

Press release

For immediate release

HKU Physicist Professor Yi Yang Honoured as Hong Kong's Sole Recipient of the 2024 Xplorer Prize

29 August, 2024



Professor Yi YANG, Belinda Hung Outstanding Young Professor and Assistant Professor in the Department of Physics at The University of Hong Kong (HKU), has been honoured with the 2024 Xplorer Prize, making him the sole recipient from Hong Kong this year. Funded by the New Cornerstone Science Foundation established by Tencent, the Xplorer Prize recognises outstanding young scientists under 45 who demonstrate exceptional quality and innovation in their fields of research. Professor Yang is internationally recognised for his innovative work in nanophotonics and free-electron optics.

Professor Yang's research focuses on the free-electron-light interactions between slow nonrelativistic electrons and nanophotonic environments. This innovative approach holds the potential for strong free-electron--photon interaction and quantum entanglement. His work has promising applications in quantum light generation, integrated radiation sources, and particle accelerators.

Expressing his gratitude for the award, Professor Yang said, 'This recognition motivates my team and me to continue advancing free-electron optics and nanophotonics, with the goal of creating new breakthroughs in free-electron-light interaction and radiation generation.'

The Xplorer Prize is a prestigious non-governmental, merit-based award and one of the most generous talent funding programmes for young scientists in China. Each year, it recognises no more than 50 outstanding scientists, with each winner receiving a total of RMB 3 million over the next five years.

HKU is proud to be at the forefront of cutting-edge research, and we look forward to Professor Yang's continued contributions to nanophotonics and quantum science, further strengthening HKU's global impact.

Biography of Professor Yi Yang

Professor Yi Yang began his academic journey at Peking University, where he obtained his bachelor's and master's degrees in 2011 and 2014, respectively. He then completed his PhD degree at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 2019 and continued to work as a postdoctoral fellow at MIT before joining HKU as an Assistant Professor in 2022.

Professor Yang has received several prestigious awards, including the 2024 Croucher Tak Wah Mak Innovation Award for Pioneering Photonics Research. He has also been named a Physical Science Fellow in the 2023 Asian Young Scientist Fellowship, recognised as one of the Innovators under 35(China) by MIT Technology Review in 2022, and awarded the 2022 Excellent Young Scientists fund (Hong Kong and Macau) under the National Natural Science Foundation of China, an organisation managed by the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST).

Learn more about the Xplorer Prize: <https://xplorerprize.org>

For media enquiries, please contact Ms Casey To, Assistant Manager (Communications) (tel: 3917 4948; email: caseyto@hku.hk) / Ms Cindy Chan, Assistant Director of Communications of HKU Faculty of Science (tel: 3917 5286; email: cindycst@hku.hk).

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