

HKUST PPOL

香港科技大學
THE HONG KONG
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY

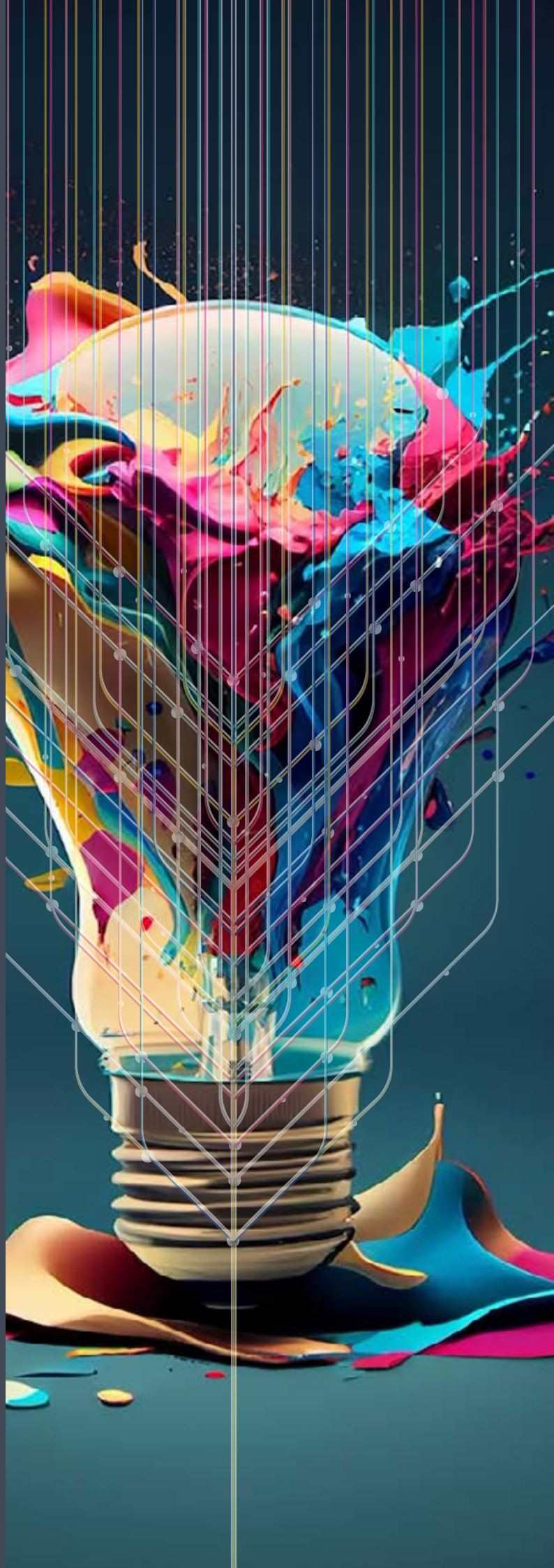
PPOL
Division of Public Policy
公共政策學部

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Faculty Photo



Acting Head's Message



Professor Naubahar SHARIF, Division of Public Policy, HKUST

As we commence another vibrant semester, it brings me great pleasure to welcome you all to the fourth edition of our Division's newsletter. This year marks a new chapter in our journey as we warmly embrace the leadership of our newly appointed president and provost. Their vision and ambition set a tone of reinvigoration, promising a phase of growth and evolution for our Division.

The dawn of a new academic year always heralds an invigorating energy that reverberates through our campus corridors, classrooms, and in the hearts of our dedicated faculty and dynamic student body. As we progress, we uphold our commitment to delivering interdisciplinary public policy research at the global frontier, partnering with diverse organizations to contribute significantly to policy development.

We are excited to explore the opportunities this new leadership brings, and we look forward to sharing our journey with you. Here's to a fruitful semester ahead, and as always, happy reading!



Awards and **Projects**

Awards and Achievements

Research Grants

New Appointments

On-going Projects

Awards and Achievements



Professor Naubahar Sharif Received the Prestigious “Chief Executive’s Project List 2023” Award

Congratulations to Professor Naubahar Sharif, Acting Head and Professor of the Division of Public Policy, who has been awarded a substantial grant of HK\$13.72 million from the prestigious "Chief Executive’s Community Project List 2023". This funding is generously made available by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and is allocated by the Chief Executive to innovative and impactful projects. Priority is given to projects that are supported by the relevant policy bureau, in this case, the Health Bureau.

This achievement is monumental in the annals of HKUST, as it marks only the second time a professor from our institution has received this esteemed award in over three decades of HKUST's history, and the first time since 1999. This speaks volumes about the significance of Professor Sharif's work and his commitment towards making a difference in our community.

The grant will support Professor Sharif's project titled "Enhancing the Mental Health of Hong Kong’s Non-Chinese Youth Aged 15-24". This project will span three years and is scheduled to launch at the end of 2023 or early in 2024.

We extend our hearty congratulations to Professor Sharif on this noteworthy achievement and look forward to seeing the positive impact his project will undoubtedly make.

Professor Naubahar Sharif Received an ‘Honorary Mention’ for the Common Core Teaching Excellence Award 2022

On 8 June 2023, Professor Sharif received an Honorary Mention, awarded by the Undergraduate Core Education Team in appreciation of his efforts in designing and teaching the common core course PPOL 2110- Science, Technology and Society in China. The Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) commended Professor Sharif's teaching philosophy, which prioritizes building strong partnerships with students and empathizing with their perspectives to support their academic and personal growth throughout his classes. His course design includes thoughtfully curated content and a well-balanced mix of assessment activities tailored to accommodate diverse student backgrounds and educational objectives. Moreover, Professor Sharif's innovative approach to adopting various digital platforms and technologies and creating high-quality course videos for this blended-learning course has transformed students from passive recipients to active, lifelong learners.



About the Common Core Teaching Excellence Award

The Common Core Teaching Excellence Award is established to recognize outstanding common core course instructors who have made substantial contributions to the design and/or the teaching of exemplary common core courses.

The nominees for the awards are evaluated based on three broad criteria: (a) Excellence in course design (including the development of a new course or the refinement or redevelopment of an existing course) and teaching innovation; (b) Delivery of an exemplary common core course; and (c) Innovative assessment of student learning.

A cash prize of \$10,000 is awarded to a maximum of three Honorary Mentions each year as a token of recognition and appreciation.



University Grants Committee's Official Coverage of Prof. Alex Jingwei He's Research Impact on Policy Making

In September 2023, the University Grants Committee (UGC) launched a series of publicity in Sing Tao Daily on how researchers in local public universities generate real-world impact through academic research. This series showcases a selection of research impact cases rated 4-star (internationally outstanding) in Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2020. Professor Alex Jingwei He, Associate Professor of PPOL and Acting Director of the Institute for Public Policy, HKUST was featured in this official coverage, representing the discipline of public policy and administration.

Below is an English summary of the newspaper feature story.

Prof He's research on the healthcare system has contributed to the knowledge informing large-scale reforms in mainland China and Hong Kong and public debate, has become an important reference to the World Bank, the World Health Organization, and the Chinese government's reform blueprint for China's health system, a large extent of it has been implemented in the State Council's Five-Year Plan (2016-2020). Prof. He's engagement with policymakers and media in mainland China and Hong Kong has reached at least one billion audiences.

In his work, Prof. He addresses the challenges of spiralling costs to meet increasing demand from a more prosperous aging population and the surge in non-communicable diseases faced by mainland China's health system, and the overstretched public service faced by the super-aging Hong Kong society. Prof. He's impact case study on "Improved Understanding and Awareness of Reforms Needed in Healthcare Delivery in China and Health Financing in Hong Kong" has been rated 4-star (internationally outstanding and considerably impactful) in the 2020 UGC's Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) UoA25- Political Science (incl. public policy & administration & international relations).



Phenomena of mainland China's Medical System and their impact on its Sustainability

Researchers and policymakers have largely overlooked the doctor-patient relationships and their significance in doctors' behavior. The unique contribution of Prof. He's investigations is on the tense doctor-patient relationship in mainland China resulting from the lack of mutual trust and even conflicts between the two parties and their significance in doctors' behavior in delivering healthcare under the implementation of universal health insurance coverage in mainland China. Such tense relationships have been identified in Prof. He's investigations as adversely affecting the sustainability and capacity of the mainland's medical system, as there is a tendency for doctors to resort to "defensive medicine" involving over-prescription of drugs and diagnostic tests to avoid potential liability and future medical disputes.



Photo Sourced from Sing Tao Daily

A Bridge Between Healthcare Professionals and Policymakers

Prof. He has been advocating for doctors and frontline medical staff and persuading policymakers in mainland China to fight for better treatment and benefits for the former by visiting and delivering speeches in different government departments and public hospitals. In Hong Kong, Prof. He has been invited by the former Food and Health Bureau and the Hong Kong Federation of Insurers to share his research results, providing new perspectives for the insurance industry and relevant stakeholders, and enabling the public to understand medical insurance options better. Prof. He has the vision to apply his research results to make policy initiatives for society, to raise public awareness and understanding of medical insurance and health policies, and to become an important bridge between the relevant stakeholders.

