

# Relishing the challenge

*From career success to marathons and band jamming, HKIS Vice-President (2016-17) Sr Dr Lesly Lik Shan Lam is a man of many talents.*

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Photo: SCMP

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Sr Dr Lesly Lik Shan Lam, HKIS Vice-President of Council Year 2016-2017 and Deputy General Manager - Property Investment, of Logan Property Holdings, is a well-rounded surveyor who demonstrates how professionalism, people-centredness and a positive attitude result in remarkable synergies. As one of the first surveyors to join mainland real estate group, Sr Dr Lam elaborates on the importance of seeking opportunities and overcoming challenges.

From Chek Lap Kok airport's "prehistoric" days to the recent record-breaking bid in Ap Lei Chau, from full marathons to band jamming, Sr Dr Lam shows a can-do attitude in living life to the fullest.

Yet, as a high-school graduate in the early 1990s, Sr Dr Lam had little idea about surveying except that it was a profession worth pursuing. Upon completion of Polytechnic University's BSc in Surveying and Geo-informatics, he was excited to join the Airport Authority and help build the new airport, Hong Kong's milestone infrastructure project.

"From pebbles to bridges, I stepped on every inch of Chek Lap Kok Island. With the aid of ropes, we climbed to the rooftop of the airport terminals, the arch-shaped roofs we see today," Sr Dr Lam recalls, with great satisfaction. "To facilitate safe flight landing, we had to ensure that every onsite measurement regarding the runway-to-be was conducted with the utmost accuracy."

Shortly after the new airport opened in the summer of 1998, Sr Dr Lam left the Authority to join the Lands Department. Already then chartered and qualified, he was responsible for West Rail's land acquisition. The job involved dealing with radical demonstrators and heated disputes – really tricky situations which he now looks back on with ease and humour as eye-opening experiences.

After a job transfer to the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD), Sr Dr Lam won a government sponsorship to pursue master's degree studies at University College London, where he specialised in hydrographic surveying. "My year in the United Kingdom widened my perspectives," he says. "I acquired

intercultural experience, problem-solving skills, and learned to see beyond the surface."

Back in Hong Kong, his overseas training enabled him to effectively negotiate with contractors about claims about underwater measurements during reclamation. Perhaps more importantly, he introduced to the government new technologies ranging from 3D multibeam bathymetry to 3D laser scanning, the latter being instrumental in the Star Ferry Pier and Queen's Pier projects. "Introducing 3D laser scanning to Hong Kong, we were able to scan various types of data to enable the restructuring, reassembling of the demolished structures, if needed."

Later posted to Hong Kong Island, and then Sai Kung for the Lands Department, Sr Dr Lam had to communicate with large developers about land leases and grants, with pre-IPO Link Reit to provide land information of housing estates, as well as with protesters in the New Territories.

As a dedicated surveyor, Sr Dr Lam never stopped serving HKIS or enriching himself professionally. Starting from being an HKIS student representative back in 1995, he has served in various positions, including as the Young Surveyors' Group Chairman, the Land Surveyor Division's Chairman, and HKIS Vice-President.

"I first joined the HKIS to meet other surveyors, and soon learned that there were many more exciting areas in surveying," he says. "Through active participation in HKIS, I became connected to all surveying divisions, as well as to other professional fields. As Honorary Secretary, for instance, I had to coordinate HKIS consultative documents sent to the government concerning the definition of saleable areas and sales of first-hand residential units – areas not necessarily related to land surveying. To do these well, I engaged in self-learning by thoroughly reading related materials, and considered criticism a chance to learn and improve."

With such a positive attitude, Sr Dr Lam's long-awaited opportunity came when he was invited to join mainland real estate developer Vanke

## MEET THE SURVEYOR

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in 2013, becoming its Vice-President. “People asked me how I had stepped out of my comfort zone after 14 stable years in the public sector; in fact, I was finally stepping into my comfort zone by entering private enterprise,” he says, half-jokingly.

At Vanke, Sr Dr Lam’s variety of experience acquired over the previous decade fitted together like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. “I enjoy meeting challenges, making decisions, and developing my potential. This was exactly what Vanke promised,” he notes.

Reciprocally, Sr Dr Lam had a lot to offer to the industry key player. Thanks to a sound knowledge of geo-informatics, he was able to solve profound questions posed by mainland corporations about site demographics, culture and dialects, needs, transport, and finance. After years in the Lands Department, he was able to master the details of land lease to facilitate bidding. Responsible for HKIS’ consultative documents, he had learned the gist of old-building acquisition, compulsory sale for redevelopment, building ordinances, the handling of illegal structures, sales procedures, planning and development, valuation, and so on.

