



# Quality Enhancement Support Scheme (QESS)

**Briefing Session**  
(2023/24 Round of Application)

Education Bureau  
November 2023

# Programme Rundown

Briefing by EDB

Q&A



Experience sharing by HKSYU

Q&A



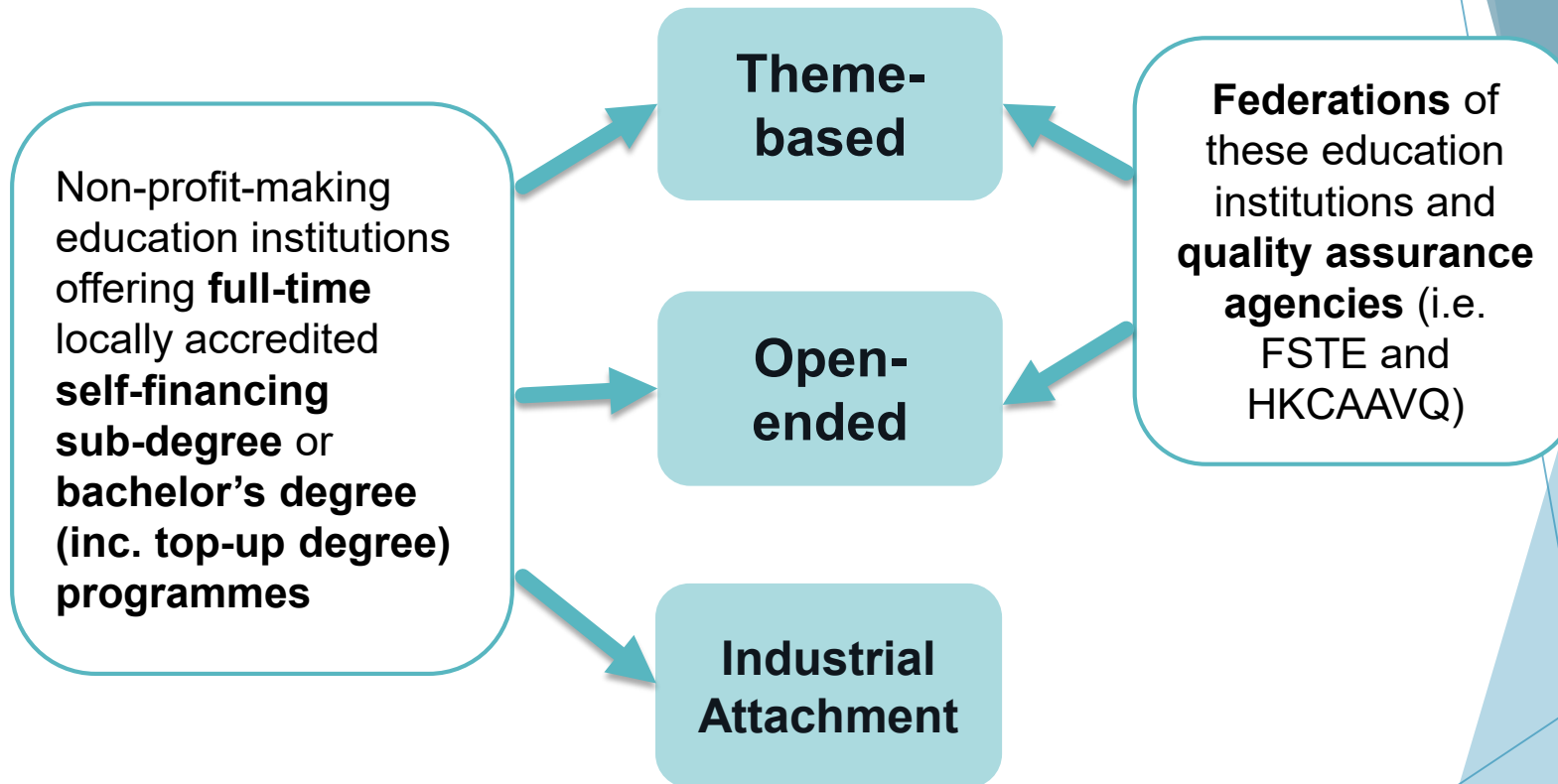
Experience sharing by CIHE

Q&A

# Quality Enhancement Support Scheme (QESS)

- ◆ Set up under the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund (SPEF)
- ◆ Support worthwhile **non-works** projects or initiatives to enhance the **quality of teaching and learning**
- ◆ Encourage cross-institutional collaboration to benefit the sector as widely as possible
- ◆ Proposed projects should **NOT** accept funding (in part or in full) from **other government sources**.  
→ This has to be declared when submitting the online application form.

