



The University of Hong Kong
Technology Transfer Office



VERSITECH LTD.

The University Technology Transfer Company

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WHEN SCIENCE MARRIES BEAUTY

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SUCCESSFUL STORY

Decoding the Scientific Beauty

The beauty industry has been on a tear for years. Most (if not all) of the businesses continue to defy gravity. Some seek out ways to satisfy consumers' age-old desire for an instant gratification while others promote a doll look using heavy makeup. Unlike these major trends, Dr. Shuting Hu's, the founder of SkinData Research & Innovation, aspires to fuse nature, science and tradition in her approach to beauty.

As a leader in natural polyphenol scientific research for the cosmetics industry, SkinData Research & Innovation strives to develop clean, natural and bioactive products that help prevent and improve skin pigmentation / hyperpigmentation (an excess production of melanin that affects the colour of our skin), photoaging (the premature aging of the skin caused by repeated exposure to ultraviolet radiation), inflammation as well as anti-glycation (skin treatments to treat, prevent or reverse skin damage).

Back to 2013 while Dr. Hu was pursuing her PhD under the supervision of Dr. Mingfu Wang at the School of Biological Sciences, The University of Hong Kong, she was the winner of the 2013 Henry Maso Award for her paper *Activity and*

*mechanism of natural resorcinol type phenolics from the twigs of *Cudrinea triuspida* as skin whitening agents*. In 2014, she won another award for the best scientific paper at the International Federation of Societies of Cosmetic Chemists (IFSCC) and attracted huge interest and attention from cosmetic companies worldwide.

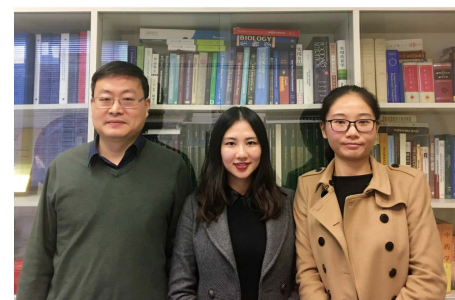


Dr. Shuting Hu (middle) attended the award ceremony of the Henry Maso Young Cosmetic Scientist Award in Paris in 2014.

However, starting her business was not a complete no-brainer. Establishing sustainable partnerships with the beauty industry and translating research results into commercially viable products were real headaches to Dr. Hu at some point. To overcome some known challenges, Dr. Hu recalled her vivid memory of the enormous support she received from the Technology Transfer Office (TTO). TTO helped file patent applications for her

innovations, introduced the company to potential industrial partners, and assisted Dr. Hu in securing a seat in the Hong Kong Science Park Incubation Programme. She remarked that the funding awarded in the academic year 2016 under the TSSSU@HKU scheme further enabled her to bring her ideas to fruition.

Reflecting on her journey of exploration, Dr. Hu realised that there are many ways to skin a cat. As a cosmetic scientist, it is her belief that she can harness the functional and restorative powers of natural ingredients in her innovative products and that she will eventually create her own line of products which encode beauty, wellness and pain relief all together.



Dr. Hu (middle) was grateful to have a supportive supervisor, Dr. Mingfu Wang (left) on her side.

EVENT HIGHLIGHT

Technology Transfer Primer, the webinar series hosted by TTO, has continued the momentum on exploring technology transfer issues that resonate with many entrepreneurs and the research community at HKU. The overarching goal is to provide HKU's PIs and start-ups with a treasure trove of insight into growing their businesses through commercialisation.

In October, TTO launched three webinars which was filled with those who were committed to taking their innovations to the next level. Attentive room listened closely to our speakers as they delivered their valuable experiences and tacit knowledge. On 8 October, we were honoured to have representatives from LinkedIn to elucidate how start-ups with limited resources could achieve best results with minimum efforts. On 16 October, the webinar entitled *Patent or Not Patent, Why and How?* discussed patent inventorship and ownership for inventions at HKU and explicated some of the sagacious strategies for global patents while advising founders/co-founders how to rise to the occasion when facing the respective risks and issues. On 20 October, a workshop session provided a practical, comprehensive, and hands-on understanding of Invention Disclosure Forms and allowed participants to identify intellectual property and determine how to proceed with it.

We now invite all interested parties to congregate in our next webinar *Technology Commercialization* on 12 November (Thursday) at 1:00 - 2:00pm. Our Deputy Director, Dr. Shawn Zhao, will expound his insights into transitioning technologies from the research lab to the marketplace and how start-ups can develop such capability for commercialisation if they are to thrive. We hope to see you back here for the next webinar.

