Dear All,

Good performance coupled with vision and strategic decision-making at Faculty and Department level gets rewarded in HKU. Hence the importance of the Strategic Planning retreat that we held here in the Faculty on Monday. Resourcing that follows vision is one of the reasons I like working here. Our Principal, Provost and Pro-VCs have all been hugely supportive of the Faculty’s HKUrbanLab initiative and we are starting to reap dividends. The dividends will keep coming so long as we can show that these investments leverage large and significant projects and bring credit to university through internationally esteemed recognition of our design work and our science and arts based research. We also need to keep up our truly superb teaching and active knowledge exchange engagements. So no pressure. Here’s some rewards from the university’s Senior Management Team that I am delighted to be able to pass on to you.

1. Publication budget for cost-intensive academic design publications. I have up to 0.5M HKD for this at the moment. To bid, please submit to faculty research office a 2 page (max) prospectus for your publication project. It should be in partnership with an international reputable publishing house and be pitched at the highest level. This is not for self-published work or student work, which is more suitable for donor funding. The aim is to co-fund the dissemination of internationally leading design scholarship.

2. Fund for creating community design student-learning experiences attached to HKUrbanLab research groups, clusters, centres and projects. In exploring how best to take forward the agenda established by CPW, the Community Projects Workshop hosted by the faculty for the past 6 years, the Faculty Office will experimentally fund a series of projects that give students professional-quality project experience. The objective is to continue the tradition of CPW but to link the projects more firmly to well-founded academic research groups and agenda. To bid, please submit to the faculty research office a 2 page (max) prospectus for your experiential-learning project. It should give students (BSc or Masters level) a chance to work with academic scholars on non-commercial projects out in the field. Projects should be rooted in a well-structured academic research agenda and involve community design and planning issues. Projects should have funding from elsewhere, with the extra funds used to add-in a learning experience for students that enhances project outputs. Please make the nature of the students’ involvement and the pedagogic goals explicit. This
is very similar to HKU’s Gallant Ho experiential-learning fund. The current exercise explores the potential of linking such student experiences directly to research groups as opposed to linking them to a special community design unit (CPW), or to accredited teaching modules or internships in faculty members’ own offices.

I hope to have more announcements about funding opportunities in the next few weeks.

Thanks for the feedback on last week’s ‘pyramid blog’. If anyone is interesting in writing a paper for an architectural journal that considers natural morphological forms under different kinds of natural environment, then let me know. There may even be a book there (cones, dendrites, pyramids, spheres, cuboids and so on).

Congratulations on the achievements listed below.

Chris
1. Dr. Cole Roskam


2. Mr. Yan Gao

   - was invited to lead a unit, SIMPLEX CARPENTRY 简杂木构, in the Digital Factory International Workshop in Tongji University, as the second event organized by Digital Architecture Design Association (DADA) under Architectural Society of China. The outcomes of this workshop was presented in the DADA international conference 2015 and was exhibited in Tongji University in the month of August. The workshop has attracted several world leading researchers to explore the making of architecture with robots. The unit aimed to explore and demonstrate the possibilities by employing the principle of mortise and tenon joints for adaptable carpentry systems with CNC fabrication method. During the workshop, different groups of students employed ModRule system as the spatial driver for the further material design and fabrication.
3. Ms. Tris Kee

- Built project “HK Value Farm”, in collaboration with Chinese University and Kadorrie Institute, won the Gold Award in Architecture Social Innovation and is exhibited at the HKIA Cross-Straight Architecture Exhibition 24-30 August 2015 at IFC.

