In a remarkable display of academic excellence, five Professors and two affiliated Professors from our Faculty have achieved top honours in the 2023 Best Scientists Rankings within their respective fields globally. The ranking is based on a scientist’s D-index (Discipline H-index), which includes only publications and citations data for a specific discipline. Additionally, Clarivate Analytics has recognized eight of our esteemed scientists, including five academics and three affiliated scholars, as the most influential researchers in the world in its ‘2023 Highly Cited Researchers’ list. Highly Cited Researchers are selected for their exceptional research performance, determined by the production of multiple highly cited papers that rank in the top 1% by citations for field and year in Web of Science. These accolades serve as a testament to the dedication, expertise, and impactful contributions of our scholars, further solidifying our position as a global leader in academic excellence.

### External Awards and Honours

**Professor Chi-ming CHE**
Zhou Guangzhao Professor in Natural Sciences, Chair Professor of Chemistry 2023 Best Scientists – ranked 65th globally in Chemistry

**Professor Sir Fraser STODDART**
Chair Professor of Chemistry 2023 Best Scientists – ranked 18th globally in Chemistry 2023 Highly Cited Researchers in the field of Chemistry

**Professor Min SUN**
Professor of Earth Sciences 2023 Best Scientists – ranked 18th globally in Earth Science

**Professor Peng GONG**
Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development), Chair Professor in both Faculty of Science and Faculty of Social Sciences 2023 Best Scientists – ranked 70th globally in Environmental Sciences 2023 Highly Cited Researchers in the field of Geosciences

**Professor Jingbo LI**
President and Vice-Chairman of HKU, Chair Professor in both Faculty of Science and Faculty of Engineering 2023 Best Scientists – ranked 97th globally in Physics 2023 Highly Cited Researchers in the field of Physics

**Professor Xiaobo YIN**
Associate Vice-President of HKU and Professor in both Faculty of Science and Faculty of Engineering 2023 Highly Cited Researchers in the field of Cross-Field

### Accomplishments

**Professor Wang YAO**
Chair Professor of the Department of Physics, was selected for Tencent’s ‘New Cornerstone Investigator Project 2023’ which aims to promote basic research spearheaded by leading scientists. Besides this achievement, Professor Yao was also honoured with the prestigious Huang Kuan Prize by the Chinese Physical Society. The Prize, named in honour of the late Chinese physicist and pioneer of China’s Semiconductors Physics Professor Huang Kuan, serves as recognition and reward for exceptional achievements in solid-state physics and semiconductor physics.

**Professor Jinqiao TANG**
Associate Professor of the Department of Earth Sciences, was awarded as a recipient of the BOCHRA Science and Technology Innovation Prize in New Materials and New Energy for the year 2023. His exceptional research in the field of active colloidal materials garnered recognition for its innovative and transformative contributions.

**Professor Hongjie DAI**
Chair Professor of Earth Sciences 2023 Best Scientists – ranked 11th Globally in Materials Science 2023 Highly Cited Researchers in the field of Chemistry

**Professor Guochun ZHAO**
Chair Professor of Earth Sciences 2023 Best Scientists – ranked 10th Globally in Earth Science 2023 Highly Cited Researchers in the field of Geosciences

**Professor Hongbo SUN**
Professor Sir Fraser STODDART
Chair Professor of Chemistry 2023 Best Scientists – ranked 18th Globally in Earth Science

**Professor Jimmy JIAO**
Professor of the Department of Chemistry, was elected by the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)’s Dalton Prize Committee to receive the 2023 Horizon Prize. The team was honoured for their pioneering research on the medicinal chemistry of biopharmaceuticals and its application in the treatment of COVID-19, as well as the identification of target sites in SARS-CoV-2 enzymes using metalloenzymes methods.

**Professor Xiang David LI**
Professor of the Department of Chemistry was awarded the Tetrahadron Young Investigator Award 2024 for his exceptional contributions to the field of Bioorganic and Medicinal Chemistry. The award is given to just two individuals each year who have exhibited ‘exceptional creativity and dedication in the fields of organic synthesis and bioorganic and medicinal chemistry, respectively. The previous awarders included Nobel Prize laureates in Chemistry.

