



Jockey Club College of Veterinary  
Medicine and Life Sciences

香港城市大學  
City University of Hong Kong  
in collaboration with Cornell University



# From the Dean's Desk

2 February 2024

Dear JCC Community,

It seems no time at all since the bells were ringing to herald the New Year and now Chinese New Year is almost upon us. A lot has happened in JCC in this time. I am delighted to announce that we now have permanent Heads of our four departments.

Congratulations to Professor Paulo Steagall who has been appointed as Head of VCS. Professor Steagall is a highly renowned veterinary anaesthesiologist, as reflected by his recent appointment as Chair of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association Global Pain Council. Prof. Steagall has been serving as interim head of VCS, and with his permanent appointment will provide ongoing stability and growth for the VCS department.

Congratulations are also in order for the appointment of Professor Rebecca Traub, Chair Professor in Veterinary Parasitology who's appointment as Head of PH starts this coming Monday on February 5<sup>th</sup>. Professor Traub brings a wealth of expertise in One-Health research and grant funding success with her from the University of Melbourne, where she was previously Professor. It is nearly 5 years (March 2019) since PH last had a permanent Head. Professor Traub's appointment marks the beginning of a new era for PH. Sincere thanks to Prof. Patrick Butaye, Global STEM Professor, who stepped in to the breach to be interim head after Prof. Olivier Sparagano's departure and has provided excellent leadership of PH over the past few months.

I would also like to welcome new clinical educator in VCS Dr Seems Tsang, who has much experience in veterinary clinical practice in Hong Kong and the UK, and together with Dr. Laurie Hippman will join our BVM 1 Students teamwork and leadership camp with Outward Bound, kayaking around Hong Kong from February 14 to 16.

You can read all of our department's news below - congratulations to Prof Xiaowei Zhu in NS for his recent grant success and to Ai Liqing, PhD student in Prof. Yao Xi's group in BMS for Best Poster Award at the International Symposium on Superwettability in Singapore.

Kung Hei Fat Choi! Gong Xi Fa Cai!



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Adjunct Professor  
Department of Population Medicine and  
Diagnostic Sciences  
Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine  
**Cornell University**

# News From JCC and Our Departments

## Biomedical Sciences

### Event



- Sai Kung, 12th Jan 2024 - BMS recently organised a delightful and engaging barbecue event. The event brought together faculty members, students, and staff in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere, promoting social interactions within BMS. The barbecue, held near Sai Kung sea shore, provided an excellent opportunity for attendees to unwind from their academic pursuits and connect with colleagues in a more informal setting. With the aim of strengthening bonds and fostering a sense of community, the event successfully achieved its objectives.

- Under the clear skies and pleasant weather, participants indulged in a mouthwatering spread of grilled delicacies, including an assortment of meats and vegetarian options. In addition to the sumptuous food, the event featured various engaging activities and games, adding an extra layer of excitement. Attendees enthusiastically participated in friendly competitions, demonstrating their skills in various team-building challenges. These activities not only brought joy and laughter but also encouraged collaboration and teamwork among the participants.



- With the success of this event, BMS looks forward to organising more such engaging activities in the future, further enhancing the bonds within BMS and nurturing a vibrant academic community.

## Awards

- Miss Ai Liqing, a PhD student in Prof. Yao Xi's group, received a Best Poster Award at the International Symposium on Superwettability+ (ISS+ 2024), which was held on 23-26 Jan 2024 in Singapore. Miss Ai delivered a short talk for her recent research publication of "Tough soldering for stretchable electronics by small-molecule modulated interfacial assemblies".



The award was presented to Miss Ai Liqing (right third) and other awardees by the conference chair Prof. Chen Xiaodong (NTU, left first), and Prof. Liu Yunqi (CAS Academician, right first).

