Wu, and Advanced Institute in Regenerative Medicine in Guangzhou, etc. Our international standing in science and technology would also attract well-known institutions, research centres, and industries globally to come to Hong Kong and we can serve as the conduit to facilitate their collaborations with national centres in the mainland. Similarly, we should fully exploit our international standings to take the lead and facilitate the collaborations with universities and institutions in the Belt and Road countries.

The international and national interactions thus created will broaden global vision and improved cultural understandings amongst the youngsters in Hong Kong and the Mainland, with additional benefits in innovation and career development via entrepreneurship and enterprise activities at the individual level.

Key points:

- Hong Kong's universities are key to answering the nation's call for Innovation and Technology, particularly in the GBA.
- Hong Kong's universities' global stature makes them the most natural and functional partner that can work with both mainland and international educational institutions, private industries (technology/pharma/biotech), and investors, serving as both a collaborator as well as a "connector" to elevate the city, the region, and the nation in the new knowledge-based economy.
- Also, industries will come to Hong Kong and will enhance Hong Kong's visibility and economy.
- All of this will great expand the future career opportunities of Hong Kong's next generation.

5. The research agenda and building the foundations of a knowledge economy

Researchers in Hong Kong have proudly ascended to the heights of the academic arena with world leading and internationally recognized research outcomes, as demonstrated by our positions in university rankings (and by the research assessment exercise of the RGC). The roles of universities today are not just to create knowledge, we have been sharing and translating our research outcome into solutions that address societal needs. With our established culture in supporting and training talents, we are ready to expand our capacities to educate skilled researchers for the talent pool required for a transforming economy.

We can be bold in building our research infrastructure. For instance, Hong Kong has been enormously successful in information technology and artificial intelligence research that benefit various sectors from engineering, biomedicine, art and science, to business and education. We can invest in next generation quantum information technology that will soon become the norm. We have satellite and remote sensing hardware that can be maintained to reach out to different parts of the Earth for studying our environment and sustainability, to work on solutions that help achieve carbon neutral within target timeframe. We can put in place biosafety research facilities for tackling emerging infectious diseases, development of technologies for the ageing population, and to support a biomedical and pharmaceutical manufacturing industry for Hong Kong.

Hong Kong is positioned as the international science and technology hub in the Greater Bay Area. Supported by Hong Kong and Central Government policies, there have been significant increase in funding for innovation in the recent years. Connecting with the expanding network of InnoHK Centres, State Key Labs, National Research Centres, and private enterprises, universities have become the core powerhouse to create and translate knowledge that can contribute significantly to a knowledge economy. It is timely to put in place a pipeline for talent training, research infrastructure support, innovation and entrepreneurship network, that facilitate the position of Hong Kong as a significant and indispensable player in the National development agenda.

6. Building Hong Kong's global reputation through international education and attracting global talent

International university experience is key to Hong Kong's future innovation economy.

The Asian Century is set to begin as the axis for global growth pivoted to the East, taking advantage of global dynamics to establish its place in a new world order. The new generation will be driving the disruption of international business through innovation and new connectivity.

As Hong Kong's focus now switches to building for a world after coronavirus – nurturing innovation ecosystem, developing sustainable finance and leveraging the city's unique role in the Greater Bay Area, have become top priorities.

What is the synergy created by enrolling international and mainland students?

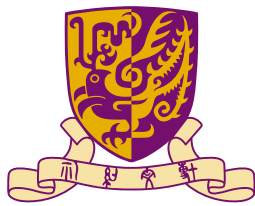
- Given the high international standing of its local universities, Hong Kong has been one of the most desirable education hubs for students from Mainland and the developed world. Hong Kong has the potentials to serve as the springboard for Chinese talents to take lead on the global stage.
- Not only will international students be a key driver for this human capital movement, but they also serve as ambassadors to help global audiences better understand the reality of Hong Kong and China.
- As the new economic gravity is rewiring the global supply chain of trade and investment, it is time for Hong Kong to further diversify its pool of foreign students –and retain them through an employment scheme or internship provision.
- Benchmark immigration policies in major international education destinations such as the UK, Canada and Australia and review opportunities to offer international students the right to gain work experience in Hong Kong after graduating from university
- A diverse pool of global talents, equipped with a global outlook and future-proof skills, will be crucial for Hong Kong as an international city to stay reputable and competitive in the long run.

How do we upskill local talents and workforce through international exposure?

- Equitable international university experience will prepare Hong Kong's future talents with a mindset that will allow them to seize the opportunities that arise from the new global reality.
- Higher education plays a key role in cultivating future talents, driving innovation ecosystem and enabling social mobility for the young generation.
- As Hong Kong is on its path to an innovation economy, a lifelong knowledge and skills development grant established by the government (or collaborate with the business and industry sectors) will be instrumental in upskilling university leavers for their career progression as well as their relevance to the labour market.

Why and how should we finance international opportunities?

- As the wealth gap widens in the city, financial support on international opportunities will allow talents from Hong Kong and overseas to acquire new skills and broaden their horizon regardless of their socioeconomic background. Such financial support will also encourage them to give back to the Hong Kong society.
- Financial support is a powerful tool to attract a diverse pool of global talents. As China's super connector to the rest of the world, Hong Kong government should invest in scholarships and financial aids to make local universities affordable to students from other emerging economies including the Belt and Road countries.
- Private sector can play a bigger role. In the wake of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), businesses will be willing to step up especially if the government implements a tax-deductible scheme.
- While access to higher education in Hong Kong denotes the opportunity structure for young people, enhancing their learning experience serves to sharpen the competitive advantage of Hong Kong's youths.



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