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AND TECHNOLOGY

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HEAD'S MESSAGE

At its core, the mission of HKUST and the Division of Public Policy is to act as catalysts for our students' success. In this issue of the PPOL Newsletter, we highlight the huge range of our students' activities and achievements. These occur in many venues – from the classroom to the boardroom; but also on the beach and the basketball court.

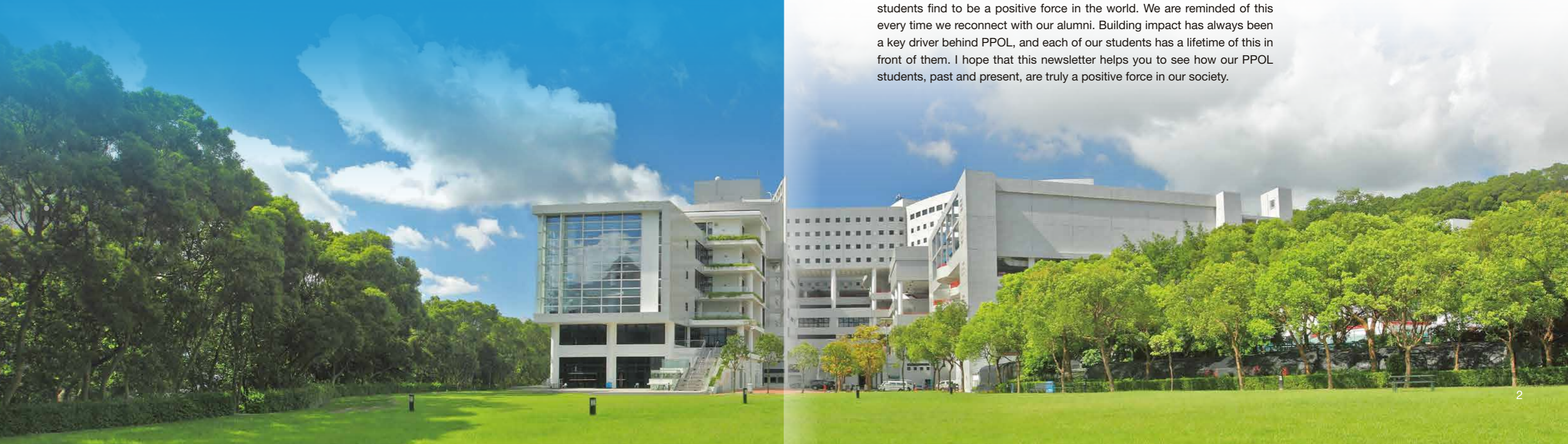
Our students are driven by a combination of curiosity about the world, and a desire to develop rigorous problem solving skills. They have traveled near and far in order to see for themselves how policy can be used to solve pressing social problems. They have strolled around Hong Kong, learning about its culture and history. Their international success in the Global Sustainability Challenge competition demonstrates their excellence in developing their professional policy design skills, and applying rigorous analysis creatively and convincingly to some of the most challenging emerging sustainability policy problems.

Despite the rigor of their studies, our students also thrive beyond the bounds of their academic pursuits. Each of our students has a different journey through their time with us at PPOL, and that involves everything from happy hours to movie screenings to beach hikes. They bring to us many talents, and we are proud to see them demonstrate this on the HKUST "Piano for All," on competitive sports teams, and through their community service activities.

At PPOL, we are immensely proud of the many and diverse ways that our students find to be a positive force in the world. We are reminded of this every time we reconnect with our alumni. Building impact has always been a key driver behind PPOL, and each of our students has a lifetime of this in front of them. I hope that this newsletter helps you to see how our PPOL students, past and present, are truly a positive force in our society.



Professor Kira Matus
Head, Division of Public Policy



GRANTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Professor Alex Jingwei He Receives HKUST Faculty Recognition Award

HKUST's Division of Public Policy is pleased to announce that Professor Alex Jingwei He has received the HKUST Faculty Recognition Award. This prestigious honor acknowledges his exceptional academic contributions, outstanding teaching and research, and dedicated service to the university and society, embodying his commitment to advancing knowledge and nurturing talents.

Professor He is a Professor in HKUST's Division of Public Policy, concurrently serving as Acting Director of the Institute for Public Policy and Co-Director of the Master of Public Policy (MPP) Program. He holds a PhD in Public Policy from the National University of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. His research focuses on comparative social policy, policy innovation/entrepreneurship, and health policy/governance (East Asia focus)—areas aligned with Hong Kong's social welfare and health governance needs.

As a distinguished educator, Professor He is committed to high-quality teaching and nurturing public policy talents. As MPP Co-Director, he oversees postgraduate core courses and teaches undergraduates on public policy, social policy and health governance. Praised by students for rigor, vivid instruction and guidance, he has shaped curricula and fostered graduates excelling in academia, public service and related fields.

Professor He has achieved remarkable research breakthroughs, publishing extensively in top international journals (e.g., *Public Administration Review*, *Governance*, *The China Quarterly*) and Chinese outlets, and co-editing *Policy Entrepreneurship: An Asian Perspective* (Routledge, 2020). Since 2021, he has been ranked among Stanford's top 2% most cited scholars in political science/public administration. In Hong Kong's 2020 RAE, his impact case was one of



only two unanimously rated "outstanding" (four stars) in his field. Since 2014, he has secured 10 major grants (5 GRFs, 2 WHO projects), with two GRFs earning perfect 5.0 scores. He also holds key editorial roles, including Editor of *Policy Design and Practice* and Associate Editor of two SSCI Q1 journals.

Beyond teaching and research, Professor He engages in university governance, public outreach and policy advocacy. In addition to his HKUST leadership roles, he serves as Executive Member of the East Asian Social Policy Network and Adjunct Research Fellow at Tsinghua University. He bridges academia and policy via commentaries in major newspapers (e.g., *South China Morning Post*) and interviews with media like CCTV and CBS News.

The HKUST Faculty Recognition Award honors faculty excellence in teaching, research and service, and their contributions to the university and society, reflecting HKUST's commitment to academic excellence and holistic faculty development.

HKUST's Division of Public Policy warmly congratulates Professor He on this well-deserved award, a testament to his dedication and achievements in academia, education and policy advocacy. We look forward to his continued leadership and greater contributions to HKUST, Hong Kong's social/health policy, and the East Asian public policy community.

Congratulations again to Professor Alex Jingwei He on this prestigious honor!



Prof. Masaru YARIME Ranked Among Stanford University's Top 2% Scientists in Environmental Sciences (2025)

HKUST's Division of Public Policy and Division of Environment and Sustainability are proud to announce that Associate Professor Masaru YARIME has been recognized as one of Stanford University's Top 2% Scientists for both Career-Long and Single Year (2025) in the sub-field of Environmental Sciences. This distinguished honor underscores his exceptional academic impact, sustained contributions to sustainability-focused research, and global standing as a leading interdisciplinary scholar.

Professor YARIME serves as Director of the MPhil and PhD Programs in Public Policy at HKUST, with concurrent appointments as Visiting Associate Professor at the University of Tokyo's GraSPP and Honorary Associate Professor at UCL's STEaPP. He holds a PhD in Economics and Policy Studies of Innovation and Technological Change from Maastricht University, complemented by a B.Eng. from the University of Tokyo and an M.S. from the California Institute of Technology. His research spans policy design for energy and environment, climate change governance, smart city innovation systems, and big data applications in social science—aligning closely with global sustainability goals and regional environmental governance needs.

A highly interdisciplinary scholar, Professor YARIME has dedicated his career to bridging engineering and social sciences, exploring dynamic interactions between technology and institutions for sustainability innovation. He has published extensively in top-tier journals including *Energy Economics*, *Sustainability Science*, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, and *Environmental Science & Policy*, and authored/edited numerous book chapters and special journal issues. His expertise is widely sought after in international initiatives: he has contributed to the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report, UNEP Finance Initiative, and IPBES Expert Group, and serves on the editorial boards of journals such as *Sustainability Science and Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*.

Prior to HKUST, he held positions at Japan's NISTEP and City University of Hong Kong, with visiting professorships in France and Malaysia.

The Stanford Top 2% Scientists ranking—based on rigorous metrics including citations, h-index, and co-authorship adjustment—serves as a globally recognized benchmark of academic excellence. Earning dual recognition for career-long achievements and 2025 single-year impact reflects Professor YARIME's consistent dedication to high-impact research and his ability to drive meaningful progress in environmental policy and sustainability science.

HKUST's Division of Public Policy and Division of Environment and Sustainability warmly congratulate Professor Masaru YARIME on this well-deserved recognition. This achievement not only honors his individual contributions but also reinforces HKUST's reputation as a hub for world-class interdisciplinary research in sustainability and public policy. We look forward to his continued leadership in advancing solutions for climate change, energy transition, and smart city governance.

