

Government allocates additional \$1 billion for Distance Business Programme

The Innovation and Technology Commission today (June 26) announced an additional provision of \$1 billion under the Anti-epidemic Fund for the Distance Business Programme to further support enterprises to adopt information technology (IT) solutions for continuing business and services during the epidemic.

"The Programme was opened for application on May 18. As at 6pm on June 24, it had received more than 14 500 funding applications from enterprises, 95 per cent of which are small and medium enterprises. Of the 1 194 applications processed so far, 1 094 have been approved with total funding of more than \$44 million. In view of the overwhelming response from enterprises, the Government will allocate \$1 billion for the Programme, in addition to the original \$500 million, to benefit more enterprises," a spokesman for the Commission said.

The vetting criteria of the Programme include relevance of the proposed project to the applicant's business, reasonableness of the budget and its conformity to economic principles, complexity and feasibility of the implementation details, and the relevant technical capability and experience of the service provider with a view to ensuring proper use of public funds. In general, the funding amount received by an applicant enterprise is within the reasonable market price range and sufficient for implementing a more economical and convenient IT solution with the same effect.

The current application deadline of the Programme is October 31. In view of the present situation, the Programme may need to cease accepting applications earlier, taking into account the progress of funding approval and the amount approved. Such an arrangement would be announced about two weeks beforehand. Enterprises wishing to apply for the Programme's funding are advised to submit applications online as soon as possible. Details are available on the Programme's website (u.hkpc.org/dbiz). For enquiries, please contact the Programme 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.