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### Replies to initial questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2024-25

**Director of Bureau : Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry**

**Session No. : 19**

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| <a href="#">ITIB193</a> | 584                        | LAM Siu-lo, Andrew     | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB194</a> | 585                        | LAM Siu-lo, Andrew     | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB195</a> | 615                        | LAM Siu-lo, Andrew     | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards   |
| <a href="#">ITIB196</a> | 2036                       | LAU Chi-pang           | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards   |
| <a href="#">ITIB197</a> | 302                        | LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth  | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government<br>(3) IT in the Community |
| <a href="#">ITIB198</a> | 3052                       | LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth  | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards   |
| <a href="#">ITIB199</a> | 1933                       | LEE Chun-keung         | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards   |
| <a href="#">ITIB200</a> | 1934                       | LEE Chun-keung         | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards   |
| <a href="#">ITIB201</a> | 2542                       | LEE Tsz-king, Dominic  | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB202</a> | 1662                       | LEE Wai-wang, Robert   | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB203</a> | 1663                       | LEE Wai-wang, Robert   | 47          | (3) IT in the Community   |
| <a href="#">ITIB204</a> | 1665                       | LEE Wai-wang, Robert   | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards   |
| <a href="#">ITIB205</a> | 3592                       | LEUNG Hei, Edward      | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB206</a> | 3593                       | LEUNG Hei, Edward      | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB207</a> | 3597                       | LEUNG Hei, Edward      | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB208</a> | 2957                       | LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards   |
| <a href="#">ITIB209</a> | 2972                       | LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards   |
| <a href="#">ITIB210</a> | 2981                       | LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB211</a> | 2985                       | LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards   |
| <a href="#">ITIB212</a> | 2988                       | LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB213</a> | 2989                       | LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis | 47          | (3) IT in the Community   |
| <a href="#">ITIB214</a> | 3785                       | LEUNG Yuk-wai, Kenneth | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards   |



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| <a href="#">ITIB216</a> | 2642                       | LI Sai-wing, Stanley        | 47          | (3) IT in the Community                              |
| <a href="#">ITIB217</a> | 2646                       | LI Sai-wing, Stanley        | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
| <a href="#">ITIB218</a> | 809                        | LIAO Cheung-kong,<br>Martin | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
| <a href="#">ITIB219</a> | 812                        | LIAO Cheung-kong,<br>Martin | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
| <a href="#">ITIB220</a> | 2                          | LO Wai-kwok                 | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
| <a href="#">ITIB221</a> | 3                          | LO Wai-kwok                 | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
| <a href="#">ITIB222</a> | 4                          | LO Wai-kwok                 | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
| <a href="#">ITIB223</a> | 1463                       | LUK Chung-hung              | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
| <a href="#">ITIB224</a> | 1464                       | LUK Chung-hung              | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
| <a href="#">ITIB225</a> | 1465                       | LUK Chung-hung              | 47          | (3) IT in the Community                              |
| <a href="#">ITIB226</a> | 1468                       | LUK Chung-hung              | 47          | (3) IT in the Community                              |
| <a href="#">ITIB227</a> | 1469                       | LUK Chung-hung              | 47          | (3) IT in the Community                              |
| <a href="#">ITIB228</a> | 1470                       | LUK Chung-hung              | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
| <a href="#">ITIB229</a> | 288                        | NG Kit-chong, Johnny        | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
| <a href="#">ITIB230</a> | 289                        | NG Kit-chong, Johnny        | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                  |
| <a href="#">ITIB231</a> | 290                        | NG Kit-chong, Johnny        | 47          | (3) IT in the Community                              |
| <a href="#">ITIB232</a> | 291                        | NG Kit-chong, Johnny        | 47          | (3) IT in the Community                              |
| <a href="#">ITIB233</a> | 292                        | NG Kit-chong, Johnny        | 47          | (3) IT in the Community                              |
| <a href="#">ITIB234</a> | 801                        | NG Kit-chong, Johnny        | 47          | (3) IT in the Community                              |
| <a href="#">ITIB235</a> | 45                         | NG Wing-ka, Jimmy           | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                  |
| <a href="#">ITIB236</a> | 703                        | NGAN Man-yu                 | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
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| <a href="#">ITIB238</a> | 1347                       | QUAT Elizabeth              | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government |
| <a href="#">ITIB239</a> | 1348                       | QUAT Elizabeth              | 47          | (3) IT in the Community                              |
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| <a href="#">ITIB241</a> | 2377                       | SHANG Hailong         | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB242</a> | 2384                       | SHANG Hailong         | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government           |
| <a href="#">ITIB243</a> | 203                        | SHIU Ka-fai           | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB244</a> | 1398                       | SHIU Ka-fai           | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB245</a> | 3046                       | SHIU Ka-fai           | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards<br>(3) IT in the Community |
| <a href="#">ITIB246</a> | 200                        | SO Cheung-wing        | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB247</a> | 1912                       | TAN Sunny             | 47          | (3) IT in the Community  |
| <a href="#">ITIB248</a> | 2136                       | TANG Fei              | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB249</a> | 2144                       | TANG Fei              | 47          |  |
| <a href="#">ITIB250</a> | 2076                       | TANG Ka-piu           | 47          | (3) IT in the Community  |
| <a href="#">ITIB251</a> | 507                        | TSE Wai-chuen, Tony   | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government           |
| <a href="#">ITIB252</a> | 3108                       | WONG Chun-sek, Edmund | 47          | (3) IT in the Community  |
| <a href="#">ITIB253</a> | 365                        | WONG Kam-fai, William | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB254</a> | 757                        | WONG Kam-fai, William | 47          | (3) IT in the Community  |
| <a href="#">ITIB255</a> | 802                        | WONG Kam-fai, William | 47          | (1) Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government           |
| <a href="#">ITIB256</a> | 911                        | WONG Kam-fai, William | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB257</a> | 912                        | WONG Kam-fai, William | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB258</a> | 913                        | WONG Kam-fai, William | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB259</a> | 1520                       | WONG Kwok, Kingsley   | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB260</a> | 2829                       | WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy | 47          | (3) IT in the Community  |
| <a href="#">ITIB261</a> | 677                        | YIM Kong              | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB262</a> | 678                        | YIM Kong              | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |
| <a href="#">ITIB263</a> | 1400                       | YUNG Hoi-yan          | 47          | (2) IT Infrastructure and Standards                            |

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB001**

**(Question Serial No. 1608)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will continue to implement the “Global STEM Professorship Scheme” (the Scheme) this year and launch a sub-scheme for visiting professors on a pilot basis to strengthen support for local universities to attract world-renowned STEM scholars to work in Hong Kong. Will the Government advise this Committee of:

- 1) the numbers of applicants/teams, the numbers of applications approved, the research areas of the approved applications, and the universities/institutions employing the scholars in each round of the Scheme since its launch in 2021;
- 2) whether efforts have been made to follow up the employment and living situations of the Scheme participants after their arrival, such as problems concerning their adaptation to life in Hong Kong, so that appropriate support can be enhanced to attract talents to stay in Hong Kong; if so, the manpower and expenditure involved;
- 3) whether the Government has collaborated with universities to proactively invite research teams to work in Hong Kong and provided assistance for the scholars in dealing with issues such as their children’s education and accommodation; if so, the manpower involved; and
- 4) the details of the sub-scheme for visiting professors to be launched in the coming year on a pilot basis, and the expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

