



ANNUAL REPORT

2023/24

# TECHNOLOGICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTE OF HONG KONG (THEi)

## Annual Report 2023/24

### Organisational Restructuring

Following the approval by the Board of Governors of the Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (hereinafter referred to as THEi or the Institute) in March 2023, and the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) in October 2023, THEi implemented a new organisational structure, aiming to maximise the operational efficiency and support the proposed key initiatives in the future plan of the Institute. This move allows THEi to further strengthen the academic focus of and foster greater specialisation in individual academic areas, which in turn enables THEi to better respond to the evolving needs of the industries, provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in the workforce upon graduation, and nurture work-ready graduates who are equipped to make meaningful contributions to and succeed in their chosen fields.

In effect, THEi entered a transition period from 1 September 2023 to 31 December 2023; and the new structure with six Academic Departments replacing the three former Faculties of Design and Environment, Management and Hospitality, and Science and Technology was officially and fully effective from 1 January 2024 onwards. The six Academic Departments are:

- Department of Construction, Environment and Engineering
- Department of Design and Architecture
- Department of Digital Innovation and Technology
- Department of Food and Health Sciences
- Department of Hospitality and Business Management
- Department of Sport and Recreation

### Degree Programmes Provision

In the academic year (AY) 2023/24, THEi offered a diverse array of 22 innovative self-financing degree programmes across its six Academic Departments that are applied science-oriented and developed with significant industry input. All programmes are accredited by the HKCAAVQ, and by the relevant professional bodies where appropriate. A notable aspect of THEi's programmes is the mandate of up to 720 hours of work-integrated learning (WIL), which involves extensive participation from industries, thereby enhancing students' overall learning experience and practical knowledge while facilitating the development of valuable professional networks. Students at THEi participate in authentic project-based learning that addresses real-world challenges in collaboration with various local and regional industries and professionals. This hands-on approach not only contributes to the upskilling of traditional sectors but also equips our students with invaluable practical experience. By engaging directly with industry

issues, our students remain at the forefront of the latest trends and innovations, positioning themselves advantageously in the job market and ensuring they are well-prepared to excel beyond their peers.

To meet the increasing demand for talents and professionals in the cinematic arts technology as well as the environmental sector, THEi has launched two new Bachelor's degree programmes in AY2023/24, namely the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Cinematic Arts and Technology (CAT) and the Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Green Engineering and Sustainability (GES). The CAT programme combines training in both artistic and technical skills and knowledge, empowering students with innovative storytelling abilities in both practical and theoretical aspects. Covering areas such as cinematography design, visual effects, motion design and 3D creation, it prepares graduates with multidisciplinary expertise required to thrive in the evolving media and entertainment sector. The GES programme focuses on sustainability in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area (GBA), encompassing a broad spectrum of evolving skills in environmental management such as emerging environmental technology, nature conservation, smart environmental monitoring, carbon audit, machine learning for environmental applications and renewable energy systems. The comprehensive curriculum equips graduates to effectively confront and address current and future environmental challenges, driving meaningful change in their communities and beyond.

Nine of THEi's Year-1 degree programmes were included under the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors (SSSDP) with subsidies ranging from HK\$44,950 to HK\$78,280 for 260 places in AY2023/24. The nine programmes are:

- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Product Design
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Fashion Design
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Landscape Architecture
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Culinary Arts and Management
- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Horticulture, Arboriculture and Landscape Management
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Surveying
- Bachelor of Social Sciences (Honours) in Sports and Recreation Management
- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Building Services Engineering

The Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address highlighted the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government's commitment to promoting Vocational and Professional Education and Training (VPET) as a pathway parallel to conventional academic education through fostering industry-institution collaboration and diversified development to provide young people with a range of learning and employment opportunities. In line with this initiative, the SSSDP has, for the first time, been expanded to include top-up degree (TUD) programmes since AY2023/24, covering about 1,310 undergraduate programme places. Nine of THEi's TUD programmes have been selected by the Education Bureau (EDB) under SSSDP for Undergraduate Programmes for the 2023/24 cohort, resulting in a total of 394 SSSDP-TUD places allocated to THEi for AY2023/24. The nine programmes are:

- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Culinary Arts and Management – Year-3 Entry
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Fashion Design – Year-3 Entry

- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Landscape Architecture – Year-3 Entry
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Product Design – Year-3 Entry
- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Building Services Engineering – Year-3 Entry
- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering – Year-3 Entry
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Horticulture, Arboriculture and Landscape Management – Year-2 and Year-3 Entry
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Surveying – Year-3 Entry
- Bachelor of Social Sciences (Honours) in Sports and Recreation Management – Year-3 Entry

As for the other degree programmes not included in SSSDP, they were covered under the Non-means-tested Subsidy Scheme (NMTSS).

