

Chen, De-Fu

The Summer Research Programme at the University of Hong Kong provided me with a valuable opportunity to gain an overview of the process of conducting scientific research. This is an English-based summer program, so all the events were conducted in English. Under the supervision of Dr. Zhang in the MARS Lab, I focused on integrating AI image processing models with LiDAR systems. My research aimed to improve the accuracy of LiDAR data using AI techniques. Being a member in the Lab, I attended to the Lab weekly meeting and discussion. It was an immersive environment for conducting research.

I truly appreciate the moments when I engaged in discussions with the talented seniors in the lab, where everyone collaborated to solve problems together. The most valuable lesson I learned from this program is that no one can achieve something great without teamwork. I witnessed many individuals, each with expertise in their own field, contributing to the same project. Their dedication to different parts of the research highlighted how essential collaboration is to the success of a project. The most impressive lesson I have learnt from this summer is that, research does not only refer to pure research, it actually contains a variety of subjects.

This involves seamless communication with teammates, managing research schedules, and sourcing necessary materials for experiments. A researcher who not only excels in their own work but also handles the surrounding tasks efficiently is someone with the potential to become an outstanding researcher in the future. The most importantly, one who is determined to devote in the field of research, must be aware of that, doing research is to generate innovative ideas and try to bring those ideas into life. At the very end of the program, there was poster presentation for every participant to share their research finding openly. Although I felt nervous—especially since I was not confident in my ability to present my research clearly in English, let alone in front of professional judges—I was also incredibly excited and eager for the event.

During the presentation, the judges first listened to your introduction and explanation, then asked questions about your poster. Rather than a one-way evaluation, it felt more like a mutual exchange of ideas. When they asked questions, we engaged in discussions about the topic, and in some cases, they even offered suggestions for future research directions. It was both challenging and rewarding. It was also an exciting moment when your research efforts are recognized, and you realize that all the hard work over the summer has paid off.

Apart from the research in Lab, the memory of hanging out with many good friends coming from all parts of the world really would never fade away. This program serves like a forge, full of people with different culture backgrounds and thinking. It is extremely interesting, having a conversation with people you have never met before. You can always receive countless advices or opinions from others, which you might have never thought before. These invaluable experiences can broaden your horizon of thinking. Furthermore, this program strongly encourages us to express our thoughts and opinions openly. It serves as a suitable stage for everyone attending to this program to practice how to convey their personal thoughts in a public setting. I regard such skill as essential and highly beneficial for everyone, regardless of the field they choose to pursue in the future.

The University of Hong Kong also organized a variety of events and networking activities during the program, such as classes, group projects, and even short city trips. Through these events, I had the chance to meet many wonderful friends. After our daily lab work, we often hung out together, discussing the challenges we faced in our research, any interesting results we obtained, and sharing personal thoughts. These moments of connection enriched both our professional and personal experiences.

Even though we were conducting research in different labs with different mentors and seniors, the program made us feel united, moving forward together, pursuing a common goal, and sharing a common vision. We still keep in touch, even though the program has ended. This valuable experience made me realize that there are passionate companions all over the world, equally dedicated to research. The journey toward academic excellence may not always be easy or comfortable, but knowing that we have like-minded friends from different parts of the world—each with ambition and passion—makes the pursuit more meaningful.

Hong Kong is a vibrant city, renowned especially for its food. While the 10-week program may not seem long, it was enough for me to explore the beauty of Hong Kong and experience daily life as a resident. One of the biggest culture shocks I encountered upon arriving in Hong Kong for the first time was the way customers are served in restaurants. Unlike the polite and euphemistic tones commonly used in Taiwan, waiters in traditional Hong Kong restaurants tend to be more direct and bold in their communication. Though it might seem abrupt at first, their intention is not to be rude but simply to conduct business in their usual way. I must admit, I was a bit startled

initially, but over time, I came to accept and even appreciate this style of service for its efficiency and straightforwardness.

I was incredibly fortunate to be awarded the HKU Presidential PhD Scholarship by the University of Hong Kong at the end of the program. This recognition not only validated my personal abilities but also strengthened my determination to pursue academic excellence in the future. Choosing the HKU Summer Research Programme was the perfect decision for my summer vacation. I not only reached a significant milestone in my academic journey but also enjoyed a wonderful summer in Hong Kong—a vibrant city filled with friendly people.

Beyond research, I also had the chance to travel and try a variety of foods, which was another highlight of the program. I would strongly encourage anyone with a passion for research to give this program a try!



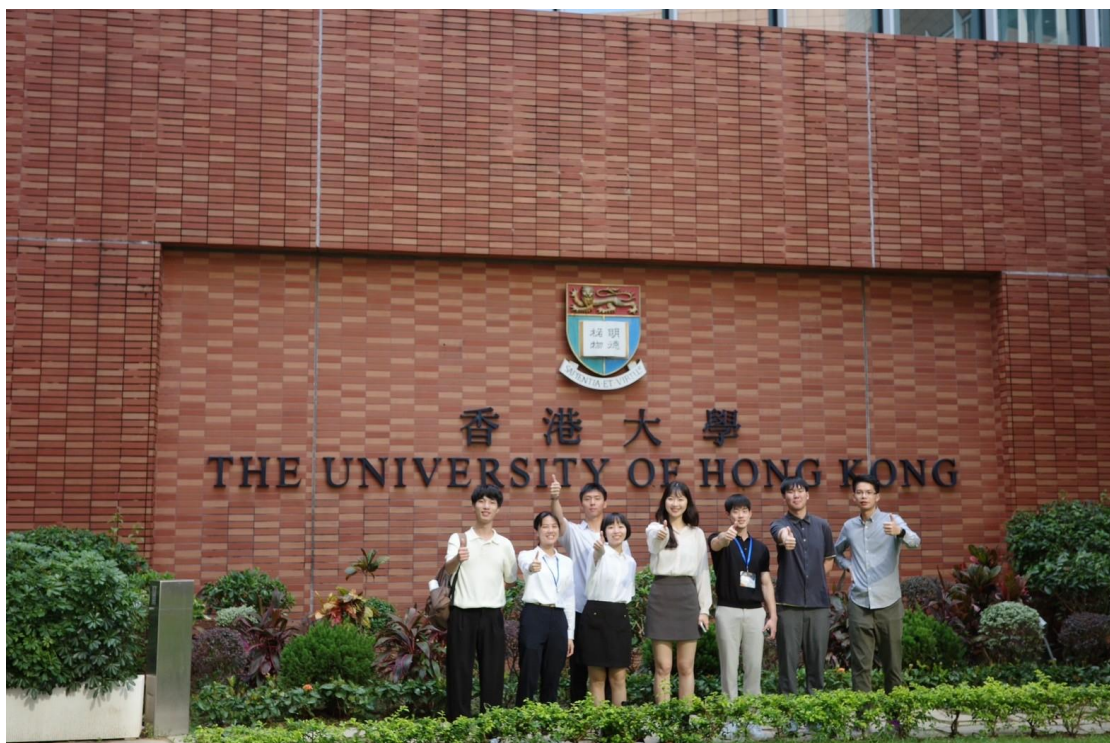
The orientation on the first day of the program



Having dinner with friends from the program after Lab work



The day of poster presentation



The University of Hong Kong