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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)