Congratulations again to Professor Masaru YARIME on this prestigious global accolade!

Elsevier Data Repository	
August 2025 data-update for "Updated science-wide author databases of standardized citation indicators"	
authfull	sm-subfield-1
Yarime, Masaru	Environmental Sciences
rank sm-subfield-1	sm-subfield-1 count
2,247	130,223



Prof. Masaru YARIME Ranks #80 Globally in Sustainability (Lifetime Achievement, Top 0.05% Scholars) – 2025

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)'s Division of Public Policy and Division of Environment and Sustainability are proud to announce that Associate Professor Masaru YARIME has been ranked #80 globally in the specialty of Sustainability (Lifetime Achievement) in 2025, placing him among the top 0.05% of scholars worldwide in this field. This prestigious honor reflects his decades of profound academic impact, interdisciplinary leadership, and outstanding contributions to advancing global sustainability research and policy practice.

The ranking, developed by Professor John P.A. Ioannidis' team at Stanford University, is a globally recognized benchmark of academic influence, evaluated through rigorous metrics including standardized citations, h-index, and co-authorship-adjusted hm-index. Among tens of thousands of researchers in the sustainability field, Professor YARIME's placement in the top 0.05% underscores the exceptional citation impact of his work and affirms his international standing as a pioneer in bridging engineering, social sciences, and policy. His research focuses on critical global challenges—policy design and innovation, energy transition, climate change governance, and smart city data governance—

aligning closely with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) such as climate action, affordable clean energy, and sustainable cities.

Professor YARIME currently serves as Director of HKUST's MPhil and PhD Programs in Public Policy, with concurrent appointments as Visiting Associate Professor at the University of Tokyo's GraSPP and Honorary Associate Professor at UCL's STEaPP. A scholar with a distinguished interdisciplinary background—holding degrees from the University of Tokyo, California Institute of Technology, and Maastricht University—he has published over 100 papers in top-tier journals including *Energy Economics*, *Sustainability Science*, and *Journal of Cleaner Production*, and contributed to pivotal global initiatives such as the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report and UNEP Finance Initiative. He also serves on the editorial boards of leading sustainability journals, driving the field's advancement through academic leadership and cross-regional collaboration.

This ranking marks a significant milestone for HKUST's sustainability and public policy disciplines, validating the university's global excellence in the field and reinforcing Hong Kong's role as a bridge for Asian sustainability research to engage with the global community. HKUST's Division of Public Policy and Division of Environment and Sustainability extend warmest congratulations to Professor YARIME, and look forward to his continued leadership in exploring cutting-edge sustainability issues, fostering international collaboration, and providing actionable insights for global climate governance, energy transition, and smart city development. Congratulations to Professor Masaru YARIME on this well-deserved world-class honor!



Prof. James Ka Lei WONG Receives the Academy of Education Excellence (AEE) Fellowship Award

The Division of Public Policy is proud to announce that Prof. James Ka Lei WONG, Senior Lecturer (Division of Public Policy & Division of Social Science), Associate Dean of Humanities and Social Science, and Assistant Professor of Social Science Education, has been awarded the title of Junior Fellow by the Academy of Education Excellence (AEE).

The AEE, facilitated by the Center for Education Innovation (CEI), recognizes faculty members at HKUST who exhibit a strong commitment to enhancing their teaching skills and contributing to effective teaching practices. Among the awardees is Prof. James Wong, Associate Dean of Humanities and Social Science (Undergraduate Education), Assistant Professor of Social Science Education, and Senior Lecturer in the Divisions of Social Science and Public Policy.

A Fellow of the British Higher Education Academy, Prof. Wong obtained his PhD in Government from the London School of Economics and Political Science and joined HKUST in 2014. He teaches a wide range of politics and public policy courses, and is devoted to inspiring students through rigorous and engaging pedagogy.

His research focuses on democracy, citizen participation, environmental politics, and political philosophy, with publications in leading journals including *Political Studies* and *Philosophy Compass*. Through his dedication to teaching excellence and impactful academic research, Prof. Wong fully embodies the values celebrated by the AEE.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Prof. WONG and look forward to his impactful contributions as he embarks on this exciting journey with the AEE.



Dr. Michael Tyrala Receives the Academy of Education Excellence (AEE) Fellowship Award

The Division of Public Policy is proud to announce that Dr. Michael Tyrala, Lecturer I and an accomplished interdisciplinary social scientist, has been awarded the title of Junior Fellow by the Academy of Education Excellence (AEE).

The AEE, facilitated by the Center for Education Innovation (CEI), recognizes faculty members at HKUST who exhibit a strong commitment to enhancing their teaching skills and contributing to effective teaching practices. As a Junior Fellow, Dr. Tyrala will embark on a three-year fellowship commencing on January 24, 2025, and concluding on January 23, 2028. During this period, he will engage in various initiatives aimed at improving educational practices, including hosting workshops, participating in seminars—building on his expertise in bridging academic research, real-world practice, and student-centered learning.

Dr. Tyrala holds a PhD in Asian and International Studies from City University of Hong Kong, with research interests spanning world-systems analysis, global offshore finance, global tax governance, the political economy of development, and the social psychology of late capitalism. His work intersects historical macrosociology, international relations, public policy, and development studies, with a geographic focus covering Asia, the US, and the EU. Beyond academia, he brings extensive professional experience from the NGO sector, international organizations (including NATO, the EESC, and the OECD's Trade Union Advisory Committee), and HKUST's Institute for Emerging Market Studies—insights he seamlessly integrates into his teaching to enrich student learning.

A prolific scholar, Dr. Tyrala has co-authored books with Routledge and Oxford University Press, and published research in top-tier journals such as *Nature Communications*, *Science Advances*, *Nature Human Behaviour*, and *Globalizations*. This prestigious AEE recognition highlights his dual dedication to professional growth and fostering academic excellence—marrying rigorous research with a commitment to delivering impactful, practice-informed teaching that benefits students and the broader academic community.

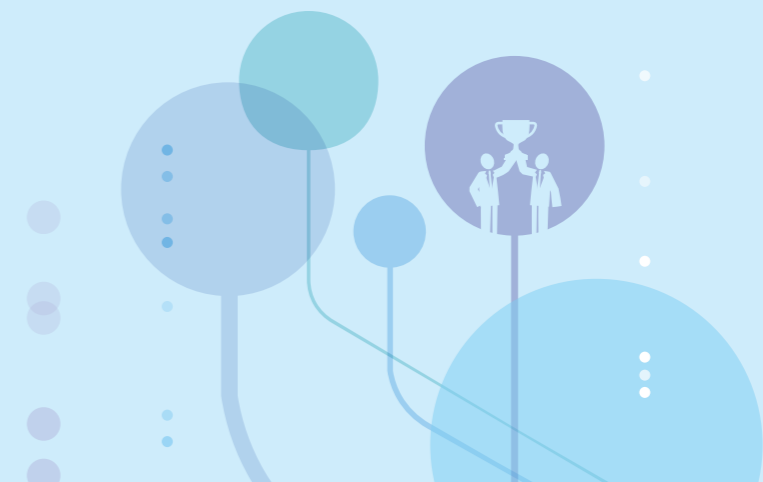
We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Tyrala and look forward to his impactful contributions as he embarks on this exciting journey with the AEE, further elevating educational practices within our division and beyond.



ONGOING PROJECTS

Leading Faculty	Funding Agency	Project
 Prof. Kira Matus	RGC - General Research Fund	Can We Regulate Our way to a Circular Economy? A Study of the Relationship between Extended Producer Responsibility Regulation and Sustainable Innovation in the Textile Industry (2025 - Now) Towards 1.5C Lifestyles: What motivates sustainable consumption choices in Hong Kong? (2022 - Now)
 Dr. Nicolo LUDOVICE	the Research Grants Council (RGC) of Hong Kong	Post-Conflict Reconstruction of the Health Sector in the Postwar Philippines, 1946-1953 (2026-Now)
 Prof. Pengyu Zhu	RGC – Research Fellow Scheme Chief Executive’s Policy Unit – Public Policy Research Funding Scheme	Regional Science and Complex Systems: A Five-year Research Plan on Transportation, Land Use, Labor, and Innovation Systems (2024 - Now) Bus Electrification in Hong Kong: Energy Consumption Prediction and Charging Facility Planning (2024 - Now) Enhancing the implementation of “One University, Two Campuses” and mutual recognition of academic qualifications: A mixed-methods study (2025 - Now)
 Prof. Alex Jingwei He	RGC - General Research Fund Tsinghua University Asia Pacific Observatory on Health Systems and Policy, World Health Organization Humanities and Social Sciences Prestigious Fellowship Scheme	Local Government Innovation under Political Recentralization in Contemporary China: A Two-stage Sequential Study (2024 - Now) Delayed retirement and mass feedback in China (2025 - Now) Use of digital health technologies and data to enhance health system outcomes (2025 - Now) Understanding China’s Huge and Complex Health Policy Reform: A Governance Approach