References:

UGC RAE 2020 Impact Case UoA25- Political Science <https://bit.ly/3Zwwntv>

Sing Tao Daily: <https://bit.ly/3rpyxP8>



Research Grants



Principal Investigator: Prof. Alex Jingwei He

Project Title: Building a World-Class Innovation District in Northern Metropolis: Policy Innovation, Institutional Design, and Capacity Building
打造北部都會區世界級創新區：政策創新、制度設計及能力提升

Funding Agency: The Greater Bay Area Association of Academicians

Amount Awarded: HK\$598,000 (Matching Fund Inclusive)

Commencement Date: 1 Feb 2023



Project Description:

The Northern Metropolis development plan is one of Hong Kong's most strategic development projects. This research project seeks to inform the SAR Government's policymakers with concrete policy recommendations by synthesizing international experience and local wisdom.



Principal Investigator: Prof. Kellee Tsai

**Co-Principal Investigator: Prof. Masaru Yarime,
Prof. Kira Matus**

Project Title: Comparing East-West AI Ethics and Governance and its Policy Implications

Funding Agency: VPRDO 30 for 30 Research Initiative Scheme

Amount Awarded: HK\$1,000,000

Project Description:

This comparative AI ethics and governance project will explore different approaches in regulating AI technologies that have emerged in different countries and regions. By compiling a comprehensive national policy inventory, this project will develop an analytic framework for AI ethics and governance to provide evidence-based observations about corporate and government practices to build an East-West AI ethics and governance platform with a policy impact.



New Appointments



Professor Naubahar Sharif Reappointed as Acting Head of the Division of Public Policy at HKUST

Prof. Naubahar Sharif, Acting Head and Professor of the Division of Public Policy and Institute of Public Policy, Professor of the Division of Integrative Systems & Design, Institute for the Environment, HKUST Institute for Emerging Market Studies, has recently been reappointed as the Acting Head of the Division of Public Policy.



Professor Kira Matus Appointed as Associate Dean of the Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies (Taught Postgraduate Studies)

Prof. Kira Matus, Professor of the Division of Public Policy and the Division of Environment & Sustainability, Director of the Master of Public Management Program has recently been appointed as the Associate Dean of the Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies (Taught Postgraduate Studies).



Professor Alex Jingwei He Reappointed as Assessment Panel Member of RGC's Research Funding Scheme

Prof. Alex Jingwei He, Associate Professor of the Division of Public Policy and Acting Director of the Institute for Public Policy has recently been reappointed as the Assessment Panel Member (Humanities and Social Sciences) for Competitive Research Funding Scheme for the Local Self-financing Degree Sector, Research Grants Council (RGC). Prof. He served on the Panel from 2021 to 2023, and his appointment has been renewed to 2025.

Ongoing Projects

Leading Faculty	Funding Agency	Project
Prof. Naubahar Sharif 白立邦 教授	Mental Health Initiatives Funding Scheme, Advisory Committee on Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening Family Relationships for Hong Kong's Ethnic Minority Communities in the Aftermath of the Covid-19 Pandemic (2023 - Now)
	Mental Health Initiatives Funding Scheme, Advisory Committee on Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Ethnic Minority Elderly with Mental Health Needs (2023 - Now)
	Mental Health Initiatives Funding Scheme, Advisory Committee on Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing and Deploying Ethnic Minority Lay Leaders to Promote Mental Well-being Among Hong Kong's Major Ethnic Minority Communities (2022 - Now)
	Center for Aging Science, HKUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Towards a More Inclusive Hong Kong: Covid-19, Mental Well-being, and Mitigation Strategies for a Multicultural Elderly Community (2022 - Now)
	Institute for Emerging Market Studies, Center for Economic Policy, HKUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influence of and Interplay Between Culture and Chinese Outward FDI into Southeast Asia (2022 - Now)
Prof. Kira Matus 穆綺蘭 教授	RGC - General Research Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Towards 1.5C Lifestyles: What Motivates Sustainable Consumption Choices in Hong Kong? 邁向 1.5° C 生活模式：是什麼推動香港的可持續消費選擇？ (2022 - Now)
Prof. Masaru Yarime 鎗目雅 副教授	Global Engagement Funds, University College London	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Perspectives on Personal Data Use for Personalized COVID-19 Advice (2022 - Now)
	Institute for Emerging Market Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Smart City as a Field of Innovation: Effects of Public-Private Data Collaboration on Innovation in the Guangdong Province and Implications for the Greater Bay Area (2022 - Now)

Leading Faculty	Funding Agency	Project
Prof. Pengyu Zhu 朱鵬宇 副教授	CLP Research Fellowship, CLP Holdings Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EV Charging Infrastructure Planning Based on an Integrated Model of Optimization Algorithms and Spatial-Temporal Analysis (2022 - Now)
	RGC - Public Policy Research Funding Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Persistence of Behavioral Changes in Post-Pandemic Hong Kong: Implications for Transportation, Housing and Economic Development Policies 後疫情時代香港社會行為轉變的持續性研究：對於交通政策、住房政策以及經濟發展政策的指導意義 (2022 - Now)
	Innovation and Technology Fund, Other Income (Non-Profit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Planning for Transforming Hong Kong into a Leading Global Aviation and Innovation Hub 香港轉型成為世界航空與創新中心之策略規劃 (2021- Now)
Prof. Alex Jingwei He 和經緯 副教授	RGC - General Research Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technocrats and Mid-Level Policy Entrepreneurship in China: Explaining Local Policy Innovations in the Social Welfare Arena 中國大陸的技術官僚與中層政策企業家：解釋社會福利領域的地方政策創新 (2023 - Now)
	World Health Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public-Private Mix for Continuity of Care for Older Persons with a Focus on Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia (2023 - Now)
Prof. Xiaofan Zhao 趙小凡 助理教授	National Natural Science Foundation of China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explaining Business Compliance: Evidence from Energy-saving Regulation in China 中國企業服從節能減排規制的動因及其作用機制 (2022 - Now)

Research Showcase

Science, Technology, and
Innovation Policy

Environmental Policy and
Sustainability

Social and Urban Policy



Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy

Veale, M., **Matus, K.**, & Gorwa, R. (2023). AI and Global Governance: Modalities, Rationales, Tensions. *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, 19.

In this review, the authors study what exactly the salient but polarizing issue of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is being governed, how, by who, and why by considering the literature on AI, the governance of computing, and regulation and governance. The authors took critical stock of the different modalities of the global governance of AI that have emerged, such as ethical councils, industry governance, contracts and licensing, standards, international agreements, and domestic legislation with extraterritorial impact, and examine selected rationales and tensions that underpin them, drawing attention to the interests and ideas driving these different modalities. As these governance regimes built around AI become clearer and more stable, the authors urge those engaging with or studying the global governance of AI to constantly ask the all-important question of “Who benefits?”

Yarime, M. "Facilitating Data-Driven Innovation for Sustainability: Data Governance and Its Impacts in Smart Cities in China." *2023 AAS Annual Conference. ASIANSTUDIES*, 2023.

Few empirical studies were conducted to examine how data are managed and provided in smart cities and how they affect companies' innovative activities, despite their crucial role in addressing a variety of sustainability issues. This conference paper examines the data available and used in smart cities and how the government and enterprises collaborate on data to facilitate innovation. Focusing on China, particular attention is paid to different types of public-private collaboration for smart cities, including equipment supply, platform building, and data analysis. Interviews were conducted to examine how key stakeholders in the public and private sectors collaborate on data, and the impact on the outcomes of innovative activities was examined by analysing the government procurement data.

Stephenson, M., Lejarraga, I., **Matus, K.**, Mulugetta, Y., Yarime, M., & Zhan, J. (2023). AI as a SusTech Solution: Enabling AI and Other 4IR Technologies to Drive Sustainable Development through Value Chains. In *The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence for the Sustainable Development Goals* (pp. 183-201). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and other new technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) can help drive sustainable development through what can be called 'SusTech' solutions. To address the questions on how can these SusTech solutions be supported by governments, adopted by firms (especially in managing value chains), and encouraged by users, this book chapter proposes a three-part solution: (1) creating a Sustainable Technology Board by the G20 (modeled after the Financial Stability Board) as a mechanism for coordination, cooperation, and scaling of SusTech solutions; (2) adopting policy and regulatory measures to help firms integrate SusTech solutions into value chains, including drawing from 11 concrete, actionable options; and (3) illustrating opportunity and inspiring replication by examples of firms already adopted SusTech solutions.



Environmental Policy and Sustainability

Wang, R., Hertwich, E. G., Fishman, T., Deetman, S., Behrens, P., Chen, W. Q., de Koning, A., Xu, M., **Matus, K.** Ward, H., & Zimmerman, J. B. (2023). The Legacy Environmental Footprints of Manufactured Capital. *PNAS*, 120(24), e2218828120.

This paper integrates 50 years of economic and environmental data to provide the global legacy environmental footprint (LEF) and unveil the historical material extractions, greenhouse gas emissions, and health impacts accrued in today's manufactured capital. It is shown that between 1995 and 2019, global LEF growth outpaced GDP and population growth, and the current high level of national capital stocks has been heavily relying on global supply chains in metals. The LEF shows a larger or growing gap between developed economies (DEs) and less-developed economies (LDEs) while economic returns from global asset supply chains disproportionately flow to DEs, resulting in a double burden for LDEs. Ensuring best practices in asset production while prioritizing well-being outcomes is essential in addressing global inequalities and protecting the environment, and it requires a paradigm shift in sustainability science and policy to achieve this end.

E. Doran, J. Golden, **K. Matus**, L. Lebel, V. Timmer, M. van 't Zelfde & A. de Koning "The Emerging Role of Mega-Urban Regions in the Sustainability of Global Production-Consumption Systems." *npj Urban Sustainability* 3.1 (2023): 23.

