

Study Sponsorship Scheme to nurture youngsters as arborists and tree workers

The Development Bureau (DEVB) announced today (July 13) that the Study Sponsorship Scheme under the Urban Forestry Support Fund is open for application to encourage youngsters to join the arboriculture and horticulture industry as arborists and tree workers.

"The arboriculture and horticulture industry is young and evolving in Hong Kong, and arborists and tree workers are in keen demand in the industry. Building up the industry's strength and capability is of utmost importance to ensure quality arboriculture service to keep our urban forest healthy and minimise tree failure risks, thereby protecting public safety," a spokesman for the DEVB said.

Under the Scheme, study sponsorships will be offered to eligible applicants who undertake and complete recognised arboriculture, tree management and tree works programmes at Level 2 to Level 5 of the Qualifications Framework (QF) offered by local vocational, tertiary and training institutions. The sponsorship amount is 50 per cent of the tuition fee or \$20,000, whichever is less, for arboriculture and tree management programmes and 70 per cent of the tuition fee or \$6,000, whichever is less, for tree works programmes.

Scholarships will be offered to students who have attained 20 total grade points (in the five best subjects) or above in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination and will undertake and complete recognised full-time arboriculture and tree management programmes at QF Level 5. The scholarship amount is the total tuition fee or \$50,000, whichever is less, for each academic year of the programmes.

"It is expected that the Scheme will benefit around 300 students per cohort to help nurture an adequate and quality workforce to support tree management and maintenance work in Hong Kong," the spokesman said.

The Scheme accepts applications throughout the year from youngsters who are interested in becoming arborists and tree workers. The relevant application forms and guidelines can be downloaded from the website of the Urban Forestry Support Fund of the DEVB (www.greening.gov.hk/ufsf/en/home/index.html).