

Profile

Prof. SIU Kin Wai Michael

Eric C. Yim Professor in Inclusive Design
Chair Professor of Public Design

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Kin Wai Michael Siu (邵健偉) is Eric C. Yim Professor in Inclusive Design, and Chair Professor of Public Design. He is Founder and Leader of the first Public Design Lab (公共設計研究室), and Director of Joint-Research Center for Inclusive Design (包容性環境聯合中心) of PolyU and Harbin Institute of Technology. He was Associate Dean (Research) (2018-2024) and Chair of the School Research Committee (2007-2013, 2018-2022). He has been Programme Coordinator (Servicing Programmes) of the School since 2000 and a member of key committees at the university level, including the Senate, Research Committee, Academic Regulations Committee, University Staffing Committee, Review Committee, and Culture Promotion Committee. In 2013, he founded the Research Group for Sustainable Public Design of the RISUD.

Siu supervises postdoctoral and PhD research. He is the Coordinator of Design Research Methods for the university's PhD students. He teaches design and engineering subjects at the postgraduate and degree levels, including design theories, research methods, public design, industrial and product designs, inclusive design and social responsibility. Siu leads public design projects that have a balance of consideration between creative design and engineering application. His research outputs have made constructive contributions to both academic knowledge and practical problem solving. He has received six times of Faculty and School Awards for Outstanding Research and Scholarly Activities. His work has been recognized by peers in various disciplines, including design, engineering, public health, management, geography and environmental studies, humanities, arts and education, and he has been elected as a fellow of several professional bodies.

Building on Vygotsky's ZPD concept and Bruner's scaffolding theory, Siu introduced the concept of 'scaffolding innovation' for design learning. He initiated 'relay thinking' for group-invention, a concept that was first published in the Journal of Design and Technology Education in 1998. He advocates FlexiDesign and d*hk®, and promotes a sustainable living environment by designing Feel-Green facilities. Working with the deprived and with persons with special needs, he has conducted interdisciplinary and participatory research projects that aim to bring an inclusive society to all.

Siu has obtained a number of external competitive research grants, including a Fulbright Scholarship and grants from the ASF (Ford Foundation), HK RGC's TRS (Co-PI), HSSPFS (PI) and GRF (PI), the PPRF (PI) and the Hong Kong Scholars Program (HKSP). His educational research grants include grants from the K. C. Wong Education Foundation and HK QEF. His recently completed projects investigated the flexibility of public design for densely populated urban environments, and explored the possibilities for inclusive public toilets for visually impaired persons and inclusive playspace for children and caregivers, and identified public design directions for promoting active household recycling practice. The HKSP project (2014-2016) sought to explore the urban and public environment design for new Asian lifestyles, including the needs of persons with special needs and the deprived. The US International Exchange Alumni AEIF project investigated and promoted sustainable design for densely populated cities.

In 2001, Siu was invited by the Engineering Design Centre of the University of Cambridge as a Visiting Scholar to conduct inclusive design research. From 2002 to 2003, he was a Fulbright Scholar at MIT, conducting research on user reception. Since then, he has worked closely with the MIT urban planning and environmental engineering teams to conduct public design projects for the benefit of developing countries. From 2006 to 2007, he was awarded by the Asian Scholarship Foundation as an ASIA Fellow at the National University of Singapore to explore public design for a multicultural society. From 2007 to 2008, he was invited by UC Berkeley as a Visiting Scholar to study

contemporary lifestyles and public design. In 2007 and 2010, he was a Visiting Professor at Tsinghua University, conducting research on street furniture and FlexiDesign®, respectively. In 2013, he was again invited by MIT as a Visiting Scholar to conduct a study on public design for densely populated cities. He is visiting Chair Professor (2012-date) of the Wuhan University of Technology and a Visiting Professor (long-term) of the Central Academy of Fine Arts, the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts and the Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts.

Siu has been appointed to serve as a member of research grant bodies and accreditation councils. He has been Panel Member of Hong Kong RGC Engineering Panel (2010-2016) and Humanities and Social Sciences Panel (2023-2026), International Reviewer of both Austria's FWF and Italy's APB Scientific Board. He has been appointed by the Hong Kong UGS as the Member of Creative Arts, Performing Arts & Design Panel of Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2026. He is an Expert Assessor of China's MoE, an Assessment Panel Member of CreateHK and a Specialist of the HK Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications. He is a Council Member of the Design Research Society (UK) and was a Council Member of the Chartered Society of Designers (UK; HK Region). He is an editorial and advisory board member of several design, engineering, humanities and education journals and book series. He has provided consultancy services concerning industrial, product, engineering and environmental designs, intellectual property, and programme development and accreditation. His clients and collaborators include MTR, CLP, HK Jockey Club, Maunsell, EDAW, Watson Group (HK), VAS Lighting, the Urban Renewal Authority, the Highways Department, the Housing Authority, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, various district councils, the United Christian Hospital, HKCSS, the HK Society for Rehabilitation, the HK Blind Union, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of HK, BGCA and St. James' Settlement. One of his recently completed projects involved designing a set of removable bollards and railings (FlexiBOL®) that fit the particular physical and social environment of Hong Kong and which have been widely installed in the city by the Highways Department.

Siu has received over 100 international design and invention awards, including the Red Dot Award (Germany), D&AD (UK), Good Design (USA), the Grand Industrial Design Prize and Gold Medals at the International Exhibition of Inventions in Geneva (Switzerland), the Innovation of the Year and Best Design Award at the British Invention of the Year Awards (UK), the JIPA Award for Best Invention in Industrial Design (Japan), the Best Invention Award and Gold Medals at ITEX (Malaysia), Runner-up at the Crystal Cabin Awards (Germany), the Diamond and Platinum Awards at the Successful Design Awards (China) and the Trophy of Perspective Awards (HK). In 2013, Include Asia 2013 conferred him with the award of Champion of Inclusive Design to recognise his contribution in 'Design for All'. He is the sole holder of more than 50 US and international patents. His design (Chess.*®) for the visually impaired has been officially accepted as China's National Standard for chess competitions. He has published 23 books and monographs and over 50 book chapters. His book *Urban Renewal and Design: City, Street, Street Furniture* was accepted for the permanent collections of the Harvard College Library, MIT Rotch Library, The Library of Congress and The British Library. He has published over 400 papers in leading journals, including *Design Issues*, *The Design Journal*, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, *Facilities*, *Applied Ergonomics*, *Communication Design*, *Journal of Engineering Design*, *Public Health*, *The Journal of Popular Culture*, and *Human Relations*.