

**For Immediate Release**

## **Gender Equality Summit Reveals Hong Kong Has Fallen Behind its Asia Counterparts**

-The Women's Foundation's 2019 Gender Equality Summit cites out of date or vague laws, insufficient child and elderly care and traditional, deep rooted conventions and bias as some of the key reasons why Hong Kong is trailing behind the rest of Asia in closing gender gap



Photo Caption: Fiona Nott CEO of The Women's Foundation

**Hong Kong, September 27, 2019:** Today, to mark its 15-year anniversary, The Women's Foundation – the leading non-profit organisation dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls in Hong Kong – held its first ever Gender Equality Summit at the HKEX Connect Hall.

Over 400 attendees from businesses, government bodies, NGOs, youth organisations and academia were present at this half-day Summit to move the dial forward for gender equality.

The aim of the summit was to bring together an influential community to brainstorm collaborative solutions to advance opportunities and progress for women and girls in Hong Kong.



At the summit The Women's Foundation addressed why immediate action needs to be taken by unveiling some shocking statistics regarding the current state of gender equality in Hong Kong:

- 22% gender pay gap
- 30% of Hong Kong women drop out of the workforce due to care responsibilities
- Over 50% of employers won't hire women with children
- Women represent over 85% of single parents living in poverty
- 1 in 7 women experience sexual assault; 90% do not report it
- Boys are four times more likely to pursue STEM related education than girls

Driving the much needed conversations and debates were more than 30 speakers from Hong Kong and further afield including; Budming, media specialist, film critic and columnist; Chan Yuen-han, Chairperson, Women's Commission; Nicole Chou, Head of e-Commerce, Greater China, Facebook; Ricky Chu, Chairperson, Equal Opportunities Commission; Dr Jane Horan, Founder of The Horan Group; Susan Hutchison, Managing Director, Head of Human Resources & Operations (Asia Pacific Region), KKR; Kate Jenkins, Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission; Dr Puja Kapai, Associate Professor of Law, University of Hong Kong; Chip Tsao, columnist, broadcaster and writer; Dr Lauren Wilcox, Deputy Director, University of Cambridge Centre for Gender Studies and Linda Wong, Executive Director, Association Concerning Sexual Violence Against Women.

### **The Future Is Equality**

Speakers inspired and challenged the audience with eight sessions discussing; closing the gender gap, a future without sexual violence or harassment, gender and technology, skills and tools that the next generation needed, amongst others.

According to the speakers, in order to forge ahead and accelerate the critical gender equality issue in Hong Kong, the following is needed:

- The government to work with bodies such as The Women's Foundation to address the issues from a regulatory, legal and policy perspective
- For all business owners and management to continually address their working environments and ensure the needs of its female workforce are addressed
- Alongside this, addressing support for men who choose to share the domestic responsibilities
- For society to work together to eradicate gender stereotypes for the enhancement of all women and girls in Hong Kong

Shirley Lau, Form 5 student stated that she hoped in the future everyone can choose their occupation based on their preference and that choice is respected and not judged by society. She hoped that women who are over 30 and not married are not negatively categorised, and she hoped that in the future of Hong Kong, people are recognised for their ability, not their gender.



Fiona Nott, CEO of The Women's Foundation commented, "Creating the right environment for significant, measurable change is paramount, and today we proudly set the tone for what The Women's Foundation is looking to achieve in terms of making gender equality a reality in Hong Kong. Through dynamic conversations we are bringing the gender equality narrative to the forefront and acknowledging the responsibilities we all have to speak out and act for this vitally important issue in Hong Kong."

Over the coming months, The Women's Foundation will continue to work to improve the lives of women and girls in Hong Kong through research, advocacy, programmes and events including the Women's Foundation Gala Dinner on November 7.

Photos:



Photo Caption (left to right): Henny Sender, Chief Correspondent for International Finance, Financial Times; Kate Jenkins, Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission



Photo Caption (left to right): Dr Jane Horan, Founder of The Horan Group; John Killian, Group Chief Financial Officer, HKEX; Elaine Tsung, Founder & CEO, Garage Society; Philippa Vizzone, Co-Head of Asia Pacific Equity Research, Goldman Sachs; Dr Vivian Lou, Director, Sau Po Centre on Ageing, University of Hong Kong



Photo Caption (left to right): Denise Tsang, Hong Kong News Editor, SCMP; Chan Yuen Han, Chairperson, Women's Commission; Budming, Media specialist, film critic and columnist; Chip Tsao, Columnist, broadcaster and writer



Photo Caption: Live illustrations on gender equality

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### [About The Women's Foundation](#)

The Women's Foundation (TWF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls in Hong Kong. We aspire to conduct ground-breaking research, to run innovative and impactful community programmes and we engage in education and advocacy in the pursuit of three main goals: challenging gender stereotypes, increasing the number of women in decision-making positions, and empowering women in poverty to achieve a better quality of life for themselves and their families.

For more information on The Women's Foundation, please visit [www.twfhk.org](http://www.twfhk.org)

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