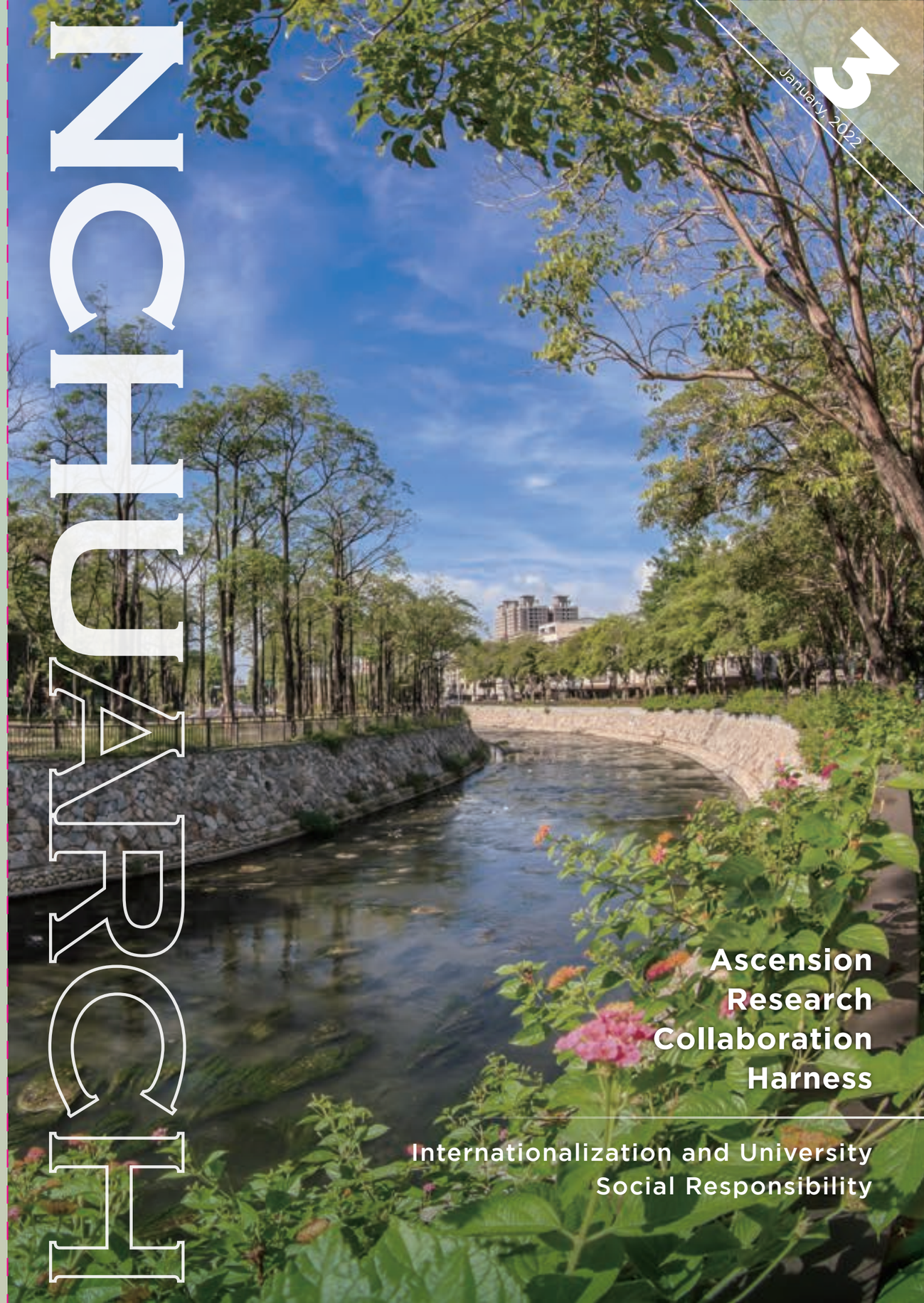
# NCHU ARCH

3
January 2022



## Ascension
## Research
## Collaboration
## Harness

Internationalization and University Social Responsibility

國立中興大學
NATIONAL CHUNG HSING UNIVERSITY
1919

Oia
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• Illustrations in "Harness" sketched and colored by |
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# Preface

The inspiration for establishing this new magazine has been to introduce the quality, ethos and beauty of National Chung Hsing University to the international community by showcasing academic creativity in the promotion of international education goals.

The semi-annual magazine NCHU ARCH features a selection of projects from across the university that deliver on this commitment through the four aspects of Ascension, Research, Collaboration, and Harness. Common meanings for the word "arch" include "a structural member serving as a support" as a noun, and also "principle or chief" when used as an adjective. This publication's principle of "Arch" aims to precisely extract the essence of explorations of academic research and the challenges of administration.

