

2026 Hong Kong International Forum on Language Aptitude

Conference Information

About the Forum

The 2026 Hong Kong International Forum on Language Aptitude: New Frontiers in Research and Application is hosted by the Division of Languages and Communication (LC) and the CPCE Centre for Pedagogic Research (CPR) at the School of Professional Education and Executive Development (SPEED) of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU-CPCE). This prestigious event is fully supported by a grant from the Research Grants Council (Project No.: UGC/IIDS24/H05/25; PI: Dr. Zhisheng Wen, PolyU SPEED; Co-Is: Prof. Shaofeng Li, PolyU; Prof. Zhenguang Cai, CUHK; Prof. Jing Yang, Zhejiang University; Prof. Mark Feng Teng, Macao Polytechnic University). This three-day international forum is dedicated to exploring the latest frontiers in language aptitude research and its practical applications. Building on more than six decades of theoretical and empirical inquiry into language aptitude, testing, and pedagogy (see Wen, Skehan, Biedroń, Li & Sparks, 2019; Wen, Skehan, & Sparks, 2023), the Forum situates itself at the intersection of several major intellectual traditions. Foundational work by leading scholars such as Peter Skehan (UCL/IOE), Richard Sparks (Mount St Joseph), Ted Gibson (MIT), Brian MacWhinney (CMU), Ping Li (HKUST), and Morten Christiansen (Cornell) has profoundly influenced contemporary thinking on language learning ability, cognitive constraints, and individual differences. The Forum examines how established concepts of language learning abilities and potential are being reshaped by cutting-edge developments across linguistics and applied linguistics, language education, psycholinguistics, cognitive and neurosciences, behavioural genetics, as well as computer science and artificial intelligence (AI). By engaging these interconnected perspectives, the Forum aims to foster genuinely multidisciplinary dialogue and to advance theory, measurement, and practice in language aptitude research in the digital and AI era.

Acknowledgement:

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Supporting Organisations:

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Item	Details
Title	2026 Hong Kong International Forum on Language Aptitude
Sub-title	New Frontiers in Research and Application
Dates	28–30 May 2026 (Thursday to Saturday)
Venue	Room N203 (28–29 May) / Room N201 (30 May), 2nd Floor, North Tower, PolyU West Kowloon Campus, 9 Hoi-ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Hong Kong
Mode	Hybrid (On-site + Zoom: 869 4942 1816 Code: 185378)
Language	English
Registration	Free of charge

List of Invited Speakers (Brief Version):

Category	Speakers (in presentation order)
Keynote Speakers	Richard Sparks, Peter Skehan, Morten Christiansen, Ping Li, Philip Dale, Ted Gibson, Brian MacWhinney
Plenary Speakers	Mark Feng Teng, Yuichi Suzuki, Raphael Berthele, Antony Kunnan, Chantel Prat, Jessica Blake-West, Susanne Reiterer, Sabrina Turker, Xin Kang
Workshop Speakers	Zhisheng Wen, Zhenguang Cai, Jing Yang
Invited Speakers	Junlan Pan, Alicia Battenfeld & the GLLAD Team (Frauke Matz, Ulrike Gut, Liane Lillich, Till Utesch), Olivia Rütli-Joy
Roundtable Panelists	Franco Wong & Zoe Chan (CPCE-LC), Brian Rusk & Barry Reynolds (University of Macau), Mable Chan (HASALD/HKBU LC), Nick Wong (HKUST), Men Xuefeng (Beijing Fistar)