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## HKUST and BGI Group Establish Joint Research Center on Biotechnological Science and Engineering

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The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) and leading genomics organization BGI Group will establish a joint research center that will set the stage for the next-generation sequencing platform and research efforts that produce novel medical diagnosis and treatments with transformative impact.

Witnessed by HKUST President Prof Tony F Chan and BGI Group President and Co-founder Prof Wang Jian, the memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed by Prof Nancy Ip, HKUST Vice-President for Research and Graduate Studies and Mr Duncan Yu, BGI Group Vice President at the ceremony held on 27 July. The MoU underlines the commitment of establishing a HKUST-BGI Joint Research Center. The center aims to promote mutually beneficial cooperation in biotechnological science and engineering, and benefit mankind by solving problems in areas such as healthcare, conservation and environment.

Prof Wang, the main initiator of many international research projects, including the International 1000 Genomes Project, said: "We have involved in many genome projects, which will help prevent birth defects, cancer and many other diseases. Going forward, we would like HKUST to join and support us in doing this together. This partnership will put together basic research and business and for us to work more closely to change things and benefit people."

"This alliance is another step further of BGI Group in support of fostering research and innovation at HKUST. It blends the best experience and expertise of researchers from both HKUST and BGI Group parties," said Prof Tony F Chan. "HKUST always strives to advance innovation and technology development between Hong Kong and Shenzhen through collaboration amongst academia, industry and the government. I hope our cooperation with BGI Group will broaden the scope of our academic development through increased scientific exposure, and enhance biotechnology education through pioneering research, as well as hands-on training in the genomics industry."

The joint center will set up different research platforms based on the two parties' core competence and mutual interest, such as that on medical imaging and high-throughput sequencing, which not only seeks to enhance and extend the scope of applied genetic studies, but also pursue novel medical treatment and diagnosis especially for certain neurodegenerative diseases which urgently require clinical interventions. The platforms will lay the foundation for facilitating multi-disciplinary research studies including aging biology, automatic medical imaging and image analysis, precision oncology targeting clonal dynamics, machine learning for medical diagnostic assistance and marine genomics.

Collaboration between BGI Group and HKUST traced back in 2011. During 2011-2014, the group sponsored HKUST's Research in Industrial Projects for Students (RIPS) – a summer research plus internship and international exchange program for students to resolve real-life issues.

### About The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) ([www.ust.hk](http://www.ust.hk)) is a world-class research university focuses on science, technology and business as well as humanities and social science. HKUST offers an international campus, and a holistic and interdisciplinary pedagogy to nurture well-rounded graduates with global vision, a strong entrepreneurial spirit and innovative thinking. HKUST attained the highest proportion of internationally excellent research work in the Research Assessment Exercise 2014 of Hong Kong's University Grants Committee, and is the world's second in the latest QS' Top 50 under 50 ranking. Its graduates were ranked 13th worldwide and top in Greater China in Global Employability University Survey 2016.

### About BGI Group

BGI Group was founded in 1999 with the vision of using genomics to benefit humanity and has since become the largest genomic organization in the world. With a focus on research and applications in the healthcare, agriculture, conservation, and environmental fields, BGI Group has a proven track record of innovative, high profile research, which has generated over 1,000 publications. BGI Group's goal is to make state-of-the-art genomics highly accessible to the global research community and clinical markets by integrating the industry's broadest array of leading technologies, including BGI Group's own sequencing platform, economies of scale, and expert bioinformatics resources. BGI Group also offers a wide portfolio of transformative genetic testing products across



HKUST President Prof Tony F Chan (first right) and BGI Group President and Co-founder Prof Wang Jian (first left) officiate at the ceremony and witness the MoU signing by Prof Nancy Ip, HKUST Vice-President for Research and Graduate Studies (second right) and Mr Duncan Yu, BGI Group Vice President.

major diseases, enabling medical providers and patients worldwide to realize the promise of genomics-based diagnostics and personalized healthcare.

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