



## Press Release

### **HKU Faculty of Education hosts Dialogue on Reimagining Higher Education Governance in Hong Kong**

The Faculty of Education at The University of Hong Kong (HKU) hosted a dialogue titled **“From Legacy to Leadership: Reimagining Higher Education Governance in Hong Kong”** on April 1. The event brought together global experts and local leaders to explore how Hong Kong’s universities can navigate global uncertainties and enhance their strategic position within the evolving international higher education landscape.

Professor Yang Rui, Dean of the HKU Faculty of Education, underscored the significance of the dialogue in his opening address. He warmly welcomed attendees and introduced the event’s two distinguished speakers: Professor Simon Marginson, Visiting Research Professor at the HKU Faculty of Education, Professor of Higher Education at the University of Bristol, and Emeritus Professor at the University of Oxford; and Professor James Tang, Secretary-General of the University Grants Committee. Professor Yang highlighted their invaluable contributions to advancing higher education policy and practice.

The dialogue was moderated by Professor Liz Jackson, Karen Lo Eugene Chuang Professor in Diversity and Equity and Associate Dean (Research) at the HKU Faculty of Education. The panel also featured Professor Jisun Jung, Director of the Consortium for Higher Education Research in Asia and Associate Professor at HKU Faculty of Education.

Professor Simon Marginson opened the discussion by highlighting Hong Kong’s distinctive and advantageous position in higher education, describing it as a city where public confidence in universities remains high and support for higher education is steadfast. In contrast to declining trust in higher education seen in some parts of the world, Hong Kong demonstrates notable qualities, acting as both a bridge between East and West and a strategic gateway to the Greater Bay Area. He called this moment as “Hong Kong’s time”, emphasising the city’s pluralistic identity, global connectivity, and potential to serve as an international forum for dialogue on pressing global issues.

Professor James Tang reinforced this optimistic outlook while providing a pragmatic perspective on policy and governance. He noted that Hong Kong’s higher education institutions benefit from sustained government commitment, strong societal support for higher education, and growing interest from international students. While acknowledging Hong Kong’s strengths, he also identified the challenges ahead: ensuring universities remain relevant by delivering value to society, maintaining accountability alongside institutional autonomy, and navigating trust issues. Professor Tang reiterated the need for Hong Kong to maintain its openness and to foster greater collaboration between local and international institutions, ensuring continued success and relevance.

Professor Jisun Jung brought forward the perspective of academics navigating Hong Kong’s globally engaged higher education system. She underlined key advantages, including robust international networks and strong research support, and also indicated areas for growth such as the scale of the system, the need for deeper local engagement, and the importance of broadening definitions of academic excellence beyond narrow metrics.

Concluding the dialogue, Professor Liz Jackson reflected on the richness of ideas shared during the discussion. She emphasised that Hong Kong's unique strength in shaping the future of higher education lies not only in its global competitiveness but also in its ability to leverage diversity to foster meaningful global collaboration.

The event concluded with a Q&A session where participants posed questions on topics such as academic mobility, cultural diversity, interdisciplinary collaboration, and Hong Kong's role in advancing global higher education. The dialogue reaffirmed the HKU Faculty of Education's commitment to facilitating thoughtful, forward-looking conversations that support higher education through an era of change and opportunity.

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