IN 5 OR 10 YEARS
COME BACK AND TELL US HOW
TODAY CHANGED YOUR LIFE
DREAMCATCHERS, with its inaugural event on Sunday, May 31, 2015, is a series of initiatives at The University of Hong Kong. It began with “If I were 28...” and ended with “What Next?”. We will form a hub to inspire and nurture innovation and entrepreneurship; there will be forums, mixers, events, courses, training, marketplaces, co-workspaces, funding for programmes and an innovation commons.

DREAMCATCHERS is cross-sector and inter-generational, for alumni, students, friends old and new, everyone with passion and determination to innovate and change the world.

The University in particular provides an environment that supports a willingness to fail, and an obsession to succeed. It is all right to fail as long as we learn the lesson. It is all right to take risks and do something that is unconventional.

The speakers and participants, patrons and partners all came together to make the day happen. There was so much energy and enthusiasm, humour and hope, sincerity and warmth. People were squeezing into the lecture halls, sitting on the floor, and eagerly exchanging views over a coffee. There was appreciation and support, heated debates and candid sharing.

And in 5 or 10 years’ time, if you come back and tell us how this day changed your life, then together we have made it.

““It is all right to fail – with an obsession to succeed””

Professor Peter Mathieson
President and Vice-Chancellor
Whether you are 28 or 68, one has to keep learning. You have to keep a certain degree of curiosity and keep asking questions.

Ask yourself two questions before starting your own business. Do you really have the passion to do it? Then ask yourself whether you have the personality. You have to not be afraid of losing. The success rate of starting a business is less than 1%. Prepare to lose. You lose fast. You lose big. And you lose forward. The important thing is, after a few failures, you should not repeat the same mistake. Then you learn how to be successful.

Antony Leung 梁錦松*
Nan Fung Group

This is the best time and there is no other better time to start. But if you do want to start your business and become an entrepreneur, be prepared for the following. First, the China market, which you have to enter. It is not a matter of ‘IF’; it is a matter of ‘HOW’. Second, think global. There is no Hong Kong startup. You are starting in Hong Kong, but you are doing one market, the global market.

Jason Chiu 趙子翹
The Cherrypicks

When you have the spirit of entrepreneurship, I believe it is there wherever you are in your life stage, whatever position you are in. Whether it is a big company or a startup company, you can always apply that spirit of entrepreneurship to whatever you do. I think that is the beauty of it because it gets you excited. It is a lot of fun.

Leong Cheung 張亮
The Hong Kong Jockey Club

* HKU Alumni

3-min highlights
https://goo.gl/YqbJsr
The Internet versus Traditional Industries

The Internet is not totally a virtual economy and should be integrated with many of the traditional industries. As I have said before, the Internet is just like the First or Second Industrial Revolution, or the invention of the steam engine and electric power; it is a new information energy and every industry should utilise it. The Internet is just like electricity, where any industry, whether financial or service, will have the need for. Our company’s thinking is to bring the Internet and traditional industries closer together to integrate them. Everyone should consider how best to utilise the Internet. If you do not use it well, your industry will be inevitably eliminated in time.

Chinese Companies versus International Companies

We Chinese internet companies have always wished to be ranked among the world’s top ten someday. To us, this would be our highest point of achievement. Now that it has really happened, we should really be proud of ourselves. Out of the world’s top ten companies, six are U.S., four are Chinese, and based on the respective market capitalisation, Chinese and U.S. companies are currently in the same league, unlike in the past when there was a big difference. So, when you are criticising the many things about China, you should also realise that it was no easy feat for China to beat all odds and achieve these hard-won accomplishments. The population of China alone is the population of all the other countries put together, and the fact that our local
businesses are able to be in the same league as the U.S. companies itself is a miracle.

China has no lack of competition from foreign companies. So who will emerge as winner in this fight? So far, there seems to be no exception. The local has always won. However, of course, foreign ones can choose to invest in these local companies. Over the past decade, not a single local company in China has ever lost a fight in the face of competition from foreign companies. That is because local entrepreneurs stake all their wealth and lives into their businesses and hold several rounds of decision making in a day. On the other hand, multinational companies are unable to achieve this as they would have to report to the big bosses who are based overseas, and the issue of time difference also prevents them from doing likewise. Furthermore, China has sufficient capital and an active Private Equity market; therefore I have great confidence in our homegrown entrepreneurs.

Is China a copycat?

Indeed, America dominates the world of the Internet… and they manufacture products that are adopted globally, which include products like operating systems, databases, computer chips, routers. The entire core of IT has originated from U.S. companies. So you can see the Chinese and U.S. companies are competing on the basis of very different starting points, making things very difficult. Other countries are learning from and actually copying the U.S. model. There is no doubt about this. However, when it comes to the application, every country’s culture is different and their user groups have different preferences. There is bound to be divergence. Developing the Internet to meet its own needs, China has displayed much creativity, which is the reason why U.S. companies are now lagging behind their Chinese counterparts in terms of innovation. To us, what really matters is not who is copying who. The main thing is rather, you satisfy your customers’ needs.

