


AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

This year, our scholars have once again distinguished themselves on the global stage.

In the 2025 Best Scientists Ranking, four Faculty Professors and two affiliated Professors were listed among the top 100 scientists worldwide in their respective disciplines. Positions in the ranking is based on a scientist's D-index (Discipline H-index), which takes into account only the publications and citation values within a specific discipline.

Further to this, eight scientists from the Faculty, including six academics and two affiliated scholars, have been recognised as 2025 Highly Cited Researchers by Clarivate Analytics. Each researcher selected has authored multiple highly cited papers that rank in the top 1% by citations for their fields and publication year in the Web of Science over the past decade.

These honours underscore the sustained contributions of our scholars and reinforce the Faculty's international reputation for academic excellence.




**Professor Xiang ZHANG**  
President and Vice-Chancellor of HKU, Chair Professor in both Faculty of Science and Faculty of Engineering  
2025 Best Scientists – ranked 48<sup>th</sup> globally in Physics  
2025 Highly Cited Researchers in Physics



**Professor Peng GONG**  
Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development), Chair Professor in both Faculty of Science and Faculty of Social Sciences  
2025 Best Scientists – ranked 65<sup>th</sup> globally in Environmental Scientists  
2025 Highly Cited Researchers in Geosciences



**Professor Guochun ZHAO**  
Mok Sau-King Professor and Chair Professor of Earth & Planetary Sciences  
2025 Best Scientists – ranked 6<sup>th</sup> globally in Earth Science  
2025 Highly Cited Researchers in Geosciences



**Professor Chi-Ming CHE**  
Zhou Guangzhao Professor in Natural Sciences, Chair Professor of Chemistry  
2025 Best Scientists – ranked 79<sup>th</sup> globally in Chemistry  
Professor Chi-Ming Che also led a Gold Medal-winning project at the 51<sup>st</sup> International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva, developing a rapid, non-invasive AI-powered cancer detection device.



**Professor Hongjie DAI**  
Sapientia Eminence Professor and Chair Professor of Chemistry  
2025 Best Scientists – ranked 17<sup>th</sup> globally in Materials Science  
2025 Highly Cited Researchers in Chemistry



**Professor Shuang ZHANG**  
Interim Head and Chair Professor of Physics  
2025 Highly Cited Researchers in Physics



**Professor Wang YAO**  
Chair Professor of Physics  
2025 Highly Cited Researchers in Physics



**Professor Min SUN**  
Professor Emeritus of Earth & Planetary Sciences  
2025 Best Scientists – ranked 20<sup>th</sup> globally in Earth Science



**Professor Zhengxiao GUO**  
Chair Professor of Chemistry  
2025 Highly Cited Researchers in Cross-field



**Professor Renhao DONG**  
Associate Professor of Chemistry  
2025 Highly Cited Researchers in Chemistry



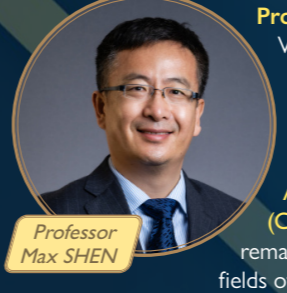
Professor Xiang ZHANG



Professor Shuang ZHANG



Professor Chi-Ming CHE



Professor Max SHEN



Professor Ferenc KRAUSZ

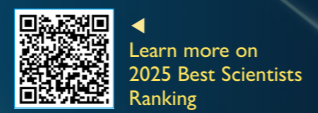
HKU State Key Laboratories were presented with plaques by the Ministry of Science and Technology on 25 August 2025. With the establishment of the State Key Laboratory of Optical Quantum Materials under the Department of Physics, alongside four existing laboratories at HKU including the State Key Laboratory of Synthetic Chemistry led by the Department of Chemistry, this further cements HKU's position as the institution with the highest number of State Key Laboratories in Hong Kong.

Directed by Professor Xiang ZHANG, President and Vice-Chancellor and Chair Professor of Physics, with Professor Shuang ZHANG, Interim Head and Chair Professor of Physics, serving as Associate Director, the State Key Laboratory of Optical Quantum Materials merges the fields of photonics and two-dimensional materials to pioneer advancements in quantum and metamaterials, with particular emphasis on ultrafast processes and topological structures. Its work supports technological innovation and contributes to the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area as a hub for cutting-edge research.

