

Research Assessment Exercise 2020

Impact Overview Statement

University: The University of Hong Kong (HKU)

Unit of Assessment (UoA): UoA 30 Chinese Language and Literature

Total number of eligible staff of the university in the UoA: 19

(1) Context

The UoA draws on its research strengths in the fields of Chinese history and culture, Chinese language and literature, Chinese-English translation and interpretation, and Hong Kong studies to benefit a range of non-academic users. Our impact takes two main forms: i) promoting and preserving Chinese and Hong Kong literature and culture; ii) developing resources for professional interpreters and translators, and, through translation, bringing Chinese literature to new audiences worldwide. Beneficiaries include primary and secondary school students and their teachers, professionals in the fields of interpreting and translation, Cantonese-speaking computer users, Hong Kong government bodies, museums, literary festivals, poets and writers, and the general public.

(2) Approach to impact

We enable achievement of impact arising from our research by active engagement with our main beneficiary groups. Members have taken up advisory roles in governmental bodies, collaborated with teachers and secondary schools on curriculum development, engaged with translators and interpreters to produce innovative resources, partnered with cultural organisations, and used the media to communicate their research.

Advisory Roles: Our expertise in Chinese language and literature has resulted in several advisory appointments. Tang has been a member of the Working Group of the Chinese Language Interface Advisory Committee since 2011. The Committee provides professional advice to the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) on the establishment and promotion of a common Chinese language interface in Hong Kong. Tang has been actively involved in several projects during the assessment period, which resulted in the development of a Hong Kong Supplementary Character Set (HKSCS) and the establishment of guidelines on Chinese glyphs (hieroglyphic characters or symbols) for Chinese computer systems. The HKSCS-2016 contains 5,033 characters that are specific to Hong Kong and facilitate electronic communication in Chinese. Wong provided historical expertise for the exhibition “The Dragon and the Eagle: American traders in China 1784–1900” at the Hong Kong Maritime Museum. Yeung serves as an Academic Consultant to Haichuang Temple in Guangzhou (China), where he is working on a project to collect and digitise Buddhist texts.

Collaborating with Schools: We are committed to promoting Hong Kong and Chinese literature and culture in local schools. Tang is consulting with the Education University of Hong Kong on a project related to the curriculum design and teaching of classical Chinese texts in local secondary schools. The team is working with teachers to review existing curricula and provide suggestions and recommendations for the development of classical Chinese school-based curricula and e-learning platforms. Chu and Wong spearheaded two projects aimed at promoting a greater understanding of Hong Kong culture and identity: “Synesthesia Hong Kong” in 2014–15 and “Keywords: Rethinking Hong Kong Cultures” in 2016–17. Through workshops attended by over 700 secondary school students, they explored concepts essential to the study of Hong Kong culture and invited students to critically reflect on local social issues. Chu’s efforts to preserve Hong Kong’s heritage and traditions were recognised in 2019 with the Spirit of Culture Award. The Spirit of Hong Kong Awards were established in 2013 by the South China Morning Post (SCMP) and Sino Group to highlight the achievements of ordinary Hong Kong citizens and their contributions to the community. Members serve as adjudicators for secondary school Chinese culture- and history-related competitions. Since 2014, Tang has been one of three adjudicators for the annual territory-wide Chinese Poetry Writing Competition organised by the Hong Kong Public Libraries and Leisure and Cultural Services Department. It attracts 100 entries annually and stimulates the

public's interest in classical Chinese poetry by disseminating winning poems on posters at public libraries, universities and secondary schools.

Merging Research and Practice through Interpretation and Translation: Our research in the areas of interpretation and translation bridges the gap between research and practice, impacting on the work of professionals in these fields. Ng's research on courtroom interpreting, which is highlighted in one of the submitted impact case studies, has led to the creation of a website and mobile application that have proven to be vital resources for professional interpreters and translators. Klein's translations of Chinese poets into English have expanded their cross-cultural reach and enabled new audiences to enjoy their works.

Media and Public Engagement: Members are frequently interviewed on matters related to their research expertise. Song Geng has given interviews on timely issues related to Chinese masculinity in the SCMP, the Guardian, Los Angeles Times, Nikkei Asian Review, and China Daily. Liu hosted the TVB television programmes "Cantoxicating" and "Walking Scientist" between 2016 and 2019, reaching an audience of approximately 1.6 million people. We host frequent public events in connection with our Writer-in-Residence Scheme, which was established to promote Chinese literature to a wider audience. The Scheme has hosted acclaimed Chinese novelists and poets, including Nobel Prize winner Gao Xingjian and author Yan Geling. Klein has given talks for International Poetry Nights in Hong Kong (IPNHK), the Hong Kong International Literary Festival (HKILF), and the Cha Reading Series. Wu appeared as an expert in a documentary series on Chinese writers, which was screened on the Phoenix television channel in 2019.

Funding: We have made extensive use of HKU Knowledge Exchange (KE) funding opportunities to advance our impact. Ng was awarded four HKU KE grants totalling over HK\$350,000 for the *Resources for Interpreting* website and *Newssary* app. Chu and Wong's initiatives were funded by two KE grants totalling HK\$160,000. Poon worked with Zayts in the School of English to develop a bilingual (English/Chinese) web-based information resource about mental health for the interdisciplinary project "Mind HK," which was funded by a KE grant in 2016.

(3) Strategy and plans

Going forward, we will strengthen our focus on our two strategic areas of impact. Chu is working with Tse Sui Luen Jewellery (International) Limited to launch a project on the history of Hong Kong popular songs in 2020. Ng has been awarded HK\$400,000 by Hong Kong's Equal Opportunity Commission to lead a project on the accreditation and regulation of interpreters and translators in ethnic minority languages, which, once established, may lead to our involvement in the administration of an accreditation examination and the provision of training courses. Ng's 2017–18 Early Career Scheme project on jury comprehension will result in recommendations to the Hong Kong Judiciary and, it is hoped, a review of court interpretation services. Yeung is collaborating with the libraries of Durham University, Leeds University and SOAS, as well as the Bavarian and Berlin State Libraries, to create a global digital repository of all Haichuang-related texts for public access. Impact is integrated into HKU's staff appraisal and promotion mechanisms. We provide mentoring and are incorporating impact into both recruitment and training to ensure that staff are able to identify impact elements in their research, secure funding, establish productive partnerships outside the academy, and can access resources for the collection of evidence.

(4) Relationship to case studies

Our two case studies reflect our approach to impact in a number of ways. Ng and Klein are excellent examples of merging research and practice through interpretation and translation – Ng through her engagement with practising legal interpreters in Hong Kong and Klein through his esteemed translations of Chinese poetry and his collaborations with poets from around the world. Klein's study exemplifies how members have formed meaningful collaborations with external partners and organisations. Ng's multiple successful grant applications speak to our approach to funding, and her engagement with school students – through the development of resources as well as the delivering of talks and seminars – underscores our commitment to educational impacts.