

Speech by SCST at seminar on “Design Impact – Now and Beyond” under Future Skills Community Event 2022 (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, at seminar on "Design Impact – Now and Beyond" under Future Skills Community Event 2022 today (December 9):

Tony (Vocational Training Council (VTC) Chairman, Mr Tony Tai), Donald (VTC Executive Director, Mr Donald Tong), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. It is my pleasure to be here this morning to kick-off the Seminar with the theme "Design Impact – Now and Beyond".

Vocational Training Council is one of the leading institutions of vocational and professional education and training in Hong Kong and the Asia region. VTC has been one of my close working partners when I was in charge of the education policy in the last term of the Government. I am therefore especially pleased to be here today in my new capacity as the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism to attend this meaningful seminar, to celebrate the remarkable achievements of VTC, and at the same time to promote the vital importance of design education and nurturing a new generation of design talents for Hong Kong.

VTC is committed to providing quality education to cultivate knowledge and professionalism, and to help equip young people with work skills that meet future needs of our society and economy. In particular, through its member institution, Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI), VTC has nurtured generations of design talent with global vision and aspiration to enhance the well-being of people through sustainable designs. Adopting the "Think and Do" approach, HKDI actively collaborates with the industry to offer their students valuable experience and practical skills through workplace attachment. The numerous awards won by HKDI students at local and international competitions, such as the Red Dot Design Award and the Hong Kong Young Design Talent Award, are strong testimony of the quality of their work.

Over the years, the 2 000 strong graduates from HKDI each year have become the mainstay of Hong Kong's energetic cultural and creative industries, which covers a wide range of disciplines, including interior and furniture design, graphic design, fashion and accessories design, industrial design and so on. At the same time, the design industry has been driving innovation of our products and businesses, and has in turn made significant contribution to Hong Kong's economic growth, job creation and overall

competitiveness. In 2020, the value added of the cultural and creative industries to Hong Kong's economy reached \$116 billion, contributing to 4.5 per cent of Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product and employing around 230 000 persons. The value added of the design sector was \$4 billion, and over 18 000 people were employed by the design sector.

As a vibrant, dynamic and stylish cosmopolitan embracing both the Chinese and Western cultures, Hong Kong is a renowned design hub in Asia. We have always been a forerunner in the region for excellence in design, branding and marketing. Hong Kong's unique cultural characters and global connection, as well as the free flow of information and excellent business environment, makes us an ideal place for designers to develop and flourish. Hong Kong's designers possess multi-lingual and multi-cultural talent as well as global mindset, and has established presence in the Mainland, regional and international markets. Partnering manufacturers specialising in light industrial products, such as toys, electronics and garments, Hong Kong designers have been powering the advancement of these companies from Original Equipment Manufacturers to Original Design Manufacturers and even Original Brand Manufacturers. The demand for Hong Kong's high-end design services from the expanding markets in the Mainland and nearby economies has continued to be strong.

And I am confident that the future of our design industry will be bright and promising. The National 14th Five-Year Plan promulgated by the Central People's Government in 2021 has expressed clear support for Hong Kong to develop into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. This not only manifests our Motherland's aspiration for Hong Kong, but also its full recognition to the flourishing and diverse growth of arts, cultural and creative industries in Hong Kong over the past years. Coupled with the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, there will be countless and exciting opportunities for our young designers to unleash their potential. Among the many initiatives outlined in the Chief Executive's Policy Address in October, I will be chairing a newly formed Culture Commission comprised of industry leaders. The Commission will give recommendations to the Government on how to enhance current policies and development strategies on arts, cultural and creative industries from a macro and forward-looking perspective, and assist the Government to map out a Blueprint for Arts and Culture and Creative Industries Development and enhance the ecosystem for the industries that could further promote commercialisation of cultural and creative industries.

In addition, we will be enhancing arts and cultural infrastructural facilities, supporting the arts and cultural mega events in Hong Kong through the Mega Arts and Cultural Events Fund, and providing funding support to our young and budding artists and art groups. No doubt, we will also continue to seize upon the unique strengths of the design industry in showcasing Hong Kong's thriving ecosystem of the creative sector.