The State Key Laboratory of Synthetic Chemistry, directed by Professor Chi-ming CHE, Zhou Guangzhao Professor in Natural Sciences and Chair Professor of Chemistry, conducts fundamental and interdisciplinary research in sustainable green catalysis, precision synthesis, synthetic biology, and novel functional molecules, advancing materials science and biomedicine in the Greater Bay Area.

Professor Max SHEN, Vice-Chair Professor in the Department of Mathematics, has been elected an International Member of the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) in recognition of his remarkable contributions to the fields of artificial intelligence and supply chain optimisation.

Professor Ferenc KRAUSZ, Chair Professor of Laser Physics in the Department of Physics, has been elected as an International Member of the National Academy of Sciences, USA (NAS), in recognition of his outstanding contributions to ultrafast laser science and attosecond physics.



AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS



Professor Vivian YAM

The Centre of Functional Materials for Energy and Sustainability (CFMES) of HKU has been officially approved for admission to the third InnoHK research cluster, SEAM@InnoHK, which focuses on sustainable development, energy, advanced manufacturing, and materials. This marks an important expansion of HKU's involvement in InnoHK, a major innovation and technology initiative by the Hong Kong SAR Government to position Hong Kong as a hub for global research collaboration.

SEAM@InnoHK builds on the existing Health@InnoHK and AIR@InnoHK clusters, bringing the total number of HKU Science research centres under InnoHK to three.

Led by Professor Vivian Wing-Wah Yam, Vice-President and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global Innovation Centre) (Interim), Philip Wong Wilson Wong Professor in Chemistry and Energy, and co-headed by Professor Hongjie Dai, Sapientia Eminence Professor, both Chair Professors at the Department of Chemistry at HKU, CFMES aims to advance breakthrough in functional materials to address challenges in energy and sustainability. The Centre will also promote world-class research, strengthen Hong Kong's international research profile, and nurture the next generation of scientists.



Professor Hongjie DAI

CFMES will leverage on the unique strengths and competitive edges to address bottleneck challenges in advancing discovery of advanced battery materials and electric-enabled technology for energy storage, green conversion and sustainability applications, and innovative light-emitting materials, and light-enabled and responsive materials and technology for energy and materials conversion, and recyclable sustainability through international, national and local inter-institutional and industrial collaborations.

Professor Yam highlighted the significance of the initiative, saying, "We are thrilled to be selected as a SEAM@InnoHK Centre, and we envision our CFMES as the premier Centre to provide solutions to important global real-world energy and sustainability challenges through innovative original research in advanced functional materials and processes. This will also serve as an international S&T hub to bring top talents both from academia and industry to Hong Kong and the GBA, to tackle the grand challenges, and to actively align with the National S&T strategy."

The Centre will work with renowned collaborators, including The University of Groningen, the Max Planck Institute, Peking University and Peking University Shenzhen Graduate School, and The University of Tokyo, to advance collaborative research and drive impactful innovations in energy and sustainability.



Professor Dong LI

Professor Dong LI, Chair Professor in the Department of Mathematics, was named a **Fellow of the American Mathematical Society (AMS) for 2026**. This prestigious recognition honours his significant contributions to nonlinear partial differential equations and fluid dynamics.



Professor Xuhua HE

The Hong Kong Academy of Sciences has elected Professor Xuhua HE, Chair Professor of the Department of Mathematics, as a **Member of the Academy** in recognition of his outstanding achievements in scientific research and contributions to society. He is one of five newly elected members this year.

Professor He's research spans arithmetic geometry, algebraic groups, and representation theory. His innovative approaches and impactful applications in these areas have earned him wide recognition in the global mathematical community.



Professor Vivian YAM

Professor Vivian YAM, Philip Wong Wilson Wong Professor in Chemistry and Energy and Chair Professor in the Department of Chemistry, has been ranked **16<sup>th</sup> among the Best Female Scientists in China 2025/2026**. The recognition affirms her outstanding contributions to chemistry and her international scientific impact. Her inclusion on this list also reflects HKU's continued efforts to support and advance women in science.



Professor Wei QIAN

Professor Wei QIAN from the Department of Mathematics has been awarded the **2025 David G. Kendall Award for Young Researchers**. Jointly presented by the Bernoulli Society and the Royal Statistical Society, and given every two years, the award recognises outstanding early-career researchers who have demonstrated significant achievements and great potential in the fields of mathematical statistics and probability theory. For the 2025 edition, which specifically honoured excellence in Probability Theory, the committee noted the impressive depth of Professor Qian's research, which spans several core areas of modern probability.



