

Speaker bios and photos BBIS3 The Future of Food



Leah Birkby has always been passionate about the environment and creating positive change in the Hong Kong community. In September 2017, along with Tamsin Thornburrow (Live Zero founder), she was inspired to address the issue of over packaging and environmental degradation caused by plastic. Live Zero is Hong Kong's first zero waste grocery store, it eliminates packaging surrounding food, and allows customers to purchase only what they need. In running Live Zero Leah hopes to reduce the immense volume of waste we produce and encourage people to live more sustainably.

Jingyi Li Blank is a director of the Mintz Group in Hong Kong. She specializes in due-diligence background checking in M&A and fraud cases, and has particular expertise in the food and drug sectors. She has conducted investigations for multinational companies, law firms, financial institutions, regulatory bodies, stock exchanges, and high net worth individuals, and has advised on financial, political, regulatory and fraud matters. She previously worked as a banker in New York and Hong Kong with two international investment banks, specializing in leveraged and structured debt.



Dr. Ulrich Boettger has been the head of Finance and Controlling in Asia Pacific and the Director of BASF Hong Kong Ltd., based in Hong Kong, since 2015.

Boettger joined BASF in 1994 in Germany, in the team responsible for subsidiary financing and acquisitions. Since then, he has held various management positions in finance and accounting, based in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Germany, and also led several global M&A projects in Europe. From 2013, he was the head of Regional Functions and Market Development Europe, based in Ludwigshafen, Germany.

Boettger was born in Ludwigshafen, 1965. He studied business economics at the University in St. Gallen, Switzerland, as well as at the Ecole Supérieure de Commerce (ESC) in Paris, followed by a PhD degree in 1994 (Dr. oec. HSG).



Sonalie Figueiras is the founder and editor-in-chief of Green Queen, Hong Kong's largest eco wellness media platform, advocating for social & environmental change using original, inspiring content and the founder and CEO of Ekowarehouse, the global sourcing platform for certified organic products created with a mission to make organic farming accessible & affordable for the whole planet. With over a decade of experience in publishing, SEO, digital marketing, organic trade and health journalism, she is a eco/wellness industry veteran with a keen eye for market trends and a regular on the speaking circuit, sharing her expertise on stages across Asia and beyond. Sonalie also recently launched a brand new podcast series about the Zero Waste Movement in Hong Kong to raise awareness about plastic pollution.



Michelle Hong is the Co-Founder of Rooftop Republic, a social enterprise dedicated to reshape our future of food through urban farming. She and her team aim to transform our city's skyline into productive spaces, and nurture a generation of conscious consumers connected with our food sources and local producers. Within the first 3 years of operations, Rooftop Republic has transformed over 30,000 square feet of underutilised urban spaces into 36 thriving farms across Hong Kong and China. The social business model has also been recognised with "The Outstanding Social Enterprise (Meritorious) Award" and "Outstanding Innovation Award" at the SE Awards 2017 and featured in local and worldwide publications such as BBC, The New Yorker, SCMP and Monocle. Coming from a background of advertising and communications in Singapore and Hong Kong, she finds purpose and motivation not only in growing her own food, but also in building sustainable communities around urban farming.



Kary Lau
Project Manager, Food Angel by Bo Charity Foundation

Kary joined Food Angel by Bo Charity Foundation in 2015. Food Angel is a food rescue and food assistance program with the mission of "WASTE NOT, HUNGER NOT, WITH LOVE." The program rescues edible surplus food from the food industry and the rescued food items will then be prepared as hot meals for the needy in HK.

Her main responsibilities include planning and executing a full spectrum of fundraising and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) events, maintaining relationship with corporate partners, and preparing funding proposals to foundations and major donors.

Prior to joining Food Angel by Bo Charity Foundation, Kary worked in a non-profit organization organizing events and workshops to promote sustainable development in Hong Kong. She holds a master degree in Development Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in the UK.



Catherine Lesselin is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer at The New Luncher.

Mother of 2 boys and strong proponent of healthy eating, she struggled to find time and headspace to feed her children well every day at school. She realized her problem was every parent's problem. With the emergence of a worldwide food revolution which was underpinned by the proliferation of materials on good eating, increased transparency in sourcing, and an overall focus on being a good global citizen, she wanted to inculcate this mission-driven focus on good eating and sustainability to her children and all children. These are the reasons why she founded The New Luncher. It wasn't just about feeding children right but about educating children on how to eat. Education is as much a part of the Company's DNA as feeding children. Building healthier bodies and stronger minds by feeding children with real food every day at school. This is the mission of The New Luncher. Cooking and delivering good food packed in a lunchbox for children at school.



Daisy Tam Dic-Sze

Daisy is an Assistant Professor at the Hong Kong Baptist University where she teaches and does research on ethical food practices and urban food systems. Her critical engagement with food began in London where she did her PhD in Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths. For five years, she worked in Borough Market as part of her field research, where she learnt from fellow traders about the production, distribution, consumption and disposal of food. Since her return to Hong Kong, Daisy has taken the question to the level of the city and is driven to search for a more ethical, equitable, and sustainable model of food system. Recent publications include "Towards a Parasitic Ethics" in *Theory, Culture and Society* London: Sage 2016 (33: 4) p103-126.

Daisy's current project on food waste is a theoretical and technical undertaking, she collaborates with the MIT Urban Risk Lab to look at the potential of collective (crowd) food rescue practices. She has lectured internationally, and done countless workshops in Hong Kong with schools, the elderly and community centres. Daisy believes that academic research should benefit society and strives to bring her work to a wider audience.



David Yeung is a noted environmental advocate and founder of Green Monday, an innovative social venture that takes on climate change, food insecurity, health issues and animal welfare with a diverse platform that shifts individuals, communities, and corporations towards sustainable, healthy, and mindful living.

Under Green Monday Mr. Yeung launched Green Common – the world's first plant-based green living destination – to introduce a revolutionary food and lifestyle experience. The movement of Green Monday has now spread to 33 countries, with 1.6 million people practicing Green Monday at its Hong Kong origin.

Awards and recognitions won by Green Monday and Mr. Yeung include "50 Most Innovative Companies", "100 Most Creative People in China", "Asia 100 Pioneers", "Ten Outstanding Young Persons Hong Kong", "Best Idea of the Year". He is also the author of a number of best-selling books on Zen wisdom and mindfulness. Mr. Yeung is a graduate of Columbia University and a Director of Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute (SIYLI), Hong Kong AIDS Foundation and Hong Kong Buddhist Association.



“To be excited about being part of something special that is worthwhile to you and your community on an ongoing basis is what purpose means to me. My purpose is to reconnect people with nature so more of humanity realises they are part of nature and not separate from nature.”

Dr. Merrin Pearse is a facilitator and connector. He has a wide range of international experience working for Government Departments, SMEs, international companies and NGOs in stakeholder engagement roles, quality assurance, auditing, and sustainability.

He brings with him his land surveying and engineering expertise, as well as, his experience in delivering experiential leadership learning programs on sustainability. With a problem solving engineer's mind, he is able to come up with alternative scenarios for client issues.

Raised on a dairy farm in New Zealand, he grew up loving the outdoors and animals, and loves living in a rural village on Lantau Island in Hong Kong where he can walk dogs amongst free roaming cows and buffalo.