

Address by Honorary Graduate

Professor Nieng Yan **Doctor of Science** *honoris causa*

Chair of the Council, President, Esteemed Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Receiving this honorary doctorate today from Lingnan University is a profound honour—made even more special by sharing this moment alongside the legendary scholar, Professor Yau Shing-tung. Professor Yau's groundbreaking contributions to differential geometry and mathematical physics have not only advanced our understanding of the universe, but also inspired generations of researchers worldwide. To be recognised by Lingnan University in his company is a privilege that underscores not only my own efforts but also the collective support of many who have been part of my journey.

As I look upon this audience, I am deeply moved by Lingnan University's steadfast commitment to the values of liberal arts education and academic freedom. This institution's dedication to cultivating well-rounded, socially conscious graduates is a powerful model for our times. By fostering a culture of critical thinking, innovation, and ethical responsibility, Lingnan University equips its students to excel professionally and to become thoughtful, impactful global citizens. This vision resonates deeply with my belief in the transformative power of knowledge to build a just and compassionate society.

Reflecting on my journey—from my early years at Tsinghua University to my time at Princeton—each step has been driven by a quest for knowledge, supported by mentors, and inspired by dreams. I am profoundly grateful to my mentors, who exemplified both rigour and courage in research, and to my team members, with whom I shared countless days and nights. These formative experiences have shaped my identity as a scientist and broadened my perspective on international collaboration.

Having gained so much from these opportunities, I now seek to extend this good fortune to the next generation. My hope is for young scientists, driven by intrinsic curiosity rather than external pressures, to discover and unlock their full potential, making original and transformative contributions. Embracing this vision has become my greatest aspiration after fulfilling my own early dreams.

Returning to Shenzhen was like stepping into a nexus of energy and innovation. Here, I have once again witnessed China's rapid scientific progress and reinforced my belief in the profound responsibility we hold as researchers in our time. Our mission is clear: to transform cutting-edge research into tangible solutions for human health challenges, and to cultivate the scientists who will carry this torch forward.

With years of experience behind me, I am embracing a new chapter dedicated to building platforms that empower outstanding scientists to tackle the pressing biomedical questions of our era. As this vision came into focus, the city of Shenzhen extended a remarkable opportunity that aligned perfectly with my aspirations. With excitement and conviction, I left Princeton to establish the Shenzhen Medical Academy of Research and Translation—short as SMART.

SMART is more than an institution; it is a pioneering model designed to integrate research, translation, education, funding, and global collaboration. Our goal is to ensure that scientific breakthroughs not only happen but also reach those in need within a supportive and collaborative ecosystem.

Alongside my role at SMART, I also serve as the Director of Shenzhen Bay Laboratory, which is dedicated to pioneering discoveries at the intersection of biology and medicine. Together, SMART and Shenzhen Bay Laboratory provide an environment where researchers can pursue new insights while addressing real-world health challenges. By fostering a comprehensive ecosystem for biomedical advancement, we aim to contribute to Shenzhen's emergence as a global hub for scientific excellence.

This honorary doctorate is more than a personal milestone; it is a reminder of the collective journey and the shared commitment to advancing science for the betterment of humanity. I am deeply grateful to Lingnan University for this recognition, to my family for their unwavering support, and to my colleagues and collaborators for their inspiration and encouragement.

Thank you once again for this incredible honour. Let us join hands as we continue to push the boundaries of knowledge and transform the world through science.

榮譽博士致謝辭

顏寧教授

榮譽理學博士

校董會主席、校長、各位貴賓、女士及先生：

今天從嶺南大學獲得榮譽博士銜是一項崇高的榮譽，更特別的是我有幸能與數學大師丘成桐教授共同分享這份喜悅。丘教授對微分幾何和數學物理作出了開創性的貢獻，不僅拓闊了我們對宇宙的了解，還啟發了全球世世代代的研究學者。在嶺南大學同仁的見證下得到嘉許，我感到萬分榮幸，這不只是對我個人努力的認可，也彰顯了一路上許多人對我的大力支持。

當我與在座各位共聚一堂，見證著嶺南大學對博雅教育和學術自由的堅定承諾，我深受感動。這所院校致力於培育全方位卓越、具社會承擔的畢業生，這種教育理念為當今時代樹立了良好典範。通過營造慎思明辨、踐行創新精神和道德責任的學習文化，嶺南大學裝備學生在專業上脫穎而出，成為心思慎密、能創造積極影響的世界公民。這一願景與我把握知識的轉化力量，建構公正、富有同理心的社會的信念不謀而合。

回首我的歷程，從早年在清華大學以至普林斯頓大學的時光，每一步都是出於對知識的追求，有著良師們的教誨，支持我繼續追夢。我由衷感謝我的導師，他們在研究中展現了嚴謹的態度和過人膽色，我亦要對我的團隊不分晝夜默默耕耘表示敬意。有賴這些畢生受用的經驗和知識，我才得以成為一名科學家，放眼於推動國際合作。

我從這些機會中獲益良多，現在設法將這些福氣傳承至下一代。我冀望年輕的科學家們能被發自內心的好奇，而非外在壓力所推動，去發掘自我潛能，盡展所長，帶來獨創的變革性貢獻。繼完成了自己的早期夢想後，去實現這個願景已成為我的最大抱負。

回到深圳對我來說猶如踏入了一個充滿活力和創新的交匯點。在這裡，我再次親眼見證著中國科學的發展一日千里，也更堅定了我的信念——作為當代研究者，我們任重道遠。我們的使命清晰明確：將前沿研究轉化為解決人類健康挑戰的切實可行方案，並培育能將之薪火相傳下去的科學家。

累積多年經驗後，我迎來一個嶄新篇章，致力於建立為傑出科學家賦能的平台，以解決當代具燃眉之急的生物醫學問題。隨著這個願景日趨澄明，深圳市提供了一個完全契合我抱負的非凡機會。滿懷興奮和堅定信念的我闊別普林斯頓，創立了深圳醫學科學院，簡稱SMART。

SMART不僅僅是一個機構；它是一個開創性的模式，旨在整合研究、轉化、教育、資金和全球合作。我們的目標是確保實現科學突破之外，還能通過支持和協作的生態系統惠及有需要的人。

除了在SMART任職外，我亦擔任深圳灣實驗室主任，這個實驗室致力在生物學和醫學的交匯處上進行開創性的發現。SMART和深圳灣實驗室共同提供了一個基地，讓研究人員能夠在追求新見解的同時，應對現實世界的健康挑戰。通過為生物醫學進步建立一個全面的生態系統，我們希望促進深圳成為全球科學卓越的樞紐。

這個榮譽博士學位不只是我個人的里程碑；它是對我們共同旅程的見證，是我們竭力推動科學進步、造福人類的共同承諾。我衷心感謝嶺南大學對我的肯定，感謝家人對我的堅定支持，也感謝我的同事和合作伙伴給予我的啟發和鼓勵。

再次感激嶺大授予我這一項殊榮。讓我們攜手並肩，繼續開拓知識領域，通過科學改變世界。