

For immediate release

**The Hong Kong Institute of Bankers Welcomes
the “First Five-Year Plan” and the “2026 Policy Address”**

*Supporting Hong Kong’s Position as an International Financial Centre
Strengthening Banking Capacity Building and Developing an International Hub for High-Calibre Talent*

16 September 2026, Hong Kong – The Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, John LEE, today unveiled the “First Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (2026–2030)” (the “Five-Year Plan”) and delivered the “2026 Policy Address” (the “Policy Address”). The Five-Year Plan sets out the objective of consolidating and enhancing Hong Kong’s position as “Four Centres and One Hub”, including strengthening the city’s position as an international financial centre and developing into an international hub for high-calibre talent. The Hong Kong Institute of Bankers (HKIB or the “Institute”) welcomes these policy directions and will actively support their advancement and implementation.

Carrie LEUNG, Chief Executive Officer of HKIB, said, “The Institute welcomes the government’s announcement of Hong Kong’s first Five-Year Plan, which proactively aligns with the National 15th Five-Year Plan and provides clear and consistent direction for the city’s development, while the Policy Address sets out the strategies for putting these policies into action. Hong Kong continues to rank third globally in the Global Financial Centres Index and has become the world’s largest cross-boundary wealth management centre this year, underlining the city’s strength as an international financial centre. HKIB will continue to strengthen capacity building across the banking industry and help the sector develop the capabilities needed to realise the vision behind these policies.

The Five-Year Plan aims to reinforce Hong Kong’s roles as a global offshore Renminbi business hub, an international asset and wealth management centre, and an international risk management centre, while advancing development in green finance, digital finance and financial innovation. These priorities will help deepen Hong Kong’s connections with the Chinese Mainland and global markets, further strengthen its roles as a ‘super connector’ and ‘super value-adder’, and increase demand for banking professionals with a global mindset, technological literacy and cross-boundary financial expertise. They will also enhance Hong Kong’s international competitiveness and strengthen its position as an international financial centre.

HKIB aims to help international talent integrate into Hong Kong’s workforce and contribute to the city’s long-term talent pool. The Institute supports the Government’s integrated approach to education, technology and talent development, including the ‘Study in Hong Kong’ brand to attract outstanding students to pursue their studies and development in the city, as well as efforts to bring in talent from the Chinese Mainland and overseas to meet the evolving needs of Hong Kong and the country.”

The Institute also welcomes the Government’s initiatives to promote “Finance + Technological Innovation”, deepen the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and facilitate the mutual recognition of professional qualifications within the region. The Policy Address proposes promoting the wider application of artificial intelligence (AI) across industries and considering the addition of more AI application-related talent categories to the Talent List. The Hong Kong Monetary Authority has also upgraded its Generative Artificial Intelligence Sandbox to the cross-sector GenA.I. Sandbox++, expanding its use cases and participating sectors beyond banking to other areas of financial services. This will help promote the safe and responsible adoption of AI across the financial industry.

In support of the policy directions set out in the Five-Year Plan and the Policy Address, HKIB will develop a diverse industry and talent platform that enables professionals across different sectors and disciplines to exchange insights and showcase their achievements, helping to strengthen the banking ecosystem and practitioners' competency. The Institute will also continue to support the Government, financial regulators, banks and other industry stakeholders to keep abreast of evolving talent and skills requirements across the financial services sector. The Institute will further strengthen its professional qualifications, competency standards and training framework to help the banking industry prepare for future developments.

LEUNG added, "Effective implementation of financial policies depends not only on markets, products, technological development and infrastructure, but also on whether the industry has the professional talent and capabilities needed to support them. As AI adoption accelerates across financial services, and offshore Renminbi business and cross-boundary wealth management continue to grow, banking practitioners will require strong professional knowledge and capabilities in technology application, regulatory compliance and risk management, alongside a cross-boundary perspective and sound professional judgement.

Talent is fundamental to maintaining Hong Kong's financial competitiveness. Beyond attracting international professionals, the industry must continue to nurture local and young talent, help existing practitioners enhance their skills, and provide incoming talent with appropriate professional support and clear pathways for professional development and qualifications alignment."

To support talent development and capacity building across the banking industry, the Institute will continue to strengthen its role as a platform for professional training and professional qualification certification, and regularly update its **Certified Banker programme** and the professional qualification programmes under the **Enhanced Competency Framework**, ensuring that their content remains aligned with regulatory requirements, market developments, banks' practical business needs and the Government's policy priorities.

Through topical training, Continuing Professional Development activities, industry conferences and knowledge-sharing platforms, HKIB will help practitioners at different career levels and across professional disciplines enhance their capabilities. The Institute will also provide clearer professional development pathways for local, incoming and young talent. Through these efforts, the Institute will continue to advance talent and capacity building in the banking sector, supporting Hong Kong in strengthening its position as an international financial centre and developing into an international hub for high-calibre talent.

Ends

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Notes to editors:

About The Hong Kong Institute of Bankers

Established in 1963, The Hong Kong Institute of Bankers (HKIB) is the first not-for-profit organisation in Hong Kong dedicated to advancing banking excellence in the region. As a trusted learning and certification hub, HKIB is the only professional body in the city to offer banking professional qualifications comparable to a Master's degree. HKIB serves as an advocate for capacity building and is committed to cultivating a competent, ethical, and future-ready workforce to strengthen Hong Kong's advantages as an international financial centre. Through creating a common qualification benchmark, fostering knowledge exchange, promoting professional networking and enhancing talent development, HKIB supports local talent and the next generation of professionals, contributing to the long-term stability and effectiveness of the banking industry.

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