Leading Faculty	Funding Agency	Project
 Prof. Masaru Yarime	Social Science Research Council (SSRC), United States UKinSPIRE Award, University of Kentucky, United States Global Engagement Funds, University College London	Data Governance for Innovation for Sustainable Smart Cities: A Comparative Analysis of Japan, the United States, and China (2024 - Now) How the Governance of Standards and Geopolitics Shape Competition in the Global Economy (2024 - Now) Public Perspectives on Personal Data Use for Personalized Covid-19 Advice (2022 - Now) Finished
 Prof. Julien de Troullioud de Lanversin	HKUST Li & Fung Supply Chain Institute Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies, HKUST	Establishing Digital Product Passport for Sustainable Supply Chains: Centralized and Decentralized Approaches to Data Governance (2025 - Now) Using Machine Learning with Gamma Spectrometry to Verify Subcritical Tests
 Dr. Fangxin Francine YI (in collaboration with Prof. Yike Guo.)	NSFC–RGC Joint Research Scheme	“Human–Machine Collaborative Intelligent Deliberation and Public Policy Optimization Using Generative Multi-Agent Large Language Models.” (2025 - Now)



SCHOLARLY SHOWCASE

Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy



Pengyu Zhu, Zining Wang, Renu Singh, and Xinying Tan. “China’s model of technology leapfrog: A case study of electric vehicle policies and the development of green technology.” *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* 226 (2026): 116414.

Focus of Study

This study explores China’s technology leapfrogging model in the electric vehicle (EV) sector, analyzing how coordinated policy interventions transformed the country from a latecomer to the global leader in EVs (holding 58% of global sales by 2023). It identifies five key drivers of China’s EV strategy: energy security, climate goals, technological self-reliance, manufacturing capacity, and industrial transformation. The research traces the four-stage evolution of EV policies—demonstration projects (infancy), subsidy-driven growth (rapid expansion), subsidy phase-out and industrial restructuring (adjustment), and regulatory reinforcement with dual-credit policies (transformation)—and highlights how China integrated state guidance, R&D investment, domestic demand stimulation, and industrial ecosystem development to achieve leapfrogging, with a focus on core technologies like batteries.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers in emerging economies seeking green technology leapfrogging should adopt a phased, coordinated framework: launch targeted demonstration projects to test technology viability, use temporary financial incentives to scale market adoption, transition to market-oriented regulations (e.g., credit systems) to drive sustained innovation, and prioritize indigenous R&D in core components. Additionally, balancing openness to international collaboration with support for domestic firms can strengthen industrial competitiveness, while aligning policies with national strategic goals (e.g., energy security, climate targets) ensures long-term policy coherence.



Mede, Niels G., Viktoria Cologna, Sebastian Berger, ... **Tyrala, Michael**, and Ziqian Xia. “Public Communication about Science in 68 Countries: Global Evidence on How People Encounter and Engage with Information about Science.” *Science Communication* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study examines science information diets and communication behavior across 68 countries with 71,922 respondents, exploring cross-country differences and their associations with sociopolitical and economic conditions. It finds social media are the most used science information source in most countries, except those with democratic-corporatist media systems where news media dominate. Key patterns include lower outspokenness about science in collectivist societies, higher outspokenness among less educated populations, and limited digital media access correlating with participation in science-related public protests. The research also identifies GDP per capita and digital media access as key factors explaining variations in science information sources globally.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should tailor science communication strategies to regional media use patterns—prioritizing social media engagement in low-GDP and non-Western countries while supporting quality science journalism in nations with strong news media systems. Investing in museums and public science events can complement digital access gaps, and integrating science media literacy into education curricula can address misinformation risks, especially among less educated populations. Additionally, supporting scientists and journalists in regions with restricted academic or press freedom can safeguard public access to reliable science information.



Yingyu Huang, Shun Wa Tsang, Wai Hung Tsang, **King L. Chow**. “Mab2112 is required to promote cell proliferation in stylopods during early limb development.” *Biochemical and Biophysical Research Communications* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study uses conditional gene knockout models to explore Mab2112's role in early limb development. It finds Mab2112 is dynamically expressed in mouse forelimb buds (E10.5–12.5), with a critical function window of E9.5–10.5. Its deletion causes stylopod malformations (humerus shortening, missing deltoid tuberosity) and delayed endochondral ossification, due to reduced chondrocyte proliferation at E10.5 Policy .

Harini KANNAN, King L. CHOW. “Chemosensory Adaptations in *Caenorhabditis Males* during the Establishment of Androdioecy.” *Biology Letters* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study explores male chemosensory adaptations in *Caenorhabditis* during the transition from dioecy to androdioecy. It finds androdioecious males have heightened olfactory habituation and reduced mate exploration, while hermaphrodites produce less potent sex pheromones. Replacing the SRD-1 receptor's cytoplasmic domain reverts these traits, highlighting its key role in facilitating hermaphroditism.



James P. Evans, Davide Cassanmagnago, Tathagata Chatterji, Andrew Irvin, Benjamin Jance IV, Cathy Oke, Massamba Thioye, Gregory Patrick Trencher, Elvira Uyarra, and **Masaru Yarime**. “Grand challenges in sustainable cities: urban innovation for global climate and sustainability goals-from policy agenda to research needs.” *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities* 7 (2025): 1568701.

Focus of Study

This study explores urban innovation as a core strategy to address global climate and sustainability goals, examining its emergence as a key policy agenda and identifying critical research needs. It defines urban innovation as a place-based, systemic activity driven by cities to solve local challenges while contributing to global targets. The research highlights three central policy themes: governance (multilevel collaboration, inclusive stakeholder engagement, and experimental models like urban living labs), scaling (overcoming the “pilot paradox” through context-adaptive replication, cultural leverage, and innovative financing), and capacity building (skills development, data utilization, and cross-city learning networks). It also notes gaps, including underrepresentation of Global South contexts, undervaluation of informal and indigenous innovation, and limited research on “urban exnovation” (phasing out unsustainable technologies).

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should prioritize inclusive, context-sensitive governance for urban innovation, integrating formal and informal stakeholders. Deploy flexible financing (e.g., outcome-based contracts, blended climate finance) to scale successful solutions beyond pilots. Invest in digital infrastructure and cross-city knowledge-sharing networks to boost cities' analytical and adaptive capacities. Broaden innovation definitions to include frugal, grassroots, and exnovation strategies, ensuring alignment with local needs and global sustainability targets.

Veronica Qin Ting Li, **Masaru Yarime**, Vivi Antonopoulou, Henry Potts, and Carla-Leanne Washbourne. “Behavioural perspectives on personal health data sharing and app design: an international survey study.” *Data & Policy* 7 (2025): e66.

Focus of Study

This study explores factors influencing willingness to use personalised health apps and share sensitive health data, using the COM-B model and a survey of 2,322 respondents from London and Hong Kong. Key findings include that willingness is driven by data literacy, granular data control, comfort with sharing health/location data, health concerns, trust in medical expert advice (stronger than trust in AI-generated advice), and acceptance of data access by specific parties. Demographically, men are more willing to use health apps than women, and London respondents show greater willingness than those in Hong Kong. The research also highlights contextual differences, with Hong Kong participants more wary of data sharing with government agencies and private companies due to privacy and trust concerns.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should mandate granular data control features in health apps to empower users to manage data sharing. Co-create clear standards for AI-generated health advice to build public trust, with medical expert oversight. Enhance digital health literacy campaigns to clarify data use and privacy settings. Develop innovative governance models like data trusts for collective data management. Address gender-specific privacy risks in app design and enforcement. Strengthen data protection regulations to align with emerging technologies, particularly in regions with low institutional trust, and ensure transparency in data handling by public and private entities.

Miyana Yoshino, Benjamin Sadlek, **Masaru Yarime**, and Adnan Ali. “Knowledge absorption pathways for eco-innovation: an empirical analysis of small and medium-sized enterprises in the European Union.” *European Journal of Innovation Management* 28, no. 2 (2025): 426–453.