The results were spectacular. Sr Dr Lam helped Vanke beat off 17 other competitors to successfully bid for a residential site at Sham Shui Po at a land premium of around HK\$4,200 per square foot, which was considered to be at the low end of market estimates. Just 18 months later, another corporation bid for a site at nearby Cheung Sha Wan with a land premium of about HK\$17,000 per square foot, i.e. 400% higher.

Now as Deputy General Manager of Logan Property Holdings, Sr Dr Lam scored another phenomenal success earlier this year when he and the corporation hit the headlines after achieving a joint-venture bid for a premier waterfront residential site at Ap Lei Chau. With a land premium of around HK\$22,000 per square foot, this marked the most significant bid in Hong Kong’s history regarding a government lump-sum sale at the time. The HK\$16.86 billion investment has broken all records in Hong Kong, exceeding the previous record, held for two decades.

“The key to successful bidding is to do your homework – conduct thorough research and investigation, make concise calculations, identify our competitors, and think about their potential strategies. Speak the language of real estate industry such as cash flow, return on investment and valuation, rather than own terms only,” Sr Dr Lam says.

When Sr Dr Lam was still working for the government, he spent five years completing a Doctor of Business Administration qualification at the University of South Australia. His thesis, “Knowledge Transfer in Public Private Partnership”, was published in the British Journal of Economics. “Now that I have joined mainland corporations, I find doctoral degrees extremely important – not just because corporations like to hire doctors, but because the knowledge learned is extremely useful at work,” he says.

Apart from seeking professional advancement, Sr Dr Lam is an enthusiast for full marathons, Trailwalker’s 100-km hike, and winter and water sports. As an active organiser of HKIS sports teams, he coordinates joint professional competitions among surveyors, medical doctors, dentists, and other professionals. He is also into music, as the lead vocalist of a pop band, a lyricist, and a member of the Composers and Authors Society of Hong Kong (CASH). He counts among his circle of friends other music-loving professionals who have formed bands in the legal and health care professions.

Now working in real estate, Sr Dr Lam continues to give back to the surveying profession. “I aspire to help HKIS enhance surveyors’ branding and recognition,” he stresses. “To young surveyors: I hope that you will actively participate in HKIS activities. Be flexible, step out of your comfort zones, network with others, and learn the most you can. Widen your horizons: you may end up having careers with a broader range than you had expected.”

Whereas Sr Dr Lam humbly says that he only wants to be “a point of reference” for young surveyors, his story proves that he is a role model, to say the very least.

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# 挑戰 x 樂趣

香港測量師學會副會長林力山博士測量師 (2016-2017) 興趣廣泛，多才多藝，由發展事業，再到跑馬拉松和組隊玩音樂都不遺餘力。

## 葉潔明

身兼香港測量師學會 2016-17 年度副會長和龍光地產控股有限公司投資發展部副總經理，林力山博士測量師涉獵面全面，處處表現出專業精神、以人為本的處事原則和正面的人生態度。作為加入內地龍頭房地產公司的先駒，林力山細說敢於尋找機會且克服挑戰的重要性。

由赤鱗角機場「開天辟地」的年代至最近破紀錄投得鴨洲洲地塊、由參與馬拉松到組隊玩音樂，林力山一貫以全力以赴、活出精彩的態度迎接挑戰。

回想 1990 年代初，林力山剛從中學畢業，對測量所知甚少，只知道值得投身測量專業。在香港理工大學完成土地測量及地理資訊學理學士學位課程後，他懷著雀躍的心情加入機場管理局，參與興建香港新機場這個重大基建項目。

回想這日子，林力山心滿意足：「由荒蕪之地至天橋道路，我踏遍赤鱗角島每個角落。我們利用繩索遊走於機場客運大樓的屋頂進行測量，也就是我們今天看到的圓拱屋頂。為確保飛機的升降安全，我們必須以最精確的方法，實地量度每個角落。」

新機場在 1998 年夏天落成啟用後，林力山離開了機場管理局加入地政總署。已擁有專業測量師資格的他，成為負責西鐵收地工作的一員，收地時曾與示威者擦身而過，見證激烈爭議。驀然回首這些棘手情況，真的大開眼界。

有一段時間林力山被調任至土木工程拓展署，期間獲政府資助在倫敦大學學院攻讀碩士課程，主修水文測量。他說：「在英國留學的日子開拓了我的視野，接觸到各種文化，並學會了抽絲剝繭的技巧，明白凡事不應只看表面，有時韜地一點也可以。」

後來，他把在海外學到的知識帶回香港，有效地應用在與承辦商磋商填海工程所涉及的海底數據爭議問題。也許更重要的，是為政府引入了多項新技術，包括 3D 多音束測深系統、3D 激光掃描等。其中 3D 激光掃描技術在天星碼頭和皇后碼頭項目上發揮了重要作用。「香港引入 3D 激光掃描技術後，我們可以掃描各類數據，在有需要時可以根據精密數據重建重組已拆解的建築結構。」