Upcoming Webinar



Register and get your seat now!
<https://www.tto.hku.hk/event/technology-transfer-primer-technology-commercialization>

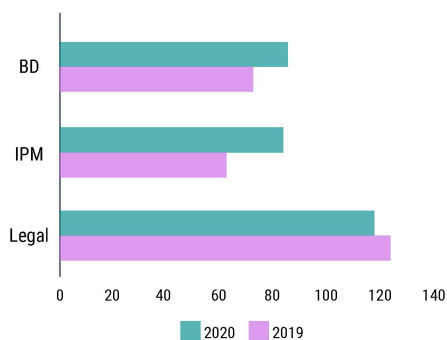
Board Meeting 2020

This year, the Board of Management Meeting was held on 9 October 2020 to engage in strategic deliberations and approve future plans of action. The meeting started with Dr Yiwu He's warm welcome to the board management. Mr Jason Chiu went on to give us a Chairman Remark, and followed by Mr. Hailson Yu's, Dr. Katherine Gan's and Mr Matchy Ma's important updates on our business development. Major advances were discussed in the meeting including confidential collaborations, our annual TSSSU@HKU (FY2021-22) and some brand-new marketing initiatives. Administered by TTO, TSSSU@HKU has been open for proposals **until 25 November 2020 at 5:00p.m. (HKT)**. This annual funding scheme (up to HKD8 million) is earmarked for supporting HKU start-ups to experiment their innovative solutions to different facets of challenges in increasingly complex environments. We have simultaneously ushered in a range of marketing and editorial endeavours. Our publications, monthly eNewsletters and biannual promotional booklets, as well as launches of official social media accounts on WeChat, LinkedIn and Facebook were vivid cases in point. The meeting ended with some fruitful discussion on internal board matters and with a positive note that we will continue to extend the impact of our research excellence within, between, and across communities locally and globally.

Remarkable Efforts

Total engagements and handling cases by our three service arms – the business development (BD), intellectual property management (IPM) and the legal team – grew 10.8% in September 2020, a year-on-year spurt that reflected the efficacy of TTO's long-term strategy and the dedication of the senior management. The technology commercialisation and industry engagement, entrepreneurship and incubation support as well as marketing outreaches by the BD team edged up 17.8% to 86 from a year earlier. The IPM efforts, including new IDFs, office action matters, evaluation reports, and filings, jumped as much as 33.3% per cent to 84. Our legal team has managed 118 new cases, spanning different aspects of legal agreements, from collaboration agreements to license agreements, to research agreement, and to memorandums of understanding. Some of the cases bring into sharp focus the rising inquiries and internal demand HKU community have during the covid-19 pandemic.

Total Engagements and Handling Cases




About TTO


The Technology Transfer Office (TTO) is committed to maximising the impact of research through technology transfer at both the institutional and industrial levels. TTO works closely with researchers at HKU to commercialise their inventions through professional consultation on business development, legal advice and assistance, as well as patent application filings. Your inventions would not benefit the society until they are mass produced. Contact us for such a transformation.

About Versitech


Versitech Limited is the commercial arm of HKU. Versitech negotiates, executes and manages commercial business contracts and agreements on behalf of the University.

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ACT NOW!

Transferring Your New Technologies into Business Opportunities

Policy Stipulation

The latest policy stipulates that the net receipts arising from the exploitation of an Invention are shared among the University, the relevant faculty/department and the inventor(s) in the ratio of 1/3 : 1/3 : 1/3. It aims to encourage the researchers at HKU not only to excel in academic performance but also to apply their technology for the benefits of mankind with an impressive reward.



How to Apply: 4 Phases for Research Projects

Phase 1: Initial project negotiation

1. PI will negotiate with their collaborator(s) and confirm a project proposal which includes the scope, budget and duration of the project.
2. PI will negotiate with their collaborator(s) and prepare a draft agreement (Agreement templates are available at the website of the Research Services (RS): <http://www.rss.hku.hk/contracts/contractresearch/templates.>)

Phase 2: Endorsement from department/faculty

3. PI will submit the project proposal, the draft agreement, and the information form/grant application form to their department/faculty to seek an approval (The information form for research/consultancy agreements is available at: <http://intraweb.hku.hk/local/rss/tto/researchor-consultancy-agreements-form.doc>).
4. After obtaining the approval, PI will submit the project proposal, the draft agreement, and the information form/grant application form to the Research Service (RS).

Phase 3: Financial legal/IP review

5. The RS will distribute the project proposal and the draft agreement to the Finance and Enterprises Office (FEO) for financial review and to the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) for legal review.
6. If there is any financial/legal issue, the FEO/TTO will inform PI through the RS. PI will negotiate with their collaborator(s) on the financial/legal issue until it is settled.

Phase 4: Signature and document archiving

7. After consolidating the settled project proposal and the agreement, the RS will proceed to the signature process.
8. After duly performing the signature process, the RS will assign the RCGAS number(s) for opening the project account(s) and archiving all the documents.

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