

Sir Ka-shing Li donates £2m to Oxford University to fund global health programmes

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19 April 2007. Courtesy of the generosity of the Li Ka Shing Foundation, Oxford University will develop new significant global health research networks with Asia, and, in particular, China.

Sir Ka-shing Li, through his Foundation established in 1980, has agreed to donate £2m towards the University's extensive global health programmes. The funding will be used for a variety of important purposes: to provide scholarships for students of Oxford's Global Health Sciences MSc; to set up collaborations between researchers in Asia and Oxford; and to fund a global health teaching programme conducted by Oxford experts at Shantou University in Guangdong, China.

The programmes will be administered by a board of senior Oxford University health scientists led by Professor Jeremy Farrar, a world expert on infectious diseases.

Oxford University's MSc in Global Health Sciences is designed to equip leaders in global health science and practice with knowledge and skills ranging from tropical and infectious medicine, epidemiology, and public health to development studies and health economics. The Li Ka Shing Foundation donation will fund four scholarships each year enabling exceptional students from Asia and Africa to gain skills and knowledge to combat diseases in their own countries.

The donation also provides fast access to seed-funding for research projects in global health, particularly new projects that have a significant impact on health issues important within Asia.

A teaching programme at Shantou University will see eminent Oxford University researchers in global health contribute to an annual teaching course for undergraduates and postgraduates studying medicine, epidemiology, health sciences and infectious diseases.

Welcoming Sir Ka-shing Li's donation, Professor Farrar said it was an incredibly exciting development for clinical research and education in international health.

'Oxford University has a long history of very successful international collaborative partnerships with China, Thailand, Vietnam and many other parts of Asia. This new and very generous donation will open up a number of important areas for future collaboration and educational opportunities and further strengthen the warm ties that already exist between Hong Kong, China and Oxford University.

'We anticipate that this will make a significant impact on health issues important throughout the region and very much look forward to many years of working with the Li Ka Shing Foundation,' he said.

Thanking Sir Ka-shing Li, Chris Patten, Chancellor of Oxford University, said: 'Sir Ka-shing Li's very generous donation to Oxford's global health programme opens up new avenues in the fruitful relationship between China and Oxford. The research and teaching made possible by the funding will, we hope, improve health in the region and throughout the world, and strengthen Oxford's strategic partnership with China. This generosity demonstrates the huge commitment Sir Ka-shing has made to improving global health.'

Speaking on his latest donation, Sir Ka-shing Li said: 'The world becomes more interdependent every day; and we now know that the fate of all of us depends on the fate of each of us.

'Nowhere is this more true than in the field of global health, where diseases spread at least as fast as the knowledge to contain them.

'I am delighted that my Foundation is working with the University of Oxford to help develop new research in the fields of prevention and cure. It is in such global collaboration that our future lies.' Sir Ka-shing added.

The Li Ka Shing Foundation was established in 1980. It reflects Sir Ka-shing Li's belief that a culture of giving is crucial to the well-being of society. The Foundation has two major concerns, both of which are focussed on capacity building and the nurturing of a caring society: education and medicine and healthcare. The Li Ka Shing Foundation and other private charitable foundations established by Sir Ka-shing Li have supported numerous philanthropic activities with grants, sponsorships and commitments of HKD 8.3 billion.

Oxford University's world-leading global health programme targets killer diseases including AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, stroke, heart disease, cancer, and emerging diseases such as dengue fever and avian flu. Long-term studies of patients in tropical countries are supported by basic science at Oxford and have led to many exciting developments, most notably the use of artemisinin combinations for the treatment of malaria (based on Chinese traditional medicine) and potential vaccines for tuberculosis, malaria, and AIDS, all of which are in clinical trials.

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