

# EXPANSION OF HIGER EDUCATION AS A BRIDGE TO A REAL CAREER PATH

## INTRODUCTION TO THE EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS GAP:

The employability skills gap is the disparity between the skills employers need and what higher education institutions provide, including technical skills and vital soft skills—like communication, decision-making, problem-solving, and teamwork(Saini, 2022). Research shows that colleges only teach 50-60% of the skills required by industries(Tan et al., 2021). Closing the employability skills gap is vital for individual career success and improving organizational performance and economic growth.

## ACTIVITY MODE



## OBJECTIVE OF MODE

- ✓ Bridging the gap between theoretical and practical needs of companies. (Butler, et al., 2019)
- ✓ Enhance employment competitiveness and enterprise suitability
- ✓ Establishing long-term co-operation between universities, enterprises and various organisations.

## ADVANTAGES OF "BRIDGE"

- Enhance professionalism, like soft skills (Paisey, &Paisey, 2010)
- Helping to clarify career direction
- Accommodates people from all fields.
- Provide more opportunities to ease the pressure of job hunting.
- Smoothly connect with future related jobs
- Multi-resource collaboration: Gather small forces to do influential projects.

## COMPARISON OF SIGC AND WZQ

	HKU SIGC	WZQ
Organizer & Objectives	HKU, FOSS; integrating academic and practical experience to cultivate social innovation.	WZQ Bridge to Chins Foundation; fostering youth leaders, promoting local practice and community development
Participant Group	Undergraduate students (academic-oriented)	30 participants from various disciplines (architecture, medicine, social sciences, etc.), emphasizing integration and project design.
Practical Focus	Social issues (e.g., SDGs), indirectly serve the community and global context.	Youth development through rural revitalization in Hong Kong (4 projects)
Evaluation & Outcomes	Academic capabilities + workplace performance	Project execution, social impact (engagement data, community feedback) + dissemination outcomes (publications, documentaries)
Resources & Advantages	Academic mentors from the university, support from partner organizations; suitable for academic and career integration. (HKU SIGC Team, 2024)	Funding from the foundation, cross-disciplinary mentors, strong practical focus, and social innovation; suitable for development in the rural revitalization field.

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## FEEDBACK OF MEMEBRS FROM WZQ LEADERSHIP LESSONS

- The experience, skills and techniques gained from the project will be useful for future work, study or life. --Rating 4.5/5
- Stimulate a sense of social responsibility, promote social activity engagement.
- Encourage innovation. Like making architecture model, transforming derelict spaces, organising orienteering games, designing creative products.
- Skills acquired for standing out in the workplace.
- Improvement of communication, organisation, leadership and coordination skills in team work.
- Participants from Various backgrounds with different personality, abilities, team members appreciating and learning from each other.
- The project has contributed to personal growth (e.g. resilience, presentation skills, positive thinking, adaptability, dealing with others, etc.). --Rating 4.42/5
- 15 out of 30 team members entering the WZQ Youth Commission for further development and networking.

## CHALLENGES & RECOMMENDATIONS

