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**Igniting Innovative Answers to Five Social Issues
by Local Entrepreneurial Young Minds
"Citi Presents IdeaPOP! 2024" Crowns Champion Team
Advocating Innovative Solutions to Youth Life Planning**

The "Citi Presents IdeaPOP! 2024" Hong Kong secondary school students startup pitch competition, organized by Hong Kong-registered charity SEED Foundation and proudly sponsored by Citi, has successfully concluded with "TechXplorers" from ELCHK Lutheran Academy emerging as the champion team. The team distinguished themselves from the top 10 finalist teams, and presented a bold and executable creative solution focusing on the social category of "education", winning unanimous approval from a judging panel of eminent executives from their respective industries, including representatives from Citi, Alibaba (HK) Entrepreneurs Fund, VCA Capital, WeLab, and Social Ventures Hong Kong.

The champion team, TechXplorers, from ELCHK Lutheran Academy, tackled the challenge of youth life planning with an innovative solution. They proposed the "Orbit" platform, which leverages gamification and the concept of metaverse for students who are uncertain about their future career to have a taster of undergraduate-level introductory programs and attain digital certificate that are recognized by job-seeking platforms. (Please refer to appendix for a full list of Top 10 finalists and awardees with details.)

Aveline San, CEO and Head of Banking for Citi Hong Kong & Macau, said, "Citi has a long history of driving and fostering innovation, including the development of innovative solutions to address social challenges. We are delighted to collaborate with SEED Foundation on 'IdeaPOP! 2024' to cultivate social innovation and entrepreneurship among youth in Hong Kong. Throughout the program, students not only demonstrated their extraordinary creativity, but also curiosity, empathy and determination for social betterment. The future of our society rests on the young generation. We look forward to continuing our partnership with like-minded organizations to drive positive changes."

Cindy Chow, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of Alibaba Hong Kong Entrepreneurs Fund (AEF), said, "I am pleased that this year's 'IdeaPOP!' has reached another major milestone of connecting creative young entrepreneurial minds with five NGO / social enterprises. During the event, we discovered the boundless creative imagination of local secondary school students and found viable solutions for several significant social issues. As a founding sponsor of SEED Foundation and program sponsor of 'IdeaPOP!', we will continue to uphold our belief in providing

young people with investment capital and strategic guidance to help them pursue their dreams and achieve their goals.”

Leveraging the success of last year's event, "IdeaPOP! 2024" has not only introduced the revival pitch but also added several new elements to enrich the program. This year's focus includes five pivotal social issues: animal welfare, education, elderly care, environmental protection and local culture preservation. Collaborating with distinguished non-governmental organizations and social enterprises, including the Hong Kong Saving Cat and Dog Association (HKSCDA), Ednovators, Christian Family Service Centre (CFSC), WWF-Hong Kong and Eldage, the event introduces an in-depth social workshop on these topics to provide participants with more profound understanding and insights.

Since the application period began last September, "IdeaPOP! 2024" has seen as many as 165 applications, with 80 teams successfully being shortlisted. After undergoing a 10-week online mentorship program and the semi-pitch, the leading eight teams have advanced directly to the final pitch, while the remaining 12 teams competed in a revival pitch for the last two spots in the final.

Ken Lo, CEO of SEED Foundation, said, “SEED Foundation has always been dedicated to promoting equitable digital and soft skills education to secondary school students, thereby cultivating digital-savviness and entrepreneurial spirit among local talents. The successful organization of ‘IdeaPOP! 2024’ highlights the boundless creativity within the local secondary school community, their deep understanding of various social issues, and their practical and innovative solutions. Through this event, we aim to ignite creativity while creating more societal value, enabling participating students to build confidence and collaboration skills, enhance their problem-solving abilities, and develop professional-standard business proposal that balances theory with practice.”

"I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the 35 mentors who have shared valuable insights with our participating teams, incubating all the magnificent ideas we heard at the rounds of pitches. My sincere appreciation also goes to the five judges who participated in the final pitch. These include Aveline San, CEO and Head of Banking, Citi Hong Kong & Macau; Cindy Chow, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, Alibaba (Hong Kong) Entrepreneurs Fund; Danny Lee, Chairman of the Board, SEED Foundation, and Managing Partner, VCA Capital; Ernest Leung, Group Chief Operating Officer, WeLab; and Francis Ngai, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Social Ventures Hong Kong. Despite their busy schedules, they took the time to attend and contribute significantly to the perfection of the ‘IdeaPOP! 2024’ event."

Apart from the champion team “TechXplorers” from ELCHK Lutheran Academy, the other participating secondary school teams also delivered outstanding performances in the finals (please refer to the appendix for the list of the top 10 finalist teams). Their proposals not only addressed societal benefits but also showcased creativity and innovation, while considering feasibility and sustainability. At the semi pitch, teams with the highest scores in the judging criteria

of “Creativity and Innovation” and “Pitch Performance” among all teams in their division were also awarded “Excellence in Innovation Award” and “Excellence in Presentation Award”, respectively.

Event Photos:



****Photo 1**:** The champion team of the "Citi Presents IdeaPOP! 2024" Hong Kong secondary school students startup pitch competition, hailing from ELCHK Lutheran Academy with the project theme “TechXplorers. Pictured from right are students from the winning team, and the award presenter Aveline San, CEO and Head of Banking, Citi Hong Kong & Macau.



