I am delighted to present the latest edition of our newsletter. I am most pleased that our local members and those from other places around the world were able to join us physically for our meeting in May. This marked a significant milestone post-Covid, as it speaks for the restoration of normalcy and the resumption of in-person interactions and activities in our higher education sector.

For the UGC Week in May 2023, we had the privilege of resuming our practice of university visits to gain valuable insights and firsthand experiences of the remarkable progress of our universities. During our visit to the Hong Kong Baptist University, our members were particularly impressed by the university’s unflagging commitment to transdisciplinary research and quality teaching. Equally important, we cherished the opportunity to interact with students and witness their return to campus. It was heartening to see the vibrant campus life and the enthusiasm radiating from the student community.

I believe everyone is well aware of the fact that generative artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a hot topic in recent months, presenting both novel challenges and enormous opportunities for the higher education sector. The rapid advancement of innovative and breakthrough technologies, including generative AI, has prompted us to reflect on the transformative potential of these technologies in shaping pedagogies and enhancing student learning experiences. It is against this backdrop that the UGC, with the support from the Quality Assurance Council (QAC), allocated $100 million to launch the Fund for Innovative Technology-in-Education (FITE) in June 2023. Indeed, integrating technology and its associated social issues in every aspect of teaching and learning is strategically significant for students, universities, various industries and our economy as a whole. I encourage all universities to seize the opportunity and move ahead to ensure that the quality of educational experience offered by the UGC-funded universities stays at the forefront both locally and internationally.

Chairman’s Foreword
主席的話

I很高興向大家送上最新一期教資會快訊。一眾本地及來自世界各地的委員在5月再次聚首香港，親身參與教資會會議。這是一個重要的里程碑，亦標誌著新冠肺炎疫情過後高等教育界已逐步恢復日常社交活動，邁向復常之路。

我們有幸在本年6月的教資會會議後恢復往常到訪大學的安排，讓教資會委員親身體會大學取得的進展，從中了解大學的最新情況。在到訪香港浸會大學期間，教資會委員對大學在跨學科研究和優質教學方面的堅持態度印象深刻。同時，我們十分珍惜與學生互動的機會，並見證他們重返校園。親眼目睹同學們熱情重新投入多姿多彩的校園生活，實實在在令人振奮。

相信大家都注意到過去數月，生成式人工智能(AI)成為熱門話題，為高等教育界帶來全新挑戰，同時亦帶來龐大機遇。包括AI在內的創新和突破性科技的發展一日千里，我們需要思考這新科技在塑造教學法及增強學生學習體驗方面的變革潛力。因此，教資會在轄下資助局（資保局）支持下，於2023年6月撥款一億元設立「科研創新基金」。事實上，將科技及相關社會議題融入教與學的各個環節，對學生、大學、各行各業，以至社會的整體經濟能發展而言，均具深遠的策略意義。我鼓勵所有大學把握機遇，積極走得更前，令教資會資助大學所提供的教育體驗及質素繼續在本地和國際上保持領先地位。
As we actively renew our global connections and sharpen Hong Kong’s competitive edges as a regional education hub, I am confident that our efforts will bear fruit. Over the past few months, the UGC has joined hands with the Heads of Universities Committee (HUCOM) to participate in major international education conferences and exhibitions in promoting the "Study in Hong Kong" brand and attracting students from around the world. Through these platforms, we also strive to foster collaborations with our strategic international partners to explore more exchange opportunities for local students. Together with HUCOM, we are building a vibrant and globally connected higher education community.

Apart from the work of the UGC, I am also pleased to share the good news in the HKSAR Government’s 2023 Honours List. First of all, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to Professor Wong Yuk Shan, the Chairman of the Research Grants Council (RGC), for receiving the prestigious Gold Bauhinia Star (GBS) award. We are also delighted that Professor Chris Brink, who has recently retired from the UGC in March 2023 but continued to serve as the Convenor of our Research Assessment Exercise Group, was awarded the Bronze Bauhinia Star (BBS). We are deeply grateful for the Government’s recognition of the contributions of Professor Wong and Professor Brink to Hong Kong’s higher education. I am sure all UGC Members will continue serving the sector and the wider community with dedication.

