

Educator warns of money mindset

College head says government should focus on nurturing creative talent

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The government's dream of turning Hong Kong into a thriving hub for the creative industries will be in vain if it spends billions on arts infrastructure without nurturing people's souls, the new head of a leading management school says.

And Professor Simon Ho Shun-man believes his Hang Seng Management College can help transform the city's money-oriented mindset, especially if it achieves its goal of becoming a private university.

"The government has never understood what a humanistic society is and what culture is," said Ho, who was appointed in

March. "In terms of cultural, technological and creative policies, all it knows is to toss a lot of money into building the West Kowloon Cultural District or set up a committee."

Many artists and arts administrators say the arts hub will fail to build robust creative indus-



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tries if the government does not have a cultural policy that nurtures creative talent.

"Everyone in society is only thinking about how to make more money," Ho said. "If everyone is unwilling to communicate, meet or share with others, it will be useless no matter how many stages or theatres you build, because there is no emotion."

Ho said a higher education policy that focused on providing workers for industries that were short-staffed was short-sighted.

In his policy address this year, Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying proposed subsidising 1,000 students a year for three years to help them pursue programmes in "selected disciplines to meet Hong Kong's manpower needs".

Ho said a real "humanistic

education policy" should develop students' global vision and their creative and critical thinking. The lack of such policies had left graduates unwilling to take a chance and led to an absence of creativity in society.

Ho said his institution could make a difference by helping change the mentality of the city's publicly listed companies.

He said many managers were more concerned with the company's stock price than improving its products and services.

Companies should scrap the link between management bonuses and short-term stock prices, allowing bosses to focus on long-term improvements.

"After we've become a private university, we want to be the leader in reforms of the financial system, business ideas and the traditional ways of doing things," Ho said.