

Government to Launch Convention and Exhibition Industry Subsidy Scheme

To reinvigorate the convention and exhibition (C&E) industry, the Government established the Convention and Exhibition Industry Subsidy Scheme under the Anti-epidemic Fund with a commitment of \$1,020 million to subsidise participants and organisers of C&E activities. In light of the gradual resumption of many C&E activities in mid- and late July, the Government will launch the Subsidy Scheme.

The Subsidy Scheme has two parts. The first part subsidises exhibitors of exhibitions organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) 50 per cent of their participation fees, subject to a cap of \$10,000 per standard booth and 10 booths per exhibitor each time. Participants of HKTDC's major conventions can also receive a subsidy equivalent to 50 per cent of their participation fees, subject to a cap of \$10,000 each time.

A spokesman for the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau said that the above part of the Subsidy Scheme related to the HKTDC will be launched on July 16 for 12 months until July 15, 2021, and is applicable to all HKTDC's exhibitions and major conventions commenced during the period.

Eligible exhibitors and participants of major conventions do not need to submit applications. The HKTDC will directly deduct the amount of the Scheme's subsidy from the amount receivable.

Furthermore, eligible small and medium enterprises (SMEs) may apply in tandem for funding support under the SME Export Marketing Fund (EMF) to cover their participation fees on a matching basis. The HKTDC and the Trade and Industry Department would work closely together in order to streamline application procedures so that eligible SMEs could obtain the subsidies they need seamlessly.

According to this arrangement, using a standard booth in an exhibition as an example, if the participation fee is \$20,000 or less, the exhibitor can take part in the exhibition for free. If the participation fee is over \$20,000, the exhibitor only needs to pay for the remainder after deducting the subsidies from the Subsidy Scheme and EMF for participating in the exhibition.

The second part of the Subsidy Scheme subsidises organisers of exhibitions and international conventions held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre and AsiaWorld-Expo 100 per cent of the venue rental without a cap. This part will be launched on July 24 for 12 months until July 23, 2021, and is applicable to all exhibitions and international conventions commenced during the period.

The spokesman urged organisers to share the subsidy with participants. Eligible exhibitors can also apply for funding support under

the EMF to cover their participation fees of the relevant events on a matching basis.

In general, eligible organisers are required to submit applications via the two venue operators after the events. To ease the cash flow of exhibition organisers, if an exhibition has been held in the two venues for the past five years, the organiser may submit an application two months before the event to obtain in advance a subsidy equivalent to 50 per cent of venue rental. The remaining subsidy will be disbursed after completion of the exhibition.

For enquiries about the Subsidy Scheme, please contact the HKTDC or the two venue operators.