

Briefing Session on the Opportunity to Participate in National Platforms to Realise the Potential of Hong Kong in Science and Technology



On 7 September 2021, the Innovation and Technology Bureau (ITB) of The Hong Kong SAR Government, the Greater Bay Area Association of Academicians (GBAAA) and the Beijing-Hong Kong Academic Exchange Centre jointly organised a briefing session on the Central Government's science and technology policies benefitting Hong Kong.

Deputy Director Tan Tieniu of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR was invited to provide details on the Central Government's support to develop Hong Kong into an international I & T hub, the supporting measures for accelerating the development of the Greater Bay Area, and an introduction of the Central Government's technology policy benefitting Hong Kong and Hong Kong's

opportunities. Guest speakers from the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST) and the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NNSFC) also spoke online to introduce various new policy arrangements for Hong Kong's higher education and I&T sector and wished that Hong Kong professionals could seize the opportunities.



Deputy Director Tan Tieniu of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR

The hybrid session was conducted both online and offline, and facilitated interaction between Hong Kong and Beijing. It also provided opportunities for discussion and questions and answers. Mr Alfred Sit, Secretary for Innovation and Technology, and Academician Nancy Ip of GBAAA also delivered key note speeches. The briefing was hosted by Mr Hsui Hoi Shan, President of the Beijing-Hong Kong Academic

Exchange Centre. During the briefing, Deputy Director Tan pointed out that Hong Kong was facing a new transformation stage from good governance to prosperity, and the Central Government would provide unprecedented support to develop Hong Kong into an international I&T hub. He further wished that the Hong Kong sector on science and technology would tightly seize the historic opportunity without delay.

Opening up large-scale scientific research instruments and facilities for Hong Kong researchers

Deputy Director Xu Jie of the Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan Affairs Office of MOST introduced an important new policy in response to the high demand of Hong Kong researchers for large-scale scientific research instruments. He pointed out that in the future, through registering an account in the national network management platform, researchers can inquire and make reservations for scientific research instruments in accordance with the types of instrument, subject areas and geographic locations. This is welcoming news for the Hong Kong scientific researchers.



Deputy Director Xu Jie, of the Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan Affairs Office of MOST

Deputy Director Xu further mentioned that a new "Hong Kong Young Science and Technology Talent Exchange Programme" will be established to organise Hong Kong youths to visit national innovation zones, high-tech industrial development zones, major scientific research facilities, well-known scientific research institutions and leading high-tech enterprises. The programme will also support Hong Kong young scientists to conduct scientific research in the science and technology institutions in Mainland China on a short term basis. He continued that as always, MOST will continue to organise "InnoTech Expo" and invite well-known mainland scientists to visit Hong Kong to deliver talks in science popularisation seminars to encourage Hong Kong youths to devote themselves to innovation career. Deputy Director Xu further highlighted that activities such as "China Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan regional competition", "Mainland Expedition for Hong Kong Young

Entrepreneurs", "China Torch Innovation Tutors Greater Bay Area Tour" will continue to be organised to provide more opportunities for Hong Kong youths to develop in the Mainland, especially in the Greater Bay Area.

National Science and Technology Organisations Welcome Members and Committee Members from Hong Kong

Vice Minister Yang Shuxuan, of the Science and Technology Innovation Department of CAST pointed out that outstanding scholars in Hong Kong have already received awards including the National Innovation Racing Award, the Chinese Young Scientist Award, and the Female Scientist Award organised by CAST. The CAST is also proactively exploring accepting the participation of science and technology personnel from Hong Kong and Macao. In recent years, more than 3,000 Hong Kong people in the sector have already participated through different channels and have actively contributed. Vice Minister Yang specifically mentioned that science and technology personnel already can apply to join and enjoy the right to elect and being elected in accordance with the constitution of the society. She further said that CAST will announce the details to science and technology personnel in Hong Kong at the briefing session it has organised for mid-September.

Deputy Minister Yang reiterated Hong Kong science and technology personnel have already joined as members of CAST and hoped that their participation will increase in breadth and depth, and participate more effectively in the governance of CAST to serve the Country.



Vice Minister Yang Shuxuan of Science and Technology Innovation Department of China Association for Science and Technology

The National Natural Science Foundation of China opens the "Young Scientists Fund"

In his introduction, Director Wang Changrui of the Bureau of Planning and Policy of the NNSFC pointed out that the fund provide supported through the agents of Hong Kong universities in the Mainland. It provide a total funding of more than 780 million Yuan for 1,302 projects. He also pointed out that the NNSFC has organised 9 forums for young scholars together with the Hong Kong Research Grants Council, and 22 seminars on cutting-edge science and academic exchange activities together with the Beijing-Hong Kong Academic Exchange Center. He emphasised that NNSFC will further strengthen the collaboration with the two organisations to support the cooperation in scientific research between Hong Kong and Mainland personnel. Director Wang continued that NNSFC will continue to encourage Hong Kong experts to join the National Science and Technology Expert

Database and the Award Assessment Expert Database, and support Hong Kong scientists to participate closely in the decision-making and implementation of major national science and technology initiatives.



Director Wang Changrui of the Bureau of Planning and Policy of the National Natural Science Foundation of China

Director Wang further pointed out that since 2019, NNSFC has opened up the “Outstanding Young Scientists Fund (Hong Kong and Macao)” to applications from selected higher education institutions in Hong Kong and Macao, including The University of Hong Kong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, City University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and the Hong Kong Baptist University. Up to now, it has funded six institutes in Hong Kong for 64 projects under “Outstanding Young Scientists Fund (Hong Kong and Macao)” with a total funding of 87.7 million Yuan. NNSFC will increase its efforts to support the Fund and has planned to issue a “Young Scientist Funding

Projects Guideline” for Hong Kong and Macao under the “National Natural Science Foundation of China Annual Project Guideline” in this December and welcome eligible local young scholars to apply.



Academician Nancy Ip, Committee Chairman of GBAAA, moderated the discussion session.

Academician Nancy Ip, Commissioner for Innovation and Technology, Ms Rebecca Pun, Vice President Ng Wang-Wai of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou), Mr Duncan Chiu, President of Hong Kong Information Technology Joint Council, and Professor Wong Kam Fai, Associate Dean of Faculty of Engineering of The Chinese University Hong Kong jointly discussed in detail the implementation of the new policy with three online guests from national ministries and commissions. More than 400 scholars and representatives of I&T institutions and groups attended the briefing both online and offline.

For more information on science education, please visit the Facebook page of the Beijing-Hong Kong Academic Exchange Center at:

<https://www.facebook.com/BHKAEC>