



HARVARD-YENCHING
EST. INSTITUTE 1928



中國制度
研 究 中 心
Research Hub on Institutions of China
Faculty of Social Sciences, HKU

HKU-HYI Joint Training Program:

New Frontiers of Research on Institutions of China

In the 20th and 21st centuries, the People’s Republic of China has been undergoing a series of multi-faceted and multi-dimensional transitions. The outcome of these revolutionary and fundamentally historic changes has been significant – China transformed itself from one of the poorest countries in the world to a major economic powerhouse on the global scale, from a Soviet-style centrally-planned economy to one that increasingly operates on the principles of free market and private property, and from a traditional agrarian society to a gradually modernizing yet heavily-controlled society fueled by the progress of technology and the expansion of a politically ambivalent urban middle-class.

These changes (and continuities thereof) taking place in an ancient civilization and the most populous nation of the 21st century will not only define the landscape of the politics, economy, technology and culture of our time, but also raise new challenging questions for the scholarly understanding of some of the most fundamental issues faced by the global community.

Institutions – political, economic, social and cultural – are key to understanding the profound socio-political development that has occurred in China. Institutions are the “persistent rules that shape, limit, and channel human behavior” (Francis Fukuyama). Institutions define the rules of the political game, set access for different levels and types of political participation, determine winners and losers of political competition and shape the outcome of the distribution and re-distribution of resources. In a more voluntarist sense, institutions also forge incentives and constraints that bend politicians’ strategic choices in public life. From a societal perspective, institutions play an essential role in shaping people’s political identity. In the China case, the development, design, operation and evolution of institutions have long been critical to the resilience, stability and vitality of the ruling regime. Research on institutions is a central imperative in the scholarly endeavor to better theorize and understand the past, present and future of China’s all-round transformation from a comparative and historical perspective.

This training program, jointly convened by the Research Hub on Institutions of China, the University of Hong Kong and the Harvard-Yenching Institute, invites young scholars of various backgrounds to study and discuss together the dynamic process and rationale behind China’s institutional development since 1949, and explore the impact of institutional change and continuity in the past one and half centuries on the contemporary politics, society and culture of the People’s Republic of China. The program aims at opening new frontiers for the field of China Studies through a fresh perspective on China’s institutions.



Time and Venue

5-12 January, 2022; The University of Hong Kong

[Important Dates]

4 January: Check in

10 January (afternoon): Roundtable (open to the general public)

Also an International Forum on New Frontiers of Research on Institutions of China

11 January: Hiking and sightseeing

12 January: Final presentation

13 January: Check out

Theme

New Frontiers of Research on Institutions of China

Topics

1. Overview: Understanding China from an Institutional Perspective
2. New Frontiers of Research on Institutions of China
3. Comparative Historical Research on Institutions of China
4. Institutions of the Chinese Communist Party
5. Social Institutions of China
6. Economic Institutions of China
7. Political Institutions of China
8. Cultural Institutions of China
9. Institutionalist Research: Global Comparison
10. Future Direction of Research on Institutions of China: Roundtable

Program Organizers

YAN Xiaojun

Associate Professor at the University of Hong Kong; Director of Research Hub on Institutions of China

Elizabeth J. PERRY

Henry Rosovsky Professor of Government at Harvard University;
Director of the Harvard-Yenching Institute



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Language

Lectures will be delivered in Chinese and English.

Eligibility

The program is open to up to 20 scholars (junior faculty members, doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows) in the field of China studies from all over the world.

The applicant should:

- (1) either be employed by an institution of higher education or research for China-relevant social sciences and humanities, have received a PhD degree with the past 7 years or be studying in an institution of higher education or research for a Ph.D. or master degree (provided that you stand out among other master students) of China-relevant social sciences and humanities such as economics, sociology, politics, history, philosophy, psychology, anthropology, communication and management.
- (2) have a good command of English and Chinese, able to comprehend lectures and seminars given in both languages.

The Harvard-Yenching Institute may select up to five outstanding Asia-based trainees for HYI fellowships opportunities, which will enable the selected trainees to spend an academic year of advanced study and research at Harvard University.

Financial support

Local accommodation and meals are covered. Travel expenses are the responsibility of the attendees. The Harvard-Yenching Institute may consider travel grants for very exceptional cases.

Selection procedure

1. By 5 p.m., August 31, 2021 (HKT), the applicant should submit via email the completed application form with two letters of recommendation to Mr. Larry Li (rhicprog@hku.hk).
2. By September 17, 2021 (HKT), notifications of the application result will be sent to applicants via email.



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Contact

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