

Internet Learning Support Programme

Chronology of Events

Timeline	Events
July 2009	The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) submitted an internal funding proposal for creation of a social enterprise to manage a programme of digital inclusion initiatives.
October 2009	The Financial Secretary's Office (FSO) asked OGCIO to further explore the idea of using a social enterprise approach to plan and manage the programme of broadband access at home for needy children over a five-year period.
14 October 2009	In his Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that the Financial Secretary (FS) would coordinate efforts of relevant bureaux to examine, through tripartite collaboration between the community, business sector and the Government, options to provide convenient and suitable Internet learning opportunities for students in need.
October 2009 to January 2010	OGCIO engaged stakeholders (including Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, Internet Professional Association (iProA), Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) and Internet Service Providers) to garner views on possible options to take forward the Internet learning initiative.
November 2009 to January 2010	FS convened a Task Force on Internet Learning to consider how best to take the initiative forward and the resource requirements. The Task Force met twice on 9 November 2009 and 15 January 2010 respectively.
24 February 2010	FS announced a two-pronged approach in his 2010-11 Budget to help primary and secondary school students from low-income families with Internet learning at home through provision of an Internet access subsidy and implementation of a five-year Internet Learning Support Programme (ILSP).
12 April 2010	Submission of funding proposal to the LegCo Panel on Education. Members of the Panel on Information Technology & Broadcasting (ITB Panel) were also invited to join.
March to April 2010	Before launch of the Request for Proposals (RFP) exercise, former Government Chief Information Officer (GCIO) met with interested parties including iProA and HKCSS at their request.
18 May 2010	OGCIO launched the RFP exercise.

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28 May 2010	The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved a funding allocation of \$500 million for the two initiatives, of which \$220 million was allocated for the implementation of the five-year ILSP.
May to early July 2010	During the RFP invitation period, OGCIO met with five prospective proponents to assist them to put together the best possible proposals that they could.
5 July 2010	Close of the RFP invitation period
July 2010	The Evaluation Panel led by former GCIO and comprising representatives from OGCIO, the Education Bureau and the Office of the Telecommunications Authority evaluated the five proposals received.
18 August 2010	GCIO presented an update to the Permanent Secretary for Commerce & Economic Development (Communications & Technology) (PSCT) and proposed to invite the two leading proponents to collaborate.
20 August 2010	PSCT observed that there could be procedural gaps in the evaluation and secured support from the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (SCED) on the establishment of a review committee to act as a tender board-equivalent to advise GCIO on procedural matters.
September 2010	OGCIO provided supplementary information on the evaluation process to PSCT.
20 September 2010	PSCT convened the 1 st review committee meeting. The committee headed by PSCT comprised two representatives from the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and one from the Education Bureau. GCIO, together with two OGCIO colleagues, attended.
29 September 2010	The review committee met for the second time. It had no objection to GCIO concluding the RFP exercise by not selecting a proposal and then commencing a separate exercise in order to explore the collaborative approach with two leading contenders, i.e. eInclusion Foundation Limited (eInclusion) and HKCSS.
8 October 2010	GCIO presented to PSCT a file note to record his rationale for concluding the RFP and proceeding with a collaborative approach.
22 October 2010	All the five proponents responding to the RFP exercise were separately debriefed. The RFP exercise was formally concluded.
22 October 2010	eInclusion and HKCSS exchanged core parts of their proposals for consideration on how best to collaborate.

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October to December 2010	The Government engaged eInclusion and HKCSS in intensive discussions on the possibility of co-founding an Implementer for the Programme.
2 November 2010	A magazine published an unsubstantiated article on the selection of the ILSP Implementer.
From November 2010	Despite several rounds of discussion, and efforts to mediate by the Government, the parties had been unable to agree on the question of ownership and control of the Implementer. The Government reviewed different fallback options including the setting up of an FSI (Financial Secretary Incorporated) company, OGCIO acting as the Implementer, single tender, re-tendering, and a dual implementer approach.
23-27 November 2010	PSCT and GCIO exchanged views on the merits or otherwise of the dual implementer approach as a fallback.
1 – 14 December 2010	FS, SCED and the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury agreed that in case collaboration failed, the Government should sound out HKCSS and eInclusion on the dual implementer approach, with the setting up of an FSI (Financial Secretary Incorporated) company as the last resort. Views of GCIO and PSCT reflected in the submission.
22 December 2010	GCIO sought and had a meeting with PSCT to discuss working relationship and contractual matters.
4 January 2011	A tripartite meeting involving the Government, eInclusion and HKCSS to make a last ditch attempt to seek collaboration had been scheduled but was subsequently called off because one of the parties would prefer to be excused. PSCT turned the meeting into two separate sessions with eInclusion and HKCSS. PSCT offered two fallback options — dual implementer subject to both parties agreeing, and failing this, a fresh tender on the basis of a scope different from that set out in the original RFP. PSCT explained to GCIO why she had not offered the FSI option given latest developments.
5 January 2011	GCIO informed PSCT that he would seek early termination of his employment.
6 January 2011	Both eInclusion and HKCSS confirmed acceptance of the dual implementer approach.

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7 January 2011	Commerce and Economic Development Bureau issued an information note to the ITB Panel reporting on the agreement to proceed with the dual implementer approach.
January to April 2011	OGCIO worked with eInclusion and HKCSS to finalise the detailed implementation and funding arrangements.
14 March 2011	OGCIO updated the ITB Panel on progress on Government's digital inclusion initiatives, including the ILSP.
18 April 2011	In response to the Finance Committee's request, the Government provided information on the selection of implementation agent for the ILSP and the rationale of implementing it in two geographical regions by separate organisations.
9 May 2011	OGCIO signed the Funding and Operation Agreement with eInclusion.
23 May 2011	OGCIO signed the Funding and Operation Agreement with the Internet Learning Resource Centre Limited, a non-profit organisation newly established by HKCSS as Implementer.
Mid July 2011	Launch of ILSP.

Office of the Government Chief Information Officer
Commerce and Economic Development Bureau
June 2011