

# Hong Kong Polytechnic University SIAM Student Chapter Hosts Dialogue with World-leading Scholars

By Yixuan Zhang

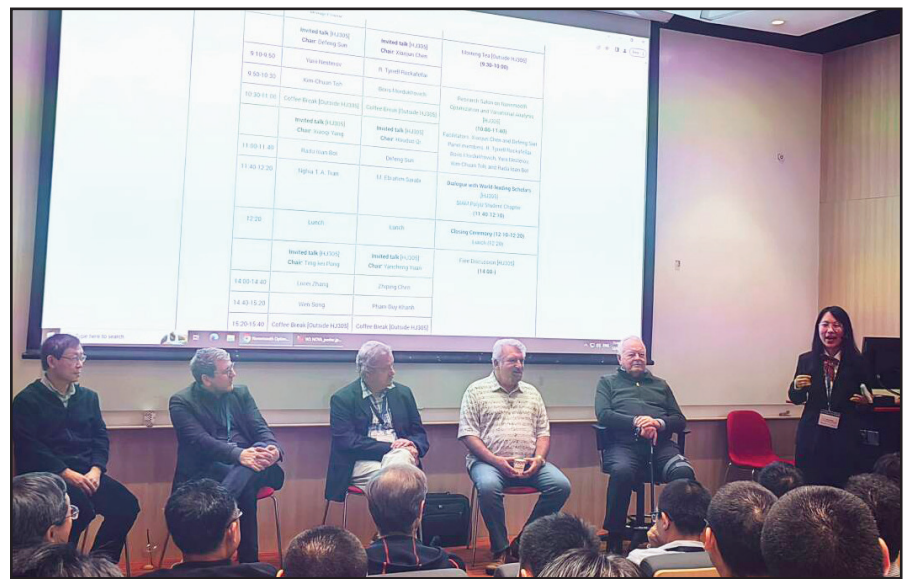
In December 2023, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) SIAM Student Chapter<sup>1</sup> successfully organized an exciting event called “Dialogue with World-leading Scholars.” The session was part of the three-day Workshop on Nonsmooth Optimization and Variational Analysis<sup>2</sup>—which took place at PolyU from December 4–6—featured five distinguished panel members: R. Tyrrell Rockafellar (University of Washington), Boris Mordukhovich (Wayne State University), Yurii Nesterov (Université catholique de Louvain), Kim-Chuan Toh (National University of Singapore), and Radu Ioan Boţ (University of Vienna).

These esteemed experts in the field of optimization discussed their early-career experiences and elaborated on their professional journeys. A question-and-answer format allowed for a more interactive and engaging experience between the students and speakers, the latter of whom also offered practical advice and encouraged attendees to continually learn new knowledge in a variety of mathematical fields. Audience questions covered a wide range of topics, from effective strategies for research and publishing to career development in both academia and industry. The panelists’

insightful advice provided students with a clearer roadmap for their future endeavors in the field of applied mathematics, computational science, and data science.

The Workshop on Nonsmooth Optimization and Variational Analysis was sponsored by PolyU’s Department of Applied Mathematics<sup>3</sup> (AMA); the organizing committee comprised academic staff at AMA who study optimization, including co-chairs Xiaojun Chen (faculty advisor of the PolyU SIAM Student Chapter and Chair Professor of Applied Mathematics) and Defeng Sun (Chair Professor of Applied Optimization and Operation Research at AMA). Throughout the first two days of the workshop, 16 scholars from around the world delivered enlightening talks that introduced recent cutting-edge progress in nonsmooth optimization and variational analysis. The third and final day commenced with a “Research Salon,” during which the aforementioned panel members from the SIAM Student Chapter event addressed the positive and negative effects of artificial intelligence; the “Dialogue with World-leading Scholars” session immediately followed this salon.

