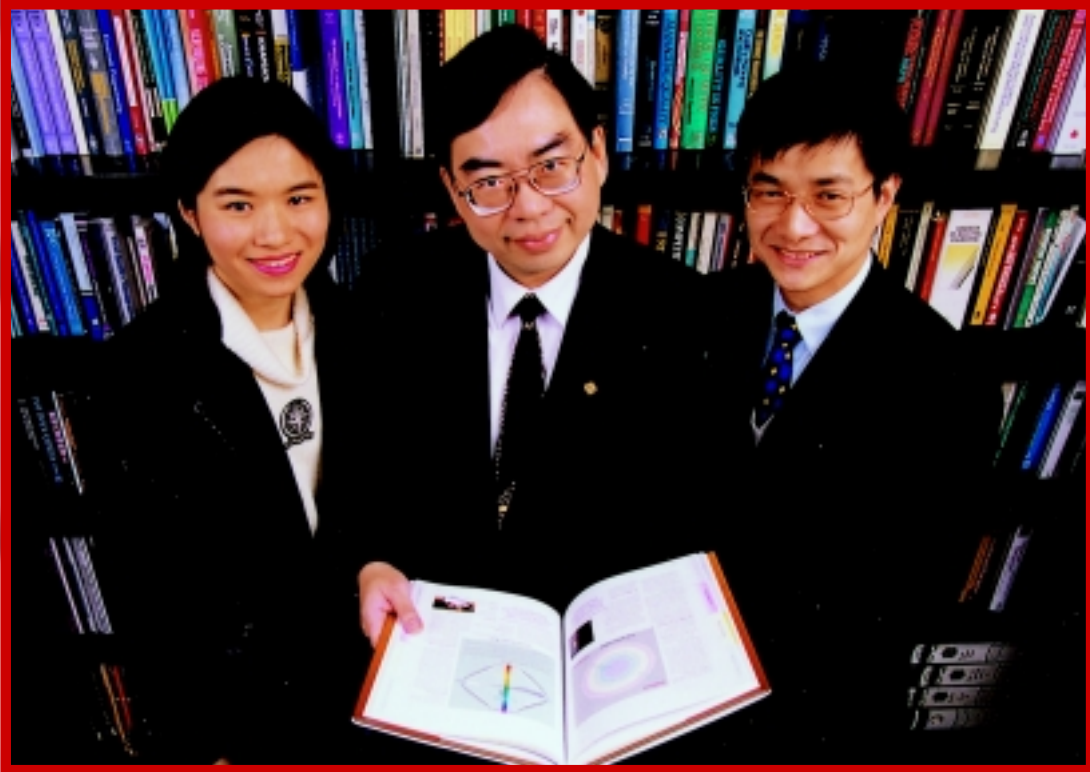


Bringing in mainland talents



(from left) Postgraduate student Gigi Lui, PolyU's Vice President Prof. Edwin Cheng and postgraduate student Zhu Ledong

As Hong Kong emerges from the woes of the economic crises that have hindered its growth for nearly two years, one objective has become clear. To remain as a competitive market economy driven by knowledge-intense industries, Hong Kong must act quickly in order to speed up recovery and to stay on par with other Asian countries.

In recent months Hong Kong has witnessed radical market reforms in areas like information technology, banking and financial services and manufacturing.

The difficult years of 1998 to 1999 have reinforced the need for greater co-operation between Hong Kong and the mainland. By working closely together, the relationship will enable Hong Kong to establish a new fundamental economic structure, one that will withstand the next wave of crisis.

On 17 December 1999 the SAR Government launched a bold move that will make a great impact on Hong Kong's continuous development. By the introduction of the new plan "The Admission of Talents Scheme", the Government is determined to bring in talents who can enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong as a knowledge-intense economy.

In a bid to attract people possessing expertise and skills not readily available in Hong Kong to seek employment in the territory, the Scheme will allow Hong Kong-based companies to recruit candidates who are mainland residents or mainland students currently studying in Hong Kong to fulfill these positions. Industries such as software engineering, pharmaceutical operations, telecommunications and environmental technology are just a few sectors that will benefit from this new initiative.

A Selection Committee has been formed to evaluate would-be applicants, which are submitted by their potential employers or academic institutions. A list of 230 mainland universities conferring doctoral

degrees has been compiled for members of the Committee to consider. Each applicant must possess outstanding academic qualifications and expertise, and will be required to supply documents such as publications and research papers to prove that their abilities are not readily available in Hong Kong.