## Veterinary Clinical Sciences

**Research** (included new awards, new publications, new **successful** external grants, etc.)

- Colleagues in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences combined their expertise and wealth of experience in One-Health Mycology and Feline Medicine (**Prof. Vanessa Barrs**), Small Animal Medicine (**Prof. Pawel Beczkowski**), Veterinary Dermatology (**Prof. Stefan Hobi**) and Veterinary Pathology (**Prof. May Tse** and **Prof. Jeanine Sandy**) to write a two-part comprehensive and practical guide for veterinarians on the diagnosis and treatment of invasive fungal infections and oomycosis in cats, published in the Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery
  - Part 1 Diagnostic Approach <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098612X231219696>
  - Part 2 Therapy <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098612X231220047>
- **Beatty, J.A.**; Choi, Y.R.; Nekouei, O.; Woodhouse, F.M.; Gray, J.J.; Hofmann-Lehmann, R.; **Barrs, V.R.** Epidemiology of Pathogenic Retroviruses and Domestic Cat Hepadnavirus in Community and Client-Owned Cats in Hong Kong. *Viruses* 2024, 16, 167. <https://doi.org/10.3390/v16020167>
- Choi, Y.R.; Iturriaga, M.P.; Nekouei, O.; Tu, T.; Van Brussel, K.; **Barrs, V.R.**; **Beatty, J.A.** Domestic Cat Hepadnavirus and Pathogenic Retroviruses; A Sero-Molecular Survey of Cats in Santiago, Chile. *Viruses* 2024, 16, 46. <https://doi.org/10.3390/v16010046>
- Extension publication at the International magazine "Hoard's dairyman": **Melendez P.** The fear of abdominal fat. *Hoard's dairyman*, 74 | January 25, 2024
- **Professor Santiago Alonso Sousa** presented his project entitled "*Advancing Veterinary Education with Artificial Intelligence: Fostering Active Learning and Critical Thinking Skills*" at the International Symposium on Teaching, Education, and Learning (STEL-24) on January 12-13, 2024 in Hong Kong. The project was implemented in the Equine Medicine and Surgery course in the BVM Programme with the teaching development grant from the CityU.

## Service

- **Professor Paulo Steagall** is now the co-chair of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) Global Pain Council with Dr. Jo Murrell (UK).

## New Staff

- We welcome new Clinical Educator **Dr. Seems Tsang** to join the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences.



# CAHW

## Upcoming Events (VCS & CAHW)

### CityU JCC Seminar by VCS Distinguished Visiting Professor



**WORKSHOP FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS:  
HOW TO WRITE SCIENTIFIC PAPERS**

February 20, 2024 (Tue) 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. in YEUNG LT-17

**Professor Domenico Otranto** DVM, PhD, DABVP, is a distinguished visiting professor in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. He will give a 3-hour face-to-face workshop on-campus for graduate students on How to Write Scientific Papers, based on his extensive experience as a researcher and editor of scientific journals.

Professor Otranto is a Professor of Animal Parasitic Diseases at the Department of Veterinary Medicine (University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy) where he was a head of Department for two years (2015-2018, 2018-2021). He is the President of the World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology (WAVAP 2019-2022) and former President of the European Veterinary Parasitology College.

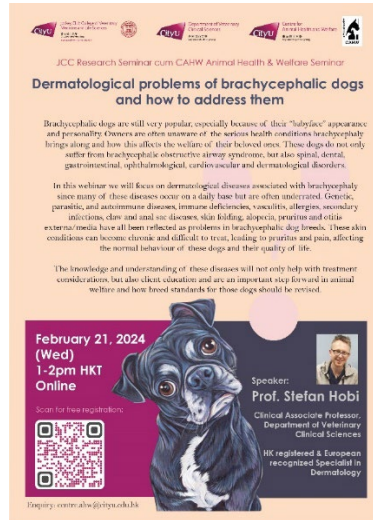
Professor Otranto's research focuses on the study of arthropods and anthelmintic resistance issues of bovine concern using both basic and applied approaches. In recent years, his activities have focused on research and teaching projects in Italy and in the Americas countries. His research topics include a range of more than 700 peer-reviewed articles in international scientific journals (over 800) and numerous book chapters. He is Co-Editor of 'The Encyclopedia of Medical and Veterinary Entomology' (RC Russell, D. Otranto, & W. Cahill, 2019) and Editor of 'The Veterinary Parasitology' (outlook Otranto and Wall, Wiley, 2024).

Professor Otranto is Deputy Sector of PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases, Assistant Sector of International Journal of Parasitology, Parasites and Wildlife, Associate Editor of Parasitology Research, Animal Tissue and Entomol Board member of numerous scientific journals, a member of the Field of the Parasitology since 2022. He has been a member of the Scientific Steering Committee of One Health Action Commission supported by the B. I. & M. de la Caixa Foundation and coordinator of 200+ for the preparation of grant plans on these technologies.

**SCAN FOR FREE REGISTRATION:**

**Workshop for Graduate Students: How to Write Scientific Papers**  
February 20, 2024 (Tue), 9:30am-12:30pm on-campus  
([More information](#))

### CityU JCC Research Seminar cum CityU CAHW Animal Health & Welfare Seminar



**JCC Research Seminar cum CAHW Animal Health & Welfare Seminar**

**Dermatological problems of brachycephalic dogs and how to address them**

Brachycephalic dogs are still very popular, especially because of their "babyface" appearance and personality. Owners are often unaware of the serious health conditions brachycephaly brings along and how this affects the welfare of their beloved ones. These dogs do not only suffer from brachycephalic airway syndrome, but also spinal, dental, gastrointestinal, ophthalmological, cardiovascular and dermatological disorders.