Mega-urban regions (MURs) are important consumers or traders of resources from or producers of wastes destined for the global hinterlands. This paper uses three cases to illustrate governance innovation in MUR-PCS interactions: industrial symbiosis in Tianjin, China; electricity production in London, the UK; and the adoption of standards and labels for seafood in Bangkok, Thailand. In London and Tianjin, waste capture reduced consumption of hinterland resources, whereas, in Bangkok, the aim was to improve the sustainability of resource use in coastal and marine hinterlands. The authors suggest an agenda for research to evaluate the potential for transferrable MUR governance innovation to enable sustainable and equitable PCSs.

Wang, X., Li, H., Wang, Y., & **Zhao, X.** (2023). Quantifying the Potential Co-Benefit of Air Quality Improvement on Cultural Heritage in China. *Sustainability*, 15(11), 8709.

Atmospheric pollutants corrode heritage materials, especially stone, causing a loss far beyond the economic losses of the degraded materials. Over the past decades, conventional air pollutants have been slashed owing to clean air actions in China, producing a significant co-benefit for heritage conservation. However, the benefits may be offset by increases in the photochemical oxidants in smog, such as ozone, which damage heritage materials. This study employed dose-response functions to quantify the impacts of air pollutants on the surface recession of the limestone of heritage structures in China, assessed the potential benefits of air quality improvement for heritage conservation, and provided evidence for the benefits of air quality improvement for heritage conservation, putting forward policy recommendations for heritage conservation, including assessing pollution risk, promoting heritage conservation through social sustainability, and implementing differentiated conservation strategies.



Social and Urban Policy

He, A. J., Liu, P., Yumeng, F., & Liu, H. (2023). Sending Professors to the Field: Does Faculty-Practitioner Exchange Narrow the Theory-Practice Gap in China's MPA Programs? *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, 16(1), 96-113.

This paper examines the micro-dynamics of such exchange in Master of Public Administration (MPA) programs in China where the gap was particularly wide. 13 faculty instructors in Chinese MPA programs with experience in government engagement were interviewed. It was found that the instructors were predominantly driven by a keen awareness of their weak real-world exposure. The government engagement experience boosted their self-efficacy when teaching in-service students, and the empathy developed between instructors and students augmented educational outcomes. The engagement service strengthened the faculty instructors' awareness of the theory-practice gap and their appreciation of students' needs. They became more cognizant of the usefulness of various theories and more capable of relating theory to practice.

He, A. J., Qian, J., Chan, W. S., & Chou, K. L. (2023). Willingness to Purchase Hypothetical Private Long-Term Care Insurance Plans in a Super-ageing Society: Evidence from Hong Kong. *Journal of Aging & Social Policy*, 1-26.

This paper seeks to unravel the paradox of having soaring demand for long-term (LTC) services in aging societies on the one hand and the absence of a risk-pooling mechanism on the other through an empirical study in Hong Kong, a super-aging society. A survey sampled 1,105 respondents was conducted in 2020 to analyze middle-aged individuals' willingness to purchase hypothetical private LTC insurance plans derived from a discrete choice experiment; clear barriers toward potential purchase have been identified in the study despite encouraging acceptance. It is found that the desire for self-sufficiency and preference for formal care powerfully increased individuals' interest, but cognitive difficulty, habitual adherence to out-of-pocket payment, and unfamiliarity with the LTC insurance market reduced such interest. The results with reference to the changing social dynamics are explained, with policy implications for LTC reforms in Hong Kong and beyond drawn.

Zhu, P., Wang, K., Ho, S. N. R., & Tan, X. (2023). How is Commute Mode Choice Related to Built Environment in a High-Density Urban Context? *Cities*, 134, 104180.

This paper addresses the gap in mainstream studies that focus on the relationship between the built environment and travel behaviors in low-density urban settings by examining such relationships in highly dense urban settings, using Hong Kong as a case study. The findings highlight that built environment characteristics have a greater impact on people's choices among different public transport sub-modes compared to their choice between public transport and cars. Specifically, millennials are more influenced by built environment attributes when selecting rail-based and mixed-mode public transport, while older commuters are more influenced when choosing road-based transport. These results shed light on individuals' commuting mode preferences in transit-dominated urban contexts and provide a solid foundation for policymaking in encouraging the use of specific public transit sub-modes and catering to the needs of different age groups.

Zhu, P., Li, J., Wang, K., & Huang, J. (2023). Exploring Spatial Heterogeneity in the Impact of Built Environment on Taxi Ridership Using Multiscale Geographically Weighted Regression. *Transportation*, 1-35.

This paper applies multiscale geographically weighted regression (MGWR) to investigate the associations between taxi ridership and spatial contexts to address the effects of spatial heterogeneity in the built environment on taxi passengers' travel behaviours. The MGWR considerably improves modeling fit compared to the global OLS model by capturing the spatially varying processes at different scales. The results demonstrate the existence of strong spatial non-stationarity in the various built environment factors affecting the spatial distribution of taxi pick-ups and drop-offs. This study reveals the complex relationships between the built environment and the distribution of taxi ridership at different spatial scales and provides valuable insights for transport planning, taxi resource allocation, and urban governance.

Wang, K., Chen, Z., Cheng, L., **Zhu, P.**, Shi, J., & Bian, Z. (2023). Integrating Spatial Statistics and Machine Learning to Identify Relationships between E-Commerce and Distribution Facilities in Texas, US. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, 173, 103696.

This paper proposes a novel analytical framework that integrates spatial statistics and machine learning techniques to identify relationships between e-commerce and distribution facilities. The framework includes centro-graphic analysis, global and local spatial association measurements, and a recently popularized interpretable machine learning approach – gradient boosting decision trees (GBDT) – to analyze warehousing location choices. The GBDT results show that industrial activities and transportation network accessibility are key factors influencing warehousing location choices. It is also found that the relationship between warehouses and e-commerce establishments is weaker in Houston, a major maritime gateway for goods entering and leaving, compared to Dallas-Fort Worth and Austin. Implications for local freight transportation planners and decision-makers are discussed.



Featured Article

Hong Kong at the
Frontstage of the
Atomic Age

PPOL Nuclear Policy
Expert Voiced in
Media on Fukushima's
Discharge of Treated
Wastewater and
Warned against Long-
Term- Environmental
Impact of Nuclear
Industry



A composite image of Hong Kong at night, viewed from a high vantage point. The city's lights are visible, with a prominent skyscraper in the center. The image is overlaid with several bright, white stage lights from above, creating a dramatic effect. In the foreground, the silhouette of a person stands on a dark, rocky ledge, looking out over the city. The title 'Hong Kong at the Frontstage of the Atomic Age' is written in large, white, sans-serif font on the left side of the image.

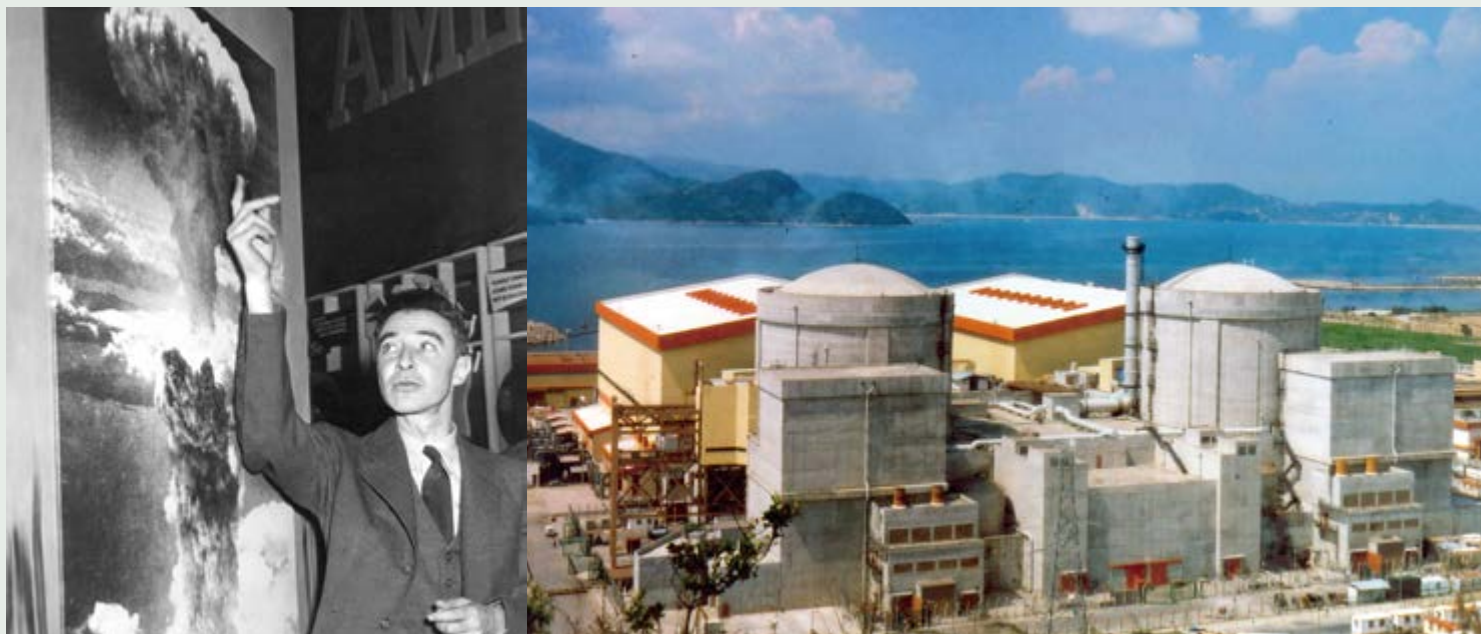
Hong Kong at the Frontstage of the Atomic Age

On July 20th of this summer, the movie “Oppenheimer” was released in cinemas worldwide. Directed by Christopher Nolan, this film narrates the life and achievements of J. Robert Oppenheimer, the father of the atomic bomb, and it reminds the audience that humanity still lives with the aftermath of his creation: the promises of low-carbon nuclear energy to mitigate global warming and the threat of total annihilation from a nuclear war. These formidable issues can only be addressed with approaches that combine bold policy ideas supported by strong technological insights. With its unique geographical position and relevance as a global center for ideas, Hong Kong and HKUST can be at the forefront of discussions on how humanity will deal with the legacy of the atom.