In the first unit Ascension, we highlight the National University System of Taiwan (NUST) which was led by the president of NCHU and introduce the "NUST-International Circulation Project", which integrates a pooling of resources from 11 member universities to strengthen group recognition and support for the International Volunteering service.

Research introduces Professor Chuan-Mu Chen, Lifetime Distinguished Professor, and his research team consisting of researchers from Canada, China, and Germany. Their outstanding research on the embryonic jawbones of an early sauropodomorph dinosaur (Lufengosaurus) was published in Nature Communications.

Collaboration highlights nanotechnology for improving the delivery efficiency of the CRISPR/-Cas9 gene-editing system to target cells, and potential solutions for the clinical treatment of patients with genetic disease. These successful international collaborations were led by Distinguished Professor Chin-Fa Lee of the Department of Chemistry at NCHU.

Harness introduces interdisciplinary agricultural education: IMPA (International Master Program of Agriculture) and IBPA (International Bachelor Program of Agribusiness), full English-taught courses are provided which enable students to enhance their awareness of global affairs and strengthen their skills in international engagement.

On the final page, we present the NCHU Art gallery's collection, guiding you to enjoy the beauty and elegance of traditional Taiwanese handicrafts as exhibited in the ceramics and bamboo crafts.

The university was established in 1919 and has maintained the highest reputation for academic endeavors in central Taiwan. An unbroken succession of outstanding leadership at NCHU over the years has successfully pursued a balance of specialized disciplines which have expanded from an outstanding history in agricultural science to a modern research-oriented comprehensive university with eight colleges.

Dr. Fuh-Sheng Shieu was appointed as the 15th President of NCHU in 2015 and has strongly supported establishing NCHU as a multi-faceted institution. Emphasis is placed on the contemporary value of teaching and research to promote a humanities-oriented academic development, and to strengthen the environment in the fields of chemical engineering, agricultural biotechnology, human and social sciences, arts, and life education. It positions National Chung Hsing University as one of the leading national universities in Taiwan.

Looking forward to the future, NCHU will actively seek to consolidate regional resources, align with international trends in tertiary education development, plan for the medium and long-term development of the university, and establish a medical school; by doing so, we foreground our existing departments and future areas of expertise, which will continue to be reported in subsequent issues of the NCHU ARCH magazine.

I would like to express my gratitude to Siuo-Ling Cheng (Julia), Yu-Ying Chen (Jennifer), Pin-Tzu Huang (Paci), Yu-Chun Liao (Claire), Jing-Yi Lai (Gina) and Ching-Yang Shiang (Ava) who have contributed significant efforts over an extended period in helping to develop the third issue of **NCHU ARCH** magazine.

**Chia-Lin Chang**
Vice President for International Affairs,
NCHU

# Major Events of NCHU Throughout June - December, 2021

## June

- NCHU Research Center for Humanities and Social Sciences held an International Forum on Environmental Humanities.
- NCHU multinational team's research on the enhancement of CRISPR gene-editing system delivery efficiency was listed in the international journal 《Small》.
- "New Agricultural Renovation Transformation and Intelligent Agriculture", was listed in the Research Highlight of Newsletter of Ministry of Science and Technology Center for Global Affaiars and Science Engagement.

## July

- NCHU Marketing Department and The Hague University of Applied Science, Netherland signed a bachelor 2+2 dual-degree agreement.
- NCHU issued the first Sustainability Report.
- NCHU team first discovered Taiwanese semi-terrestrial Cephalaeschna.

## August

- A USR inter-school cooperation forum was jointly held with National Cheng Chi University.
- NCHU Vice President HUANG, JENN-WEN has advocated on using plant probiotics to protect crop health and reduce the use of chemical pesticides.

## September

- NCHU signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with The International Cooperation and Development Fund (TaiwanICDF) for the "Overseas Volunteers Internship Program".
- Eight teams of NCHU won the Future Tech Awards.
- NCHU and Agricultural Technology Research Institute have co-developed the first cross-industry probiotics suitable for agriculture, fishery, and animal husbandry; relevant technology has been transferred to President Biotech Group.