THEi is set to launch several Bachelor's degree programmes in AY2024/25, underscoring its commitment to strong industry partnerships that better prepare students for the workforce. These initiatives include three industry-sponsored Bachelor's degree programmes, namely the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Music Technology and Management, the Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Digital Manufacturing, and the Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Artificial Intelligence and Enterprise Management. Moreover, THEi will introduce its first joint Bachelor's degree programme, namely the Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering, in collaboration with the University of Queensland (UQ), Australia. This partnership not only allows students to complete the final two years of their studies at UQ but also enriches their educational experience by exposing them to diverse learning environments and cultures. Such collaboration is essential for enhancing students' academic journeys and boosting their future career prospects in a competitive job market.

### **Master Programme Provision**

In response to the high demand of Chinese taught Master's degree programmes, THEi's Department of Hospitality and Business Management in partnership with the Department of Digital Innovation and Technology commenced the development of its inaugural Qualifications Framework (QF) Level 6 programme, namely the Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Digital Transformation, in October 2023. The new MBA programme, being developed with Chinese (Putonghua) as the medium of instruction (MOI), would have two streams, specifically (a) Digital Business and Leadership; and (b) Digital Technology and Innovation. The programme, expected to be launched in AY2024/25, not only provides prospective students with an articulation opportunity to further their studies at an advanced level but also serves as a training initiative for local students and the workforce in Chinese (Putonghua), thereby enhancing their employability in the GBA.

## **Programme Accreditations, Reaccreditation and Recognition**

One new programme, the Bachelor of Social Science (Honours) in Sports Coaching, successfully went through the learning programme accreditation (LPA) by the HKCAAVQ and was granted approval at QF Level 5 in AY2023/24. THEi would start offering this new programme from AY2024/25.

In addition, five programmes underwent learning programme reaccreditations (re-LPA) by the HKCAAVQ:

- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Aircraft Engineering (QF Level 5)
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Chinese Medicinal Pharmacy (QF Level 5)
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Hotel Operations Management (QF Level 5)
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Multimedia Technology and Innovation (QF Level 5)
- Professional Certificate in Turfgrass Science and Management (QF Level 4)

Riding on the success of the offering of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Hotel Operations Management (HOM) and Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Public Relations and International Events Management (PRIEM) programmes with MOI in Chinese (Putonghua) in AY2023/24, the Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Chinese Medicinal Pharmacy (CMP) programme applied to the HKCAAVQ via the re-LPA exercise conducted in January 2024 for incorporating Chinese (Cantonese) as an additional MOI to the existing programme. Upon the approval by the HKCAAVQ, the CMP programme will be delivered in both English and Cantonese MOI in AY2024/25.

THEi's programmes continued to gain and maintain professional recognition through accreditation or reaccreditation by various professional bodies and organisations, including UK Society of Sports Therapists (UKSST), National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) Education Recognition Program (ERP) (USA), The Hong Kong Institute of Construction Managers (HKICM) and Institute of Hospitality (United Kingdom).

## **Enhancing Applied Degree Provision**

To dovetail with the HKSAR Government's plan to strengthen the promotion of VPET with multi-pronged approach as announced in the Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address, the first round of the Pilot Project on the Development of Applied Degree Programmes (PPDADP) was launched in AY2022/23, which gained overwhelming support and received positive feedback.

Building on its success, the EDB launched the second round of the PPDADP in March 2023, with THEi's Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Building Services Engineering (BSE) programme being selected for inclusion in the second round of the PPDADP in September 2023. After modifying the programme structure and curriculum of the existing degree programme with stronger industry-focused elements and satisfactory completion of relevant accreditation, the BSE programme, which now features a total of 720 hours of WIL, will be launched as THEi's second Applied Degree Programme in AY2024/25, following the Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Horticulture, Arboriculture and Landscape Management (HALM) programme in AY2022/23.

Following the EDB's announcement in May 2024 to provide additional annual subsidies of HK\$5,000 (for non-laboratory-based programmes) and HK\$8,000 (for laboratory-based programmes) through the SSSDP to students enrolling in designated applied degree programmes under SSSDP from AY2024/25, the attractiveness of the BSE Applied Degree programme was expected to be further enhanced.

Furthermore, jointly developed with the Hong Kong Federation of Electrical and Mechanical Contractors (HKFEMC), the THEi-HKFEMC collaborative Work-Study Scheme exclusively designed for the BSE Applied Degree programme, i.e. 《工。書。教。學》學位。工作@兼得計劃, was successfully established in January 2024. The Scheme offers employment opportunities and financial subsidies to Year-1 entry students of the BSE Applied Degree programme. By participating in the Scheme, students become eligible for tuition fee waivers, as the HKSAR Government and member companies have generously subsidised all tuition fees. Besides, member companies will provide guaranteed salaries to these students, offering them financial support during their studies, thereby further enhancing the attractiveness of the BSE Applied Degree programme.

To further enhance the applied degree characteristics across THEi programmes, the curricula of THEi degree programmes are undergoing a phased review and revision to transition from non-credit-bearing to credit-bearing WIL. The Institute is committed to continuously assessing and implementing necessary transitional arrangements across all its programmes to improve industry connectivity, market relevance, programme attractiveness and overall viability. By incorporating more extensive “applied” elements into our programmes and adopting proactive and innovative teaching and learning pedagogies with staunch support and inputs from industry partners, our students and graduates are able to remain competitive and work-ready.