The problem is, you are just too old!

There are times when you have done nothing wrong at all. The only problem is, you are just too old. When Tencent first came across Snapchat, something which teenage girls (from ages 13 – 18) in America are particularly fond of, our senior management installed it and after exchanging a couple of messages, we found it silly, boring and saw no value in it, therefore we made only minimal investment in it. Later on, when its value skyrocketed, Snapchat became a company with a market capitalisation amounting to billions of dollars. We came to regret and self-reflect on whether we are just too old to keep up with times, or that we simply do not understand the preferences of the kids… The majority of people in China are using WeChat (微信) these days, but the kids are still using the mobile version of QQ. This is not a technical issue; this is an issue concerning human nature. These kids do not want to be in the same community with their parents. They want to be separate while being “together”. Therefore, many communities of new generations are popping up. Even though we do not understand, we have to show our respect. After all, popularity has its reasons.

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Vision and Opportunities for Technology Entrepreneurship

Four thought leaders exchanged views on the following questions: What should be the vision for technology entrepreneurship for Hong Kong, in the context of China and the Regional development? Everyone is talking about entrepreneurship as the means of moving forward for the younger generation, but what are the real opportunities in Hong Kong? What is Hong Kong’s competitive edge over our neighbours for technology startups? How should Hong Kong respond to this worldwide movement and benefit from it?

Innovative technology, design, and business models are key to successful startups. At this session, four young entrepreneurs from the fields of electronics, ICT, innovative watch design and online jewellery shared their experiences, challenges, pain and lessons learned from running their respective businesses.

Nick Yang 杨伟雄
Advisor to the Chief Executive on Innovation and Technology

Dr Rosanna Wong 王䓪鳴
The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups

Johnson Lau 刘耀南
Kinex Pharmaceuticals

Respondent
Allen Yeung 杨德斌
Hong Kong Science & Technology Parks Corporation

Moderator
Janet Wong 王荣珍
Innovation and Technology Commission

From Dream to Reality - IT & Business

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Dr Patrick Hung 洪小瑩
Velosti

Theodore Ma 马衡
MaBelle Jewellery Co. Ltd

Keith Li 李劲华
Innopage

Nick Gu 顾力恒
Eone Timepieces Inc

Moderator
Herman Lam 林向阳
Hong Kong Cyberport Management Co. Ltd

Full version of 14 sessions
https://goo.gl/Liv4PT

* HKU Alumni
Energetic and unconventional entrepreneurs in the cultural and lifestyle arenas, mostly in their 20s and 30s, passionately shared their aspirations and were not shy about the challenges and frustrations they are dealing with. Their common goal is to re-create the city’s social and spiritual values rather than merely financial ones.

“They are young and not so ‘successful’, still at the age when they are struggling to achieve their goals. Their sharing of the difficulties they encountered provide us all with very useful lessons. They were inspiring.”

– Forum participant
Harnessing Resources to Build in the World’s Biggest Mobile Market

The panel highlighted the resources and support that are available to startups in Greater China. Investors are looking for good projects, especially those catering to a young audience. But startups must be proactive in telling their stories to potential funders. Startups in Hong Kong must also take bold steps to enter the China market.

Huang Xiang 習翔
IDG Communications China

Dr David Chung 鍾偉強
Hong Kong Cyberport Management Co. Ltd

Moderator
Prof Ying Chan 陳婉瑩*
Journalism and Media Studies Centre, HKU

Media Tips for Founders: Gaining Traction and Customer Exposure

This panel took an intimate look at delivering media to audiences of all kinds in an environment where mainstream media no longer holds a monopoly on news and information distribution. Social platforms and inexpensive media production software mean that startup founders must pay attention to communications with the public on all media platforms.

May Yamaura
Brand Pit

Catherine Tan
Notey

Ben Cheng 鄭斌彬
OurSky

Moderator
Douglas Crets*
AsiaHustle.co

Full version of 14 sessions
https://goo.gl/Liv4PT

47 speakers and participants were interviewed by students and alumni of JMSC.
Entrepreneurial Spirit in Social Innovations

The social entrepreneurs talked about the challenges their startups faced in the beginning or in later phases of scaling up. As creative pioneers, they took up different community issues and ventured along different paths to success. Their sharing not only opened up new frontiers for imagination, but also provided newcomers with very practical tips on managing and sustaining social enterprises.

This workshop combined a lecture with a magic performance, using 18 real-life cases from the 18 districts in Hong Kong, to explain how social innovation can be achieved from the bottom up and demonstrate how the four principal social innovation models actually work.

