

Speech by FS at Awards Presentation Ceremony and Dinner of the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2024 (English only) (with photos/video)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the Awards Presentation Ceremony and Dinner of the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2024 today (November 22):

Professor Qin (Chairman of the Grand Judging Panel of the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2024 and the President of Lingnan University, Professor Joe Qin), 王寧 (the Deputy Director-General of the Youth Department of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Ms Wan Ning), Dong (Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong), ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening. I am pleased to join you tonight, for the annual, and much anticipated, Hong Kong Information and Communications Technology Awards Presentation Ceremony. Let me first congratulate the winners, and finalists of this prestigious award. Your dedication and achievements are an inspiration to practitioners, entrepreneurs and students, to the innovation and technology industries, and to us all.

For 18 years now, the HKICT Awards has celebrated the exceptional achievements of individuals and organisations in a diversity of sectors and businesses. They put a deserved spotlight on the remarkable talent, creativity and dedication of people seeking to harness technology to reinvent products and services, to improve efficiency, to offer better care to the needy, and ultimately to make our lives and the world better.

In just a few minutes, we'll know all about those elite achievers – and their innovative applications and solutions.

This year's award, I'm pleased to note, introduces a new "Best Use of AI Award" in all eight categories, to recognise and honour the efforts of those harnessing the power of AI (artificial intelligence) to transform our businesses and ways of living.

The HKSAR (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) Government, too, believes in the vast potential of AI. It is a sweeping force in boosting productivity and enhancing the competitiveness of the economy. We believe AI can become a strategic pillar of our innovation and technology sector. And we have been working on multiple fronts to make it thrive. That includes supporting R&D (research and development), nurturing start-ups, fostering cross-boundary and cross-industry collaboration, attracting strategic enterprises, and building the related infrastructure, including a

supercomputing centre.

But above all, it is people and talent that matter, if we are to realise this vision. We must raise the AI literacy and preparedness of our community. That has to take a whole-of-society approach, starting with children's education, integrating AI into school and university curricula, and supporting the training of professionals and continuous learning.

My thanks to the organisers of the Hong Kong ICT Awards, and to the high-profile judges of the eight award categories. Your expertise and commitment to excellence can only inspire the continuing growth and success of our innovation and technology industry – and the economy, and community, of Hong Kong.

Ladies and gentlemen, I know you will enjoy this very special evening and the good company all about you.

Thank you.