The implementation of the Scheme will have various implications on the academic front, such as PolyU. Part of the University's pursuit of academic excellence in applied research has been well recognised by professional industries including engineering, optometry and design. Currently more than half of PolyU's candidates conducting postgraduate research are from the mainland. With the effect of the Admission of Talents Scheme, PolyU can welcome more research candidates of high calibre who can bring their knowledge and expertise to Hong Kong.

Prof. Edwin Cheng, PolyU's Vice-President (Research and Postgraduate Studies), is in favour of the government's decision and feels that the Scheme will enable PolyU to build on its strength in applied and midstream research.

"The competition for postgraduate research studies is very fierce, thus ensuring that the candidates accepted by our University are of very high quality," Prof. Cheng said.

"Their solid and sound knowledge is essential to various research and industry-related projects. And by allowing them the opportunity to work in Hong Kong after obtaining their postgraduate degree, it will give these well-qualified people a chance to use their knowledge for the betterment of our community."

In the past, it would take at least six months to one year to process an application for a mainland student to come to Hong Kong, causing delays for ongoing projects.

"Once we have selected the most suitable candidate, the wait for his/her visa holds up the project and often the outcome is fruitless, when the mainland government denies the application," Prof. Cheng said. "Valuable resources have been wasted."

According to Prof. Cheng, many industry-related projects require the knowledge-strong mainland students and exposure-strong Hong Kong to work together. PolyU has long established strong ties with academic and research institutes on the mainland, and he sees the collaboration between Hong Kong and mainland talents as a winning combination.



"We have always had our unique strengths, in mechanical engineering, construction and land use," Prof. Cheng said. "We play an important role in helping Hong Kong to become a knowledge-based society, and the Scheme is a good interim plan to provide Hong Kong with the necessary manpower to succeed."

PolyU has a limited intake for full-time research students each year. Prof. Cheng hopes the government will relax on the funded quota because of the community's increasing demand for knowledge-intensive manpower.

"I share the government's concern about their limited funding for universities," Prof. Cheng said. "We are able to manage our resources to accept more students without increasing the budget. Increasing our quota will allow us to further develop in applied and midstream research."

This, Prof. Cheng feels, will generate positive results on society. "It's not a question about taking opportunities away from local people," he said. "It's about getting the best candidates for the positions."

"Singapore and the Silicon Valley have been attracting talents from all over the world to enhance their economy," Prof. Cheng said. "Hong Kong has been doing the same but it's time to do it on a larger scale."

However, there are still controversies surrounding the implementation of the Scheme. Concerns not



only over the interests of Hong Kong's own working population but also the assessment of the candidates' eligibility have been voiced by various Legislative Council members and labour union representatives.

Miss **Chan Yuen-han**, Legco member and Vice-Chairman of the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions, comments cautiously on the Admission of Talents Scheme.

“I am not against recruiting talents from other places; Hong Kong has welcomed a substantial number of individuals from the West,” Miss Chan said. “My concern is over how we can enforce a fair and just evaluation system.”

The Selection Committee has been given the ultimate authority in handling applications, and Miss Chan worries that the lack of labour union representatives on the Committee will ignore the concerns of Hong Kong's workforce.

“I am afraid that candidates may be judged by their connections rather than by their merits,” she said. “The evaluation system must be open and fair, and Legco should act as a watchdog.”

Miss Chan sees great potential in recruiting mainland candidates to fill employment gaps in Hong Kong, and recognises the need for an interim plan to help Hong Kong remain competitive in the knowledge-intensive industries.

However, she feels the Government should not neglect the interests of Hong Kong's own professionals. Technology and knowledge transfer, she believes, is an essential part of the progress.

“How can we assimilate our own students to learn from those on the mainland?” Miss Chan asked. “The people of Hong Kong should hold the future. We must ensure that the knowledge that mainland candidates bring to Hong Kong will stay in Hong Kong.”



