

Funding for Distance Business Programme increased to \$1.9 billion

The Innovation and Technology Commission today (January 5) announced that the funding for the Distance Business Programme under the Anti-epidemic Fund has been increased from \$1.5 billion to \$1.9 billion to provide funding support for eligible applications received.

A spokesman for the Commission said that the Programme had received an overwhelming response from enterprises. During the application period from May 18 to October 31, 2020, the Programme received a total of 38 572 applications, of which nearly 10 000 were submitted in the last week of October. About 95 per cent of the applications received came from small and medium-sized enterprises. As at 10am today, 28 038 applications had been processed, of which 25 930 were approved. Excluding cases in which the enterprises did not accept the application results or provide relevant documents after their applications had been approved, the total funding involved is around \$1.4 billion with average approved funding of about \$60,000.

"Through increasing the financial commitment of the Programme, the Government hopes to meet the strong demand of applicant enterprises for distance business during the pandemic as far as possible. The Programme Secretariat is working at full steam to process the remaining applications, and aims to notify enterprises of the application results by the end of January," the spokesman said.

The Distance Business Programme aims at supporting enterprises to adopt information technology solutions to continue business and services during the pandemic. Enterprises which have submitted applications may check the statuses of their applications and manage their applications via the online system (u.hkpc.org/dbiz). For other enquiries, please contact the Programme Secretariat, the Hong Kong Productivity Council, by phone on 2788 5070 during business hours (9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except public holidays)) or via email at dbiz@hkpc.org.