



*Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation sends out the below press release on behalf of its partner company – Health View Bioanalytic.*

## **Press Release**

*For Immediate Release*

### **HKSTP Partner Company HVB: Frontier to Develop Retinal Image Analysis for Health Risk Assessment in Companion Animals**

*A rapid, safe, and non-invasive health assessment tool to lead development of the global companion animal healthcare market*

- HKSTP partner company Health View Bioanalytic Limited signed a MoU with the Hong Kong Institute of Animal Assisted Intervention and Your Wellness Partner to launch collaborative research of the frontier application of retinal image analysis to assist animal caretakers in assessing health risks in companion animals using their retinal images.
- This innovation, based on HVB's patented "Automatic Retinal Image Analysis (ARIA)" technology, will provide a non-invasive rapid pre-screening solution for health assessment and detecting underlying risks in companion animals.
- The research will target at identifying the risks of vascular and endocrine-related diseases in companion animals at the first stage. The pre-screening solution is expected to be launched onto the market by the end of 2024.

**(Hong Kong, 25 August 2023)** – Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTP) partner company Health View Bioanalytic Limited (HVB), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Hong Kong Institute of Animal Assisted Intervention (HKIAAI) and Your Wellness Partner (YWP) to launch collaborative research of the frontier application of retinal image analysis to assist animal caretakers in assessing health risks in companion animals using their retinal images. This innovation, based on HVB's patented "Automatic Retinal Image Analysis (ARIA)" technology, will provide a non-invasive rapid pre-screening solution for health assessment and detecting underlying risks in companion animals.

Dr Grace Lau, Head of Institute for Translational Research, HKSTP said, "HKSTP is committed to accelerating the innovation journey by creating a complete support system for translational research, product development through to commercialisation, cementing Hong Kong's position as Asia's leader in biomedical technology. We are excited that HVB is going to extend the application of the groundbreaking ARIA technology from humans to animal levels, expediting global companion animal healthcare market development with technological innovations."

According to [The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals \(ASPCA\)](#), "companion animals" are defined as "domesticated or domestic-bred animals whose physical, emotional, behavioural and social needs can be readily met as companions in the home, or in close daily relationship with humans". Keeping companion animals has become an increasingly popular lifestyle



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trend in recent years, and the most common ones are cats and dogs. Many studies have found that animal companion ownership is associated with [greater cognitive health](#) and [a reduction in emotional stress](#). Some studies have also shown that [stress levels are synchronised in dogs and their owners](#).

In Hong Kong, according to the [Census and Statistics Department's survey report 2019](#), over 240,000 households kept an estimated of over 400,000 cats and dogs. According to [statistics from Bloomberg Intelligence](#), the pet industry is expected to swell from US\$320 billion this year to almost US\$500 billion by 2030. As the number of pets and companion animals increases, the market's derivative demands for various veterinary services, healthcare products, vaccines and medicines are escalating. In view of this, HVB joined hands with HKIAAI and YWP to launch collaborative research of a health assessment tool designed for companion animals, based on its patented ARIA technology. The tool will use companion animals' retinal images to rapidly access their health condition and address underlying risks, thereby improving their quality of life and prolonging their lifespan. The research will target at identifying the risks of vascular and endocrine-related diseases in companion animals at the first stage. The pre-screening solution is expected to be launched onto the market by the end of 2024.

