

Family Council

Progress of Work of the Sub-committees under the Family Council

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the progress of work of the two Sub-committees under the Family Council (the Council).

SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE PROMOTION OF FAMILY CORE VALUES AND FAMILY EDUCATION

2. The Sub-committee on the Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education (the Promotion Sub-committee) was originally scheduled to meet on 25 February 2020 to discuss the 2020-21 Publicity Plan of the Family Council and the Territory-wide Publicity Campaign organised in collaboration with the Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) in 2020-21. However, the Sub-committee meeting was cancelled due to the outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 and the relevant discussion papers have been circulated to the Sub-committee Members for comments.

2020-21 Publicity Plan

3. The Promotion Sub-committee agreed to reinforce the family core value of “Respect and Responsibility” as the theme of the 2020-21 publicity campaign with the Chinese title 「"尊·責" 愛家」推廣運動. It would comprise a territory-wide publicity campaign organised in collaboration with RTHK; publication of a second storybook of “The But’s Family” for parent-kid reading on the role and responsibility of respective family members; and further expansion of the base of the Council’s Facebook followers by publishing comic strips and festive illustrations of “The But’s Family”, video interviews and informative newsfeeds on thematic topics on family-related issues, as well as giving out entrance tickets of meaningful family activities and suitable souvenirs to the general public through game posts.

Collaboration with RTHK

4. In view of the positive responses to the publicity programmes organised by RTHK in the past years, the Promotion Sub-committee supported that the Council should continue to collaborate with RTHK to launch the following publicity programmes in 2020-21 –

- (a) promotional clips and guest interview for the International Day of Families in May 2020;
- (b) two radio programmes (one would be hosted by children and another one would feature interviews with guest speakers on the roles and responsibilities of respective family members in order to bring out the importance of respect and responsibilities) from May 2020 to February 2021;
- (c) a children’s radio drama programme and theme song featuring “The But’s Family” from June 2020 to February 2021 as well as pre-programme recruitment of actors and training workshops;
- (d) a family publicity event with about 200 participants in February 2021 to launch the second storybook of “The But’s Family”;
- (e) promotional programme trailers during specific festive seasons and messages of “The But’s Family” and
- (f) souvenirs for distribution to participants of the programmes and members of the public as well as dedicated webpage for the publicity campaign on RTHK’s website and media platforms.

SUB-COMMITTEE ON FAMILY SUPPORT

5. The Sub-committee on Family Support (the Support Sub-committee) was originally scheduled to meet on 5 March 2020 to discuss the progress of the Thematic Sponsorship Scheme to Support Family-related Initiatives. Having regard of the coronavirus epidemic, the Sub-committee meeting was cancelled and the relevant discussion paper has been circulated to the Sub-committee Members for comments.

Thematic Sponsorship Scheme to Support Family-related Initiatives

6. Having regard to the satisfactory results of the Pilot Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives (the Pilot Scheme), the Support Sub-committee supported the launching of a new thematic sponsorship scheme (the New Scheme) following largely the framework of the Pilot Scheme with refinements mainly in the evaluation mechanism of the approved projects. The New Scheme will continue to provide sponsorship to support non-profit making and worth-while family-related initiatives, with the objectives to raise community awareness of family core values as well as to promote a pro-family environment and family well-being. There are three themes for the New Scheme, namely “Divorce Education”, “Step and Split Families” and “Preventing and Resolving Family Conflicts/Disputes”. Sponsorship will be disbursed in the form of a matching fund while additional funding will be provided to sponsored organisations to carry out evaluation researches for the approved projects. Applications to the New Scheme will be invited in June 2020 tentatively with a view to announcing the application results in end 2020, and launching of the approved projects in early 2021. The proposed framework of the New Scheme covering the objectives, general features, themes, eligibility criteria, assessment criteria, application procedures, monitoring and review mechanism, as well as the implementation timetable is at **Annex**.

ADVICE SOUGHT

7. Members are invited to note the progress of the Sub-committees. The Sub-committees will continue to oversee their respective programmes and activities. Members are welcome to convey their comments and suggestions to the Council Secretariat.

