



**NEW CONNECTIONS  
STRONG PARTNERSHIPS**





*Dentistry students teach youngsters how to brush properly*

## TRANSFORMING SOCIETY THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

Universities are storehouses of knowledge and ideas that can benefit all of society. But how do we get these assets out to the community? This question is at the heart of Knowledge Exchange, also called KE.

HKU has made KE one of its three pillars alongside teaching and research and this has given us impetus to overcome some of the challenges involved – lack of time, the need to find partners, the need to understand what the community needs. The result of our efforts has been a mushrooming of KE projects.

### Multiple Projects

Our academic staff and students have launched dozens of funded projects that are helping local schoolchildren, small businesses, remote communities, human rights campaigns, the elderly and urban neighbourhoods, to name a few. These efforts have been supported by a formal infrastructure of funding, training and publicity to facilitate KE. In 2011–12, for instance, we introduced a pilot KE funding scheme for student projects and recommended that KE contributions be recognised in the academic staff review process. KE has also become a factor in the faculty budgeting process. It is

hoped these measures will inspire more KE and raise our profile in the community.

KE in some form or other has always been practised at HKU, but for many years it was informal and not explicitly recognised. Academics might have launched community-based research projects but impacts were only evaluated in terms of publication, and funding often came from private donations only. The value of such work was not fully articulated and appreciated. HKU recognised this shortfall and in 2003 adopted a goal of 'partnering with society through knowledge' in its first five-year plan.

This paved the way for a more formal KE strategy and put us in a strong position when the University Grants Council (UGC) decided in 2009 to start funding what it called 'knowledge transfer'. Since then we have been building capacity and pushing the boundaries.

The University regards KE as something much broader than the typical focus on technology transfer. While that activity has great merit, it is generally limited to the sciences, engineering and medicine. We believe all of our faculties, including the arts and the humanities, possess knowledge that can benefit society. Our planning therefore has been based around

the expectation that every corner of the University will carry out KE.

In 2010–11 we provided funding support for each faculty to set up a formal KE unit. We also launched the Faculty KE Award scheme to honour outstanding accomplishments. These measures signalled the integral place that KE had in the University's mission. We then strengthened that signal in 2011–12 in two ways. First, as mentioned, KE became one of the key profile indicators in the annual recurrent budget allocation process for faculties and it was recommended to recognise KE contributions in the academic staff review process. And second, each faculty was required to enhance knowledge access by building its own KE website. These measures are helping to formalise KE and prod staff to consider it as part of their core activities.

### Reaching Out

Apart from raising the stature of KE, the University has also dedicated itself to providing a support structure. KE is supported not only by the Knowledge Exchange Office and Technology Transfer Office, but also the KE unit in each faculty. These components work in partnership to provide training, publicity and encouragement for KE activities





*'Sharing a Roasted Potato for Lunch' – Two refugee children photographed by student Hting Nan Htoi Awng while he was on service assignment in Myanmar (Burma)*

in all areas of the University. In December 2011 we also took the lead in organising a KE conference with the seven other UGC-funded institutions in Hong Kong that was attended by more than 570 participants, including some from Mainland China, Macau, Japan, Indonesia and the UK. The Conference provided a platform to share best practices in KE and showcase our success stories.

Another, most crucial form of support is funding. We allocate most of the funding we receive for KE to the faculties for capacity building and to individual academic staff for impact projects. Some funding is used to develop institution-wide initiatives, such as the HKU Scholars Hub, an online repository with information on about 1,500 professorial staff, including their

contact details, research interests, publication lists, patents, community service and topics and languages in which they can comment in the media. The Hub is designed to make it easy for members of the public to discover research, potential research partners and experts, and by summer 2012 it had accumulated more than one million view counts.

### Competitive Funding

For impact projects, we have set up a competitive funding scheme that awards up to \$100,000 per project. In 2011–12 we funded 46 projects led by academic staff and, under a pilot scheme, provided funding for 18 student-led KE projects. The latter will become a regular feature to help ensure all levels of the University embrace

the KE concept and have an opportunity to practise it.

There is still much room for growth in KE at HKU and we will continue to promote it vigorously on campus. We can do this more effectively if we better understand the impacts of KE in the community, so we are exploring mechanisms that can achieve this. Unlike other academic activities, KE cannot be measured by the number of publications, yet the outcome can still be far-reaching. By sharing our assets – our expertise and knowledge – more widely, we can help society to overcome problems and enhance material, human, social, cultural and environmental well-being.



*Professors and students give members of the public guided tours on 'Traces of Hong Kong's Urban Development' aboard the HKU 100 Tram*



## A WINDOW ON HUMAN RIGHTS

A unique portal that offers a repository of information on human rights in Hong Kong, Mainland China and the world in English and Chinese has been launched at HKU.

The Human Rights Portal draws on the resources of the Centre for Comparative and Public Law (CCPL), which has extensive legal and political connections around the world and a large collection of articles, documents, videos, guides and manuals on human rights.

