

Press release

For immediate release

HKU Inaugurates New Cornerstone Science Laboratory 2023

1 July, 2024



From the left: Professor Wang Yao, New Cornerstone Investigator and Chair Professor of Department of Physics; Professor Max Shen, Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research); Ms Wurong Wang, Vice President and Secretary-General of the New Cornerstone Science Foundation; and Dr Yong Wang, Head of Operations in the Area of Physics for New Cornerstone Science Foundation.

The Unveiling Ceremony for the New Cornerstone Science Laboratory and Briefing Session was held at the University of Hong Kong (HKU) on June 21. Professor Max Shen, Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research); Professor Wang Yao, New Cornerstone Investigator and Chair Professor of Department of Physics; Ms Wurong Wang, Vice President and Secretary-General of the New Cornerstone Science Foundation; and Dr Yong Wang, Head of Operations in the Area of Physics for New Cornerstone Science Foundation, jointly unveiled the laboratory.

Professor Wang Yao was among the 46 scientists selected for the 2023 New Cornerstone Investigator Programme, with three recipients from Hong Kong. His research focuses on two-dimensional materials and their heterostructures. Collaborating with his team, he pioneered concepts in valleytronics in 2D materials and their

moiré superlattices, advancing the field of valley optoelectronics and introducing the concept of moiré excitons in twisted two-dimensional semiconductors.

The New Cornerstone Science Laboratory (“the Laboratory”) was set up by the New Cornerstone Science Foundation (“the Foundation”). It serves as the platform supported by the Foundation for research work and academic exchange.

The New Cornerstone Investigator Programme (“the Programme”) is a non-profit and independent funding initiative that takes a forward-thinking approach to encouraging basic research spearheaded by leading scientists. The programme focuses on two areas: Mathematics and Physical Sciences and Biological and Biomedical Sciences. Interdisciplinary research between these two areas is highly encouraged.

Professor Max Shen congratulated Professor Wang Yao on his selection as a New Cornerstone Investigator. He highlighted HKU's 113-year history as a world-renowned university with comprehensive disciplines, disciplinary advantages, and a long-term commitment to basic research and innovation. He also noted HKU's role as the most internationalised university in terms of teaching staff in China.

Following the unveiling ceremony, a briefing session was held, during which Tencent presented the New Cornerstone Investigator Programme and the Xplorer Prize's project positioning, application requirements, and past awardees.

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