

# ENTREPRENEURIAL SPOTLIGHT

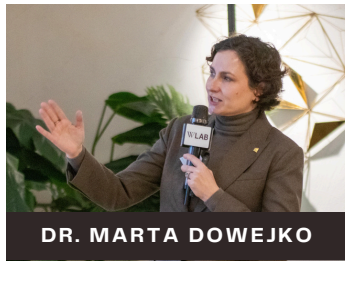
## STARTUP MENTORING FORUM | DEAN'S CUP BIG 10.0

### STARTUP MENTORING FORUM 2025

**HKBU School of Business Hosts Successful Startup Mentoring Forum, Energizing the GBA Entrepreneurial Ecosystem.**

The HKBU School of Business marked a significant step in supporting the regional startup ecosystem by hosting its inaugural Startup Mentoring Forum in early February. The forum successfully convened 42 industry experts and mentors, creating a valuable platform to enhance the local startup environment. This wasn't just another talk-shop; it was a high-energy collision of minds dedicated to fueling innovation and forging stronger bonds within the entrepreneurial community.

The forum emphasized active participation and co-creation. Participants engaged in lively discussions, sharing practical experiences, addressing key challenges, and developing collaborative recommendations to advance the ecosystem.



Dr. Marta DOWEJKO, Director of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Centre, captured the forum's essence perfectly: "A brilliant startup idea is just the starting point. Mentorship is the **rocket fuel** for sustained growth and impactful success. The raw experience and wisdom shared by our mentors here was **immensely valuable and profoundly inspiring**. This is real-world guidance that will translate into real-world results." The EIC is already harnessing the forum's energy, diligently compiling insights and suggestions into a forthcoming report – a concrete deliverable to further **empower** the startup community.

Prof. Han ZHANG, Dean of the School of Business, highlighted the forum's strategic importance: "This forum aligns closely with the School's mission to **actively engage with and strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem**, and to prepare future business leaders to **effectively address emerging challenges**. We anticipate that this forum will serve as a catalyst for enhanced collaboration, impactful innovation, and the continued advancement of our entrepreneurial landscape."



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## 10TH EDITION OF THE DEAN'S CUP BUSINESS INNOVATION GYMNASIUM (BIG)

**BIG is a dynamic program fostering entrepreneurial spirit and real-world skills, such as innovation, communication, or problem-solving in our students. This competition directly benefits not just students and the university, but also the future of Hong Kong's innovation landscape and competitiveness.**



#### Sponsorship and Supporting Organization

We are delighted to announce the EIC has received HK\$100,000 from **The Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC)**, along with venue support from **Cyberport, Hong Kong Science and Technology Park (HKSTP)**, and **WLAB**. This generous backing is crucial for the success of the BIG 10.0. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all sponsoring and supporting organizations for their invaluable support and are excited about the upcoming initiatives!



#### Mentorship Program

BIG boasts a robust mentorship program where semi-finalist teams are paired one-on-one with seasoned professionals from diverse industries. These mentors provide invaluable guidance in areas such as finance, marketing, and strategy. Our mentoring pool is continually expanding, reflecting the growing support for our mission from industry experts.

As of March, a total of 51 mentors are eager to support the next generation of responsible innovators. We hope this collaboration will inspire and empower our future leaders to achieve their full potential.

#### Cocktail Session

The Cocktail Session was a vibrant and engaging event where mentors and finalist teams came together to connect and kickstart the Dean's Cup of this year.

#### Pre-finals Activities

This bootcamp serves as an entrepreneurial sandbox, where students can actively explore and develop their ideas. In addition to in-class training, EIC believes that students need practical experience to grow and succeed in the future.

EIC offers a variety of activities from March to May, designed to equip teams with the essential skills they need for the Dean's Cup and their future projects, including workshops on innovation, pitching, coachability, and self-efficacy.



#### BIG Dates

The semi-final competition will be held on campus on 19 May. The top six teams will advance to the Grand Final, scheduled for 27 May at Cyberport. Stay tuned!

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## ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES

### ENTREPRENEURIAL SEMINARS | A NIGHT FOR FAILURE

## ENTREPRENEURIAL SEMINARS

**EIC is committed to identifying new opportunities for engaging speakers to inspire and educate our students further under "Entrepreneurship Seminar Series" and the "Kickstarting Your Career Series".**

11 FEBRUARY 2025



Yamilette inspired students by sharing her journey from dance to entrepreneurship. She urged them to discover their "ikigai," embrace adaptability, and balance passion, skills, and market needs for success.