Focus of Study

This study explores the external knowledge absorption pathways that drive proactive eco-innovations (proactive-EIs) among SMEs in resource-intensive sectors of the EU, adopting a national innovation system (NIS) framework with micro-, meso-, and macro-level determinants. Using binary logistic regression on survey data of 6,188 SMEs, it finds that public environmental awareness (micro-level), national economic complexity (macro-level), and public sector R&D (macro-level) positively influence proactive-EI adoption. Conversely, external collaboration (meso-level) and intra-industry agglomeration (meso-level) have negative effects. The research addresses gaps in understanding external knowledge-based eco-innovation and heterogeneity across EU member states, focusing on collaborative, technology-intensive, and high-investment proactive-EIs linked to the circular economy.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should strengthen public environmental awareness campaigns to motivate SMEs' proactive-EI adoption. Increase public sector R&D investments targeted at resource-intensive sectors to provide accessible technical knowledge for eco-innovation. Leverage national economic complexity by supporting knowledge diffusion between high-tech and resource-intensive industries. Reorient meso-level policies: refine external collaboration frameworks to reduce coordination barriers for SMEs, and redesign agglomeration policies to avoid counterproductive competition in eco-innovation. Tailor interventions to EU member states' contextual differences to maximize the uptake of proactive-EIs and advance the circular economy.

Environmental Policy and Sustainability



Yatang Lin, Ziyang Chen, Ting Chen, Jin Wang. “The environmental cost of power outages: Evidence from Delhi.” *Journal of Public Economics* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study explores the environmental cost of power outages in Delhi, using high-frequency outage and air pollution data. It finds that outages increase hourly NO₂, NO, and PM10 concentrations by 0.4%, 1.3%, and 0.4% respectively, due to widespread use of polluting backup diesel generators. The research employs spatial DID and event-study methods to confirm causality, noting the environmental cost of outages exceeds private costs. It also evaluates Delhi’s outage penalty policy, showing significant welfare gains when environmental benefits are included.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should prioritize grid modernization and generation capacity investments to reduce outages. They should also promote clean backup energy (e.g., solar-battery systems) via subsidies, tighten diesel generator emissions regulations, and incorporate environmental costs into outage-related policy evaluations to enhance air quality and public welfare.



Jeffrey Chow, Tianle Liu, Coco Dijia Du, Rui Hu, and Xun Wu. “From research to policy recommendations: A scientometric case study of air quality management in the Greater Bay Area, China.” *Environmental Science and Policy* 165 (2025): 104025.

Focus of Study

This study uses scientometric meta-analysis to examine how institutional factors shape the role of scientific research in air quality policymaking in China’s Greater Bay Area (GBA), a region with distinct “One Country, Two Systems” governance (mainland China and Hong Kong). It analyzes 687 Chinese and English-language peer-reviewed articles (2000–2019) to explore funding sources, government co-authorship, and policy recommendations. The research finds that Chinese-language articles (focused on the broader GBA) have greater government involvement in funding and authorship, and tend to offer more cautious policy recommendations. In contrast, English-language articles (focused on Hong Kong) are less likely to involve government co-authors, more likely to propose new policies, but less critical of existing policies if funded by mainland or overseas governments.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should foster a balanced science-policy interface in the GBA by encouraging more transparent collaboration between researchers and government, while preserving academic independence to ensure diverse policy insights. Additionally, establishing formal mechanisms to evaluate post-implementation policy impacts (e.g., for air pollution regulations) and promoting data accessibility across the region can enhance the translation of scientific research into effective, evidence-based air quality management.



Mede, Niels G., Viktoria Cologna, Sebastian Berger, ... **Tyrala, Michael**, and Rolf A. Zwaan. “Perceptions of science, science communication, and climate change attitudes in 68 countries – the TISP dataset.” *Scientific Data* 12, no. 114 (2025).

Focus of Study

This study addresses the lack of robust global data on public perceptions of science by developing the TISP (Trust in Science and Science-Related Populism) dataset. It conducts a cross-sectional survey between November 2022 and August 2023, covering 68 countries and 71,922 valid participants, with the questionnaire translated into 37 languages. The research measures eight key constructs, including trust in science and scientists, science-related populist attitudes, perceptions of science’s societal role, science communication behaviors, climate change attitudes, and demographic characteristics. It features post-COVID-19 insights, representation of non-WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, Democratic) countries, and rigorous validation through pre-testing, attention checks, and psychometric assessments of core scales.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should leverage the TISP dataset to design targeted science communication strategies that address regional differences in public trust and populist attitudes toward science, while promoting open access to the dataset for researchers and educators worldwide. Additionally, integrating the dataset’s findings on climate change attitudes and media engagement into policy development can enhance public support for environmental initiatives and strengthen the science-society relationship.



Shiming Zheng, **Alex Jingwei He**, Yujie He “Authority Versus Competition: Intergovernmental Interactions and Subnational Policy Adoption in Climate Policy” *Review of Policy Research* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study investigates how intergovernmental interactions—formal authority interactions and informal competitive interactions—shape Chinese provincial governments’ climate policy adoption, using panel data from 31 provinces between 2003 and 2018. It constructs a two-dimensional analytical framework and finds that formal authority interactions (from central-municipal-provincial levels and interdepartmental collaboration) significantly promote policy adoption. Informal competitive interactions follow an inverted “N-shaped” trajectory (initial suppression, subsequent promotion, final suppression) with overall inhibitory effects, and they negatively moderate the positive impact of formal authority interactions, weakening and distorting policy adoption outcomes.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should strengthen the guiding role of formal authority interactions, such as optimizing central policy directives and interdepartmental coordination mechanisms. They should also rationalize informal competitive dynamics, align promotion incentives with climate policy goals, and establish formal learning channels to mitigate free-riding, ensuring intergovernmental interactions synergistically advance climate policy adoption.



Delina, L., Fuerzas, I., Dharmiasih, W., Tam, K. K-P., Dulay, M. J., **Ludovice, N.P.**, & Salamanca, A. “Climate Risks and Resilience in Southeast Asia’s Culturally Significant Ricescapes.” *Intangible Cultural Heritage Safeguarding and Climate Action in Asia and the Pacific*. UNESCO, ICHCAP, IRCI, and IRDR (2025)

Focus of Study

UNESCO World Heritage ricescapes in Ifugao, Philippines and Bali, Indonesia face significant climate vulnerabilities from droughts and intense precipitation that reduce yields. Using mixed methods, this study examines how intangible cultural heritage—including community bonds, shared labor systems, and spiritual practices—strengthens resilience among rice farming communities. Findings reveal that social capital through cooperation and mutual support, alongside family networks and customary institutions, provides crucial intangible assets for coping with climate pressures while sustaining traditional practices. The research identifies transpersonal capacities shaped by physical, social, and spiritual environments as central to adaptive responses. Nine policy recommendations emerge: recognize intangible assets, support community-based traditional knowledge projects, facilitate knowledge exchange, empower local institutions, design disaster preparedness plans, improve government support, promote sustainable cultivation, invest in rural infrastructure, and encourage stakeholder collaboration to preserve indigenous rice farming traditions while building climate resilience.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should pursue culturally significant climate adaptation strategies for agricultural landscapes which integrate the recognition and strengthening of intangible assets—including community solidarity, traditional rituals, and indigenous knowledge systems—into formal heritage management frameworks, while simultaneously supporting community-based initiatives that sustain traditional knowledge through knowledge exchange platforms and empowered local institutions. In addition, governments should develop comprehensive support systems that balance formal disaster preparedness planning with informal community resilience mechanisms, invest in rural infrastructure that protects both ecological and cultural sustainability, and facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration that harmonizes local and national efforts in preserving indigenous rice farming traditions while building adaptive capacity to climate pressures.



Nicolo Paolo P Ludovice, Kira Matus, Stephane Redonnet, Xuan Zeng, Yawei Zhang, Ees Ther Loh, Yan Zhang, & Jeffrey Chow, “Towards a holistic and reflexive assessment of green buildings and technological landscapes in Hong Kong.” *Energy Research & Social Science* 127 (2025): 104235.

Focus of Study

This study addresses the limitations of conventional green building technology selection models, which often prioritize technical and economic metrics while neglecting contextual nuances and stakeholder diversity. It develops a holistic and reflexive assessment framework that integrates technical, economic, environmental, and social criteria, and embeds perspectives of end-users and local regulators. Using Hong Kong as a case study—characterized by dense urban form, regulatory complexity, and subtropical climate—the framework is applied to evaluate a range of green building technologies (including insulation, paints, windows, lifts, and HVAC systems) across both retrofit and new construction scenarios. The findings demonstrate that context-attuned technology selection enhances technical viability, fosters social legitimacy, and accelerates adoption, transcending expert-driven models to offer an adaptive, user-centred approach.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers and urban planners should adopt the reflexive assessment framework to guide green building technology selection, ensuring alignment with local infrastructural, regulatory, and cultural conditions. Additionally, promoting stakeholder engagement—including end-users, industry partners, and regulators—in iterative evaluation processes can democratize decision-making and enhance the sustainability and social acceptability of technologies. For Hong Kong specifically, incentivizing the adoption of context-appropriate solutions (e.g., space-efficient insulation for retrofits, energy-efficient HVAC systems for high-rises) can advance decarbonization goals outlined in the Climate Action Plan 2050.