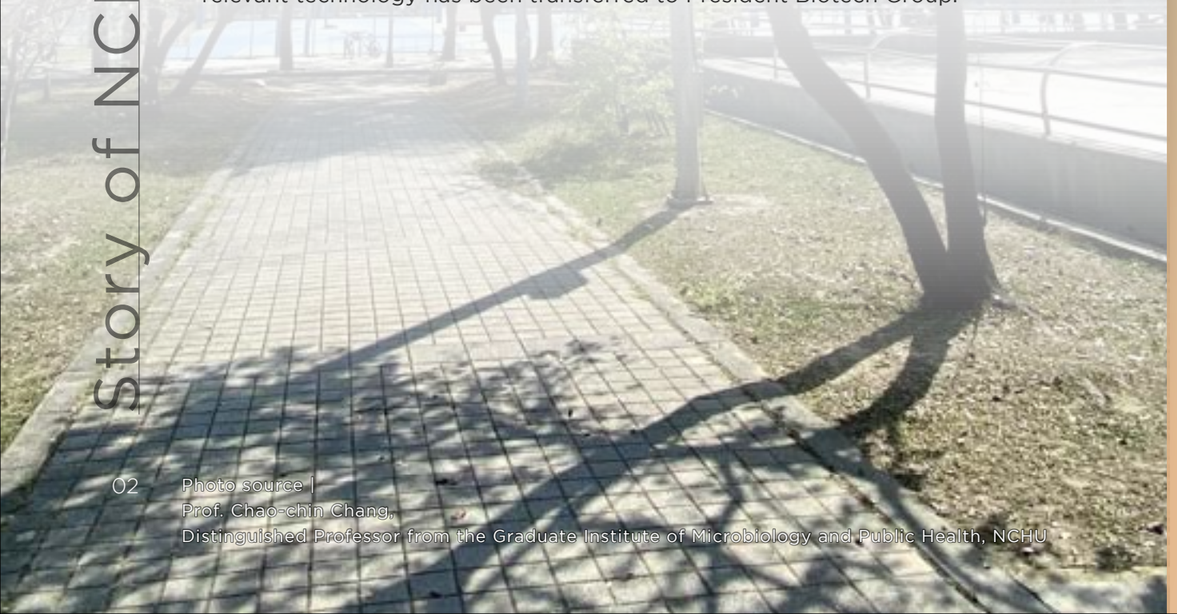


Photo source |
Prof. Chao-chin Chang,
Distinguished Professor from the Graduate Institute of Microbiology and Public Health, NCHU





President,
National Chung Hsing University
***Fuh-Sheng Shieu***

- NCHU's Tea Making Research and Industry Alliance has developed two pioneering tea products in the domestic market: (1) Tzen Puerh Tea mouthwash; (2) natural farming Tzen Tea powder.
- NCHU Materials Science and Engineering Department published an article about the world's first bionic antibiofouling coatings in a renowned international journal.
- Professor CHEN, JENQ-SHYONG, NCHU Mechanical Engineering Department, won the honor of National Invention and Creation Award.

## October

- NCHU professor YANG, MING-DER's drone developing team allowed farmers' crop surveillance as easy as scrolling their phones.
- The "Termite Identification AI" research cooperated by NCHU and Academia Sinica was listed in an international journal.
- NCHU students' success in producing packing materials from recycled bio-waste has won the Gold Prize for Climate Change Innovation Competition.
- NCHU's bio-industrial mechatronics engineering team has won First Prize and Third Prize in the 14th Field Robot Competition held by the Taiwan Institute of Biological Mechatronics (TIBM).
- Young scholar LAI, YING-CHIH of NCHU invented soft electronic devices.

## November

- NCHU veterinary vaccines are sold globally, winning "The Award for Excellence in Technology Transfer".
- NUST was founded to integrate 11 universities' resources, manifesting the benefits of collaboration.

## December

- Turn reclaimed water into treasure. NCHU launched a cutting-edge crystallization technology!
- To broaden our international agriculture horizons and cultivate talented agricultural experts, NCHU established a collaboration with World Vegetable Center.

# ASCENSION

## VOLUNTEER

Location
Myanmar

Photo source
NCHU International Volunteer (Mr. Yu-De, Lin)

# “National University System of Taiwan (NUST)”

Source Chia-Lin Chang, Distinguished Professor, Department of Applied Economics, NCHU
Pin-Tzu Huang (Paci), Office of International Affairs, NCHU
Kuo-Chih Liao, Associate Professor, Graduate Institute of Biomedical Engineering, NCHU

Due to the impact of aging populations and decreasing demand for higher education, some universities are now on the edge of being shut down or down-sized. The tertiary institutions in Taiwan are now facing a bizarre scenario that the number of university enrolment vacancies outstrips the demand of high school graduates which causes disastrous depreciation of diploma and resources as funding being cut down. With these circumstances, it becomes more difficult for the universities to make both ends meet and develop internationally.

National University System of Taiwan

## Initiation: Integration Makes Amplification

To address this issue, Dr. Fuh-Sheng Shieu, the President of the National Chung Hsing University, initiated an invitation for 10 national universities located in mid-west Taiwan to jointly establish the “National University System of Taiwan (NUST)”. This is an allied system focusing on research, internationalization, talent-training, teaching with the aims of cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. In light of mutualism, NUST anticipated the achievement of an outcome where they can provide the maximum effort for the tertiary education in Taiwan at a multifaceted level.