Family Council Secretariat
May 2020

Thematic Sponsorship Scheme to Support Family-related Initiatives – Framework

INTRODUCTION

With a view to creating a pro-family environment and supporting family-related initiatives, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) and the Family Council (the Council) launched the Pilot Scheme on Thematic Sponsorship to Support Family-related Initiatives (the Pilot Scheme) in March 2016 to provide one-off sponsorship to registered organisations¹, statutory bodies or recognised community organisations² to support worthwhile family-related initiatives. It was one of the three-pronged approaches³ adopted to address the call for setting up a Family Development Fund. A total of \$6 million was set aside for the Pilot Scheme⁴.

The Council Secretariat first conducted an interim review on the Pilot Scheme in January 2019 upon completion of the four projects approved under the first year, i.e. the 2016-17 Pilot Scheme. With the completion of the other four projects approved under the second year, i.e. the 2017-18 Pilot Scheme, the Council Secretariat conducted a final review on all the eight completed projects under the Pilot Scheme in December 2019.

Having regard to the satisfactory results of the final review on the Pilot Scheme, the Council Secretariat recommended to the Sub-committee on Family Support (the Support Sub-committee) under the Council vide the paper SC_FS_6/2019 the launching of a new thematic sponsorship scheme (the Scheme) following largely the framework of the Pilot Scheme with refinements mainly in the evaluation mechanism of the approved projects. Taking into account comments of the Support Sub-committee Members, the objectives, general

¹ Organisations registered in Hong Kong under the Societies Ordinance (Cap.151, Laws of Hong Kong), or incorporated under the Companies Ordinance (Cap.622, Laws of Hong Kong) or its predecessor Ordinance i.e. the former Companies Ordinance (Cap.32, Laws of Hong Kong), or the Education Ordinance (Cap.279, Laws of Hong Kong), etc.

² Organisations formed by statute in Hong Kong or registered on the list of charitable institutions or trusts of a public character exempt from tax under the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap.112, Laws of Hong Kong).

³ The other two approaches were expanding the scope of study topics to cover family-related issues in the Public Policy Research Funding Scheme administered by the then Central Policy Unit (now Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office) and conducting “A Study on Family Research in Hong Kong: A Critical Review and Annotated Bibliography” to stocktake the family studies in Hong Kong with a view to identifying the research gaps and make recommendations on the future research direction of the Council.

⁴ Two-year funding (i.e. \$3 million each year) was earmarked for the Pilot Scheme which spanned three years as the 2017-18 Pilot Scheme was completed in June 2019.

features, themes, eligibility criteria, assessment of applications, application procedures, monitoring and review mechanism, and tentative timetable of the implementation of the new thematic sponsorship scheme are set out below.

A. OBJECTIVES

The Scheme seeks to support non-profit making and worthwhile family-related initiatives which accomplish the following objectives –

- (a) to raise community awareness of family core values and the importance of families;
- (b) to promote and create a pro-family environment; and
- (c) to promote family well-being.

B. GENERAL FEATURES

1. HAB sets aside a total of \$4 million for the Scheme for an initial period of 14 months, amongst which **\$3 million is provided to support the expenses for implementing the approved projects** while the remaining **\$1 million provides additional funding to cover the expenses for carrying out evaluation researches** for the approved projects.
2. To demonstrate the collaborative element of the Scheme and encourage community support and participation, **the sponsorship for implementing the approved project shall be disbursed in the form of a matching fund.** The ratio of the matching fund is capped at 1:2, i.e. the Council will support up to two-third of the total expenses for implementing the proposed project while the applicant organisation has to provide funding from its own sources and/or from other non-governmental contributions or sponsorship to meet at least one-third of the total actual expenditure concerned of the project. On the other hand, to encourage applicant organisation to collaborate with research organisation to conduct evaluation research to collect evidence based findings of the approved project, **additional funding will be provided to cover the research-related expenses of the project which will be fully supported up to a ceiling of 50% of the total budget for implementing the same project or \$250,000, whichever is the lower. Research-related expenses in excess of the ceiling will be borne by the applicant organisation concerned.**

3. There are two categories of projects under the Scheme, namely “Category A – Ordinary Projects” and “Category B – Seed Projects”, with different thresholds of sponsorship **for implementing the projects** as follows –

(a) Category A – Ordinary Projects

To bring a more significant and sustainable impact to the community, the project should be of a considerable scale and the minimum total budget for each proposal should be at least \$900,000 (i.e. the minimum sponsorship was \$600,000). To ensure prudent use of public fund, the maximum amount of sponsorship from the Council for each proposed programme/project is capped at \$1,000,000.