1) to 3)

The Global STEM Professorship Scheme (the Regular Scheme) supports local universities funded by the University Grants Committee in attracting research and development (R&D) talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. As at the end of February 2024, the numbers of nominations received and approved scholars who have accepted invitation in each tranche are as follows:

| <b>Tranche</b> | <b>Number of nominations received</b> | <b>Number of approved scholars who have accepted invitation</b> |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| First          | 119                                   | 26  |
| Second         | 66                                    | 11  |
| Third          | 37                                    | 12  |
| Fourth         | 30                                    | 12  |
| Fifth          | 42                                    | 15  |
| Sixth          | 44                                    | 15  |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>338</b>                            | <b>91</b>   |

As at the end of February 2024, 57 scholars have taken up their posts in Hong Kong while the remaining will be arriving gradually. Their research areas and the institutions they work for are as follows:

| <b>Research Area</b>             | <b>Number of scholars who have come to Hong Kong</b> |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Computer Science and Engineering | 28   |
| Medical and Life Sciences        | 15   |
| Natural Science and others       | 14   |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>57</b>  |

| <b>Institutions they work for</b>                  | <b>Number of scholars who have come to Hong Kong</b> |
|--|--|
| Hong Kong Polytechnic University                   | 13   |
| The University of Hong Kong                        | 12   |
| The City University of Hong Kong                   | 11   |
| The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 11   |
| The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology | 7  |
| Hong Kong Baptist University                       | 3  |
| <b>Total</b>                                       | <b>57</b>  |

The Regular Scheme provides remuneration subsidy to a university employing a selected scholar, which is capped at 50% of the actual remuneration offered by the university and subject to an annual ceiling of \$1 million for each scholar, over a period of up to 5 years. In addition, under the Regular Scheme, a selected scholar can receive subsidy from the Research Talent Hub for recruiting up to 4 research team members to assist in his/her R&D work over a period of up to 3 years. If needed, a selected scholar may apply for subsidy from The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for setting up a laboratory. The universities concerned will continue to follow up on the performance of the selected scholars in accordance with their personnel management practices and provide selected scholars with the necessary support. The Government will maintain close liaison with the universities and review the implementation of the Regular Scheme as and when appropriate. The University Grants Committee Secretariat (UGC Secretariat) provides secretariat support for the Scheme. In 2023-24, the actual manpower involves 4 time-limited contract posts in the UGC Secretariat. These include 1 executive equivalent to Senior Executive Officer in the civil service, 2 executives equivalent to Executive Officer I and 1 clerical staff. The total salary is about \$3.48 million. Meanwhile, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau implements the work under the Scheme with its existing manpower and resources.

4)

Taking into account the views of stakeholders, the Government launched the Sub-scheme for Visiting Professors (the Sub-scheme) on a pilot basis in January this year, providing universities with funding for attracting more eminent scholars in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines to come to Hong Kong as Visiting Professors, thereby encouraging international collaborations in innovation and technology (I&T) and expanding the local I&T talent pool in the long run. Subject to the actual circumstances, we expect to support a total of around 20 selected Visiting Professors in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years.

The Sub-scheme provides remuneration subsidy to a university employing a selected Visiting Professor, which is capped at 50% of the actual monthly remuneration offered by the university and subject to a monthly ceiling of \$75,000 for each selected Visiting Professor, over a period of 3 to 6 months. Considering that Visiting Professors would in general engage in local scholars' research projects rather than initiate independent projects in Hong Kong, no subsidy will be provided under the Sub-scheme for recruiting research team members or setting up laboratories, as opposed to the Regular Scheme.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0909)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Hong Kong is well-equipped to develop into an international life and health technology centre. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following?

A year has passed since the 2023-24 Budget proposed to set aside \$6 billion to provide subsidies for universities and research institutes to set up thematic research centres. What is the progress now?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

As announced in the 2023-24 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government will allocate \$6 billion to provide subsidies for local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations to set up life and health technology research institutes (LHTRIs). The purpose is to facilitate relevant research and development (R&D) activities and transformation of R&D outcomes, and to attract leading innovation and technology talent and research teams around the world to Hong Kong.

Subsequently, the Government worked on finalising the proposal on the subsidy programme for LHTRIs and consulted the stakeholders in the course. On 20 February 2024, the Government consulted and secured support from the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology. The Government plans to seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) in the second quarter of 2024. After FC's funding approval is obtained, the Government will invite applications from universities interested in setting up LHTRIs.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB003**

**(Question Serial No. 0938)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Bureau will further improve the service of 1823 through the application of innovative technologies. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- a) the innovative technologies to be applied, and the specific measures and the implementation timetable;
- b) the efficiency in expediting case handling and streamlining of procedures through the application of these innovative technologies; and
- c) whether performance indicators (e.g. customer satisfaction, percentage of enquiries addressed, etc.) will be set for the innovative technologies, such as artificial intelligence chatbot, to evaluate their capability in case handling?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)



Reply:

To continuously improve service quality and efficiency, 1823 will further strengthen the application of technology with a view to coping with the public demand for its service. In 2023, 1823 completed the telephony system upgrade project, including the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) speech recognition technology through which members of the public can use their voice to input the required options without pressing any button. The technology also enables the recognition of callers' enquiries for the provision of relevant information, thereby facilitating public access to information on government services. In 2024-25, 1823 will fully expand its AI chatbot for enquiry service to answer frequently asked questions under all of its scope of service. The chatbot will provide instant and convenient self-service to members of the public, allowing the staff of 1823 to focus on handling more complicated cases. 1823 will also conduct a project to pilot the use of generative AI technology to assist staff in drafting replies to written enquiries from citizens. The technology will save staff effort to search for relevant information in the knowledge base, thereby enhancing 1823's case handling capability and efficiency. In addition, 1823 will apply AI speech-to-text technology to transcribe citizens' voicemail messages into text, reducing the time required for data input and enhancing handling efficiency. 1823 will adopt AI speech recognition technology to identify callers' enquiry subjects so that callers can receive the requested information by short message service (SMS) without the need for answering the calls manually. We aim at implementing the above enhancements within 2024. 1823 will continue to keep a close watch on the latest technological developments and applications, and actively explore the possibility of further utilising innovative technologies, such as AI, in various areas to enhance service efficiency.

The 1823 AI chatbot can now handle simple enquiries in 10 specific areas. 1823 is fully expanding the AI chatbot to answer frequently asked questions under all of its scope of service, such as application for public rental housing and driving licences. The expansion work is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2024. We will collect user feedback on such aspects as the adequacy and clarity of the information provided as well as the user interface design, in order to enhance the case handling capability and user experience of the AI chatbot.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0939)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 104 of the Budget Speech that the Government will allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund to provide elderly people aged 60 or above with digital training courses and technical support in the next 3 years so that they can integrate into the digital era more easily and enjoy the benefits of digital technology. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- a) What were the expenditures on providing digital training courses and technical support in 2023-24? What were the specific results?
- b) What innovative projects will be launched to promote digital inclusion and reduce the digital divide? What are the key performance indicators expected to achieve?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Government has been committed to taking measures to promote digital inclusion and encourage various sectors to play an active part in helping those in need, including the elderlies, get to know and use technology products and services, so that they can fully integrate into the digital society.

