

# HK Foreign Direct Investment



## Charting a Course for Future through Innovation

**START  
ME UP HK  
FESTIVAL  
2018** startmeup.hk

Following the success of the 2017 StartmeupHK Festival which attracted over 5,000 attendees and 130 speakers, the 2018 StartmeupHK Festival will return on 29 January to 2 February 2018 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

[investhk.gov.hk](http://investhk.gov.hk)

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29  
JAN

InvestHK's StartmeupHK Venture Forum will kick off the week on 29 January afternoon. The forum will focus on emerging technologies with the opportunities and challenges that they bring along. Confirmed panel discussions include topical issues such as "Gaming in China". Entrepreneurs Steven Lam of GoGoVan and Simon Loong of FinTech company WeLab will share the long and winding road to building a unicorn. Also, venture capitalists such as James Giancotti, Bonnie Cheung and Jonathan Teo will talk about the latest trends and challenges for early-tech venture investors around the globe.

Five industry verticals will be featured during the week:

### FinTech Finals 2018

30-31  
JAN

Next Money's FinTech Finals brings together 60 speakers from around the world, including Jonathan Larsen, Chief Innovation Officer of Ping An Bank, Claire Calmejane, Director of Innovation of Lloyds Bank, Anthony Thomson, Founder and Chairman of Atom Bank to share insights on FinTech design and innovation. The two-day programme includes talks, panel discussions, workshops, tours and networking. Also, there will be the world's top 24 FinTech startups to pitch for a chance to win the best-in-show title.

### HealthTech O2O

1  
FEB

Bringing together leading minds in healthtech, HealthTech O2O connects people at the core of transforming the health, medical and wellness world through cutting edge technology. The event will showcase international and local innovations that are changing the way healthcare is delivered, and explore new solutions to some of mankind's most pressing problems.

### The Connected City

30  
JAN

Hosted by KPMG, this conference will gather industry leaders, government representatives and entrepreneurs from around the world to share and showcase innovation for the next generation of city living. Topics will include the technological trends in urban landscape and to explore ways to enhance a city's liveability, workability and sustainability.

### Internet of Life Summit

2  
FEB

Built by Brinc and the Mills Fabrica, the Internet of Life Summit will merge technology with everyday life, to offer a deeper understanding of how lives will be impacted in the near future. In a dedicated room, Mill Fabrica, a business incubator for techstyle startups, will discuss and explore techstyle as a new industry.

### Retails' Cutting Edge

31  
JAN

Followed by last year successful debut, Retail's Cutting Edge will once again gather retailers, startups, investors and entrepreneurs with a chance to learn the secrets from retail experts to get a new perspective on the retail world. The full day event will involve 15 speakers, over 10 exhibitors, round table discussions, startup pitchfest and a cocktail party.

### Sign up NOW:



[www.startmeup.hk](http://www.startmeup.hk)



[www.facebook.com/startmeuphk](https://www.facebook.com/startmeuphk)



[#startmeuphk](https://twitter.com/startmeuphk)



## 2017 • 2018

## DEC 2017

## Hong Kong and Shenzhen

12 Dec  
|  
1 Feb

## Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture Exhibitions

The event will hold exhibitions at nine highly accessible vacant or shared urban locations and cultural hubs in Hong Kong and Shenzhen. Themed "City Smarts: Density 2.0", the event shows the smart design of Hong Kong architecture and provides a public interactive platform for increasing awareness and understanding about the sustainability of Hong Kong architecture and city planning.

Location: Hong Kong

Organiser: The Hong Kong Institute of Architects Biennale Foundation

► uabhbhk.org

## JAN

## Hong Kong

11

## French Community Networking Reception

This networking reception is to thank French companies for their contribution to Hong Kong.

Location: Hong Kong

Organiser: InvestHK

(by invitation only)

## Hong Kong

15-16

## 2018 Asian Financial Forum (AFF)

AFF brings together the influential members of the global financial and business community to discuss developments and trends in the dynamic markets of Asia.

Location: Hall 5F-G, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

Organisers: FSTB and HKTDC

► hktcdc.com/ncs/aff2018/en/main/index.html

## Hong Kong

22-24

## Global Off-Grid Solar Forum and Expo

The event provides a unique platform for knowledge exchange, networking and showcasing off-grid solar products and services. It also aims to accelerate the development of the global off-grid solar marketing, contributing to achieving universal energy access by 2030.

Location: Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

Organisers: Global Off-Grid Lighting Association (GOGLA) and Lighting Global

► offgridsolarforum.org

## Paris, France

30-31

## Paris Fintech Week

Following the success in 2017, the event expects over 2,000 attendees over two days to listen to more than 200 CEOs and C-Levelers from banks, insurance, telco, regulators and FinTechs from all continents.

Location: Palais Brongniart, Paris

Organiser: Altéir

► parisfintechforum.com

## FEB

## Hong Kong

## LOHAS Expo 2018

LOHAS Expo is an international trade expo for natural, healthy, green and sustainable businesses. The event features sustainable, healthy and environmentally-friendly living products which include organic food, natural products, health food and supplements, natural personal care, eco leisure, eco and green living products, and many more.

Location: Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

Organisers: Inspire Advertising &amp; Marketing Ltd. &amp; Baobab Tree Event Management Co., Ltd.

► lohasexpohk.com

## Vegetarian Food Asia 2018

Vegetarian Food Asia is the first and only trade exhibition with focus on vegetarian and vegan markets in Hong Kong. Its aim is to promote healthy and sustainable vegetarian lifestyle, and act as the vegetarian industry trade platform for connecting sellers with buyers from around the globe.