(b) Category B – Seed Projects

This category is for small scale projects with innovative elements that are worthy of support. The minimum total budget of these “seed projects” should be \$300,000 (i.e. the minimum sponsorship from the Council is \$200,000), and the ceiling of sponsorship is capped at \$599,999.

Details are set out in Section D on Eligibility Criteria below.

4. Out of the \$3 million funding earmarked for implementing the approved projects, \$2.4 million is reserved for “Category A – Ordinary Projects” while the remaining \$600,000 is for “Category B – Seed Projects”. The \$1 million funding provision for carrying out evaluation researches will be allocated to both “Category A – Ordinary Projects” and “Category B – Seed Projects” following the mechanism set out in paragraph B2 above accordingly.

5. An Assessment Panel (AP) is formed under the Council to determine the priority of funding support. Details are set out in Section E on Assessment of Applications below.

6. The proposed programme/project should be carried out and completed within a maximum period of 14 months, including follow-up services and evaluation of programme/project (if applicable).

C. THEMES

As the subject of “family” covers a vast array of areas, different family-related subjects were set as the themes of the Pilot Scheme in 2016-17 and 2017-18.

The themes for the coming Scheme are “Divorce Education”, “Step and Split Families” and “Preventing and Resolving Family Conflicts/Disputes”.

1. Divorce Education

The Council has been attaching great importance to the issues related to divorce in Hong Kong. “A Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong” (the Study) was first commissioned in 2012 and completed in 2014, while “Further Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong” (the Further Study) was launched in June 2018 which is expected to be completed in mid-2020. Besides, “Divorce Education” was one of the selected themes for the 2016-17 Pilot Scheme.

The Study suggested that divorce education could help with reducing stress during the divorce process while also providing emotional support and parenting knowledge, look after the emotional and parental needs of adults while preserving awareness for the wellbeing of children, and reduce the points of disputes in court proceedings by empowering involved parties with information and skills. The Further Study which is in progress has initially revealed that there are needs to strengthen support services for divorced families, including stepping up public education on divorce. Pending the detailed recommendations of the Further Study, it is considered that support services in the aspect of divorce education will be useful to fill the service gaps in this area.

2. Step and Split Families

In an echo of the divorce situation in Hong Kong, there is also a growing number of re-marriage cases and hence the emergence of step and split families. The qualitative findings of the two projects under the theme “Step and Split Families” under 2017-18 Pilot Scheme revealed the lack of support services specifically for remarried families, and that the relevant service practitioners were not sensitive enough to the needs of re-married families. There is an imminent need to fill the service and knowledge gaps by providing holistic support services to re-married families, as well as to provide specialised training to social workers, teachers and school staff.

As the services on this area are still under development in the market and there are genuine needs to support these families as identified by the two projects under the 2017-18 Pilot Scheme, “Step and Split Families” will continue to be a theme under the Scheme.

3. Preventing and Resolving Family Conflicts/Disputes

The Council had a discussion on family-related matters arising from the recent social situation in Hong Kong at its meeting held on 12 September 2019. Council Members were briefed on the services provided by the Education Bureau, the Social Welfare Department and the Food and Health Bureau having regard to the recent social atmosphere. At the meeting, Council Members considered that long-term support and assistance, including counselling services should be provided to help students to suitably handle their emotions and feelings; and ways should be explored to re-build family relations, including those between parents and their children, as well as those between husband and wife.

Pending the overall enhancement of support services relating to family conflicts/disputes in the long run, there is an imminent need to strengthen the support services to the families affected by the social issues of unprecedented nature. In this regard, “Preventing and Resolving Family Conflicts/Disputes” is introduced as a new theme of the Scheme.

D. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. Applicant organisations must be a registered organisation, a statutory body or a recognised community organisation. These organisations/bodies or their sub-groups will be regarded as a unit and each unit is allowed to submit one sole application only. If more than one sole application is received from a unit, the unit should decide on the application to be submitted by it.
2. An applicant organisation can only submit one application under either Category A or Category B.
3. Joint application (i.e. application jointly made by two or more local organisations) is allowed, but a principal or lead organisation must be identified and be responsible for the application.
4. To ensure that a more significant and sustainable impact will be brought to the community, the proposed programme/project under **Category A** should be of a considerable scale. **The minimum total budget for implementing each proposal shall be \$900,000.** While there is no ceiling on the total budget for implementing the programme/project, the sponsorship concerned under Category A will start at \$600,000 and be capped at \$1,000,000 per programme/project. Besides, the applicant organisation is required to **work**

out a separate budget for conducting evaluation research for the same project for consideration of additional full funding support by the Scheme up to a ceiling of 50% of the total budget for implementing the same project or \$250,000, whichever is the lower.

