

Distance Business Programme receives nearly 38 600 applications

The Innovation and Technology Commission today (November 2) announced that the Distance Business Programme, which closed for application last Saturday (October 31), has received 38 572 applications from 32 143 enterprises. Around 95 per cent of the applications came from small and medium-sized enterprises. As at noon today, 20 772 applications had been processed, of which 18 025 applications had been approved with total funding of around \$1.02 billion.

A spokesman for the Commission said that the Programme had received an overwhelming response from the industry since its launch. Over the past week, the Programme has even received close to 10 000 applications. Given the time required for handling the large number of applications, the spokesman appealed for the enterprises' patience for the application results.

"To enable enterprises to benefit as soon as possible, the Secretariat of the Programme has adopted various measures to expedite the processing of applications, signing of funding agreements and disbursement of funding, including increasing manpower, adopting automation software to accelerate the processing of documents, allowing applicant enterprises to sign the funding agreements through video conferencing, and further enhancing the online system to enable enterprises to manage their applications, submit supplementary documents and make appointments for signing the agreements more conveniently and efficiently," the spokesman said.

The Distance Business Programme under the Anti-epidemic Fund was open for application from May 18 to October 31 and aims at supporting enterprises to adopt information technology solutions to continue business and services during the epidemic. The Hong Kong Productivity Council is the Secretariat of the Programme. Enterprises may check their application statuses and manage their applications via the online system (u.hkpc.org/dbiz). For other enquiries, please contact the Secretariat by phone on 2788 5070 during business hours (9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except public holidays)) or via email at dbiz@hkpc.org.