# Eligibility & Categories of Projects



# Theme-based Projects

## Scope of Project

- ◆ Applicants can **set their own themes**
- ◆ Collaborative in nature, i.e. proposed and undertaken by **more than one eligible institution**

Starting from 2023/24 round of application, different self-financing arms or operating units of a publicly-funded institution are **counted as one eligible institution / organisation** for the purpose of submitting application under the Scheme.

New!

- ◆ Benefit the sector as widely as possible
- ◆ **Specify the theme** in the applications

### Part A Type and Scope of Project

**Project Category**  
 \* Please tick the most appropriate box. For open-ended applications, more than one box can be ticked.

**Theme-based**

Please specify:

**Open-ended**

Improving the overall learning experience and language proficiency of students

Developing and improving teaching methodology and practices, including development of assessments

# Theme-based Projects

## Quota

- ◆ Each applicant may submit or be involved in a maximum of **two applications** under each round of application
- ◆ **No limit** on the number of **ongoing** theme-based projects at any one time

## Grant Amount

- ◆ **Up to \$30 million** for each academic year for **up to three years**

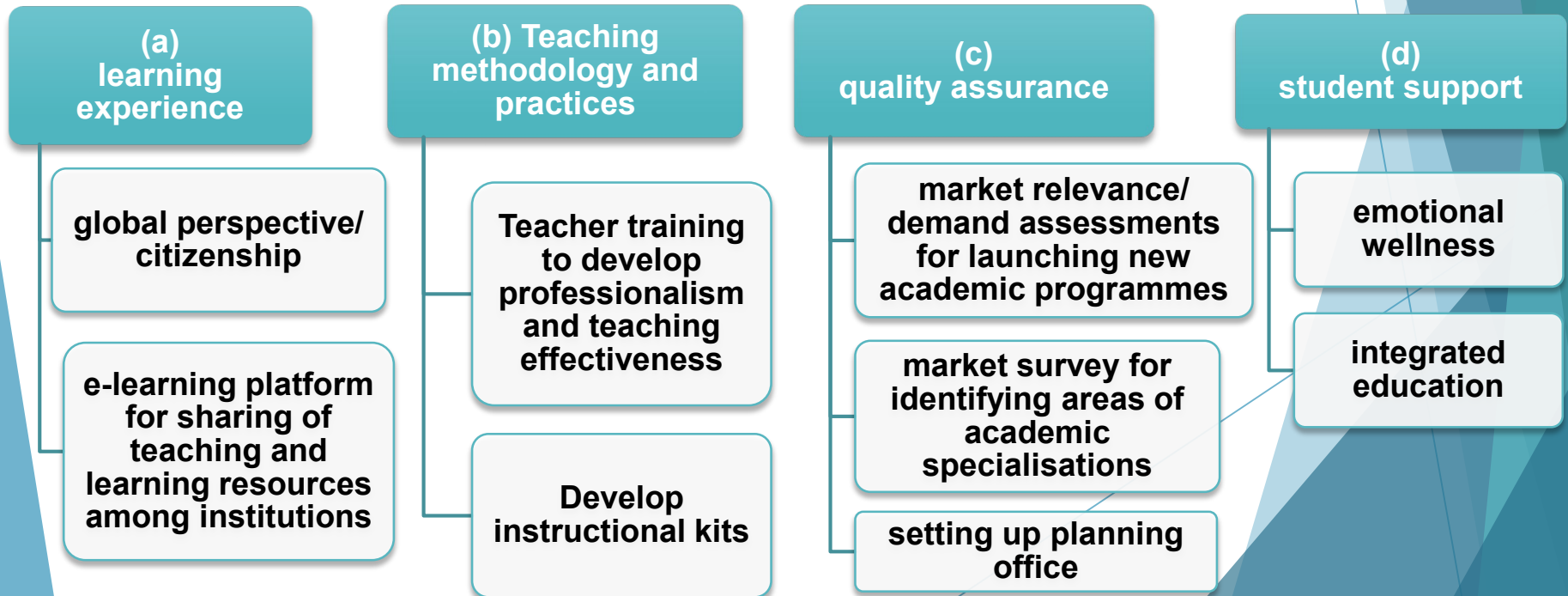
# Open-ended Projects



## Scope of Project

- a) improving the overall **learning experience** and **language proficiency** of students
- b) developing and improving **teaching methodology and practices**, including development of assessment strategies
- c) strengthening and improving **quality assurance** and related measures
- d) enhancing **student support and career guidance** services, including support for non-Chinese speaking students and students with special educational needs

