

Government launches Solar Harvest scheme to support development of solar energy

To combat climate change the Government is actively taking a multi-pronged approach, which includes promoting the development of renewable energy (RE). The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) has launched "Solar Harvest – Solar Energy Support Scheme for Schools and Welfare Non-Governmental Organisations" with the aim of installing solar photovoltaic (PV) systems at eligible schools and welfare non-Governmental organisations (NGOs). The scheme opened for applications today (March 8) and the closing date for the first batch of applications is April 4.

A Government spokesman said that Solar Harvest will implement the initiative to promote the use of RE announced by the Chief Executive in the 2018 Policy Address. Under the scheme, the EMSD will provide eligible non-Government and non-profit-making schools, as well as welfare NGOs which are receiving recurrent subventions from the Social Welfare Department (SWD), with a one-stop service including conducting site visits and technical assessments at their premises, design of the solar PV systems, procuring and installing the equipment, and system testing. The EMSD will also help the schools and welfare NGOs apply to join the Feed-in Tariff (FiT) Scheme. All expenses in relation to the solar PV system installation and application to join the FiT Scheme will be fully covered by Solar Harvest.

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"The Government and the two power companies have implemented the FiT Scheme as an initiative to provide various sectors with financial incentives to invest in distributed RE. The Government has launched Solar Harvest to provide eligible schools and welfare NGOs with further financial and technical support for the installation of solar PV systems. We hope that through the collaboration of the Government, power companies, schools and welfare NGOs, we can encourage students and young people to get a better understanding of RE, and to 'cultivate' and 'harvest' electricity together. We also hope that schools can make good use of the solar PV systems installed to enrich the teaching of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and environmental education, with a view to fueling the interest of students and young people in exploring science and promoting low-carbon living," said the spokesman.

In addition to launching Solar Harvest, the Government will continue to install solar PV systems at suitable government schools. As regards for-profit schools, the FiT Scheme can help the schools recover the cost of installing solar PV systems and pay for the expenses on maintenance and repair.

Eligible schools and welfare NGOs which are receiving recurrent subventions from the SWD interested in joining Solar Harvest are invited to

download the form from the EMSD's website (re.emsd.gov.hk). For enquiries, please contact the EMSD by telephone during office hours at 3155 3977 or by email (solarharvest@emsd.gov.hk).