

Visiting Scheme to Outlying Islands opens for applications today

The Visiting Scheme to Outlying Islands is open for applications from today (July 17) to encourage eligible organisations, such as schools, uniformed groups, non-governmental organisations, community and local groups, to organise activities to visit the outlying islands. Successful applicants will be provided with free ferry rides to travel to and from the outlying islands covered in the Scheme to hold activities.

The Transport Department (TD) has launched the Scheme since 2012, aiming to promote local economy of the outlying islands, reduce the travelling expenses of organisations for holding activities and boost the patronage of the outlying island ferry services. To align with the social distancing measures implemented to combat COVID-19, the Scheme was suspended from 2020 to 2022.

The TD has relaunched the Scheme. In addition to ferry services to and from Cheung Chau, Lantau (Mui Wo), Peng Chau and Lamma Island (Yung Shue Wan and Sok Kwu Wan), the Scheme now extends to cover those plying between Lantau (Tung Chung, Sha Lo Wan and Tai O) and Ma Wan.

Applicants should note the maximum number of participants of each activity which is set according to the different operation conditions of each route to avoid affecting the daily use of ferry services by residents of the outlying islands. Applicants should also pay attention to the requirements concerning the dates, times, ticket types and service sections that are available for applications. Applicant is required to submit a duly completed application form together with copies of the relevant supporting documents at least 30 days prior to the date of its proposed activity to the TD. New applications will not be accepted if the funding for the Scheme is fully utilised.

The TD has arranged posters and leaflets with application forms for the Scheme, and will disseminate the relevant information to the public through the Education Bureau, the Social Welfare Department and the Home Affairs Department.

During the application period of 2017-2019, about 800 applications were approved with about 95 000 free passenger trips provided for travelling to and from Cheung Chau, Mui Wo, Peng Chau and Lamma Island.

For details, please visit the TD's website (www.td.gov.hk).