

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### TWF RAISES CLOSE TO HKD4 MILLION AT 2016 GALA DINNER FOR PROGRAMMES EMPOWERING GIRLS IN TECH

**Hong Kong, November 16, 2016** - The Women's Foundation announced today that its 2016 Gala Dinner raised close to HKD4 million for the Foundation and in particular, its community programmes encouraging girls to embrace STEM subjects and careers.

Over 500 guests attended the event including Sophia Kao from the Central Policy Unit, Charles Mok from the Legislative Council, U.S. Consul General Kurt Tong, Professor Alfred Chan - Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission and representatives from the Foundation's major corporate partners including Bloomberg as Title Sponsor, Kering as Event Sponsor, Facebook as Social Media Sponsor and FANCL as Official Beauty Sponsor. This year's Gold Table Sponsors were ANZ, Gaw Capital, Goldman Sachs, KKR, Li & Fung, Link REIT, Mason Financial, Melco Crown Entertainment and State Street. The Silver Table Sponsors were Baker & McKenzie, Barclays, BlackRock, BNP Paribas, Brunswick, Carnival Group, Deutsche Bank, Executive Access, EY, Freshfields, FTI Consulting, Google, Linklaters, Morgan Stanley, Paul Weiss, St. James's Place, Swire and Zurich Insurance. Other supporting partners included Hong Kong Tatler, I-Scream, SCMP and Time Out Hong Kong.

The event featured a keynote address by Sabrina Peng - Vice President of Ant Financial Services Group and Partner of Alibaba Group, on empowering women in the tech industry. Other guest speakers included Erika Irish Brown - Global Head of Diversity & Inclusion, Bloomberg and Shiza Shahid - Co-Founder of the Malala Fund and Founder of Now Ventures. The event also featured inspirational video remarks from global tech icons Sheryl Sandberg - COO of Facebook, Ruth Porat - SVP and CFO of Google Inc. and Alphabet Inc. and Jean Liu - President of Didi Chuxing.

According to keynote speaker, Sabrina Peng - Vice President of Ant Financial Services Group and Partner of Alibaba Group, "Technology touches our lives every single day. At Ant Financial and Alibaba Group, we have seen how the increase in women's purchasing power is driving economic growth. Having more women working in the organisation has brought innovation and fresh ideas that cater to evolving consumer needs. Alibaba is delighted to support The Women's Foundation and their important work to empower women and girls to achieve their full potential particularly in the area of science and technology."

"The level of engagement at this event speaks volumes about what top businesses in Asia feel about the role of women in technology", said Erika Irish-Brown, Global Head of Diversity & Inclusion at Bloomberg. "We are laying the foundations for a new generation of women leaders in STEM related fields, ensuring that women of all backgrounds are given the opportunities they need to succeed".

According to Su-Mei Thompson, TWF CEO, "At TWF, we are very excited and grateful that thanks to the generosity of all the partners and donors who made this year's Gala such a success, we can expand our initiatives to encourage more girls from under-privileged backgrounds to embrace science and technology subjects which will put them in a better position for tomorrow's best job opportunities. Research shows that many jobs that currently employ a majority of women are likely to be hit hardest proportionately by impending technological disruption. This "hollowing out" of female livelihoods could deprive the Hong Kong economy further of women's talents and underscores the urgency for more women to enter high-growth fields that demand STEM skills."

TWF is working with a number of leading partners like Accenture, Bloomberg, Cisco, Capital Group, Education Bureau, Equal Opportunities Commission, Goldman Sachs, Google, HKT education, MTR Corporation, Operation Santa Claus and Telstra to provide under-privileged girls with coding and digital literacy foundational skills through our Girls Go Tech Programme. Separately, January 2017 will see the launch of the fourth consecutive year of GirlSpark – a joint initiative by TWF, Microsoft and Ivey Business School to expose female undergraduates to the range of career pathways in the tech sector. TWF will also release the findings from our new study sponsored by GS Gives on why girls in Hong Kong are not opting to pursue STEM subjects in December.

## Photos of the Gala

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Keynote speaker Sabrina Peng, Vice President of Ant Financial and the youngest Partner of Alibaba Group, shared highlights from her exciting career journey and how Alibaba and Ant Financial embrace gender diversity in the tech world.

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Guest Speaker Erika Irish Brown, Global Head of Diversity & Inclusion, Bloomberg, affirmed that as a tech company, Bloomberg is committed to advancing women in tech and reaching gender equity in the workplace.



Guest speaker Shiza Shahid, Co-Founder of Malala Fund and Founder of Now Ventures spoke about her work with Malala on empowering girls through educational opportunities, and her current commitment to funding tech start-ups with social missions that make the world a better place.



From left: Su-Mei Thompson of TWF, Erika Irish Brown of Bloomberg, Jayne Leung of Facebook, Consul General Kurt Tong of the US Consulate, Chris Rawlings of British Council, Sabrina Peng of Ant Financial & Alibaba Group and Shiza Shahid of Malala Fund and Now Ventures at TWF's Gala Dinner.



Sophia Kao of the Central Policy Unit joined Su-Mei Thompson, TWF CEO, at the Gala Dinner.





From left: Charles Mok, Legislative Councillor representing the Information Technology functional constituency and Prof. Alfred Chan, Chairperson of Equal Opportunities Commission joined TWF's Gala Dinner.



Su-Mei Thompson, TWF CEO, shared with the audience on how TWF empowers women and girls in pursuing STEM subjects and career.



Antonia Kwan, Girls Go Tech programme participant, shared with us how the programme inspired her to pursue STEM subjects and a future career in tech.



15-year student Misha Fischer initiated a fundraising concert to support TWF to empower girls in tech and impressed the Gala audience with her marimba performance.



TWF's Gala Dinner at JW Marriott attracted over 500 guests.

### **About The Women's Foundation**

The Women's Foundation is a Hong Kong registered not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving the lives of women and girls in Hong Kong. TWF is focused on challenging gender stereotypes, increasing the number of women in policy and decision-making roles, and empowering women in poverty through ground-breaking research, innovative and impactful community programmes, and education and advocacy. For more information on The Women's Foundation, please visit [www.twfhk.org](http://www.twfhk.org).

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