**Professor Joseph MICHALSKI**
Professor of the Department of Earth Sciences, received the Xplorer Prize 2023, becoming the first non-Chinese recipient of this esteemed accolade. The prize acknowledged his significant contributions to the field of planetary science and the study of Mars.

**Professor Guochun ZHAO**
Chair Professor of the Department of Earth Sciences, was elected as a member of Hong Kong Academy of Sciences. This prestigious membership recognized his highly esteemed expertise in the field of geosciences and was bestowed by his peers in Hong Kong.

**Professor Xuechen LI**
Professor of the Department of Chemistry, was awarded the Innovation Award by the Peptide Alliance of China at 19th Take China 2023. This award served as a testament to Professor Li’s exceptional and valuable contributions in the field of peptide synthesis and peptide drug development.

**Professor Jimmy JIAO**
Professor of the Department of Chemistry, was selected for the 2023 Chinese Chemical Society Young Chemist Award in recognition of his achievement in the synthesis and application of novel chiral, discreet metal catalysts. This placed him among the ten outstanding young chemists who received this recognition.
HKU Students Captured Gold Medal in International iGEM Competition 2023

A multidisciplinary team of HKU students, including members from the Faculty of Science, won a Gold Medal at the International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) Competition Grand Jamboree 2023. Their winning project aimed to improve solid tumour treatment through genetically engineering macrophages with CAR and SIRPα Blocker, aiming to enhance immunotherapy methods. Their dedication, hard work, and commitment to wet lab work, science communication, and education have led to this well-deserved recognition.

Actuarial Science Students Thrived in CASH Algo Trading Challenge 2023 with Winning Strategy

The HKU Team “MASS”, comprising Muhammad HUSSAIN and Hassan Ali NASEEM, both second-year students majoring in Actuarial Science in the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science, collaborated with HKU Faculty of Engineering, achieved remarkable success in the CASH Algo Trading Challenge 2023, a global competition for algorithmic trading. They were crowned Grand Champions and received Silver Awards in both Best Return and Best Sharpe categories. The team’s dedication over a span of nearly four months, involving extensive backtesting and careful monitoring, led to the development of a winning trading strategy.

Biological Sciences PhD Graduate Awarded Prestigious Grant by Malacological Society of London in 2023

PhD graduate Dr Bovern ARROMRAK from the School of Biological Sciences was awarded the Early-Career Research Grant by the Malacological Society of London in 2023. This highly competitive grant is conferred on students and researchers who have demonstrated exceptional potential and achievements in their respective fields.

A major part of Bovern’s research centres around understanding the interaction between animal hosts and their associated microbial community in high thermal environments, with implications for unravelling tolerance mechanisms. Their dedication, hard work, and commitment to wet lab work, science communication, and education have led to this well-deserved recognition.

PhD Student Won Best Talk Award at AsiaEvo Conference for Research on Germline Mutation Rates in Sticklebacks

PhD student Chaowei Charlene ZHANG from the School of Biological Sciences was awarded the Best Talk Award at the AsiaEvo Conference held in December 2023 at the National University of Singapore. Her research on ‘Catalytic reductive demethylation of malarial esters’, which was published in Nature Chemistry, 2021. Her findings served as a valuable resource for researchers studying fish population genetics, especially in the context of sticklebacks. Charlene is supervised by Professor Juha MERILÄ in the Area of Evolutionary Genetics.

From the left: Aines Ali NAEM and Muhammad HUSSAIN, both from the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science, Faculty of Science; Shah Jahan ISHAQ is a second-year student of the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science; and Postdoctoral fellow Dr Pengwei XIU of the Department of Chemistry were awarded the Faculty’s Research Output Prize 2021-22 for their exceptional work in the research project ‘Catalytic reductive demethylation of malarial esters’, which was published in Nature Chemistry, 2021.