## Examples



# Open-ended Projects

## Quota

- ◆ Each applicant may submit or be involved in a maximum of **two applications** (indicated with priority) under each round of application
- ◆ **No more than four ongoing** open-ended projects at any one time

## Grant Amount

- ◆ **Up to \$2.4 million** for each individual project
- ◆ **Up to \$4.8 million** for each sector-wide/joint project

“**Joint Projects**” refers to projects co-organised by two or more eligible self-financing institutions or related bodies such as federations of these education institutions and quality assurance agencies

- ◆ Project period not more than **three** years



# Industrial Attachment Projects

To source more internship opportunities for students and / or to enhance relevant institutional support to students.

## Scope of Project

- a) Incorporating quality assured **work-based learning and assessment** in programme curriculums through close partnership with industries

# Industrial Attachment Projects



## Scope of Project (cont'd)

- b) Sourcing of more **IA opportunities within and/or outside Hong Kong**, and/or enhancement of relevant institutional support to students
- c) Organisation of **visits or short-term training/courses** conducted **within and/or outside Hong Kong** for students
  - should be directly relevant to IA
  - e.g. touring of industrial facilities, company visits, work experience programmes, classes delivered by corporate academies

The expanded scope for projects undertaken outside Hong Kong runs on a pilot basis from 2019/20 and will be in place until the 2024/25 round of application.

# Industrial Attachment Projects

## Quota

- ◆ Each applicant may submit or be involved in only **one application** under each round of application
- ◆ Applications and awarded projects under IA **do not count** toward the **quota for theme-based and open-ended** projects and applications

# Industrial Attachment Projects

## Funding for Student Allowance

- ◆ Only for IA activities conducted **outside** Hong Kong
- ◆ For **students'** direct cost on:
  - (i) airfare, train fare, etc. to and from the destination;
  - (ii) local transportation fees at the destination;
  - (iii) accommodation fees;
  - (iv) living expenses; and
  - (v) other miscellaneous expenses (e.g. insurance, medical expenses, etc.)

# Industrial Attachment Projects

## Grant Amount

- ◆ Grant on **student allowance** for **each institution** in a project should not exceed **\$800,000 per year on average**
- ◆ **Each student** could receive a **maximum** of **\$10,000** allowance in each project
  - Budget for student allowance should be well-justified. Each student may receive less than \$10,000 depending on the destination and duration of activity, or any other considerations.
- ◆ **No specific limit** to the level of grant for **other budget items**
- ◆ Not more than **three** years

# Industrial Attachment Projects

## Student Allowance

Provide details in the application, e.g.:

- ◆ duration and content of the visits/training/courses
  - ◆ number of student quota for each activity
  - ◆ participant selection mechanism
  - ◆ hosting employers and their industries
  - ◆ breakdown on student cost
- etc.

# Industrial Attachment Projects

## Student Allowance

- ◆ Students who have **received** other government scholarship/subsidy are also **eligible**.
- ◆ In addition to the IA project allowance, students may **receive other** government and non-government **subsidies for the same IA activity**.
- ◆ Accord **priority** to students who **have not received** other government scholarship/subsidy
- ◆ Provide lists of students receiving allowance in the progress/final reports; including subsidies from other sources  
→ seek consent on provision of personal data as appropriate

# Industrial Attachment Projects

The grant should **NOT** be used as...

## Student

- ◆ Should **not** be used as **salary to students**.
- ◆ For IA conducted **within Hong Kong**, the project grant should **not** be used as **student allowance**.

## Staff

- ◆ Except for salary (including MPF), the project grant should **not** be used as **staff subsidy**, e.g. allowance or **travelling expenses**, etc.