### **On-the-job Training Allowance Pilot Scheme by the Development Bureau**

Subsequent to the announcement by the HKSAR Government in the 2023-24 Budget, the Development Bureau (DEVB) introduced a two-year pilot scheme in July 2023, namely the On-the-job Training Allowance Pilot Scheme (the Pilot Scheme), aimed at providing on-the-job training allowance to trainees who are studying and working in the construction field, so as to enhance the attractiveness of respective degree programmes and foster a greater supply of qualified professionals in the construction industry. The Pilot Scheme targets trainees admitted in part-time construction-related degree programmes in AY2023/24 or AY2024/25 (two cohorts), who have undergone on-the-job training with designated employers during the course of their degree studies. Each eligible trainee will receive a monthly training allowance of HK\$2,000 in the first academic year, HK\$2,500 in the second academic year, and HK\$3,000 in the third academic year, with a maximum cumulative allowance of HK\$90,000, disbursed every 3 months and supported by a mechanism to regularly verify the eligibility of the trainees.

Six of THEi's degree programmes have benefited from the Pilot Scheme, including:

- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Building Services Engineering
- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Horticulture, Arboriculture and Landscape Management
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Surveying

- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Landscape Architecture
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Green Engineering and Sustainability

### **Professional Diploma Meister Programmes and Short Courses**

Building on the successful launch of the Professional Diploma Meister in Lift and Escalator Engineering (PDM-LEE) programme and with the intention to address the growing demand for skilled power electrical workers for the smart and sustainable city development of Hong Kong, a new two-year part-time Professional Diploma Meister in Power Electrical Engineering (PDM-PEE) programme, pegged at QF Level 5, was launched in AY2023/24. The PDM-PEE programme comprises workplace training, workshop training and professional assessment, aiming to nurture Power Electrical Meister (aka Skills Masters/Industry Masters) who can demonstrate occupational, managerial and pedagogical competencies across the full range of power electrical specialisms. With the committed support of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) of the HKSAR Government and key industry stakeholders, including the two major contractors' associations, namely the Hong Kong Electrical Contractors' Association (HKECA) and the Hong Kong Federation of Electrical and Mechanical Contractors Limited (HKFEMC), as well as the two workers' unions, namely the Federation of Hong Kong Electrical & Mechanical Industries Trade Unions (EMF) and the Hong Kong & Kowloon Electrical Engineering & Appliances Trade Workers Union (EE Union), the PDM-PEE programme is expected to equip graduates with the practical experience necessary to attain the status of Power Electrical Meister.

The Professional Education and Lifelong Learning (PELL) Centre of THEi continues to offer diverse lifelong learning courses and continuing professional education programmes, blending emerging skills and knowledge to address the needs of upskilling and reskilling individuals and the workforce across various professional fields and industries.

In February 2024, THEi launched a comprehensive short-term certificate course in stage engineering, emphasising quality and broad coverage. Experienced industry professionals and representatives from various engineering fields were invited to teach the course, which aims to impart knowledge and experiences from different professional streams with a particular focus on engineering management. By integrating solid engineering theory with operational principles, students are able to develop a comprehensive understanding of essential technical knowledge and construction regulations, starting with foundational concepts and progressing to more complex topics. In addition to classroom learning, the course also features on-site surveys and management of stage engineering projects, which enhances the technical skills and professional expertise of stage engineering practitioners. This hands-on approach not only ensures public safety but also supports the sustainable development of the industry.

Other short courses offered in AY2023/24 are:

- Recognised Continuing Education in Arboriculture (CEA) Course – Diagnosis & Treatment of Pests & Diseases
- Recognised Continuing Education in Arboriculture (CEA) Course – Plant Selection & Propagation

- Tree Risk Assessment Course with Assessment (including one Government Class and one Corporate Training Class)
- Digital Transformation of Energy Management for Data Centres
- Bakery Food Sensory Training (Corporate Training Class)

### **THEi's Development towards Becoming a University of Applied Sciences (UAS)**

THEi welcomed the timely announcement in the Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address that the HKSAR Government will facilitate the establishment of universities of applied sciences (UASs), and strive to raise the status of VPET to attain qualifications at university degree level. This important initiative would require close collaboration between UASs and technical professions in offering programmes with more internship and practical learning opportunities, with the objective of providing an alternative path to success for young people who aspire to pursue a career in the technical professions.

In February 2024, the EDB promulgated the criteria for self-financing post-secondary institutions to qualify as UASs which were drawn up in consultation with the HKCAAVQ, making reference to experiences in other countries, including Australia, Canada, China, Finland, Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, covering aspects such as governance, management, quality assurance, learning environment and learner support, as well as industry collaboration and recognition.

As stated in the Institute's vision of becoming a leading applied sciences and technology institution, it has all along been the intention of THEi to apply for the UAS and/or university status, even before the announcement in the 2023 Policy Address. In July 2024, THEi was invited by the EDB to submit an application for becoming an Associate Member of the Alliance of UAS (UAS Alliance). The application was submitted in early August 2024 and THEi was officially admitted as an Associate Member of the UAS Alliance on 13 September 2024, marking a significant step in enhancing collaboration and engagement within the UAS community.

