

## **HKU student wins British Council FameLab contest and place in UK international finals**

24 November 2010 (HONG KONG) – A Hong Kong University student stormed to victory in the second FameLab science communication competition held in Hong Kong, beating six other finalists to represent Hong Kong at the international finals in the UK next year.

Mr. Kaamil Ur Rahman MOHAMED SHIBLY, a second year Mechanical Engineering student, wowed both the judges and audience alike with his excellent presentation on ‘The Mysteries Of Memory’ at the Hong Kong finals, held at the Hong Kong Science Museum on Saturday (20 November). He had three minutes to convince judges of his chosen scientific argument on Hippocampus, the key part of the brain responsible for forming new memories – and was judged the best based on the content, clarity and charisma of his presentation. Mr MOHAMED SHIBLY also won the ‘Audience Favourite’ vote.

FameLab is a highlight of this year’s Science Alive, organised by the British Council in partnership with the Hong Kong Science Museum and Education Bureau, sponsored by the Croucher Foundation. Video clips from the contest will be available at [www.britishcouncil.org.hk/famelab](http://www.britishcouncil.org.hk/famelab) by 26 November 2010.

The Hong Kong FameLab judging panel comprised three judges who came from the worlds of science, education and communications. They were Mr. W. M. Leung, Assistant Director of the Hong Kong Observatory, Professor Jim Al-Khalili OBE, a leading academic nuclear physicist based at the University of Surrey, and William Yip, founder of Theatre Noir

The University of Hong Kong won the ‘Best Institution’ prize for fielding the largest number of contestants in the open auditions. This prize is intended for the university or company that sends the most number of contestants to the competition. Last year’s “Best Institution” prize went to The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Ms. Katherine LEE Ching Yan, a Biochemistry undergraduate at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, was named first runner-up. She impressed the judges by explaining how diabetes is caused, how its symptoms develop and its severity. Mr. Ahmad GREWAL, a Mechanical Engineering undergraduate at Hong Kong University, was second runner-up. His presentation explored how greenhouse gases like methane and carbon dioxide trap the sun’s rays within the Earth’s atmosphere and contribute to global warming in ways never seen before. He also won the online vote for ‘Video Favourite’ from the open auditions.

Mr MOHAMED SHIBLY worked hard to win the prize, having spent many days practising. He also benefited from the communication training he and the six other finalists received from UK science communicator Professor Malcolm Love of the University of Bristol and Mr Yip, founder of Theatre Noir.

On winning the final, Mr MOHAMED SHIBLY said: “This competition meant a lot to me. It was tough, making it to the finals, and I couldn’t believe it when I won the Grand Prize. This achievement is a real confidence boost and is sure to keep me cheerful through some hard times (like my university exams).

FameLab has taught me the importance of communicating science and it is sure to benefit Hong Kong as well, since the country now has a few more effective science communicators to spread the love of science.”

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## Notes to Editor

1) Press photos: [www.britishcouncil.org.hk/download/famelab\\_2010.zip](http://www.britishcouncil.org.hk/download/famelab_2010.zip)

2) To arrange interviews please contact:

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3) About Science Alive:

First launched in Hong Kong in 1991, Science Alive is the British Council's annual science education programme. It invites leading UK science academics and communicators to present interactive lectures and workshops to students and teachers in Hong Kong to promote fun and easy ways to learn science. For more information about Science Alive, please visit: [www.britishcouncil.org.hk/ScienceAlive](http://www.britishcouncil.org.hk/ScienceAlive).

4) About FameLab:

FameLab is an international science communication competition created by the Cheltenham Science Festival and held for the first time in Hong Kong as part of the annual Science Alive programme. The aim of FameLab is to encourage young scientists (20 to 35 years old) to inspire and excite public imagination with a vision of science in the 21st century. Contestants have 3 minutes to present a scientific topic to an audience and a panel of expert judges. The talk should be entertaining, original, and scientifically accurate but also engaging to a non-scientific audience. The Grand Prize is an all-expenses-paid trip to the UK in June 2011 to represent Hong Kong in the FameLab international finals during the Cheltenham Science Festival in June 2011. For more information, visit [www.britishcouncil.org.hk/famelab](http://www.britishcouncil.org.hk/famelab) and [www.famelab.org](http://www.famelab.org).

5) About British Council Hong Kong

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