Last but not least, I would like to welcome our new member, Professor Lino Guzzella, former President and Emeritus Professor of Thermotronics, ETH Zurich, who joined our UGC family recently in July 2023.

I hope you will enjoy reading this issue of the UGC Newswire, and have an enjoyable summer break!

Tim LUI
Awards by the Government for UGC Chairman and Members

教資會主席及委員榮獲政府嘉獎

The HKSAR Government’s 2023 Honours List was announced on 1 July 2023. The UGC Chairman and two of our incumbent/former UGC Members were honoured by the Government for their tremendous contributions. The citations from the Government are extracted below. The UGC would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate all other awardees who have made significant contributions to the development of higher education.

Mr LUI Tim-leung, Tim
UGC Chairman since January 2023
UGC Member from 2008 to 2019

雷添良先生
自2023年1月起擔任教資會主席
在2008至2019年間擔任教資會委員

Citation from the Government:

Mr Lui is awarded GBS in recognition of his exemplary public and community services over the years, in particular his profound contributions to the education sector. During his tenure as the Chairman of the Education Commission, Mr Lui spared no efforts in unifying the education sector and the community at large. In facilitating the Government to map out a wide range of policy directions from basic education to higher education, he put forward balanced and constructive views as well as practicable recommendations which contributed to enhancing Hong Kong’s position as an education hub in the region and addressing the needs of our society and nation. Mr Lui has demonstrated visionary leadership and is well-respected by the community.

政府嘉許語：

雷先生多年來竭誠參與公共及社會服務，在教育範疇貢獻尤著。在擔任教育統籌委員會主席期間，雷先生致力凝聚教育界和社會人士力量，就基礎教育以至高等教育等廣泛議題的政策方向，向政府提供中肯精闢的意見及切實可行的建議，有助提升香港的區域教育樞紐地位和配合本港及國家需要。雷先生高瞻遠識，備受社會推崇，現獲頒授金紫荊星章。
Citation from the Government:

Professor WONG is awarded GBS in recognition of his distinguished contributions to the development of education in Hong Kong over the years. During his tenure as the President of The Open University of Hong Kong, Professor WONG led the University to make great strides in developing into a full-fledged comprehensive university. All along, he has been a staunch supporter of the Government in promoting vocational and professional education. In his capacity as the Chairman of the RGC, Professor WONG has made tremendous efforts in driving the Council to strengthen Hong Kong’s research talent pool and launch new funding schemes to support collaborative and inter-disciplinary research at universities and to enhance research collaborations with the Mainland.

Government Citation:

黃教授獲頒授金紫荆星章，以表揚他多年來為香港教育發展作出的重大貢獻。他擔任香港公開大學校長期間，帶領該校發展為一所全面的綜合型大學，並鼎力支持政府推廣職業專才教育。作為研資局主席，黃教授不遺餘力帶領該局壯大香港研究人才庫，牽頭推出多項新的資助計劃，以支持大學跨學科及協作研究，和加強內地與香港的科研合作。

Citation from the Government:

Professor Brink is awarded BBS in recognition of his dedicated service to Hong Kong’s higher education sector. As a member of the UGC from 2017 to 2023 and with his profound knowledge and experience, Professor Brink has time and again assessed research submissions, steered numerous reviews and provided insightful advice to the UGC.

Government Citation:

Chris Brink教授獲頒授銀紫荊星章，以表揚他對香港高等教育界作出的貢獻。Chris Brink教授學識淵博、經驗豐富，在2017至2023年間出任研資局委員期間，屢就研究擔任評審工作，並督導多項研究檢討，向教資會提出精闢意見，樹建良多。
Whole-person Development Fund 全人發展基金

In response to the strategic direction for “Whole-person Development” as set out by the Government, the UGC has established the Whole-person Development Fund (WPDF) with an allocation of $30 million in January 2023 to support the eight UGC-funded universities in pursuing initiatives that will enrich the learning experience of students outside classroom and promote their whole-person development.