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) launched the "ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly" (the Outreach Programme) in June 2023 for a period of two years. Through six engaged non-profit-making organisations and their service

networks, visits are organised to elderlies across the territory, including those living in residential care homes, receiving day care and home care services and the hidden elderlies, etc. A variety of activities have been organised for elderlies to experience digital living, encouraging them to make wider use of digital technology. Furthermore, OGCIO has included the pilot mobile outreach service stations as a part of the Outreach Programme with the set up of over 300 mobile outreach service stations across the territory to assist elderlies in the community in using smartphones and mobile applications. As at February 2024, the number of participating elderlies under the Outreach Programme was over 18 000, and the mobile outreach service stations also served more than 10 000 elderlies in the community.

Moreover, the Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (the Training Programme) launched by the OGCIO in 2021 was completed in December 2023. By subsidising 11 Elder Academies, the Training Programme provided free advanced ICT training courses to elderlies in the community with basic knowledge on digital technology. In addition to commonly used Government mobile applications like “iAM Smart”, training topics also covered smart healthcare, online shopping, mobile payment, mobile applications frequently used in the Mainland, social media, e-wallet and cyber security, etc., to assist elderlies in equipping relevant skills. A total of about 4 000 elderlies have participated in the recently completed Training Programme.

The total expenditure of the abovementioned Outreach Programmes and Training Programmes in 2023-24 is around \$18 million.

OGCIO will continue to implement the two-year Outreach Programme which was launched in June 2023, and set up more than 300 mobile outreach service stations across the territory at different times to attract the participation of elderlies and introduce to them commonly used mobile applications. It is estimated that the number of participating elderlies in the Outreach Programme will be over 68 000, including 20 000 elderlies to be benefitted from the mobile outreach service stations. In addition, the OGCIO will launch a new round of the two-year Training Programme in the second quarter of 2024, and it is expected that over 3 000 elderlies will benefit. OGCIO will also keep developing and introducing more learning modules for the Elderly IT Learning Portal to meet the needs of elderlies in response to the development of digital technologies and the ever-changing digital lifestyles, and to encourage elderlies to embark on lifelong learning.

The Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) allocated a total of about \$13 million in 2021 to support four innovative projects to promote inter-generational digital inclusion by engaging young people to enhance the capability and interest of the elderlies in learning and adopting digital technologies, and at the same time promote inter-generational harmony and enhance social cohesion. These projects cover a wide range of activities, including providing digital outreach rehabilitation services for the elderlies, training young people to teach elderlies the operations of tablet computers/smartphones and mobile applications, engaging the elderlies after training to volunteer and introduce digital products to their fellows, etc. These four projects will all be completed by April 2024, with a total of 600 participating youths since October 2021, benefiting more than 4 700 elderlies.

In addition, the Government plans to allocate \$100 million under the SIE Fund to subsidise non-governmental organisations to set up community-based help desks at suitable locations (e.g. community centres) to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elderlies aged 60 or above in Hong Kong, particularly the singleton

or doubleton elderlies, in the coming three years. Apart from smartphone operation and the use of digital government services (e.g. iAM Smart and other common government mobile applications), we also intend to cover topics such as online shopping, electronic payment and cyber security in the programme, with a view to enhancing the elderlies' capability in adopting digital technologies. Experienced staff (or volunteers) will station at the community-based help desks to provide technical support tailored to the specific needs of the elderlies, so that they can enjoy the benefits brought about by digital services. We expect the programme to benefit at least 50 000 elderlies, and by mid-2024 at the earliest, invite project proposals from institutions/ organisations through open invitation, with the first batch of programme commencing in the fourth quarter of 2024.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB005**

**(Question Serial No. 0940)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Programme (2) points out that the Bureau will take forward the planning of the setting up of InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park, which will focus on aspects related to life and health disciplines. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the followings?

- a) Will the Hub be completed in phases starting from the end of 2024 as planned?
- b) Are there any specific measures to attract top-notch local, Mainland and overseas research teams to move in and focus on the translational research in the field of life and health sciences?
- c) Is there a specific timetable for taking forward the planning efforts in the coming year? What are the estimated expenditure and expected effectiveness?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to various parts of the question is set out below:

Life and health technology industry will be the key direction of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development in the future. As announced in the 2024-25 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government will allocate \$2.2 billion to support setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Loop. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to take forward such work with

existing manpower and resources. Please refer to the Estimates of “Head 135 - Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau” for details.

To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and to conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines, the Government will allocate \$2 billion to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc.

The HSITP Limited is progressing with the construction of 8 buildings in Batch 1 of the HSITP. Of these, 4 are wet-lab enabled buildings to tie in with the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Upon completion of the Batch 1 buildings in the HSITP progressively, research teams and enterprises related to the life and health industry are expected to move in. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2297)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As mentioned in paragraph 104 of the Budget Speech, the Government will allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund to provide, in the next 3 years, elderly people aged 60 or above with digital training courses and technical support, so that they can integrate into the digital era more easily and enjoy the benefits that digital technology brings. The first group of projects is expected to commence in the fourth quarter of 2024 at the earliest and benefit at least 50 000 elderly persons. In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

1. whether the Government has drawn up any plans in respect of the above work for the next 3 years; if yes, the details; if no, the reasons; and
2. whether the Government has planned to collaborate with local organisations in promoting the above projects; if yes, the details; if no, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-ki, Maggie (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to parts 1 and 2 of the question is as follows:

The Government plans to allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) to subsidise non-governmental organisations to set up community-based help desks at suitable locations (e.g. community centres) to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elderlies aged 60 or above in Hong Kong, particularly the singleton or doubleton elderlies, in the coming three years. Apart from smartphone operations and the use of digital government services (e.g. iAM Smart and other common government mobile applications),



we also intend to cover topics such as online shopping, electronic payment and cyber security in the programme, with a view to enhancing the elderlies' capability in adopting digital technologies. Experienced staff (or volunteers) will station at the community-based help desks to provide technical support tailored to the specific needs of the elderlies, so that they can enjoy the benefits brought about by digital services. We expect the programme to benefit at least 50 000 elderlies, and by mid-2024 at the earliest, invite project proposals from institutions/ organisations through open invitation, with the first batch of programme commencing in the fourth quarter of 2024. The programme mainly involves the engagement of institutions to provide training courses on digital technologies and technical support services, and related publicity programmes. The details are yet to be finalised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB007**

**(Question Serial No. 2416)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that \$2 billion will be allocated from the \$10 billion earmarked to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop, and \$200 million will also be allocated to provide assistance to start-ups engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following?

1. Regarding the \$2 billion allocation, what are the specific details, timetable and breakdown of the estimated expenditure?
2. Are 3 *InnoHK* research clusters covered?
3. Regarding the \$200 million support measures, what are the specific details, timetable and breakdown of the estimated expenditure?
4. Will key performance indicators be set for the economic effectiveness of the assistance programmes funded by the \$200 million allocation? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to various parts of the question is set out below:

Life and health technology industry will be the key direction of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development in the future. As announced in the 2024-25 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the

Government will allocate \$2.2 billion to support setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Loop, including allocating \$2 billion to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop and \$200 million to provide assistance to start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc.

