

Research Assessment Exercise 2020 Impact Overview Statement

University: The Hong Kong Polytechnic University |
Unit of Assessment (UoA): 23 Hotel Management & Tourism |
Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA: 39 |

(1) Context

The main user groups that benefit from research conducted in the School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) include the Hong Kong hospitality and tourism sector, official tourism organizations (e.g. Hong Kong Tourism Board, Hong Kong Hotels Association), internationally-oriented regional tourism organizations (e.g. Pacific Asia Travel Association and the European Travel Commission), as well as global tourism bodies such as the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The main impacts generated from our research are on destination policy formulations, business decision-making and educational programmes |

(2) Approach to impact

SHTM's approach to impact is to work closely and collaboratively with specific national and international organisations to address real industry needs.

Acting as a “House of Innovation”: The Tomorrow's Guestrooms project has been established by SHTM in its teaching and research hotel – **Hotel ICON** – with a view to setting new standards for hotel rooms of the future. The Tomorrow's Guestrooms are purpose-built to serve as a platform to innovate, develop and showcase new technologies, hotel designs and business concepts in hotel management for the advancement of the entire industry. Through the Tomorrow's Guestrooms, SHTM is creating a “House of Innovation” for the global hotel industry, where new products and services can be researched and tested.

Acting as a Training Hub: SHTM has developed a series of special Executive Development Programmes (EDPs), including the **Hong Kong PolyU Winter School (HKWS)** and custom-made courses specially designed for individual organizations such as Dorsett Hospitality International, Hong Kong Dragon Airlines Ltd., Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority, and Fujian Provincial Tourism Development Commission etc. in areas such as innovation, leadership, service quality management, human resource management, marketing management, and revenue management. These are delivered by SHTM staff and established industry professionals, and are supported by the Hong Kong Hotels Association and Pacific Asia Travel Association. Between October 2013 and September 2019, SHTM has run 146 EDPs attended by 5,550 participants. The HKWS was held six times from February 2014 to December 2018, attracting over 750 participants from industry.

Partnership with industry through the Hospitality and Tourism Research Centre (HTRC): With a donation from the family of the late Mr and Mrs Chan Chak Fu, HK\$22 million dollars were earmarked for the School to advance research on hospitality and tourism. SHTM used this to establish the HTRC in 2018 as a knowledge transfer centre. The HTRC has run a knowledge transfer event known as the “**Think Tank of Smart Hotel Rooms**” (16 July 2019) which brought together 27 industry professionals and academics to share insights into smart hotel rooms and collaborate on practical design ideas.

Providing Input for Tourism Development: Our staff have engaged with the media on tourism development. Prof. Haiyan Song was interviewed by [Hong Kong Commercial Daily](#) (23 April 2019, A13) on development of tourism products in Hong Kong for Greater Bay Area. Prof. Brian King commented on the impact of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge on tourism of the regions (28 Oct 2018, [SCMP](#)).

Contribution to the Community and Professional Services: Our staff have held executive or advisory positions in leading international, regional and local tourism organizations and have served on government committees during the assessment period. Examples include: Advisor - UNWTO TedQual Accreditation Network, Director - UNWTO Knowledge Network, Director - Board of Pacific Asia Travel Association, Member - Advisory Committee on Travel Agents under Travel Agents Registry of the Tourism Commission, Asia Council Member - Association of Corporate Travel Executives, Council Member - International Vacation and Recreation Society, Advisory Board Member - International Live Events Association (Hong Kong Branch), Independent Director - Board of Directors, Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong, Member - Industry Consultative Network (Tourism) of the Employees Retraining Board, Vice Chairmen and Vetting Committee - Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong.

(3) Strategy and plans

Strategy: The School's strategy for achieving and enabling impact is to:

- a. identify emerging trends and issues that will affect industry practices to inform research;
- b. collaborate with hospitality and tourism leaders to translate academic research into best practice, which will set new benchmarks for the hospitality and tourism industries;
- c. provide policy recommendations for destination management organizations and governments across the world through evidence-based research;

Plans:

- a. **Greater Bay Area (GBA) Tourism Research Alliance:** The School formed this strategic alliance in November 2018 with Sun Yet-Sen University (SYSU) in Guangzhou, and the Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) in Macau. SHTM will liaise with the Hong Kong authorities to conduct research and surveys that will provide information to guide government decision making and support tourism providers and organisations. The first joint research venture is to develop a future destination brand and image by providing guidance for policy makers and destination management organizations. The School will continue to actively participate in other joint research projects to strengthen the GBA's international tourism status.
- b. **Regular Industry Conference:** The School will organize a regular conference where academics and industry can meet and exchange research findings, disseminating the School's research and ensuring that it is closely aligned with the needs of industry. The inaugural conference is planned for 2020.
- c. **Book on Selected Research Articles:** The School has selected a number of research articles published by SHTM staff to be rewritten in accessible language and incorporated in a book aimed at a wide industry audience. The book is scheduled for publication in 2020.

(4) Relationship to case studies

The three case studies exemplify key aspects of SHTM's approach to impact. Case Study 1 arises from close engagement with industry, Case Study 2 shows how impact has developed through dissemination of research via the media, and Case Study 3 shows impact from involvement with governmental bodies, in particular the UNWTO.

SHTM supported these case studies through provision of office space, resources of the Che-woo Lui Hotel and Tourism Resource Centre, conference support, recruitment of research staff and general administrative support. In addition, doctoral students assisted in the data collection and analysis phases of the studies. English language editing of publications was provided as required. Press conferences and media briefings were hosted by SHTM to present the findings.