



PRESS RELEASE

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PolyU and Meeting Professionals International launch Asia's first Training Centre

The School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) has intensified its efforts to cope with the rapid growth of convention and event management as a profession in Asia. The University has recently won support of the Meeting Professionals International (MPI) to establish its first Global Training Centre in Asia on the university campus.

At a ceremony today (16 October) announcing the establishment of Asia's first MPI Training Centre in PolyU, SHTM Director Professor Kaye Chon said, "Hong Kong's strategic location at the heart of the world's fastest growing economies along with its sophisticated infrastructure, easy accessibility, business-friendly environment, professional expertise and vibrant lifestyle converge to become what is recognised as Asia's premier destination for the MICE industry."

As one of the leading hospitality and tourism schools in the world, SHTM is mindful of the need to provide executive education for those responsible for the planning and organising of meetings and conventions. Professional organisations from all parts of the globe are now expanding their presence to Asia and planning certification level programmes in regional centres here; and MPI represents the industry's largest and most vibrant global community with more than 24,000 members in over 80 countries and territories.

"We are rapidly expanding our available locations for individuals in the meeting and business event industry to receive hands-on education at the local level," said Didier Scaillet, Chief Development Officer for MPI. "The Hong Kong Polytechnic University brings many years of hospitality and event management education experience to the table, meeting key selection criteria and making it a perfect fit as an MPI Global Training Centre."

Echoing the view of Mr Scaillet, Prof. Chon said, "Meetings and conventions are fundamental components of a robust hospitality and tourism industry. As a global centre of excellence in hospitality and tourism education for the 21st century, the School is positioned to lead the development of the industry's future leaders."

SHTM is committed not only to providing first-class executive development programmes for industry practitioners, but as an innovator, the School also pioneered Hong Kong's first-ever Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Convention and Event Management conversion programme at the beginning of this academic year.

MPI has its roots in North America that now has an office in Singapore. The international body also plans to launch their Global Certificate in Meetings and Business Events training

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programmes through regional training centres, which includes Asia. MPI also has a strong network of Global Training Centres in San Diego State University (USA); Ted Rogers School of Management, Ryerson University (Canada); CERAM Business School (France); and Qatar MICE Development Institute (Qatar).

PolyU's School of Hotel and Tourism Management is a leading provider of hospitality education in the Asia-Pacific Region. It is ranked No. 4 among the world's top hotel and tourism schools based on research and scholarship, according to a study published in the *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research* in 2005.

With 60 academic staff drawing from 18 countries, the School offers programmes at levels ranging from PhD to Higher Diploma. It was awarded the 2003 International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators Institutional Achievement Award in recognition of its significant contribution to tourism education, and is the only training centre in the Education and Training Network in Asia recognised by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation.

Meeting Professionals International (MPI), the meeting and event industry's largest and most vibrant global community, helps its members thrive by providing human connections to knowledge and ideas, relationships, and marketplaces. MPI membership is comprised of more than 24,000 members belonging to 71 chapters and clubs worldwide. For additional information, visit www.mpiweb.org.



Prof Kaye Chon, SHTM Director (left), and Mr Bruce MacMillan, MPI President and CEO (right), at the Signing Ceremony today.

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