

Guide to
Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme
“伙伴倡自強” 社區協作計劃

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I. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme (“伙伴倡自強” 社區協作計劃) is established under the Home Affairs Department in response to an initiative of the Commission on Poverty (CoP) to reinforce its work in preventing and alleviating poverty through a district-based approach. It has also taken into account the renewed emphasis on district partnership contained in the consultation document on Review on the Role, Functions and Composition of District Councils published on 27 April 2006. We believe that district-based projects and solutions can help identify local needs more precisely, mobilize community resources more effectively and create employment opportunities and support services on a more sustainable basis.

1.2 Objective of the Programme

The Programme seeks to promote sustainable poverty prevention and alleviation efforts at the district level that help enhance self-reliance, targeting socially disadvantaged groups. Instead of providing welfare or short-term relief, the Programme aims at increasing the skills and capacities of the employable and providing opportunities for the disadvantaged to upgrade themselves and to be effectively integrated into community.

II. Application

2.1 Eligibility

2.1.1 The applicant should be a bona fide non-profit-making organization which shall be –

- (a) a statutory organization or an organization registered under the laws of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (e.g. the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32), the Societies Ordinance (Cap. 151), etc.);

and

- (b) an approved charitable institution and trust of a public character

under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112).

Joint applications involving more than one organization or the relevant District Council are also welcome.

2.1.2 Applications from the following will not be considered –

- (a) individuals in their personal capacity; and
- (b) the HKSAR Government (including bureaux, departments etc.).

2.2 Application Procedures

2.2.1 Applications should be made on the Programme's application form. The form can be downloaded from the Home Affairs Department's website as follows –

www.had.gov.hk/esr

2.2.2 All sections of the application form must be completed with supporting documents wherever required. The application form must be typed or printed. Additional pages may be attached to the form if necessary.

2.2.3 An application should contain the following information (for details, please refer to the application form) –

- (a) Name and background of the applicant organization, and documentary proof of eligibility to apply (please refer to Section 2.1 above);
- (b) Details of other co-organizing/assisting/supporting/sponsoring bodies for the proposed project;
- (c) Project objectives;
- (d) Method of implementation;
- (e) Workplan and timetable;
- (f) Expected benefits/achievements of the project, with proposed performance measurement and milestones in quantifiable terms;
- (g) Budget of the project;
- (h) Cash flow projection throughout the funding period; and
- (i) Other relevant information in support of the application.

2.2.4 Completed application forms should be sent to the Programme's Secretariat at the following address –

The Secretariat to the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme
Home Affairs Department
21/F, China Overseas Building
139 Hennessy Road
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

2.2.5 There is no limit on the number of applications each applicant organization may submit individually or together with a District Council or other organizations, provided they can demonstrate an ability to deliver.

2.2.6 In joint applications involving more than one organization, there should be clear accountability arrangements, with one of the organizations identified as the principal applicant.

2.2.7 We welcome collaboration with District Councils particularly where the proposed project is intended to serve residents in a particular district.

2.3 Deadline for Submission and Notification of Result

Applications are normally invited on a half-yearly basis. For the date on the latest round, applicants may refer to the Programme's homepage on Home Affairs Department's website (www.had.gov.hk/esr). Under normal circumstances, applicants will be notified of the outcome within two months after the deadline for submission of application or after the receipt of all relevant information of an application, whichever is later.

2.4 Withdrawal

The applicant may write to the Programme's Secretariat to withdraw an application at any time before an agreement is signed between the Government and the applicant.

2.5 Resubmission

A declined application may be resubmitted only if it has been revised

substantially or if it has been able to produce new evidence to address the comments made by the Advisory Committee in its earlier review. A resubmitted application will be treated as a new application and will be subject to the same assessment procedures.

III. Assessment of Project Proposals

3.1 Preliminary Screening

The Programme's Secretariat will first conduct a preliminary screening of all applications and seek clarification or supplementary information from the applicant. The applicant may be required to attend assessment meetings to present their project proposals.

