

Government launches Pilot Scheme on Immigration Facilitation for Visitors Participating in Short-term Activities in Designated Sectors

The Government will launch tomorrow (June 1) a Pilot Scheme to provide immigration facilitation for visitors participating in short-term activities in designated sectors. Following the launch in June 2020 of the Pilot Scheme on Facilitation for Persons Participating in Arbitral Proceedings in Hong Kong, the Pilot Scheme on Immigration Facilitation for Visitors Participating in Short-term Activities in Designated Sectors is an additional immigration facilitation scheme launched by the Government to facilitate business and raise Hong Kong's international profile.

The Pilot Scheme will cover the following 10 sectors:

- Medical and healthcare;
- Higher education;
- Arts and culture;
- Sports;
- Heritage;
- Creative industries;
- Innovation and technology;
- The Hong Kong Laureate Forum;
- Aviation; and
- International/mega events.

Under the Pilot Scheme, host organisations authorised by the relevant government bureaux/departments can issue invitation letters to relevant non-local talents in their sectors. Invited persons may come to Hong Kong to participate in designated short-term activities as visitors, without the need to apply for employment visas/entry permits from the Immigration Department (ImmD). Invited non-local talents are talents in shortage or whose participation in designated short-term activities in Hong Kong is conducive to economic development or achieving relevant policy objectives. They may participate in the designated short-term activities for up to 14 days upon each arrival, and receive remuneration for the designated activities concerned.

The Pilot Scheme will run for two years. To implement the scheme and monitor its implementation, relevant bureaux/departments have issued ImmD's guidelines to the authorised host organisations in their respective sectors, and established reporting and communication mechanisms. For more information on the Pilot Scheme, please visit ImmD's website (www.immd.gov.hk/eng/services/visas/stv.html).

In addition, the Government's current immigration facilitation for non-local speakers will be further relaxed. With effect from tomorrow, non-local speakers across the board will be allowed to deliver speeches/presentations without the need to apply for an employment visa/entry permit for 14 consecutive days (up from seven days) upon each arrival, and the cap on the number of events will be removed. However, the condition that they should not be remunerated (other than expenses in respect of the provision of accommodation, passage, meals, etc relating to the event) will remain unchanged.

Persons who require a visa/entry permit to visit Hong Kong may also benefit from the Pilot Scheme and facilitation for non-local speakers (i.e. they need not apply for an employment visa/entry permit separately), but they still need to apply for a visit visa/entry permit.

All persons are subject to applicable immigration control for visiting Hong Kong, including examination upon arrival in accordance with the applicable laws, policies and practices. They are also subject to any prevailing COVID-19 related entry restrictions.