World University Presidents Forum: 36 Partner Institutions Discuss Higher-Education Transformation and Sustainable Development

Campus focus

To celebrate the 75th anniversary of Tamkang University, a delegation of 67 distinguished guests from 36 partner universities across 11 countries visited the university on November 8 to offer their congratulations. At 7:50 a.m., the delegation toured the newly renovated University Commons, where the names of 285 global sister universities are engraved on the surrounding granite. Guests enthusiastically searched for the names of their own institutions and took a commemorative group photo filled with smiles and excitement, symbolizing lasting friendship and shared prosperity. The delegation then attended the Anniversary Celebration Ceremony at the Shao-Mo Memorial Sports Center and enjoyed a lunch banquet at the Ching-Sheng International Conference Hall, followed by a campus tour of the Tamsui Campus and the TKU History Gallery in the afternoon.

At 2:10 p.m., the MOU Signing Ceremony was held in the Ching-Sheng International Conference Hall. President Huan-Chao Keh and UMass Lowell Chancellor Julie Chen signed a 2+2 dual bachelor's degree agreement between the Chemistry Departments of both institutions. Vice President for International Affairs Hsiao-Chuan Chen and University of Queensland Deputy Vice-Chancellor Brett Lovegrove signed a 3+2 bachelor–master dual degree agreement between TKU's Department of International Tourism Management and UQ's Business School.

The World University Presidents Forum, themed "Digital Transformation and Sustainable Development of Higher Education", focused on the global direction of AI and sustainability. The forum was chaired by President Huan-Chao Keh and Executive Vice President Chun-Hung Lin. Featured keynote speakers included four sister university presidents: C. Muthamizhchelvan, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, India Yuko Takahashi, Tsuda University, Japan Julie Chen, University of Massachusetts Lowell, USA

Alojzy Z. Nowak, University of Warsaw, Poland Together with TKU's Vice President for Academic Affairs Hui-Huang Hsu, they shared global perspectives on higher education innovation and future development strategies.

First to take the stage, Vice President Hui-Huang Hsu shared how Tamkang University integrates AI into university governance and talent cultivation, advancing its development vision of "AI + SDGs = ∞" & "ESG + AI = ∞." He emphasized that universities should leverage digital innovation to integrate education with social responsibility, use AI to enhance academic research and administrative decision-making, and cultivate future talent with global vision and sustainability-oriented thinking, enabling technology to become a key force in advancing education.

C. Muthamizhchelvan discussed the digital transformation of higher education and the construction of a sustainable future. He emphasized that digital sustainability must be grounded in the interconnected foundations of the economy, society, and environment. He further explored how institutions can enhance innovation and global impact through digital transformation and partnerships with international and industry collaborators, advancing sustainability through the combined power of technology and education.

Yuko Takahashi delivered a keynote titled "Empowering Women for Global Leadership," in which she shared how Tsuda University cultivates women with competencies in AI, mathematics, information technology, and languages, enabling them to excel in STEM fields. She noted that the university emphasizes small-class instruction and strong faculty–student interaction, and enhances students' creativity, problem-solving abilities, and global perspectives through exchanges with partner institutions worldwide. Guided by the founding vision of Tsuda Umeko, the university continues to advance gender equality and international collaboration, nurturing women leaders who think independently, act courageously, and aspire to make a positive impact on the world.

Julie Chen presented her university's innovative educational model, emphasizing its commitment to ensuring that every student gains at least

one career-connected experience, such as an internship, cooperative education, or research opportunity, before graduation. By integrating theory with real-world practice, the institution safeguards the long-term value of education. She noted that this commitment enables students to apply what they have learned in authentic professional environments, while also strengthening collaborations between the university and industry partners, contributing to stable enrollment growth despite a nationwide decline in college admissions.

Alojzy Z. Nowak delivered a keynote titled "Will AI Replace Universities?", exploring the relationship between AI and higher education through the lenses of financialization, the COVID-19 pandemic, de-globalization, and accelerating technological change. He questioned whether AI could truly possess the passion and creativity required for research, and emphasized that universities remain irreplaceable as hubs for human interaction, talent cultivation, and innovation.

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