Since our establishment, we have upheld the belief in applied sciences and maintained close connections with various industries. It is our responsibility to strengthen the talent pool in different sectors and continuously enhance teaching and applied research standards. We emphasise the integration of applied sciences and practical experience in our students, as well as the transformation of turning research into practical applications.



Staunch support from the industry is evidenced by the industry’s nomination of THEi for the award of “The Best Integrated Science Technology Education Development Institute of the Year (年度最卓越綜合科技教育及發展學院)”<sup>1</sup> which it subsequently received on 30 November 2023 with great honour. Moving forward, THEi will continue to live up to this award and actively pursue diverse collaborations in industry-academia research and development. We aim to create a new era of applied science education for the future of Hong Kong.

### **Programme Area Accreditation (PAA)**

Prior to being deemed qualified to make an application for becoming a UAS or university, THEi must fulfil the pertinent criteria and requirements set by the EDB. One of the key requirements is that THEi must have obtained PAA status for degree programmes at undergraduate level (i.e. QF Level 5) in at least three programme areas. With the PAA status, THEi will not only be in a stronger position to present itself in applying for the UAS or university status, but it will also enable a higher degree of flexibility and autonomy in developing and operating learning programmes to meet the evolving needs of the community, industry and students.

Further to the first PAA exercise, which is anticipated to conclude by the end of January 2025, THEi has kicked off the second PAA exercise and is preparing for the third PAA exercise. It is expected that all the three PAA exercises will be completed by the end of 2025.

### **Student Admission**

Riding on the revised Vision and Mission of THEi promulgated in early 2023, which emphasises an applied science-orientation, robust industry integration and global perspective across its programmes, the Institute attracted a significant number of new students. In AY2023/24, the Institute welcomed about 1,120 new local and non-local students across its academic programmes, including those enrolled in the degree, professional diploma, professional certificate, professional diploma meister and collaborative master’s programmes offered by the six Academic Departments. THEi has achieved a remarkable increase of over 10% in local student enrolment, accompanied by an exponential surge in non-local student admission in AY2023/24. Aiming to be a leading applied sciences and technology institution, THEi is poised to welcome an even greater number of talented and motivated students in the years ahead.

### **Student Achievements**

Throughout AY2023/24, THEi students consistently achieved outstanding results and earned well-deserved awards and accolades in numerous competitions, scholarships and events. They excelled in a range of major international and local competitions across diverse fields, competing against students from

---

<sup>1</sup> The award of “The Best Integrated Science Technology Education Development Institute of the Year” was one of the awards of the “2023 Most Innovative Solutions Award” organised by BUSINESS INNOVATOR to recognise companies and institutions that have made remarkable contributions and demonstrated unparalleled innovation across various industries.

both universities funded by the University Grants Council (UGC) and other self-financed tertiary institutions at local, national and international levels. Some of the competitions, events, projects and scholarship/bursary schemes in which THEi students have had incredible accomplishments are the 7<sup>th</sup> National College Student Art Exhibition and Performance (全國第七屆大學生藝術展演活動) – First Class Award in Design (設計一等獎) and Second Class Award in Design (設計二等獎), WorldSkills Hong Kong Competition 2023 – Bakery Category, Gourmet Master Chefs Global Challenge 2023, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Eyewear Design Competition, The HKFDA (Hong Kong Fashion Designers Association) Creativity Award 2024, the “Back in Fashion” green fashion design competition and catwalk show co-organised with the HK Electric, the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) Asia-Pacific Region Congress in Tokyo, the “Create Your Chill Tee” design competition organised by the Hong Kong Playground Association, the MonsoonSim Enterprise Resource Management Competition (MERMC) HK 2024 organised by Creative Talent Asia Limited, Inter-School Coding and Programming Competition organised by the Lions Club of Hong Kong Millennium, the Ideation Fund of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Park in collaboration with Gulu Consultancy Limited, fashion show at the “Vietnam International Trade Fair for Apparel, Textiles, and Textile Technologies (VIATT)” in Ho Chi Ming City, Grand Award for Design Excellence at the Hong Kong Flower Show 2024, 2<sup>nd</sup> runner-up at the Best Final-Year Project Award by the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, Outstanding Student Award 2024 from Hong Kong Institution of Engineers-Building Services Division (HKIE-BSD), Best Student Award 2023 from the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE) Structural Division, The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) Student Award 2023, Reaching Out Award (ROA) and Endeavour Scholarship from HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund (GSF) 2023/24, the 19<sup>th</sup> Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) Award, the Disney Scholarship 2022/23, ASHRAE Hong Kong Chapter Student Scholarship 2023/24, Mr K S Cheng Memorial Scholarship AY2023/24, Wu Jieh Yee Green Admission Scholarship, HSBC Overseas Scholarship 2023/24, Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (HKIS) QSD Scholarship, the Maritime and Aviation Training Fund Scholarship, HKIS Scholarship 2024, Scholarship from BYME Engineering (Hong Kong) Ltd., REC Engineering Company Ltd. and the Hong Kong Plumbing and Sanitary Ware Trade Association (HKPSWTA), Alistair Harvey Foundation Scholarship for Master’s Degree Programme Study and Alistair Harvey Foundation Scholarship for Academic Exchange 2024/25, etc.