# Industrial Attachment Projects

The grant should **NOT** be used as...

## Internship / Job Placement

- ◆ Should **not** be used as **payment / coaching fee to employers**

## Organisation of visits / training / courses

- ◆ Should **not** be used as **non-itemised fees** to employers, outsourced service providers, etc.

# Industrial Attachment Projects

## Projects undertaken outside Hong Kong

- ◆ Should take into account the **safety of the destination**, personal safety of students, etc.
- ◆ Group comprehensive **travel insurance** should be purchased. Group insurance **cost of students** may be included in the budget with provision of documentary proof (e.g. quotation).

# Industrial Attachment Projects

## Selection Mechanism

Principles of openness, fairness and competitiveness should be adopted:

- ◆ **Selection of employers / service providers** for providing IA opportunities, visits or short-term training/courses
  - ◆ **Shortlisting of students** for participating in project activities
- etc.

# Release of funds

- ▶ Funding support is normally given as a grant covering the entire project period, to be disbursed by stages according to the implementation schedule setting out the key milestones and the funding requirements as proposed by the applicant(s) and agreed by the Education Bureau.
- ▶ On receipt of the confirmation of acceptance of the grant by the applicant(s), a portion **(subject to a cap of 60% unless otherwise justified)** of the grant will be released.
- ▶ Subsequent payment(s) will be released in accordance with the project's implementation schedule, subject to the evidence submitted by the grantee showing that the key milestone(s) of the previous stage has/have been attained.
- ▶ For all projects, the final 10% of the grant will be withheld and only be released upon the submission of the final evaluation report and the final audited statement of accounts, and subject to the acceptance of such by the Education Bureau.

# Assessment

- ◆ Projects to be selected on a competitive basis by the CSPE Sub-committee on Support Measures
- ◆ Major assessment criteria:

	Theme-based & Open-ended	Industrial Attachment
1. Benefits and sustainability	✓	✓
2. Viability and deliverables	✓	✓
3. Institution commitment and self-evaluation mechanism	✓	✓
4. Sharing of outcomes	✓	N/A
5. Innovativeness	✓	N/A

- ◆ Refer to the guidelines for detailed criteria

# Projects Approved

Proposals of approved projects are available at Concourse  
(<https://www.cspe.edu.hk/en/qess-project.page>)

# Suggestions / concerns from the Sub-committee

Project Area	Suggestions / Concerns
<b>Mental health awareness on campus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal on emotional wellness (including enhancing communication / interaction between teachers and students) is encouraged;</li> <li>• How to sustain / assess the benefits for sponsoring students to attend mental health course;</li> <li>• To explore initiatives that could help build positive thinking;</li> <li>• To enhance communications among teachers and students on campus which could have a positive impact on students' mental health;</li> <li>• To indicate in project proposals the proposed measures to share project outcome with the self-financing education sector. (joint project is also encouraged)</li> </ul>

# Suggestions / concerns from the Sub-committee

Project Area	Suggestions / Concerns
<p>IT applications / systems</p>	<p><u>Concerns</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective use of such applications / systems in blended learning;</li> <li>• Ethical and monitoring issues on using AI in education including research ethics;</li> <li>• Impact on students regarding the use of IT tools in blended learning (including whether such applications could accommodate students with vision problems);</li> <li>• Implications of the rapid changing development of IT for the sustainability of projects.</li> </ul> <p><u>Suggestions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To rethink / adjust the focus of projects by considering how IT applications / systems could support students without compromising face-to-face communication and interaction between teachers and students.</li> </ul>



# Application Procedures

# Guidelines

Available on CONCOURSE website  
(<https://www.cspe.edu.hk/en/qess-project.page>)

Overview > Support Measures > Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund >  
Quality Enhancement Support Scheme > **QESS Guidelines**

## Guidelines

[Guidelines on Application and Management of Projects](#) 

# Online Application

QESS Management System (<https://feddcs.edb.gov.hk/>)

**Information Framework**  
for the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Sector

Welcome to the Information Framework for the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Sector

**Login**

Username:

Password:

[Forgot Password](#)

