Press Releases

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National Support for IT Key Lab

Research collaboration between the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) and Microsoft Research Asia (MSRA) has received valuable government support and recognition with the establishment of the Ministry of Education (MOE)/MSRA Information Technology Key Laboratory at HKUST.

This is the first time that an MOE Key Lab is established in Hong Kong.

A signing ceremony marking the establishment of MOE/MSRA Key Labs was held in Beijing on 8 November 2004. Officiating at the ceremony were Zhao Qinping, Vice-Minister of Education, Dr Richard F Rashid, Senior Vice President of Microsoft Research, Prof Harry Shum, Managing Director of MSRA, and Prof Paul Chu, HKUST President.

In accordance with the terms of the collaboration agreement, MSRA will upgrade the five existing university joint research laboratories into MOE/MSRA Key Labs. Of the five prestigious university partners, four are from Mainland China, namely Tsinghua University, Zhejiang University, the University of Science and Technology of China, and the Harbin Institute of Technology, with HKUST being the only university representing Hong Kong.

From left: HKUST Vice-President Roland Chin, Harry Shum, Zhao Qinping, Richard F Rashid, Paul Chu, and Lionel Ni

MOE/MSRA Key Labs will conduct joint basic research projects in computer science, train young and talented researchers, and promote the Chinese information technology industry.

HKUST established the MSRA/HKUST IT Joint Research Laboratory in September 2000 to promote academic exchange and research collaboration. Since then, seven PhD students have been awarded Microsoft Fellowships and two faculty members have spent a year at MSRA as visiting researchers. This year, four HKUST PhD students, selected from 76 distinguished students from Asia, have been awarded scholarships as Microsoft Fellows.

The MOE/MSRA IT Key Lab at HKUST will focus on three research areas: vision and graphics, systems and networking, and mass information management. "The Key Lab represents an effective model for collaboration between university, industry, and government. Leveraging government support, the industrial strength of Microsoft, and the research expertise of HKUST, the Key Lab will be instrumental in enhancing research and nurturing IT professionals," says Prof Lionel Ni, Key Lab Director and Head of the Department of Computer Science.