Location: Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

Organisers: Inspire Advertising &amp; Marketing Ltd. &amp; Baobab Tree Event Management Co., Ltd.

► vegfoodasia.com

## Stockholm, Sweden

8

## FinTech Roundtable in Stockholm

This event will help audience to gain a better understanding on how to expand their FinTech business in China and Asia via Hong Kong.

Location: To be confirmed

Organisers: InvestHK and Stockholm Fintech Hub

► stockholmfin.tech

## Barcelona, Spain

26 Feb  
|  
1 Mar

## Mobile World Congress

The GSMA Mobile World Congress is a combination of the world's largest exhibition for the mobile industry and a conference featuring prominent executives representing mobile operators, device manufacturers, technology providers, vendors and content owners from across the world.

Location: Fira Gran Via, Av. Joan Carles I, 64 08908 L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, Barcelona; Fira Montjuic, Avda. Reina Maria Cristina, s/n 08004, Barcelona

Organiser: GSMA

► www.mobileworldcongress.com

## MAR

## Tel Aviv, Israel

5

## GoforIsrael Conference 2018

GoforIsrael (previously known as GoforEurope) has been one of the most influential business conferences in Israel for over 20 years. The conference addresses current issues in fundraising and establishes strategic alliances globally between Israeli companies, businesses and financial institutions. Its parallel event will be held in Tel Aviv.

Location: Tel Aviv

Organiser: Cukierman and Co. Investment House

► goforisrael.com

## London, UK

14

## China-Britain Business Council' SME Conference

This event is to provide networking opportunity and relevant information about business opportunities in Hong Kong and Mainland China.

Location: London

Organiser: China-Britain Business Council

► www.cbbsc.org

## London, UK

19-20

## Innovate Finance Global Summit

An annual event for the FinTech industry, the conference is a platform that convenes the world's global institutions together with startups, policy makers and investors to share ideas and solutions to the challenges facing financial services.

Location: Guildhall, Gresham St, London EC2V 7HH

Organiser: Innovate Finance

► ifgs.innovatefinance.com

## Hong Kong

21-24

## Great Festival of Innovation

The four-day Festival will enable the sharing of innovations that will drive the future of free trade and build life-long partnerships. The event will offer a series of thought-provoking and lively keynotes, masterclasses, showcases, installations and performances involving industry leaders, entrepreneurs, artists, educationalists, futurologists to an audience from the UK, Hong Kong, Mainland China, Japan, South Korea and wider region.

Venue: Hong Kong

Organiser: Department for International Trade, UK

► great.gov.uk/innovation

## Brussels, Belgium

27

## Fintech seminar in Belgium

This event aims to help attendees to gain a better understanding on how to expand their FinTech business in Mainland China and Asia via Hong Kong.

Location: To be confirmed

Organisers: InvestHK and startups.be

► startups.be

## Hong Kong

29-31

## Art Basel in Hong Kong

Art Basel 2018 features 248 premier galleries from 32 countries and territories. Underlining Art Basel's commitment to the region, half of the participating galleries once again have exhibition spaces in Asia and Asia-Pacific. The show provides an in-depth overview of the region's diversity through both historical material and cutting-edge works by established and emerging artists.

Location: Hong Kong Convention &amp; Exhibition Centre

Organiser: Asian Art Fairs Limited (AAF)



ASEAN

# Hong Kong Signed Free Trade Agreement with ASEAN

**The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is an important milestone in the bilateral trade and investment relations between Hong Kong, Mainland China and ASEAN Member States**

ASEAN is Hong Kong's second largest merchandise trading partner and the fourth in services trade.

The Agreements are significant and comprehensive, as evident by the extensive scope of fourteen chapters and commitments that spread across 4,000 pages. The commitments will bring legal certainty, better market access, and fair and equitable trade and investment opportunities. These will bring about new business opportunities and boost our trade and investment flows.

The FTA also has a chapter on economic and technical co-operation which aims to enhance the benefits of the agreement with capacity building and technical assistance.


With these Agreements in place, Hong Kong encourages and expects to see more ASEAN enterprises to trade with and invest in the city. Being one of the world's freest economies buttressed by the rule of law and an independent judiciary, Hong Kong has many fundamental strengths that have stood the test of time. These include a simple and low tax regime, high-quality services, a skilled and talented workforce with global vision, and free flow of information and capital.

The signing of the Agreements is just a start. From now on, Hong Kong and the ASEAN member states will have ample opportunities to meet and review the trade and investment opportunities as well as initiatives with a view to promoting even deeper and broader economic integration as well as social integration.

FACTS ABOUT

HK-ASEAN FTA


What's in it for Hong Kong?



Tariff reduction


Customs duties on goods of HK origin reduced or even eliminated

Trade in Goods




Fewer restrictions on HK service providers, e.g. lifting the cap on foreign ownership to **≥50%** in many sectors of individual ASEAN markets

Trade in Services




Facilitating entry & stay for business purposes, e.g. permission for HK business visitors to stay up to **90 days** in individual ASEAN markets

Entry and Stay of Business Persons




Fair treatment on HK investments and enhanced protection against non-commercial risks

Investment Protection



HKSAR Government

Commerce and Economic Development Bureau



Trade and Industry Department

[www.tid.gov.hk](http://www.tid.gov.hk)

## Key Features of the Hong Kong-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement

### Trade in Goods

ASEAN Member States (AMS) have agreed to progressively eliminate or reduce their customs duties on goods originating from Hong Kong. Individual AMS has made the following commitments:

- Singapore commits to binding all its customs duties at zero, with effect from the date on which the FTA enters into force for Singapore;
- Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand will eliminate customs duties of about 85 per cent of their tariff lines within 10 years and reduce customs duties of about another 10 per cent of their tariff lines within 14 years;
- Indonesia and Vietnam will eliminate customs duties of about 75 per cent of their tariff lines within 10 years and reduce customs duties of about another 10 per cent of their tariff lines within 14 years; and
- Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar will eliminate customs duties of about 65 per cent of their tariff lines within 15 years and reduce customs duties of about another 20 per cent of their tariff lines within 20 years.