The HSITP Limited is progressing with the construction of 8 buildings in Batch 1 of the HSITP. Of these, 4 are wet-lab enabled buildings to tie in with the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Upon completion of the Batch 1 buildings in the HSITP progressively, research teams and enterprises related to the life and health industry are expected to move in. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3097)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Efficiency Office will co-ordinate bureaux's and departments' participation and provision of cross-boundary public services through different service delivery modes, including the set up of self-service kiosks in Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area by phases. In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

1. the planned number of self-service kiosks to be set up and their distribution, as well as the implementation timetable, staffing establishment and expenditure involved;
2. the expenditure on software and hardware involved in the self-service kiosks and relevant equipment, as well as the expected expenditure on maintenance; and
3. the bureaux/departments expected to participate in the initiative in each of the phases and a list of the services to be provided.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

We rolled out the first Hong Kong Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) self-service kiosk at the Guangzhou Municipal Government Service Center in February 2024. The self-service kiosk currently provides over 50 government services from 9 government bureaux/departments (B/Ds), encompassing areas commonly used by Greater Bay Area (GBA) residents and enterprises such as taxation, company registration, property and vehicle enquiry and registration, applications for personal identification documents and entry of talents, welfare and education, healthcare, as well as immigration clearance and urgent assistance.

A research and development centre established by the Government was engaged to design and develop the self-service kiosk. Each kiosk involves an expenditure of about HK\$80,000 and an annual maintenance cost of about HK\$16,000.

We are discussing with Guangdong Province to set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks in more Mainland cities of the GBA, so as to cope with the demands of GBA residents and enterprises for Hong Kong government services. Meanwhile, we will continue to coordinate B/Ds' participation and provision of cross-boundary public services through different service delivery modes and understand the needs of GBA residents and enterprises for Hong Kong government services through various channels, with a view to launching more government services under Hong Kong's CBPS. As setting up self-service kiosks is one of the many core tasks in implementing the CBPS initiative, the staffing establishment and expenditure involved cannot be separately singled out and itemised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB009**

**(Question Serial No. 3193)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government will allocate \$3 billion from the sum earmarked in the past to assist the 8 universities funded by the University Grants Committee, on a matching basis, in procuring relevant facilities and conducting research projects to be led by leading local/Mainland/overseas research personnel in relation to various fields such as artificial intelligence, quantum information, integrated circuit, clinical medicine and health, and gene and biotechnology. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the specific items of expenditure, resource allocation mechanism, implementation timetable, the staffing and expenditure involved for the initiative?
2. What are the expected achievements of the initiative? Will there be any key performance indicators formulated for reviewing its effectiveness? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

It is proposed in the 2024-25 Budget that a Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme (the Support Scheme) will be launched to assist the 8 University Grants Committee-funded universities, on a matching basis, in procuring facilities and conducting research projects led by top-notch Mainland and overseas researchers, which cover various fields such as artificial intelligence, quantum information, integrated circuit, clinical medicine and health, and gene and biotechnology. To this end, the Government will allocate \$3 billion from the sum earlier earmarked. The Government is currently working out the detailed arrangements of the Support Scheme. To ensure proper use of public funds, the Government will put in place

appropriate monitoring mechanisms and funding conditions. For instance, the Government would require the funded institutions to submit regular progress reports to ensure that the implementation progress and expected outcome of their projects and the amount of matching fund involved are in line with those committed at the time of application. The Government plans to consult the relevant institutions on the detailed arrangements of the Support Scheme this year, and consultation with the Legislative Council on the proposal is expected to take place within this year.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB010**

**(Question Serial No. 1597)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Innovation and technology (I&T) development in the Northern Metropolis

Regarding the I&T land of the Northern Metropolis, will the Government advise this Committee on the following:

1. Given that the proposed Sandy Ridge site has been rezoned for I&T purposes and that it is a spade-ready site, when is it expected to be available for government use or tender by the industry for their use?
2. Further to the above question, will the Government consider putting the Sha Ling/Nam Hang Nature Park adjacent to the Sandy Ridge site under the centralised management of an I&T-related department, so as to facilitate the overall development of the area?
3. As the limited size of San Tin is not comparable to those of major I&T parks around the world, an additional 15 hectares of I&T land has been earmarked from the development of Lau Fau Shan area. Since there is an abundance of flat land in the eastern part of the Northern Metropolis and the development of boundary commerce and industry has been proposed, will the Government identify I&T land in the eastern part of the Northern Metropolis to cater for the overall I&T development of Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

Having coordinated information from the Development Bureau (DEVB) and the Environment and Ecology Bureau, our reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

1. As proposed in the 2023 Policy Address, the Government would change the land use of a 2-hectare formed site at Sandy Ridge in the North District for I&T and related purposes. The site will be ready for I&T and related development after the completion of the technical assessment and relevant rezoning procedures by the DEVB.
2. & 3. According to the Northern Metropolis Action Agenda published by the DEVB in end-2023, the Northern Metropolis will be the foothold for Hong Kong's strategic development and the new engine for Hong Kong's economy to scale new heights. The Northern Metropolis can be divided into 4 major zones, namely the High-end Professional Services and Logistics Hub, the I&T Zone, the Boundary Commerce and Industry Zone, and the Blue and Green Recreation, Tourism and Conservation Circle, each with different strategic positioning and development theme.

The Northern Metropolis includes both urban developments as well as ecological and environmental conservation projects. The coexistence of the two not only achieves "co-existence of development and conservation", but also creates a unique urban and rural landscape for the Northern Metropolis. The Northern Metropolis has rich and diverse habitats, and ecological conservation is one of its main development objectives. The area of the Sha Ling/Nam Hang Nature Park is about 4 hectares. Around 90% of the area is ecological compensation area provided under the statutory Environmental Impact Assessment Report of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project for mitigating the ecological impacts caused by the project with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department being responsible for the habitat management work. When planning the land use of the Boundary Commerce and Industry Zone in the eastern part of the Northern Metropolis, the Government will suitably consider the proposed Hoo Hok Wai Wetland Conservation Park (including the part of Sha Ling/Nam Hang) nearby, with a view to ensuring compatibility and coordination in respect of planning.

The I&T site in the Northern Metropolis mainly includes the San Tin Technopole (including the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in Lok Ma Chau), which provides about 300 hectares of I&T land; and Lau Fau Shan, which provides about 15 hectares of land for the development of a digital technology hub, digital infrastructures and supercomputing facilities. The area of I&T land provided by the San Tin Technopole is equivalent to the area of 17 Hong Kong Science Parks and comparable to the size of the Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Zone on the other side of the Shenzhen River. As indicated by the DEVB, the Boundary Commerce and Industry Zone (including the New Territories North New Town under planning) in the eastern part of the Northern Metropolis can be developed into a boundary control point business district and a base for emerging industries that can complement the I&T industry.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB011**

**(Question Serial No. 0770)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Cross-boundary Public Services have been launched for the convenience of residents and enterprises in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) Regarding the current Cross-boundary Public Services thematic website, offline service counters and self-service kiosk, what are the staffing arrangement and expenditure involved?
- (2) What is the Bureau's plan on further implementing the Cross-boundary Public Services initiative in the coming year? What are the details and implementation timetable?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- (1) The Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) thematic website was launched in November 2023. It currently provides a total of 61 online services and related information of CBPS from 9 bureaux/departments. Moreover, the first Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosk was set up at the Guangzhou Municipal Government Service Center in February 2024. The total expenditure involved in developing the thematic website and the self-service kiosk was about HK\$1.08 million, including the costs of engaging contractors and research and development organisation for the design and development of the website and the self-service kiosk, conducting security risk assessment and audit, as well as the service fees for conducting on-site testing in Mainland cities in the Greater Bay Area (GBA). The above work did not involve any additional manpower.