We are proud of our students’ remarkable achievements and dedication. We will continue to support our students in developing and showcasing their talents academically and non-academically, nurturing them into versatile, skilful and multitalented individuals.

## **Graduate Employment**

The findings of the Graduate Employment Survey conducted in January 2024 to study the graduate employment situation for full-time programmes of THEi of 2023 indicated that the overall employment rate was 95% (i.e., same as that for 2021 and 2022), based on the overall response rate of 74.6%. The statistics about the relevance of the job showed significant improvements when compared to the numbers from the previous year. About 86% (vs. 84% in 2022) of the employed graduates are working in jobs relevant to the programmes they studied at THEi; while 92% (vs. 86% in 2022) of the employed graduates agreed that the discipline/industry-specific knowledge learnt from the programmes at THEi is helpful for

them to perform in their present jobs. Such data continues to indicate that THEi's graduates are work-ready, equipped with current and relevant skills and capabilities.

THEi is dedicated to continually evolving and adapting to the latest industry trends and changes to ensure our graduates, as well-rounded individuals, are well-prepared to contribute to the professional landscape of Hong Kong.

### **Employers' Views on THEi Graduates 2021/22**

In a committed effort to assess and monitor the quality of THEi programmes, an independent external party was commissioned in August 2023 to conduct a survey to obtain employers' perceptions on the performance of THEi's seventh cohort of graduates (i.e., graduates of 2021/22) who had given their consent. According to the feedback from the participating employers, the performance of our graduates was found to be highly satisfactory. The overall score given by the employers has improved slightly in comparison with the score attained in the previous year's survey. Of the various core competencies measured, all for which our graduates attained remarkable scores, our graduates had exceptional performance on team spirit, work attitude, sense of responsibility, ability to learn, adapt new skills and work independently. This is a testimonial that highlights the effective integration of practical applications with theoretical knowledge in THEi's programmes, ensuring our students are well-equipped to apply what they have learned in real-world scenarios and achieve success in their careers.

### **THEi Work-Study Degree Programmes Scheme (formerly Earn and Learn Degree Programmes Scheme)**

The Institute offered four programmes as listed below in different delivery modes under the Work-Study Degree Programmes Scheme of THEi (the W-S Scheme) in AY2023/24:

- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Building Services Engineering (BSE)
- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering (CE)
- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Aircraft Engineering (AE)
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Chinese Medicinal Pharmacy (CMP)

In AY2023/24, a total of 131 students were recruited from 82 employers who participated in this Scheme, including some key industry partners such as MTR Corporation, Chun Wo Construction Company Limited, ATAL Engineering Group, Build King Management Limited, FSE Engineering and Hong Kong Aircraft Engineering Company Limited (HAECO). Moreover, 17 training places were offered by the 10 partnering companies to students of the CMP programme. The well-designed training provided under the W-S Scheme enables the students to benefit from a structured workplace training programme lasting between 6 to 12 months. Additionally, regular and timely job-rotations are offered, allowing the students to expand their knowledge and skill sets effectively.

To further enhance the employability of our students, career fairs were organised to engage and attract more new employers and prospective students to participate in the W-S Scheme, so as to provide more

job vacancies in the relevant industry to students before the completion of their degree programmes, ensuring they have access to valuable career prospects. The feedback on the Scheme from students and employers has been positive and encouraging so far.

## Partnerships and Connections

Recognising the criticality of robust connections and integral relationships with our partners and the industry in the delivery and development of our programmes, THEi continued to expand and sustain a network of institutional and professional partnerships and related activities locally, internationally and with the Mainland, including the GBA. In AY2023/24, Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) were signed with a number of local, Mainland and international institutions and industry partners. To name a few, Hebei University of Technology, Guangdong University of Science and Technology, Shunde Polytechnic, Guangdong Construction Polytechnic, Henan Vocational College of Nursing, Sichuan Vocational and Technical College of Communications, Qingyuan Polytechnic, Liaoning Communication University, Huizhou Engineering Vocational College, Huizhou Health Sciences Polytechnic, Huizhou Economics and Polytechnic College, Dalian Institute of Science and Technology, Luzhou Vocational and Technical College, University of Electronic Science and Technology of China, Qilu University of Technology, Fujian Vocational College of Bioengineering, Hampton by Hilton, etc. in the Mainland, as well as, Seneca Polytechnic (Canada), Aston University (United Kingdom), Mandarin Oriental, Tokyo (Japan), Federation of Hong Kong Industries (FHKI), The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE), The Hong Kong Federation of Electrical and Mechanical Contractors Limited, Youth of Guangzhou and Hong Kong Association (YGH), The Cosmetic and Perfumery Association of Hong Kong Ltd, Specialife Industries Ltd, Hacienda International Corporation Limited (a subsidiary of Bar Pacific Group Holdings Limited), The Infiniti Medical Group Limited, WITTI Technology Ltd, etc. Our partners provide a wide range of exciting and valuable opportunities for our students, including industrial attachments, internships, training and job opportunities. The extensive partnerships and connections that we have established also brought articulation opportunities for Year-3 entry, collaborative projects of different natures for students, and collaboration opportunities on research projects for academic staff and students.