Social and Urban Policy



Bobo Hi-Po Lau, Eric Ngai-Yin Shum, Alex Pak-Ki Kwok, Ben Chi-Pun Liu, Alex Chi-Keung Chan, Rick Yiu-Cho Kwan, Steve Fu-Fai Fong, Gigi Lam, Chung-Kin Tsang, Daniel Dick-Man Leung, Johnson Chun-Sing Cheung, Jason Tak-Sang Chow, Paulina Pui-Yun Wong, **Stuart Gietel-Basten**. “Revealing the nuances of ‘Grey Digital Divide’ in Hong Kong: A latent profile analysis” *Plos One* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study explores Hong Kong’s post-pandemic “grey digital divide” using latent profile analysis (LPA) on 870 younger (18–54) and older (≥55) adults. It identifies three digital engagement profiles (Proficient, Intermediate, Novice), reveals significant intergenerational gaps, links socioeconomic status to profile membership, and finds profiles correlate with non-family social contact frequencies, aiming to inform targeted digital inclusivity interventions.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should prioritize grid modernization and Policymakers should design segmented support: subsidize devices for Novice, enhance skills training for Intermediate, and engage Proficient older adults as peer coaches. Expand community helpdesks and promote age-friendly tech design to narrow the divide while preserving offline options for non-users.



Li, Q., Wu, R., & **Zhu, P.** (2025). Quality or quantity of urban greenery: Which matters more to mental health? Evidence from housing prices in the Pearl River Delta. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 263, 105438.

Focus of Study

The study examines the relationship between urban green environments and mental well-being in Pearl River Delta, China, particularly about quality or quantity of urban greenery. The mediating roles of neighborhood ties and place attachment are studied. The results are that neighborhood ties and place attachment are important mediators between greenery and mental health; quality of greenery is more important than quantity. Interestingly, less wealthy populations enjoy better mental health improvements enabled by urban greenery, while neighborhood ties reduce the mental health benefits of greenery for the wealthy.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should improve the provision of quality green spaces in big cities. Attention should be paid to less privileged populations, such as those living in villages and public rental housing. It is important to implement mental health policies with integrated indicators for evaluating urban greenery among neighborhoods. Finally, the mediating factors of neighborhood ties and place attachment demonstrate that despite urban greenery different needs of different groups must be addressed, for example, facilities which can enable socialization and workout are essential for older populations.



Yan, Yifei, Alfred M. Wu, Biao Huang, and **Fangxin Yi**. “Policy Capacity Matters Differently Over Time: The Emergence and Persistence of Participatory Budgeting in China.” *Public Administration and Development* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study explores the emergence and long-term persistence of participatory budgeting (PB) in China’s Wenling County, challenging the conventional view that deliberative democratic practices can only thrive in liberal political environments. Utilizing Wu, Ramesh and Howlett’s policy capacity framework and data from interviews with local officials and stakeholders, the research analyzes the role of three core policy capacities—political, analytical, and operational—over time. It finds that strong political capacity (including elite political will and public participation willingness) was critical for PB’s initial launch in 2005. As political capacity waned in subsequent years, the gradual build-up of analytical capacity (specialized knowledge, data analysis, and stakeholder training) and operational capacity (fiscal resources, procedural standardization, and institutionalized policy tools) became pivotal to sustaining PB amid evolving institutional conditions. The Wenling case, with over two decades of PB practice, demonstrates how the relative importance of different policy capacities shifts across a policy’s lifecycle.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers seeking to initiate and sustain participatory governance reforms like PB should prioritize building political capacity (aligning elite vision and mobilizing public support) in the early stages. Additionally, investing in long-term analytical capacity (e.g., specialized training and data infrastructure) and operational capacity (e.g., standardized procedures and stable fiscal support) can enhance reform resilience, ensuring continuity even as initial political enthusiasm diminishes. For non-Western and developing contexts, institutionalizing these technical capacities can help overcome the vulnerability of reforms to political turnover.

Zhang, C., Meng, M., **Yi, F.**, Chen, Z. et al. Wavelength-specific urban nighttime light modulates expressed sentiment across China. *Nature Cities* (2026). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44284-025-00384-x>

Focus of Study

This study demonstrates that artificial light at night (ALAN) has wavelength-specific effects on expressed sentiment across Chinese cities. Using multispectral satellite data and 4.2 million geotagged Weibo posts, it finds that emotional impacts vary by spectral composition, exposure distance, season, and nighttime hour. Importantly, simulations show that reducing brightness alone cannot fundamentally mitigate negative sentiment risk. Instead, spectral optimization, particularly reducing blue and green wavelengths, plays a decisive role. The combined strategy of brightness reduction and color-temperature adjustment achieves an average 90% reduction in negative sentiment risk, highlighting the importance of multidimensional lighting governance.

Policy Recommendations

These findings generate four key policy implications. First, urban lighting regulations should move beyond intensity-based standards and incorporate spectral indicators, such as limits on blue-light ratios or the spectral band. Second, cities should adopt spatially targeted, risk-based lighting controls informed by sentiment-risk mapping. Third, nighttime lighting should be integrated into public health and urban resilience frameworks, recognizing emotional well-being as a governance objective. Fourth, municipalities should promote adaptive and intelligent lighting systems capable of dynamically adjusting both brightness and spectral composition. Together, these measures support a shift toward human-centered, evidence-based urban nighttime governance.



Alex Jingwei He, Ling Zhu, Jiwei Qian. “Policy design and policy feedback in welfare retrenchment: A survey experiment in China.” *Policy Studies Journal* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study explores how different policy designs and individual proximity to reform shape heterogeneous feedback effects in China’s welfare retrenchment, using a 2020 survey experiment in Guangdong Province targeting the proposed medical savings account reform. Bridging policy feedback and policy design theories, it examines two designs—one preserving individual material self-interest (e.g., family benefit coverage) and the other emphasizing sociotropic gains (e.g., broader healthcare protection). The research finds moderate de facto retrenchment triggers public opposition, with policy designs and individuals’ past experiences with existing health insurance (e.g., account usage frequency) driving divergent attitudinal and behavioral responses.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should adopt policy designs preserving individuals’ material interests (e.g., family benefit coverage) to mitigate opposition. They should also consider citizens’ policy proximity (e.g., account usage frequency) when formulating and communicating welfare retrenchment reforms.

Liu Kai, **He Jingwei**. “Policy Synergy in Health Reform: How Does the Coordinated Reform of Health Insurance, Health Services and Pharmaceuticals Affect Healthcare Costs?” *Jilin University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study combines medical policy text data (nearly 460,000 municipal-level documents) with micro survey data from the China Family Panel Studies (CFPS) to explore how the policy synergy of “three medical collaborations” (medical insurance, medical services, and pharmaceuticals) affects personal out-of-pocket medical expenses. It classifies policies into expansion-oriented (e.g., improving medical insurance benefits, strengthening grassroots medical institutions) and constraint-oriented (e.g., DRG/DIP payment reforms, centralized drug procurement), finding that intra-system synergy between medical insurance expansion and constraint policies, as well as inter-system synergy across the three medical fields, significantly reduce such expenses, while a single medical insurance expansion policy without corresponding collaborative policies increases personal out-of-pocket medical spending.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should strengthen holistic governance, establish a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism, and give full play to the leverage role of medical insurance in resource allocation to promote synergistic development of medical insurance, medical services, and pharmaceuticals.

Qiang Wang, **Alex Jingwei He** “Central–local relations, accountability, and defensive administration: unraveling the puzzling shrinkage of China’s urban social safety net” *Journal of Social Policy* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study employs a principal-agent framework and difference-in-differences (DID) strategy, drawing on unique city-level panel data (2009–2019) covering 274 prefectural cities to unravel the puzzling shrinkage of China’s urban Dibao program. It finds that upper-level discipline inspections significantly reduce Dibao coverage, an effect reinforced by local anti-corruption intensity (measured by duty-related crimes per 10,000 public personnel). Local governments, driven by blame avoidance, adopt defensive administration—tightening eligibility screening and forcing unwarranted exits—leading to distorted welfare provision that unjustly excludes numerous deserving recipients.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should strengthen informational capacity (e.g., big data platforms) to mitigate principal-agent information asymmetry, balance central regulatory oversight with local implementation flexibility, and avoid campaign-style enforcement to curb defensive behaviors, ensuring social assistance programs like Dibao deliver targeted, equitable support.