Contractors have been engaged to set up iAM Smart registration service counters in Guangzhou, as well as in Qianhai and Futian of Shenzhen to provide registration service to Hong Kong residents in these places. The total monthly expenditure is approximately HK\$227,000 and no additional manpower is involved. The registration service counters will be gradually replaced by self-service kiosks to deliver more cost-effective services.

- (2) We will continue to identify and introduce more CBPS of Hong Kong so as to provide greater convenience to the public. In addition, we are discussing with Guangdong Province to set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks in more Mainland cities of the GBA, so as to cope with the demands of GBA residents and enterprises for Hong Kong government services. We will also cater for the needs of the Guangdong Provincial Government by assisting it in setting up "Yue Zhi Zhu" self-service kiosks in Hong Kong to facilitate the public's access to Guangdong's government services through these self-service kiosks.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB012**

**(Question Serial No. 0771)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund to promote digital inclusion. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the planned content, estimated number and target intake in respect of the digital training courses;
2. of the content of the digital technical support project; and
3. how elderly people aged 60 or above can be effectively attracted to take part in relevant projects?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Government plans to allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) to subsidise non-governmental organisations to set up community-based help desks at suitable locations (e.g. community centres) to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elderlies aged 60 or above in Hong Kong, particularly the singleton or doubleton elderlies, in the coming three years. Apart from smartphone operation and the use of digital government services (e.g. iAM Smart and other common government mobile applications), we also intend to cover topics such as online shopping, electronic payment and cyber security in the programme, with a view to enhancing the elderlies' capability in adopting digital

technologies. Experienced staff (or volunteers) will station at the community-based help desks to provide technical support tailored to the specific needs of the elderlies, so that they can enjoy the benefits brought about by digital services. We expect the programme to benefit at least 50 000 elderlies, and by mid-2024 at the earliest, invite project proposals from institutions/ organisations through open invitation, with the first batch of programme commencing in the fourth quarter of 2024.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB013**

**(Question Serial No. 1707)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

On the promotion of digital inclusion, the Government will allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund to provide, in the next 3 years, elderly people aged 60 or above with digital training courses and technical support. The first group of projects is expected to commence in the fourth quarter of 2024 at the earliest and benefit at least 50 000 elderly persons. In this connection:

- (1) What are the specific implementation details of the first group of projects, including the institutions or organisations responsible for providing the courses and technical support respectively, ways of selecting contractors, contents of the courses, eligibility criteria for enrolment, setting of tuition fees and monitoring mechanism?
- (2) Will any local technology-related bodies and organisations be invited to participate in the projects?
- (3) What are the major expenditure items in respect of the \$100 million?
- (4) What kind of digital knowledge does the Government expect the elderly to grasp through studying the courses?
- (5) Upon completion of the courses, will the Government provide job matching services for the elderly who wish to return to the job market?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)



Reply:

- (1) to (4) The Government plans to allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) to subsidise non-governmental organisations to set up community-based help desks at suitable locations (e.g. community centres) to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elderlies aged 60 or above in Hong Kong, particularly the singleton or doubleton elderlies, in the coming three years. Apart from smartphone operation and the use of digital government services (e.g. iAM Smart and other common government mobile applications), we also intend to cover topics such as online shopping, electronic payment and cyber security in the programme, with a view to enhancing the elderlies' capability in adopting digital technologies. Experienced staff (or volunteers) will station at the community-based help desks to provide technical support tailored to the specific needs of the elderlies, so that they can enjoy the benefits brought about by digital services. We expect the programme to benefit at least 50 000 elderlies, and by mid-2024 at the earliest, invite project proposals from institutions/ organisations through open invitation, with the first batch of programme commencing in the fourth quarter of 2024.

Service providers are required to submit regular financial, progress and performance reports (covering key performance indicators such as the numbers of beneficiaries, training sessions and support points, and the level of satisfaction of participants) to the SIE Fund for effective supervision. The major expenses of the programme will cover the engagement of institutions to provide training courses on digital technologies and technical support services, publicity expenses, etc. and the details are yet to be finalised.

- (5) The main objective of the programme is to help the elderlies get to know and use technology products and services and fully integrate into the digital society by providing them with training courses on digital technologies and technical support, which does not include job-matching services for the elderlies who wish to return to the job market.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB014**

**(Question Serial No. 1712)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Cyberport 5 expansion project, which will provide a gross floor area of about 66 000 square metres for co-working spaces and offices, etc., is expected to be completed by the end of next year at the earliest. Have the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and Cyberport discussed how the Cyberport 5 expansion project site can be put to better use? If yes, what are the preliminary results? Will proposals for technology-oriented strategic development plans be formulated?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

The Cyberport expansion project (i.e. Cyberport 5 development) involves the construction of a new office building at a site of approximately 1.6 hectares, providing a gross floor area of about 66 000 square metres with facilities including office, co-working space, a data services platform, a multi-function hall and ancillary facilities. The expansion works commenced in 2021 and are expected to be completed in end-2025 at the earliest.

The Cyberport expansion project aims to provide more space and ancillary facilities to attract more technology companies and start-ups to set up their offices in Cyberport. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been one of the technology clusters that Cyberport focuses on. Apart from nurturing and supporting start-ups, Cyberport also proactively identifies strategic enterprises to establish a presence there to dovetail its development focus and expansion project. Cyberport has also signed collaboration memoranda with a number of relevant leading enterprises to promote the development of the AI ecosystem.

It is mentioned in the 2023 Policy Address that Cyberport will establish an AI supercomputing centre (AISC) in phases, with a view to supporting the huge demand for computing power

from universities, research institutions and relevant sectors for AI development. Cyberport is actively preparing for the establishment of the AISC. The first phase of the facility is expected to come into operation in the second half of 2024 at the earliest, while the second phase is expected to commence operation upon completion of the Cyberport 5 expansion works in early 2026 at the earliest. As an important strategic digital infrastructure, the AISC development can inject impetus to the Cyberport expansion project, with AI, blockchain, big data and cyber security being the key development axles, thereby attracting more emerging technologies and enterprises in the key development clusters such as AI, blockchain, educational technology, health technology, regulatory technology and arts technology, etc., and promoting the diversity of the digital technology ecosystem at Cyberport. Cyberport will formulate a detailed development plan and operation strategies within this year to tie in with the completion of the expansion project in end-2025 and its objective of further promoting the development of key technology areas.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB015**

**(Question Serial No. 3224)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. In 2023-24, the Government commenced the industry planning of the development of new sites for innovation and technology uses in San Tin Technopole. What are the positions of the manpower and expenditure involved? What are the specific work details? What is the latest progress? What are the relevant work, details and project timetable in 2024-25 subsequently?
2. In 2024-25, the Government will continue to take forward the planning of the development of new sites earmarked for innovation and technology uses. What specific projects will be involved? What are the latest planning and progress regarding the 2-hectare formed site in Sandy Ridge of North District? What are the details of the expenditure and manpower resources involved in the new land projects concerned?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

To support the development of innovation and technology (I&T) in Hong Kong, the Government has been actively identifying land to provide the industries with the space necessary for their development. For instance, the I&T land in the Northern Metropolis mainly includes about 300 hectares of such land (including the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (hereinafter referred to as the "HSITP") in Lok Ma Chau) in San Tin Technopole, and about 15 hectares of land in Lau Fau Shan for the development of a digital technology hub, digital infrastructure facilities and supercomputing facilities.