Some of the key outcomes of the partnership engagement and connection establishment efforts of THEi are highlighted below:

- Chinese Medicine and Culture Research Center (中國醫藥及文化研究中心) of THEi and D20 Roots (德根盛園):** Supported by the generous donations from Dorsett Hospitality International and Far East Consortium International Limited, along with funds from the UGC's Research Matching Grant Scheme (RMGS), the primary goal of the Chinese Medicine and Culture Research Center as well as the D20 Roots herbal farm is to promote and facilitate applied research in the field of Chinese medicine, contributing to industry advancement. The Center actively participates in various research activities and collaborations, while the real farm setting provides students with invaluable opportunities to acquire hands-on nurturing skills and deepen their understanding of the properties of herbal medicines. As a result of this initiative, a collaborative effort between the Center and the industry has led to the development of the Herbal Sparking Tea, which is currently being served as beverages in hotels under Dorsett Hospitality

International. Furthermore, two books titled “揀靚料 · 煲靚湯” and “陽台上的中草藥隨手用” were published in February and August 2024 respectively, consolidating the study results from the final-year projects of students of THEi’s CMP programme.

- **Chinese medicines for gout treatment (痛風門診及治療):** Collaborating with 廣東省水電醫院 and 廣東嶺南健康產業集團, a research project has been initiated to study the utilisation of Chinese medicines for gout treatment (痛風門診及治療) in late 2023. This initiative involves not just the development of the medicine, but also the design of its packaging, formulation of ingredients, and a clinical trial at a hospital (廣東省水電醫院) in Guangzhou, China.
- **Henan-Hong Kong-Thai Traditional Medicine Research Center (豫港泰传统医药研究中心):** After a period of fruitful dialogues and liaisons among THEi, Mahidol University (Bangkok, Thailand) and Henan University of Chinese Medicine (河南中医药大学) (Henan, China), a tri-party MoU was signed in November 2023 for the establishment of the Henan-Hong Kong-Thai Traditional Medicine Research Center. This new research center will mainly focus on research projects in the field of herbal / Chinese medicines, including artificial intelligence (AI) in the herbal / Chinese medicinal realm.
- **Student-run Restaurant – CAMeraaaa:** THEi partnered with Bar Pacific Group Holdings Limited to provide final-year students of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Culinary Arts and Management programme with a unique and unprecedented opportunity to launch and operate a restaurant for lunch service for a limited time from 13 December 2023 to 21 January 2024 in MPM Plaza, Mongkok. Leveraging their diverse backgrounds and talents, these talented culinary students worked together to conceptualise, manage and evaluate all aspects of the pop-up restaurant named CAMeraaaa (meaning the era of capturing snapshots of food before eating) – from the name, menu, and food preparation to the overall operations. This collaboration provided THEi’s students with invaluable practical experience, enhancing their entrepreneurial skills in a real-world setting. Aligned with THEi’s mission to cultivate work-ready graduates, this impactful industry-academia initiative represents a significant step in elevating THEi’s applied learning model, bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world practice.
- **Q Reel:** Partnering with Specialife Industries Ltd, a student from the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Product Design programme, under the guidance of THEi’s academic staff, designed an innovative electric car wall-mounted charger named “Q Reel”. This project led to the production of two fully tested and operational units, which were installed and in active use in the undercover parking lot of THEi’s Chai Wan campus in its pilot launch, marking a significant step in sustainable infrastructure development and further reinforcing the Institute’s commitment to sustainability. The collaboration not only allowed the student to receive mentorship, technical guidance, and assistance with manufacturing and prototyping, as well as sponsorship for the design and prototyping of the charger from Specialife Industries Ltd but also positioned these units for the main market in Europe. The units are now being commercialised and mass-produced for distribution in Europe and other regions.