引進內地優秀人才

香港經濟在亞洲金融風暴拖累之下，曾經有連續兩年的發展步伐停滯不前；如今正當復甦之餘，已找到了一個明確的發展目標。在各行各業皆以知識為最大本錢的今天，要在國際市場經濟群雄中立於不敗，香港必須馬上行動起來，加快復甦的進度，在亞洲市場中力保競爭的條件。

歷經一九九八至一九九九年的經濟困境之後，香港與內地唇齒相依的關係已更趨明顯。與內地進一步加強合作，有助於香港建立起一個新的經濟基礎。

一九九九年十二月十七日，特區政府推行「輸入優秀人才計劃」，銳意為本地引入內地的專才，以協助香港增強作為知識密集型經濟體系的競爭能力。

本地機構可以通過是項計劃，聘請在內地居住或正在本地就學的內地人才，以填補本地未有合適人才擔任的空缺。目前，因計劃實施而受惠的本地行業包括軟件工程、藥物製造和分銷、電訊以及環境科技不等。

是項計劃已成立了遴選委員會，由有意聘用此等人才的僱主以及學術機構向其提交申請人的資料。一份內地有資格頒授博士學位的大學名單，已呈交委員會備覽。申請者必須具備優秀的學術資格和專門才能，而且還須提交有關文件，例如著作或研究論文目錄。

是項計劃的實施，對本地學術機構的影響，同樣既深且遠；香港理工大學自然也不例外。理大在專科應用研究方面的部分成果，向來備受有關行業所嘉許，其中包括工程、眼科視光學以及設計等等。目前理大研究生當中，來自內地的已經超過半數。是項計劃將會增添優秀的內地人才，以其所學和專長，為本港作出貢獻。

理工大學副校長（科研及深造課程）**鄭大昭教授**對是項計劃深表支持，認為計劃將有助於加強本校的應用及中流研究。「研究學額僧多粥少，競爭激烈，有助於確保能獲本校接受的申請人具備優秀的條件，」鄭教授說。

以往內地學生申請來港，至少要花上六個月至一年的時間，因此對已展開的研究工作造成重大阻延。「我們選中了合適的人，還得等候對方辦理申請來港的簽證手續。但整個過程往往徒勞無功，只因內地政府否決了有關的申請。」鄭教授說，「寶貴的資源也就因此而白白浪費了。」據鄭教授表示，不少有關工業方面的研究項目，其實需要學有專長的內地學生，與見聞廣博的本地學生一起合作，才能達到最佳的效果。理大早已與內地的學術機構和研究學院建立起密切的聯繫，而鄭教授深信，本地與內地人才互相配合，定能發揮無與倫比的優勢。

「本校在機械工程、建築和土地運用等學科上素來具有優勢，」鄭教授說，「因此本校在協助本港發展成以知識為本的社會方面，定能發揮重要的作用。『輸入優秀人才計劃』是一個理想的臨時措施，藉以提供本地賴以成功的人才。」



目前理大每年錄取的全日制研究生數目仍稍嫌不足，鄭教授希望政府能稍為增加資助學額的數目，因為本地社會對知識豐富的人才需求有增無減。「政府表示憂慮對本地大學的資助不足以應付所需，我也深有同感，」鄭教授說，「本校素能善用資源，故能在不超出預算的情況下不斷增加學額。因此，政府若能增加資助學額，本校定能在應用和中流研究方面取得更大的成果。」

鄭教授認為這對本地社會的發展也大有幫助。「這個計劃的目的，不在於剝奪本地學生的就業機會，而在於為有關職位物色最佳的人選。」鄭教授補充說，「新加坡和美國硅谷，都不斷招攬世界各地的人才前往為當地經濟發展作出貢獻。香港雖然也有這樣做，但以往做得不夠，現在要急起直追。」

不過，是項計劃在實踐方面仍有不少爭議之處。多位立法會議員以及勞工界代表都曾表示憂慮本地就業人口的利益會受到損害，和評審內地申請人資格的標準會過分寬鬆。

立法會議員兼香港工會聯合會副理事長**陳婉嫻**對計劃就持有保留的態度。「我不反對從外地招聘人才，反正香港對西方的人才向來都大開中門，」她說，「我憂慮的反而是怎樣才能公平地評審內地申請人的資格。」

遴選委員會是全權負責評審有關申請的機構，陳議員憂慮委員會缺乏勞工界代表，將會漠視本地勞工

界所關心的問題。「我擔心申請人的關係會比他們的才能更加重要，」她說，「評審機制必須公平而且公開，立法會應該扮演監察者的角色。」

陳議員承認輸入內地人才以填補本地空缺一事確實大有可為，而且也實在有必要採取臨時措施，以協助本地在知識為本的行業保持競爭條件，但她認為政府不應忽視本地專業人才的利益。她以為技術和知識的轉讓，正是輸入人才的關鍵所在。「我們怎樣才能夠協助本地的學生向內地的學生學習呢？」陳議員問道，「香港的未來，理應掌握在香港人的手中。我們必須確保內地人才帶來的知識最終能應用於本港。」



