Joining hands with Thai partners in transportation research

PolyU has signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with King Mongkut’s Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL) and the Expressway Authority of Thailand (EXAT) on the establishment of a Research Centre on Transportation Technology and Railway Engineering at the KMITL campus in Bangkok, Thailand.

Dr Agachai Sumalee, Associate Professor of PolyU’s Department of Civil and Structural Engineering, was instrumental in initiating the MOU. The University’s transportation researchers and the other two parties will explore collaboration and technology applications in the areas of intelligent transport systems, bridge and road structures and maintenance, and engineering and the environment.

In addition, EXAT and KMITL will send staff members to study in PolyU’s postgraduate transportation and engineering-related programmes. The Thai authorities will sponsor tuition fees for the related Master’s degree students, provide scholarships for PhD candidates and cover necessary research expenses.

PolyU-Tsinghua U Centre for Language Sciences

PolyU’s Department of English and Tsinghua University’s Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures have established the PolyU-Tsinghua U Centre for Language Sciences. Comprising 23 members from PolyU and 19 from Tsinghua University, the Centre has a mission to organize academic activities to deepen the understanding of English as a second or foreign language or as an international language franca in classrooms and professional workplaces.

The Centre will disseminate its findings from joint research projects on applied linguistics and English language teaching. It will also organise a series of international symposia, roundtables, seminars and workshops to enhance academic exchange and exercise positive influence on researching and teaching English at the tertiary level in Asia and beyond.

Within a year of the Centre’s inception, the PolyU side has successfully garnered three prestigious external research grants. One grant was awarded by the Language Training and Testing Center of Taiwan for a project entitled ‘A Register Analysis of Advanced GEPT Examinees’ Written Producction’. Another was awarded by the Educational Testing Service, USA for a project entitled ‘Profiling Spoken Discourse Features in Real Academic Settings: A Multidimensional Perspective’. The third was a General Research Fund grant for a project entitled ‘Meeting the Challenges of English-medium Higher Education: The Undergraduate Experience at the New Hong Kong Curriculum.’

From left: Prof. Ning Chu, Dean of PolyU’s Faculty of Humanities; Prof. Liu Shihong, Dean of Tsinghua University’s Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures; Prof. Angelika Yuan, PolyU Vice President (Institutional Advancement and Partnerships); Prof. David Chan, Director of the PolyU-Tsinghua U Centre for Language Sciences; and Prof. Christian Mathieson, Head of PolyU’s Department of English.

In addition, Prof. Jinjuan Li, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Centre, also attended the ceremony. The Centre is expected to further strengthen the relationship between PolyU and Tsinghua University and promote cross-cultural understanding and cooperation in the field of language and communication.

Witnessed by PolyU’s senior management and the Thai partners’ representatives, the MOU was signed by (front row from left) Prof. Suchatra Suwanasawat, Dean of KMITL’s Faculty of Construction; Prof. Teng Jin-Quan, Dean of PolyU’s Faculty of Construction and Environment; and Aiyawat Tirapa, Governor of EXAT.

In addition to the representatives of the three universities, the ceremony was also attended by various distinguished guests, including Dr Agachai Sumalee, Associate Professor of PolyU’s Department of Civil and Structural Engineering; Dr Somdang Chariyakun, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at KMITL; Prof. Suchatra Suwanasawat, Dean of KMITL’s Faculty of Construction; Prof. Teng Jin-Quan, Dean of PolyU’s Faculty of Construction and Environment; and Aiyawat Tirapa, Governor of EXAT.

Photography by PolyU Visual Services Department.