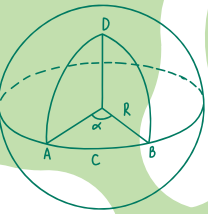
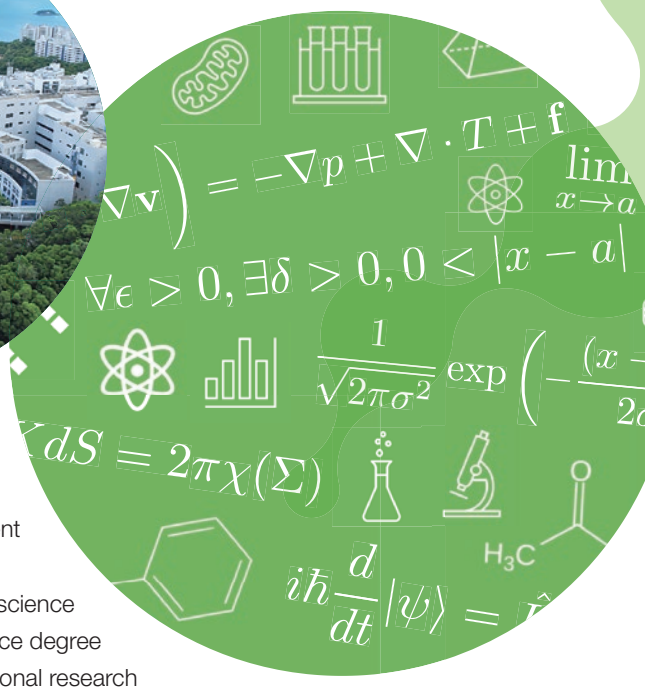
香港科技大學
THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



International Research Enrichment (IRE) Program







SMALL COHORT • EARLY LAB ACCESS • GLOBAL RESEARCH

Established in 2014, the International Research Enrichment (IRE) program is Hong Kong's longest-running structured undergraduate program designed specifically to prepare science students for research careers. It combines a strong science degree with guided projects, close faculty mentoring, an international research placement and opportunities to present your work.

Curious about how discoveries are made? IRE gives you room to explore before choosing a major, then supports you as you grow from student to young researcher.

FROM CURIOSITY TO DISCOVERY

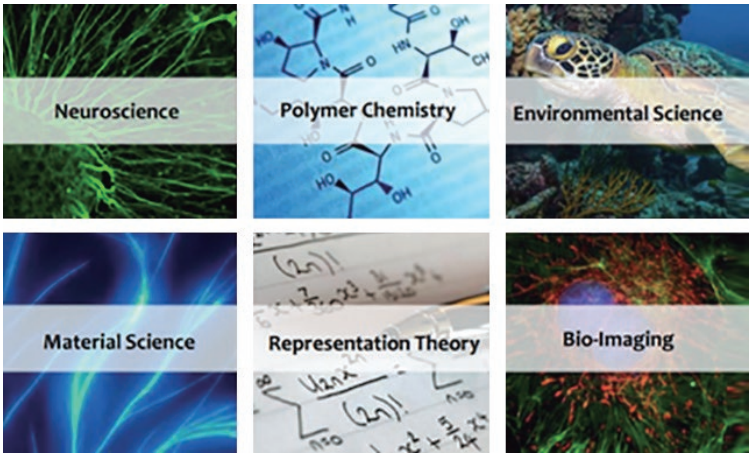
PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF RESEARCHERS.



School of 理學院 Science

Program Highlights

- **Explore before you specialize:**
  choose from Biochemistry and Cell Biology, Biotechnology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Ocean Science and Technology, and Physics.
- **A deliberately small cohort:**
  class size is intentionally capped to support high resource availability, personalized faculty mentoring and early laboratory access.
- **Participation and presentation at IRE mini conferences:**
  share your research output and exchange ideas with fellow students and professors.
- **International experience with support:**
  join an overseas summer research placement, with dedicated scholarships available to eligible students.
- **BY GRADUATION**
  You will have built a research portfolio, worked in research groups, completed advanced projects, presented findings, and experienced an international laboratory.



Explore ambitious questions across six science majors.

Program Structure

IRE adds a 21-credit research-enrichment sequence to your science degree, helping you move steadily from exploration to independent research.