The tariff reduction commitments cover different kinds of commodities, including jewellery, articles of apparel and clothing accessories, watches and clocks, toys, etc. For instance, Brunei Darussalam will grant tariff free access to articles of apparel and clothing accessories originating from Hong Kong within three years, while Thailand will eliminate custom duties of watches and clocks and their accessories originating from Hong Kong within three years.

Hong Kong exporters who comply with the relevant preferential origin rules and fulfil the relevant requirements can benefit from the preferential tariff treatment for exports to AMS.

Hong Kong commits to granting tariff free access to all products originating from AMS when the FTA takes effect.

### Trade in Services

Services and service providers of the two sides will enjoy the following benefits in each other's market, subject to listed specific exceptions:

- In similar circumstances, service providers of both sides will enjoy national treatment i.e. being treated equally with local service providers of the other party; and
- The two sides commit to removing or reducing various restrictions, including on types of legal entity, foreign capital participation, number of service providers or operations, value of service transactions, and number of persons employed, etc. For example, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam allow Hong Kong enterprises to have foreign capital participation of up to 50 per cent or even full ownership in many sectors.

In respect of arrangements for temporary stay and entry for business purposes, AMS will provide facilitation to various extent to Hong Kong service providers. For instance, there are commitments of temporary stay of up to 90 days in general for Hong Kong business visitors, as well as a stay of no more than two years (and extendable for another two years) in general for intra-corporate transferees. In addition, the commitments of Malaysia and Vietnam also extend to other categories, i.e. independent specialists/experts/professionals and contractual services suppliers.

Hong Kong also makes commitments to AMS on a wide range of service sectors.

## Key Features of the Hong Kong-ASEAN Investment Agreement

The Investment Agreement complements the FTA by providing Hong Kong and ASEAN investors with non-discriminatory treatment of investments in non-services sectors and protection of investments in all sectors, in respect of their investments in the other party's area. Such protection includes requiring each party to:

- provide fair and equitable treatment of investments;
- provide physical protection and security of investments;
- provide compensation according to the agreed standard in case of expropriation of investments and in a freely usable currency as determined by the International Monetary Fund;
- provide non-discriminatory treatment in compensation for investment losses or damages owing to war, armed conflict, civil strife, or similar events; and
- permit free transfer of investments and returns.





Creative Industries

## Hong Kong - The Creative Hub of Asia

**With the vision of developing Hong Kong as an international arts and cultural metropolis, Chief Executive Carrie Lam proposed in her Policy Address to inject HK\$1 billion into the CreateSmart Initiative to strengthen support for the development of the design and creative industries**

The thriving arts scene in Hong Kong is best showcased in March, Hong Kong Arts Month, with an inspirational spectrum of events, ranging from art fairs, art installations to seminars. Here are some of the highlights:

### **Art Basel Hong Kong (29-31 March 2018)**

Being one of the premier art shows of its kind, Art Basel Hong Kong 2018 edition will feature 248 premier galleries from 32 countries and territories. With half of the participating galleries are from Asia Pacific, the fair will also offer galleries from around the world a platform for bringing their highest quality of work to town. The show provides an in-depth overview of the region's diversity through both historical material and cutting-edge works by established and emerging artists.

[artbasel.com/hong-kong](http://artbasel.com/hong-kong)

### **Art Central (27 March - 1 April 2018)**

Since its inaugural show in 2015, Art Central has established itself as an international platform for pushing boundaries in contemporary art and experimentation. Taking place at the iconic Central Harbourfront, the event will present over 100 exhibitors showcasing the next generation of artistic talent alongside some of the most established contemporary galleries from across Asia and the globe. In addition, the fair offers a dynamic programme that includes interactive installations, cutting-edge new media and engaging panel discussions.

[artcentralhongkong.com](http://artcentralhongkong.com)

### **Asia Contemporary Art Show (23-26 March, 2018)**

The show will feature over 2,500 unique works of art spread across several floors in a luxury hotel. The works on show will include original paintings, limited editions, sculpture and photography from some of the world's most interesting emerging and mid-career artists, to those housed in private and public collections, and sold at auctions.

[asiacontemporaryart.com](http://asiacontemporaryart.com)



Considered as the cultural centre of the Asian contemporary art scene, Hong Kong is not only a tax-free and duty-free port for the import and export of artworks, but also provides access to a large community of collectors and high-net-worth individuals in the Asia Pacific region. Together with art districts centred around Central and SoHo, as well as destination art galleries that are evolving into art clusters in warehouse sized ex-industrial buildings in Wong Chuk Hang and Kwun Tong, Hong Kong is poised to become a vibrant international centre for arts and culture in Asia.

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# STAMFORD AMERICAN SCHOOL HONG KONG



**“Hong Kong is a major inward investment hub, which also brings in families who want quality and premium education. It is a natural place for us to be in.”**

**Malcom Kay, Superintendent  
Stamford American School**

## Creating Future Leaders and Innovators in Hong Kong

**Stamford American School opened in Hong Kong providing high quality, innovation-focused education with an eye to the future**

In September 2017, Stamford American School opened in Ho Man Tin, one of the well-established school networks in the city. A member of the Cognita School group which has 68 international schools around the world, the school offers an inquiry-driven curriculum to students from pre-primary to grade 7, and will eventually grow into a through-train school up to grade 12.

