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AoE in Plant and Fungal Biotechnology: Current progress and future prospects

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ABSTRACT

The Area of Excellence (AoE) in Plant and Fungal Biotechnology was selected in 1999 by the University Grants Committee (UGC) for a 5-year support of HK \$38.8M during the first round AoE exercise. The project was initiated in March 2000. In the past four years, we have successfully built a strong and coherent research team consisting of members from different institutes in Hong Kong, including 13 labs from CUHK as core members and 3 labs from HKU, 2 labs from HKUST and 2 labs from HKBU as associate members, an effective management system, and extensive collaboration networks. Based on our complementary expertise, together we address focused and important questions related to plant and fungal biotechnology with emphasis on the niches and needs in food supply and healthcare products in China, the region and beyond. We now are close to the completion of the first phase of this AoE. In essence, we have accomplished the planned targets and delivered the promised outputs stipulated in the “Indicative Time Table” of the proposal. In this talk, I shall summarize what we have achieved, including the strength added, impact made and recognition gained, and the opportunities we see and pursue in the future.