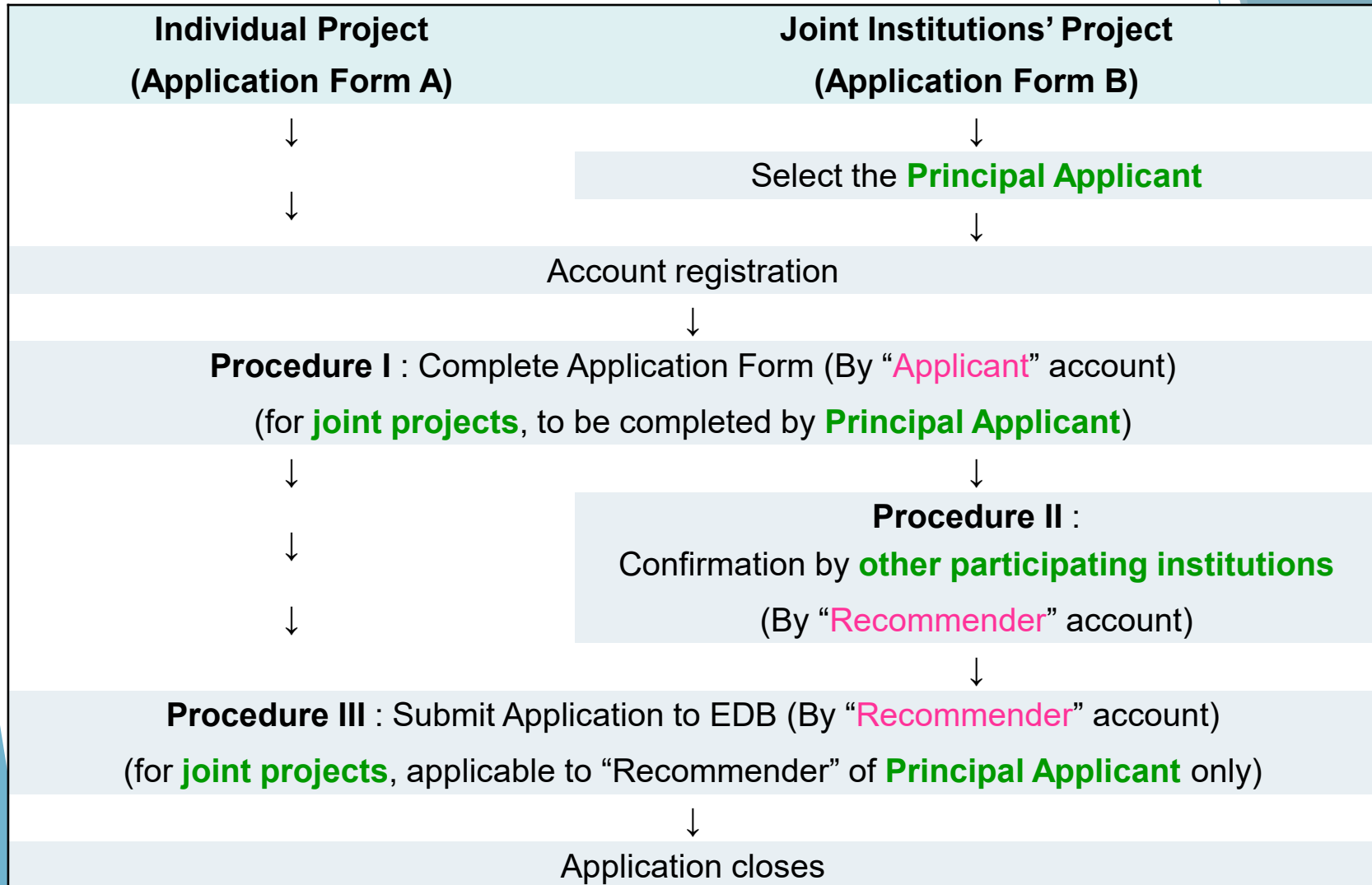
**Important Notes:** The System is password protected which requires you to be a registered user. If you do not have a username and password, please contact the Further Education Division, Education Bureau.