Many people in Hong Kong might wonder what makes nuclear science and policy relevant in this city. The connection becomes clearer when one remembers that $\frac{1}{4}$ of the electricity consumed in Hong Kong comes from a nuclear reactor located on the mainland. Besides, with pressing objectives to decarbonize its electricity sector, Hong Kong is considering increasing the share of imported

nuclear electricity to more than 50%, making Hong Kong one of the most nuclear-dependent cities in the world. A look at the locations of nuclear power plants in the region also shows that Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area are surrounded by nuclear power plants, making the megalopolis all the more vulnerable to a nuclear accident. Finally, China is on course to become the world leader in nuclear technology, a shift that will bring fundamental changes to the nuclear industry and its practices worldwide. Whether it is to better prepare for a nuclear future domestically or to understand the changes to come for the global nuclear sector under Chinese leadership, Hong Kong and HKUST have a unique role to play in participating in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

As the movie “Oppenheimer” shows, nuclear technology confronts us with existential threats. The Doomsday clock indicates how close humanity is to a nuclear apocalypse, is now set 90 seconds to midnight, the closest it has ever been to the fatal hour. Most concerning for experts is the rising confrontation between China and the U.S. and the nuclear arms race they have engaged in. Many



Left: J. Robert Oppenheimer with a snapshot of a nuclear explosion cloud

Right: Daya Bay Nuclear Plant of the Guangdong Province

fears that a nuclear war between the two powers could be triggered by an accident during a clash in the South China Sea or near Taiwan. Nuclear arms control treaties and exchanges between nuclear experts from rival states have been crucial in the past to mitigate the risks of nuclear conflicts. However, there has been an alarming collapse of nuclear arms control frameworks and a shutdown of communication between nuclear experts from China and the U.S. in recent years. Hong Kong is geographically located at the doorstep of possible military conflicts between the U.S. and China and cannot escape the deadly impacts of such clashes. Yet, the city has a compelling asset that it can leverage to contribute to preventing these nightmarish outcomes. Hong Kong can help restore the vital connections between nuclear experts and act as a platform where they can discuss policy frameworks to reduce the risks of a nuclear conflict between the two countries. The city of Hong Kong has a responsibility to its people and the world to work toward avoiding a nuclear war between the two rivals.

About the Author



**Prof. Julien de
Troullioud de
Lanversin**

Prof. Julien de Troullioud de Lanversin is Assistant Professor in the Division of Public Policy at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, he received his Ph.D. in Applied Physics from Princeton University. Prof. de Troullioud de Lanversin's scholarship combines technical solutions and policy analysis to address the dangers of nuclear technologies while promoting its peaceful use as low-carbon energy. He is interested in nuclear energy's role in decarbonizing the electricity sector in Hong Kong and China while addressing public concerns over safety issues. Prof. de Troullioud de Lanversin also works toward understanding and addressing the risks of nuclear war, especially in the context of the U.S.-China rivalry. Together with the academic community at HKUST, he is striving to place Hong Kong at the front stage of discussions on how the atom will impact humanity's future.

PPOL Nuclear Policy Expert Voiced in Media on Fukushima's Discharge of Treated Wastewater and Warned against Long-Term-Environmental Impact of Nuclear Industry



Nuclear scientist and policy expert Prof. Julien de Troullioud de Lanversin of PPOL has recently gained media attention for his scientific and policy insight on Fukushima's discharge of treated wastewater, the long-term environmental impact generated by the nuclear industry, and his view on Hong Kong citizens' purchase and use of commercial radiation detectors.

Prof. de Troullioud de Lanversin voiced in his article "Fukushima Waste Water Release: How Mainland China and Hong Kong Got it Wrong" in *South China Morning Post* that the recent seafood ban is based on unfounded fear of treated wastewater discharged from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant; what should be of real concern but failed to address are the issues of low public acceptance of nuclear



TVB and Now TV News interviewed Prof. Julien de Troullioud de Lanversin on his views on the Fukushima nuclear plant's discharge of wastewater and the purchase of radiation detectors by Hong Kong citizens

technology, and the impact of the nuclear industry's long-term use of the environment to dispose of radioactive waste.

Read the SCMP article here:

<https://bit.ly/3ZkbEZV>



In a recent interview with TVB News, Prof. de Troullioud de Lanversin stated that there are no better alternatives for handling the wastewater, such as the evaporation or burial of the wastewater underground as proposed by other parties, because in evaporation, the particles of tritium are going to stay in the air, likely the upper part of the atmosphere, and there is no guarantee that it would not spread and penetrate to the populated areas in China, Japan, South Korea, and elsewhere. By burying the wastewater underground, it will leak and contaminate the land of the entire region in case of an earthquake.

As regards the Hong Kong citizens' purchase of radiation detectors, Prof. de Troullioud de Lanversin suggested during a Now TV News interview that the current radiation level ($1.9\mu\text{Sv/h}$) measured around 10km away from the Fukushima nuclear plant as read on those commercial radiation detectors will only become dangerous if someone exposes to the dose continuously for a duration of at least ten months to 1 year. Only a nuclear professional is capable of interpreting those readings on the radiation detectors. Therefore, he does not recommend Hong Kong citizens to use these devices and draw conclusions from the readings. He assured that the radiation levels monitored by Hong Kong and Japanese governments are more accurate than those by commercial devices.



A person in a dark suit is seated at a dark wooden table. Their hands are resting on the table, one near a large gold gear with the words 'International Policy' and another near a smaller silver gear with the word 'LAW'.

Public Policy Dialogue Series

Hong Kong and the World:
Still Connected and Valued
Internationally?

Education and Science: Does
STEM Education Matter in Hong
Kong's Move into an Innovation
and Technology Hub?

Hong Kong and the World: Still Connected and Valued Internationally?



On February 11, 2023, the Policy Dialogues Series invited an esteemed panel of speakers Professor Anthony B. L. Cheung, GBS, JP, Chair Professor of Public Administration at EdUHK and former Secretary for Transport and Housing in the HKSAR Government; Professor Tai-lok Lui, JP, Chair Professor of Hong Kong Studies at the Department of Asian and Policy Studies and Director of the Academy of Hong Kong Studies at EdUHK; and Mr. Brian Wong, a Rhodes Scholar and DPhil candidate in Politics at Oxford University, who is also the Founding Editor-in-Chief of the Oxford Political Review. The discussion was expertly moderated by Professor Kira Matus from the Division of Public Policy at HKUST to discuss the topic "Hong Kong and the World: Still Connected and Valued Internationally?"

Prof. Cheung initiated this dialogue series by posing two thought-provoking questions: firstly, is Hong

Kong returning to a world that is as friendly and appreciative as it once was? And secondly, do Hong Kong people possess unwavering confidence in the city's future and its impact on the global stage? Prof. Cheung then proceeded to delve into the historical narrative of Hong Kong, highlighting its post-WWII success and its unique role as a result of its historical and geopolitical positioning. He emphasized how Hong Kong served as a buffer zone between the US and China during the decline of the British Empire and the rise of Pan-Americana. Furthermore, he discussed Hong Kong's interconnectedness with both the Western camp and China during China's early reform in the 1980s and 1990s. The remarkable economic success of Hong Kong was evident as being one of the Four Asian Tigers in the 1980s and was hailed by Time Magazine in early 2008 as the "Ny-lon-kong."

However, Prof. Cheung astutely observed that since the late 2010s, there has been rising hostility within Sino-American relations. With the termination of the Hong Kong Policy Act and the passing of the Hong Kong Autonomy Act in July 2020, Prof. Cheung noted that Hong Kong has transformed from a buffer zone to a hotspot in US-China relations. Consequently, Hong Kong has suffered collateral damage in the deteriorating relationship between the two superpowers verging on the New Cold War. Prof. Cheung lamented that Hong Kong, once the epitome of the "Best-of-Both-Worlds," now finds itself in an unflattering situation. While acknowledging Hong Kong's significant challenges in maintaining its status, Prof. Cheung adopted a philosophical perspective, asserting that no great world city is immune to decline. He drew upon historical examples of once-great cities such as Venice, Lisbon, Amsterdam, Liverpool, and Detroit, all of which have experienced varying degrees of decline. In Prof. Cheung's view, there is no reason why Hong Kong should be an exception. He emphasized that Hong Kong's strategic value has always been its role as an interconnection between China and the rest of the world.

Approaching the question of internationalization, Prof. Lui cautioned against complacency, highlighting the distinction between regional headquarters, regional offices, and local offices. He presented data indicating that while the number of local offices has been increasing, regional headquarters and regional offices have reached a plateau and have been declining in recent years. Furthermore, when

comparing the composition of regional headquarters from 30 years ago to present figures, Prof. Lui noted a significant decrease in the dominance of US regional headquarters and those from other Western countries, with mainland Chinese companies taking their place. According to Prof. Lui, the status of Hong Kong in the eyes of the world is shaped by evolving international relations and geopolitics. He emphasized the need to find ways to enhance Hong Kong's relinking with the world, while acknowledging the advantage of its institutional depth.