5. “Seed projects” under Category B will be granted a sponsorship between \$200,000 and \$599,999 for implementing the programme/project. In other words, **the total budget for implementing each programme/project under Category B should be no less than \$300,000 and normally not more than \$900,000.** Besides, the applicant organisation is required to **work out a separate budget for conducting evaluation research for the same project for consideration of additional full funding support by the Scheme up to a ceiling of 50% of the total budget for implementing the same project or \$250,000, whichever is the lower.**
6. Taking into account the availability of funding and merits of individual proposed programme/project, the AP may propose to move a proposed programme/project from Category A to Category B⁵ or vice versa. Under this circumstance, the application organisation will be invited to indicate if it accepts the proposed arrangement.
7. To demonstrate the collaborative element of the Scheme and encourage community support and participation, the sponsorship for implementing the approved project shall be disbursed in the form of a matching fund. The applicant organisation shall provide funding from its own sources and/or from other non-governmental contributions or sponsorship⁶ to meet at least one-third of the total actual expenditure of the programme/project. To ensure prudent use of public fund, the maximum amounts of the sponsorship for implementing each proposed programme/project under Category A and Category B are capped at \$1,000,000 and \$599,999 respectively.
8. **The applicant organisation is required to collaborate with research organisation(s) to conduct more in-depth evaluation research with a view to generating evidence-based findings, evaluating the effectiveness of the service/intervention models, suggesting improvement measures for future reference, etc.** Typical programme evaluations on the level of participant satisfaction such as conducting simple pre- and post-activity surveys should not be the main focus. In this regard, **the applicant**

⁵ The maximum total budget of Category B (i.e. no more than \$900,000) is not applicable to the proposed programme/project moved from Category A to Category B by the AP.

⁶ Other sources of income should not be funding provided by the Government and/or public bodies.

organisation is required to submit the framework of the evaluation research, including the research objectives, research questions, methodology, evaluation plan of the programme effectiveness, collaboration with research organisation(s), a separate estimated budget and ways to disseminate the research findings in the proposal.

9. On top of the sponsorship provided to implement the approved project, the successful applicant organisation will be granted with additional funding to cover the research-related expenses of the project which will be fully supported up to a ceiling of 50% of the total budget for implementing the same project or \$250,000, whichever is the lower. Research-related expenditure in excess of the ceiling will be borne by the successful applicant organisation concerned.

E. ASSESSEMENT OF APPLICATIONS

1. The AP is formed with the Chairman of the Council as the Chairman of the AP, two Convenors of the Sub-committees under the Council as Members and any other Council Members as Members on a voluntary basis. The Chairman and Members of the AP shall declare interests in accordance with the stipulated procedures.
2. The AP may assess applications in accordance with the assessment criteria below –
 - (a) *relevancy of the theme (25%)* – the theme, objectives and contents of the programme/project should tie in with the theme(s) of the Scheme;
 - (b) *research elements, effectiveness, benefits to the community and sustainability (30%)* – for the purpose of the evaluation research, the applicant organisation should include in its proposal the framework of the evaluation research, including the research objectives, research questions, methodology, evaluation plan of the programme effectiveness, collaboration with research organisation(s), a separate estimated budget and ways to disseminate the research finding. In terms of benefits to the community and sustainability, the applicant organisation should be able to demonstrate in the proposal that the proposed programme/project can generate a higher level of evidence on the effectiveness and bring benefits to the community and that the project/programme is sustainable in the long run and scalable, e.g. its implementation experience and model can be replicated and adapted in the community. Programme/project targeting at hard-to-reach families

would be accorded higher scores. “Converting the converted” should be avoided. Follow-up evaluation of outcomes on family well-being after the completion of the intervention is needed;

