

## **PolyU leads scholarly exchange between East and West with SE Asia's first Erasmus Mundus Grant**

*By The Hong Kong Polytechnic University*

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The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) has received another strong boost to achieve further internationalization with the award of South East Asia's first Erasmus Mundus (EM) Mobility Grant of nearly €1.4 million by the European Commission. The grant will support a large-scale scholarly exchange involving nine universities in Europe and South East Asia and greatly benefit faculty members and postgraduate students.

EM is a flagship European Commission programme promoting international education. The successful application for the EM Mobility Grant is the joint effort of a consortium partnership consisting of nine higher education institutions across Europe and South East Asian countries, with PolyU's Faculty of Humanities as the initiating institution and the coordinator in South East Asia, and Université de Provence as the overall coordinator and coordinator in Europe.

A special ceremony commemorating the project was held today (13 December) on the PolyU campus with the presence of Ms Maria Castillo Fernandez, Head of Office of the European Union to Hong Kong and Macao; Ms Amy Wong, Principal Assistant Secretary (Higher Education), Education Bureau; Professor Timothy W. Tong, PolyU President; Professor Judy Tsui, PolyU Vice President (International and Executive Education); and Professor Huang Chu-ren, Dean of PolyU's Faculty of Humanities.

Speaking at the occasion, Professor Tong said, "We are pleased to be awarded South East Asia's first Erasmus Mundus Mobility Grant by the European Commission. This will help us build fruitful partnerships with universities in Europe and the Asia Pacific Region, as well as open up the eyes and minds of our postgraduate students and faculty staff members."

Ms Maria Castillo Fernandez said, "Erasmus Mundus is a world-class, top quality programme that promotes academic excellence, intercultural understanding, as well as people-to-people contacts. The Erasmus Mundus alumni are the ambassadors of openness and intercultural dialogue and we are pleased to have The Hong Kong Polytechnic University on board this programme. This new partnership will create mutual enrichment between the European Union and Hong Kong in the field of higher education, by promoting the exchange of persons, knowledge and skills."

The grant of nearly €1.4 million will be allocated to successful applicants of the nine consortium partners in a project titled "MULTI – Multilingualism and Multiculturalism: Linguistic approaches to Transition and Identity". This project, which will span for about three years, aims to address the linguistic, cultural and technological aspects of multilingualism and to understand the impact of multilingualism in both European Union and South East Asia societies.

With the support of EM grant, more than 80 students at postgraduate level or above and faculty members from PolyU as well as other eight higher education institutions in Europe and South East Asia will be selected to participate in the scholarly exchanges at a host university funded by the European Commission.

PolyU is expected to send forth a total of 13 postgraduate level or above students and staff to undertake an exchange programme that will last for 1-12 months. The grant will cover their travel costs, monthly allowance, and tuition fees for participants to study at partner universities in Europe and South East Asia.

The nine universities in the consortium partnership include Université de Provence (France), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (HK), City University London (UK), Università di Pisa (Italy), Universität des Saarlandes (Germany), Freie Universität Berlin (Germany), National Taiwan University (Taiwan), Nanyang Technological University (Singapore) and University of Macau (Macau).

#### About Erasmus Mundus (EM)

Erasmus Mundus (EM) is a flagship European Commission programme promoting international education. Its objective is to enhance quality in higher education through scholarships and academic cooperation between Europe and the rest of the world. The EM programme sanctions and sponsors multi-national postgraduate programmes in Europe and offers scholarships for students from all countries.

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PolyU offers a wide range of courses which directly meets industrial, commercial and community needs. It also provides the public and private sectors in Hong Kong with expanding range of consultancy, professional training and applied research services.

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