****Photo 2**:** Aveline San, CEO and Head of Banking, Citi Hong Kong & Macau, addressed the audience on the Final Pitch Day.



****Photo 3**:** Judging panel of “Citi Presents IdeaPOP! 2024”, consists of Ernest Leung, Group Chief Operating Officer, WeLab; Cindy Chow, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, Alibaba (Hong Kong) Entrepreneurs Fund; Aveline San, CEO and Head of Banking, Citi Hong Kong & Macau; Danny Lee, Chairman of the Board, SEED Foundation, and Managing Partner, VCA Capital; and Francis Ngai, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Social Ventures Hong Kong (seated on the front row from left to right), took group photos with NGO / social enterprise partners, mentors and all students at the Final Pitch.

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About SEED Foundation

SEED Foundation, a registered charity organisation in Hong Kong, aims to future-proof our youths in the technology-driven economy by delivering a unique, equal-access ICT education program that builds students’ expert knowledge and use of technology tools, enabling them to capture future opportunities in the digital world, and in the process, provide the talent pipeline for a digital Hong Kong. SEED Foundation is supported by Alibaba (HK) Entrepreneurs Fund as founding sponsor, and Lee Hysan Foundation as strategic partner and sponsor. For more information, please visit www.seedfoundation.hk.

About Citi

Citi is a pre-eminent banking partner for institutions with cross-border needs, a global leader in wealth management and a valued personal bank in its home market of the United States. Citi does business in nearly 160 countries and jurisdictions, providing corporations, governments, investors, institutions and individuals with a broad range of financial products and services.

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Appendix :

10 Finalists in “Citi Presents IdeaPOP! 2024”

Award(s)	Team Name	School Name	Introduction
Champion; Excellence in Innovation Award	TechXplorers	ELCHK Lutheran Academy	“Orbit” leverages gamification and the concept of metaverse for students who are unsure of their future career to have a taster of undergraduate-level introductory programs and attain digital certificate that are recognized by job-seeking platforms.
1 st Runner-up; Audience Vote Award; Excellence in Presentation Award	COMPLUS	Sacred Heart Canossian College	The COMPLUS team, addressing the issue that 40% of solid waste in Hong Kong is food waste, aims to establish an ecosystem that allows users to compost kitchen waste into fertilizer from the comfort of their homes. This fertilizer can then be supplied to organic farms or manufacturers which use food waste-derived materials for production, thereby adding value to kitchen waste.
2 nd Runner-up; Excellence in Innovation Award; Excellence in Presentation Award	Talent Explorer	TWGHs Kap Yan Directors' College	Using a VR experience platform, Talent Explorer provides students with equal access to interactive career experience activities. Followed up by activities such as personality tests and student reflections, the platform will match students with suitable internship and training opportunities.
3 rd Runner-up; Excellence in Innovation Award; Excellence in Presentation Award	再見你 Stand By Me	St. Mary's Canossian College	"Stand By Me" utilizes artificial intelligence to generate farewell audio messages, video messages, and even chat conversations using only a small amount of data about the deceased, such as photos, videos, and voice tones from their lifetime. This technology helps bereaved families find solace and move beyond their

			grief.
Excellence in Innovation Award; Excellence in Presentation Award	智援手*	St. Stephen's Girls' College	The team has identified various challenges that the elderly face when using smartphones, with severe issues potentially leading to their resistance to technology. "智援手" utilizes artificial intelligence and voice input to understand the difficulties, then provides instant assistance through a specially designed electromagnetic panel and finger sleeves, guiding them to press the relevant commands on the screen and teaching them how to perform the required functions.
/	Multable	Ying Wa Girls' School	Multable is a multi-functional table which will elevate the classroom environment to suit the comfort of students. The set of table and chair is ergonomically designed for prolonged sitting, and made with long-lasting materials that is environmentally friendly.
Excellence in Innovation Award; Excellence in Presentation Award	MedleyBot	Ying Wa Girls' School	The intelligent pill dispensing machine, MedleyBot, can store up to 15 different types of pills for the elderly, automatically distribute them on a scheduled basis, and even cut them to the required dosage. It timely reminds the elderly to take their medications, ensuring they take the correct dosage on time, thereby reducing the pressure on the healthcare system.
Excellence in Presentation Award	收垃神通 *	St. Paul's Convent School (Secondary Section)	In response to the issue of public recycling bins often overflowing and affecting sanitation, the team hopes to collaborate with relevant government departments to deploy a recycling bin called "收垃神通" in public markets across

			Hong Kong. This bin, equipped with computer vision and Internet of Things (IoT) technology, can automatically sort waste. It also allows relevant departments to monitor the status of each recycling bin in real-time via a dashboard and obtain the most efficient collection routes.
/	AYHK	Po Leung Kuk Mrs. Ma Kam Ming-Cheung Fook Sien College	The AYHK team has designed a solution that uses VR headsets in conjunction with an app, allowing young people to explore different careers and understand their interests and abilities for clearer future planning. The solution assigns different tasks based on the job users select and guides them to completion, through which users can learn about the actual scope of work and skills required for those professions.
Excellence in Presentation Award	Learn2Earn	La Salle College	Learn2Earn is an app which aims to help students maintain motivation and stay productive in their study by providing analytics on their study progress, and rebating their subscription fee for an amount in proportion to number of questions answered correctly.

*Without English Project Titles