<b>Data Collection System</b> Email: <a href="mailto:jpass@edb.gov.hk">jpass@edb.gov.hk</a> Contact No.: 3509 7422, 3509 7406	<b>QESS Management System</b> Email: <a href="mailto:self_fin_edu_fund@edb.gov.hk">self_fin_edu_fund@edb.gov.hk</a> Contact No.: 3468 2283
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# Online Application User Role

User Role	Features
<b>Applicant</b>	<p>Project Coordinator or Contact Person <i>(not more than 5 for each institution)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To <b>submit application form(s)</b> for review and selection by “<b>Recommender</b>”.</li> <li>Each applicant account could submit multiple applications.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommender</b>	<p><b>One</b> staff representative for each institution, responsible for <b>coordinating</b> QESS applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review and select project(s) for endorsement by the head of institution.</li> <li>To prepare declaration form(s) for signature by the head of institution.</li> <li>To <b>submit application form(s)</b> with signed declaration form(s) to <b>EDB</b>.</li> </ul>

# Online Application Workflow



# Application Form

- ◆ Part A – Type and Scope of Project
- ◆ Part B – Applicant Information
- ◆ Part C – Project Overview
- ◆ Part D – Problems Identified
- ◆ Part E – Project Objectives and Deliverables  
(including Beneficiaries and Implementation Schedule)
- ◆ Part F – Cash Flow and Budget  
(including Project Sustainability)
- ◆ Part G – Additional Information

# Part C – Project Overview / Part D – Problems Identified

(IMPORTANT!)

Keep the content short and concise

- X Avoid excessive academic references
- X Avoid long list of reference websites
  
- Suggest to be within 500 words for each part
- Do not repeat details provided in Parts C, D, E & F.

## Part E - Project Objectives and Deliverables (IMPORTANT!)

- ◆ **Clear and measurable** objectives  
(How teaching and learning could be enhanced)
- ◆ **Measureable** deliverables  
(e.g. 20 seminars, 200 additional internship places)
- ◆ **Coherent** presentation  
(Deliverables and implementation schedule should facilitate the attainment of objectives)
- ◆ Focus on **primary beneficiaries**



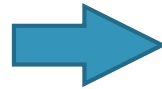
# Part E - Project Objectives and Deliverables

## (IMPORTANT!)

- ◆ All **Project Deliverables** should be **included** in the **Implementation Schedule**
- ◆ Feasible implementation schedule in **half-year** interval

**Project Deliverables**  
*(Please list out all the deliverables to be achieved)*  
*(Please indicate the information that can be used for the implementation schedule)*

S/N	Deliverables
1	Seminar A
2	Seminar B
3	Competition A
4	Online platform for knowledge exchange



Months 1 - 6	<u>Add</u>
Key milestones	
<b>Activities &amp; Deliverables</b>	
<b>Seminar A</b>	
<b>Selection of contractor for online platform development</b>	
Months 7 - 12	<u>Add</u>
Key milestones	
<b>Activities &amp; Deliverables</b>	
<b>Seminar B</b>	
<b>System Development for the online platform</b>	
Months 13 - 18	<u>Add</u>
Key milestones	
<b>Activities &amp; Deliverables</b>	
<b>Competition A</b>	
<b>User acceptance test for the online platform</b>	
Months 19 - 24	<u>Add</u>
Key milestones	
<b>Activities &amp; Deliverables</b>	
<b>Launching the online platform for knowledge exchange</b>	

# Part F - Cash Flow and Budget

## Drafting Budget Plan

- ◆ Break down large lump sum amount
- ◆ Provide documentary proof, if any
- ◆ For joint projects, indicate the allocation of funding to each participating institution

## Expenditure table

Expenditure (Amount in HK\$)	1-6 Months	7-12 Months	13-18 Months	19-24 Months
<b>Services Add</b>				
<b>Web-based System Development</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Layout design (\$ xxx)</li> <li>- Server (\$ xxx)</li> <li>- Stage 1 development (\$ xxx)</li> <li>- Stage 2 development (\$ xxx)</li> </ul>	0.00	1,000,000.00	0.00	800,000.00
Quotation at Appendix A	documentary proof			
(funding allocated to ABC School)	funding allocation			

## List of Supplementary Information

S/N	Document Name	Upload Date	Related section
1	<a href="#">Appendix A - Quotation for Web-based System Development</a>	08/11/2019	Part F Cash Flow and Budget

# Part F - Cash Flow and Budget

## Drafting Budget Plan (Manpower)

- ◆ Only **salary** (including MPF) of the **additional** manpower **directly deployed** to the project will be funded
- ◆ **Fringe benefits** should **NOT** be included
- ◆ If the project involves the institution/organisation's **existing staff**, applicants should indicate clearly how many **man hours** will be dedicated in the proposed project by the staff concerned and the remuneration to be paid to the staff (the project budget should only include additional payment made to the staff concerned)