The WPDF aims at supporting the universities’ efforts in nurturing students to be future leaders with a passion for social responsibility and personal aspiration, as well as a sense of national identity, affection for Hong Kong and an international outlook through various initiatives under the following four key areas, namely:

(i) Cultivating leadership with compassion and empathy through service learning;
(ii) Fostering a stronger sense of social responsibility and good citizenship;
(iii) Promoting positive education and psychological wellbeing; and
(iv) Stimulating curiosity, creativity and lifelong self-improvement.

Apart from enhancing the holistic development of students, the universities also make use of the WPDF to implement innovative projects that benefit those in need on campus as well as from the community, such as under-privileged families, ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged students, thereby promoting upward social mobility and addressing inter-generational poverty.

The eight universities have responded positively to the launch of the WPDF with a total of 67 initiatives for implementation over the next two years. Here are some examples -

City University of Hong Kong organises “Performing Arts Exchange Tour in China” to enable students understand the Mainland’s development.

香港理工大學舉辦“科大青年出國開闊計劃”，鼓勵學生走出去結識，自我增值。

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology organises “HKUST Sail and Shine Program” to encourage students to step out of their comfort zone for self-improvement.

香港科技大學舉辦“科大青年出國開闊計劃”，鼓勵學生走出去結識，自我增值。

Hong Kong Baptist University makes use of the WPDF to organise “An Inclusive World: of Emotions, Fostering Empathetic Leadership through 3D Facial Animation Production” and “Co-creating a Virtual World of Humanity and Service for a Better Future”, allowing students to use interdisciplinary knowledge and innovative approaches to recognize and understand different groups in society.

香港浸會大學利用基金資助“情還共融3D動畫世界”及“創建人道及服務虛擬世界，為未來更好”項目，讓學生運用跨學科知識和創新方式，認識及了解社會中的不同群體。

因應政府訂有「全人發展」的策略方針，教育局在2023年1月撥款3,000萬元設立「全人發展基金」，支持八所教資會資助大學舉辦豐富學生課外學習體驗的項目，推動學生全人發展。

「全人發展基金」旨在支持大學在以下四個主要範疇推展不同項目，培育學生成為對社會有承擔、對自己有抱負，並具備國家觀念、香港情懷和國際視野的未來領袖：

（一）透過服務學習培養同情心及同理心兼備的領導才幹；
（二）培養學生的社會責任感和良好的公民意識；
（三）推廣正向教育及心理健康；以及
（四）激發求知慾、創意及終身自我提升的動力。

除了提升學生的全面發展，大學亦利用基金推展具創意的項目，惠及校園內和社會上有需要的人士，例如貧困家庭、少數族裔和其他弱勢社群學生，藉此促進社會向上流動及協助解決跨代貧窮問題。

八所大學積極響應「全人發展基金」的設立，在未來兩年推展合共67個項目，以下是一些例子——
The UGC, with support from QAC, launched the Fund for Innovative Technology-in-Education (FITe) with a funding allocation of $100 million in June 2023. The FITe aims to provide an impetus for universities to harness innovative and breakthrough technologies in transforming pedagogies and enriching student learning experiences, and to nurture a digitally competent and technologically responsible generation, for the future success of their students in the digital economy.

With the advent of generative AI, innovative and breakthrough technologies have presented new challenges and enormous opportunities for transforming pedagogies and student learning experiences. At the same time, the widespread adoption of technologies, such as Web3, may pave way for closer academia-industry collaboration in offering more authentic learning experiences for students. While it is widely acknowledged that digital competency plays a significant role in economic restructuring, there is also growing awareness of the ethical issues and social implications arising from the use of innovative technologies. In response to these changes, the UGC, with support from the QAC, launched the FITe to support experimental and exploratory endeavours of universities in enhancing their teaching and learning.

