

PolyU School of Hotel and Tourism Management signs a Tripartite Agreement to establish the Greater Bay Area Tourism Research Alliance

(21 November 2018) The School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), the School of Tourism Management of the Sun Yet-Sen University (SYSU) in Guangzhou, and the Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) in Macau, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) today for establishing the Greater Bay Area Tourism Research Alliance (the Alliance).

The five-year tripartite collaboration aims for strengthening the international tourism status of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (GBA) through joint endeavour in tourism research. The set-up of the Alliance is to develop the GBA into an international first-class bay area ideal for living, working and travelling through leveraging the comparative advantages of Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macau.

The MOU was signed by Professor Haiyan Song, SHTM Associate Dean and Chair Professor and Mr and Mrs Chan Chak Fu Professor in International Tourism; Professor Honggang Xu, Dean of School of Tourism Management of the SYSU; and Dr Fanny Vong, President of the IFT. Professor Timothy W. Tong, PolyU President, and Professor Jun Luo, SYSU President, witnessed the signing at the ceremony held at the SHTM.

Under the Alliance, the three institutions will collaborate in the annual production of the Report for Tourism in the GBA. They will conduct a series of research activities over the next five years with significant impact at local and international levels, and will contribute to the development of public infrastructure, tourism attractions and services in the GBA. The three institutions will also provide mutual support in liaising with governmental units and tourism industry partners of their respective regions to collect data and information for conducting collaborative research in tracking the tourists' satisfaction and the quality of accommodation in the GBA. It is expected that these co-operative endeavours will provide the respective governments with meaningful insights and scientific references so as to facilitate them in policy-making for tourism development.


“We are confident that the Greater Bay Area Tourism Research Alliance will contribute to the development of the region's public infrastructure, tourism attractions and services,” said Professor Song. “Captialising on the diverse talents of our School's international researchers together with those of our partners, we will contribute our expertise in exploring new intelligence for the betterment of the tourism industry. Today's ceremony marks the beginning of a long and fruitful collaboration, we are proud to be part of this initiative to strengthen the GBA's tourism development in the international landscape.”

“The School of Tourism Management of Sun Yat-Sen University, the SHTM and IFT are long standing partners in research and student exchange programmes, and together we have achieved

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significant results. The establishment of the Alliance will provide an organisational system to strengthen and deepen the co-operation amongst the three leading institutions. The School of Tourism Management of the SYSU is committed to delivering the agreement and will join hands with the other two partners to achieve the visions and goals set out by the Alliance,” said Professor Xu.

“The MOU signed today will further consolidate the relationship amongst the three institutions, which will jointly build a research platform and think tank to provide intellectual support for tourism development in the Greater Bay Area. By scientifically examining the existing challenges and exploring future trends, the Alliance will contribute to regional integration of tourism and establish destination branding for the GBA in the long run,” said Dr Vong at the ceremony.

Photo	Caption
	<p><i>Professor Timothy W. Tong, PolyU President (Back row, left), and Professor Jun Luo, President of the Sun Yet-Sen University (Back row, right) witnessed the signing of the MOU by: (front row from left) Professor Honggang Xu of the Sun Yet-Sen University, Professor Haiyan Song of PolyU and Dr Fanny Vong of the Institute for Tourism Studies.</i></p>
	<p><i>(From left) Professor Honggang Xu, Professor Haiyan Song, Professor Timothy W. Tong, Professor Jun Luo and Dr Fanny Vong after the MOU signing</i></p>

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About PolyU's School of Hotel and Tourism Management

For close to 40 years, PolyU's School of Hotel and Tourism Management has refined a distinctive vision of hospitality and tourism education and become a world-leading hotel and tourism school. Rated No. 1 in the world in the "Hospitality and Tourism Management" category according to ShanghaiRanking's Global Ranking of Academic Subjects 2017 and 2018, placed No. 1 in the world in the "Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism" subject area by the CWUR Rankings by Subject 2017 and ranked among the top 3 "Hospitality and Leisure Management" institutions globally in the QS World University Rankings by Subject 2017 and 2018, the SHTM is a symbol of excellence in the field, exemplifying its motto of *Leading Hospitality and Tourism*.

With 75 academic staff drawing from 22 countries and regions, the School offers programmes at levels ranging from undergraduate degrees to doctoral degrees. In 2012, the SHTM was bestowed the McCool Breakthrough Award by the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (I-CHRIE) recognising its breakthrough in the form of its teaching and research hotel – Hotel ICON – the heart of the School's innovative approach to hospitality and tourism education. A member of the UNWTO Knowledge Network, the SHTM is also the editorial home of *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism* and *Journal of China Tourism Research*.

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