Mr. Brian Wong asserted that Hong Kong's competitiveness faces its greatest risk in its inability to adapt to a post-Covid and post-Sino-US rivalry geopolitical landscape. He cautioned against the extremes of those wishing to transform Hong Kong into just another mainland Chinese city. Conversely, Mr. Wong advocated for a departure from binary dichotomies when examining the world, urging us to transcend the limitations of a nation-state mentality. Prof. Matus, on the other hand, encouraged us to have faith in the people and culture of Hong Kong. She expressed optimism about Hong Kong's future and urged us to appreciate the vibrant and unique elements that distinguish Hong Kong from any other place in the world.



28 Jan 2008 Time Magazine Cover

Education and Science: Does STEM Education Matter in Hong Kong's Move into an Innovation and Technology Hub?



On March 18, 2023, the fifth Public Policy Dialogue Series invited Professor Anthony B. L. Cheung, GBS, JP, Chair Professor of Public Administration at EdUHK, former president of EdUHK and Secretary for Transport and Housing; Professor Tai-lok Lui, JP, Chair Professor of Hong Kong Studies at the Department of Asian and Policy Studies and Director of the Academy of Hong Kong Studies at EdUHK; Professor Naubahar Sharif, esteemed authority on Innovation and Technology Policy, Acting Head and Professor of the Division of Public Policy at HKUST. The panel was moderated by Professor Peter T. Y. Cheung, Head and Professor of Practice in the Department of Social Science at EdUHK. The dialogue focused on STEM education and its role in propelling Hong Kong towards becoming an innovation and technology hub.

Prof. A. Cheung opened the Dialogue Series by stating the objectives of science education and the prominence of innovation and technology in national policies, and drew figures from worldwide studies to illustrate the rapidly changing labor market and structure. Prof. A. Cheung deduced that what is important is not the specific skills, techniques or knowledge, but how to nurture the critical mind. He advocated a stronger government role in reshaping the innovation and technology ecosystem, and fostering collaboration among government, industry, and universities stating that innovation should be collective and not just depend on university research alone. Prof. A. Cheung emphasized the significance of the human mind and its capacity for adaptation, reflection, and invigoration, referring to these qualities as the Newton spirit.

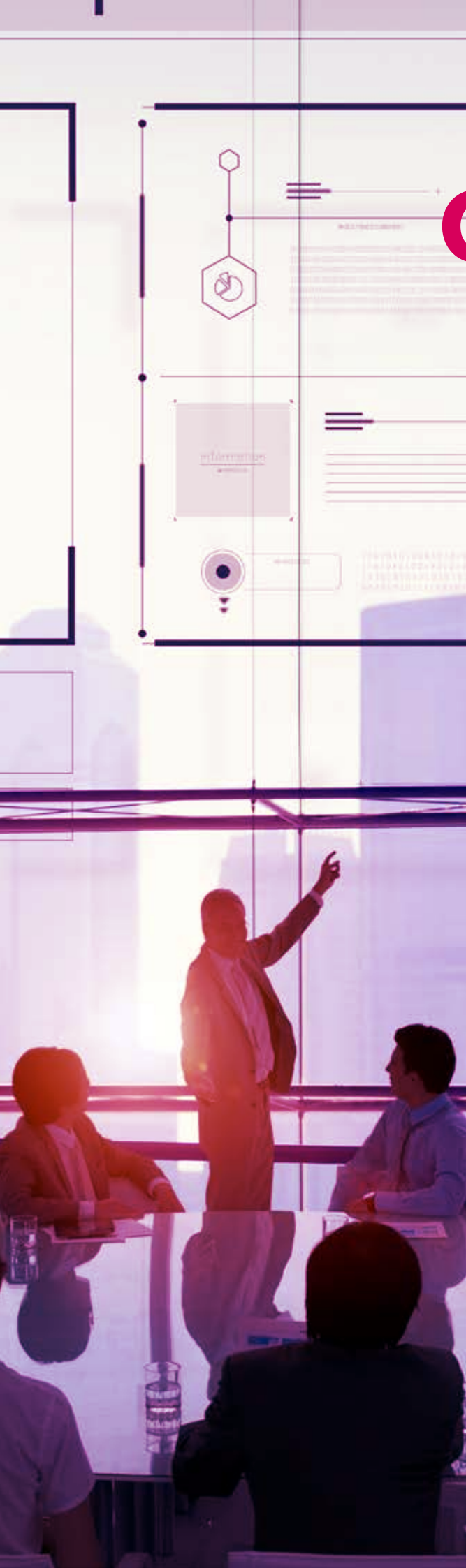


Prof. A. Cheung prompted educators to reflect on their approach to education, emphasizing the importance of imparting knowledge and wisdom. He argued against a dichotomy between science and arts, stating that both stem from liberal arts and that education should focus on understanding nature, human society, and humanhood, instead of just skills and knowledge. He acknowledged that perennial problems such as conflicts, violence and prejudice cannot be solved solely through innovation and technology (I&T). Prof. Sharif agrees with Prof. A. Cheung pointed out that STEM education is related to the need to maintain economic competitiveness or the “lever for riches”, but the challenge lies in the tendency for STEM subjects taught in isolation, with insufficient connection to Arts and not being helpful to make the world a better place. Prof. Sharif delineated the history of STEM in other countries and made a comparison, he advocated for a broader societal context for STEM education, referencing the Humboldt Model of Higher Education. Prof. Lui perceived that STEM or STEAM education would be quite demanding on the teaching skills without pre-manufactured teaching materials, and its demand on knowledge integration moving from one domain of knowledge to another, Prof. Lui invited us to rethink the necessity of STEM education suggesting that talents can be hired from elsewhere and warned the inevitable time-lapse in nurturing future STEM talents



to address existing issues, he proposed a business ecosystem that rewarding and incentivizing innovation without seeking short-term returns is key for Hong Kong to become a successful I&T hub.

During the discussion session, Prof. A. Cheung posed three questions: the possibility of innovation without STEM, the necessary ecosystem for non-STEM individuals, and whether I&T can sometimes limit wisdom. Prof. Sharif's suggested that other channels can contribute to Hong Kong's innovation ecosystem and expressed the same skepticism as Prof. Lui about the necessity to have Hong Kong's own STEM talents. Prof. Lui added that innovation should not be restricted to hardware; focusing too much on STEM can restrict our imagination. Prof. P. Cheung emphasized that the ecosystem is a result of various factors that the government cannot easily manipulate. He stressed the importance of critical thinking and freedom of expression for creativity and exploration of ideas. In response to a question about STEM branding, Prof. Sharif suggested customizing STEM or STEAM education to make it relevant and applicable, building on the characteristics that have made Hong Kong successful as a first-world city.



Conference and Events

PPOL Hosted the Asia Pacific Public Policy Network Conference

PPOL Hosted Book Launch on “How Covid-19 Took Over the World: Lessons for the Future”

PPOL Visit to IPE in HKUST (GZ) Campus

PPOL Hosted the Asia Pacific Public Policy Network Conference

The Division of Public Policy (PPOL) has successfully hosted the 8th annual Asia Pacific Public Policy Network (AP|PPN) Conference on 1 and 2 June 2023. It is the second time that PPOL has hosted the conference, and this year's theme is "Public Policy in a Turbulent World" inviting experts across multiple disciplines from different parts of the world to talk about public policy issues in a post-pandemic world. The 2-day AP|PPN conference consisted of 2 keynote speeches, 1 panel conversation, 6 workshops, and 130 sessional talks.

The AP|PPN is a flagship conference in the Asia Pacific region for public policy scholars. The AP|PPN began with the opening remarks given by Professor Naubahar Sharif, Acting Head and Professor of PPOL, and Professor Xun Wu, Professor of the Trust of Innovation, Policy and Entrepreneurship, at the Society Hub, HKUST (GZ), and a member of the steering committee of AP|PPN, gave the welcome speech.



Professor Naubahar Sharif delivered the AP|PPN opening speech



Professor Xun Wu delivering welcome speech

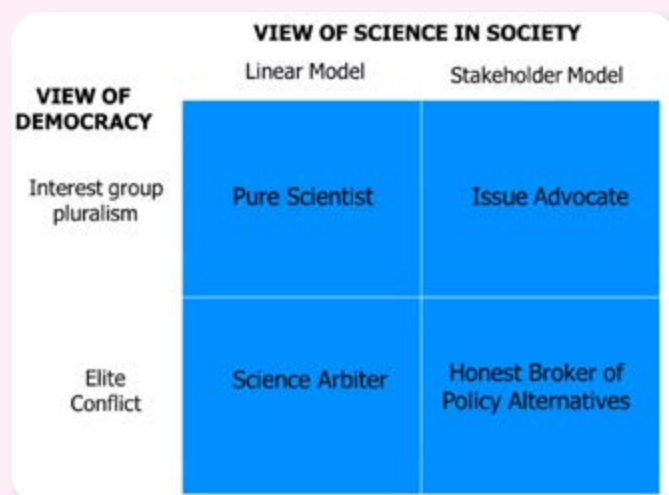
Keynote Speech by Professor Roger A. Pielke Jr.



