

Ninth batch of Child Development Fund projects open for applications

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) is inviting interested non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to submit applications for operating the ninth batch of Child Development Fund (CDF) projects, which are to be launched in the first quarter of 2022. The projects will provide children from disadvantaged backgrounds with more personal development opportunities to reduce intergenerational poverty.

A spokesman for the SWD said today (August 12) that to assist NGOs to better plan ahead in terms of resource allocation and build up a pool of experienced mentors, the Government will continue to adopt a "one-plus-one approach" in the ninth batch of projects, under which each selected NGO would be awarded two three-year projects in one go, with confirmation of the second project subject to the satisfactory performance of the NGO in implementing the first project. Selected NGOs are expected to start recruiting participants for the first projects in February next year.

"A total of around 30 projects will be launched by the SWD in the first quarter of 2022, providing service quotas of 3 000 to 3 450. A maximum amount of \$26,180 per participating child (comprising a \$23,800 training subsidy and \$2,380 for administrative expenses) will be allocated to the operating NGOs for conducting the training/programmes for the participating child, his or her parents/guardians and mentor. These projects will help participating children draw up and implement personal development plans as well as develop an asset-building habit, thus preparing them for long-term development," the spokesman said.

The CDF, launched in 2008, aims at promoting the longer-term development of children aged between 10 and 16 or studying Primary Four to Secondary Four from a disadvantaged background through collaboration of the family, the private sector, the community and the Government, thereby reducing intergenerational poverty.

Each participating child will be assigned a volunteer personal mentor. The operators will provide training programmes, which will cover topics such as self-awareness, personal development and financial management, to help participating children formulate personal development plans with specific targets.

The participating children will also take part in a two-year targeted savings programme. With the support of the business sector as well as individual donors, the operators will provide a matching contribution for the targeted savings accumulated by the participating children. In addition, the Government will provide a special financial incentive at a 1:1 ratio to the participant's targeted savings, with a maximum of \$4,800 for each participating child who can complete the two-year savings programme. In the third year of the project, the participating children will, under the

guidance and supervision of the operators and mentors, use the money concerned to implement their personal development plans.

So far, 169 CDF projects in eight batches operated by NGOs as well as 71 school-based projects in seven batches operated by schools have been rolled out, benefiting over 21 000 children. In addition, the SWD has awarded 18 school-based projects of the eighth batch in July, which will be rolled out in the 2021-22 academic year, benefitting more than 1 100 new participants.

An applicant of a CDF project must be a charitable organisation exempt from tax under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112). Designated application forms and guidelines are available on the website of the SWD (www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_whatsnew). An online briefing session will be held at 2.30pm on August 26 (Thursday) for NGOs interested in operating the projects.

All the duly completed designated application forms, together with the required documents, should be submitted by hand to the Child Development Fund Office, Social Welfare Department, Room 942, 9/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Hong Kong, on or before 5pm on September 24.