Press Release

31/05/2011  24 World Top-notch Scholars Gather at HKUST for a Conference on Cosmology since Einstein

The Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) holds a three-day "Conference on Cosmology since Einstein" starting from 30 May 2011 at which world top scientists including a Nobel Laureate explore the most up-to-date developments and challenges of cosmology.

This conference has brought together 24 top cosmologists and relativists from China, Japan, France, Switzerland, the U.K. and U.S to share as speakers their insights and latest research findings on cosmological theories. Distinguished speakers like Prof David Gross, 2004 Nobel Laureate in Physics and Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics, University of California, Santa Barbara, spoke on "Cosmological Challenges - The View of a String Theorist".

Human’s view on the origin of the universe changed drastically when Albert Einstein’s theory of general relativity provided a totally new understanding of space, time and gravity. The mystery of our universe remains to be unfolded. This conference aims to unleash the latest scientific developments on the issue of the expanding universe and its associated puzzles. The latest topics on inflationary universe, string theory, dark matter, dark energy, etc will be covered.

Addressing at Prof Tye’s inaugural lecture, HKUST President Tony F Chan says, “We, at HKUST, position ourselves in the forefront of the technological advancement. The IAS is a key initiative outlined in the HKUST Strategic Plan with a mission to act as an intellectual platform for excellence gathering great minds and to set high standards for academic disciplines. As a distinguished theoretical physicist and cosmologist, Prof Tye will bring to this post wealth of experience in the world’s leading scientific bodies. We are confident that he will take IAS to reach new heights.”

Prof Henry Tye, IAS Director, HKUST, gave his inaugural lecture entitled “Does the universe have a beginning?”. “In the past decades, cosmology has moved from a speculative field to a precision science. This is the golden age of cosmology. For the coming 10 years or so, a lot of data will pour in. IAS’s goal is to explore the frontiers of knowledge. The Conference on Cosmology since Einstein is a prime example in this effort,” Prof Henry Tye added.

The Institute for Advanced Study of HKUST aims to foster collaboration across disciplines and institutions to foster innovation and scientific breakthroughs in Hong Kong and the Greater China region. Since its inauguration, it has organized over 170 distinguished lectures, seminars and workshops with internationally-acclaimed speakers including chemist Prof Harold Kroto, economist Prof James Mirrlees, physicists Prof C N Yang (1957 Nobel Laureate in Physics), Prof David Gross and Prof Douglas Osheroff and many others. To date 24 world-renowned scholars have joined the Institute as Visiting Members.

The Conference is one of the core programs of "Einstein in Hong Kong" as well as a satellite program in celebration of HKUST’s 20th anniversary. IAS joins hand with swissnex China to organize this conference to promote the exchange of the latest knowledge and development of cosmology. The event was supported by the Croucher Foundation, K.C. Wong Education Foundation, Lee Hysan Foundation and HKUST Department of Physics.

Detailed information of the conference is available at: http://ias.ust.hk/cosmo/.
California (2004 Nobel Laureate in Physics), Prof Alan Guth from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Prof Gary Shiu from University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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