周禮棟博士
Dr ZHOU Lidong

榮譽大學院士
Honorary Fellow of HKUST

When renowned computer scientist Dr Zhou Lidong was asked what advice he would give to young researchers, his reply reflected his humble character: "It is not about publishing papers or chasing titles. Rather, it is about chasing ideas and staying connected to real-world needs."

This "curiosity with purpose" mindset has been the guiding light of Dr Zhou's distinguished career, shaping the evolution of the scalable, reliable and trustworthy distributed systems that power today's artificial intelligence (AI), search engines, big data and cloud infrastructure.

Currently serving as Managing Director of Microsoft Research Asia (MSRA), Dr Zhou was born in China where his early fascination with mathematics and science prompted him to study computer science. After earning a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from Fudan University, he went on to Cornell University in the United States, where he obtained a PhD in computer science.

After graduation, he deliberated over where to begin his professional career. Guided by his mentor's advice to "go where you can find the best colleagues," he eventually chose Microsoft in 2002. This decision marked the beginning of his distinguished career collaborating with some of the brightest minds in the field of computer science.

Starting as a researcher at Microsoft's Silicon Valley lab, Dr Zhou relocated to Beijing in 2008 to join MSRA. Over the years, he progressed through roles as a principal researcher and research manager, and in 2021, he was appointed Managing Director. Through his efforts, he has played an instrumental role in bringing MSRA to the forefront of the world's industrial research laboratories. He has also become Chief Scientist of the Microsoft Asia Pacific R&D Group and a Corporate Vice President of Microsoft.

Under his leadership, MSRA has become a wellspring of innovation, making strides in foundational AI research, such as large-scale pre-training, multimodal alignment, and ultra efficient AI systems. These breakthroughs have directly influenced Microsoft's core products from Azure AI to Office, Windows and Xbox. Dr Zhou also led the establishment of MSRA's pan-regional innovation network across Asia Pacific, solidifying the region's presence in the global research community.

Among Dr Zhou's notable achievements, he is particularly proud of fostering a culture and environment that encourages interdisciplinary research. Under his leadership, the lab has been actively exploring AI's intersections with sociology, psychology, and law through Societal AI research, ensuring that AI development serves the broader goal of benefiting society at large. Through it all,

周禮棟博士是國際著名的計算機科學家，為人謙遜自持，當被問及對年輕研究員的忠告時，他一語道破科研真諦：「科研之道，非為發表論文或追逐頭銜，而在於追索創新意念，回應現實所需。」

以好奇心和使命感為導引，這正是周博士一生科研之本懷。他的研究卓然不群，推動分散式系統的演變一日千里，使其邁向可擴展、可信賴、穩健可靠的超卓水平，成為支撐着當今人工智能、搜尋器、大數據及雲端基建的堅實根基，貢獻至鉅。

周博士現任微軟亞洲研究院院長。他出生於中國，自幼對數學和科學充滿熱愛，遂於復旦大學修讀計算機科學學士學位，後赴美國康奈爾大學深造，獲得計算機科學博士學位。

博士畢業後，周博士慎重思量職涯起點，幸得導師循循善誘，決定前往擁有最優秀同儕之地——微軟。自2002年加入微軟，他得與世界頂尖的計算機科學家並肩探索，開啟其非凡的科研事業。

周博士最初於微軟硅谷研究院擔任研究員，2008年轉至北京加入微軟亞洲研究院，歷任首席研究員和研究經理，並於2021年晉升為院長，肩負領導重任。在其麾下，微軟亞洲研究院迅速崛起，成為全球頂尖的工業研究機構。同時，他還兼任為微軟亞太研發集團首席科學家及微軟全球資深副總裁，成就驕人。

他帶領微軟亞洲研究院成為孕育創新的泉源，在人工智能基礎研究領域屢創新猷，包括大規模預訓練、多模態對齊及高效能人工智能系統等，這些技術成果廣泛應用於如Azure AI人工智能平台、Office辦公室套裝軟件、Windows作業系統及Xbox遊戲系統等微軟核心產品。此外，周博士亦推動建立微軟亞洲研究院在亞太地區的創新網絡，進一步鞏固該區在全球科研版圖的重要地位。

在眾多成就之中，周博士尤以培養鼓勵跨學科研究的文化與環境為傲。在他的領導下，研究團隊積極探索人工智能與社會學、心理學及法律等領域的交叉點，透過「社會責任人工智能」研究，確保

he has been tireless in cultivating talent, forging connections between researchers and educators across continents and inspiring the next generation along their path of discovery.