林力山其後曾被派往港島區、西貢區地政總署工作。期間多次與大型發展商就土地契約及批地問題溝通，接觸面由為領展上市安排而負責提供屋邨設施土地資料，到與新界區的投訴者溝通。

作為有承擔及敬業樂業的測量師，林力山多年來除用心服務香港測量師學會，亦孜孜不倦地提升自己的專業水平。自 1995 年以學生代表身份參與學會活動開始，他先後擔任過不同崗位，包括青年組主席、土地測量組主席，學會副會長等職位，全力協助統籌會務。

他說：「當初加入香港測量師學會是為了與其他同業交流，但很快我便發現

測量界其實有很多值得深入探索的領域。透過積極參與香港測量師學會的工作，我和學會內各組別以至其他專業界別建立了聯繫。例如，身為義務秘書，我需要協調學會向政府提交關於實用面積和一手住宅銷售條例的諮詢文件，這些事情不一定與土地測量相關。為了把工作做好，我認真學習，細閱相關資料，並視所有批評為學習與改進的動力。」

林力山抱持這種積極態度，至 2013 年新機會出現，內地龍頭房地產發展商萬科向他伸出了橄欖枝，邀請他出任公司副總裁。他半笑地說：「我常被問到是什麼驅使效力了政府 14 年後，勇敢跳出自己習慣了的舒適區。我答道，現在私人企業工作應該才是我的舒適區。」

加入萬科後，林力山發現在過去 10 多年所累積的各方面經驗都能大派用場。他說：「我享受面對挑戰、做決策和發展自己的潛能。這都是萬科給我的。」

相對地，林力山也為公司貢獻良多。他善用工作累積的深厚地理資訊知識，解答內地公司提出的深奧問題，包括地區人口、文化與習性、社會需要、交通和金融等事宜。在地政總署工作多年，讓他得以掌握土地契約的知識，有助進行投地工作。又因為負責擬備香港測量師學會的諮詢文件，他從中學懂了收購舊樓、強拍重建、建築物條例、處理違法建築、銷售過程、規劃與發展、估值等各方面要訣。

結果亦很理想。林力山協助萬科擊敗了另外 17 家競爭對手，成功投得深水埗一幅住宅用地，地價為約每平方呎 4,200 元，市場認為地價水平偏低。18 個月後，另一家公司在鄰近的長沙灣投地，地皮呎價約 \$17,000，貴了整整 400%。

現在作為龍光地產控股有限公司副總經理，林力山另一項得意之作是在今年年初協助公司聯同另一家公司攜手投地，成功奪得鴨洲洲臨海住宅地塊，成為報章頭條佳話。地皮呎價約為港幣 22,000 元，當時是香港歷來最高價值的官地投標。這項 168.6 億港元的投資，打破了香港紀錄，金額超越 20 年前創下的紀錄。

林力山表示：「要成功投標，關鍵是做足功課，包括進行全面的研究和調查，確保計算精準、知己知彼，並考慮競爭對手可能會採用的策略。善用現金流、投資回報和估值等地產知識，不要局限在自己熟識的範疇。」

林力山還在政府工作時，花了五年時間完成南澳大學的商業管理博士課程，他以題目 Knowledge Transfer in Public Private Partnership 撰寫博士論文，並於《英國經濟學期刊》(British Journal of Economics) 發表文章。他說：「當我加入內地企業後，才發現博士學位極為重要，不只因為公司銳意聘請博士生，更因為博士課程所學的知識在工作上極其有用。」

除了在事業上精益求精，林力山也熱心參與馬拉松、毅行者的 100 公里全程遠足，還有滑雪和水上運動。作為香港測量師學會體育隊伍的活躍份子，他為測量師、醫生、牙醫和其他專業人士籌辦聯合賽事。此外，熱愛音樂的他更身兼流行曲樂隊主音歌手、填詞人及香港作曲家及作詞家協會成員等多職。在他的朋友圈中，還有其他熱愛音樂的專業人士，他們也在法律和醫療界組成了自己的樂隊。

現正從事地產業的林力山，一直以專業回饋測量界。他強調：「我期望參與香港測量師學會的工作，協助提升測量師的品牌和認受性。我有幾句話想對年輕測量師說：希望大家能積極參加香港測量師學會的活動。待人處事要靈活，勇敢走出自己的舒適區，多和其他人建立聯繫，並盡力學習新知識。擴闊視野，多元化發展你的事業，涉獵一些自己從未想像過的領域。」

雖然林力山謙稱自己對年輕測量師來說只是一個「參考」，但他的經歷卻為年輕人樹立了一個好榜樣。

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