The UGC-funded universities are welcome to utilise the FITe for different initiatives under the following four key themes:

(i) Driving transformation in pedagogies, curriculum, assessment and student development;

(ii) Advancing digital competency for all;

(iii) Promoting technological social responsibilities and academic integrity; and

(iv) Fostering academia-industry collaboration for authentic learning experience.

In addition, universities may make use of the funding for other initiatives aiming at advancing the use of technology in teaching and learning. The FITe allocation includes $20 million specifically for inter-institutional collaborative activities.

The universities may utilise the funding to take forward various initiatives over the next three years. In this regard, the UGC Secretariat has invited all universities to submit their work plans and detailed proposals.
Planning Exercise for the 2025/26 to 2027/28 Triennium

2025/26-2027/28 三年期規劃工作

The Government adopts a triennial cycle in determining the recurrent funding for the UGC-funded universities. The UGC's recommendation for recurrent funding allocation is underpinned by the Planning Exercise, in which the UGC works with all the UGC-funded universities to review their academic planning, including the introduction of new programmes and phasing out of those no longer aligned with the strategic development of the universities. This ensures that all UGC-funded universities will continue to offer academic programmes that dovetail with the policy direction of the Government and the evolving needs of the community.

To prepare for the formal commencement of the upcoming Planning Exercise for the 2025/26 to 2027/28 triennium (2025-28 triennium) later this year or early next year, the UGC has canvassed the views from all universities on the manpower development of strategically important professions and industries (P&Is) for reference by the Government in devising the board planning parameters. The UGC will also set up two sub-groups, namely the (i) Sub-Group on Institutional Development and Taught Programmes and the (ii) Sub-group on Research Postgraduate Programmes, under the aegis of the Strategy Sub-committee to take forward the Planning Exercise for the 2025-28 triennium. The UGC will proceed with subsequent stages of the upcoming Planning Exercise in accordance to the Government’s steer on Strategic Directions and the broad planning parameters as well as any other specific instructions in due course.

Third Audit Cycle of the Quality Assurance Council

質素保證局第三輪質素核證週期

Established under the aegis of the UGC as a semiautonomous body, the QAC conducts quality audits to bring in international and local peer perspectives on the quality of educational experience offered by the eight UGC-funded universities. The current round of quality audits, i.e. the third audit cycle, covers all programmes at the levels of sub-degree, first degree and above, however funded, leading to a qualification wholly or partly awarded by the UGC-funded universities. Audit visits have commenced in early 2023 and the audit are to be completed by end 2024.

The two Audit Visits to Hong Kong Baptist University and The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology were successfully conducted virtually in March and May 2023. In particular, the QAC is pleased to note that the adoption of Virtual Quality Audits (VQAs) has met the expectations for the requirement of the audit and achieved the intended outcomes. The QAC will publish the Audit Reports on individual universities in due course.
UGC-funded universities made strong contributions to the wider society
教資會資助大學貢獻社會的實證

The 340 impact case studies submitted by UGC-funded universities in the Research Assessment Exercise 2020 have provided strong evidences on how our academic research have benefited the wider society and brought tangible changes to people's lives. The UGC has commissioned an independent consultancy Clarivate Analytics (UK) Ltd to further analyse these impact case studies, and released the consultancy report and online searchable database on UGC's website in May 2023. Clarivate has made four key observations:

1. Universities in Hong Kong make a significant contribution to society, with a great diversity of impact across the research spectrum;
2. The social impact of research benefits communities in Hong Kong and globally, with around two-thirds of the impact realized in Asia, predominantly in China and the Asia-Pacific region;
3. The research (including basic and applied research) underpinning social impact is globally outstanding, with high Category Normalised Citation Impact; and
4. The societal impact of research of Hong Kong universities provides the foundations to support the Government's strategic priorities.