Malcolm Kay, Superintendent, said that while the school has been operating in Singapore for eight years, they saw a rising demand for high quality education in Hong Kong, and want to bring its successful model to the city.

“We have operated in places where overseas companies are incredibly important as they attract along many expatriate employees,” Kay said, “Hong Kong is a major inward investment hub, which also brings in families who want quality and premium education. It is a natural place for us to be in.”

With its vision to develop future leaders with innovative minds, the school is devoted to providing forward-thinking education programmes that focus on children's growth. The programmes are also combined with strong core standards to ensure the math and literacy skills are developed to a high standard while students create innovative ideas.

“Our teaching is based on what we know children would need in the future,” Kay remarked, “we want every child to achieve more than they believe.”

The school's STEMinn programmes (science, technology, innovation and math) concentrate on problem-solving skills and innovation which, the school believes, are essential for future leaders that will thrive in this global marketplace. This programme is woven into the curriculum and therefore is a focus of multiple periods a week. Dedicated class sessions in the STEMinn lab focus on critical thinking and building ideas for real-world application, from coding to solving social problems through technology.

“Our goal is to change the dialogue of education, to get people to start question what quality education looks like, and what suits children best in terms of the future,” Kay added.

In its first year of operation, the school now has some 350 students and plans to grow steadily every year. It is expected to reach its full capacity of 1,000 in four years. In addition to the current 72 academic and administrative staff, the school also plans to steadily expand the team as they receive more students.

Stamford American School was connected with InvestHK before its setup in Hong Kong. Kay said that the department has provided helpful support for their preparation work. “InvestHK is a key agency in helping us understand the environment here before we set up. It's so important to have their assistance,” Kay remarked, “they are also key to bringing in foreign investors together with their families, whom we want to provide education for.”

### Stamford American School

- Offers a blend of inquiry based and the academically rigorous American Education Reaches Out (AERO) and Common Core Plus frameworks from five years old
- Will offer the option of the American diploma or International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB) in Grades 11 and 12
- Campus is equipped with facilities such as swimming pool, innovation lab with dedicated STEMinn facilities, and library in every classroom
- Strong world language programme with choice of bilingual (English/Putonghua), or daily Putonghua or Spanish by level

[sais.edu.hk](http://sais.edu.hk)



# CDP Group goes further in the global market by developing its office in Hong Kong

**The innovative human resources solution and service provider headquartered in Shanghai leverages the city's unique position in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and reaches out to APAC and beyond**

CDP Group is far more than a human resources expert. As one of the earliest HR providers bringing out the concept of "EcoSaaS" in the industry, the company has pointed out an innovative model, an one-stop HR digital platform covering a wide spectrum of business services including employee's well-being, payroll, as well as a software system.

CDP Group has been listed on the market guide for Gartner's HCM 2017 report with its multinational payroll solution, and what it provides is the solution containing the system as well as service.

The company has also attracted some of the world's top investors, including Morgan Stanley, Fidelity and Sumitomo Corporation. In 2015, CDP opened its Hong Kong office to grow their global business and serve their international clientele.

According to Charlie Zhai, Group VP Solution, General Manager for South China, Hong Kong is their strategic location covering Southern China, Macau and Taiwan. With the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, CDP will leverage Hong Kong's unique position and reach out to other markets.

"Hong Kong is not only an international city, but also a bridge between Mainland China and APAC region," Zhai said, "therefore, we have enhanced our resources to grow the hub in Hong Kong with unlimited potential in the near future."

CDP's SaaS-based products are now serving over 620 multinational corporate and one million white-collar employees, including some first-class investment banks. Zhai said that their clients always regard CDP as trustful partner in the long term. He added that it is natural for CDP to step forward Hong Kong, since there are lots of multinational corporates having their regional headquarters here. "Hong Kong is a mature market in our business with a high level of acceptance, which is beneficial for us," Zhai said.

"The operation in Hong Kong goes smoothly and problems are solved quickly. We have never encountered any politics of bureaucratic problems in Hong Kong before, and we are confident in making full use of the city's favorable business environment to develop regionally and globally," Zhai remarked.

CDP's employee in Hong Kong covers different functions, such as sales and marketing, technical solutions and operation. There is a plan to further expand its Hong Kong office in the near future. "We can find a lot of devoted talents respectful for their jobs with high professionalism in the HR industry here. There's a high chance to find talent with regional and international exposure, which is very important for our company."

"InvestHK is very helpful in expanding our business contacts. Moreover, they have invited us to attend industry conferences and business events. During the early stage they also assisted us to set up in Hong Kong to make sure the process is smooth. I would highly recommend entrepreneurs to use their services," Zhai concluded.

## CDP

- Headquartered in Shanghai, the company has 12 branch office in Mainland China and APAC region and has some 10,000 employees in total
- Hong Kong office was set up in 2015
- As a market guide for HCM Suit and multinational payrolls solution

[cdpgroupltd.com](http://cdpgroupltd.com)

**"Hong Kong is not only an international city, but also a bridge between Mainland China and APAC region, therefore, we have enhanced our resources to grow the hub in Hong Kong with unlimited potential in the near future."**

**Charlie Zhai**  
Group VP Solution, General  
Manager for South China  
CDP





# FOOD IS GREAT BRITAIN

**“Hong Kong is an easy place to start a business and I would absolutely recommend to the companies that have an outstanding product or service.”**

Faraz Amir, Director, Asia Pacific  
British Essentials



## British Essentials Accelerates Expansion through Hong Kong

**British Essentials offers a convenient grocery shopping experience with home delivery of only British products**

British Essentials is one of the first online supermarkets selling food and home products directly imported from the UK. It is also the official Hong Kong online retailer of Morrisons private label groceries. Morrisons is one of the largest supermarket chains in Britain. Currently, the site hosts around 850 products and delivers directly to home with their in-house logistic team.

