

Biography

Prof. SIU Kin Wai Michael

Eric C. Yim Professor in Inclusive Design
Chair Professor of Public Design

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PhD PhD MSc MA MEd FCP BA(Hons)
RPE(MIE) CEng FIET FIMechE FHKIE CMgr FCMI
FDRS FCSD FRSA FRGS FRSPH FCoIP MHKCS

Professor Kin Wai Michael Siu is the endowed Eric C. Yim Professor in Inclusive Design and Chair Professor of Public Design. As an academic leader within the School of Design, he is an established international authority at the intersection of technological innovation, engineering, and human-centred design. With a dual background spanning engineering and design, his work successfully bridges academic scholarship with high-impact knowledge transfer and practical application. He is the Founder and Leader of the first and largest Public Design Lab in the region, Director of the PolyU-HIT Joint-Research Centre for Inclusive Design, and Director of the PolyU-WUT Joint Laboratory on Ship and Marine Aesthetic Design Technology. His extensive administrative leadership includes serving as Associate Dean (2018–2024) and Chair of the School Research Committee across multiple terms (2007–2013, 2018–2022). For over two decades, he has also served as Programme Co-ordinator of joint design-engineering-business programmes and subjects, bridging academic disciplines to foster industry-ready innovation.

Professor Siu's academic influence is recognised globally through an extraordinary series of prestigious international appointments. He has conducted research as a Visiting Scholar at the University of Cambridge (2001), a Fulbright Scholar at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2002–2003), an ASIA Fellow at the National University of Singapore (2006–2007), a Visiting Scholar at the University of California, Berkeley (2007–2008), and again as a Visiting Scholar at MIT (2013). Within Greater China, he serves as a Visiting Professor at the country's most prestigious institutions, including Tsinghua University, the Central Academy of Fine Arts, the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, the Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts, and the Wuhan University of Technology. His interdisciplinary professional standing is further underscored by his credentials as a Chartered Engineer, Chartered Designer, and Chartered Manager (UK), alongside his election as a Fellow of leading international bodies, including the IET, IMechE, CMI, DRS, CSD, RSA, RGS, RSPH, CoP(CoT), and HKIE.

At the level of policy, governance, and peer review, Professor Siu's expertise is highly sought after by governments and academic funding bodies. He has served as a Panel Member of both the Engineering Panel (2010–2016) and the Humanities and Social Sciences Panel (2023–date) of the Hong Kong Research Grants Council, as well as a Member of the RAE Humanities Sub-Panel and numerous other assessment panels for competitive project funds and postgraduate fellowships. He has contributed to public governance as a Member of the Hong Kong SAR Government's Copyright Tribunal, the Buildings Ordinance Appeal Tribunal Panel, and the CreateSmart Initiative, and has been regularly appointed to serve on international research grant bodies and accreditation councils. He also shapes global academic discourse as an editorial and advisory board member for leading journals and book series spanning design, engineering, humanities, and education.

As a dedicated educator and mentor, Professor Siu coordinates the Design Research Methods course for the university's doctoral students and currently guides the largest research group in the school, supervising postdoctoral researchers and over 25 PhD candidates. Drawing upon Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Bruner's scaffolding theory, he pioneered the 'Scaffolding Innovation' concept for design learning. Furthermore, he established the innovative Social-Impact Framework, which empowers

postgraduate students to seamlessly combine rigorous, independent PhD research with high-impact, practical knowledge contribution for the betterment of society.

Professor Siu's research paradigm seamlessly balances creative design with technological application, placing him at the top of his field in Hong Kong in terms of securing competitive external project grants and research funding. His highly funded portfolio includes the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship administered directly by the United States, the ASIA Fellowship from the Asian Scholarship Foundation and Ford Foundation, and the Humanities and Social Sciences Prestigious Fellowship Scheme from the RGC. He has collaborated extensively with international researchers across the US, UK, Singapore, Japan, South Asia, and Mainland China to spearhead social-tech inclusive and participatory designs, particularly for users with special needs and disabilities. His research outputs in public design—focusing on open spaces, playgrounds, country parks, waste and recycling facilities, and sheltered workshops—have been widely adopted by Hong Kong government departments and industrial sectors, including the Highways Department, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. His contribution and achievement in inclusive design research led to his conferment as a 'Champion of Inclusive Design' by the Include Global Network in 2013. Notably, his globally acclaimed Chinese chess design for the visually impaired was adopted as the official Chinese National Standard and designated for use in the National Paralympic Games. His pioneering design of the award-winning water filtration container, Filtainer®, was developed alongside an MIT environmental engineering team and implemented in Nepal to support highly disadvantaged populations.

Driven by a commitment to applied research and knowledge transfer, Professor Siu's lab actively develops inclusive public designs aimed at addressing pressing societal challenges, such as minimising the transmission of COVID-19 and other novel infectious diseases. His prolific contributions to industry, intellectual property, environmental design, and academic accreditation are backed by a staggering record of outputs. He is the sole holder of more than 50 US and international patents and has published 25 books and monographs, over 50 book chapters, and more than 500 papers in top-tier peer-reviewed journals. His monographs are held in the permanent collections of prominent national and academic libraries globally, such as the British Library, the US Library of Congress, Harvard Library, the MIT Rotch Library, and various university and public libraries in Hong Kong. His translational design-tech innovations have received over 100 prestigious international design and invention awards, including the Crystal Cabin Award, D&AD, Red Dot Awards, Geneva Industrial Design Prize, Geneva Invention Awards, Good Design Awards, Eaton Hall Product Development Award, ITEX Awards, JIPA Award, Sparks Awards, A&D Awards, and the British Invention Awards.