



Submission to the Panel of Home Affairs on the Proposed Injection of Funds into the Arts and Sport Development Fund

We welcome the government initiative to give support to arts and sport by its proposal to inject \$150 million into the ASDF.

The proposed distribution of fund is to give \$60 million for the arts portion and \$90 million for the sports portion. This appears to be a change in direction from previous practice, in which the supply of funds to Arts and Sports are equally distributed, as for instance, in January 2007, when the government last injected \$80 million to ASDF for an equal share between the support of Arts and of Sports. We would like Government to give the reason for this change in the government directive, which results in the provision of smaller support for arts development relative to sports development, as shown in the proposed injection of funds to ASDF this year.

Currently, the administration has given HKADC a budget of \$84 million, with \$20 million to meet its staff and administrative expenses, \$49 million for the various grant schemes, and \$15 million for the support of the HKADC-led projects of a recurrent nature. This limited budget means that the HKADC has to apply for funding from the arts portion of the ASDF if it wants to run or support special projects, including pilot schemes and projects of a bigger scale relating to sustainable development of a social environment conducive to dynamic cultural growth locally. Under the present mechanism, through which the HKADC must submit request for the use of ASDF through the Home Affairs Bureau, there is little transparency in decision-making, often much delay for the launching and planning of arts development projects of a significant scale.

As we know, the HKADC is a statutory body made up of appointed persons from the administration and elected arts professionals representing ten different arts interests. While it would be advisable to gradually enhance the arts professional representation at the HKADC both in terms of quantity and quality, the body remains the only representative arts council locally delegated with the responsibility of planning for Hong Kong's arts development, targeted especially at supporting the small and medium-sized cultural organizations, the young and emergent artists, as well as the potential art talents and audience in our local communities.

In view of the above, we feel very strongly that the administration should:

- Provide as much support to the arts as it has proposed for sports developments by raising the amount of funds to be injected to ASDF accordingly.



- Be more transparent in its selection procedure in granting or rejecting project proposals submitted to the ASDF.
- Seriously consider to provide the HKADC with a substantially higher level of annual budget than is currently the case.
- Allow more arts professionals to participate in HKADC so that more diverse and wider spectrum of arts is supported.
- Provide more grants for research and development in the field of arts and culture, especially in view of the needs of the West Kowloon Cultural District project and the demand for more cultural education and audience development projects for the growth of the creative industries.
- Put in measures that the ASDF would benefit artists and athletes more directly and encourage the long-term development of more career artists and athletes in Hong Kong.

The Civic Party

3 Feb. 2009