3.2 Advisory Committee

3.2.1 An Advisory Committee comprising both representatives from relevant Government Bureaux/Departments and non-official members appointed by the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs from different sectors is established to –

- (a) examine and recommend applications for funding;
- (b) monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of funded projects; and
- (c) advise the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs on all matters related to the administration of the Programme.

3.2.2 Government representatives on the Committee would include –

- (a) representative from Labour Department;
- (b) representative from Home Affairs Department; and
- (c) representative from Social Welfare Department.

3.2.3 To avoid conflict of interest, members of the Advisory Committee who are directly or indirectly related to an application will be required to declare interest and refrain from taking part in the discussion of that application.

3.3 Vetting Criteria

3.3.1 Funding support would be considered for the following types of projects –

- (a) Projects that promote sustainable poverty prevention and alleviation efforts at the district level with a view to helping to enhance participants' self-reliance will be supported. Since CoP has identified employment, tackling inter-generational poverty and elderly poverty as priority issues, district initiatives which have a clear employment focus, which promote self-reliance of children and youth from disadvantaged background on a sustainable basis, and the integration of the elderly poor into the society, will be considered.
- (b) Neighbourhood level, district and cross-district initiatives will all be considered but the catchment of the proposed project should be realistic to ensure effective implementation.
- (c) While funding support will only be provided to individual projects for a defined period, projects that are financially viable and can create sustained employment opportunities after the funding period are welcome.

3.3.2 Higher priority will be accorded to projects featuring the following characteristics –

- (a) **Job creation** : the project should aim to help create jobs in the local community through some form of social enterprises. These jobs should target low-skilled and socially disadvantaged people.
- (b) **Self-reliance** : in order to help as many people as possible, the project should have a mechanism to help participants move into the open labour market, instead of staying in the project for a prolonged period.
- (c) **Cross-sector partnerships** : the project should help community building and through collaboration amongst different sectors or organizations at the district level, promote a harmonious society.
- (d) **Sustainability** : the project should aim at continuation after the funding period, either on a self-financing basis or through other

forms of resources support to be generated.

- (e) **Added value** : although projects should not be welfare or relief-oriented, those that create added value in terms of improving accessibility to existing support network and services especially amongst deprived children and vulnerable elders would be welcome.
- (f) **Fields of business encouraged** : applications involving businesses which may tie in well with prevailing government policies or the needs of the community are encouraged. These business fields will be reviewed on a periodic basis and announced for public information.

3.3.3 The following types of projects would normally **not** be supported –

- (a) One-off consumption or recreational activities, such as household visits and cleansing activities, banquets, picnics, carnivals, etc., which will have no lasting effect on enhancing employment and self-reliance.
- (b) Services or programmes that are currently receiving funding or have applied for funding from other government channels or funding bodies.
- (c) Projects which aim primarily at building social capital and cross-sectoral partnerships, without an employment element.

3.3.4 The following broad criteria will also be used to assess the merits of individual applications –

- (a) whether the applicant has sound entrepreneurship background and commercial experience (e.g. technical and management capability), commitment and satisfactory performance record in delivering past projects;
- (b) whether there is a market niche for the proposed business;
- (c) whether the project's schedule of implementation is well-planned and practicable;
- (d) whether the proposed budget is prudent, realistic and cost-effective, giving full justification for the main expenditure items;

- (e) whether the proposed project has alternative sources of funding support, or should more appropriately be funded by other sources; and
- (f) whether there is or likely to be a duplication of work already or currently carried out by other groups.