**Note:** The universities who joined this collaboration are—National United University; National Taiwan University of Sport; National Chin-Yi University of Technology; National Taichung University of Education; National Changhua University of Education; National Chi Nan University; National Yunlin University of Science and Technology; National Formosa University; National Chiayi University; National University of Kaohsiung and National Chung Hsing University.

NUST plans to work on multiple levels including research, social responsibility, internationalization, talent-training, library resources, etc. Some of the highlights are as below:

### Internationalization: United as Giant to Lift Up Our Students

As for global collaboration, with the “International Circulation Project ” in mind, NCHU has joined hands with the members of NUST alongside the International Cooperation and Development Fund to nurture worldwide social workers whose horizons are  broadened and social responsibilities are taken. The “circulation” starts from Taiwan, engaging in cultivating international volunteers, hand-on agricultural activities, and stray animals care, in which fosters foreign students’ sense of place identity and local students’ international perspectives.


National University System of Taiwan (NUST) Opening Ceremony
Photo Source | Secretariat Office, National Chung Hsing University

Photo Source | Nepal
Photography | Mr. Yu-De, Lin

### Research and Course

NUST provides grants for new faculty members to enhance publications and cross-disciplinary research in hope of sparking more interactions and collaborations among member universities. Grants are available to all graduate students, allowing them to attend lab exchanges in which they share their research capacity and wisdom of science. Undergraduates may obtain credits by taking online courses from the other universities. NUST members are with diverse academic backgrounds that enable students to acquire knowledge from experts specialized in various fields.

### Internationalization and University Social Responsibility (USR)

Being an international volunteer is a perfect combination of devotion and participation in international affairs. NUST plans to partner with International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF), an organization founded in 1996 which serves countries with diplomatic ties with Taiwan, to enhance their economic, social and human resources development, sending students abroad to volunteer for one semester. Students may seize the rare chance to visit countries like Uganda and Thailand to experience the adventures designed with the purpose of international services.

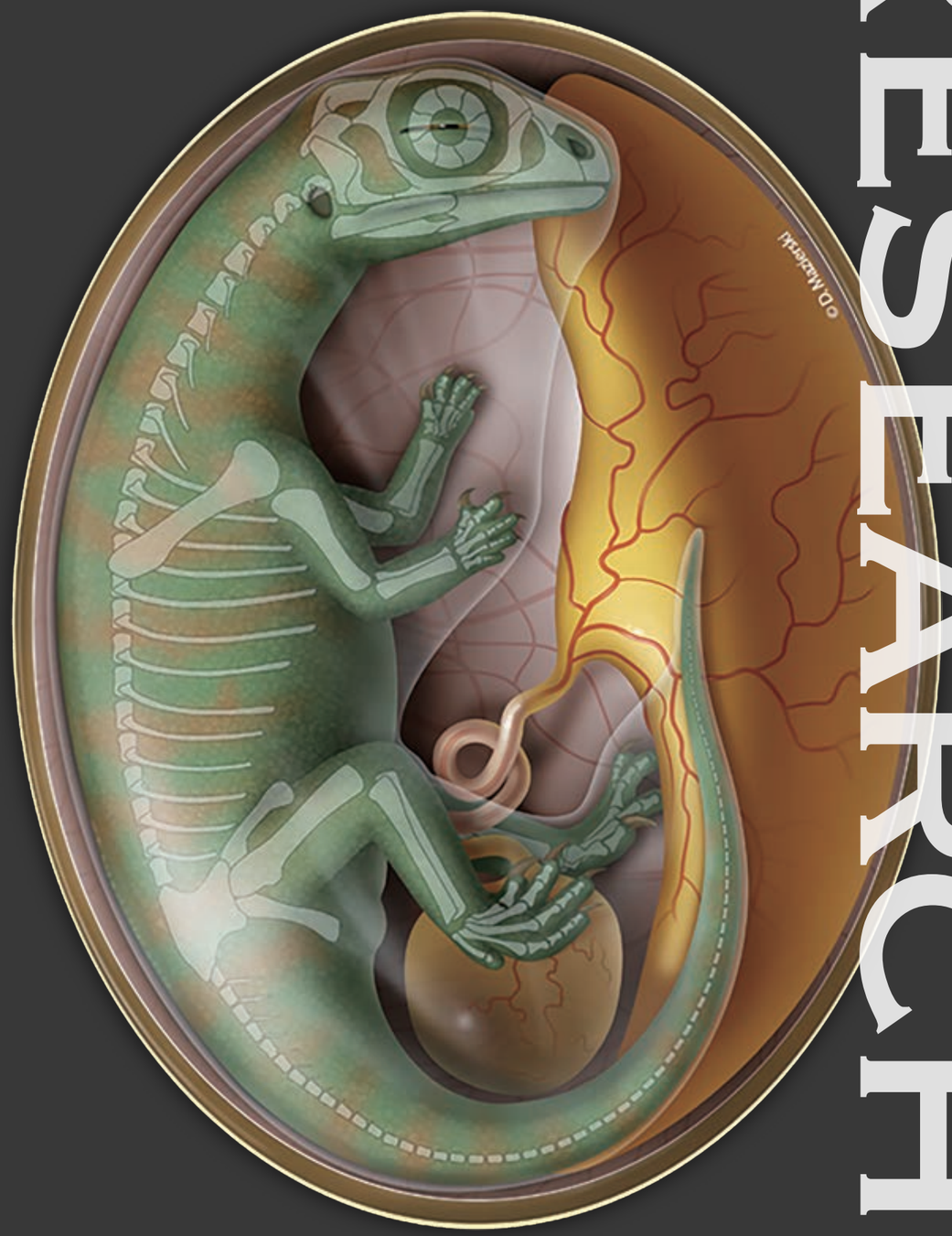
Before the departure, NCHU will lead the allied schools to design the pre-trip training and cultural orientation for the students to acquire local customs and knowledge of the target countries. Students will be providing their services in multiple countries, therefore, the goal of NUST is to assure that the contents of the training are in accordance with the respective culture and needs of the students.