Upon co-ordination of the information provided by the Development Bureau, the consolidated reply concerning each part of the question is as follows:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) is conducting a consultancy study on the I&T industry development plan for the new I&T land in San Tin Technopole (outside

of the Loop), with a view to recommending specific I&T uses in the I&T value chain (i.e. upstream (research and development), midstream (prototype or application development) or downstream (manufacturing) processes) for development on different land parcels in the area, as well as requisite infrastructure and supporting facilities, etc. The study is expected to be completed in 2024. The estimated expenditure for the whole consultancy study is \$4.98 million.

Regarding the development of the HSITP, it will be developed in 2 phases from west to east. The Phase 1 planning has been completed. In 2021, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved a funding of \$14.3 billion to the HKSAR Government to construct road networks connecting the Loop and relevant infrastructure, and an injection of \$18.1 billion into the HSITP Limited for the construction of 8 buildings in Batch 1 of Phase 1 and in support of its operation. The first 3 buildings can be completed progressively from the end of 2024 onwards. The HSITP Limited is pressing ahead with the relevant work of leasing and business attraction by using its existing resources. Moreover, the HKSAR Government has announced that it would first release about 5 hectares of land with community isolation and treatment facilities erected thereon for commencing the construction of the remaining 5 buildings in Batch 1 of the HSITP as early as possible. To promote the development of life and health industry in Hong Kong, the InnoLife Healthtech Hub will be set up in the HSITP to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines. To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP, the Government will allocate \$2 billion from the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop, and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

Regarding the land for I&T use in Lau Fau Shan, taking into account its proximity to Qianhai just across Deep Bay, the Development Bureau earlier proposed the development of a digital technology hub in the Lau Fau Shan area to capitalise on advanced technology for promoting integration of new and traditional economies, and serve as an incubation base for young talent and start-ups. Cyberport has been invited to look into the establishment of the digital technology hub at Lau Fau Shan. The Government has initially earmarked about 15 hectares of land therein for the development of a business and technology park. Cyberport will commence a further study in 2024 to ascertain the details of the proposed development at Lau Fau Shan.

As for Sandy Ridge, as proposed in the 2023 Policy Address, the Government would change the land use of a 2-hectare formed site at Sandy Ridge in the North District for I&T and related purposes. The site will be ready for I&T and related development after the completion of the technical assessment and relevant rezoning procedures by the Development Bureau.

The ITIB will continue to take forward the work on I&T development in the Northern Metropolis with existing manpower and resources. A breakdown of the relevant figures is not available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB016**

**(Question Serial No. 3252)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the Cyberport Accelerator Support Programme, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Since the commencement of the Programme, how many Fintech start-ups have been admitted, and which countries and regions do they come from? Please provide the information in tabular form.
2. Since the commencement of the Programme, how many Fintech companies have been incubated, and what are the regions in which such companies have been assisted to develop their business? Please provide the information in tabular form.
3. What is the average processing time for approving the applications and the staffing establishment of the Programme? Will the Government provide additional resources and manpower to expedite the processing time? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

1. & 2. The Cyberport Accelerator Support Programme (Programme) provides a maximum funding of HK\$300,000 to incubatees or alumnus of the incubation programme seeking opportunities to expand into the overseas market and to raise funds, by supporting participation in Cyberport's endorsed accelerator programmes. Cyberport has formed partnership with 91 accelerators in and outside Hong Kong. Of these, 17 accelerators are from the Mainland and 51 from overseas (including 21 from Southeast Asia).

Since the launch of the Programme, Cyberport has approved 231 applications to support start-ups in joining local, Mainland and overseas accelerator programmes and assist them with overseas expansion and fund-raising. Of these, 59 applications are related to 45 Fintech start-ups, including 37 local enterprises, 1 Mainland enterprise and 7 overseas enterprises (from Israel, India, Canada, etc.). The endorsed accelerators involved in these applications come from the following locations:

|              | <b>Endorsed accelerators involved in applications from Fintech enterprises</b> |
|--------------|--|
| Local        | 27   |
| Mainland     | 9  |
| Overseas     | 23<br><i>(including Singapore, United States, Japan, etc.)</i>                 |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>59</b>  |

3. The vetting procedure of the Programme takes 2 months on average. Cyberport endeavours to process the applications received and grant approval to eligible start-ups within the shortest time.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1998)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

With a view to supporting the development of artificial intelligence (AI) and meeting the demand for computing power, an indicator is set in the 2023 Policy Address, stating the operation of the first phase of the AI supercomputing centre in Cyberport in 2024. The Budget further confirms such policy. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the latest works progress, including the expenditure and manpower involved, and details of the timetable?
2. Are there any measures in place to ensure that the computing demand stated in the Budget can be fulfilled?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

The 2023 Policy Address announced that Cyberport would, from this year onwards, set up an AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases. Cyberport will operate the AISC, being its major digital infrastructure, under a market model having regard to its financial and manpower resources. Cyberport is working on the operational arrangements. At the same time, the 2024-25 Budget proposed to allocate \$3 billion to launch a 3-year AI Subsidy Scheme (the Subsidy Scheme). The major objective of the Subsidy Scheme is to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises to leverage AISC's computing power, thereby providing sufficient financial support and incentive to eligible users to make good use of AISC's services.



Cyberport is pressing ahead with the establishment of the AISC in good progress, expecting to commission the first phase of the development in the second half of 2024 at the earliest. Upon completion of the Cyberport 5 expansion project and the commencement of the second phase of the AISC, the facility's computing power is expected to reach 3 000 petaFLOPS by early 2026 the soonest. The launch of the AI Subsidy Scheme will tie in with the commencement of operation of the first phase of AISC within this year at the earliest.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB018**

**(Question Serial No. 1999)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Government will work with the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund Task Force to take forward innovative projects to enhance the capability and interest of the elderly in learning and adopting digital technologies. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the resources and staffing to be involved in the implementation of this policy initiative? What is the latest progress of the projects?
2. How will the Government review the synergy effect between the projects and the policy initiatives to develop gerontechnology and promote the silver economy?
3. Have any resources been earmarked for providing opportunities to local innovation and technology enterprises to participate in the projects and running such projects in the local community care services centres for the elderly, with a view to enhancing the reliability of elderly care services?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

1. & 2. The Government plans to allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) to subsidise non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to set up community-based help desks at suitable locations (e.g. community centres) to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elderlies aged 60 or above in Hong Kong, particularly the singleton or doubleton elderlies, in the coming three years. Apart from smartphone operations and the use of digital government services (e.g. iAM Smart and other common government mobile applications), we also intend to cover topics such as online shopping, electronic payment and cyber security in the programme, with a view to enhancing the elderlies' capability in adopting digital technologies. Experienced staff (or volunteers) will station at the community-based help desks to provide technical support tailored to the specific needs of the elderlies, so that they can enjoy the benefits brought about by digital services. We expect the programme to benefit at least 50 000 elderlies, and by mid-2024 at the earliest, invite project proposals from institutions/ organisations through open invitation, with the first batch of programme commencing in the fourth quarter of 2024. We believe that these projects will not only enhance the elderlies' ability in using digital technologies and give them more confidence in applying digital technologies in their daily lives to enhance the quality of life, but also promote the research and development of related technology products and foster the development of "silver economy", unleashing the economic potential of the elderly market.
  