IV. Scope of Funding

4.1 Form of Funding Support and Coverage

- 4.1.1 Funding support is normally given as a grant covering the entire project period, to be disbursed at regular intervals. The grant may be used to pay for –
 - (a) necessary initial capital expenditure on equipment, fitting-out works, etc.; and
 - (b) operating expenses including staffing for a maximum period of three years.
- 4.1.2 Only expenditure directly incurred for the project during the approved project period can be charged to the grant. A central administration overhead of no more than 5% of the approved grant may be accepted to defray the indirect staff costs and other administrative expenses incurred by the grantee organization exclusively for the purpose of the approved project. For equipment, only the cost of procuring or leasing of additional equipment for implementing the project can be charged to the grant. Equipment proposed to be purchased must be essential to or specifically required by the project. Applicants are encouraged to use their existing equipment or to lease the additional equipment required, in order to fully utilize the grant.
- 4.1.3 Unless with the approval of the Programme's Secretariat, virement of funds between the grant for capital expenditure and operating expenses will not be allowed. If rent and rates are included in the project cost, that also should be separately accounted for. Otherwise, each cost component will generally operate on a lump sum grant basis.

- 4.1.4 The project should commence active operation/service within six months after approval of the grant.
- 4.1.5 Should staff be employed for the project (as approved in the project proposal), the principles of openness, fairness and competitiveness should be strictly observed during the recruitment process. The employment terms should comply with the relevant Ordinances (including employment-related legislations) and should not be better than those for comparable jobs in the civil service.

4.2 Amount of Grant

- 4.2.1 In order to accommodate more worthwhile projects, a funding ceiling of \$3 million per project has been set. There is no pre-set level of minimum funding for individual project.
- 4.2.2 Application for supplementary grants for potentially unsustainable businesses or extension of the funding period will normally not be considered.

V. Administrative and Financial Arrangements

5.1 Contractual Requirement

- 5.1.1 Successful applicants will be required to sign an agreement with the Government (the Agreement) and comply with all the terms and conditions laid down in the Agreement, this Guide and all instructions and correspondence issued by the Advisory Committee or the Programme's Secretariat from time to time in respect of the project or the grant of funds.
- 5.1.2 An approved project has to be carried out in accordance with the Agreement and the approved budget. Any modification, amendment or addition to the project or the Agreement, including the change of project period, project scope, mode of operation, or major budget components¹

¹ Any single expenditure item shown in Part II of the Application Form, "Budget and Cash Flow Projection", which exceeds 20% of the overall budget is a major component.

shall require prior written approval of the Advisory Committee or the Programme's Secretariat.

5.2 Payment Arrangements

- 5.2.1 Payment of the grant for capital expenditure on the procurement of equipment, fitting-out work, etc. will be made on reimbursement basis and the claims should be supported by invoices or bills certified by the grantee.
- 5.2.2 The grant for operating expenses will be paid in advance on a half-yearly basis or at other intervals as considered appropriate by the Advisory Committee having regard to the cash-flow projection submitted in the project proposal.
- 5.2.3 The Director of Home Affairs reserves the right to withhold any further payment if the project is observed to be no longer viable or is seen to have substantial deviation from the original plan or if a large amount of fund remains unspent in the account of the project.
- 5.2.4 The last 10% of the grant for operating expenses will be withheld and will only be released upon the submission of the final audited statement of account and the evaluation report, and subject to the acceptance of such by the Programme's Secretariat.

5.3 Books of Accounts and Records

The grantee should maintain separate proper books of accounts and records for the project. The books of accounts and records of the project will need to be kept for inspection for at least five years after the commencement of the project.

5.4 Project Bank Account and Interest

- 5.4.1 The grantee should keep a separate risk-free interest-bearing Hong Kong Dollar account with a bank licensed in Hong Kong solely and exclusively for processing all receipts and payments of the project. Payments from that account should be made by the authorized representative(s) of the organization that receives the approved funding.

Any unspent balance of the grant should be kept at all times in that account.

5.4.2 All interest income generated from the project bank account set out in paragraph 5.4.1 above should be ploughed back into the project. Under no circumstances shall the interest earned be applied for other uses outside the project, and no negative interest should be charged to the project.