### Unity is Strength

As the famous American author Napolean Hill once said, “*It is literally true that you can succeed best and quickest by helping others to succeed*.” This is the quote that sums up the expectations and aspirations of NUST. If we unite and help one another, this reciprocal relationship will surely reinforce mutual benefits; furthermore, a better learning environment is created for the next generation.

We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided.

Photo Source | Sri-Lanka
Photography | Mr. Yu-De, Lin



RESEARCH

Photo source Prof. Hillary Maddin ( Faculty of Science, Carleton University), SCIENCE.CARLETON.CA



# Transnational Research Team Led by NCHU Discovered an Ancient Tooth Tale from Early Jurassic Dinosaur Embryos

Source Professor Chuan-Mu Chen
(Lifetime distinguished professor and Dean of Department of Life Sciences at NCHU)

"The integrative Evolutionary Galliformes Genomics and Animal Biotechnology Research Center" (The iEGG/ABR Center), an international and interdisciplinary cooperation research team led by Professor Chuan-Mu Chen, Dean of Department of Life Sciences at NCHU, focused on evolutionary developmental biology studies from living species and ancient animals such as avian, livestock, and fossil dinosaur. Professor Chen is an expert on molecular embryology and animal biotechnology, having workined on embryonic culture and gene micromanipulation, embryonic stem cell development and application, and human-disease animal models for more than 30 years.

Source | NATURE COMMUNICATIONS
https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-16045-7

Dinosaur embryos are a precious finding for interdisciplinary fields of paleontologists, earth scientists, biochemists, and embryologists. A recent discovery of embryonic bones and teeth from the Early Jurassic period has given this research team an excellent opportunity and even rarer glimpse to study the early tooth formation in a baby dinosaur.

Professor Robert Reisz, vertebrate Paleontologist at University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM), and Professor Hillary Maddin, earth scientist at Carleton University were part of this international research team who recently studied the excellently preserved embryonic jawbones of an early sauropodomorph dinosaur called Lufengosaurus—a distant relative of the giant, long-necked sauropod dinosaurs. These embryonic dinosaur skeletons are among the oldest in the world and include preserved jaws with teeth still inside.

The dinosaur embryo fossils were originally collected during an expedition by a soul team member, Professor Timothy Huang from College of Life Sciences at NCHU, carefully prepared by embedding in the electron microscopic matrix. Subsequently, micro-computational tomography (μ-CT) scanning works in NCHU, UTM and histological thin sections by Dr. Aaron LeBlanc, and then this international research team revealed a first discovered novel finding that multiple generations of developing, unerupted teeth in embryo stages of this early dinosaur.

"The μ-CT data are like a digital dissection. We can visualize the shapes and positions of the baby teeth within the tiny jaw, all without destroying this rare fossil" Professors Huang and Professor Maddin said. "These unique fossils allowed us to compare for the first time the development of embry-

Photo Source | Prof. Chuan-Mu Chen, The iEGG/ABR Center group meeting in NCHU

onic teeth to both hatchlings and adult teeth of the same kind of dinosaur" added by Professor Reisz, "surprisingly we found that tooth development was rapid in the unhatched embryos, with multiple generations of teeth coexisting in each tooth position in a wide jaw".