- Designing Commercial Coffee Machines through National Academic Exchange:** In May 2023, THEi signed a MoU with Zhengzhou University of Light Industry (鄭州輕工業大學) (ZZULI), paving the way for a significant academic and cultural exchange project that launched in September 2023 in collaboration with ZZULI and G.E.W. International Corporation Limited (GEW). Sponsored by GEW, this initiative provided students of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Product Design (PD) programmes with an invaluable opportunity to engage in design mentoring, prototyping, and hands-on experience as part of their final year project. The project offered students firsthand exposure to Mainland China’s popular coffee and tea culture, resulting in the successful design and prototyping of two complete sets of commercial coffee machines and grinders, along with accompanying accessories. These innovations not only showcase the students’ creativity and technical skills but also hold potential for further refinement and mass production. This comprehensive experience has been instrumental in students’ academic and professional development, while also strengthening the relationship between THEi and ZZULI, laying a solid foundation for future collaborations and underscoring the value of international partnerships in enhancing educational outcomes and fostering innovation in the realm of product design.
- Kai Tak Sports Park Souvenir Design Project:** The Kai Tak Sports Park Souvenir Design Project was a prestigious design competition sponsored by the Kai Tak Sports Park held between September 2023 and January 2024. The project provided students and graduates of THEi’s PD programme with a unique opportunity to create souvenir items for a large-scale government project aimed at celebrating and promoting the iconic sports park. Participants not only competed for cash prizes but also for the chance to have their designs mass-produced and marketed. One of our talented students achieved an impressive victory, winning the gold prize with an innovative model pack design of the Kai Tak Sports Park. This exemplary design will be featured in the Sports Park’s official souvenir line, with the designer’s name displayed on the packaging. The project not only offered our students invaluable design experience but also underscored our commitment to nurturing young talent and integrating their exceptional designs into high-profile projects, ultimately delivering significant educational benefits and enhancing cultural promotion.
- CyberDefenders’ Carnival 2024 – 800-Drone Light Show:** Invited by DNT FPV Drone Association H.K. China and the Hong Kong Police Force, 18 students from the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Public Relations and International Events Management programme of THEi assisted and planned the captivating 800-drone light show, as part of the events of the CyberDefenders’ Carnival 2024 in West Kowloon in February 2024, to raise awareness among citizens on internet security and online fraud prevention. This was the second time THEi students participated in the show. The students’ hands-on experience in managing the intricate details of this large-scale project provided invaluable learning opportunities, shaping them into the next generation of event professionals.

These partnerships not only present valuable opportunities for our students to put the skills and knowledge that they have acquired from their study at THEi into real-life practice and industry projects but also provide them with increased access to industrial attachments, exchange programmes, and other

valuable resources. THEi will continue its steadfast efforts in promoting industry-academic collaborations to strengthen teaching and learning initiatives.

### **THEi Innov8 Enterprise Start-up Programme and Empowerment of Entrepreneurship**

Supported by Lions Clubs International District 303 Hong Kong & Macao, China (Lions Clubs), the THEi Innov8 Enterprise Start-up Programme continued to support THEi's students and graduates in pursuing their entrepreneurial journey by providing seed capital and a comprehensive range of services, including mentorship, business networking support, training workshops, co-working office space and workshop facilities with an objective to nurture and turn their entrepreneurial ideas and design projects into viable start-ups. One of the integral components of this initiative is the annual THEi-Lions Clubs Enterprise Start-Up Competition, which provides students with the opportunity to compete for a place in the THEi Innov8 Enterprise Start-Up Programme and a bursary of up to HK\$100,000. Through the THEi Innov8 Enterprise Start-Up Programme, the winning team(s) will have the valuable opportunity to learn from industry advisors, develop essential business skills and establish strong business networks with industry and market leaders.

The two champion teams from the First THEi-Lions Clubs Enterprise Start-Up Competition, "Constance" (official business name: Constance Health-Tech Limited) from the CMP programme, and "Doctor Tree" (official business name: Doctor Tree Service and Consultancy Limited) from the HALM programme, received the seed fund in December 2023 to start operating their business.

The exceptional entrepreneurial ideas of our students not only lead to recognition within THEi but also achieve success in external competitions. "Constance" was admitted to the Ideation Programme of the Hong Kong Science Park. This recognition included a financial grant of HK\$100,000, along with mentorship, business advice, networking opportunities and training offered by the Hong Kong Science Park to support their entrepreneurial journey. Another shortlisted team from the same competition, Artive, distinguished itself by winning the Cyberport University Partnership Programme 2023, competing against nine university teams and securing a cash award of HK\$100,000.

Further highlighting THEi's culture of innovation, a research team comprised two alumni of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Culinary Arts and Management and the Bachelor of Science (Honours) Food Science and Safety programmes respectively, and an Assistant Professor of THEi's Department of Hospitality and Business Management, focused on reducing the amount of food by-products dumped into landfills. Their entrepreneurial concept involved transforming food by-products from licensed food factories into pet snacks. The innovative proposal stood out among the submissions made by the 783 research teams, earning the team the second runner-up award at the "Hong Kong Food Waste Competition 2022 – Entrepreneurial Project Proposal Competition" and HK\$100,000 to start a company under the name of "U-treats Limited (怡寶有限公司)".

## **Campus Development**

Renovation of rooms/laboratories/offices in the THEi Chai Wan campus is underway to accommodate the relocation of the four science programmes under the Department of Food and Health Sciences from THEi Tsing Yi campus by end of August 2025 and the affected programmes at the Chai Wan campus, arising from the conversion of THEi Tsing Yi campus into a campus for the Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology (HKIIT), VTC's 14<sup>th</sup> member institution, which has welcomed its first cohort of students in AY2024/25.

Moreover, to prepare for the first PAA, underutilised space at THEi Chai Wan campus has been transformed into a new centre relevant to the programme area of the first PAA. The renovation of the new centre has been completed and it will be phased into use during AY2024/25.