In this webinar we will focus on dermatological diseases associated with brachycephaly since many of these diseases occur on a daily base but are often undetected. Genetic, parasitic and autoimmune diseases, immune deficiencies, toxicities, allergies, secondary infections, claw and nail diseases, skin folding, alopecia, pruritus and otitis externa/medica have all been reflected as problems in brachycephalic dog breeds. These skin conditions can become chronic and difficult to treat, leading to pruritus and pain, affecting the normal behaviour of these dogs and their quality of life.

The knowledge and understanding of these diseases will not only help with treatment considerations, but also client education and are an important step forward in animal welfare and how breed standards for these dogs should be revised.

**February 21, 2024 (Wed) 1-2pm HKT Online**

**Speaker:** **Prof. Stefan Hobi**  
Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences  
HK registered & European recognised specialist in Dermatology

Scan for free registration:

Enquiry: [cahw@cityu.edu.hk](mailto:cahw@cityu.edu.hk)

**Dermatological problems of brachycephalic dogs and how to address them by Prof. Stefan Hobi**  
February 21, 2024 (Wed), 1-2pm Online  
([More information](#))

### CityU CAHW Animal Health & Welfare Seminar



**TRUST, HELP, FRIENDSHIP, AND COOPERATION: POSITIVES OF THE ANIMAL KINGDOM**

Throughout history, humans have witnessed numerous conflicts that have led to aggressive interventions, such as war, often resulting in the collapse of societies. Fortunately, evolution has equipped us with skills for conflict resolution, alliance formation, and, believe it or not, hyper-cooperation to build or maintain societies. Only recently have we begun seeking parallels in non-human societies to investigate the evolutionary trajectory of such positive skills. Keeping evolution as the backdrop, Dr. Debottam Bhattacharjee will talk about human-animal trust building, and helping, friendships, and cooperation in animal societies, all based on empirical evidence.

**Speaker:**

**DR. DEBOTTAM BHATTACHARJEE**  
Postdoctoral Researcher  
Department of Infectious Diseases and Public Health  
City University of Hong Kong

**Date and Time**  
**MARCH 14, 2024 (THU) 4-5PM HKT ONLINE**

**Free Registration**

Enquiry: [centre.cahw@cityu.edu.hk](mailto:centre.cahw@cityu.edu.hk)

**Trust, help, friendship, and cooperation: positives of the animal kingdom by Dr. Debottam Bhattacharjee**  
March 14, 2024 (Thu), 4-5pm Online  
([More information](#))

# Infectious Diseases and Public Health

## Teaching (e.g. awards)

- Benoit Guénard from HKU and **Prof. Mason DEAN** were awarded a Teaching Development Grant (TDG) for their project "Virtual and integrative approaches to increase student and visitor biological knowledge using the Hong Kong Biodiversity Museum specimen collection", which will take advantage of HKU's fantastic museum and leverage digital anatomy for cutting-edge teaching at both of schools.

## Research (included new awards, new publications, new successful external grants, etc.)

- Goats can tell if you are happy or angry by your voice alone <https://www.eurekalert.org/news-releases/1031833> (press release)



## [Goats can tell if you are happy or angry by your voice alone](https://www.eurekalert.org/news-releases/1031833)

Goats can tell the difference between a happy-sounding human voice and an angry-sounding one, according to research co-led by Professor Alan McElligott, an expert in animal behaviour and welfare at City University of Hong Kong (CityUHK).

The study

reveals that goats may have developed a sensitivity to our vocal cues over their long association with humans, according to the study published in *Animal Behaviour*.