The team were very excited to discover that the early embryonic teeth of this early sauropodomorph dinosaur were actually more like the teeth of some of their descendants, the giant sauropods that had massive batteries of teeth as adults for processing plant material. "This discovery allowed us to propose that the evolution of complex dental batteries and the pencil-shaped adult teeth in the giant herbivorous sauropod dinosaurs may have evolved through paedomorphosis: the retention of embryonic developmental stages in adults" said Professor Chen.

The similarities between embryonic Lufengosaurus teeth and those of much later-occurring species show that paedomorphosis was a common theme in the evolution of sauropods, the largest and longest-lived land-dwelling animals of all time.

Finally, Professor Chen expressed his appreciation for international visiting scholarship funding supports from the Ministry of Science and Technology of Taiwan(MOST), and research funding supports from the Feature Areas Research Center Program under the framework of the Ministry of Education(MOE)'s Higher Education Sprout Project in Taiwan. "Without their long-term support of basic research, we can't build up this wonderful international and interdisciplinary research team"

Readers can download the full article of this paper, "Early Jurassic dinosaur fetal dental development and its significance for the evolution of sauropod dentition", on *Nature Communications* official website.

Photo Source | Prof. Chuan-Mu Chen, NCHU



# COLLABORATION

Location | library, National Chung Hsing University

# CRISPR/Cas9 As an Emerging Technology for Gene Disruption and Deletion

Source Professor Chin-Fa Lee
(Distinguished professor and Head of the Department of Chemistry at NCHU)

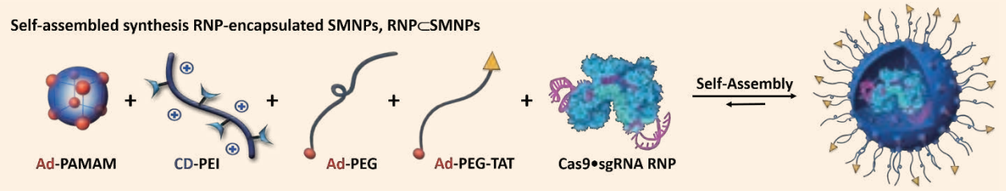
The clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats (CRISPR)-associated protein 9 (CRISPR/Cas9) system has been rapidly shifted from its natural role as an RNA-guided genetic adaptive immune system in prokaryotes to a robust site-specific gene editing method. The CRISPR/-Cas9 system consists of two critical components which is the Cas9 endonuclease and a short single-guide RNA (sgRNA) which forms a Cas9•sgRNA ribonucleoprotein (RNP) complex. Based on a simple base-pairing mechanism, the RNP identifies and cuts a targeted DNA in the genome, which leads to a double-strand break (DSB) at the specified location. The Endogenous DNA repair mechanisms such as the non-homologous end joining (NHEJ) pathway, leads to insertions or deletions (indels) that results in gene disruption. Gene disruption via CRISPR/Cas9 editing has been frequently applied to knock down genes in cell lines and animal models. Alternatively, complete gene knockout can be achieved via CRISPR/Cas9-mediated gene deletion, where a pair of sgRNA targeting two ends of a given gene is used in the presence of Cas9 protein to induce two DSBs at the targeted sites where subsequent NHEJ-based DNA repair enables precise removal of the gene. In contrast to gene disruption, CRISPR/Cas9-mediated gene deletion offers a different gene knockdown solution capable of removing a DNA sequence (up to 30 million bp) associated with monogenetic diseases, like Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) and Leber congenital amaurosis type 10 (LCA10).


Photo source | Prof. Chin-Fa Lee, National Chung Hsing University

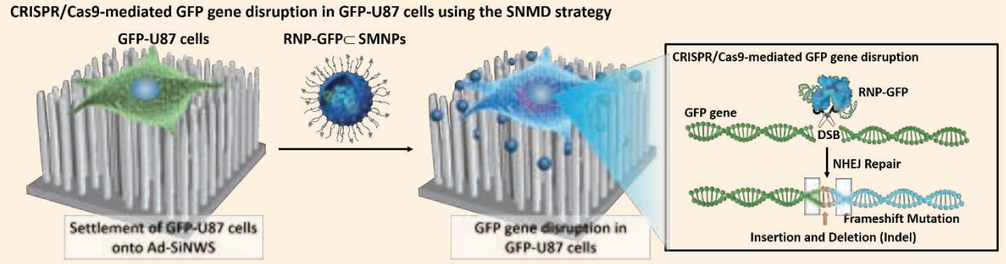
Chin-Fa Lee, a Lifetime distinguished professor and Head of the Department of Chemistry at NCHU, collaborates with scientists from UCLA and the result was recently published in “Small”, an authoritative journal in this field. This technology platform provides solutions for the clinical treatment of patients with genetic diseases of Duchenne muscular dystrophy and also showed a greater gene deletion efficiency in the human cardiomyocyte cell line (AC16) induced pluripotent stem cells and mesenchymal stem cells.