Reflecting on his journey, Dr Zhou sees three distinct stages in his career. The first was a period of personal growth, where he learned to embrace the joy of "doing what you love and loving what you do." The second saw him transition into leadership, focusing on team building and helping others grow. Now, in the third stage, he is driven by the desire to give back: to build community impact and advance the research ecosystem.

If there is one lesson Dr Zhou holds dear, it is that "breakthroughs are a team sport." He finds joy in collective discovery and leads by fostering spaces where diverse talents can co-invent, and always lifting up the shared success over individual glory.

As a mentor to young scientists, Dr Zhou advises them to be fluent in AI while also developing deep knowledge in other domains. He believes that multidisciplinary knowledge opens doors to new opportunities for innovation, and the future will belong to those who can bridge disciplines with insight and imagination.

Dr Zhou remains deeply committed to his vision of human-centric AI. He advocates for creating technology that is not only advanced but also responsible and inclusive. As the line between the physical and digital world fades and unlocks incredible possibilities, it is up to the next generation to explore these frontiers.

This vision is exemplified through MSRA's collaboration with The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding in 2025. Together, they are nurturing talent, revolutionizing smart healthcare, and accelerating translational medical research. As highlighted by HKUST President Professor Nancy IP, the partnership will help pioneer innovative medical education and advance cutting-edge research. Dr Zhou has high hopes that by joining MSRA's expertise with HKUST's interdisciplinary strengths and global reach, the human-centric AI vision will blossom into broad and long-lasting impact.

A decorated scientist with numerous honors, Dr Zhou has received fellowships from IEEE and Association for Computing Machinery (ACM). He has served on the editorial boards of ACM Transactions on Computer Systems, ACM Transactions on Storage, and IEEE Transactions on Computers. Yet, in Dr Zhou's eyes, the true legacy of his work lies not in his accolades, but in the lives transformed and the future breakthroughs made possible through the innovations he helped create.

In recognition of Dr Zhou's visionary leadership and contributions to research, education, and collaboration, HKUST is proud to honor him for his career dedicated not only to advancing technology, but also to empowering people to reach their full potential and strengthening the global research community.

人工智能的發展能夠造福整個社會。他不懈耕耘，致力於人才培育，連結世界各地的研究員和教育者，啟迪年輕一代在科研路上勇敢探索。

回顧其科研生涯，周博士將之劃分為三個階段：第一階段為個人成長，領悟「擇己所愛，愛己所擇」之樂；第二階段轉向領導，專注於團隊建設、助人發展；如今進入第三階段，他志在回饋社會，積極創造深遠影響，推動科研生態的繁榮。

團隊合作精神是他最珍視的管治理念，他深信突破非一人之功，而是群策群力之果，總是樂於集體探索，以團隊榮耀為先。透過營造開放共融的科研環境，讓多元人才能合作無間，碩果纍纍。

身為年輕科學家的良師益友，周博士勉勵後輩既要精通人工智能，也要廣泛涉獵其他領域，博採眾長。他相信跨學科知識能激發創新思維，開啟無限機遇，未來將屬於那些能以洞察力和想像力觸類旁通的全方位人才。

周博士始終堅守「以人為本」的人工智能願景，提倡發展先進技術的同時，須兼顧社會責任與包容。隨着現實與數碼世界的界線日漸模糊，未來充滿無限可能，正待新一代去探索與實現。

為實踐此願景，微軟亞洲研究院與香港科技大學（科大）攜手合作，於2025年簽署戰略合作備忘錄，共同培育人才、革新智慧醫療、加速轉化醫學研究。正如科大校長葉玉如教授所言，此次合作將引領醫療教育創新，推動前沿研究。周博士深信，結合微軟亞洲研究院的技術專長與科大的跨學科優勢及國際網絡，定能帶來深遠的影響，讓以人為本的人工智能理念開花結果。

作為享譽國際的科學家，周博士曾獲多項殊榮，包括電氣電子工程師學會（IEEE）會士、國際計算機學會（ACM）會士，還曾擔任《ACM計算機系統會刊》、《ACM計算機存儲會刊》、《IEEE計算機會刊》的編委會成員。然而在他眼中，真正的成就不在於榮譽，而在於通過創新科研所改變的生命，以及由此孕育的未來突破。

周博士以雄才偉略推動科研發展欣欣向榮，以熱心栽培後進，俾使人才生生不息，又致力於促進國際社群協作，有功不居，堪為典範，科大予以衷心表揚。