

SWD invites applications for IT schemes for persons with disabilities

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) will invite applications from tomorrow (July 6) until August 9 from eligible individuals and organisations for the IT Scheme for People with Visual Impairment (2nd Round) and the Central Fund for Personal Computers (44th Round).

The objectives of the IT Scheme for People with Visual Impairment (the Scheme) are to support non-governmental and non-profit-making organisations providing services or schooling for people with visual impairment (PVI) as well as tertiary institutions to acquire advanced Chinese screen readers, Braille displays of 40 cells and accessories/portable devices to facilitate PVI's surfing on the Internet, and to subsidise individual PVI in need to purchase these devices for the purpose of studying or employment.

Successful organisational applicants will be supported in full for purchasing a set of high-performance Chinese screen readers (capped at \$9,800) and/or Braille displays (capped at \$36,000) and/or accessories/portable devices (capped at \$66,300) on the reference list under the Scheme. Successful individual applicants will be sponsored to purchase a set of high-performance Chinese screen readers with an amount not more than \$9,800 and/or accessories/portable devices not more than \$49,600 and/or Braille displays on the same reference list not more than \$32,400.

Eligible organisations may lodge their applications by completing the designated form. For individual applicants, a nomination from subvented non-governmental rehabilitation organisations, the student affairs offices of local tertiary institutions, principals of local secondary/primary schools, or the Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department (LD) is required, and application should be submitted through the nominating organisation in the designated form together with the quotations for the items concerned. Invitation letters have been sent to the relevant organisations to invite nominations.

As for the Central Fund for Personal Computers, the Fund aims to assist eligible persons with disabilities in acquiring the required computer facilities for self-employment or receiving supported employment services at home with guidance and follow-up services to be provided by the referral rehabilitation organisations or the Selective Placement Division of the LD. Applicants must:

- (a) be users of rehabilitation services of and nominated by rehabilitation service organisations or the Selective Placement Division of the LD;
- (b) have difficulties in engaging in open employment;
- (c) provide a viable business plan which has to use computer facilities;
- (d) have financial difficulty in acquiring the required computer facilities;
- (e) be capable of using a computer to carry out the business plan; and
- (f) have the consent of the nominating organisations or the LD to provide

guidance and follow-up services after applicants' acquisition of the computer facilities.

For enquiries, please contact the Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services Branch of the SWD at 3586 3594, through email at eoimc@swd.gov.hk or by fax: 2834 7046.

Details of the above schemes are available on the SWD website (www.swd.gov.hk) and CyberAble.net (www.CyberAble.net). Information notes and application forms can be downloaded from the websites.