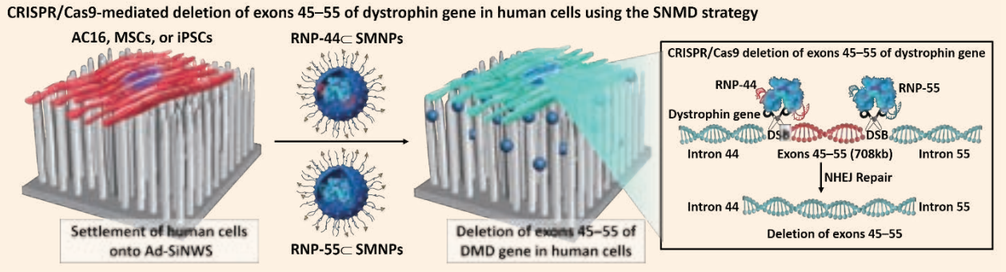





Self-assembled synthesis of RNP-SMNPs




CRISPR/Cas9 mediated SNMD system for GFP-U87 as a model cell line




CRISPR/Cas9 mediated SNMD system for AC16, MSCs in human cell lines

We have successfully demonstrated the feasibility of applying a SNMD-based strategy to deliver Cas9 RNP complexes into target cells, enabling CRISPR/Cas9-mediated gene disruption and deletion. This SNMD strategy leverages the local enrichment of RNP⊂SMNPs from surrounding medium onto nanowires of Ad-SiNWS. As cells come in contact with the nanostructured substrates, physical interactions between nanowires and cell membranes facilitates the uptake of RNP⊂SMNPs. In our previous work, we found that the potential of SNMD-based strategy is an effective delivery platform to perform HBB/ GFP knocking into the AAVS1 locus via homology-directed repair pathway in hematologic cells to cure hemoglobinopathies. Here, through co-delivering a pair of RNP complexes, we achieved high efficiency of large deletion of exons 45–55 (708 kb) in the dystrophin gene via NHEJ pathway in human adherent cells, including AC16 cells, MSCs, and iPSCs, offering a general clinical therapeutic solution for DMD. This is the longest gene deletion record using non-viral vectors in the literatures. Future studies will focus on validating the feasibility of this system to deliver CRISPR/Cas9 systems including RNP, DNA plasmids, and mRNA to correct mutated genes, resulting in broadening the types of diseases that could be targeted by our approach. To explore the potential in vivo applications of this platform, we are planning to develop an implantable nanosubstrate that is biodegradable and flexible (e.g., based on polymer nanoneedles) to enable implantation into target organs. This work is currently in progress.




# HARNESS


Illustrations in “Harness” sketched and colored by
Ching-Yang Siang (Ava), Office of International Affairs, National Chung Hsing University

# Harness Global Perspective to Local Agricultural Business: The Importance and Future Trends of International Agriculture

Source Professor Shaw-Yhi Hwang (Deputy Dean of College of Agriculture and Natural Resources)
Yu-Ying Chen (Jennifer), Office of International Affairs, NCHU

Agriculture is the backbone of economy in many countries. It is responsible for the majority of the world's food and textiles. It's noteworthy that focusing on agricultural development is one of the most effective strategies to accelerate the growth and improve the country's international status. Besides, Jim Rogers, an American investor and financial commentator said that he "will continually bet on silver, agriculture and energy over the next decade(2021)." Particularly, international agriculture in the 21st century is increasingly prominent in the global market.

IBPA 2016 Graduate Photo, in front of the program building

**IMPA & IBPA,**
**the Pioneer of NCHU Globalization**

The International Master Program of Agriculture (IMPA) and the International Bachelor Program of Agribusiness (IBPA) of NCHU are the very first English-taught Programs in NCHU. Founded in 2008, IMPA is a two-year Master's program combining theoretical study, practical knowledge and field experience. IMPA offers all its curricula in English and allows students to choose their thesis advisers from any institutes in the College. The program also provides an integrated agricultural education that enables students to enhance their awareness of global affairs and strengthen their ability to international engagement. The Ministry of Education evaluated IMPA as a "highly recommended" English-taught program.

