

FSTB organises exhibition to promote digitalisation of public service among departments through procurement (with photos)

The Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (FSTB) today (August 9) organised an exhibition and sharing session titled "Seizing the Opportunities: Digitalisation of Work Process and Data Management – Matching Your Needs through Procurement" to provide a one-stop platform for various government departments to learn about the latest digital technology solutions and trends, so as to promote and encourage departments to accelerate the reform of public services and enhance service quality through open procurement of suitable solutions in the future. The event was co-organised with the Government Logistics Department (GLD) and the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC).

The FSTB took the lead to organise the event with a view to helping government departments expedite and streamline their work processes and process data with a digitisation mindset and relevant solutions, thereby providing public services that are more targeted and based on scientific principles to bring about a fresh experience for the public.

To prepare for the event, staff from the FSTB and the GLD have been in touch with different government departments to learn about the difficulties they often encounter in their workflow and data processing when delivering public services. A variety of digital technology solutions was sourced from the market together with the HKPC, the Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport.

The exhibition attracted about 600 officers from more than 60 bureaux and departments and over 20 Heads of Department to visit. They explored digital technology solutions concerning 18 technology areas showcased by 40 innovative technology exhibitors.

Officiating at the opening ceremony, the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, said that innovation industry is a new economic growth area which spearheads the development of new priority industries and the transformation and upgrading of traditional industries, enabling the economy to move towards high-quality development and providing more quality employment opportunities. For enterprises, digitalisation could help with transformation and empowerment, quality and quantity improvements, and innovation stimulation. The Government has been using innovation and technology (I&T) industry as a macro strategy in driving the overall economic development.

Mr Chan said that the pandemic has further highlighted the importance of digitalisation of public services, driving the Government to speed up examining how to bring about innovation in the delivery of public services to

address the needs of the public under the "new normal". The Government must set a good example and play the role of an advocate and pioneer, and help government departments to improve the efficiency of public services through I&T solutions.

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, when addressing the opening ceremony, also expressed his hope that government departments would adopt solutions available in the market and work together with the I&T industry to expedite the reform of public services. This will also bring business opportunities to the industry, stimulate innovation and create a win-win situation for both the Government and the industry. Mr Hui encouraged departments to act promptly to adopt digitalisation through procuring appropriate solutions. In line with existing practice, procuring departments would ensure open and fair procurement and tendering procedures, and welcome all digitalisation solution providers in the market to participate in the tenders.

Mr Hui said that the FSTB has been enhancing the awareness and applications of digitalisation and innovative technologies in government departments by formulating a government procurement policy that keeps abreast of the times. The FSTB introduced a pro-innovation government procurement policy in 2019. Under the policy, the maximum technical weighting in the marking scheme has been increased from 40 to 70 per cent, with about 20 per cent of the technical marks reserved for innovative proposals, indicating that the policy is not solely based on the "lowest bid wins" principle. And on the basis that the procurement principles of existing procurement policy are observed, departments could exercise flexibility to draw up their procurement contracts and tender requirements according to the departments' needs to procure goods and services that best suit their requirements.

The I&T applications showcased at the exhibition included artificial intelligence, process automation, the Internet of Things, big data analysis as well as network security, facilitating a one-stop access for departments to gain first-hand information on innovative technology solutions in the market that are up-to-date and tailored to their needs.

Four in-depth seminars were also held during the event. Industry experts were invited to share the latest trends in digital technology solutions, including robotic process automation, digital transformation and the application of smart technology in public services.