"Relaxing time. He was delivering his message via a Monopoly game, sharing his insights into the operations of the Hong Kong Government, and also made fun of the Government's mistakes. Cool."

– Forum participant

The speakers discussed how they reformed traditional businesses, such as garment, catering and agriculture, to accomplish the same missions as social enterprises. These entrepreneurs transcend the dichotomy between commercial and social enterprises, and create social businesses that continue to provide financial rewards to stakeholders while bringing tremendous social benefits to everyone.

Social Business - Blending Social Enterprises with Traditional Businesses

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“The Magic of Social Innovation

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* HKU Alumni

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STARTUPS IN CHINA: Creative Entrepreneurship in an Era of Great Transformation

When it comes to the China market, it is not a matter of “IF” it is a matter of “HOW”. The “Internet+” strategy, stated by the Chinese Government in a working report, will be the trend going forward on the Mainland. The panel discussed China’s changing business environment, and the keys to survive and succeed in the dynamic Mainland market, which include policies, partners and allocations of capital. Speakers shared their success and failure stories of doing business in China today.

Lo Sheung Yan 劉雙恩*
J. Walter Thompson

Ted Chong 莊煥華*
Designer Time

Norman Sze 施能自*
Deloitte China

WHAT NEXT? Hub or Pub – co-working space, incubator, accelerator and MORE

“What next?” “Where should I start?” “Where can I get help?” “What resources are available out there in Hong Kong to get me started?” These are just a few of the questions posed by the audience at the final session. Here the panel generously provided answers and pointers to what are available in town – and there are many options!

“We will be launching our Innovation Commons. We need you to keep up the entrepreneurial culture and spirit.”
– Prof Paul Tam
Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)

“I hope that this event is just the beginning. Entrepreneurship is growing rapidly in Hong Kong and entrepreneurs, big or small, need the support. With HKU’s unique vantage point, it will undoubtedly give students and alumni the competitive advantage they need to succeed.”
– Forum participant

David Fong 方文雄*
Hip Shing Hong (Holdings) Co. Ltd

Victor Tsang 曾昭學*
PMQ

Cherry Chan 陳卓卓
The Mills

Ada Wong 黃英琦*
The Good Lab

Vincent Fong 方添明
Kairos Society Hong Kong

Moderator

Professor Paul Cheung 張英相
Associate Vice-President (Research), HKU

Nicholas Tung 嚴偉濤*
Lewis & Paul Investment Co. Ltd

Respondent

Patrick Yeung 楊偉添*
Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd

Moderator

Raymond Chow 周學文*
B+CR Marketing Consulting
Pitch Demonstration

At the Pitch Demonstration, jointly organised by HKU Alumni Entrepreneurs Club and HKU Graduates Association, eight alumni-based startup companies pitched their business ideas and were evaluated by a panel of judges.

“The demonstration provided a great platform for young people to promote their inventions and inspire the audience to think big. I believe some of the inventions could become successful and popular. I love this kind of event and hope the University could do more of this.”

– Forum participant

Judges
Douglas So 蘇彰德*
Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Institutional Advancement), HKU
Ada Yip 葉蓁蓁
Hong Kong Institute of Social Impact Analysts
Terence Cheung 張廣達*
Western Region, Deloitte Touche
Tohmatsu
Ernest Wong 黃耀傑*
KVB Kunlun Holdings Ltd
Joelle Woo 胡靄慈*
Business Development & Developer Experience (DX), Microsoft HK Ltd

Patrons
Partners
Organisers
Curatorial Team
Professor Paul Cheung, Associate Vice-President (Research)
Dr Albert Chau, Dean of Student Affairs, Centre of Development & Resources for Students
Professor Ying Chan, Director, Journalism & Media Studies Centre
Professor Bernadette Tsui, Director, Development & Alumni Affairs Office (Convenor)
Project Team
Monica Wong
Laurence Tang
Catherine Chan
Cindy Chan
Special Thanks
HKU Faculties
Information Technology Services
Chi Wah Learning Commons
Communications & Public Affairs Office
Shun Hing College
Support Team
Business & Economics Assn, HKUSU
HKU Mentees
Green Gown Guides
HKU Class of 2005
DreamCatcher /ˈdrɪmkætʃə/ Noun [C]
A small hoop containing a horsehair mesh decorated with feathers and beads, believed by American Indians to give its owner good dreams.

Extraordinary! This professional forum offered a platform for all real dreamcatchers to share their minds, thoughts, and ideas or maybe even souls at a decent pace.

Sara Li, M.Phil in Psychology

Great event! Proud to attend DreamCatchers as an HKU alumnus!
Dr Julian Fong, MBBS

67 speakers
1200+ participants
14 panels

dreamcatchers@hku.hk | HKU Dreamcatchers | www.alumni.hku.hk/dreamcatchers