

# Speech by FS at Hong Kong ICT Awards 2021 Awards Presentation Ceremony (English only)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2021 Awards Presentation Ceremony this evening (November 29):

Professor Shyy (the Chairman of the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2021 Grand Judging Panel, Professor Wei Shyy), David (the Acting Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Dr David Chung), Annie (the Permanent Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Ms Annie Choi), Victor (the Government Chief Information Officer, Mr Victor Lam), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening.

I'm pleased to join you in person tonight for this year's Hong Kong Information and Communications Technology Awards Presentation Ceremony.

Innovation and technology is a critical element of our economy, our community and this Government. Over the last four years, we have committed more than \$130 billion HKD in the development of I&T.

And we're getting all the support we could hope for from the Central Government. The National 14th Five-Year Plan backs Hong Kong's rise as a global innovation and technology hub, alongside seven other sectors, including financial services, trade and transport.

Hong Kong, ladies and gentlemen, is on the cusp of a golden era for I&T development. And I encourage you, our I&T elites and start-ups, to seize the boundless opportunities that will transform Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area in the global economy.

This annual award, now in its 15th year, is certainly helping more Hong Kong's development in this direction.

I'm told that a record-breaking 2 160 applications were received this year. And the number of entries in the Student Innovation Category almost tripled – from some 570 in 2017 to more than 1 600 this year.

For that, we can thank the emphasis, in recent years, on STEM education. To reinforce our commitment on this important area, two major IT initiatives were announced in my previous annual Budgets, namely the "Knowing More About IT" Programme at the primary schools, and the "IT Innovation Lab Programme" for secondary schools. Together, they promote innovative thinking and nurture an IT learning environment among our youth – tomorrow's I&T leaders and innovators.

This year's Awards are, as always, a supremely collaborative effort. A separate judging panel is appointed for each of the eight categories, some 300 prestigious judges and assessors in all, with Professor Shyy Wei, the President of The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, chairing the grand judging panel. My sincere thanks to you all for your superlative leadership and painstaking efforts.

My thanks, as well, to the Award's eight organisers and six supporting organisations. You play a vital role in bringing these Awards, and the innovative individuals, groups and companies taking part, to bright life.

My congratulations to this year's deserving winners. We'll know who you are in just a few minutes.

Thank you.