5.5 Procurement Procedures

5.5.1 The grantee should exercise utmost prudence in procuring equipment, goods or services and must adhere to the following procedures unless agreement has been obtained from the Programme's Secretariat –

- (a) for every procurement the aggregate value of which is more than HK\$5,000 but not exceeding HK\$10,000, quotations from at least two suppliers should be obtained;
- (b) for every procurement the aggregate value of which is more than HK\$10,000 but not exceeding HK\$50,000, quotation from at least three suppliers should be obtained;
- (c) for every procurement the aggregate value of which is more than HK\$50,000 but not exceeding HK\$500,000, quotation from at least five suppliers should be obtained;
- (d) for every procurement the aggregate value of which is HK\$500,000 or more, open tendering should be used; and
- (e) the grantee should select the supplier that has submitted the lowest bid. If the lowest bid is not selected, full justifications must be given and properly recorded for subsequent auditing purpose.

5.5.2 All quotations and tendering documents in relation to the project should be kept for inspection by the Director of Home Affairs and the Director of Audit for at least two years after the completion of the project or termination of the Agreement.

5.6 Title to Equipment

- 5.6.1 An equipment register shall be maintained to account for all fixed assets with individual cost of \$1,000 or above purchased by using the grant.
- 5.6.2 The title to equipment procured with the grant will be held by the applicant. Throughout the project period and for the two years afterwards, prior written approval from the Programme's Secretariat is required for the transfer, sale or disposal of the equipment/fixed asset purchased with the grant. Sales proceeds, if any, shall be reinvested into the project.
- 5.6.3 Grantees, including those who have decided to terminate the projects prematurely, should dispose of the capital items procured with the grant according to the "Guidelines on Disposal of Capital Items" available on the Programme's webpage.

5.7 Project Income and Residual Funds

- 5.7.1 All incomes generated from the project, irrespective of whether it has been declared in the proposal, should stay with the project and be accounted for at the end of the project, with a view to being ploughed back to support the continuation of the project.
- 5.7.2 Any surplus arising from the project's operation during the funding period should be re-invested back into the project.
- 5.7.3 Upon the completion or termination of the project, any unspent amount of the grant over the recognized total expenditure of the project will be clawed back and returned to the Government.
- 5.7.4 The Advisory Committee and the Home Affairs Department accept no liabilities for deficits arising from the project.
- 5.7.5 Should the project cease operation within or at the end of the approved funding period for any reason, the Government reserves the right for prior claim to any sales proceeds arising from its cessation, with the exact amount to be reviewed individually up to the maximum level of the

approved grant.

5.8 Use of Information and Data of the Project

Any relevant information and data of the application and the operation of the projects may be used by the Government to conduct research, surveys and sharing sessions in relation to the Programme.

5.9 Acknowledgement of the Government's funding support and display of Programme logo

The grantee shall ensure that (a) the acknowledgement of the Government's funding support, (b) the Programme logo and (c) other logos as may be specified by the Government (all in the form and substance as may be specified by the Government) are shown or displayed in a conspicuous manner on all advertising, promotional and publicity materials and publications (whether written or in electronic form or medium) relating to the grantee's project.

VI. Monitoring Mechanism

6.1 Regular Progress Reports and Final Evaluation Report

6.1.1 The grantee will be required to submit the following reports on the project covering the period from the signing of Agreement up to the end of the funding period –

- (a) mid-year progress reports (including financial reports and cash-flow statements) - to be submitted within two months following the end of the six-month period;
- (b) annual reports (including annual audited accounting statements) - to be submitted within two months following the end of the accounting period; and
- (c) final evaluation report (including the final audited accounts) - to be submitted within two months following the end of the agreed project completion/termination date.

6.1.2 For the annual reports and the final evaluation report, they should contain audited accounts and the Auditor’s Reports (please refer to Section 6.2 for details). Failure to submit a report or submission of reports containing insufficient, incomplete or false information may result in deferral or termination of project funding.

6.2 Audited Statement of Accounts

6.2.1 Grantees are required to submit annual audited accounts. The accounts must contain the Auditors’ Report (including an assurance that the funding was spent in accordance with the conditions of grant), Balance Sheet, Income and Expenditure Statement, Cash-flow Statement and Notes to Accounts. All such accounts must have been audited by a certified public accountant.