Sponsored by the Wu Jieh Yee Charitable Foundation, the Wu Jieh Yee Arboriculture Education and Research Centre will be established at THEi Chai Wan campus by converting the existing greenhouse on the ground floor into a Tree Climbing Training and Research Centre. The Centre would be equipped with advanced tree climbing facilities, Augmented Reality (AR)/Virtual Reality (VR) learning devices and safety equipment to provide an all-inclusive training venue for THEi students and in-service practitioners. The Buildings Department granted consent for the commencement of the construction work in March 2024 and the construction work has begun in June 2024.

## **Applied Research and Consultancy**

With our students at the forefront, THEi actively supports research activities which inform teaching practices, equipping students and graduates with cutting-edge knowledge to effectively meet the challenges of the workplace. THEi academic staff actively participated in the 2024 round of the Research Grants Council (RGC) funding exercise as well as the applications for various external competitive research grants. Altogether, in AY2023/24, THEi successfully secured grants from RGC's Faculty Development Scheme (FDS) as well as research grants from other external competitive research funding schemes or bodies, amounting to a total of HK\$9.89 million.

Additionally, since the launch of the UGC's RMGS, THEi has actively solicited private donations to support staff and student applied research activities and projects, and used those donations to apply for grants under the RMGS. In AY2023/24, THEi's academic staff members solicited HK\$54.67 million worth of cash and in-kind private donations, and received a sum of HK\$19.54 million of research matching grant from the UGC. During the period of the RMGS, which operated from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2024, THEi successfully secured a total of HK\$40.87 million in research matching grants.

Similar to last year, the annual THEi Student Applied Research Presentations (SARP) for AY2023/24 (SARP2024) will be hosted physically at THEi's Chai Wan and Tsing Yi campuses, as well as on the THEi website. The 63 abstracts, 42 research posters and 6 video presentations received from students across the six Academic Departments will be featured at the event. The research topics continue to explore the latest advancements in applied science and technology and how they can be applied to solve practical real-time problems. This year, in addition to the Most Popular Poster and Video Awards by



votes, the “Best Department Poster Award” has been introduced, with evaluations conducted by academic staff and students of the respective department based on scientific merits and innovations. These awards recognise the student’s dedication to advancing knowledge and demonstrating their rigour, critical thinking, and sound research methodology.

### **Quality Enhancement Support Scheme Project**

Kicked off in September 2022, the institution-wide 30-month project, “Formation and Development of a Work Integrated Learning Hub for Diverse Programmes of THEi”, was approved under the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme (QESS) and received funding of HK\$5.87 million from the EDB’s Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund, aimed to develop an institutional WIL framework and set up a one-stop-shop system (i.e. a digital platform) for all THEi programmes that have WIL components.

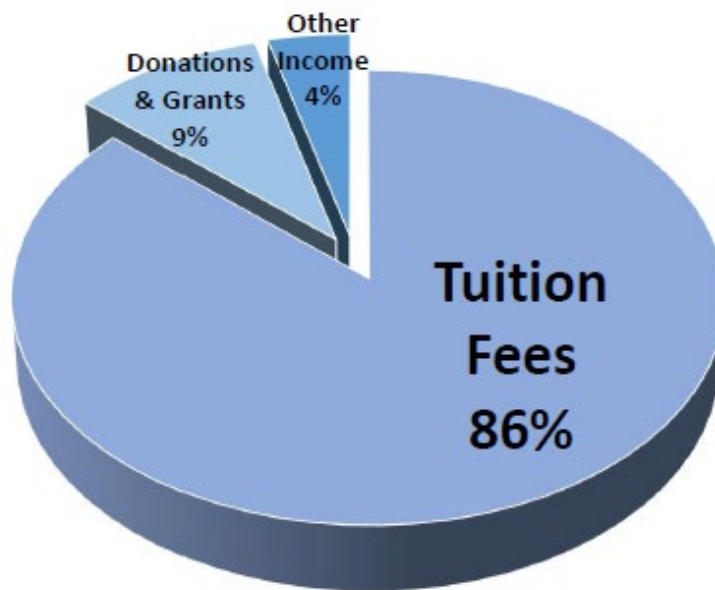
The institution-wide WIL Framework for the credit-bearing WIL modules commenced on 1 September 2024. Furthermore, the first phase of development of the WIL Digital Platform has been completed; while the second phase commenced in August 2024 and is expected to be completed by January 2025.

To better prepare students for taking up the WIL placement, career talks/sharing sessions, pre-WIL training workshops and one-on-one consultation sessions were conducted during AY2023/24 with positive responses received. A central pool of potential WIL industry partners from over 1,000 organisations has been established. In March 2024, an institution-wide WIL Day-cum-Career Fair event was jointly organised by the QESS Project Team and the Student Development Office to promote the WIL strategy to potential industry partners, attracting representatives from over 40 organisations to participate in the event.

## Finance

A summary of the operating income and expenditure of THEi for the financial year 2023-24, i.e., from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, is depicted in the charts below.

### Income



### Expenditure

