

Second "City I&T Grand Challenge" Grand Pitch produces innovative solutions tackling daily life issues (with photos)

Organised by the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) together with the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC), the second City I&T Grand Challenge concluded its Grand Pitch at Hong Kong Science Park today (August 10). More than 500 guests from all walks of life, as well as an online audience, witnessed the emergence of the next generation of innovators and celebrated the conclusion of the competition.

To promote an innovation and technology (I&T) culture and enhance the application of I&T in the community, the second City I&T Grand Challenge was launched under the theme of "Hong Kong's Got I&T" on March 16 this year. It invited applications from different sectors of the community to develop I&T solutions focusing on two subjects, namely "I&T for Nature (Yama)" (improving the operation and management of country parks and campsites, and enhancing hikers' experiences in nature) and "I&T for Community (Community Wellness)" (enhancing support for carers) between April 5 and May 16. The competition was divided into four categories, which were the Primary School Group, the Secondary School Group, the University/Tertiary Institute Group and the Open Group. In all, 1 172 submissions were received from nearly 2 500 local and non-local contestants on an individual or team basis.

After an initial screening and a semi pitch held in July, 27 solutions were shortlisted to enter the Grand Pitch today. Winners from four categories were selected by a judging panel consisting of eight representatives from the Government, I&T and academic sectors, and subject matter experts. Prototypes of I&T solutions entering the Grand Pitch were also displayed on-site to foster exchanges and mutual learning among participants and guests on the technologies applied.

Addressing the award presentation ceremony, the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, said, "This event is not just a competition, but also a good opportunity to promote science education for all. Hong Kong is moving at full steam to develop into an international I&T centre with talents being the key to the development and source of inspiration. 'City I&T Grand Challenge' is thus a platform for identifying and training talents." He also affirmed the participants' passion for I&T and their care for the community, and hoped that they would continue to bring new ideas for the I&T development in Hong Kong with their creativity.

The Commissioner for Innovation and Technology, Mr Ivan Lee, said that the City I&T Grand Challenge aimed at promoting the application of I&T to tackle social problems. An enthusiastic response was received from all walks

of life with the number of participants almost doubling that of the first Grand Challenge. Mr Lee praised the 27 teams entering the Grand Pitch after stages of review and competition as the best of the best.

The Chairman of the HKSTPC, Dr Sunny Chai, said that the competition enhanced the I&T atmosphere in Hong Kong by inviting society's participation. This year's competition received over 1 000 submissions, which was a testament to the theme of "Hong Kong's Got I&T." Dr Chai said he looked forward to seeing these high-potential innovative solutions be implemented to benefit the public in the future.

To drive applications of I&T solutions for the benefit of the general public, winners of the University/Tertiary Institute and Open Groups will also be given financial support for research and development, as well as training to refine their solutions for trials at designated venues such as government departments or public organisations. At the sharing session after the award presentation ceremony, the winners of this cohort agreed that the competition provided them with a platform and resources to realise their ideas and apply their I&T solutions to hopefully benefit the public.

Please visit the dedicated website (citytechgc.hk) to learn more about the competition. The list of winners of the second City I&T Grand Challenge can be retrieved at website (citytechgc.hk/en/winners).

