

For information

Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs

**Provision of funding for the Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship
and the International Youth Exchange Programme**

Purpose

This paper introduces to Members the proposals of allocating additional resources to the Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship (Scholarship) and the International Youth Exchange Programme (IYEP).

Background

2. The Financial Secretary announced last month in the 2017-18 Budget that additional resources will be allocated to promote youth development. The relevant paragraph in the Budget Speech is quoted below -

“To nurture young people as future leaders with vision, creativity, leadership and a sense of commitment, we have been actively advocating a culture of multi-faceted excellence and providing additional resources to implement various youth development initiatives in recent years. In 2017-18, I will inject \$200 million into the Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship to support local students who excel in areas other than academic performance, for example sports, arts or community services, to pursue undergraduate studies, in a bid to promote multi-faceted excellence. I will also allocate an additional \$100 million to expand the International Youth Exchange Programme so as to encourage young people to increase their global exposure and broaden their international horizons.”

3. In response to the proposals in the Budget, we plan to expand the scale of the Scholarship and the IYEP. Details are set out in paragraphs 4 to 6 and paragraphs 7 to 9 respectively.

(I) Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship

4. To promote a culture of multi-faceted excellence and convey to society the message that academic results are not the sole criterion for measuring the success of young people, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) launched the \$100 million Scholarship in 2014. Every year, the Scholarship supports universities in admitting a total of about 20 Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) candidates who excel in sports, arts, community services, etc. on a full-cost recovery basis to pursue undergraduate studies. Scholarship awardees are not required to pay tuition fees. The quota for the Scholarship is not included in the university places currently funded by the University Grants Committee. In other words, universities may admit Scholarship awardees within the over-enrolment quota permitted by the Government.

5. Selection of nominees for the Scholarship is conducted by an Assessment Panel appointed by the Secretary for Home Affairs, comprising distinguished members of the community in the fields of education, sports, arts and community services. We invite secondary schools in Hong Kong every year to nominate Form Six students with multi-faceted talents. Following interviews with the Assessment Panel, more than 20 nominees are shortlisted for the Scholarship. The nominees recommended by the Assessment Panel will then be referred to relevant universities for consideration. If deemed necessary, the universities may conduct further interviews with the nominees to assess their aptitude for the chosen programmes and decide whether to issue conditional offers. Upon the release of HKDSE results, in accordance with the established practice of the Joint University Programmes Admissions System, universities will refer to nominees' HKDSE results in determining whether to admit them. Nominees whose HKDSE results meet the conditional offers will secure the scholarship for their desired programmes.

6. Entering its third year of operation, the Scholarship is well received by the public and provides a new pathway for local HKDSE candidates to be admitted to universities through non-academic achievements. In light of the additional provision of \$200 million announced in the Budget, starting from the university academic year 2018/19, we plan to double the annual quota for the Scholarship from 20 to 40, with a view to benefitting more young people and further promoting the culture of multi-faceted excellence. The original provision of \$100 million allocated to the HAB in 2014 was planned to support five cohorts of Scholarship awardees. With the additional injection of \$200 million and the doubled quota for the Scholarship, we expect that the whole scholarship programme can support eight cohorts of awardees to pursue undergraduate studies.

(II) International Youth Exchange Programme (IYEP)

7. The IYEP is currently co-organised by the HAB and the Commission on Youth (CoY). The scheme aims at providing overseas exchange opportunities to young people aged between 18 and 24 so that they can have in-depth exchange with their counterparts overseas and broaden their horizons. The IYEP participants are nominated by their schools, universities, relevant government departments, uniformed groups and non-governmental organisations. Nominees are then shortlisted by a selection board consisting of CoY members. Successful candidates will have the chance to take part in exchange activities and field trips in Ireland, Singapore, Japan, Poland, Australia, etc. The HAB liaises directly with its overseas partners to set the itinerary and detailed arrangements under the IYEP. About 110 young people from Hong Kong and abroad will participate in the programme this year.

8. To benefit more young people gaining international exchange opportunities to broaden their horizons, in addition to continuing the IYEP, we plan to expand the programme with the additional provision of \$100 million. We will introduce a new funding scheme, sponsoring community organisations to organise overseas youth exchange activities, so as to widen the range of exchange opportunities for young people. We expect up to 400 young people can benefit from exchange programmes sponsored by the HAB in 2017.

9. Registered non-profit-making organisations, statutory bodies or charitable bodies may apply for funding to organise international exchange activities for local youth. The funding scheme operates as a matching fund, where the ratio between Government funding and the funding offered by the sponsored organisation is capped at 2:1. The HAB will evaluate the applications in detail, assessing the quality of each organisation and ensuring that the proposed programmes are in line with the scheme's purpose, eligibility criteria and other requirements. In addition, the sponsored organisation will be required to adhere to a set of regulations and guidelines in organising activities. A report comprising financial statements and activity records should be submitted to the HAB for review.

Financial Implications

10. The expansion of the Scholarship involves a one-off non-recurrent provision of \$200 million. The extra workload arisen will be absorbed by existing resources of the HAB and therefore no additional recurrent expenditure will be incurred.

11. The estimated cash flow requirement of the Scholarship (including the provision of \$100 million allocated in 2014) is as follows -

<u>Accumulated</u>							
<u>expenditure</u>	<u>2016-17</u>	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>from 2014 to</u>	<u>(\$'000)</u>	<u>(\$'000)</u>	<u>(\$'000)</u>	<u>(\$'000)</u>	<u>(\$'000)</u>	<u>and beyond</u>	<u>(\$'000)</u>
<u>2015-16</u>						<u>(\$'000)</u>	
<u>(\$'000)</u>							
4,301	8,523	15,000	25,000	30,000	35,000	182,176	300,000

12. The expansion of the IYEP involves a one-off non-recurrent provision of \$100 million. The extra workload arisen from the implementation of a new programme and relevant administrative work will be absorbed by existing resources of the HAB and therefore no additional recurrent expenditure will be incurred.

13. The estimated cash flow requirement of expanding the IYEP is as follows -

<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>Total</u>
(\$'000)	(\$'000)	(\$'000)	(\$'000)	and beyond	(\$'000)
				(\$'000)	
3,000	9,000	14,000	18,000	56,000	100,000

Public Consultation

14. We consulted the CoY on 8 March 2017 and Members supported the proposals to increase provision for the Scholarship and the IYEP.

Advice Sought

15. Members are invited to note the above proposed arrangements for the funding injection to expand the coverage of the Scholarship and the IYEP. If members wish to discuss this paper, we will arrange with the Secretariat an opportunity at the meeting of the Panel of Home Affairs scheduled on 27 March 2017.

Home Affairs Bureau
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