Two sides of the same coin

Zhu Ledong lives in a tiny 80-square-foot room in Hung Hom. The high cost of living in Hong Kong means he eats mostly in the university canteens, and rarely spends on entertainment. He longs to see his daughter and wife in Shanghai. But Zhu, like many other mainland postgraduate students, would give anything to study in Hong Kong, because they think this cosmopolitan city will give them the exposure they need to the outside world.



"I came to Hong Kong to connect with the outside world," Zhu, a PhD candidate conducting research on wind-resistance in bridges, said. "I feel I can really concentrate on my work here." Zhu has been admitted before the implementation of the Admission of Talents Scheme and expresses that before the Scheme, application process was cumbersome and lengthy. A graduate of Shanghai Tongji University, Zhu initially held a part-time research post with another university in Hong

Kong when he was accepted for his PhD studies at PolyU.

However, he had to return to Shanghai and endured a six-

month wait before his visa could be processed. A formality, he feels strongly, should be eliminated. "I had to go back to Tongji University and file an application through the appropriate department, and wait for the Hong Kong Macau Affairs office to approve the application. It hindered my work at PolyU."

With the Admission of Talents Scheme, Zhu is confident that Hong Kong can attract the right talents. "It will enable me to apply for a job after graduation," he said. "This way, I can pay off the investment the University and Hong Kong have placed in me by serving the community."

With the influx of mainland research students in the past years, Hong Kong born **Gigi Lui** has learned to work side by side with classmates like Zhu. "I think we each have our own strengths," Lui, who is studying for her PhD in engineering, said. "Mainland students have strong theoretical knowledge while Hong Kong students have more practical knowledge. We try to help each other out in the projects."

Initially, she too, was worried about potential competition for jobs after graduation. However, Lui said she realised that it only increased her desire to better herself. "Sometimes I do feel a bit threatened but I must say that Hong Kong students have their own advantage because we know the language and the society we are working in," she said. "I think if both sides make an effort to be more accommodating, we can really get along. In fact, my Putonghua has improved tremendously after being tutored by my mainland classmates."

兩地學生 各抒己見

朱樂東現居於紅磡一個面積只得八十平方英尺的斗室之中。香港物價高昂，一日三餐他幾乎都在理大飯堂吃，娛樂消費更是少之又少；對於仍留在上海的妻女，他固然十分掛念，但與不少大陸研究生一樣，他不惜一切也要到香港來進修，是因為在香港這個國際大城市做研究，能夠拓闊他們的國際視野。朱樂東現正在理大修讀博士學位，從事橋樑抗風的研究，「我到香港來就是為了見識外面的世界，」他說，「我想我在這可以專心做好研究的工作。」

他在「輸入優秀人才計劃」實施之前已獲理大取錄，他表示當時申請來港從事研究工作的程序十分繁複，審批時間又長。他本身持有上海同濟大學學位，獲理大取錄之時正在本港另一家大學當兼職研究員。但獲得理大取錄之初，他得先返回上海待六個月，以便重新辦理來港簽證；他認為如此繁複的手續實在應該廢除。

朱樂東深信有了這個計劃，香港定能吸引合適的人前來效力。「計劃可以幫助我畢業之後找到工作，」他說，「這樣一來，我就可以藉著投身社會，以報答大學和香港社會對我的資助。」

隨著近年來內地移民日益增加，土生土長的雷芝行已習慣了跟朱樂東一類內地留學生相處。

她目前正在修讀工程學博士學位，「我們跟來自內地的同學可說各有所長，」她說，「內地學生長於理論，香港學生則在實用

知識方面佔優，大家可以互相合作，互補長短。」

雷芝行承認起初也有點擔心畢業之後找工作要跟內地留學生競爭，但後來卻認識到有競爭，反而能夠鞭策自己不斷求進步。「有時候我確實感覺受到在港的內地學生威脅，但本地學生的優點在於容易跟本地人溝通，而且對本地社會的情況也比較熟悉，」她說，「我想雙方只要能夠互相遷就，就一定可以融洽相處。其實，在他們的指點下，我的普通話水平已大大提高了。」