The company specialises in British products and Hong Kong is its first overseas market. Faraz Amir, Director of Asia Pacific, sees a big potential for supermarket eCommerce here. “There are mainstream supermarkets with products from all over the world, but we specialise in only British products, offering high quality of food products meeting European regulations and standard,” he said.

“With a high density of an expatriate population in Hong Kong, we expect the city to be an attractive market for us to supply food products from their home country. We are not only targeting British expatriates, but also those from the rest of Europe, as well as consumers who has lived in the UK or appreciate its food and culture,” he added.

Setting up their first overseas operation in Hong Kong, the company has planned to use the city as a test bed for Asia, “if we get this model right in Hong Kong, we can apply to other regions such as Middle East and across Asia Pacific,” Amir said.

While it is focussing on packaged food and toiletries, the company plans to add fresh food, baby products, and frozen dairy products to the list. Other than their exclusive partnership with Morrisons, Amir revealed that more British brands will be available through their platform in the coming months.

British Essentials currently has a core team of staff in its Hong Kong office, handling logistics and quality control. Its plan is to

expand its delivery fleet and to add four to six more delivery vans so as to optimise its logistic capability.

“Hong Kong is an easy place to start a business and I would absolutely recommend to the companies that have an outstanding product or service,” he said, “it is a competitive place, but for career or business growth, it is definitely the place to be.”

Having been living in Hong Kong for over 10 years, Amir enjoys the high accessibility of the city. “Hong Kong is right in the middle where we can easily connect to a lot of Asian countries, so travelling has been very easy.”

Amir was introduced to InvestHK during one of the trade shows held in Hong Kong. He recalled, “InvestHK has given us the network with other entrepreneurs through social activities organised by the team. That really helps a lot for the exposure. The fact that InvestHK is a government department adds to their reliability.”

### British Essentials

- Launched its Hong Kong office in May 2017
- Offers over 850 items including toiletries, packaged drinks and food
- Currently has a core team of staff in Hong Kong office in charge of logistics and quality control, with a plan to expand the delivery team in next few months

[britishessentials.hk](http://britishessentials.hk)

# Another Step towards Smart City Living

**Since its establishment in 1946, Iskra from Slovenia has evolved to a globally recognised provider of intelligent industrial solutions and cutting-edge electro-technical products**

**“Hong Kong is the ideal platform for us to expand into Mainland thanks to its geographic advantage and ease of doing business.”**

**Marko Batic**  
International Managers for Asia and Pacific  
Iskra

With profound experience in developing and manufacturing devices and wide engineering knowledge in realising demanding projects, Iskra ranks among the leading European companies with presence in over 80 countries in the world.

Iskra's core activities include turnkey solutions in energy sector, telecommunications, railways and road traffic with an aim to help its clients improve existing applications, adopt new technologies, increase efficiency, control power consumption and improve connectivity. In addition, the company also develops, manufactures and markets substations automation and protection products, capacitors, low voltage switchgear, electrical measuring instruments and telecommunications devices. All products are made in the European Union with competitive prices and professional technical aftersales support.

In view of the market potential in the region, especially Mainland China, Iskra set up its regional office in Hong Kong recently to allow the company greater flexibility and swifter responsiveness to market needs. Not only does the Hong Kong office represent the Iskra brand in the region, it also coordinates and manages local stock warehousing and distribution.

According to Marko Batic, International Managers for Asia and Pacific, Asian markets were initially developed in 1980 by engaging an agent handling the area's business. With steady growth in the past few years, Iskra has decided to establish its own office in the city. “Hong Kong is the ideal platform for us to expand into Mainland, thanks to its geographic advantage and ease of doing business,” Batic said. “Also, we hope to use this



opportunity to reposition Iskra as the leading regional premium suppliers of passive components and system solutions.”

Iskra got in touch with Invest HK's Berlin office at the initial stage and was then introduced to the Innovation and Technology team at Hong Kong head office. InvestHK has assisted the company by providing professional information and networking opportunities. “Their free service is valuable for any companies who would like to set up a presence in Hong Kong,” Batic concluded.

## Iskra

- A globally recognised provider of intelligent industrial solutions and cutting-edge electro-technical products
- Established in Slovenia in 1946 with presence in over 80 countries including a regional headquarters in Hong Kong

[www.iskra.eu](http://www.iskra.eu)



# Connect to the World from Hong Kong

**Riding on the advantages of Shenzhen-Hong Kong Gold Connect and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area, Vpower Finance Security (HK) Limited aims to expand into new markets and develop a diversified range of secured transportation services within this region**

**“Hong Kong is one of the world’s largest financial centres. It is also a major trading and logistics hub and the world’s freest economy. Having a presence in Hong Kong will undoubtedly benefit our expansion into overseas markets.”**

**Li Xiaofeng, Executive Director  
Vpower Finance Security (HK) Company Limited**

Being the first professional security transportation company from the Mainland China to set up substantial operations from inception in Hong Kong, Vpower Finance Security (HK) Limited provides cross-border armoured transportation encompassing security and point-to-point manned security services on cash and a range of valuable items in Hong Kong and Mainland China. Its parent company, Shenzhen Vpower Finance Security Co. Ltd, was founded in 1997 and was the first security transportation company designated by the People’s Bank of China under its pilot scheme.

