

New round of applications under Quality Enhancement Support Scheme opens

The Education Bureau announced today (October 31) that the 2019/20 round of applications under the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme (QESS) of the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund (SPEF) is open.

The QESS is a major support measure to promote the healthy and sustainable development of the self-financing post-secondary education sector. Launched in November 2012, the QESS aims to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in the sector. It accepts applications under three project categories, namely theme-based projects, open-ended projects and industrial attachment (IA) projects.

In the 2018/19 round of applications, nine out of 26 applications were approved with a total earmarked grant of about \$24 million. The approved projects aim to improve students' learning experience, strengthen support for students with special educational needs, enhance internship support and more.

The 2019/20 round of applications invites projects proposed to be launched in the 2020/21 academic year. As in last year, applicants in the category of theme-based projects may set their own themes, provided that the projects are conducted in a collaborative manner, i.e. planned and undertaken by more than one eligible institution, to foster closer collaboration and synergy among institutions and benefit the sector as widely as possible.

The applicants in the category of open-ended projects need to submit applications in relation to the relevant areas of the QESS. The main areas include the following:

- (1) improving the overall learning experience and language proficiency of students;
- (2) developing and improving the teaching methodology and practices, including the development of assessment strategies;
- (3) strengthening and improving quality assurance and related measures; and
- (4) enhancing student support and career guidance services, including support for non-Chinese speaking students and students with special educational needs.

For IA projects, applicants should submit proposals with the aim of increasing students' employability by sourcing more internship opportunities and/or enhancing relevant institutional support for students. To encourage institutions to explore more initiatives to support students on IA, the category of IA projects is expanded on a pilot basis for 2019/20. Under the expanded category, institutions may also submit applications on IA projects

to be undertaken outside Hong Kong.

All non-profit-making education institutions offering full-time locally accredited self-financing sub-degree or bachelor's degree (including top-up degree) programmes are eligible to apply. Other related bodies such as the federations of these education institutions and quality assurance agencies may also apply. The deadline for this round of applications is February 28, 2020. All applications will be considered by the relevant Sub-committee established under the Committee on Self-financing Post-secondary Education.

Further details of the QESS, including the application procedures, are available at the Concourse for Self-financing Post-secondary Education at www.cspe.edu.hk/en/qess-project.page.