Qian Zhang, Julia Shu-Huah Wang, **Alex Jingwei He**, Chenhong Peng, Aya Abe, Inhoe Ku, Irene Y.H. Ng, Xi Zhao “Providing financial protection in health for low-income populations: a comparison of health financing designs in East Asia” *International Journal for Equity in Health* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study comparatively explores health financing designs (SHI and MFA) and financial protection outcomes for low-income populations across six East Asian societies. Using the model family approach and simulating lung cancer-related catastrophic spending, it finds Taiwan and Hong Kong’s inclusive models offer the strongest protection, while mainland China’s minimalist model provides limited benefits, with near-poor groups facing higher catastrophic spending risks.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should expand MFA coverage and generosity, prioritize protection for near-poor groups, and reference inclusive models to optimize SHI-MFA coordination, enhancing equitable financial protection in health.



Wing Shan Kan, **Raul P. Lejano**, and Yu Cheung Wong. “Social work-led case management in Hong Kong: A relational analysis.” *International Social Work* (2025).

Focus of Study

The study evaluates factors that foster and impede interprofessional interaction within multidisciplinary teams for case management of older adults in Hong Kong. The research employs a conceptual framework based on Lejano and Kan's relational theory.

Policy Recommendations

The research highlights the need for in-service training for multiple professionals (social workers, nurses, PT/OT specialists) in interprofessional coordination, along with other institutional support for multidisciplinary teams.



Meerwijk, Maurits Bastiaan, and **Nicolo Paolo P. Ludovice**. “Health Messaging in the Philippines: Guest Editors’ Introduction.” *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 73, no. 4 (2025): 413-420.

Focus of Study

This introduction traces the historical evolution of health messaging in the Philippines, from early 20th-century colonial “medical propaganda” to contemporary pandemic responses. It argues that health messaging has long served as a tool of persuasion and governance, intertwining communication, politics, and medicine by leveraging visual technologies and simplified narratives to normalize biomedical authority. The authors examine key continuities and tensions across eras—including colonial campaigns under American and Japanese rule, postcolonial developmentalist initiatives (e.g., the Marcos regime’s Nutribun program), and modern digital-era efforts—highlighting how such messaging has both advanced public health and legitimated power, while often obscuring complex realities like structural inequalities. The special issue’s contributing essays explore these dynamics through case studies on leprosy eradication, wartime propaganda, nutritional policy, social medicine narratives, and Covid-19 communication strategies.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers and public health practitioners should move beyond overreliance on simplified, spectacle-driven health messaging and instead cultivate a broader “epistemic repertoire” that acknowledges complexity, structural determinants of health, and diverse ways of knowing. Additionally, building trust in health communication requires addressing historical legacies of power imbalances and ensuring transparency, while countering misinformation by fostering critical health literacy rather than merely disseminating simplified directives.

Ludovice, **Nicolo Paolo P.** & Francisco Jayme Paolo Guiang. “‘More Calories, More Protein, More Progress’: The Nutribun and the Politics of Nostalgia of the Marcos Regime.” *Philippine Studies: Historical & Ethnographic Viewpoints* 73, no. 4 (2025): 481-512.

Focus of Study

This study examines the Nutribun, a ready-to-eat meal developed by a United States Agency for International Development program, which became tied to Ferdinand E. Marcos when his administration claimed credit for its nationwide distribution through feeding programs. His children later used nostalgia for the Nutribun to cast the Marcos years positively, aiding their political rise. This study reframes nostalgia politics by tracing the Nutribun’s changing political and emotional meanings. It shows how the bun functioned as a symbol for reimagining authoritarian rule as a time of prosperity and national pride, and how nostalgic health messages were used to deflect attention from present problems. The study links public health communication, nutrition policy, and political memory to show nostalgia’s role in shaping historical narratives.

Policy Recommendations

Nutrition programs must be designed with transparent institutional frameworks that prevent political capture and ensure accountability through independent monitoring bodies, while simultaneously addressing the structural determinants of malnutrition rather than relying on supplementary feeding alone. Moreover, public health communication strategies should incorporate critical historical literacy components that equip citizens to distinguish between evidence-based health interventions and nostalgic political narratives, thereby strengthening democratic engagement with health policy while countering the manipulation of collective memory for partisan ends.



Economic Policy



Guillaume Marois, **Stuart Gietel-Basten**, Wolfgang Lutz “The Demographic Race between India and China.” *Population Research and Policy Review* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study explores whether India’s surpassing China as the world’s most populous country will lead to economic overtaking, using multi-dimensional demographic projections (age, sex, education, labor force participation) and the productivity-weighted labor force (PWLF) indicator. It finds China retains an economic edge for most of the next half-century due to better education and female labor force participation, while India’s potential depends on investing in these areas.

Policy Recommendations

India should boost educational access and female labor force participation. China should continue advancing education and adapt to aging via raising retirement age and automation, with both prioritizing human capital for long-term economic success.

Shuang Chen, **Stuart Gietel-Basten**. “Only Children and Low Family Size Ideals: Did the One-Child Policy Create a ‘Low-Fertility Trap’ in China?” *European Journal of Population* (2025)

Focus of Study

This study examines whether growing up as an only child reduces fertility ideals in urban China, using a fuzzy regression discontinuity design and China’s 1980 one-child policy as an exogenous shock. Analyzing data from the Chinese General Social Survey, it finds that being an only child significantly lowers the ideal number of children and the likelihood of desiring two or more, supporting the “Low-Fertility Trap” hypothesis.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should move beyond simplistic fertility incentives and prioritize institutional reforms (e.g., hukou, pension) to address population aging. They should also design holistic policies addressing young people’s family-formation barriers to avoid further fertility declines.



Yatang Lin, Ziyang Chen, Ting Chen, Jin Wang. “Building tall, falling short: An empirical assessment of Chinese skyscrapers.” *Journal of Urban Economics* (2025).

Focus of Study

This study explores the drivers and economic efficiency of state-led urbanization via China’s skyscraper development (2006–2014). It finds local governments offer average 40.1% land price discounts to commercial skyscraper developers, motivated by officials’ career incentives and the central government’s monetary easing. Using spatial DID and event study methods, it reveals unsubsidized skyscrapers generate localized spillovers (land price hikes, new businesses), while subsidized ones show negligible effects 5–10 years post-completion due to poor locations, unreliable developers, and inadequate infrastructure.

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should avoid over-reliance on skyscraper subsidies for urban growth. They need to prioritize local conditions (e.g., location, infrastructure) when approving projects, strengthen oversight of developer qualifications, and increase complementary public investments. This ensures state-led urbanization initiatives deliver sustainable economic returns and avoid exacerbating local debt risks.



Chen, Xiaodong, Ding Li, and Pengyu Zhu. "Long-term impacts of historical education policy on wages in China: insights on over-education." *Humanities & Social Sciences Communications* 12, no. 959 (2025).

Focus of Study

This study examines the long-term impact of China's historical Imperial Examination System (IES, 1371–1905) on contemporary workers' wages, using Jinshi density (highest IES attainment) as a proxy. Employing 2SLS analysis with instrumental variables (access to study materials via river proximity to bamboo/pine forests, and transportation accessibility via the Grand Canal/Ming Courier Stations), it finds that a 1% increase in Jinshi density per 10,000 people raises current wages by 7.9–13.1% (equivalent to 1030–1710 CNY in 2004). The effects are stronger in labor-intensive and high-technology firms, and operate through two key channels: human capital (improved education levels, degree/technical title structures) and social capital (enhanced innovation, favorable firm capital structures, talent migration attraction). Additionally, the IES positively influences fringe benefits (welfare, medical insurance) and public services (hospitals, transportation).

Policy Recommendations

Policymakers should leverage the persistent cultural emphasis on education shaped by the IES to further enhance human capital development. Invest in educational infrastructure and technical training programs in regions with historical IES success, as these areas exhibit stronger wage and productivity dividends. Strengthen social welfare and public service provision in these regions to amplify the positive spillover effects of accumulated human and social capital. Additionally, recognize and preserve the cultural value of historical education systems to sustain long-term economic and social benefits.



CONFERENCES AND EVENTS



Seminar Archive



Prof. Qiang Zhang

Professor at the School of Government of Beijing Normal University, the founding Director of the Innovation Research Center for Risk Governance at BNU

Human-Machine Synergy for a Resilient Future: An Explorative Pathway in AI-Empowered Resilient Community

In this study, he presented a human-in-the-loop governance model that leverages artificial intelligence to augment—not replace—human decision-making, showing how such integration can improve risk anticipation, optimize resource allocation, and enhance public participation in urban resilience building.



Prof. Paul S. Adler

Professor of Management and Organization, of Sociology, and of Environmental Studies at the University of Southern California

Charting Alternative Responses to the Climate Crisis

In this talk, Prof. Paul S. Adler argue that navigating the climate crisis requires not only technological innovation but also fundamental organizational and institutional transformation, and that by understanding the diverse pathways available, we can foster more effective collaboration and mutual learning across different systems of societal governance to accelerate a just and sustainable transition.



