

## S for IT visits secondary and primary schools (with photos)

The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Alfred Sit, and the Vetting Committee on IT Innovation Lab Programme in Schools today (October 21) visited PLK Dr Jimmy Wong Chi-Ho (Tin Sum Valley) Primary School and Man Kwan Pak Kau College to keep abreast of the schools' views on the IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools Programme and the Knowing More About IT Programme. Mr Sit took the chance to listen to views of teachers and students and encouraged students to seize the opportunities to learn and actively participate in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) activities and competitions to broaden their knowledge and widen their exposure.

The Chairman of the Vetting Committee on IT Innovation Lab Programme in Schools, Professor Wong Kam-fai, and committee members Mr Leonard Chan, Dr Wong Chung-kiu and Mr Gary Yeung also joined the school visits.

Mr Sit and the committee members first visited PLK Dr Jimmy Wong Chi-Ho (Tin Sum Valley) Primary School in Tai Wai to better understand students' learning experience in information technology (IT) through watching their unconventional e-Orch practice with iPads as musical instruments. They were also briefed by the students on the Internet of Things (IoT) technology deployed in the Sky Garden project to collect data.

At Man Kwan Pak Kau College in Tin Shui Wai, Mr Sit and the committee members joined the sharing sessions by students on their learning experience and achievements in innovation and technology (I&T) activities, including their research and development journeys and experiences gained from I&T activities and competitions. Mr Sit said he was glad to see students master STEM knowledge and apply STEM knowledge to solve problems in their everyday lives such as utilising environmentally friendly materials to create a chlorine generator, using artificial intelligence to monitor the safety of the elderly living alone, designing an augmented reality (AR) app of an emotion fairy, building a drowsiness alert system using artificial intelligence in the facial landmark function, using a smart NFC food labelling system and applying a distant turtle monitoring system using IoT technology.

Mr Sit said talent is the key to I&T development. In addition to attracting talent from other places to Hong Kong, the Government has been actively nurturing local I&T talent. Efforts have been stepped up in recent years to enlarge local technology talent by extending additional IT programmes to secondary schools and also primary schools to train up next-generation I&T talent from early ages. The goal of the programmes is to cultivate an interest in IT among students and enhance their digital skills, computational thinking and innovative abilities through participation in extra-curricular activities and competitions.

"The Policy Address this year has put forward a number of I&T initiatives that are forward-looking and groundbreaking. The determination in developing Hong Kong into an international I&T hub brings massive support to I&T development, injects impetus into Hong Kong's diversified economy and creates more quality employment opportunities for young people. I&T is high on the Government's agenda and more I&T talents are needed. I would like to express my gratitude to the Vetting Committee on IT Innovation Lab Programme in Schools for converging efforts of the IT industry and academics, ensuring the IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools Programme and the Knowing More About IT Programme are customised for students. I would also like to thank the participating schools for their enthusiastic support in enhancing students' technology literacy. I believe a brighter future can be built with the concerted efforts of the Government, industry, academia and research sectors," Mr Sit added.

The IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools Programme and the Knowing More About IT Programme subsidise schools to organise extra-curricular activities and nurture new I&T talents. Each publicly funded secondary school can apply for funding support of up to \$1 million within the three school years from 2020/21 to 2022/23 under the IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools Programme, while each publicly funded primary school can apply for funding support of up to \$400,000 within the three school years from 2021/22 to 2023/24 under the Knowing More About IT Programme. The grant can be used in organising IT-related extra-curricular activities and procuring IT equipment and professional services such as cloud services required for the activities concerned. Open for application since December 2020, the IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools Programme has received funding applications from more than 260 secondary schools. Among these, 177 of the applications have been approved, involving funding of over \$68 million. Since the launch of the Knowing More About IT Programme in September this year, 40 primary schools have submitted funding applications so far. Among these, 15 of the applications have been approved, involving funding of over \$3.39 million.

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer has set up a one-stop support centre for the IT Innovation Lab Programme in Schools to support schools' application procedure, progress, procurement of IT equipment and professional services, scheduling of activities, and more. For enquiries on the IT Innovation Lab Programme in Schools, please call the hotline at 2116 9083 for secondary schools, and 2231 5977 for primary schools. For details, please visit [www.it-lab.gov.hk/tc/index.php](http://www.it-lab.gov.hk/tc/index.php).