3. The SIE Fund plans to invite NGOs to submit proposals on the implementation of digital inclusion programme for the elderlies. The programme mainly involves the engagement of institutions to provide training courses on digital technologies and technical support services, and related publicity programmes. The details are yet to be finalised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB019**

**(Question Serial No. 1379)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The estimate for the promotion of technological entrepreneurship will increase by 45.6%. With regard to the promotion of technology, the advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) may have undesirable effects in many different ways:

**Fake news**

Generative AI can be used to create fake news articles that are indistinguishable from the real ones. Fake news may influence public opinions, undermine democracy and incite violence.

**Deepfakes**

Generative AI can be used to create deepfakes, which are synthetic videos or images that can be used for impersonation of ordinary people, political figures or celebrities, as well as extortion, defamation or deception.

**Cyber attacks**

Generative AI can be used to launch cyber attacks that are more complex and effective than before, as well as create phishing emails, malware or ransomware for specific targets or customised scenarios, causing financial loss, operational interruption or physical damage.

**Ethical issues**

There may be ethical issues arising from generative AI that challenge our values and principles. The quality and fairness of the contents generated will be affected by ethical issues.

**Social impacts**

Generative AI can cause social impacts on our behaviour and interpersonal relationships. It can even render contents that are more realistic or convincing than those made by humans, which will affect our perception and self-expression. The social impacts will also jeopardise our privacy and undermine our trust in other people and things.

Question:

Regarding the additional provision for promoting technology and innovation, will the Government advise whether part of the technology resources will be deployed to prevent hackers and guard against the adverse effects caused by, among others, fake news, cyber attacks and invasion of privacy arising from AI development?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

Artificial intelligence (AI) presents enormous opportunities to the development of technology and innovation, but at the same time creates various challenges. The Government and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD) have published the Ethical AI Framework and the Guidance on the Ethical Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence (the AI Guidance) respectively for reference by the industry. Under the existing legislation in Hong Kong, most of the laws enacted to prevent crimes in the real world are in principle applicable to the online world. There are various provisions in place under the existing legal framework to deal with the dissemination of untrue or inappropriate information. For instance, the Crimes (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 introduced the offences of publication or threatened publication of intimate images without consent. The offence is also applicable to intimate images that have been altered (including that altered by AI technology). The application of AI technology shall also be subject to the requirements under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance to safeguard privacy of personal data.

It is the Government's ongoing effort to review and enhance the overall information and data security awareness of the Government and society at large, strengthen their capability in defending against cybersecurity threats and response to cybersecurity incidents, and further fortify the data security protection. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has formulated the Government IT Security Policy and Guidelines (Policy and Guidelines), setting out the requirements for establishing, implementing, maintaining and continuously improving the information security management system for all bureaux/departments to follow. Also, the Policy and Guidelines have been uploaded to the OGCIO website for reference by all public and private organisations, and will be timely updated by the OGCIO with reference to the latest standards on information security management and industry best practices. Furthermore, the OGCIO has been working closely with various stakeholders, such as collaborating with the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited (HKIRC) to administer the "Cybersec Infohub" programme for promoting cybersecurity information sharing among public and private organisations; supporting the Hong Kong Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Centre (HKCERT) in providing incident response services for information security, security threat alerts, preventive guidelines and security education; and working in partnership with the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force, the HKIRC and the HKCERT to organise various publicity campaigns and training to remind the community to strengthen their cybersecurity measures and protect their information systems and data against cyberattacks.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3162)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 92 of the Budget Speech that the Government has commissioned an expert group to undertake an in-depth study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong, the scope of which includes Hong Kong's role as a "super connector" in data trading as well as promoting the formulation of international data trading rules. The aim is to enable us to unleash the potential of data elements and facilitate its development into a new industry with an enormous growth momentum, hence empowering the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries.

In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee whether it will consider setting up a data exchange in Hong Kong to facilitate the establishment of a Hong Kong-Shenzhen cross-boundary data exchange, thus promoting the co-development of various smart cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and building Hong Kong as an "international digital port"?

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

The Government has recently commissioned an expert group to undertake an in-depth study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong. The scope of which includes Hong Kong's role as a "super connector" in data trading as well as promoting the formulation of international data trading rules. The presence of a highly efficient data ecosystem is one of the considerations for many enterprises to establish a foothold in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is underpinned by its distinctive advantages under "One Country, Two Systems" and endowed with the characteristics of an international city. From supply and demand of data to application scenarios, we are equipped with a robust foundation and possess an abundance of favourable conditions for developing international data trading. We believe

a robust data trading ecosystem can help empower the upgrade and transformation of industries and enterprises. Details of the study are yet to be determined.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB021**

**(Question Serial No. 2103)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding green technology, please inform this Committee of:

- 1) the number of existing green technology companies in Hong Kong, with a breakdown by location of company (e.g. Cyberport/Science Park), line of business, company size and field of patented technology owned;
- 2) the details of various green technology support schemes, and the numbers of applications for research and development as well as pilot projects received and approved under respective schemes since their launch with a breakdown by business area;
- 3) the related expenditure and staff establishment for supporting the development of green technology in the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24);
- 4) the details of the activities for promoting green technology in the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24), including the name and date(s) of the activities, the number of participants/participating enterprises, the publicity channels, as well as the manpower and actual expenditure involved;
- 5) the relevant activities proposed for 2024-25, the date(s) concerned, the manpower and estimated expenditure involved; and
- 6) the exchange and co-operation plans for promoting the development of green technology with cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in the future.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)



Reply:

Having consulted the Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB), the reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

- 1) According to the Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 promulgated by the Environment Bureau (ENB) (i.e. the predecessor of the EEB) in 2021, Hong Kong will implement a series of measures with an aim to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and expedite the development of green transformation. Hong Kong possesses advantages in green technology. At present, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) has a total of about 130 green technology start-ups, while Cyberport has about 55 start-ups engaging in environmental technology and about 15 in green finance. We do not maintain the information regarding the lines of business, sizes and fields of patented technology of the above enterprises.
- 2) The Government set up the Green Tech Fund (GTF) in 2020 to provide better and more focused funding support for research and development (R&D) projects which can help Hong Kong decarbonise and enhance environmental protection. The ENB has arranged the injection of a total of \$400 million into the GTF to support R&D projects in the priority areas including net-zero electricity generation, energy saving and green buildings, green transport, and waste reduction. Since the launch of the GTF for application in December 2020, a total of 368 applications have been received. 30 projects have been approved, involving a total grant of about \$130 million. In addition, the Government has been implementing various measures to provide funding for technology enterprises, from which start-ups engaging in green technology have also benefitted. For example, the Innovation and Technology Fund administered by the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC), has funded over 140 R&D projects related to green technology so far, with a total funding of about \$433 million. We do not maintain a breakdown of other statistics.
- 3) The work on promoting the development of green technology is absorbed by existing manpower and resources of the relevant bureaux/departments. We do not maintain a breakdown of the relevant figures.
- 4)&5) The EEB co-organised with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd. the annual Eco Expo Asia (the Expo) in October 2021, December 2022 and October 2023. The Expo provides a business platform for the environmental industry that showcases the latest green products, services, equipment and technologies, offering a bundle of business opportunities. In support of the Hong Kong Green Week hosted by the Government in 2023-24, the EEB set up a "Green Technology" exhibition zone in the pavilion at the Expo 2023 to showcase the green and smart technologies adopted by the Hong Kong Government. The Expo is mainly organised and promoted by the HKTDC. The EEB plans to continue co-organising the Expo in October 2024. The work of co-organising the Expo is absorbed by existing staffing establishment. We do not maintain a breakdown of the relevant figures.