Since its establishment in Hong Kong, Vpower sees a positive growth in their business. They have also strengthened cooperation with other local and international industry players to expand global secured transportation services for sending and repatriation of RMB, HKD and other foreign currencies as well as precious metals and diamond and jewellery.



According to Li Xiaofeng, Executive Director, the business opportunities available in the Greater Bay Area were a key factor for the company’s decision to set up an office in Hong Kong. “The Greater Bay Area development has accelerated economic integration between Hong Kong and the region and this helps to further expand more business opportunities for Hong Kong,” he said.

“Hong Kong is one of the world’s largest financial centres. It is also a major trading and logistics hub and the world’s freest economy,” he added, “having a presence in Hong Kong will undoubtedly benefit our expansion into overseas markets.”

Li also stated that the demand for RMB has increased in Southeast Asia and the rest of the world, and Hong Kong is the world’s largest offshore RMB centre. Together with a steady demand for cash processing and transportation services between Mainland China



and Hong Kong, VPower eyes a great potential in this market especially because there is no well-established Chinese-owned international security transportation in Mainland China yet.

Thanks to the recently launched Shenzhen-Hong Kong Gold Connect scheme, Vpower has tapped into this new business opportunity and has been appointed as the official secured logistics service provider for warehouse management, delivery and secured transportation of gold, silver and other precious metals under the scheme. Vpower’s long-term goal is to provide a diversified range of security services and become a leading cross-border and global secured transportation services company in Asia.

Li said that Hong Kong is the ideal location for many multinational companies as the city is located in the heart of Asia and has a simple low-rate tax regime, world-class infrastructure, transparency and open market access. It is also home to a large local and international talent pool.

VPower currently employs approximately 100 staff in Hong Kong. According to Li, the company’s medium-term plan of expansion is to double the number of employees in Hong Kong.

“Invest Hong Kong has provided substantial support in marketing and networking opportunities. The support we’ve received from the government has boosted our confidence for our future development in the city,” he concluded.

## **Vpower Finance Security (HK) Company Limited**

- Appointed official secured logistics service provider for warehouse management, delivery and security transportation of gold, silver and other precious metals under the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Gold Connect scheme
- Has approximately 100 employees and 30 vehicles for local and cross-border security transportation of valuable goods

[v-power.com](http://v-power.com)

# Leading Law Firm Eyes Set on High Net Worth Clients in Hong Kong

**Leading law firm Charles Russell Speechlys opens new Hong Kong office, entering the market in association with Jonathan Mok Legal to offer expert advice to high net worth clients**

Headquartered in London with offices in the UK, Europe and the Middle East, Charles Russell Speechlys has recently opened its first Asia office in Hong Kong, in association with Hong Kong Lawyer Jonathan Mok, to offer an integrated private client and commercial service to successful entrepreneurial and family businesses, the creators and owners of private wealth and their advisors and financiers.

Hong Kong's strong synergies with English law - particularly family law - mean that the firm's choice in setting the first Asia office in Hong Kong allows the firm to support the Hong Kong office with the depth of London-based experience, according to Richard Grasby, Partner of Charles Russell Speechlys and leader of the office's private client practice. In addition, Grasby finds Hong Kong easy to do business and a magnet for entrepreneurial family business. Jonathan Mok from Jonathan Mok Legal in association with Charles Russell Speechlys, added, "Hong Kong has a number of longstanding wealthy families. The Pacific region is predicted to see a 91 percent increase in ultra-high net worth individuals between 2016 and 2026 and Hong Kong will be one of the centres of that growth."

The Hong Kong office has five lawyers who are responsible for private client practice and family and dispute practice, with Ashley King-Christopher joining from London as the new office's resident Partner. Also, lawyers from other Charles Russell Speechlys offices have regular visits to Hong Kong with other disciplines, such as UK property advice, UK tax advice, inbound investment into the UK and continental Europe, together with UK, French, Swiss and Luxembourg investment funds advice, all working under one firm. Under this arrangement, clients can have a single contact point that can co-ordinate the advice amongst different offices and service lines.

Before setting up the office in Hong Kong, the Charles Russell Speechlys' London office got in touch with InvestHK's London office. The Business and Professional Services team based in Hong Kong then assisted the firm with market intelligence and networking opportunities.

Grasby finds Hong Kong very vibrant and energetic. The city combines the old and the new, the east and the west and is an enjoyable place to live. With an open, welcoming and multicultural population, Hong Kong provides an unrivalled blend of different cultures and cuisine.

"Hong Kong is a very modern city in terms of connectivity and infrastructure. The strong infrastructure links to many global hubs make the city a unique place for a UK law firm planning to expand into Mainland China and the region," Grasby concluded.

## Charles Russell Speechlys

- A leading law firm with offices in the UK, Europe and the Middle East, opened its first Asia office in Hong Kong
- Five lawyers in the Hong Kong office who are responsible for private client practice and family and disputes practice

[Charlesrussellspeechlys.com](http://Charlesrussellspeechlys.com)



**"The strong infrastructure links to many global hubs make the city a unique place for a UK law firm planning to expand into Mainland China and the region."**

**Richard Grasby**  
Partner  
Charles Russell Speechlys







**“Hong Kong remains the geographical and cultural heart of Asia, helping to drive our business growth. It creates an ideal location for CSM to base its regional operations. Building upon our presence and uniting all our offices across the region is instrumental to our future success.”**

**Simon Drake, Head of Account Management, Asia  
CSM**

## Leading Global Sports and Entertainment Marketing Agency Eyes Tremendous Potential in Asia

**Formed in 2011 as a collection of global, market leading sports and marketing agencies, CSM re-organised in 2017 to become “CSM Sports and Entertainment” with a clear focus on bringing even more extraordinary moments to benefit its clients**

The development and investment in sports and entertainment has rapidly expanded over the past decade with Asia being at the epicenter of this growth. According to CSM, Sports sponsorship is now a USD \$40 billion industry, with Asia representing over USD \$15 billion and growing at the fastest rate of any continent worldwide. Eyeing this tremendous opportunity CSM has redefined their company structure around three core servicing verticals - Brands, Rights and Live as part of the consolidation and rebrand. The Brands division works with consumer facing clients, leveraging sport for strong commercial benefits. The Rights division supports rights holders to commercialise interest in their specific series, tournaments or individual sporting talent. And the Live division is a team of experts bringing all aspects of a consumer's experience around sport and entertainment to life - across aspects as diverse as branding and wayfinding, augmented reality, virtual reality, social media content production, events and hospitality.