Prof. Sara Migliorini

Faculty of Law, University of Macau

LLMs in Court

In this research, Prof. Sara Migliorini and Dr. Djallel Bouneffouf conclude that responsible LLM governance is essential to uphold judicial accountability, transparency, and public trust amid accelerating AI adoption, emphasizing the need for rigorous validation, human oversight, and clear institutional safeguards to ensure fair and legitimate judicial decision-making.



Dr. Djallel Bouneffouf

IBM Research New York



Prof. TANG Li

School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University

Generative AI for Economic Policy Analysis

In this talk, She highlights the multifaceted forces reshaping scientific cooperation across the Pacific and offers insights into how policy and institutional adjustments can help sustain productive and resilient research partnerships despite ongoing geopolitical headwinds.



Prof. Xufeng ZHU

Professor & Dean, School of Public Policy & Management, Tsinghua University (SPPM)

Digital Technologies and Agile Governance: Challenges and Adaptation for the Chinese Government in the Intelligence Era

In this seminar, he addressed that achieving agile governance in China requires balancing technological empowerment with institutional flexibility, strengthening accountability, and safeguarding public trust, thereby ensuring that digital transformation serves both state capacity and societal well-being.



Prof. YI Fan

Associate Professor, National University of Singapore

Northern Metropolis Plan: Effects on Housing Prices, Consumption, and Demographics—With Inconclusive Evidence on Inequality

In this seminar, Prof. YI Fan argue that the findings confirm the Northern Metropolis Plan's short-term stimulus on housing and consumption, while demographic shifts and inequality trade-offs call for targeted policy interventions.



Dr. Julio Bacio Terracino

Former Head of the Anti-Corruption and Integrity in Government Division at the OECD

Integrity in Practice: Real Tools for Real Policy Problems

In this talk, Dr. Julio Bacio Terracino

Demystifies corruption's hidden role in diverse policy domains, equips public policy practitioners with practical anti-corruption tools via real-world cases, and highlights integrity competence as a critical strategic asset for effective governance.



Dr. Matthew ZOOK

University Research Professor, Department of Geography, University of Kentucky



Dr. Yujia HE

Assistant Professor, Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce, University of Kentucky



Dr. Chen-Chris GONG

Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research

Bi-directional Coupling Methodology between Integrated Assessment Model REMIND and Hourly Power-Sector Model

In this research, Dr. Gong demonstrates that bidirectional soft-coupling of IAM REMIND with PyPSA and DIETER merges strategic long-term climate mitigation insights with hourly operational precision, delivering granular data to support emission-aligned energy transition planning across Germany, Europe and China.

STUDENT HUB



Student Achievement

PPOL PhD Students Join Editorial Teams of Two Leading International Public Policy Journals

We are delighted to announce that our PhD students Chunyan Ran and Prithish Anand have joined the editorial teams of two leading international public policy journals: Policy Design and Practice (PDP) and The Journal of Asian Public Policy (JAPP). This outstanding achievement reflects their strong academic expertise and rising reputation in the global policy community, and we extend our warmest congratulations to them.

Policy Design and Practice (PDP) is an open-access, peer-reviewed journal that connects academic research with real-world policymaking, publishing theoretically informed and practically relevant analysis to address global governance challenges. The Journal of Asian Public Policy (JAPP), established in 2008, is a major platform for high-quality research on public policy, governance, and development across Asia, with a focus on comparative, cross-regional, and interdisciplinary studies. These appointments highlight the quality and impact of our PhD students within the international scholarly community.



3rd Champion of DW-SPORT.HK BASKETBALL LEAGUE Women 20th DIVISION

We celebrate the DW-SPORT.HK BASKETBALL LEAGUE Women 20th DIVISION women's basketball team, featuring Eryu Pan, a Master of Public Policy (MPP) student from HKUST's Division of Public Policy. This victory testifies to the team's dedication and camaraderie—including Eryu's integral role— reflecting the MPP program's spirit of collaboration.



Throughout the league, Eryu joined her teammates in rigorous training and thrilling matchups, embodying resilience, collaboration and determination—qualities of both outstanding athletes and future public policy leaders. As champions, the team honors Eryu and the university community.





PPOL Students Earn Second Prize at Global Sustainability Challenge (Asia-Pacific Final)

We are delighted to share that two students from the Master of Public Policy (MPP) Program of the Division of Public Policy (PPOL) at HKUST—HU, Lingyi and LIU, Yangyang—have achieved outstanding success in the 2025-2026 Global Sustainability Challenge (Asia-Pacific Regional Final).

Hosted by Zhejiang University and HKUST (in partnership with Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability), the competition took place in Hangzhou, China, gathering interdisciplinary teams across the Asia-Pacific to develop actionable sustainability solutions. Their team's project—“Climate-Ready Megaprojects: Decoupling Urban Expansion from Carbon Loss via Strategic Eco-Conscious Planning”—used GIS tools to map Greater Bay Area rural-urban carbon flow, standing out for its data-driven spatial design.

The team was awarded the Second Prize, a recognition of their ability to merge public policy expertise with spatial analytics to tackle complex global sustainability challenges.

This achievement reflects PPOL's commitment to nurturing tech-enabled policy leaders and reinforces HKUST's role in cross-regional sustainable development collaboration. We are proud of our students' success and look forward to their continued contributions on the global stage!



Student Activities

PPOL Students' Perspective on “Piano for All” Thanksgiving Event



Organized by the Green Team and with active participation from PPOL students, our “Piano for All: Music, Games, and Giving Back” gathering on Thanksgiving Day was a heartfelt success. PPOL students stepped forward to take the stage (and the keys) to share music

through the community piano—an initiative that underscores the strength of our community and the power of unity, especially as we stand together to support one another in the aftermath of the tragic Tai Po fire. The Green Team spearheaded a charity sale alongside PPOL student volunteers, where two organizations—Oxfam Hong Kong and Recovery Art—received overwhelming support from attendees. The funds raised will be directed towards local well-being initiatives, a meaningful outcome that makes the joint efforts of the Green Team (as organizers) and PPOL students (as participants) more rewarding.



HKUST PPOL Orientation 2025: Embarking on a New Academic Journey Together

On August 28, 2025, the Division of Public Policy (PPOL) at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) successfully held its annual orientation event, warmly welcoming a new cohort of MPP, MPM, MPhil and PhD students to the PPOL family.

The day kicked off with a warm welcome ceremony, where PPOL faculty shared the division's mission of nurturing future public policy leaders with global perspectives. They also introduced PPOL's distinguished academic resources and cutting-edge research directions, helping new students gain a clear overview. Informative sessions followed, covering curriculum, academic requirements and career guidance, with faculty patiently answering students' questions.



Student Activities

Beyond academic guidance, engaging ice-breaking activities fostered camaraderie, helping students connect, exchange aspirations and build a sense of belonging to the PPOL community. Concluding with a group photo, the orientation marked the start of their academic journey, boosting their confidence.

PPOL is committed to supporting every student's growth, and we look forward to witnessing the new cohort thrive as outstanding public policy professionals. Welcome to HKUST PPOL—your journey of exploration starts here!

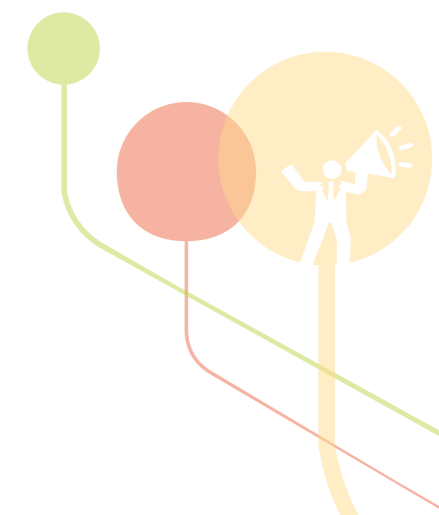


MPM Walking Tour- "Authentic Immersive Experience of Old Hong Kong – Urban Hike of Kowloon and Hong Kong Island"

On August 29, 2025, MPM students of HKUST's PPOL participated in a unique walking tour themed "Authentic Immersive Experience of Old Hong Kong – Urban Hike of Kowloon and Hong Kong Island", guided by Professor Donald Low. The tour offered students a rare chance to explore the city's historical charm beyond textbooks and classrooms.

Led by Professor Low, students wandered through iconic old neighborhoods in Kowloon and Hong Kong Island, learning about the city's urban evolution, cultural heritage and social changes. Professor Low shared insightful comments on how historical context shapes public policy, linking the tour's experiences to their MPM studies.

More than a casual hike, this immersive activity blended learning with exploration, strengthening the bond between students and the professor. It deepened students' understanding of Hong Kong's authenticity and provided practical insights for their future policy studies, making it a rewarding and memorable experience.