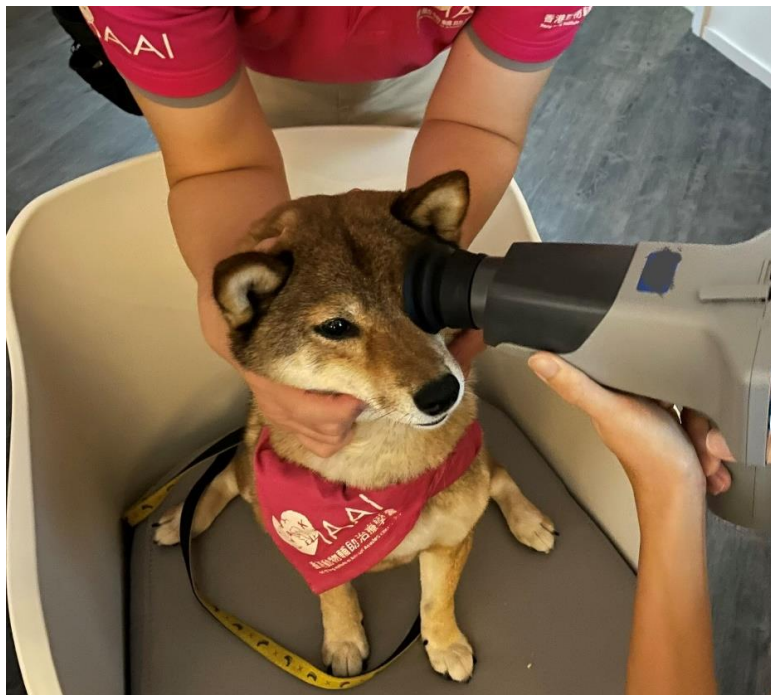
ARIA is a non-invasive and effective technology for assessing various health risks. At present, HVB has successfully used ARIA to assess the risks of stroke, white matter disease and diabetes in humans, with an accuracy rate of over 90%. ARIA employs artificial intelligence (AI) and machine-learning methods to accurately reveal a variety of underlying health conditions without the need for a blood test, creating a more rapid and accessible means for early diabetes diagnosis.



**Photo 1:** Health View Bioanalytic Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Hong Kong Institute of Animal Assisted Intervention and Your Wellness Partner to launch collaborative research of the frontier application of retinal image analysis to assist animal caretakers in assessing health risks in companion animals using their retinal images.



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**Photo 2 and 3:** The assessment tool, based on HVB's patented "Automatic Retinal Image Analysis (ARIA)" technology, will provide a non-invasive rapid pre-screening solution for health assessment and detecting underlying risks in companion animals.

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### **About Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation**

Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTP) has for over 20 years committed to building up Hong Kong as an international innovation and technology hub to propel success for local and global pioneers today and tomorrow. HKSTP has established a thriving I&T ecosystem that supported over 10 unicorns and Hong Kong's leading R&D hub with over 13,000 research professionals and over 1,400 technology companies focused on healthtech, AI and robotics, fintech and smart city technologies.

Established in 2001, we attract and nurture talent, accelerate and commercialise innovation and technology for entrepreneurs on their journey of growth in Hong Kong, to the Greater Bay Area, Asia and beyond. Our growing innovation ecosystem is built around our key locations of Hong Kong Science Park in Shatin, InnoCentre in Kowloon Tong and three modern InnoParks in Tai Po, Tseung Kwan O and Yuen Long. The three InnoParks are realising a vision of new industrialisation for Hong Kong. The goal is sectors like advanced manufacturing, electronics and biotechnology are being reimaged for a new generation of industry.

Through our infrastructure, services, expertise and network of partnerships, HKSTP will help establish innovation and technology as a pillar of growth for Hong Kong, while reinforcing Hong Kong's international I&T hub status as a launchpad for global growth at the heart of the GBA innovation powerhouse.

More information about HKSTP is available at [www.hkstp.org](http://www.hkstp.org).

### **About Health View Bioanalytic Limited**

Health View Bioanalytic Limited (HVB), an e-health provider and an HKSTP incubatee from the HKSTP Incu-Tech programme, has received many awards in technology and community engagement. HVB's cutting-edge technology and scientific research was developed and licensed by the Centre for Clinical Research and Biostatistics of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. HVB seeks to promote better healthcare in local and global markets through automatic retinal image analysis methods.

### **About Hong Kong Institute of Animal Assisted Intervention**

The Hong Kong Institute of Animal Assisted Intervention (HKIAAI) is a non-profit, volunteer-based welfare organization (Registered Charity #91/15298). HKIAAI aims to enhance the recognition of animal-assisted intervention through practice and academic research and promote physiological and psychological harmony between people and animals in society. The short form of the organization name – IAAI is created to signify the symmetrical and balanced combination between nature, animals and humans.

### **About Your Wellness Partner**

Your Wellness Partner (YWP) is supported by the Chinese University of Hong Kong Social Enterprise Startup Scheme (SESS) and is one of the 2016-17 CUHK ICARE CUSE Fund Awardees. YWP offers professional human and companion animal services, facilitating them to attain physical, psychological, social, and spiritual well-being (Wellness).



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