With three global quadrennial events - Summer Olympics, Winter Olympics and the Rugby World Cup - taking place over the next three years in Asia, there is an ever-increasing demand for CSM's services to help both brands and rights holders mature, grow and service clients and consumer's needs. “Hong Kong remains the geographical and cultural heart of Asia, helping to drive our business growth. It creates an ideal location for CSM to base its regional operations. Building upon our presence and uniting all our offices across the region is instrumental to our future success” Simon Drake, Head of Account Management, Asia said.

### Hong Kong as a Sports Hub

Drake also sees that more and more people in Hong Kong are embracing sport, whether that is participating or viewing. This is in large part due to the increased understanding of across the region around the benefits of living a healthier and more balanced lifestyle. A few specific sports on the rise are triathlons and open water

swimming, obstacle races and endurance racing. E-Sports (gaming) has also taken hold in Hong Kong in a big way with our own globally respected team. Away from traditional participation sports, in 2016, Hong Kong hosted its first electric motor race (Formula E) on the streets of Central and the series returns as a double-header this December. Additionally, the city will host a round of the Volvo Ocean Race in early 2018 at the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal, the former Kai Tak airport site.

CSM currently has a team of over 20 staff in their Hong Kong office with an experienced mix of locals, Chinese nationals and westerners. By providing a great mix of local knowledge and languages, along with insights and experience from outside the region, Drake finds Hong Kong is still the best city for embraces both eastern and western cultures and ideas.

“InvestHK is a vital part of business support and networking here in Hong Kong. Their Creative Industries team supports agencies like us in our quest to grow, bring in new business to Hong Kong and ensure the people of Hong Kong have the highest caliber sports experiences possible,” Drake concluded.

### CSM

- Renamed as “CSM Sports and Entertainment” in 2017 with three core servicing verticals - Brands, Rights and Live
- Hong Kong is CSM's regional headquarters with an experienced team of over 20 staff

[csm.com](http://csm.com)

# Credit Rating Agency Taps on the Tremendous Opportunities from Belt and Road

**Having completed more than 40,000 issuer and issuance ratings and corporate governance ratings, and being backed by top tier Mainland financial institutions, Pengyuan Credit Rating is building an integrated credit management for companies who aim to go global**

Being recognised by the People's Bank of China to carry out credit rating services for enterprise bonds on a national scale since 1994 in Mainland China, Pengyuan has also become the first Chinese credit rating agency to obtain a Type 10 license from the Hong Kong Securities and Future Commission (SFC) in 2012. This allows the company to provide credit rating services such as preparing reports on the credit worthiness of companies, bonds and sovereigns and the results are being recognised in Hong Kong and the European Union.

With a shareholder change in 2016, the company decided to expand the Hong Kong office to capture the business opportunities in the city. According to Jonathan Hu, Chief Executive Officer, there are three main reasons for the expansion. "Hong Kong's legal and financial systems are very transparent which attracts financial institutions to establish here. SFC provides clear guidelines on what you need to do and what you can do and these help us to set up smoothly in the city. Obtaining a Type 10 license from the SFC has greatly helped us to gain confidence among international investors."

Also, Hong Kong is close to their headquarters in Shenzhen and the city is a world recognised international financial hub. Together with the launch of Bond Connect, it allows investors from Mainland China and overseas to trade in each other's bond markets through connection between the related Mainland and Hong Kong financial infrastructure institutions. This has further increased the confidence for Mainland Chinese enterprises to go global through Hong Kong with a more flexible capital flow. "In my view, Hong Kong is the most important capital financing hub in the region," Hu said.

The third advantage that plays a key role to the company's future development is the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Early this year, the Chinese government has pledged US\$124 billion investment into the Silk Road Fund. Hu stated that a lot of these funds will come from debt financing which will involve a large number of bond issuance. "I can foresee a huge opportunity on providing credit opinion on the Chinese infrastructure companies who are looking to raise capital along the BRI. They will use Hong Kong as a bridge to raise capital in overseas markets as the city is rich in capital."

There are 16 members in the Hong Kong office who are responsible for analysis, business development and operations for the company's overseas business.

"InvestHK is extremely helpful and they have helped us to obtain the SFC license. We truly appreciate the assistance that the team has provided us all along", Hu concluded.

