

HAD invites organisations to apply for funding to operate support service centres for ethnic minorities

â€œTo further enhance support for ethnic minorities (EMs), the Home Affairs Department (HAD) today (February 22) invited eligible and interested non-profit-making organisations (NPOs) to apply for funding to establish and operate a support service centre for EMs (EM centre) in Kowloon Central or New Territories East.

The two new centres are required to organise language programmes, dedicated programmes for youths, orientation and familiarisation programmes for EMs newly arrived in Hong Kong, as well as integration activities and counselling and referral services, to facilitate EMs' early integration into the community. The centres are also required to set up Ethnic Minority Care Teams to provide dedicated caring services through household visits or outreach services to EMs.

Details of the project, the application criteria and the briefing session are set out in the Project Brief, which is available on the HAD website (www.had.gov.hk).

The deadline for application is 5pm on April 5.

Currently, the HAD provides multiple support services to assist ethnic minorities to integrate into the local community. The HAD has commissioned NPOs to run eight EM centres in Wan Chai, Kwun Tong, Tuen Mun, Yuen Long, Yau Tsim Mong, Sham Shui Po, Tung Chung and Kwai Tsing to provide language classes, interest classes, after-school tutorial classes, youth activities, integration programmes, etc, to EMs to facilitate their integration into the community. Among these centres, the CHEER Centre in Kwun Tong also provides general interpretation and translation services between English and eight ethnic minority languages (namely Bahasa Indonesia, Hindi, Nepali, Punjabi, Tagalog, Thai, Urdu and Vietnamese) in non-specialised/non-professional areas. In the 2022-23 project year, the total number of service recipients of the eight centres was over 102 000. Apart from EM centres, the HAD has also provided other support services for EMs including community support teams, ambassador schemes, District-based Programmes for Racial Harmony, Harmony Scholarships Scheme, etc. For dissemination of information, the HAD has sponsored five radio programmes in ethnic minority languages, operated a website and published guidebooks in six ethnic minority languages to facilitate EMs' early integration into the community.

In order to reach out to the ethnic minority communities more effectively and assist them to integrate into the local community, the 2023 Policy Address announced that two additional EM centres will be set up, one in Kowloon Central and the other in New Territories East, bringing the total

number of these centres to 10. Each of the centres will be invited to set up one Ethnic Minority Care Team to reach out to EM households, understand their needs and introduce public services they need.