

# Interview with Dr John HUI, HKIIT Principal: Driving IT industry growth through Institute-Industry collaboration and talent development



## Launch Ceremony of Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology 香港資訊科技學院啟動禮

13 June 2024



The Launch Ceremony of HKIIT is officiated by a group of distinguished guests. (From left to right) HKIIT Principal Dr John HUI, VTC Deputy Executive Director Dr Eric LIU, Chairman of HKIIT Advisory Board Raymond CHENG, VTC Deputy Chairman Dr Daniel YIP, Secretary for Education Dr CHOI Yuk-in, VTC Chairman Tony TAI, VTC Deputy Chairman Paul CHONG, Legislative Council Member Duncan CHIU, Legislative Council Member Prof William WONG and VTC Executive Director Donald TONG.

The Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology (HKIIT) was established as the 14th member institution of VTC and the first dedicated IT tertiary institute in Hong Kong with the support of the HKSAR Government. Last month, HKIIT held its launch ceremony with the presence of Dr CHOI Yuk-in, Secretary for Education, as the Guest of Honour. Over a hundred industry partners attended the ceremony, witnessing this important milestone in the talent training for Hong Kong's IT industry.

In an interview with "VTC Spotlight", HKIIT Principal Dr John HUI shared HKIIT's development strategies and directions. HKIIT's goal is to nurture outstanding IT professionals for Hong Kong, drive industry development, and contribute to society. He stated: "HKIIT is not only an institution for talent cultivation, but also a partner of the IT industry. Through the 'I+' (Institute + Industry) Development by Collaboration strategy, we jointly drive the development of Hong Kong's innovation and technology as well as the digital economy."

## Digital transformation drives soaring demand for IT talents

Dr HUI mentioned that, the influence of information technology is far-reaching. The widespread adoption of technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), FinTech, cloud computing, and Internet of Things (IoT) has integrated information technology into various industries. Its impact has gone beyond the IT industry itself, becoming an essential driving force behind digital transformation of various industries, and propelling overall economic development.

Dr HUI believes, "We need to train a substantial number of IT talents to support the rapid digital transformation across industries. Therefore, HKIIT not only provides pre-employment training, but also emphasises assisting IT practitioners and in-service personnel in upgrading their digital skills, thereby supporting the continuous development of the industry."



HKIIT Principal Dr John HUI shares HKIIT's development strategies and directions, and hopes to cultivate IT professionals for Hong Kong and drive economic growth.



Dr John HUI states that under the "I+" Development by Collaboration strategy, HKIIT will work together with partners to jointly promote the development of Hong Kong's IT and digital economy.

## "I+" strategy and close collaboration with industry to meet market needs

Dr HUI emphasised: "The 'I+' strategy ensures that HKIIT's curriculum closely aligns with market demand, helping students master industry knowledge and emerging skills, creating opportunities for professional development." Since its establishment, HKIIT has forged partnership relationships with a number of large enterprises and leading IT companies, including Lenovo, Alibaba Cloud, Automated Systems Group (ASL), Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia), and others, providing students with abundant internship and meaningful learning opportunities.

HKIIT has also launched an in-service training service called "SkillsUP", which provides customised training for different companies, covering areas such as information and network security, project management training, multimedia and AR/VR development. Launched for almost half a year, "SkillsUP" has received widespread support from the industry, serving more than 10 participating organisations with over 9,000 enrolments so far. HKIIT also offers over 90 continuing and professional education programmes to address the diverse learning needs of different individuals.

## Optimising IT programmes to address talent shortage

To address the IT talent and skills gaps in Hong Kong, HKIIT will further optimise the IT pre-employment training programmes being offered. HKIIT will admit its first batch of full-time students in the 2024/25 academic year, and will offer 11 Higher Diploma and two Diploma of Foundation Studies programmes in full-time mode. These include 10 of the designated Higher Diploma programmes under the "Vocational Professionals Admission Scheme" (VPAS). Non-local students (including those from the Mainland and other countries/regions) participating in VPAS can stay and work full-time in Hong Kong after graduation from Higher Diploma, subject to meeting the relevant requirements.



HKIIT will provide multiple IT pre-employment training programmes, in order to build an IT talent pool for the industry.

## Cutting-edge facilities to cultivate professional knowledge

In response to the various emerging technologies in the industry and the market, the institute has also set up advanced teaching and learning facilities, including a Cybersecurity Centre, an Artificial Intelligence and Big Data Centre, and a Digital Innovation Co-creation Centre. As mentioned by Dr HUI, "HKIIT's innovative teaching facilities aligns with the industry trends, aiming to help students master new professional skills and develop applied skills, preparing them for future careers in different technology industries."



HKIIT is equipped with cutting-edge teaching facilities that are enhancing in mastering the latest industry technologies and enhancing their practical abilities.

## Maintaining close ties with academia to understand their needs

As a forward-looking institution, HKIIT not only collaborates extensively with the industry, but also maintains close ties with the academic sector: "We have been reaching out to secondary school principals, teachers, students and parents through various channels, and listening to their feedback. We learned that many secondary school teachers are particularly interested in cybersecurity, so we organised workshops for them to acquire up-to-date industry knowledge and information on cybersecurity, and have received overwhelming response."

Dr HUI thanked the Government and the industry for supporting HKIIT. He looked forward to more collaboration with industry partners under the "I+" strategy, providing quality IT and related professional training to different sectors, driving the future development of Hong Kong's information technology industry.



At the HKIIT launch ceremony, a group of speakers come together to discuss the future of IT and means to foster tomorrow's IT talents.



In June, HKIIT organises the "ExploreFest". Through expert panel discussions, interactive experience workshops, and student project exhibitions, participants are able to personally experience HKIIT's learning model, as well as exploring the development trends and employment prospects of the IT industry.