## Pengyuan Credit Rating (Hong Kong) Co., Ltd

- Headquartered in Shenzhen and Hong Kong is the first overseas office
- Obtained a Type 10 license from SFC that allows the company to provide credit rating services

[pyrating.cn](http://pyrating.cn)



**"Hong Kong is the most important capital financing hub in the region."**

Jonathan Hu,  
Chief Executive Officer  
Pengyuan Credit Rating  
(Hong Kong) Co., Ltd







**“Hong Kong is a good tie between Asia, Southeast Asia and Mainland China. It is easy to travel anywhere on the planet from here. The energy, flow of capital and talent are all here. The level of quality is extremely high. It’s right in the middle of everything. That’s why we like it.”**

**Darryl J. Custer**  
Regional Practice Group Leader, South Asia, Commercial  
CallisonRTKL

## Building the Future through Asia

### Architecture, planning and design firm CallisonRTKL sees growth in Southeast Asia market

Design consultancy CallisonRTKL was formed in 2015, under the global engineering consultancy Arcadis. With 1,700 professionals working across 24 offices worldwide, CallisonRTKL specialises in architecture, interior design and urban design through four major practice groups – commercial, retail stores, healthcare and workplace.

Darryl J. Custer, Regional Practice Group Leader, South Asia, Commercial, sees Hong Kong as a market unto itself but also a bridge between Mainland China and Southeast Asia. “We have a long history in Asia and have been very successful in Mainland China, but we are seeing renewed activity throughout Southern China and Southeast Asia,” he said.

“Hong Kong is an ideal location for us. If you look at our network across the world, we tend to focus on what we called ‘gateway cities’ – those cities that are connected, or bring connectivity, to other regions,” Custer continued. “To us, Hong Kong is a good tie between Asia, Southeast Asia and Mainland China. It is easy to travel to anywhere on the planet from here. The energy, flow of capital and talent are all here. The level of quality is extremely high. It’s right in the middle of everything. That’s why we like it.”

In Hong Kong, the firm has developed a strong team with expertise in commercial architecture, urban design as well as retail interior design for regional and local markets. “For CallisonRTKL, it is more about enhancing value than a pure stylistic approach. We help our clients find value in their assets and bring properties into the next generation,” Custer remarked. “We are looking at some large commercial mixed-used projects locally, while we also see a lot of potential here for the retail

sector.” The team has recently worked with the travel retail operator CDFG-Lagardere to design a Duty Free Store at the Hong Kong International Airport.

According to Custer, there are a lot of talented architects and designers in Hong Kong. Thanks to the city’s deep and diverse talent pool, CallisonRTKL’s team is a mix of local and international professionals. “Hong Kong is a very international city, which is appealing to us as a design firm. The city has a great blend of cultures so that we are able to bring different ideas to our projects,” he remarked. Over the next few years, the firm is looking to expand the office to 45 employees. It is also CallisonRTKL’s goal to do more projects in Hong Kong and broaden the team’s capabilities.

### CallisonRTKL

- CallisonRTKL is a merger of two architecture and design firms—Callison and RTKL—under Arcadis
- Set up office in Hong Kong in June 2016. Practice focus include commercial, retail, healthcare and workplace
- Currently the Hong Kong office has a team of 24 professionals but is expected to expand to 45 in next few years

[callisonrtkl.com](http://callisonrtkl.com)

InvestHK recently facilitated the following companies to establish or expand their business presence in Hong Kong. We welcome them to our city and wish them a prosperous future.

Company name	Sector	Company name	Sector
<b>Australia</b>		<b>Mexico</b>	
Elevate Digital	Digital Marketing	SERA	Logistics and Supply Chain Management
Ka-BLOOM Group	HR Management Consulting		
XLMS Limited	Design Consultancy Services for Planning, Architecture, Retail, Interior & Project Management	<b>Russia</b>	
		Interfax	Information and Communications Technology
<b>Canada</b>		<b>Singapore</b>	
Sunnybrook Wine Canada (Asia Pacific) Ltd.	Beverage Alcohol Manufacturer	Apex Retail Ltd	Luxury Beauty Skincare
		I Can Read Limited	English Language Education
<b>France</b>		Taiger Hong Kong Limited	Information Technology
Agorize	Business and Professional Services		
I-Tracing Ltd Hong Kong	IT Security	<b>Spain</b>	
Les Gens Asia	Digital Marketing Agency	LaLiga	Sports & Entertainment
<b>Germany</b>		<b>Sweden</b>	
Colloq	Conference and Event Platform	BIMobject Hong Kong Ltd	Building Information Modeling (BIM) Technology
<b>Ireland</b>		<b>Taiwan</b>	
Intuition Publishing Ltd	Knowledge Management Services	Mr Tree Company Limited	Family Restaurant
<b>Italy</b>		<b>United Kindgom</b>	
DO IT - IDEAS INTO THINGS	Design and Development Services	British Essentials	Online Supermarket
		Cheryl China Wow	Creative, Fashion, Branding Content
<b>Japan</b>		Charles Russells Speechlys	Law Firm
Aderans Hong Kong Limited	Total Hair Solutions	CSM	Broadcasting
Heguru Education Limited	Education	Stamford American School	Education
Shunkado Limited	Food & Beverage	The UWL Hong Kong Centre	Higher Education
WA Theater (HK) Co., Limited	Exporter, Importer and Distributor of Premium Japanese Food Products and Restaurant	<b>United States</b>	
		BiteUnite	Community Co-working Kitchen and E-Commerce Food Platform
<b>Mainland China</b>		CallisonRTKL	Architecture Firm
ABP (HK) Holding CO. Limited	Real Estate Investment and Development	Clarity Investment Partners Limited	Independent Asset Manager
CDP	Software Solutions	Deloitte Asia Pacific Blockchain Lab	Professional Services
Chengdu Shudaxia Catering Management Co., Ltd.	Restaurant	Polygon Tea Limited	Café
Pengyuan Credit Rating Co Ltd	Credit Risk Rating Service	Verrex Asia Limited	Audiovisual
The Beam Co., Limited	Fashion Brand	WatchBox HK Limited	Luxury Watch eCommerce
VPower Finance Security (Hong Kong) Limited	Security Transportation Service		



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