Members of the PolyU SIAM Student Chapter were appreciative for the opportunity to converse with optimization scholars, learn from their experiences, and glean inspiration and career direction. Student organiz-



During the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) SIAM Student Chapter “Dialogue with World-leading Scholars” event, experts in optimization shared insights and advice based on their own career experiences. From left to right: panel members Kim-Chuan Toh (National University of Singapore), Radu Ioan Boţ (University of Vienna), Yurii Nesterov (Université catholique de Louvain), Boris Mordukhovich (Wayne State University), and R. Tyrrell Rockafellar (University of Washington), and moderator Yixuan Zhang (president of the PolyU SIAM Student Chapter). Photo courtesy of Xin Qu.

ers from the Board of the PolyU SIAM Student Chapter—president Yixuan Zhang, vice presidents Cunxin Huang and Bei Sun, secretary Yuan Gao, treasurer Zexian Li, and webmaster Gaohang Chen—would like to thank all attendees, including their fellow chapter members and other participating students and researchers from throughout the world. We are especially grateful to the

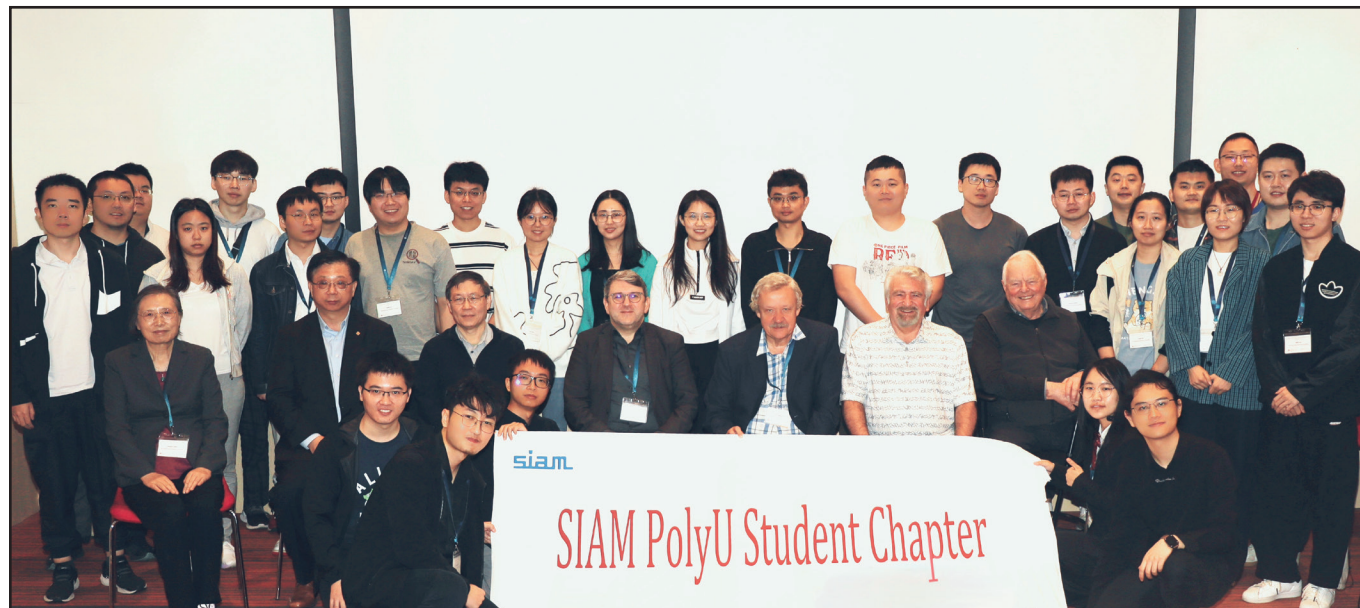
panel members, who generously contributed their time and knowledge, as well as for support from the organizing committee of the concurrent Workshop on Nonsmooth Optimization and Variational Analysis.

2023 marked the milestone 10th anniversary of the PolyU SIAM Student Chapter. Established in 2013, this group was the first SIAM Student Chapter to arise in Hong Kong. The chapter generates student interest in applied mathematics and computational science by organizing various activities and occasions for the dozens of members to gather with contemporaries and faculty members from relevant departments both within and beyond PolyU’s campus. Recent activities include a variety of lectures, several discussion salons, and an online workshop during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of these events were held jointly with SIAM Student Chapters at nearby sister institutions, such as the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the City University of Hong Kong. We invite readers to stay tuned for more upcoming events!

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/ama/research-and-consultancy/siam-polyu-student-chapter>  
<sup>2</sup> <https://events.polyu.edu.hk/nova/home>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/en/ama>



Speakers and participants gather for a group photo at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) SIAM Student Chapter’s event, “Dialogue with World-leading Scholars,” which took place during the three-day Workshop on Nonsmooth Optimization and Variational Analysis at PolyU in December 2023. Photo courtesy of Eric Lam Kwok-lung and Peter Lo Charn-tong.