Prof. Pielke Jr. delivering the keynote speech on Day 1 of AP|PPN Conference

Prof. Pielke Jr. who authored the book "Honest Broker: Making Sense of Science in Policy and Politics" and a few other books on climate change and politics is currently professor in environmental studies at the University of Colorado Boulder, he gave a keynote speech for the AP-PPN conference on the topic "Science Advise in the Covid-19 pandemic" which is public policy research beyond Covid itself, Prof. Pielke Jr. started the keynote by giving definitions to science, expert, policy, politics, and politicization of science, the politicization of science should be encouraged according to Prof. Pielke Jr.. He stated that there are four roles that experts can

play in policy advising, as shown in the figure below, and whatever advice given towards decision-making is policy advice, whether it is science advice, expert advice, or political advice. Professor Pielke Jr. gave some famous examples of advisory mechanisms, namely science, expert, political, and policy advice, and presented his research results under the context of Covid-19 pandemic. The Emergency of Science Advice in a Pandemic Emergency (ESCAPE) of Hong Kong, Italy, the Netherlands, and Japan during the Covid-19 pandemic were compared in his presentation, and examples of countries or regions that neglected (the US) or those that failed to incorporate expert advice (the UK, Japan, Italy, Hong Kong) can be generally be interpreted as a policy failure, followed by a comparison of how countries balance between economic growth and control of the Covid-19 pandemic, examples include the US, Dutch (the shadow advisory), the UK, Italy. Prof. Pielke emphasized that policy requires integration, not different islands of expertise. The concepts of shadow science advice, adversarial governance, stealth advocacy, and misplaced accountability were explained.



Four idealized roles for scientists in decision-making (Source: "The Honest Broker: Making Sense of Policy and Politics" by R. A. Pielke Jr.)

Keynote Speech by Professor Stuart Gietel-Basten

Prof. Gietel-Basten, Professor in social science and public policy at HKUST, author of the book "Why Demography Matters?" gave his keynote on "Is Demographic 'Crisis' an Inevitable Consequence of the Development Welfare State?" He pointed out the challenge posed by low fertility and the failure of two-dimensional pronatalist policies suggesting that the governments in Asia fail to address the fundamental and multidimensional causes of low fertility. Prof. Gietel-Basten presented the possible socio-theoretical reasons behind the low fertility rate: compressed modernity and the accelerated pace of changes in Asia as compared with Europe; clash of ideologies across generations; risks placed on the new generations' shoulders arising out of the transition from family/ community collective to individual responsibility; inadequate social cushioning during the transition to compressed modernity; the work no.1 obligation; predominant strength of political and industrial authority; the compounding effect of education fever without enough family-raising support; lack of incentive to support people in work; the existential threat due to persistent gender inequalities, the dualization of the labor market, etc.. Looking forward to the future regarding this issue, Prof. Gietel-Basten suggested that there should be inclusive family policy responsive to the changes in the world, and to accelerate the gender attitudinal shift with zero tolerance for gender-based violence and discrimination. A social protection system should be set up early.



Prof. Gietel-Basten delivering the keynote speech on Day 2 of the AP|PPN Conference

Panel Conversation between Prof. Benjamin J. Cowling and Ms. Diana Jou

On day two of the AP|PPN Conference, we also had a panel conversation session between Prof. Benjamin J. Cowling, Chair of Epidemiology and Division Head of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of Hong Kong, and Diana Jou, seasoned journalist and Lecturer of HKU Journalism and Media on Covid-19 pandemic under the topic of “Looking Ahead: Rebalancing Policy Response and Science Advice for Better Crisis Preparedness” that reflected on the important issues during the Covid-19 pandemic and important lessons learned from a public health point of view, such as contact tracing, vaccine controversy and interesting research findings, vaccination hesitancy, public healthcare during Covid, science advice and conspiracy theory in other parts of the world, and more.



Panel conversation reflecting on policy lessons learned from the Covid pandemic



PPOL Hosted Book Launch on “How Covid-19 Took Over the World: Lessons for the Future”



From the left: Prof. Xiangwei Wang, Prof. Hualing Fu, Prof. Christine Loh, Prof. Richard Cullen, Prof. Naubahar Sharif, Prof. Alex He

In March 2023, the Division of Public Policy (PPOL) hosted a book launch for “How Covid-19 Took Over the World: Lessons for the Future” two weeks after the Hong Kong government lifted all mandatory mask-wearing requirements. As the Covid-19 pandemic has swept the world for more than three years, reflecting on the lessons learned at this critical juncture was very timely. We invited the editor and contributing author of the book, Prof. Christine Loh, SBS, JP, OBE, Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite, Chief Development Strategist of HKUST; Prof. Hualing Fu, Warren Chan Professor of Human Rights and Responsibilities and Dean of the HKU Faculty of Law, contributing author of the book and keynote speaker of the book launch; Prof. Xiangwei Wang, Associate Professor of Practice at HKBU, former Editor-in-Chief of SCMP, and award-winning journalist as discussant for Prof. Fu's chapter; Prof. Richard Cullen, Visiting Professor at HKU Law School, contributing author of the book; and Prof. Richard Fielding, psychologist at the Division of Behavioral Health, Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, HKU as discussant for Prof. Cullen's chapter. Prof. Alex Jingwei He, Associate Professor

of PPOL, HKUST served as the MC of the book talk, and Professor Naubahar Sharif, Acting Head and Professor of PPOL, HKUST as the moderator of the panel discussion session.

Prof. Christien Loh first introduced how the book “How Covid-19 Took Over the World: Lessons for the Future” came about, tracing to the precursor of the book “At the Epicentre: Hong Kong and the SARS Outbreak” on SARS published in 2004 and gave an overview of the issues and topics addressed in the book about Covid, the book has paid particular attention to adding to the existing knowledge by looking at issues that had been neglected and emphasized the articulation of what happened in Greater China during the pandemic. The book's first eight chapters serve as background to the neglected issues, with the second half of the book, i.e. Ch. 9-Ch. 13 gives the government's response to Covid, such as the speakers' chapters, Prof. Hualing Fu on mainland China's response to Covid-19 (“Pandemic Control in China's Gated Communities”), and a chapter about Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macau and Singapore's response to Covid (“The Hong Kong

and Greater China Response to Covid-19” by Prof. Richard Cullen.

The keynote speech was delivered by Prof. Hualing Fu with Prof. Xiangwei Wang as the discussant. Prof. Fu shared with the audience the fruit of his study on the micro-institutions at the grass-root level and interaction between the state and society in China during the Covid-19 pandemic, the exercise of infrastructural power in mainland China, delineating the reason for the high political trust of Chinese people towards the government during the Covid-19 pandemic evidenced in China’s efficiency to mobilize people with minimal resistance, the social context for the initial success of zero-Covid policy in China in the early months and years of the pandemic, and why the zero-Covid policy failed in the case of Shanghai lockdown and consequently the end of the zero-Covid policy. Very important and valuable sociopolitical and legal concepts and viewpoints were brought up during Prof. Fu’s keynote, which was an intellectual feast for the audience. Prof. Wang shared with the audience his valuable first-hand experience during the Covid-19 pandemic in mainland China, and he witnessed the immense power of street officials in carrying out the zero-Covid policy and shared his views on the impact of the zero-Covid policy in mainland China.

Prof. Cullen gave an overview of his chronological and event-based chapter about Hong Kong during the pandemic, mainly on vaccination, zero-Covid, living with Covid, as well as Covid and Hong Kong’s social contract. Prof. Cullen pointed out that Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and Singapore all run

particularly sound public finance systems, so they could be cushioned from the pandemic by relying on fiscal reserves rather than borrowing heavily as in the case of most Western jurisdictions. About social contracts in Hong Kong, Prof. Cullen quoted Barrington Moore’s advanced version of class analysis that certain societal structures influence the primary protocols of a given social contract; this argument holds that operational political regimes are profoundly shaped by the social structure of a given jurisdiction. Prof. Cullen said the merits of Hong Kong’s primary Covid management policy had been intensely debated, but the well-being of the lower-income population has been prioritized in Hong Kong during the pandemic.

Prof. Fielding pointed out the great contrast between the response of governments of the Western countries and those in Greater China, while the West rapidly adopted ‘living with Covid’, it did so in a post hoc way, and the laissez-faire attitude of governance to the infection to gain a foothold was a failure from the beginning. Regarding vaccine hesitancy in Hong Kong, Prof. Fielding pointed out the importance of trust, that trust in the government goes hand in hand with what the government recommends.

The keynote speeches were followed by a Panel Discussion chaired by Prof. Naubahar Sharif; some thought-provoking questions were raised during the discussion session and encouraged the audience to think and reflect on the lessons learned from the pandemic in the past three years. The book launch concluded with great success.



Prof. Naubahar Sharif chaired the panel discussion



Prof. Richard Fielding

PPOL Visit to IPE in HKUST (GZ) Campus



Before the commencement of the Fall Semester, the faculty of the Division of Public Policy visited the Thrust of Innovation, Policy and Entrepreneurship (IPE) of the Society Hub of the HKUST (GZ) Campus. PPOL arrived at the beautiful HKUST Guangzhou campus on 24 August 2023. The faculty of PPOL were warmly welcomed by Professor Danyang Xie, Dean of the Society Hub, Professor Xun Wu, Chair Professor, and other faculty members of IPE. Prof. Xie extended a very warm welcome to the PPOL faculty and staff. IPE staff guided us to see the vibrant and dynamic campus and introduced the programs, such as the interdisciplinary teamwork, real-world-application emphasized RedBird Mphil program and supporting facilities like the Hybay and Maker Space.

