

Summer STEM Internship Scheme well received by universities and business community

A spokesman for the Innovation and Technology Commission said today (December 29) that the STEM Internship Scheme had attracted over 2 500 university students and more than 1 300 companies or organisations to join this summer. According to the findings of the surveys conducted by participating universities (see Annex), the Scheme received high commendations from the universities, interns and employers.

Most students upon completion of their internships have gained a better understanding of the innovation and technology (I&T) field and will consider pursuing their careers in I&T in the future. Moreover, it is the first time that students under the Scheme joined internships conducted in the Mainland and overseas, thanks to the easing of the COVID-19 pandemic during part of the summer vacation this year. As well, almost all participating employers considered that the job performance of their interns had met or even exceeded their expectations and plan to join the Scheme again. This survey reflects that the universities and business community recognised the positive results of the Scheme, which has fully met the expectations of students and companies or organisations.

The majority of the participating companies are small and medium-sized enterprises or start-ups from various business sectors, mostly information technology, biotechnology, electrical and electronic engineering, financial services and the construction industry. The internship positions offered cover various I&T elements, such as programme coding, web design, big data analytics, cloud computing, machine learning, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, digital marketing, biotechnology and supply chain technologies.

Participating universities found that the Scheme provided the chance for employers to allow more I&T-related internship places, offering students the opportunity to apply their STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) knowledge in the workplace and understand the I&T culture and work environment at an early stage. Furthermore, the Scheme has helped companies and organisations, small enterprises in particular, hire good quality STEM students. In view of the popularity and effectiveness of the Scheme, most of the participating universities continue to implement the Scheme in winter this year.

"The STEM Internship Scheme was first launched in summer 2020 to encourage students to experience I&T-related work and foster their interest in an I&T career in the future. It provides students with internship opportunities and assists companies in recruiting suitable I&T talents. It supports the nurturing of new blood in I&T, thereby enlarging the local I&T talent pool. We look forward to participation from more students and

employers in the Scheme," the spokesman for the Innovation and Technology Commission said.

The STEM Internship Scheme provides university students in STEM disciplines with internships of at least four consecutive weeks with a monthly allowance of \$10,500 for up to three months in every academic year. To enhance the flexibility of the Scheme for covering a broad spectrum of business sectors, an internship place is regarded as I&T-related as long as its actual work contains I&T elements. Interested students and employers may contact the participating universities. Details of the Scheme are available at the website of the Innovation and Technology Fund (www.itf.gov.hk/en/funding-programmes/nurturing-talent/stem-internship-scheme).