In 2020 research assessment, UGC-funded universities have submitted 340 impact case studies, which have provided strong evidences on how our academic research have benefited the wider society and brought tangible changes to people's lives. The UGC has commissioned an independent consultancy Clarivate Analytics (UK) Ltd to further analyse these impact case studies, and released the consultancy report and online searchable database on UGC's website in May 2023. Clarivate has made four key observations:

1. Universities in Hong Kong make a significant contribution to society, with a great diversity of impact across the research spectrum;
2. The social impact of research benefits communities in Hong Kong and globally, with around two-thirds of the impact realized in Asia, predominantly in China and the Asia-Pacific region;
3. The research (including basic and applied research) underpinning social impact is globally outstanding, with high Category Normalised Citation Impact; and
4. The societal impact of research of Hong Kong universities provides the foundations to support the Government’s strategic priorities.

In 2020 research assessment, UGC-funded universities have submitted 340 impact case studies, which have provided strong evidences on how our academic research have benefited the wider society and brought tangible changes to people's lives. The UGC has commissioned an independent consultancy Clarivate Analytics (UK) Ltd to further analyse these impact case studies, and released the consultancy report and online searchable database on UGC's website in May 2023. Clarivate has made four key observations:

1. Universities in Hong Kong make a significant contribution to society, with a great diversity of impact across the research spectrum;
2. The social impact of research benefits communities in Hong Kong and globally, with around two-thirds of the impact realized in Asia, predominantly in China and the Asia-Pacific region;
3. The research (including basic and applied research) underpinning social impact is globally outstanding, with high Category Normalised Citation Impact; and
4. The societal impact of research of Hong Kong universities provides the foundations to support the Government’s strategic priorities.
RAE 2026 - continuing our effort in achieving research excellence

2026年研究評審工作 — 繼續追求研究卓越

With the support of our universities, UGC has started the preparation of RAE 2026 and commenced the consultation with the universities on the proposed Framework of the exercise in May 2023. Universities are also invited for nominations of RAE panel members, including Panel Convenors and Deputy Convenors. UGC will also consult universities at different stages on other canonical documents, namely the Guidance Notes, General Panel Guidelines and Panel-specific Guidelines on Assessment Criteria and Working Methods. Relevant documents of RAE 2026 will be uploaded to the UGC website when available.

在各大學的支持下，教資會正積極籌備2026年研究評審工作，並於2023年5月就研究評審工作的「框架」擬稿諮詢大學，同時邀請大學提名評審工作小組成員（包括小組召集人及副召集人）。教資會將會分階段就評審工作的其他核心文件諮詢大學，當中包括「工作指引」、「評審小組一般工作指引」及「個別小組評審標準及工作模式指引」。2026年研究評審工作的相關文件將會適時上載到教資會網頁。

Research Grants Council Publication Gateway
研究資助局資助論文資料通

RGC Publication Gateway (the Gateway) has been launched on 10 May 2023. The Gateway, as one of RGC’s Open Access Plan initiatives, is an online database providing information of peer-reviewed journal articles arising from research projects funded by RGC which includes the project title, principal investigator, the corresponding author(s), as well as hyperlink(s) of the refereed journal articles provided by the universities and other means of getting access to the articles.

Members of the public and researchers are welcome to visit the Gateway at www.rgcgateway.hk to explore the research outputs of RGC-funded projects.