- (c) *concreteness and feasibility (20%)* – the applicant organisation should be able to demonstrate the concreteness (e.g. measurable deliverables) as well as the feasibility (e.g. implementation, outreaching and financial plans) of the proposed programme/project in the proposal;
 - (d) *experience and track record (15%)* – the experience and track record of the applicant organisation will be taken into consideration; and
 - (e) *innovation (10%)* – the programme/project should be innovative. For programme/project which is based on, adopted or modified from programmes/projects/interventions which have been implemented before, the applicant organisation should demonstrate the new or innovative elements in the proposal. The proposed interventions should be based on some previous evidence and sound theory to support that they are potentially effective.
3. In processing the applications, especially those relating to the same theme and with similar coverage, the AP may direct the Secretariat to liaise with the applicant organisations to refine the proposals in order to create greater synergy and achieve better cost-effectiveness.
 4. If the AP considers it more appropriate for any proposed programme/project under Category A to be processed as “seed projects”, the AP may propose to move it from Category A to Category B. The AP may also invite the applicant organisation of Category B project to enrich/expand its project and move it to Category A. Under this circumstance, the Secretariat will invite the application organisation to indicate if it accepts the proposed arrangement.
 5. Proposed programme/project should be non-profit making in nature and must not be used for political, religious or commercial publicity for any individuals or organisations.
 6. The AP will not consider programmes/projects that are currently subvented by the Government. One-off event (e.g. carnival) for publicity purpose will not be supported.
 7. Under no circumstances are applicant organisations allowed to seek and/or accept donations and/or sponsorship that may tarnish the image or

reputation of the Government and the Council.

8. Programme/project involving a high proportion of capital and administration costs (taking up about 70% or more of the total budget) would normally not be considered.

F. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Applications shall be made by submitting the Application Form together with all necessary supporting documents by 31 August 2020.
2. Applicant organisations may be required to attend interview to be arranged by the Secretariat of the AP as appropriate.

G. MONITORING MECHANISM

1. Monitoring mechanism will be put in place to ensure that public funds are spent prudently and in accordance with the approved budget and parameters.
2. The Support Sub-committee will play a monitoring role over the approved programmes/projects.
3. The approved fund will be disbursed in phases to the successful applicant organisation in accordance with the following milestones in general –
 - (a) 40% of the approved funding upon signing of the undertaking by the successful applicant organisation and acceptance of inception report;
 - (b) 30% of the approved funding upon the acceptance of the half-yearly progress report; and
 - (c) the remaining balance of the actual expenses incurred by the successful applicant organisation will be disbursed upon acceptance of the financial report, auditor's report and final project report by the Government.
4. The successful applicant organisations will be required to submit progress report and brief the Council and/or its Sub-committees on the progress of the programme/project. Site inspections/visits will be arranged by the Council Secretariat and/or Sub-committees where necessary.

5. If it is found in the final account that the total expenditure of the programme/project does not reach 70% of the original threshold and/or 70% of the performance targets set by the successful applicant organisation in the proposal, the Council reserves the right not to reimburse the remaining sponsorship.
6. Any changes to the content (including consequential changes to financial arrangements) of the programme/project should be approved by the Government in advance. If any changes are made without the prior approval of the Government, the Council reserves the right to withdraw the sponsorship.
7. To facilitate exchange of views and timely feedback to the successful applicant organisations, the Council may consider appointing interested Council Members as mentors/observers for individual programmes/projects. The organisations will also be able to benefit from the expertise of and sharing by the mentors/observers.

H. REVIEW OF SCHEME

Upon completion of the Scheme in 2022, the Council Secretariat will take into account all relevant factors, including the results of all projects approved during the three rounds of thematic sponsorship scheme since 2016-17, as well as the findings of researches/surveys conducted by the Council such as “A Study on Family Research in Hong Kong: A Critical Review and Annotated Bibliography” and “Further Study on the Phenomenon of Divorce in Hong Kong” which is expected to be completed in mid-2020, and will recommend the way ahead regarding the themes and areas of support to be provided by the Council under the thematic sponsorship scheme in the long run.

I. TENTATIVE TIMETABLE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHEME

The timetable for the implementation of the Scheme is set out below –

Time	Action
April 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulation of paper on the proposed framework of the Scheme to the Support Sub-committee for endorsement

Time	Action
April/May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsement of the Family Council on the proposed framework of the Scheme
June to August 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitation of proposals for the Scheme
July 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing session for interested organisations
August to October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vetting of proposals • Meeting(s) of Assessment Panel
November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsement of the Sub-committee and Family Council on the recommended projects • Notification of results to successful applicant organisations
December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of inception report by successful applicant organisations
January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launching of approved projects
July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of first half-yearly progress reports
February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of the approved projects
April 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of financial report, auditor's report and project report on the approved projects
Q2-Q3 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the Scheme • Experience sharing session of completed projects

Family Council Secretariat
May 2020