

University Grants Committee welcomes 2022-23 Budget

The following is issued on behalf of the University Grants Committee:

The Chairman of the University Grants Committee (UGC), Mr Carlson Tong, welcomed the 2022-23 Budget announced by the Financial Secretary today (February 23), which continues to give full support to the promotion of higher education in Hong Kong amidst the challenging environment.

Mr Tong said, "The UGC and the eight UGC-funded universities have all along attached great importance to nurturing talent for our society. I am delighted to note that having considered the UGC's recommendations, the Government has decided to allocate \$63.2 billion to the UGC-funded universities as recurrent grants in the 2022/23 to 2024/25 triennium. With the recurrent funding, the universities will leverage on their unique roles to innovate in the provision of higher education. In particular, various new programmes will be launched to nurture talents in areas of strategic importance to Hong Kong. Apart from programmes in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), universities will also blend disciplines such as art, social sciences and humanities subjects with technology. The recurrent grant is disbursed in the form of a block grant from which universities may flexibly deploy for the nurturing of local talents and the support of academic research, thereby contributing further to Hong Kong's development over the longer horizon."

The Budget proposes the allocation of funding for subsidising students in healthcare-related taught postgraduate programmes of UGC-funded universities, and earmarking an additional \$10 billion for completing the works to upgrade and increase healthcare teaching facilities at relevant universities. Mr Tong welcomed these initiatives which would further strengthen the important role of UGC-funded universities in the training of healthcare professionals, thereby helping Hong Kong cope with future public health challenges.

Mr Tong once again expressed appreciation for the Government's staunch support for research and the various initiatives implemented for the purpose, including the injection of \$20 billion into the Research Endowment Fund to enhance the budget for various research funding schemes for the Research Grants Council to support a wider variety of research projects, as well as the provision of \$3 billion for the launching of the Research Matching Grant Scheme. The UGC is also examining the feasibility of increasing the number of research postgraduate student places with a view to further enhancing the strength of the universities in research. Its work on these fronts has achieved good progress.

The UGC will continue to drive the Hong Kong's higher education sector in achieving excellence so as to help the city move forward and overcome the

challenges ahead.