We had the faculty meeting session in the afternoon. Professor Naubahar Sharif, Acting Head and Professor of PPOL first introduced our Division, its research strength and faculty profile, strategic areas of focus, ongoing research projects and the postgraduate programs offered by PPOL, followed by Prof. Xie's introduction to the thrust areas in HKUST (GZ) and Society Hub, pointed out that everything in the four thrusts in the Society Hub is incorporated by policy study. Prof. Xie recapitulated IPE's mission and cross-disciplinary areas and introduced taught and research postgraduate programs offered by the Thrust of IPE. Prof. Ye Qi gave the institutional history of the Society Hub at HKUST (GZ).

Each PPOL and IPE faculty member introduced their research background and shared their ongoing

research projects and recent research findings to explore the potential synergies and collaboration opportunities in respective areas of expertise, consolidate the existing collaborative projects, and identify related research areas to generate a synergy of long-term collaboration. Very inspiring and informative research areas and topics were shared and presented. Prof. Naubahar Sharif, Prof. Kira Matus, Prof. Alex He, Prof. Masaru Yarime, Prof. Magdalena Klemun, Prof. Xiaofan Zhao, Prof. Julien de Troullioud de Lanversin from PPOL presented their recent research work and on-going projects; and Prof. Ye Qi, Prof. Xun Wu, Prof. Jinyu He, Prof. Jia Li, Prof. Corey Xu, and Prof. Xu Zhang, Prof. Luoye Chen, Prof. Yun Hou, Prof. Chenyang Li from IPE presented their research work and on-going projects. The meeting between PPOL and IPE has been tremendously fruitful, and we look forward to collaborating with IPE in HKUST (GZ) in various public policy expertise areas.



The image shows the silhouettes of a group of people, likely a community, standing on a rooftop or high vantage point. They are facing away from the camera, looking out over a city skyline at sunset or sunrise. Several people have their arms raised in a gesture of celebration or unity. The sky is a warm, golden-orange color, and the city lights are visible in the distance. The right side of the image is a solid blue vertical band containing the title and table of contents.

Community Impact

Introduction

Projects Overview

Snapshot of Interim Impact

Introduction

Empowering Ethnic Minorities: A Spotlight on Community Mental Health Projects

Public policy benefits immensely from community projects backed by real-world data, especially those focused on mental health. Using this data-driven method, we can gain insights into the specific mental health issues ethnic minority communities face. This knowledge helps us craft customized strategies and solutions, resulting in more impactful policies. Our faculty member, Professor Naubahar Sharif's ongoing projects underscore the value of this approach, emphasizing the need to base public policy on solid, empirical research.

While Hong Kong's ethnic minority population is still small, it's growing quickly, particularly among the young. The percentage has risen from 2.79% in 2011 to 4.07% in 2021. Meanwhile, the proportion of ethnic minority youth increased from 9.90% to 11.40% during the same period. Even with a declining overall youth population, the number of ethnic minority youth continues to rise. Their mental health needs are as urgent as the majority's. Sadly, current mental health services often overlook these diverse communities' unique cultural and linguistic needs. Our project aims to bridge this gap, offering culturally sensitive mental health services to everyone in Hong Kong.

Our team is committed to tackling mental health issues in Hong Kong, with a focus on encouraging help-seeking, reducing stigma and discrimination across all groups, including ethnic minorities. We strive for inclusivity, fostering open conversations among all ethnicities. As mental health gains priority in Hong Kong, we ensure our ethnic minorities receive equal focus alongside the Chinese majority. In essence, our work centers on inclusivity and equal effort for all.



Professor Naubahar Sharif



Miss Cassy Ying Tung Chan

Projects Overview

Activity Highlights

Motivated by our dedication to providing culturally fitting and language-sensitive support in Hong Kong, we're excited to launch three practical, evidence-backed projects, each running for two years. Funded by the Advisory Committee on Mental Health, Health Bureau, these initiatives aim to boost mental health and well-being among Hong Kong's key ethnic minorities.

Project 1 (April 2022 - March 2024): Preparing and Deploying Ethnic Minority Lay Leaders to Promote Mental Well-being

Launched in April 2022, our first project aims to boost mental health awareness amongst Hong Kong's key ethnic minorities, including the Indian, Pakistani, Nepalese, and Filipino communities. We're training community lay leaders in mental health first aid, enabling them to share mental health information that fits both their culture and language.

We aim to engage 5%-10% of each ethnic group, hoping to make a significant impact on mental health awareness and support. Stay tuned for the interim results of this project in our next section!

Project 3 (May 2023 – April 2025): Supporting Ethnic Minority Elderly with Mental Health Needs

Also launched in May 2023, our third project aims to connect the ethnic minority elderly population — specifically Pakistani, Indian, and Nepalese — with mental health services in Hong Kong. We're concentrating on early identification, outreach, and delivering culturally sensitive support for those at risk of mental health issues.

Our goal is to boost the mental well-being of elderly individuals in ethnic minority communities and encourage a greater understanding of Hong Kong's diverse socio-cultural population. Key to this is the early detection of 'hidden' elderly individuals at risk of mental health issues, for whom we provide scientifically-backed programs to improve their well-being. We aim to positively impact 150 elderly individuals from ethnic minorities through this initiative.

Project 2 (May 2023 - April 2025): Strengthening Family Relationships for Hong Kong's Ethnic Minority Communities in the Aftermath of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Launched in May 2023, our second project is geared towards bolstering family bonds and boosting mental well-being among ethnic minority families following the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative offers broad family-based training services and activities to support the mental health of Indian, Pakistani, and Nepalese families in Hong Kong.

The project's goals are to spread mental health knowledge, raise awareness, and build lasting support networks. We aim to equip families with the tools for conflict management, communication, and mindful healing practices. We're also focused on identifying families in need and directing them to mental health services they might not know exist. Our goal is to positively impact 105 ethnic minority families through this initiative.

Snapshot of Interim Impact

Over the past year, our Mental Health Project Team has been dedicated to supporting Hong Kong's ethnic minority community. Here's a brief update on our first project's accomplishments:

Outreach to Community Members: We have successfully connected with over 5,000 community members through online and in-person channels, spreading mental health first aid awareness and delivering crucial mental health information. Our activities ranged from large-scale lectures to more intimate, interactive group discussions, fostering a sense of community and mutual support.

Training of 28 Community Lay Leaders: These leaders have played a key role in overcoming cultural and language barriers bringing mental health first aid and information to their communities. This step has been vital in increasing mental health first aid awareness within these communities.

Our team's commitment to delivering mental health programs for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong has caught the attention of local media. Ming Pao and

HK01 have spotlighted our innovative projects and the crucial need to tackle mental health issues within the city's ethnic minority communities.



Read the Ming Pao article here: <https://bit.ly/3Dph3EI>



Read the HK01 article here: <https://bit.ly/3KuzRGT>



Professor Sharif was a main speaker at an Emotional Support Seminar hosted by the Sham Shui Po District Office. Supported by our trained lay leaders, the seminar allowed local residents to express their thoughts, learn about mental health first aid, and discover how to reach crucial support services.



Dr. Michael Magtoto Manio from HKU, a lay leader of ours, along with Ms. Cassy Chan from our team, have actively engaged in disseminating essential mental health information. They've focused on insomnia and Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), specifically tailoring the information for our Filipino audience in Hong Kong.

Get Involved

Follow us to stay updated on our progress and the impact of our work!



<http://emmh.hkust.edu.hk/>



http://instagram.com/emmh_hkust



<https://www.youtube.com/@hkustmindmatters>



Email: emmh@ust.hk

Student Achievements and Events

PhD Thesis Presentation

RedBird PhD and AIS Best Research
Award

Tsinghua International Case Analysis
Competition 2023

MPP-PAE 2022-23

PPOL 2023-24 PG Orientation



PhD Thesis Presentations



Dr. Gleb Papyshev

Currently Research Assistant Professor in the Division of SOSC, HKUST

Supervisor: Prof. Masaru Yarime

Thesis Title: The Emergence of Institutional Architecture to Govern Artificial Intelligence: Investigating the State's Role in Digital Capitalism

This thesis gains a systematic understanding of the roles the governments are taking, which is lacking in the academic literature. The analysis of regulatory documents and game theoretic modeling shows that some countries prioritize consumer protection through stringent regulation. In contrast, others promote innovation by adopting a more hands-off approach when balancing a trade-off between regulation and innovation. However, minimal regulation is rationalizable only if a government is not prioritizing consumer welfare but tries to maximize innovation, domestic producer surplus, or perceived consumer welfare.



Dr. Marie Noel Loullie Bernal-Garrido

Currently Lecturer in the Division of PPOL, HKUST

Supervisor: Prof. Kira Matus

Thesis Title: Alignment of Society's Mental Models of Chemical Risk Perception with Chemical Regulatory Policies: Legislative Activity in the United States between 2010 and 2020

This thesis studies the chemical regulatory policy and regulatory environment in the U.S. between 2010 and 2020, it fills the research gap of identifying areas or types of regulatory policy that take into consideration citizen's preferences by first analyzing legislative activity at state and federal level as it pertains to toxic and hazardous chemicals, and then examines patterns of behavior related to people's attitudes towards chemicals and towards risk, to finally be able to determine whether or not there is an alignment between people's chemical risk perceptions and the regulatory policies that are instituted to mitigate those risks.



