

## An Artful Impact

# Endowed Professorships in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Build New Bridges

## 人文關懷燃亮生命

The importance and impact of arts and culture can be seen in world-class cities like New York, London, Paris, and, closer to home, Tokyo and Shanghai. Hong Kong as an international city has potential to be a world-class cultural hub, some would assert.

At The University of Hong Kong, the Endowed Professorships Scheme has played a role in advancing the arts and humanities on campus and off.

Although the number of such professorships in the arts is relatively small compared with other fields, it has been slowly gaining the attention of benefactors. Since 2005 the lone Endowed Professorship in the arts, the Hon-Yin and Suet-Fong Chan Professorship in Chinese, was joined by the M B Lee Professorship in the Humanities and Medicine in 2010.

Two other endowed professorships in the arts and humanities include the Tung Lin Kok Yuen Professorship in Buddhist Art and Culture and the Glorious Sun Professorship in Buddhist Studies, both launched in 2007.

For the Faculty of Arts, the Centre for the Humanities and Medicine is a major focus of the endowment. Kam Louie, recipient of the M B Lee Professorship in the Humanities and Medicine in 2010, is also the Dean of Arts.

The Centre, the by-product of an innovative partnership between the faculties of arts and medicine, was set up to explore areas including the relationships among disease, health, culture and society, and the humanisation of the understanding and practice of medicine.

The Centre has hosted seminars, lectures and conferences. Two events reflect those goals: a public lecture on “When Humanitarianism Goes to War” and a seminar on “Global Health and Conspiracy Theories.” The Centre is also keen on fostering faculty exchanges and is currently hosting Professor Didier Fassin, Visiting Research Professor from the Institute for Advanced Study in the United States.

Daniel Chua, Chairman of the Centre for the Humanities and Medicine, and Head of School of Humanities said: “Hong Kong needs people who can be advocates for culture. If you endow a professorship in music or literature you are making a significant statement about the value of the arts and cultural leadership.”

At HKU the humanities also includes Buddhist Studies. The University is home to one of the few centres of Buddhist Studies in the world, and grants undergraduate and advanced degrees. For Glorious Sun Professor in Buddhist Studies K L Dhammajoti, the endowment has allowed him to produce a dictionary of terms from Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan, which further foster the studies of Buddhism.



Venerable Dhammajoti, a Buddhist monk, is a leading scholar on the "Sarvastivada Abhidharma".

The benefactor of The Tung Lin Kok Yuen Professorship in Buddhist Art and Culture said: "The Buddhist teaching is wondrously profound and art is a universal form of expression. We believe that the value of Buddhist art as a direct inspiration of wisdom and compassion could well serve humanity."

At the Faculty of Social Sciences, Endowed Professorships have funded initiatives that have directly contributed to community wellness.

The community is the major beneficiary of the Endowed Professorships Scheme.

As the recipient of the Henry G Leong Professorship in Social Work and Social Administration, Nelson W S Chow has used the funding to study poverty and launch programmes that benefit the elderly. Chow is the course director for the Henry G Leong Programme on Holistic Care for Elderly People.

Cecilia L W Chan, Si Yuan Professor in Health and Social Work, launched "The Better Health for Better Hong Kong" Health Promotion Campaign. Chan runs HKU's Centre for Behavioral Health, which offers training for healthcare professionals, degreed programmes, and consultations and wellness programmes for community members.

今年新設專為支持人文學科的「冼為堅傑出客座教授席」，捐贈者冼為堅博士這樣闡釋人文的意義：「人文學科能啟迪人心，燃亮生命。文學、音樂、歷史、哲學、法律、政治、社會科學、建築、藝術 全都能讓我們有所感悟、提升。」

大學代表了人文關懷的核心價值，陳漢賢伉儷基金教授席支持中文學院單周堯教授研究中國古文字，編撰楚國文字字典以助學者解讀古代文獻，深入研究中國歷代文學及哲學。

李文彬基金教授雷金慶，亦為文學院院長，主催由文學院及醫學院攜手創立的人文醫學中心，探索疾病、健康、文化和社會的互動，潤澤生命。中心另一負責人蔡寬亮教授希望獲得更多資源：「在大學成立文學或音樂教授席，代表對人文價值的推崇和嘉許。這正是香港這個國際都會極需要的文化領航。」

佛學智慧如海，以智慧和慈悲為導，佛教藝術則是普世共通的表達方式。東蓮覺苑基金教授席支持佛教藝術及文化。旭日基金教授法光法師，則是研究佛學專科阿毘達磨（對法）的權威，他現正專注編修英梵文對照的阿毘達磨辭典，對佛學研究有獨特貢獻。

社會科學院梁顯利基金教授周永新，主要研究青少年、長者、本地家庭及新移民的社會福利和社會保障，以及老人及貧窮問題。在社福界舉足輕重，極具影響力。思源基金教授陳麗雲，是港大行為健康教研中心總監，發展社會工作，開展寧養服務、心靈重建、生命教育，四川地震後特設哀傷輔導培訓、致力建設成熟而和諧的社會。