6.2.2 Annual audited accounts should be submitted within two months following the end of the accounting period, and the final audited statement of the project should be submitted no later than two months following the completion/termination of the project.

6.2.3 Grantees should identify their own auditors. Should the auditing of the project incur extra cost (in terms of auditors’ remuneration), the extra cost can be claimed on a reimbursement basis from the Programme (not as part of the grant for the project), according to the following scale –

Size of the Grant	Maximum Auditors’ Remuneration Payable (Per Year)
Less than \$1 million	\$5,000
\$1 million to \$3 million	\$10,000

6.3 Visit and Progress Review Meeting

Members of the Advisory Committee or staff of the Programme’s Secretariat may conduct visits to approved projects. Progress review meetings may be organized to examine the progress and level of achievement of the project. Grantees will be required to assist in arranging such visits and meetings. Where appropriate, grantees will be assigned business mentors who would provide

advice on the operation of the projects.

6.4 Pre-mature Termination of Project

6.4.1 Prior written approval from the Advisory Committee is required for pre-mature termination of the project for any reason before the end of the approved funding period.

6.4.2 For projects which have ceased or intending to cease operating within the funding period or within two years after the funding expiry, grantees are required to participate in an “exit interview”. The purpose is for the Government to gain insight into the reasons for business failure, with a view to drawing up further improvement measures for the Programme.

6.5 Monitoring after Funding Period

6.5.1 To monitor the sustainability of the approved projects, grantees are required to submit annual progress reports up to two years after the approved funding period.

6.5.2 Should the project cease operation or change ownership within two years after the approved funding period for any reasons, the Government reserves the right for prior claim to any sales proceeds arising from its cessation or ownership transfer, with the exact amount to be reviewed individually up to the maximum level of the approved grant.

VII. Assistance to Applicants during the Application Process

7.1 The Programme’s Secretariat

Applicants may contact the Programme’s Secretariat for enquiries and assistance regarding the submission of application to the Programme –

Address: The Secretariat to the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through
District Partnership Programme
Home Affairs Department
21/F, China Overseas Building
139 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Email Address: esr_secretariat@had.gov.hk
 Web-site: www.had.gov.hk/esr
 Enquiry Tel. No.: 2123 8383

7.2 Assistance at District Level

Applicants may also approach the District Offices of the Home Affairs Department for assistance or for discussing collaboration with the District Council in regard to the submission of application –

<u>District</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Tel. No.</u>	<u>Fax No.</u>	<u>Address</u>
Central & Western	Officer-in-charge (W)	2852 3473	2815 2155	G/F, 11/F & 14/F, Harbour Bldg, 38 Pier Road, Central, HK
Eastern	Liaison Officer in-charge (SD) 1	2886 6522	2904 8744	G/F, Eastern Law Courts Bldg, 29 Tai On Street, Sai Wan Ho, HK
Islands	Liaison Officer in-charge (BM/TC)	2852 3579	2815 2291	20/F, Harbour Bldg, 38 Pier Road, Central, HK
Kowloon City	Senior Liaison Officer (DL)	2621 3438	2621 3199	Rooms 1706-1713, One Harbourfront, 18-22 Tak Fung Street, Hung Hom, Kln
Kwai Tsing	Liaison Officer I in-charge (G1)	2494 4540	24891083	5/F, Kwai Hing Government Offices Bldg, 166-174 Hing Fong Road, Kwai Chung, NT
Kwun Tong	Liaison Officer in-charge (KTC)	2171 7481	2331 2809	3/F, Kwun Tong District Branch Offices Bldg, 6 Tung Yan Street, Kwun Tong, Kln
North	Officer-in-charge (Fanling Town)	2675 1780	2675 4414	G/F, 3/F & 4/F, North District Government Offices, 3 Pik Fung Road, Fanling, NT