Dr. Lei Shi

Supervisor: Prof. Xun Wu

Thesis Title: When Stronger Policy Capacities Produce Worse Outcomes: A Historical Case Analysis of Crisis Management of Eight Asian Cases

This thesis explores crisis management and policy capacity through case studies of Hong Kong and other countries' crisis episodes. It argues that the traditional event-centered approach to crisis management literature overlooks connected crises contexts. The study applies a processual approach and proposes a novel "crisis-to-crisis frame" incorporating pre- and post-crisis analyses. The policy capacity framework assesses analytical, operational and political capacities for explaining and evaluating crisis management actors' actions during crises. The novel "crisis-to-crisis" framework underpinned by policy capacity analysis generated valid patterns of relationships between areas of policy capacity in crisis contexts that are not dependent on crisis contexts.

PPOL Research Postgraduate Students Received RedBird PhD Award and AIS Best Research Merit Award

In this academic year (2022-23), three PhD students of PPOL have been awarded **RedBird PhD Awards**, in recognition of their outstanding academic achievements and demonstrated research accomplishments; each awardee receives a cash prize of HK\$ 20,000:



Dr. Marie Noel Loullie Bernal-Garrido (Doctoral Graduate 2023)



Mr. Alvin Li (Year 3 PhD student)



Miss Xiaotong Li (Year 3 PhD student)

About the RedBird Academic Excellence Award

The Fok Ying Tung Graduate School of HKUST issue the RedBird PhD Academic Excellence Award in recognition of existing PhD students for their outstanding academic performance and research capacity; awardees need to demonstrate academic and research achievements such as journal article publication records, patents filed, research awards, and honors received.

Congratulations to Marie, Alvin, and Xiaotong!

One PPOL MPhil student has been awarded the AIS Best Research Merit Award 2022-23 (MPhil category) to honour her policy research on using company and government contract data to examine the relationship between the innovation performance of small and medium-sized companies in China and the Chinese government smart city projects, the awardee receives a cash prize of HK\$5,000:



Miss Xiaohui Jiang (2022 MPhil graduate)

About the IPO Best Research Award

The IPO Best Research Award was established in 2011 with the support of the Provost's Office to recognize outstanding achievements by research postgraduate students who made the most original and influential research achievements from their study, which was carried out mainly at HKUST. The key objective of the Best Research Award is to foster the overall quality of research education in the University. The Award has the PhD and the MPhil categories.

Congratulations to Xiaohui!

MPM Students Won the Second Prize in Tsinghua International Case Analysis Competition of Public Policy on SDGs 2023



Congratulations to our MPM students (Tim Man Him Lo, Koby Lok Yin Wong, Bryant Wui Kwan Chan, and Moni Lixia Deng, Tim and Koby are acknowledged as the two best team members) who won the second prize in 2023's Tsinghua International Case Analysis Competition of Public Policy on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), organized by China Case Center for Public Policy and Management, the School of Public Policy & Management and the Institute for Sustainable Development Goals of Tsinghua University. The award-winning project of this year, "Harnessing the Power of Open Data to Advance the Planning Effort in Local Communities—A Hong Kong Perspective" was supervised by Professor Xun WU, who guided the team in the project's strategic direction and writing the case study. This project showcased Hong Kong's effort to apply open data to community planning, based on the assumption that open data would be one of the solutions to understanding Hong Kong's progress in meeting SDG 11.

Our students have won the prize for the second consecutive year. Last year's winning project was

"Salient Altar of Saline Alkali Land: Lessons from the Development of Agricultural Technology in Saline Alkali Land in the Yellow River Delta".

About Tsinghua International Case Analysis Competition of Public Policy on SDGs

The Competition organized by Tsinghua University invites participants to focus on one of the 17 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) based on their research interests and experience. Participants will work in teams to investigate local community cases and find innovative public policy solutions for achieving SDGs.

Master of Public Policy - Policy Analysis Exercise 2022-23: Emerging Innovations for a Sustainable Future



The Policy Analysis Exercise (PAE) is an eight-month capstone project of the two-year Master of Public Policy (MPP) program offered by PPOL, HKUST. The PAE 2022/23 was conducted under the theme of “Emerging Innovations for a Sustainable Future”, final year MPP students presented the findings of their projects in four hours in two lecture halls simultaneously.

Prof. Naubahar Sharif, Acting Head and Professor of PPOL delivered the welcome speech introducing PAE’s background and thanked the project supervisors, client advisors, and students for their effort and contribution towards the successful completion of the PAE projects. Prof. Masaru

Yarime, program co-director of MPP encouraged the students during the PAE to extract from what they learned from PAE in a turbulent world. Prof. Pengyu Zhu, program co-director of MPP said that although the MPP students could not travel abroad for their PAE projects due to the Covid-19 pandemic, he appreciated students’ participation online, and Prof. Zhu encouraged MPP students to make good use of summer and to initiate connecting with clients.

For this academic year’s PAE, we have Prof. Naubahar Sharif, Prof. Kira Matus, Prof. Xun Wu, Prof. Donald Low, Prof. Masaru Yarime, Prof. Pengyu Zhu, Prof. Alex He, Prof. James Wong, Prof. Magdalena Klemun, Prof. Xiaofan Zhao



served as academic supervisors, together with 14 clients served as industry/ government advisors for our MPP students' group projects to look at how government, industry, and society would be affected by emerging and increasingly disruptive technologies, what opportunities and challenges we would face in a wide range of sustainability challenges, and how various sectors would be able to design and implement appropriate policies and strategies for the future. The PAE conference also allowed the MPP students to apply what they learned in the 2-year program to real-world scenarios, gain industry exposure, and establish connections with potential future employers and industrial partners.

During the PAE Conference, students presented their joint effort in groups, covering interesting and thought-provoking topics addressing the current policy challenges, ranging from climate change, social welfare, and environmental policy to innovation policy. Some examples of these topics are: "Imperfect Maternity Leave Policy for Pregnant Foreign

Domestic Helpers in Hong Kong", "Policy Analysis on China's Property Debt Crisis", "Community Healthcare System for Chronic Disease Management among Middle-aged People in Hong Kong", "Flying High from a Global Aviation Hub: Promoting the Development of Aviation Technology in Hong Kong", etc. Clients and academic advisors gave their comments to the MPP students and suggested how the projects could be improved and developed.

This academic year's fourteen client advisors are taking senior management roles, deputy heads, or senior executives in diverse sectors from Hong Kong and other countries and regions. The fourteen clients include Alaya Consulting; Arthur D. Little Asia Pacific Limited; Carbon World Limited; Centennial Asia Advisor; the Center for Green Finance Research; Development and Reform Bureau in Haizhu District, Guangzhou; HKUST-Jiangmen Laboratory of Carbon Science and Technology; Huawei Technological Co. Ltd.; Netherlands Innovation Network; PathFinders Hong Kong; PayPal Hong Kong; PwC HK; RAND Corporation; and Research for Social Advancement.

HKUST Division of Public Policy 2023-24 Postgraduate Student Orientation

Welcome to HKUST to all our postgraduates of the 2023-24 intake! The Postgraduate Student Orientation of the Division of Public Policy was held on 18th August 2023 at HKUST.



Welcome by Acting Head of PPOL Professor Naubahar Sharif, PPOL Faculty and Professor Huamin Qu, Dean of the Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies

Professor Naubahar Sharif, Acting Head and Professor of PPOL, warmly welcomed all new MPP, MPM, and RPG students, congratulated them for entering HKUST for their continuing degree pursuit and admitted to the competitive programs. Prof.

Sharif gave a brief introduction to the Division of Public Policy and the postgraduate programs, then introduced the faculty and teaching staff of the Division to the students.



Professor Naubahar Sharif (Left) and Professor Huamin Qu (Right) welcomed PPOL students to HKUST

PPOL faculty Prof. King Chow, Acting Dean of Students and Director of the Center for the Development of the Gifted and Talented, Prof. Kira Matus, Associate Dean of the Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies (AIS), Associate Head and Director of MPM program, Co-directors of MPP, Prof. Masaru Yarime and Prof. Pengyu Zhu, Prof. Alex Jingwei He, Prof. Xiaofan Zhao, Prof. Magdalena Klemun, Prof. Julien de Troullioud de Lanversin, Prof. James Wong, Dr. Francine Yi, Prof. Michael Chen, and Prof. Kam Wing Siu welcomed the students

and introduced about their research specialties and their teaching areas to the new postgraduate students. Prof. Naubahar Sharif emphasized the interdisciplinary nature of the programs, as the Division's mandate is under the AIS to provide interdisciplinary education.

Prof. Huamin Qu, Dean of AIS and Head of the Division of Emerging Interdisciplinary Areas delivered his welcome speech and introduced AIS to the postgraduate students.

Professor Naubahar Sharif on Intercultural Awareness and Professor Kira Matus on Academic Integrity

Our students come from various cultural backgrounds, Professor Sharif gave his heartfelt advice to the students on cultural sensitivity, difference adjustment, and toleration, and awareness of expectations due to cultural differences to be conducive to learning.



Professor Naubahar Sharif (Left) and Professor Kira Matus (Right) gave students advice on intercultural awareness and academic integrity

Prof. Matus reiterated the definition of academic integrity and emphasized its cruciality in academia, warned against plagiarism and stressed the importance of giving necessary credit to the source of data and ideas to grow to become real thinkers.

Our program directors briefed the three cohorts of students separately about the program structures and expectations, grading system, internship and career strategy. Our year-two students also shared their experiences and gave the new students hands-on and take-home tips to facilitate their study and learning experience in HKUST.

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