

STEM Internship Scheme attracts over 1 700 university students so far this summer (with photos)

A spokesman for the Innovation and Technology Commission said today (August 2) that the new round of the STEM Internship Scheme launched this summer has attracted over 1 700 university students in the past two months, exceeding the total number of participants last year. Meanwhile, around 1 000 companies or organisations have joined this round so far, which is close to the total number last year. These figures show that the Scheme is well recognised and supported by the universities and the business community.

"In view of the enthusiastic responses from both universities and the business community to the pilot STEM Internship Scheme last year, the Government has regularised the Scheme this year. We are pleased to see that the Scheme has offered innovation and technology (I&T) internships to more and more university students and assisted employers in recruiting suitable I&T talents in the future. We look forward to participation from more employers and students," the spokesman said.

BioMed Technology Holdings Limited has joined the Scheme for the first time. The company is dedicated to developing advanced technologies and providing professional medical services. Company Research Scientist Dr Joseph Tsui said, "The Scheme has helped enrich the company's human resources. My company intern is of high calibre and is able to apply advanced technologies in mapping out solutions for the company. In addition, the Scheme offers us the opportunity to assess the performance of interns, which facilitates our selection of suitable students to be our future staff. Through the Scheme, the company can also contribute to the nurturing of the next generation of I&T talents for Hong Kong."

Ng Cheuk-him, the company intern and a year four student of the Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences Programme of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, said, "The internship has widened my horizons. It has offered me the opportunity to learn about information technology (IT) in the real world. It has also helped me understand how IT can be combined with biotechnology in scientific research in the commercial world."

An online retailer, YesStyle.com, has joined the Scheme for the second time. It has employed three interns from the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, namely Derry Li, a year three student of the Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Engineering programme; Timothy Tsang, a year four student of the Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance programme; and Matt Wong, a year three student of the Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Science programme. Company Application Support Manager Ms Zoe Ho said, "The interns are smart and energetic. The Scheme provides them with the opportunity to apply their classroom knowledge about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) in the business world, bringing new

ideas to the company." Company Project Manager Mr Jacky Poon added that the Scheme helped the interns explore I&T career opportunities and the company identify prospective candidates as future employees.

All three interns said that the Scheme had enabled them to get in touch with state-of-the-art IT applications and advanced technologies beyond the school syllabus through real-life work, and to experience the practical I&T work environment and strengths of the I&T field, which is beneficial to their I&T career development after graduation. Furthermore, they commended the flexibility of the Scheme, which allows students to take up I&T-related internships in companies from different sectors.

The STEM Internship Scheme aims to encourage students to experience I&T-related work before graduation and foster their interest in an I&T career in the future. It provides university students in STEM disciplines with internships of at least four consecutive weeks with a monthly allowance of \$10,500 for up to three months in every academic year. To enhance the flexibility of the Scheme for covering a broader spectrum of business sectors, an internship place is regarded as I&T-related as long as its actual work contains I&T elements.

The universities participating in the Scheme this year are the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University and the Education University of Hong Kong. The Innovation and Technology Commission welcomes more employers and students to participate in the Scheme, and encourages them to contact the relevant universities early. Details of the Scheme are available at the website of the Innovation and Technology Fund (www.itf.gov.hk/en/funding-programmes/nurturing-talent/stem-internship-scheme).