IMPA and IBPA students visited Taiwan Tea Boutique



IMPA & IBPA 2020 joint Christmas party

International Bachelor Program of Agribusiness (IBPA) is a four-year undergraduate degree program established in 2011, emphasizing an interdisciplinary approach which provides future agribusiness professionals with both theoretical and practical insights into agribusiness administration and management. IBPA offers courses in a broad range of agricultural-related fields, incorporating academic areas such as Crop and Animal Production, Natural Resources Conservation and Management, Agricultural Economics and Rural Development. In addition, IBPA lays emphasis on enterprise financial management and encourages students to travel abroad for advanced research and study.

**Major features, highlights and benefits**

- English-taught Curriculum: Best implementation of EMI (English as the Medium of Instruction) in a small-class learning environment.
- Transnational Education: International classmates, overseas visiting professors, international speakers, overseas exchanges and internship programs.
- Abundant resources of business partners and linkages: Agriculture industry/business visits and internships.
- Extension Services: Global rural volunteer program.
- Competence building: Cultivating students' competitiveness in the global job market.

IMPA 2020 graduate group photo

**Future perspective**

Students from both IMPA and IBPA are expected to acquire proficiency in English and gain global perspective during rigorous trainings in order to assist local agribusiness industry in taking advantage of global trends and opportunities and further outshine others in their future workplace.

IBPA students are doing their Agro-Eco Tour Project in the paddy field

*Quest for Changes*

Insight•Life | Tsai Jung-Yu's Art Exhibition
Quest for Changes Series
18.5x19x25cm
Ceramist / Tsai Jung-Yu



中興大學藝術中心

*The Art Center of National Chung Hsing University*

## Exploring the Craft Trends in Taiwan via Art Exhibitions

The Art Center of NCHU was established to immerse everyone in a great atmosphere of art through exhibitions, lectures, workshops and diverse collections that provide opportunities to nurture our students with international visions of art and their interests through social engagements. We averagely plan eight various art exhibitions every year, offer people quick access to appreciate numerous valuable art works and also provide a great resource of educational materials for school learning and community activities. This time, we are going to present two of Taiwanese craft masters' art works.

Artist / Tsai Jung-Yu

*Tolerance Series* / 2008 / 44.5x44.5x16.4cm

**Insight•Life: Tsai Jung-Yu's Art Exhibition**
Tsai Jung-Yu is a master who has accomplishments in ceramics and is widely recognized domestically and internationally. Tsai has been active in creating ceramic art for more than 45 years and received numerous awards. His creation began from the pottery jars used in daily life but is never limited by traditional forms and the application of glaze. With his understanding of art and life, he has climbed up to an apex of art in Taiwan, establishing himself as a model. The theme of Tsai's ceramics is always based on domestic cultures, and boldly fused with different cultures, to create his own unique style. Furthermore, his adventurous experiments with glazes and the versatile shapes of containers are all brought into full play by his distinctive approach of using mat glaze, forming the

*Wood Firing-Simplicity and Honesty Series*
16.5x16.5x10.9cm

characteristics of his works. This exhibition leads visitors to view the vitality of art from Tsai's works of ceramic, painting, photography and to demonstrate the aesthetic of "Not Monotonous".

*Soaring*

Bamboo Movement |
Lin Hsiu-Feng's Bamboo Weaving Exhibition
Soaring / 2018
Bamboo, Lacquer
240x130x310cm



Artist/ Lin Hsiu-Feng

**Bamboo Movement:**
**Lin Hsiu-Feng's Bamboo Weaving Exhibition**

"Bamboo Weaving" is an important Taiwanese traditional craft that presents the accumulation of our ancestors' wisdom and experience passed down over the generations. Through the stacking and derivation of different eras, groups, regions and needs, it has created a rich and diverse modern bamboo weaving style, and moved towards to the development of bamboo weaving aesthetics. Lin Hsiu-Feng is an outstanding Taiwanese bamboo weaving artist who achieved the recognition of the 4th Da Dun Arts and Crafts Masters, and the important preserver of Intangible Cultural Heritage: Bamboo Weaving. Lin's works strongly reveal her inner dialogues, cultural concerns, and transformation of attitude towards life, in addition to the external technique, application of media, variation of format, warm hand-feel, and natural and distinctive fabric and texture. The valuable artworks are leading us to see the beauty of change in forms and the incredible skill of bamboo weaving, especially the large-scale installations that bring us a new vision of bamboo weaving art.

*Crowd* / 2018
Bamboo, Rattan, Lacquer,
Linen, Fabric, Leather
100x100x255cm

*Fusion* / 2020
Bamboo, Ceramics,
Wood, Lacquer
Ceramist / Hung Yen-Ming

*Remerging Glamour* / 1999
Bamboo, Rattan,
Wood, Lacquer
60x35x55cm