

[Home and Youth Affairs Bureau launches second round of applications of 2024-25 Funding Scheme for Youth Exchange in the Mainland](#)

The 2024-25 Funding Scheme for Youth Exchange in the Mainland is open for the second round of applications starting from today (June 20). Eligible non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are invited to submit applications.

Through the Funding Scheme for Youth Exchange in the Mainland, the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau and the Youth Development Commission (YDC) provide funding for NGOs to organise youth exchange projects on the Mainland for Hong Kong youth to learn and understand the country's development, foster exchanges with Mainland people, and strengthen their sense of national identity.

Details and application forms of the second round of applications are available on the YDC website (www.ydc.gov.hk/en/programmes/ep/ep_fundingscheme.html). Interested NGOs should submit their applications on or before July 12.

[SCST meets Vice Chairperson of Shanghai Municipal Committee of CPPCC \(with photos\)](#)

The Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, today (June 20) met with Vice Chairperson of the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Mr Jin Xingming and his delegation. Mr Yeung introduced to the delegation Hong Kong's latest developments in arts, culture and creative industries. They also explored opportunities for co-operation and exchanges between Hong Kong and Shanghai in relevant sectors.

Mr Yeung said, "The National 14th Five-Year Plan supports Hong Kong in developing into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchanges. We are proactively integrating into the national development by strengthening the co-operation between Hong Kong and the Mainland in the arts, culture and creative industries, and fostering the fine Chinese culture to go global. Shanghai has rich cultural and creative resources, and its

unique cultural charm makes Shanghai an important partner of Hong Kong in promoting Chinese culture."

Hong Kong and Shanghai have maintained close exchanges and co-operation in the arts, culture and creative industries. Shanghai is the focal city in the inaugural Chinese Culture Festival held this year, and Shanghai Culture Week will be organised during the Festival. On creative industries, Hong Kong has also established a strategic partnership with Shanghai Fashion Week to further deepen the co-operation between the fashion industries of the two places.

Mr Yeung said that through the Government's efforts to promote exchanges and co-operation with the arts and culture sectors in different places, he hopes to bring excellent programmes from different places to Hong Kong, and also facilitate the local arts and culture sectors to explore opportunities, thereby deepening cultural exchanges and promoting people-to-people bonds.



Government announces tuition fee levels of UGC-funded universities for 2025/26 to 2027/28 academic years

The Government today (June 20) announced the tuition fee levels for publicly funded programmes of University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities for the 2025/26 to 2027/28 academic years.

After taking into account various factors, the Government has decided to adjust the tuition fee levels for UGC-funded programmes modestly by 5.5 per cent per annum on average from the 2025/26 academic year to the 2027/28 academic year (i.e. three academic years). The respective levels are as follows:

Academic year	Tuition fees per student per academic year for UGC-funded full-time undergraduates, taught postgraduate and research postgraduate programmes	Tuition fees per student per academic year for UGC-funded full-time sub-degree programmes (Note)
2024/25	\$42,100 (i.e. current level)	\$15,040 (i.e. current level)
2025/26	\$44,500	\$15,900
2026/27	\$47,000	\$16,800
2027/28	\$49,500	\$17,800

Note: Currently only a small number of funded sub-degree programmes are offered by the Education University of Hong Kong.

The above tuition fees are only applicable to eligible students for UGC-funded student places. The tuition fees for the 2024/25 academic year will remain unchanged to allow more time for society to adapt to, and get prepared for, the adjustment.

The tuition fees for UGC-funded degree programmes were last adjusted in the 1997/98 academic year, when it was increased to the current level of \$42,100 per student per academic year. It has been frozen for more than 20 years since then. Moreover, as UGC-funded programmes are publicly funded, the Government set, in the early 1990s, the target cost recovery rate for the tuition fee levels at 18 per cent, which has been in place since then. The cost recovery rates have fluctuated over the years due to economic situations, but have continued on a declining trend in recent years as the cost of delivering higher education generally moved upwards. The cost recovery rate is projected to drop to a low level of 12.5 per cent in the 2024/25 academic year. After the adjustment of the tuition fee levels, it is estimated that the cost recovery rate for the 2027/28 academic year would stabilise and improve slightly to 13.4 per cent.

A Government spokesman said, "Since higher education is different from general public services, as it represents our major investment in Hong Kong's future, the Government has always handled tuition fees adjustments in a prudent manner. When considering relevant proposals, we have endeavoured to strike a balance between all relevant factors, including the Government's fiscal discipline and providing affordable higher education for students, to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the relevant sector as we continue to drive higher education development proactively.

"Since the last tuition fees adjustment in the 1997/98 academic year, the Composite Consumer Price Index has increased by 40 per cent cumulatively. Comparatively, the tuition fees adjustment is very modest this time. The

Government also continues to support capacity expansion and quality enhancement of higher education through allocating additional resources. The recurrent subvention in the next academic year will reach around \$24 billion. With ample financial support and a stable development environment, the UGC-funded universities have made remarkable achievements over the past two decades. Five of our universities are now within the world's top 100."

The spokesman added, "It is the Government's policy that qualified students will not be denied access to higher education because of financial difficulties. The Tertiary Student Finance Scheme – Publicly-funded Programmes (TSFS) and the Non-means-tested Loan Scheme for Full-time Tertiary Students (NLSFT) under the Government provide means-tested and non-means-tested financial assistance to eligible full-time students of UGC-funded programmes. Upon this tuition fees adjustment, the TSFS tuition fees grant and the NLSFT tuition fees loan will be adjusted correspondingly starting from the 2025/26 academic year. The Government also notes that the UGC-funded universities provide other financial assistance such as scholarships, bursaries and loans to needy students to ensure that no qualified students will be denied access to higher education due to financial difficulties."