4. John Lin and Olivier Ottevaere

- ‘The Pinch, Community Center and Library’ was recently published in the South China Morning Post: http://www.scmp.com/property/article/1850566/hong-kong-architecture-professors-bring-their-skills-earthquake-hit-yunnan
  The project, located in Yunnan Province, was completed in March 2014.
Division of Architectural Conservation Programmes

1. Mr. Li FENG (2011 MSc(Conservation) graduate)

- Published a book entitled 《邬达克的家：番禺路129号的前世今生》 (tentatively translated as "Hudec’s Home: the Past and Present of No. 129 Panyu Road"; Shanghai Far East Publishers, August 2015) based on his MSc(Conservation) dissertation. This book is considered to be the most in-depth study to date on the municipal-level heritage building that was once the home of Laszlo Hudec, the Hungarian-Slovak architect credited for introducing modernity to Shanghai's cityscape. Newspaper interviews of Li Feng on his book: (English) http://www.shanghaidaily.com/feature/art-and-culture/Hudecs-daughter-recalls-happy-times-in-former-family-home/shdaily.shtml; (Chinese) http://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_1322164
Matthew Pryor has been appointed as a technical specialist to the newly formed Joint Task Force to review the management of Stonewall Trees, set up by The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers and The Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects.

The task force will bring together geotechnical, landscape and arboricultural specialists, to review the current mechanisms of Stonewall Tree management and come up with effective and constructive recommendations to the Government on Stonewall Trees management by October 2015.

Photos from the press conference, held on 20 August 2015:
1. Dr. Isabelle Chan

- Invited by the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) to present a CPD seminar on ‘Mindful or Mind full: Stress Management for Construction Professionals’, 25th August 2015.

Mr. Lam Wai Choi (CIOB HK Vice-President) presented an appreciate certificate to Isabelle

2. Dr. Wilson Lu

1. Dr. Roger Chan, Ms. Lingyue Li and Mr. Yi Sun

- attended the Regional Conference of the International Geographical Union (IGU) 2015 at Moscow (16-21 August) and made the following presentations:

  Dr. Roger Chan
  - State-Space and Urban-Regional Development in China
  - Incorporating Place-based Education in Teaching Urbanism (with Huiwei Chen, Yi Sun)

  Ms. Lingyue Li
  - Mega-event as a tool in the optimization of urban spatial structure: An entrepreneurial city in action (with Roger Chan)
  - The multi-scale new area strategy in transitional China: Evidence from Chongqing Liangjiang

  Mr. Yi Sun
  - Awarded the IGU local organizing committee grant for participating the conference. The LOC grant was awarded to 48 postgraduate students and early career scientists (up to 35 years) from developing countries in attending IGU 2015.

2. Dr. Roger Chan

- attended Fourth Global Conference on Economic Geography 2015 (19-23 August) at the University of Oxford and gave a presentation entitled “China’s New State Space: Evidence from Qianhai, Shenzhen.”
3. Professor Rebecca Chiu

- Invited by the Management Committee of the Guangzhou Economic and Technology Development Districts of the Guangzhou Government to participate in the Expert Consultative Meeting on the Development and Planning Strategy of Guangzhou's New Whampu District (486 sq. km.) held on 22 August 2015. Also invited were top planning experts in China and the mass media.

4. Dean Webster

- The Dean’s paper co-written with Tongji and Cardiff University collaborators is now published:


**Abstract:** The specification of locational attributes in hedonic house price models has traditionally been problematic. Whilst many studies use similar sets of structural attributes the range of locational attributes can be diverse and inconsistent both in their identification and in their measurement. To address this problem, researchers have adopted concepts related to urban configuration such as the monocentric city and the access – space trade-off model, and later multicentric and multiple accessibility models, to structure their enquiry. This has led to issues related to a priori variable specification using geometrically defined accessibility measures that can also lead to problems such as spatial autocorrelation. In this research, we investigate the use of network accessibility metrics in hedonic house price research using Cardiff, Wales as a case study. We hypothesize that a network-modelling approach to measuring accessibility will improve performance compared with conventional planar geometry specifications. We find that estimating centrality variables across a variety of spatial scales allows the impact on property prices of urban configurations to be modelled more accurately. The research shows that not all dimensions of accessibility can be adequately captured by network measures and that conventional planar geometry measures of accessibility can add additional explanatory power in certain circumstances.

([http://epb.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/08/18/0265813515600120](http://epb.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/08/18/0265813515600120))
- The Dean was invited by the iMoney magazine for an interview on China's urban planning and the Tianjian explosion.