Executive summary
The Innovation and Technology Commission of The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the Government) announced on May 8, 2018 that it will introduce a Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) to address the shortage of local technology talent in Hong Kong. TechTAS is a three-year pilot scheme that allows eligible technology companies/institutes to admit qualified overseas and Mainland technology talent to work in Hong Kong under a fast-track arrangement. This pilot scheme will first apply to tenants/incubates/grantees/occupants of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Park Corporation (HKSTPC) and the Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited (HKC) that are engaged in biotechnology, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, robotics, data analytics, financial technologies, or material science.

TechTAS process overview
1) Eligible technology companies/institutes will first need to apply for a TechTAS quota through HKSTPC or HKC.

2) A maximum of 100 person quota may be allotted to each eligible technology company/institute which is valid for 6 months. A maximum of 1,000 persons may be admitted in the first year.

3) Eligible technology companies/institutes would sponsor the eligible person by using the allotted quota and apply for an employment visa with the Hong Kong Immigration Department.

Eligibility of non-local technology talent
The eligibility criteria is summarized below:

a) Employed as full-time employees and principally engaged in conducting R&D (Research and Development) in the areas of biotechnology, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, robotics, data analytics, financial technologies or material science; and

b) Degree-holders in science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) from a well-recognized university. Reference is made to the top 100 universities in the latest publications of STEM-related ranking tables of QS, Times Higher Education and Academic Ranking of World Universities (also known as Shanghai Ranking). Bachelor’s degree holders should possess a minimum of one year of work experience in the relevant technology area and work experience is not compulsory for those with a Master’s or Doctoral degree; and

c) Remuneration received is broadly commensurate with the prevailing market level for comparable jobs in Hong Kong.

Should the requirements under (b) not be met, the application will be considered on a case-by-case basis with supporting reasons.
An individual who is admitted under the TechTAS may apply to bring in their spouse and unmarried dependent children under the age of 18 to Hong Kong, and may apply for the right of abode in Hong Kong after the individual has ordinarily resided in Hong Kong for a continuous period of not less than 7 years.

**Ratio of non-local to local technology talent**

It is important to note that for every three non-local persons approved to be admitted under TechTAS, the applicant company/institute would need to employ:

1) one new local full-time employee (with an employment contract for at least one year); and
2) two local interns (of at least three months duration) or two local full-time employees instead.

Full-time employees should possess at least a bachelor’s degree while the interns can be undergraduates, graduates or post-graduates.

All of the local employees should be engaged in technology-related positions such as R&D, technology or intellectual property lawyer, or a technology transfer expert, but not including general supporting positions such as an administration clerk.

**Next steps**

It is expected that the quota applications will be available in June 2018 with the exact date to be announced later. The eligible applicants should assess their needs for technology talent and consider whether they can benefit from the TechTAS pilot scheme, such as the need to only demonstrate talent shortage once and quicker visa processing times.