「研究資助局資助論文資料通」（「論文資料通」）於2023年5月啟用。作為研究局開放取用計劃的其中一環，「論文資料通」提供研究局資助項目期刊論文的相關資訊，包括研究項目名稱、首席研究人員、通訊作者，以及由院校提供的期刊論文的超連結和其他瀏覽期刊論文的途徑。

歡迎市民瀏覽「論文資料通」(www.rgcgateway.hk) 以探索研究局資助項目的研究成果。
Promotion of "Study in Hong Kong" Brand

隨著疫情結束，教資會和各資助大學致力恢復與全球各地的聯繫，並透過推廣「留學香港」品牌招收更多來自世界各地的學生。

大學校長會國際化小組善用教資會的資助，參加兩場大型國際教育博覽會，分別是3月在泰國曼谷舉行的亞太國際教育協會年會和展覽，以及5月底至6月初在美國華盛頓舉行的美洲教育者年會暨教育展。

教資會秘書長譚智教授亦在這兩場活動中與大學校長會國際化小組聯手推廣香港高等教育。在出席於曼谷舉行的亞太國際教育協會年會和展覽活動期間，譚教授率領香港代表團出席泰國教育部部長兼教育副部長Kruhying Kalaya Sophonpanich，以加強香港與泰國高等教育界的聯繫。譚教授亦在美洲教育者年會暨教育展的環球合作夥伴分享會上以「香港：一座內地教育及科研橋樑」為主題發表演講，強調香港作為區域教育樞紐的獨特優勢。他亦拜訪了美國和英國的策略合作夥伴和研究資助機構，說好香港在學術和研究取得卓越成就的故事。

**Hong Kong As a Gateway for Education and Research Opportunities in China**

Professor James Tang, the Secretary-General of the UGC, also joined HUCOMSCI in promoting Hong Kong’s higher education at these two events. In particular, during his visit to Bangkok for attending the APAIE events, Professor Tang led the Hong Kong delegation to call on Kruhying Kalaya Sophonpanich, the Thai Deputy Minister of Education, to strengthen our network with the higher education sector of Thailand. Professor Tang also conducted a presentation in the global partner session of NAFSA on "Hong Kong As a Gateway for Education and Research Opportunities in China" to highlight Hong Kong’s distinctive advantages as a regional education hub. He also shared good stories on Hong Kong’s academic and research excellence when visiting strategic partners and research funding bodies in both the United States and the United Kingdom.

**The Study in Hong Kong pavilion at APAIE 2023 (top) in Bangkok and NAFSA 2023 in Washington D.C. (bottom)**

於曼谷舉行的2023亞太國際教育協會年會和展覽（上圖）及2023美洲教育者年會暨教育展（下圖）中設立的香港館。
Support for Campus Development

In support of the initiative to develop Hong Kong into an International Innovation and Technology Hub under the National 14th Five-year Plan, the UGC supported a campus development project of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) in making available additional space and state-of-the-art facilities for cutting-edge research in strategic interdisciplinary areas. In July 2023, the Legislative Council approved the funding for HKUST’s New Research Building 2 with an approved project estimate of $835.1 million. The building will provide laboratories and research facilities, offices and support space to facilitate the development of technologies in synthetic biology. In particular, the building will feature a DNA foundry that specialises in using automated and robotic systems to enable researchers to rapidly develop prototypes and test emerging applications. The project is funded under the $16 billion dedicated provision for enhancing and refurbishing campus facilities announced by the Government in 2019. The UGC Secretariat will continue to work with the university to ensure smooth implementation of the project.
UGC Members visited the Hong Kong Baptist University

UGC Members visited the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) on 18 May 2023, and met Dr Clement Chen (HKBU Council Chairman), Professor Alexander Wai (President & Vice-Chancellor of HKBU), the university’s senior management team, faculty members and students to learn about the development of HKBU, and to exchange views on nurturing talents and the potentials of transdisciplinary collaborations. UGC Members also visited various facilities including the Visualisation Research Centre, Motion Capture and Visualisation Lab, Life Science Imaging Centre, Dr & Mrs Hung Hin Shiu Museum of Chinese Medicine, Mr & Mrs Chan Hon Yin Chinese Medicine Specialty Clinic & Good Clinical Practice Centre.

UGC Members visit the Visualisation Research Centre (left) and Dr. & Mrs. Hung Hin Shiu Museum of Chinese Medicine (right).