Student Activities

PPOL Private Film Screening: “Still Human”

On Saturday, November 8, 2025, HKUST’s Division of Public Policy hosted a meaningful private film screening of the acclaimed Hong Kong film “Still Human” for its students, faculty and staff, followed by a networking session.

Attendees watched the award-winning film, which tells the unlikely friendship between a Filipino domestic helper and her paralysed employer, offering insights into social inclusion and cross-cultural understanding. After the screening, a 1-hour networking session with refreshments allowed everyone to reflect on the film’s themes together.

It provided a unique chance for the PPOL community to connect outside classrooms while engaging with important social issues, making it a memorable and intellectually enriching afternoon.



Homecoming and Student-Faculty Buffet Lunch 2025



On November 15, 2025, the MPP program held a warm homecoming buffet lunch for alumni at UniQue, HKUST. Filled with nostalgia and warmth, the event honored graduates and strengthened bonds within the MPP community.

Attired in smart casual wear, participants enjoyed a delicious buffet. The highlight was a brief panel discussion by outstanding “star alumni,” who shared inspiring success stories and professional insights, sparking lively interactions.

This gathering connected new/seasoned alumni with first-year and second-year students, enabling them to renew friendships, expand networks, and deepen their sense of belonging to the MPP program through casual exchanges.

Such events are key to nurturing MPP community spirit. We thank all attendees and “star alumni” for making it a memorable occasion. The MPP program will host more gatherings to keep the community connected.

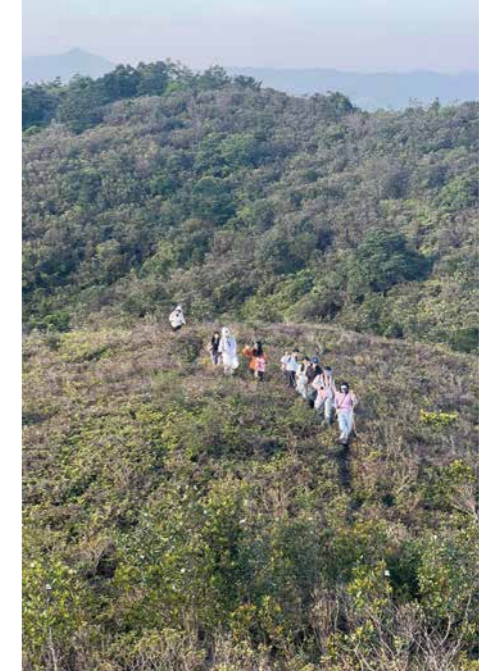


MPM Students’ Sai Kung Excursion

On December 28, 2025, a group of Master of Public Management (MPM) students from HKUST’s Division of Public Policy (PPOL) joined Prof. Donald Low for a memorable excursion to Sai Kung. Far from the campus classroom, this outing offered a relaxed setting for students to connect with Prof. Low and their peers beyond academic discussions.

Surrounded by Sai Kung’s beautiful coastal scenery, students engaged in casual yet insightful conversations with Prof. Low, who shared his perspectives on public management practices, career development, and real-world policy challenges. The day also included joyful group interactions, strengthening the camaraderie within the MPM cohort.

This excursion was more than a leisure trip—it deepened the student-faculty bond, broadened students’ horizons, and provided a unique learning experience outside the curriculum. It was a meaningful day that combined relaxation, connection, and inspiration, cherished by all participants.



MPM Alumni Sharing and Networking Event



In November 2025, the Master of Public Management (MPM) program of HKUST’s PPOL successfully held an Alumni Sharing and Networking Event, bringing together MPM alumni, current students and faculty in a warm and engaging atmosphere. The event aimed to facilitate knowledge sharing, strengthen alumni-student bonds and build a cohesive MPM community.

Outstanding MPM alumni were invited to share their valuable career experiences, insights into public management practices and practical advice for career development. Their inspiring stories sparked in-depth discussions, helping current students gain a clearer vision for their future paths. The networking session also allowed attendees to connect freely, exchange ideas and expand their professional networks.

This meaningful event not only bridged the gap between alumni and current students but also reinforced the MPM community spirit. It served as a precious platform for learning and connection, leaving a lasting impression on all participants and laying a solid foundation for future interactions.



Student Activities



PPOL Fall RPG Gathering

The Division of Public Policy successfully hosted its Fall RPG Gathering at Feather & Bone restaurant on November 21, 2025.

Organized by the PP Program Office, the gathering brought together PPOL faculty members and RPG students in a relaxed, non-academic atmosphere. It kicked off with wine and canapes to encourage casual mingling among attendees, followed by a warm family-style dinner. This meaningful event provided a precious opportunity for RPG students connect with their advisors outside the traditional classroom setting, fostering closer bonds and strengthening the sense of community within PPOL.



MPM End of Semester Lunch

To celebrate the successful conclusion of the semester, the Master of Public Management program of HKUST's Division of Public Policy held a warm end-of-semester lunch for its students, faculty and academic advisors. The event served as a perfect opportunity to reflect on the semester's achievements and strengthen bonds among the MPM community.

During lunch, attendees gathered in a relaxed and joyful atmosphere, chatting freely about their academic gains, challenges overcome and future plans. Faculty members expressed their appreciation for students' hard work and dedication, while students shared their gratitude for the guidance and support received throughout the semester.

More than just a meal, this end-of-semester lunch was a meaningful gathering that wrapped up the semester on a positive note. It reinforced the sense of belonging within the MPM family and laid a warm foundation for the next stage of their academic and professional journeys.



LAPS – GZ Campus Visit & Exchange: MPP Student Participation

The LAPS – GZ Campus Visit & Exchange proved a heartfelt success, with MPP student Lingyi Hu from HKUST's Division of Public Policy joining the initiative to interact and exchange ideas with student leaders from both the CWB and GZ campuses.

Student leaders from HKUST Guangzhou extended a warm welcome to the visiting group and guided them around the campus, where the group encountered the future of innovation and entrepreneurship at Qingsheng Hub, Nansha. Far more striking than the hub's innovative highlights, however, was the profound pride the HKUST Guangzhou community held for their campus, and the genuine openness and camaraderie shared among all its members.

This campus visit served as a meaningful reminder that reaching out and learning from peers is always a worthwhile endeavor. More than just a tour of the hub and campus spaces, the exchange centered on connecting with like-minded student leaders who share common goals and challenges—driving home the realization that the broader university

community is united in growing and learning together. Participation in the initiative brought valuable insights back to the MPP program, further strengthening HKUST's intercampus bonds.



Hike and Beach Cleanup at Campsite Bay

The Division of Public Policy at HKUST's Hike and Beach Cleanup at Campsite Bay proved a deeply success, uniting its members and enthusiastic participants in a meaningful blend of outdoor exploration and environmental stewardship. Guided by the Division's thoughtful pre-event arrangements and a spirit of camaraderie, the initiative not only offered a refreshing escape into nature but also fulfilled its vital mission to preserve Campsite Bay's natural beauty.

After a short hike to the bay—traversing an unpaved trail with sturdy footwear recommended for safety—participants turned their focus to the core cleanup effort. Equipped with garbage bags and gloves provided by the Division, they worked together to collect and sort waste along the shore, turning individual goodwill into tangible environmental impact and serving as a powerful reminder that small, collective efforts can make a lasting difference.

Following the cleanup, the collected garbage was properly disposed of at a designated point in Sai Kung Town, with participants embracing minor inconveniences—such as wet feet while boarding the boat—to see their environmental commitment through. The event's true success, led by the Division of Public Policy, lay in the unity and shared purpose of all involved, fostering purpose-driven community engagement and environmental responsibility.



Program Admissions

Programs	Requirement	Application deadline for 2026/27 Admissions
MPhil/PhD in Public Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to the University admission requirements, applicants must possess a bachelor's degree in any field with strong academic performance, especially in analytical courses. Applicants are highly recommended to have a satisfactory GMAT/GRE score. 	<p>For applicants from outside Hong Kong: 31st May 2026</p> <p>For applicants from Hong Kong: 30th June 2026</p>
Master of Public Management (MPM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A bachelor's degree with second class honors. At least 3 years of full-time working experience. Fulfilled English Language requirements set by the University. 	<p>For applicants from outside Hong Kong: 31st May 2026</p> <p>For applicants from Hong Kong: 30th June 2026</p>
Master of Public Policy (MPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A bachelor's degree with second class honors or above from a recognized institution, or an approved equivalent qualification. Fulfilled English Language requirements set by the University. 	<p>For applicants from outside Hong Kong: 31st May 2026</p> <p>For applicants from Hong Kong: 31st May 2026</p>

All applicants should submit their application documents through <https://pg.ust.hk/applynow>