According to the existing mechanism, the Government provides recurrent subvention to the UGC-funded universities on triennial cycles. The Government will consider matters concerning the next triennium (i.e. 2028/29 to 2030/31 academic years) in due course as per the established arrangements.

[Two Smart Prison projects of CSD win GovMedia Awards 2024 award \(with photo\)](#)

Two Smart Prison projects of the Correctional Services Department (CSD), namely the Integrated Custodial and Rehabilitation Management System and the Social Visit e-Booking Service, have won the Hong Kong Smart City Initiative of the Year at the GovMedia Awards 2024.

The GovMedia Awards recognise outstanding government initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region to honour organisations that exemplify leadership, creativity and impactful results in public services. The CSD is committed to introducing innovative technology projects in correctional facilities to create a modernised working environment. The award for the CSD's Smart Prison projects affirms the Department's efforts in introducing innovative technology elements.

The CSD fully implemented the Integrated Custodial and Rehabilitation

Management System in all its correctional institutions last year, integrating eight core operation systems and reinforcing digital management to enhance operational efficiency.

The Social Visit e-Booking Service was fully implemented in November last year to facilitate visitation. Apart from shortening the registration and waiting time for visitors at correctional institutions, the Service also allows visitors to manage their bookings and check the latest visit status of persons in custody so that they can plan their visits conveniently.

To align with the Government's Smart City development blueprint, the CSD will continue to provide more convenient e-services to members of the public.



[Eight temporary application service centres set up to assist in handling JoyYou Card applications](#)

The Government announced today (June 20) that to assist Hong Kong residents aged 60 or above in applying for JoyYou Cards so that they can continue to enjoy the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (\$2 Scheme), eight temporary JoyYou Card application service centres on Hong Kong Island, in Kowloon and the New Territories will commence operation from next Monday (June 24).

From August 25 this year, all Hong Kong residents aged 60 or above must use a JoyYou Card to enjoy the \$2 Scheme. Existing Anonymous Elder Octopus and ordinary Personalised Octopus will no longer be applicable. As for eligible persons with disabilities aged below 60, they can continue to enjoy the \$2 Scheme using the Personalised Octopus encoded with "Persons with Disabilities Status" and need not apply for a JoyYou Card.

To assist persons in need in submitting applications or supplementary

information as soon as possible, Octopus Cards Limited (OCL) will set up the following eight temporary JoyYou Card application service centres from next Monday until August 31 (see Annex for location maps):

- Conference Room, 2/F, Kennedy Town Community Complex ([12 Rock Hill Street, Kennedy Town, Hong Kong](#));
- Conference Room, G/F, Leighton Hill Community Hall ([133 Wong Nai Chung Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong](#));
- Room 210, 2/F, Wong Tai Sin Community Centre ([104 Ching Tak Street, Wong Tai Sin, Kowloon](#));
- Conference Room, Mong Kok Community Hall, L2, Mong Kok Complex ([557 Shanghai Street, Mong Kok, Kowloon](#));
- Conference Room, G/F, Tai Yuen Community Hall ([Tai Yuen Estate, Tai Po, New Territories](#));
- Conference Room, 4/F, North District Community Centre ([2 Lung Wan Street, Sheung Shui, New Territories](#));
- Activity Room, G/F, Kwai Fong Community Hall ([2 Lai Fong Street, Kwai Chung, New Territories](#)); and
- Conference Room, G/F, Long Ping Community Hall ([Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long, New Territories](#)).

The opening hours of these service centres will be 9am to 8pm from Mondays to Fridays and 9am to 1pm on Saturdays. They will be closed on Sundays and public holidays. Members of the public who need assistance in applying for a JoyYou Card may visit these service centres during opening hours.

In addition, the Government has stepped up publicity to remind eligible persons to apply for JoyYou Cards as soon as possible, and has made good use of district and service networks to provide assistance to eligible persons with disabilities and elderly persons to make an application.

OCL will send out a JoyYou Card to an eligible applicant within four weeks upon receipt of a duly completed application. Applicants who have not received their JoyYou Cards four weeks after completing the application may call the hotline at 3147 1388 (press 0 after choosing the language to contact operators directly). For applications with incomplete information, OCL will also issue SMS or letters to the applicants concerned for follow-up. Applicants who received relevant SMS or letters should submit the supplementary information as soon as possible. Otherwise, their applications will not be processed further.

Furthermore, eligible beneficiaries who have not yet applied for a JoyYou Card could also submit their applications by post or via the Octopus App to OCL. Members of the public may visit the JoyYou Card webpage (www.octopus.com.hk/joyyou/en) for videos illustrating steps for making an application and distribution points for paper application forms (with a postage-free return envelope).

A JoyYou Card carries a personal photo and the name of the eligible beneficiary as proof of eligibility for enjoying the \$2 Scheme. Each eligible

person will be issued with one card only. The Government accepted JoyYou Card applications from Hong Kong residents aged 65 or above (born in 1956 or before) in batches from June 1, 2022. Some 1.3 million applications, equivalent to around 92 per cent of estimated eligible applicants, have been received to date.