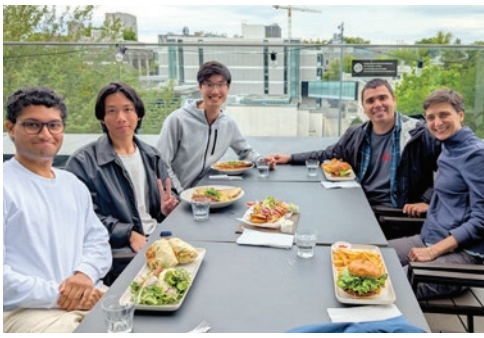
STAGE	FOCUS	MILESTONES
YEAR 1	Explore	SCIE 1500 Guided Study • UROP • Meet Research Groups
YEAR 2	Choose Direction	SCIE 2500 • Choose a Major • Develop Faculty Connections
YEAR 3	Deepen Research	SCIE 3500 Research Project • Prepare for an 8+ Week Overseas Placement
SUMMER + YEAR 4	Go Global & Communicate	SCIE 3900 Overseas Research • SCIE 4500 • LANG 3027 • IRE Mini-conference

+ 6 credits of 2000-level or above Science electives. Total additional credits: 21.

Overseas Research Internship

IRE students join overseas laboratories for at least eight weeks, learning new methods, working across cultures and building the independence expected of future researchers.

RECENT HOSTS	Cambridge • Cornell • CERN • EPFL • NUS • Toronto • UBC • and more
2025 PhD OFFERS	Harvard • Stanford • Toronto • Northwestern • Cornell • UC Irvine • UC Davis
RESEARCH SUPPORT	Dedicated scholarships help eligible IRE students undertake overseas research



Building connections with fellow researchers at the University of British Columbia, Canada





Career Prospects

From undergraduate study to a faculty role often takes more than a decade. Since IRE began in 2014, its earliest cohorts are only now reaching the stage where independent research careers become visible.

UNDERGRADUATE
4 Years

PhD TRAINING
Typically 4–6 Years

POSTDOCTORAL
Often 2–5+ Years

FACULTY / RESEARCH LEADERSHIP
The Long-term Goal

The long journey is beginning to bear fruit. IRE alumni now conduct research at institutions including Princeton, Cornell, Caltech and Johns Hopkins. Dr Tsz-Kiu Aaron Chow is an Assistant Professor of Mathematics at HKUST; Dr Peiwei Chen is an HHMI Hanna Gray Fellow and postdoctoral researcher at Cornell.



Words from IRE Graduates

The IRE program gave me the opportunity, as an undergraduate, to experience what frontier mathematical research is really like. Under the guidance of my IRE supervisor, I learned mathematics in a way similar to a PhD student—through guided reading of recent research literature and presenting what I had learned in seminars. The IRE Summer Overseas Research Program also provided invaluable support by connecting me with overseas institutions and offering financial assistance. These experiences broadened my academic network, exposed me to different research environments, and helped me develop mathematical maturity at a very early stage of my journey towards becoming a researcher.

Dr Tsz-Kiu Aaron CHOW
IRE graduate • PhD, Columbia University • Postdoctoral Fellow, MIT • Assistant Professor of Mathematics, HKUST



I was fortunate to have wonderful mentors at HKUST who encouraged me to pursue research, which led me to join the first cohort of the International Research Enrichment (IRE) Program. That experience truly changed the course of my career--it gave me the chance to experience scientific research in a safe, inspiring, and supportive environment, and that first taste of success gave me the confidence to dream bigger. From there, everything seemed to fall into place: I went on to pursue a PhD at Caltech and later a postdoctoral fellowship at Cornell University. Looking back, I am incredibly grateful for the mentorship, encouragement, and opportunities I received through IRE, which helped shape both my confidence as a young scientist and the path I have followed ever since.

Dr Peiwei (Charles) CHEN
IRE first cohort • PhD, Caltech • HHMI Hanna Gray Fellow • Postdoctoral Researcher in Evolutionary Biology, Cornell University

Admissions Requirements

Students can apply for the IRE program through direct choice in the JUPAS / Non-JUPAS admissions scheme, or apply for transfer from the regular Science (Group A) program or Science (Group B) program of the School of Science into IRE program after their first year of study. Students interested in IRE program are encouraged to include both *IRE program (JS5101)* and either *Science (Group A) program (JS5102)* or *Science (Group B) program (JS5103)* in their JUPAS / Non-JUPAS program choices.

JUPAS	Program-based entry: JS5101. HKDSE applicants with one of M1/M2, Biology, Chemistry or Physics.
Non-JUPAS	Applicants with international qualifications and one senior-level subject in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics or Physics.
AFTER YEAR 1	Students in Science (Group A) or Science (Group B) may apply to transfer into IRE

JOIN IRE PROGRAM
GO BEYOND YOUR LIMITS
FIND TRANSFORMATION HERE

School of Science – Undergraduate Admissions
Tel : (852) 2358 5065
Email : ugscience@ust.hk
Website : science.hkust.edu.hk
Facebook : @hkust.science
Instagram : @hkust.ug.science

IRE Program
Website : science.hkust.edu.hk/programs/ire_program

IRE website

SSCI Linktree



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