Professor Ngaiming MOK

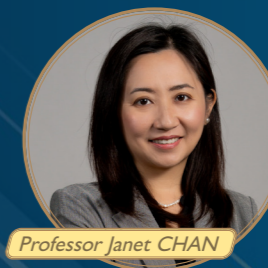
Professor Ngaiming MOK, Edmund and Peggy Tse Professor in Mathematics and Chair Professor of the Department of Mathematics, has been invited to deliver a one-hour **Plenary Lecture at the International Congress of Mathematicians (ICM) 2026**, to be held in Philadelphia, USA, from July 23 to 30, 2026.

Plenary speakers at the ICMs are internationally recognised mathematicians of the highest reputation, selected to present current directions of research to a broad mathematical audience. This marks the second time Professor Mok has been invited to speak at the ICM, following his first invitation in 1994. The invitation represents one of the highest honours in mathematics and reflects his sustained contributions and influence in the discipline over the past decades.



Professor Nicole KHAN

Professor Nicole KHAN from the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences has received the **2025 Sir Nicholas Shackleton Medal from the International Union for Quaternary Research (INQUA)**, a biennial award recognising outstanding young scientists in Quaternary research. She was honoured for her work on sea-level change and coastal evolution, including reconstructing high-precision records in regions vulnerable to climate change.



Professor Janet CHAN

Professor Janet CHAN from the School of Biological Sciences has received the **Advanced Materials Innovation Award from the International Association of Advanced Materials (IAAM)**. The award was presented at the European Advanced Materials Congress in Stockholm, recognising her work on innovative approaches to waste management and recycling. At the congress, Professor Chan presented research applying behavioural science to improve recycling practices and introduced a newly developed mobile app aimed at enhancing public engagement in recycling and environmental education.

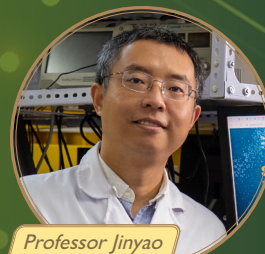
## AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### The HKU Excellence Award Scheme 2025



Professor  
Ryan MCKENZIE

**Professor Ryan MCKENZIE**, Associate Professor of Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, received the **Faculty Research Output Prize** for his research titled 'A Climate Threshold for Ocean Deoxygenation during the Early Cretaceous', published in the journal *Nature* in 2024.



Professor Jinyao  
TANG

**Professor Jinyao TANG**, Associate Head (Research) and Professor of the Department of Chemistry, was honoured the **Outstanding Researcher Award** in recognition of his exceptional research accomplishments.

**Professors Haibo JIANG**, Associate Professors of the Department of Chemistry, was awarded the **Outstanding Young Researcher Award**, acknowledging his promising potential and achievements in the respective research fields.



Professor Haibo JIANG

**Dr Kin Sum LEUNG**, Assistant Lecturer of the School of Biological Sciences, was awarded the **Early Career Teaching Award**, under the Teaching Excellence Award Scheme, which is designed to recognise individuals for their potential for leadership in teaching as well as their past achievements.



Dr Kin Sum LEUNG

### Faculty Awards on Teaching Excellence and Outstanding Performance



Dr Yat Ming  
CHAN

**Dr Yat Ming CHAN**, Lecturer of the Department of Mathematics was honoured with the **Award for Teaching Excellence 2024-25** in recognition of his dedication to delivering high-quality teaching.



Professor Thiyagarajan  
VENGATESEN

**Professor Thiyagarajan VENGATESEN**, Professor of the School of Biological Sciences, was recognised with the **Faculty Knowledge Exchange (KE) Award 2025** for his research on the genetic basis of climate resilience in oysters and the development of climate-adaptive aquaculture strains. His work led to a climate-resilient 'HKU super oyster' with improved survival and meat quality for sustainable aquaculture.

**Ms Emily Elizabeth JONES**, PhD student of the School of Biological Sciences, was awarded **Excellent Teaching Assistant Awards 2024-25** for her enthusiasm in providing teaching support in classes.



Ms Emily Elizabeth JONES

**Dr Angela Mai Yan YUEN**, Associate Head (Teaching & Learning) in the Department of Chemistry, receives the **Outstanding Service Award 2024-25** for her leadership in advancing interdisciplinary education and her dedicated mentorship of students.



Dr Angela Mai Yan YUEN