The Government has always attached great importance to the development of the design industry and creative industries. In 2009, the Government launched the CreateSmart Initiative (CSI) to provide designated support to

different sectors of the creative industries, including design, advertising, architecture, digital entertainment, printing and publishing, television and music. Sponsorship will be provided to stakeholders through CSI for organising projects that aim to nurture talents and facilitate start-ups, expand markets, promote Hong Kong as Asia's creative capital and foster a creative atmosphere in the community. At the same time, Create Hong Kong (CreateHK) was established for implementing CSI and providing designated support to the creative sector. Since 2009, the Government has injected a total of \$3 billion into CSI, and supported over 200 projects in the past five years. Many of these projects showcased Hong Kong designers' creativity overseas. For example, the first-of-its-kind Hong Kong Art Toy Story Exhibition was successfully staged at Bangkok, Thailand in September this year, featuring 15 units of Hong Kong's hottest and emerging art toy designers from different generations, with over 300 pieces of collectable original works spanning the past three decades. Among those original works, some are museum- and auction-level art toy collections that are rare to view in the market. The exhibition allows visitors in Bangkok to get a glimpse of the development and achievements of Hong Kong's original art toys since the 1990s.

As all of us here today would agree, nurturing of talents is a crucial element in the development of arts, cultural and creative industries. The Government has launched the Design Incubation Programme and Fashion Incubation Programme in 2006 and 2016 respectively, as targeted measures to holistically promote the development of the design industry. CreateHK has provided a total funding of \$118 million to the Hong Kong Design Centre (HKDC) in the past five years for implementation of the two schemes. During the two-year incubation period, we have offered financial assistance and incubation services to help local design-entrepreneurs build up business network, publicise products and conduct marketing promotions. It is encouraging to note that as at the end of September 2022, 95 per cent of the graduated incubatees are still operating two years after programme completion.

After the completion of the incubation, HKDC continues to follow up closely the development of these graduated designers and enterprises, and invite them to take part in various exchange and promotional activities of the industry, such as the "Fashion Challenges Forum" and "10 Asian Designers to Watch Exhibition", to enhance their exposure and expand their business networks.

The Government will also be launching a design and fashion project in the Sham Shui Po District, which is anticipated to be completed in 2024. Located at a redevelopment by the Urban Renewal Authority, the project will provide a ground for the nurture and exchanges of emerging design talents and fashion designers to assist them to start their career or own businesses. Exhibition and activity space open to the public will also be provided. Leveraging on the characteristics of the Sham Shui Po District as a traditional hub for wholesale and retail of garment and fabric, the project is also expected to create new synergy by blending design, fashion, garment manufacturing and retail, which will become a focal point of design and

fashion in Hong Kong and a popular spot of the industry players. We also hope to bring in members of the public and visitors from and outside the local community and hence drive the development of tourism of the Sham Shui Po District.

Creative industries are important economic drivers for Hong Kong. They help to increase the innovation capacity of the economy and can be a powerhouse for future economic growth. The Government will continue to keep close ties with the industry and promote development of creative industries through CreateHK. As announced in the policy address, we will explore the enhancement of CSI to encourage more cross-sectoral and cross-genre collaboration on creative and culture programmes with CreateHK playing a leading and co-ordinating role. A notable example of such successful collaboration in the past include the "WearDance" project supported by CSI in 2019, in which local emerging fashion designers and choreographers were paired up to design new dancewear for the Hong Kong Ballet.

Ladies and gentlemen, today's seminar brings together key stakeholders from the design sector, including masters of the design sectors, renowned entrepreneurs from local and overseas, as well as experts in design education, and of course, the many exemplary alumni from the Hong Kong Design Institute. They will be shedding lights on the latest market trends and exciting business opportunities, especially those in the Greater Bay Area. Through the fruitful and insightful exchanges, I am certain there will be much to be taken away by our young design talents, as they gain more practical knowledge of the design industries, as well as the mode of thinking of leading professional designers who they all aspire to become in the future.

Finally, I wish to thank VTC once again for organising this seminar. My heartfelt gratitude also goes to all of you who have been joining hands with us in promoting design and creative excellence. I wish the 3-day Future Skills Community Event a resounding success and all of you a great time ahead. Thank you very much.