# Part F - Cash Flow and Budget

## Drafting Budget Plan (Manpower)

- ◆ Make reference to the standard **salary structure of the institution**
- ◆ Common issue: lead time required in **recruitment** of project staff

# Part F - Cash Flow and Budget

## Drafting Budget Plan (IA Projects)

### Student Allowance

- ◆ Provide breakdown for **each IA activity**  
(shorter trips should require less budget)

### Service Package

- ◆ Provide **itemised breakdown**  
(e.g. trainers' fee, course materials)
- ◆ List out the **payees**  
(e.g. travel agencies)
- ◆ Provide **documentary proof**  
(e.g. quotation)

# Part F - Cash Flow and Budget

## Drafting Budget Plan

### General Expenses

- ◆ Unaccountable and non-itemised general administrative expenses are **NOT** permitted

### Contingency

- ◆ Up to **3%** of the total grant

### Audit Fee

- ◆ Not more than **1.5%** of the total grant, or **\$150,000**, whichever is **less**

# Part F - Cash Flow and Budget

## Duty List of Manpower to be funded by QESS

- ◆ Duty list should tally with “Manpower” expenditure

Project Expenditure			
<i>(Please also indicate the amount to be funded by other funding sources (e.g. the funding.)</i>			
	Expenditure (Amount in HK\$)	1-6 Months	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Manpower <b>Add</b>		
1	Project Officer	120,000.00	
2	Project Assistant (part-time)	60,000.00	

Duty list of manpower to be funded by this project		
S/N	Post	Duties
1	Project Officer	- Duty A - Duty B - Duty C
2	Project Assistant (part-time)	- Duty D - Duty E - Duty F

## Project Sustainability

- ◆ Demonstrate how the institution would absorb the cost for **sustaining the project**

# Prevention of Corruption

## Relevant materials

- ▶ QESS Guidelines (e.g. paragraph 14. Tendering, Procurement and Employment of Additional Staff)
- ▶ ICAC (Government Funding Schemes Grantee's Guidebook)  
([https://cpas.icac.hk/EN/Info/Lib\\_List?cate\\_id=3&id=142](https://cpas.icac.hk/EN/Info/Lib_List?cate_id=3&id=142))



# Collaboration & Innovativeness

- ◆ Explore new / innovative project themes
- ◆ Proposals should be provided in a more concrete, well-structured, and concise manner
- ◆ Self-arranged experience sharing among institutions to develop new themes with common interest among institutions
- ◆ Line up individual projects on same subject into a joint project, if possible

# Application Submission

The following should be **uploaded** and submitted with the online application form by **29 February 2024**:

- ◆ Copy of school/post-secondary college/company registration, etc. documents
- ◆ Proofs of registration as a non-profit making organisation under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112)
- ◆ Supplementary information in support of the application

\* Applicants are advised to submit the applications as early as possible to avoid overloading due to large volume of applications towards the application deadline.

# Progress & Final Reports

For approved projects:

- ◆ Progress Reports **every 6 months**
- ◆ Final Evaluation Report & Financial Report **within 3 months** after project completion
- ◆ Allow sufficient time and manpower to prepare for the reports

# Timeline for 2023/24 Round of Application

2023	19 Oct	Application opens
	23 Nov	Briefing Session on Application
2024	Jan	Briefing Session on Report Writing (for grantees of 2022/23 round)
	<b>29 Feb</b>	<b>Deadline for application</b>
	Jul / Aug (tentative)	Notification of results
	Aug / Sep (tentative)	Signing of project agreements
	<b>Sep / Oct (tentative)</b>	<b>Commencement of projects</b>



# Enquiries

## Address

Units 803-804, 8/F., Dah Sing Financial Centre,  
248 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

## E-mail

self\_fin\_edu\_fund@edb.gov.hk

## Telephone No.

3468 2283

## CONCOURSE - webpage of QESS

<https://www.cspe.edu.hk/en/qess-project.page>

# Thank you

The slides contain a summary of the major QESS guidelines in a simplified manner provided for reference only. In case of any inconsistency or ambiguity between the slides and the “Guidelines on Application and Management of Projects”, the latter shall prevail.