

**Panel on Commerce and Industry**  
**Meeting on Tuesday, 17 July 2018 at 2:30 pm**

**Deputations' views on "Latest development of the Hong Kong Science Park and industrial estates, and the Administration's measures to support re-industrialization"**

**"Continuing Education is Medicine to City's Future of Innovation and Technology"**

Good afternoon. I am Edith from Asia Pacific Youth Development Foundation Limited, a charity organisation that promotes youth upward mobility and offers a platform for young people to collaborate on making positive impacts.

To start with, I would like to quote a few numbers. According to a global benchmark of innovation, the Global Innovation Index of 2018, Hong Kong has a no-so-bright position, where it ranks 14th globally among 126 economies, behind Singapore, Korea and Japan, and is very close to China, who ranks only 3 places after Hong Kong.

Why do we lose our advantage? We have to identify and review Hong Kong's strengths and weaknesses.

A successful tech ecosystem requires a network of factors, including a supply of investment, talent, infrastructure, a market for services, and support from associated systems such as tax and regulation.

Among all the indicators of the Index, Hong Kong topped in infrastructure and market conditions, but we underperformed particularly in talents-related areas, including education (ranking no. 52), human capital and research (ranking no. 25) and knowledge creation (ranking no. 49th). Expenditure in education was even worse – at 98th.

It is a shame that we made ourselves into an international city by our precious, high quality human capital but we are now informed that we suffered from a shortage of innovative and research talents.

To tackle the challenge, the government always stresses in "importing and retaining" talents, but has ignored the idea of "nurturing" talents. Not only our education system has failed in preparing our students for a future where technology will be king, young people who already entered the workforce has also no way to better equip themselves with future skills. It is very difficult for young people who had no science background to be enrolled in technology related education programmes.

Youngsters at their twenties or early thirties will encounter an age of technological re-industrialisation in their career - where their jobs may be taken over by Artificial Intelligence - is the government going to leave them alone in the tide of future job loss?

Focusing on the investment of smart skills and continuing education, I suggest the government to 1) Identify future skill sets and encourage tertiary institutions and training bodies to open ICT programmes for young working population, and 2) increase the subsidy provided under the Continuing Education Fund for people taking ICT courses.

Continuing education is like medicine. The future of innovation and technology in the city depended on the breeding of talents.