

Alliance of Universities of Applied Sciences officially launched (with photos)

The Government announced today (November 11) that, with support from the Education Bureau (EDB), the Alliance of Universities of Applied Sciences was officially launched, signifying a new journey for the development of vocational and professional education and training (VPET). The Alliance comprises four post-secondary institutions as founding members, with the Hong Kong Metropolitan University (HKMU) and Saint Francis University (SFU) as full members, and Tung Wah College (TWC) and the Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi) as associate members.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Cheuk Wing-hing, said that he was pleased that the Government's direction of developing universities of applied sciences (UAS) has received strong support from various sectors. He said he was also glad to see that UAS and other aspiring post-secondary institutions responded to the Government's policies proactively to establish the Alliance, promoting VPET development with concerted efforts and supporting Hong Kong's development into an international post-secondary education hub.

He said that he looked forward to all sectors of society and the Alliance to continue strengthening collaboration, achieving co-operation between industries and education, as well as integration of science and education, and, through sharing of experience and resources, enhance the quality and recognition of VPET, thereby jointly nurturing applied talent for contribution to the development of Hong Kong and the country.

Guests attending the ceremony included the Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin; the Permanent Secretary for Education and Chairman of the Steering Committee on the Alliance, Ms Michelle Li; the Chairman of the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications, Mr Rock Chen; representatives of member institutions of the Alliance, namely, the President of the HKMU, Professor Paul Lam; the Acting President of SFU, Professor Lo Tit-wing; the President of TWC, Professor Sally Chan; and the President of THEi, Professor Alan Lau; and representatives from over 80 supporting organisations which included enterprises, chambers of commerce, industry organisations, think tanks, quasi-government organisations, and educational and charitable organisations.

The Alliance also invited representatives from the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, Hong Kong; the Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong; the Federation of Hong Kong Industries; and the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, to a panel discussion. They exchanged and shared insights on how the industries could collaborate with UAS and other post-secondary institutions under the Government's strategy of fostering industry-institution collaboration and diversified development for promoting VPET

development and nurturing quality talent with applied knowledge and skills.

As announced in "The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address", the Government will continue to press ahead with the development of UAS in Hong Kong. It has allocated a start-up fund of \$100 million to support the establishment of the Alliance, which will embark on joint promotions with industries and stakeholders, including organising international conferences, strengthening exchanges and collaboration with applied sciences institutions from other places, and initiating collaboration and research on applied education at the post-secondary level.

All UAS may apply to become full members of the Alliance, whereas institutions aspiring to become UAS may apply to become associate members. The HKMU serves as the secretariat of the Alliance. The EDB has established the Steering Committee on the Alliance to advise on the development and strategy of the Alliance, as well as approving and supervising the use of the start-up fund.

