

SIE Fund supports innovative projects to drive inter-generational digital inclusion

The Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) Task Force announced today (October 4) that a total funding of \$13 million will be granted to support four innovative projects to promote inter-generational digital inclusion by engaging young people to enhance the capability and interest of the elderly in learning and adopting digital technologies, as well as foster youth employment at the same time.

The COVID-19 epidemic led to more people using digital products to receive instant information and maintain a connection with society. Many elderly people who have lower digital literacy may find themselves isolated and vulnerable as a result. Meanwhile, many young people who are well-versed in digital technologies are unemployed or underemployed during the epidemic. In view of this, the SIE Fund earlier on openly invited funding proposals for innovative projects to encourage youths to, through employment or volunteer work, make good use of their digital knowledge to help the elderly increase their understanding and adoption of digital technologies and at the same time, foster inter-generational harmony and enhance social cohesion.

The SIE Fund received quite a number of funding proposals for innovative projects. After the assessment process, the Task Force decided to fund four organisations, namely, the Harmony Garden Lutheran Centre for the Elderly, the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups Youth Employment Network, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University Institute of Active Ageing, and the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Ltd, to launch their innovative projects. These projects cover a wide range of activities, including training young people to teach the elderly on the use of digital technologies and provide technical support; providing digital outreach rehabilitation services for the elderly; organising "Digital City Adventure" to foster collaboration between youths and the elderly; engaging the elderly after training to volunteer and introduce digital products to their fellow elderly people, etc.

The four innovative projects will all commence this month and last for 1.5 years to 2.5 years. It is expected that more than 3 700 elderly people and nearly 450 youths will be benefitted. The projects will not only address effectively social needs under the epidemic, but also promote sustainable inter-generational digital inclusion and create a long term social impact. For details of the projects, please visit the SIE Fund website (www.sie.gov.hk/en/what-we-do/digital_inclusion.page).

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The SIE Fund was inaugurated in 2013 and is overseen by the SIE Fund Task Force under the Commission on Poverty. By facilitating social innovation and cultivating social entrepreneurship, the SIE Fund aims to make an impact in alleviating poverty and social exclusion, promote social integration as well as enhance the well-being and cohesion of society.