"The Law Faculty has long been a site for collecting human rights knowledge both regionally and internationally, especially after

1997 when Hong Kong became the freest place in China," Professor Simon Young, Director of the CCPL and project co-ordinator for the Portal, says.

"We felt it was necessary to have some way to capture, organise and disseminate this valuable knowledge of the past, present and future. Most importantly, it had to be translated into Chinese to reach the wider Chinese audience both in Hong Kong and other parts of the Mainland and Taiwan. To have this kind of content available in English and Chinese must be a first."

The Portal, which received KE funding, is targeted at

professionals in the field, such as government officials, non-government organisations, practitioners and students, as well as those new to the subject. Professor Young stressed it was meant to be more than a reporting centre on human rights.

"The content is fairly advanced and tends to be more socio-legal analysis than merely factual. It is not so much aimed at raising awareness about current rights violations but at providing analysis and research on human rights issues. As China moves closer towards a rule of law society, this kind of information becomes extremely useful and valuable," Professor Young says.



*Professor Simon Young and members of the CCPL team*



## BASIC SCHOOLING

One thing knowledge exchange can do is to highlight issues that may have been neglected by others. That is the case in a study that looks at the feasibility of building a kindergarten for autistic children in Hong Kong.

Currently there is no such dedicated facility in the city, so a team of experts and students from the Faculty of Architecture and Faculty of Business and Economics joined forces to consider how they could fill that need.

The team identified an abandoned building in Discovery Bay that was architecturally sound and could be renovated to meet the needs of autistic children. They produced a business plan as well as an architectural plan that included a play area, wheelchair access, ramps, special bathrooms,

a partition for two classrooms and other features.

They also proposed a garden that could be developed by the children.

"We want it to be horticultural therapy so the students can learn from playing with soil and doing the landscaping – to make it a therapeutic and learning experience," says Assistant Professor Tris Kee, Director of Architecture's Community Project Workshop and project co-ordinator for the kindergarten study.

The study, funded by the KE Impact Projects Fund, was also a learning experience for HKU students who were able to put some of their classroom knowledge into practice and sit in on meetings with government officials, where they witnessed the

complexity of dealing with bureaucracy.

"The process was rather complicated because we had to work with various government departments and there were multiple procedures," Ms Kee says. Nonetheless, they received practical support from the Education Bureau which assigned a person to provide advice and information that was useful to their proposal.

The final study report was submitted to the government in June. "Now we'll just wait to see if the project is supported. If we can make good use of that vacant site, the government doesn't lose anything," she concludes.

And the community, and children, will gain a new resource.



*Architecture students work on plans (far left), while Associate Professor Daniel Ho and Assistant Professor Tris Kee, Principal Investigators on the project, discuss ideas*





## EMPOWERING THE THIRD SECTOR

The 'Third Sector' comprises non-profit and non-government organisations and it plays an important role in filling unmet needs and advocating societal improvements. A new project based at HKU seeks to empower the sector and help it to build up its capacity.

ExCEL3 – which stands for Excellence and Capacity Building for Entrepreneurship and Leadership for the Third Sector – is a cross-disciplinary initiative to equip the sector to cope with a changing environment and rising community expectations and also develop HKU's research and teaching capacity in studying civil society.

The project will organise training, sharing and research activities that focus on nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship, and

strengthening leadership, management, governance and organisation capacity.

Specific programmes will elaborate on such issues as human rights management in non-profit organisations, financial strategy and leadership in high-performing non-profits, legislation and policy reform and advocacy, and understanding and using the news.

Collaborative networks will bring together philanthropists, foundations, social entrepreneurs and institutional investors, and non-profit groups and the academic community, both in Hong Kong and overseas. The non-profits will represent a wide gamut of interests such as the environment, women, artists, religious faith, human services, advocacy, patients and self-help.

The project initially will run for five years and it received \$32 million from the Hong Kong Jockey Club in May 2012.

The Dean of Social Sciences, Professor John Burns, said they had already established networks with charities, investors, social enterprises, NGOs and social venture capitalists.

"This project crosses disciplines – we're working with Law, Business, Arts and Medicine – and we're partnering with the Rockefeller Foundation as well as the Jockey Club. It's a huge multi-year project and within the sector it has sparked recognition that HKU is a player," he says.

*At the opening ceremony for ExCEL3, Vice-Chancellor Lap-Chee Tsui and HKJC Chairman Brian Stevenson display a scroll aptly summing up Knowledge Exchange: 'Wisdom of the knowledgeable will benefit the community'*





## SUSTAINABLE AMBITIONS



The founders of the student group Sustainable Generation started with big ambitions, just like many student groups before them. But they had something else: a well-thought out strategy for making their ideals a reality.