<u>District</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Tel. No.</u>	<u>Fax No.</u>	<u>Address</u>
Sai Kung	Liaison Officer in-charge (Tseung Kwan O)North	2702 3709	2704 9429	Public Enquiry Service Centre, 1/F, King Lam Neighbourhood Community Centre, King Lam Estate, Tseung Kwan O, NT
Sha Tin	Liaison Officer in-charge (East)3	2158 5329	2695 4305	4/F, Sha Tin Government Offices, 1 Sheung Wo Che Road, Sha Tin, NT
Sham Shui Po	Officer-in-charge (East)	2150 8166	2360 1931	G/F & 4/F, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Sham Shui Po, Kln
Southern	Senior Liaison Officer (S)	2814 5850	2552 4939	G/F & 1/F, Ocean Court, 3 Aberdeen Praya Road, Aberdeen, HK
Tai Po	Liaison Officer (2)	2654 1169	2652 1187	Tai Po Government Offices Bldg, 1 Ting Kok Road, Tai Po, NT
Tsuen Wan	Senior Liaison Officer (TW)	3515 5625	2412 0244	1/F & 2/F, Tsuen Wan Station Multi-storey Carpark Bldg, 174-208 Castle Peak Road, Tsuen Wan, NT
	Liaison Officer in-charge (N)	3515 5639		
Tuen Mun	Senior Liaison Officer (2)	2451 3063	2450 3014	2/F, Tuen Mun Government Offices, 1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun, NT
Wan Chai	Liaison Officer-in-charge (East)	2835 2003	2147 0465	21/F, Southorn Centre, 130 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, HK
Wong Tai Sin	Officer-in-charge (Community Building)	3143 1150	2350 5421	6/F, Lung Cheung Office Block, 138 Lung Cheung Road, Wong Tai Sin, Kln

<u>District</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Tel. No.</u>	<u>Fax No.</u>	<u>Address</u>
Yau Tsim Mong	Senior Liaison Officer (2)	2399 2118	2397 3425	6/F, Mong Kok Government Offices, 30 Luen Wan Street, Mong Kok, Kln
Yuen Long	Liaison Officer in-charge (Tin Shui Wai) North Executive Officer (Community Affairs)	2470 1057 2470 1117	2474 7261	Yuen Long District Office Bldg, 269 Castle Peak Road, Yuen Long, NT

VIII. Notes on Personal Data of the Applicants

8.1 Purposes of Collection

The personal data provided as part of the application will be used by the Government to process the application and conduct research, evaluate studies, conduct training/sharing sessions, for daily implementation of the Programme, for monitoring the performance of the agreements in respect of the grant under the Programme, for meeting the requirements to make disclosure under the requirements of any law and any other purposes relating to any of the above. The provision of personal data by means of the application is compulsory.

8.2 Classes of Transferees

The personal data provided by means of application to the Programme may be disclosed by the Government to any of the following persons for the purposes set out in paragraph 8.1:-

- (a) any person who is involved in or relating to the Programme (including any agent, contractor or third party service provider who provides administrative, telecommunications, computer, payment or other services to the Government);
- (b) the public, this is in relation to the personal data provided in the information

- and documents pertaining to the Government in relation to the application;
- (c) any person to whom the Government is under an obligation to make disclosure under the requirements of any law; and
 - (d) any other person who is under a duty of confidentiality to the Government.

8.3 Access to Personal Data

The applicant has a right of access and correction with respect to personal data as provided for in Sections 18 and 22 and Principle 6 of Schedule 1 of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, Cap. 486. The applicant's right of access includes the right to obtain a copy of the personal data provided in the application.

8.4 Enquiries

Enquiries concerning the personal data collected by means of application to the Programme, including requests for access and corrections, should be addressed to –

The Secretariat to the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District
Partnership Programme
Home Affairs Department
21/F, China Overseas Building
139 Hennessy Road
Wan Chai, Hong Kong
Tel: 2123 8383
Email Address: esr_secretariat@had.gov.hk