[www.eurekalert.org](http://www.eurekalert.org)

Goats discriminate emotional valence in the human voice -

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S000334722300307X?via%3Dihub> (full paper by Prof. Alan McElligott)

- Khizar Hayat (VM/P PhD student, **Doube/Dean**) USD300 travel award and poster prize finalist at the American Association of Anatomists "Anatomy Connected" meeting in Toronto, March 2024, for his abstract: *Colocalisation of Collagen fibre type-I/-II at the osteochondral cement line: A potential bonding mechanism*
- **Ákos Kenéz** presented the outcome of his teaching development grant project at the annual meeting of the Cornell Veterinary Educators Academy in Sarasota, FL, USA (Kenéz Á, MacKinnon B, Rizzo F, Schiff PJ, Vizcaino Serrano M, Li CM, Parkes RSV: The use of digital tools to support learning in PBL)
- **Bhattacharjee, D.\***, Guðjónsdóttir, A.R.\*, Escriche Chova, P., Middelburg, E., Jäckels, J., de Groot, N.G., Wallner, B., Massen, J.J.M., and Pflüger, L.S., 2023. [Behavioral, physiological, and genetic drivers of coping in a non-human primate](#). *iScience* 27(2), 108890. (\*co-first authors) doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.isci.2024.108890>
- Amar Surapaneni, a postdoc in Mason DEAN's group, had a paper accepted at *Advanced Optical Materials*, looking at the interesting ways that stingrays produce color. The work is a collaboration with our group and researchers in Austria, Germany, Belgium and Portugal and will be the first work to come out from Mason DEAN's GRF grant: VA Surapaneni, MJ Blumer, Ki Tadayon, AJ Mclvor, S Redl, H-R Honis, FH Mollen, S Amini, **MN Dean** (2024) Ribbontail stingray skin employs a core-shell photonic glass ultrastructure to make blue structural color. *Advanced Optical Materials*. DOI: 10.1002/adom.202301909.

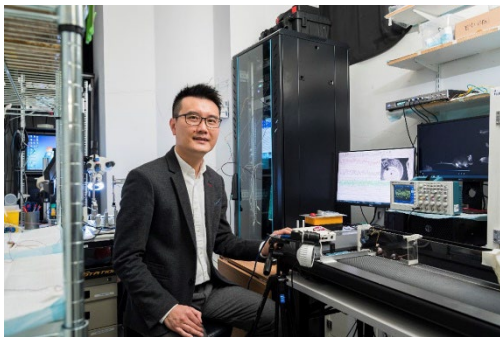
## Neuroscience

### New External Grant



- Congratulations to **Prof Xiaowei Zhu** for being awarded Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) released by Innovation and Technology Commission.  
Project Title: Machine Learning-based Mobile Element Testing for Personalized Cancer Testing  
Approved Funding: HK\$1,354,585

**Research** (included new awards, new publications, new **successful** external grants, etc.)



- **Prof Eddie Ma's** recent research has been featured in CityU Research Stories "CityU neuroscientists uncover the therapeutic potential of low-dose ionizing radiation for traumatic brain injury and ischemic stroke".  
[Link to the article](#)

## Research Grants

Notable grants application deadlines upcoming:

1. [Professional Services Advancement Support Scheme \(PASS\)](#)  
[Deadline: 14 February 2024](#)
2. [RGC Research Impact Fund \(RIF\)](#)  
[Deadline: 19 February 2024](#)
3. [National Natural Science Foundation of China Research Grants \(via SRI\)](#)  
[國家自然科學基金委員會資助項目](#)  
[Deadline: 29 February 2024](#)
4. [National Natural Science Foundation of China Research Grants \(via CityU\)](#)  
[國家自然科學基金委員會資助項目 \(青年、優青、傑青\)](#)  
[Deadline: 29 February 2024](#)
5. [Health and Medical Research Fund \(HMRF\)](#)  
[Deadline: 18 March 2024](#)

For more information on Research Grants  
[Research Grants and Contracts Office](#)

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

### DEI News



The [International Day of Women and Girls in Science \(IDWGIS\)](#) is celebrated annually on February 11th, aiming to promote gender equality and empowering women and girls in the field of science. This event explores that vital role that women and girls play in research and innovation, and this year the day will focus on how these issues are related to the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#). ([Link](#))



Lunar New Year (LNY), also known as the Spring Festival, is one of the most important festivals for Asian countries. It is the first day of the new year according to lunar calendar (a calendar based on the monthly cycles of the Moon's phases), thus the dates would be different each year, compared to the static dates on the solar calendar. This year is the year of Dragon, which begins on 10 February 2024. ([Link](#))

### Upcoming DEI Events

#### Workshop on Promoting Culturally Inclusive Workplace

**Date:** 7 March 2024

**Speaker:** Equal Opportunities Commission HK

**Register:** [Link](#)

#### The Roslin Institute - Athena Swan Gold

**Date:** 8 February 2024

**Speaker:** Prof. Jayne HOPE

**Register:** [Link](#)

Click on the events tab on our DEI website for the full list of events  
<https://www.cityu.edu.hk/jcc/about-us/diversity-equity-and-inclusion>

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