The group's mission is to implement renewable energy projects in rural areas. In 2012 they completed their first project, a mini-hydropower plant in a remote Thai village that provides enough power for 30 light bulbs – a big step forward for a village that is not hooked up to the electricity grid. The students also provided training and instructions so the villagers can maintain the plant themselves.

In preparation, they approached the Centre of Development and Resources for advice on communities that could use their help and put together a detailed

plan on costings for the generators, water pipes and other components and expenses such as flights. They also worked with the Faculty of Engineering to apply for KE funding.

Sony Han, a third-year Engineering student and one of the driving forces behind Sustainable Generation, said they were motivated by a desire to make the most of their university education.

### Responsibility to Help

"A lot of student societies are about social activities but we thought that as university students, we have a responsibility to apply our knowledge in areas that can use our help," he says.

"The [KE] funding was crucial because it made the project possible in a material sense and it also showed we were legitimate

and not messing around when we applied for sponsorship outside the University." The group also has support from the Hong Kong Electric Clean Energy Fund.

Sustainable Generation includes students from Engineering, Architecture and Journalism and Sony said they were using expertise from all of them. For instance, they are currently looking at how to use social media to promote their group and investigating social enterprise opportunities as a way to fund future projects that help to sustain others.

"We can't go to every village in the world so we plan to install, demonstrate and teach others how to do it for themselves," Sony adds.



*Members of the student group Sustainable Generation in rural Thailand (above left) to build the mini hydropower plant which they designed and developed at HKU (above)*





*The HKU-Shenzhen Hospital represents unprecedented achievement in Knowledge Exchange*



*Trial runs at the hospital prior to opening*



## THE HKU-SHENZHEN HOSPITAL

An unprecedented achievement in knowledge exchange was realised when the HKU-Shenzhen Hospital had a soft opening in July 2012, a facility that will be developed into a world-class medical centre and provide many mutual benefits to HKU and Shenzhen.

The hospital is managed by HKU, supported by the Faculty of Medicine, to HKU standards and enables us to introduce a new

hospital management system and patient care culture to the Mainland, for example through the appointment system and fixed-price package.

### Broader Impact

The partnership with Shenzhen is envisaged to have a broader impact beyond the physical confines of hospital walls. This potentially can serve to change and advance clinical services in

China and contribute to its healthcare reform.

"This collaboration will infuse bold, creative, transforming insights into China and will function as a training centre of clinical skills and professional ethics," says Professor Lee Sum-ping, Dexter H.C. Man Professor in Medical Science and Dean of Medicine.

"The rich clinical materials will

also provide a strong impetus to our own medical education and research. Most importantly, this project allows our Medical Faculty to realise our mission and vision, transcending the physical constraints of our institutional boundaries."

The hospital opened with the service of 62 doctors. During Phase 1 of its operations, it is initially offering primary care, speciality out-patient services and a limited

scale of in-patient services. When fully up and running, the hospital is expected to provide 2,000 beds and 10,000 daily out-patient consultations and have over 900 doctors on staff.

### Areas of Excellence

In addition to a full panel of specialty services, the HKU Affiliate Teaching Hospital will be complemented by five of HKU's areas of excellence (organ

transplantation, haematological oncology, cardiology, orthopaedics and traumatology, and reproductive medicine and prenatal diagnosis).

The aims are ambitious and while there may be challenges and hurdles along the way, particularly in the merging of two medical cultures, Professor Lee is confident they can be overcome. "A thousand-mile journey starts with the first step," he says.



## SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTS



University Knowledge Exchange funding for a student arts project is having a multiplier effect: not only did the students stage a drama production as planned, they also were inspired to organise a cultural festival to promote the arts in general on campus.

The drama, *Take Love* by Lighthouse Productions, was performed in four sold-out shows at the Fringe Club in March 2012.

Charles Fong, a third-year Science student, helped to found Lighthouse Productions and said the KE funding, combined with the show's success, had enabled them to be more ambitious in their goals for the future and plan

a week-long student arts festival in the 2012–13 academic year.

"If we hadn't got the funding for *Take Love*, we would have had to pay for everything ourselves and get the money back from ticket sales," he says. "But because we had this initial funding, we were able to use the ticket money for the arts festival and our next production. It's made it easier to become more sustainable and not just be a one-off thing."

### Fostering Innovation

Their success has also been an encouragement to the Cultural Youth Leadership Academy, a spinoff of the Faculty of Arts' Cultural Leadership Academy that

aims to groom student leaders and foster an environment where they can innovate, network and draw on expertise in the faculty.

Dr Robert Peckham, who mentored the *Take Love* project and established the Academy with Professor Daniel Chua, was impressed by the quality of the production and the resourcefulness of the students in putting on the show.

"It was a wonderful performance and we felt that there was an imperative to encourage this kind of student leadership in whatever ways we could," he says.



*Charles Fong helped to found Lighthouse Productions which, with KE funding, was able to stage its first show Take Love (above left) this year*