



## Saving lives

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# HK, Macao start to select space experts

Local talents urged to seize chance to contribute to national research

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The Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions began the application process for payload experts for national space programs this week. Officials and experts are calling on local talents to seize the chance to propel the regions' science and technology development to a higher level.

Enrollment in the Macao SAR began at noon on Monday and will continue through Oct 17. The selection process, which will have three stages, is expected to last a year and a half. Those who pass the selection short list will undergo two and half years of training at the China Astronaut Research and Training Center. They will have an opportunity to engage in scientific research and conduct experiments in China's orbiting space station, according to the Macao government.

The application form has 15 pages. Applicants must be permanent residents of the Macao SAR, have Chinese nationality, be from 30 to 45 years old and have a doctoral degree. They are required to have been engaged for at least three years in research in the fields of medicine, biology, psychology, physics, chemistry, mechanical or electrical engineering, astronomy or other disciplines. They must be proficient in written Chinese and English and fluent in spoken Chinese.

The applicants should also provide their medical history, basic information on family members and an essay of no more than 500 words dealing with their personal career achievements.

This unprecedented recruitment could inspire Macao's research and education in aerospace-related disciplines and lay a solid foundation for nurturing the next generation of scientists. Joseph Lee Hun-wei, president of Macao University of Science and Technology, told Xinhua on Tuesday.

Lee envisioned that the devel-

opment of space science and technology will spawn numerous scientific frontier research projects — he added that Macao University of Science and Technology hopes to engage in cross-disciplinary space research such as stem cell experiments, biological research on microgravity and research on materials.

The selection process for payload specialists in the Hong Kong SAR begins on Thursday and continues through Oct 27. Its basic requirements of candidates and application procedure are similar to those of Macao.

News of the recruitment has been welcomed by Hong Kong's scientific community, and research teams and aerospace experts are eager to grasp such an opportunity. Sun Dong, secretary for innovation, technology and industry of the Hong Kong SAR, said in a recent interview with Shenzhen Satellite TV.

Sun, who leads the city's selection process, said the job of a payload specialist is to conduct scientific research in space, which requires high-level scientific professionalism and technical expertise.

As Hong Kong has advantages in scientific research and about 30,000 people engaged in this field, the city has met the basic conditions for selecting such specialists for space missions, Sun said.

This first-ever recruitment of payload specialists in Hong Kong and Macao highlights China's demand for these professionals in space, which can encourage local schools and universities to strengthen space education and inspire people to pursue a career in the industry.

Sun also hopes that with the continuous progress of space science and technology, Hong Kong professionals will have the opportunity to become aerospace flight engineers for national programs and will develop a space tech industry with unique strengths to serve the nation's needs.