24 FEBRUARY 2025



Jennifer inspired students by sharing her journey of balancing tradition with innovation in her family business. She urged them to embrace sustainability, value employee input, and adapt to market needs for future success.

11 MARCH 2025



Jordan urged students to identify pain points, build relationships, and seek feedback. Sharing his journey to founding Deploy, he highlighted adaptability and embracing challenges as keys to success in today's business world.

25 MARCH 2025



Micky emphasized adaptability, genuine partnerships, and effective communication. He encouraged students to embrace challenges, stay informed on trends, and innovate to create value in the tech industry.

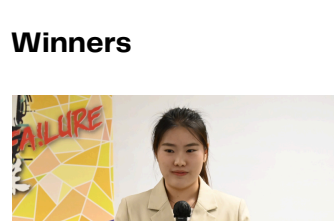
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## A NIGHT FOR FAILURE

**This 1-minute pitch challenge enabled students to showcase their innovative ideas and provided them with a chance to refine their pitching skills. Dr. Marta DOWEJKO (Director of EIC) and Prof. Howard LING (Associate Director of EIC), served as judges, offering immediate constructive feedback to the participants.**

#### Winners

11 MARCH 2025



The idea aims to help Form 4 and Form 5 students explore career aspirations through internships, connecting them with companies and sharing opportunities via teachers and our website for informed career choices.

11 MARCH 2025



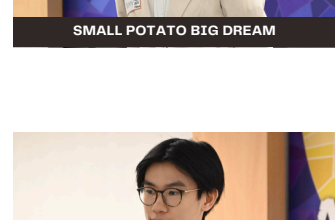
The idea empowers individuals with SEN by offering personalized training and job opportunities in a franchise cafe, focusing on skill development, confidence building, and social inclusion.

11 MARCH 2025



The idea aims to use AI to automate cooking, offering personalized, healthy meals quickly, reducing stress, and improving well-being for busy Hong Kong residents with limited time to cook.

11 MARCH 2025



The idea aims to address Hong Kong's food waste and poverty by connecting surplus from high-waste sectors to underserved communities, promoting sustainability in the city's dense urban environment.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TEAM

### BALVITO | AUDACITY

## TECHSTARS STARTUP WEEKEND HONG KONG FOR SOCIAL GOOD (#HK4SOCIALGOOD)

**Members of the BIG9.0 winning team, along with participants from BIG10.0, joined the competition organized by the Centre for Innovative Service-Learning and achieved remarkable success. Their innovative solutions and dedication to addressing social challenges were recognized with prestigious awards.**



The event, powered by Alibaba Cloud as our Tech Enabler, provided an excellent platform for HKBU and other institutions' students to leverage cutting-edge technology like GenAI in developing impactful prototypes aimed at advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## BALVITO - BUSINESS MODEL AWARD

**Award: \$15,000 | Nomination to HKtechathon+ | HKSEC | Entry to Alibaba Yunqi 2025**

Balvito empowers students with learning difficulties by transforming static documents into dynamic, interactive learning experiences. The platform extracts content from reading materials, highlights key terms, generates visual diagrams, and creates tailored practice questions. By enhancing comprehension and retention, Balvito saves users valuable time on manual note-taking and research, making learning more accessible and effective.



#### Team Members:

Vishal GINNI

Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Statistics  
Year 3

Dao Wen FUNG

Bachelor of Business Administration  
Year 3

Vishaly GINNY

Associate of Biological Sciences, HKUSPACE  
Year 1

Imane MALKI

Bachelor of Business Administration  
Year 3

Hao Rui LU

Master of Arts in Communication  
Graduated (2024)

Chun Kit Bruce LAM

Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Statistics  
Year 4

## AUDACITY - MARKET VALIDATION AWARD

**Award: \$10,000 | Nomination to HKtechathon+ | Entry to Alibaba Yunqi 2025**

Audacity is a sustainable fashion sports brand dedicated to providing high-performance, eco-conscious apparel. In addition to its clothing line, the brand operates a media channel focused on mindfulness and well-being, actively engaging with Hong Kong's sports community. Through its content, Audacity promotes mental health awareness, celebrates local athletes, and contributes to the overall growth of the city's sports industry.



#### Team Members:

Chun Hei Leo LAU

Bachelor of Business Administration  
Year 4

Chun Yin TANG

Bachelor of Arts in Creative Communication  
Year 2

Leo Ho WING

Bachelor of Arts in Arts and Technology  
Year 3