According to the figures provided by the organiser, the overall numbers of trade buyers visiting the Expo and the numbers of exhibitors are listed in table below:

|                                 | 2021           | 2022  | 2023          |
|---------------------------------|----------------|---|---------------|
| Number of visiting trade buyers | around 16 000* | around 9 200<br>(including online visitors) | around 12 000 |
| Number of exhibitors            | over 200       | around 250                                  | over 300      |

Note: \*including the number of visitors for exhibitions held in the same venue.

Furthermore, the Hong Kong Green Week, held during 26 February - 2 March 2024, offered a series of events, of which activities focusing on green technology included:

- (i) the “Green Travel for a Zero Carbon Future” - New Energy Bus Experience Day and Carnival organised by the EEB, the Environmental Campaign Committee and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department;
- (ii) the “Leveraging BuildTech and Green Finance in Public Housing” seminar organised by the Housing Bureau;
- (iii) the “Hong Kong GreenTech Summit 2024” co-organised by the Green Development Institute, the HKSTPC and the Greater Bay Area Green Finance Alliance;
- (iv) the “Dark Green Tech Business Leader Dialogue”, the “Green Tech for SME Forum” and the “Green Tech Insight Forum for Future STEM Education Change Makers” co-organised by the HKSTPC and other organisations;
- (v) the “Tech Decode ESG: SMEs Sustainable Development Seminar” organised by the Hong Kong Productivity Council; and
- (vi) the “Hydrogen – the Path to Green Transportation” seminar organised by the Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre (APAS).

For the 2 events (attracting around 1 500 visitors in total) directly organised by the Government, together with the Hong Kong Green Week, the overall publicity (mainly through the thematic website, posters and banners) involved a government expenditure of around \$383,000 in total. The work was absorbed by existing manpower of the relevant bureaux/departments and we do not maintain a breakdown of the relevant figures. For other activities and publicity organised by individual organisers, they were responsible for the expenses and publicity involved and we do not have the details.

- 6) The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau has been enhancing the Innovation and Technology (I&T) ecosystem from different aspects to promote Hong Kong's overall I&T development, including green technology and other technology areas. Government bureaux and departments also promote the adoption of green technology under their policy areas. The ITC will continue to encourage the 5 R&D Centres (namely APAS, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute, Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel, Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre and Nano and Advanced Materials Institute) to exchange and

link with the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area (GBA). The 5 R&D Centres will, through technology exchanges and collaborative researches with their GBA partners, as well as participation in or organisation of seminars and technology exhibitions etc., promote the development of green technology in the GBA with concerted efforts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB022**

**(Question Serial No. 2106)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As stated in paragraph 122 of the Budget Speech, the Government is drafting the White Paper on the Development of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Lok Ma Chau Loop targeting to be announced this year. In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

- 1) the progress, preliminary direction and timetable of drafting the White Paper and the departments/members participating in the drafting work;
- 2) whether the Government has consulted relevant stakeholders and discussed with relevant Mainland ministries and commissions on drafting the White Paper; if so, of the details; if not, of the reasons;
- 3) the respective functions and positioning of the HSITP, the Northern Metropolis and San Tin Technopole;
- 4) the details, resources allocated and achievements in respect of the Government's work in taking forward the development of the HSITP over the past 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24); and
- 5) the details, estimated expenditure and staff establishment in respect of the Government's plan for taking forward the development of the HSITP in 2024-25.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The Shenzhen-Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Co-operation Zone (hereinafter referred to as the “Co-operation Zone”) in the Loop consists of the 87-hectare Hong Kong Park (i.e. Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park, hereinafter referred to as the “HSITP”) and the 300-hectare Shenzhen Park. It is one of the major co-operation platforms in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area under the 14th Five-Year Plan. The HKSAR Government and the Shenzhen Municipal Government have been jointly taking forward the development of the Co-operation Zone in full swing to establish “one zone, two parks” under the “One Country, Two Systems” principle, leveraging the comparative advantages of both sides in striving for excellence and achievements.

Our reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

- 1) and 2) The HKSAR Government is drafting an overarching document on the development of the Hong Kong Park in the Loop to better plan for the development. It will set out, among others, the development directions, positioning, hardware and software of the Hong Kong Park, targeting to be announced this year. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) takes the lead in drafting the overarching document, and will consult the relevant bureaux/departments in the course. Hong Kong and Shenzhen will also continue to maintain communication in respect of the development of the Co-operation Zone through the Joint Task Force on the Development of the HSITP in the Loop.
- 3) According to the Northern Metropolis Action Agenda published by the Development Bureau in end-2023, the Northern Metropolis will be the foothold for Hong Kong’s strategic development, and the new engine for Hong Kong’s economy to scale new heights. Adopting an “industry-driven and infrastructure-led” approach as its key planning axle and taking into account the characteristics and strengths of different areas, the Northern Metropolis can be divided into 4 major zones, namely the High-end Professional Services and Logistics Hub, the Innovation and Technology (I&T) Zone, the Boundary Commerce and Industry Zone, and the Blue and Green Recreation, Tourism and Conservation Circle, each with different strategic positioning and development theme.

San Tin Technopole, situated at the Northern Metropolis, provides about 300 hectares (including the HSITP in Lok Ma Chau) of I&T land. The land will serve as a hub for clustered I&T development, which will not only create synergy with Shenzhen, but also assist Hong Kong in developing into an international I&T centre under the new industry pattern of “South-North dual engine (finance-I&T)”. Its spatial planning will align with the development positioning of the Co-operation Zone elevated to the national strategic level. It will also fully integrate with the strategy on enhancing Hong Kong’s I&T competitiveness to pave way for the future development of the Co-operation Zone in a forward-looking manner. The ITIB is conducting a consultancy study on the I&T industry development plan for the I&T land in San Tin Technopole (outside of the Loop), with a view to recommending specific I&T uses in the I&T value chain (i.e. upstream (research and development), midstream (prototype or application development) or downstream (manufacturing) processes) for development on different land parcels in the area, as well as requisite

infrastructure and supporting facilities, etc. The study is expected to be completed in 2024.

- 4) and 5) The HSITP will be developed in 2 phases from west to east. The Phase 1 planning has been completed. With a total floor area of up to 1 million square metres, the HSITP will be divided into various clusters with different industry themes (including life and health technology, artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, and industries, academia and research) as well as a talent accommodation area and the commercial and ancillary facilities, with a view to developing a diverse I&T ecosystem. The HSITP Limited will commence the relevant planning work of the Phase 2 development soon.

In 2021, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved a funding of \$14.3 billion for the HKSAR Government to construct road networks connecting the Loop and relevant infrastructure, and an injection of \$18.1 billion into the HSITP Limited for the construction of 8 buildings in Batch 1 of Phase 1 and in support of its operation. The first 3 buildings will be completed progressively from the end of 2024 onwards. The HSITP Limited is pressing ahead with the leasing and business attraction work by using existing resources. Moreover, the HKSAR Government has announced that it would first release about 5 hectares of land with community isolation and treatment facilities erected thereon for commencing the construction of the remaining 5 buildings in Batch 1 of the HSITP as early as possible.

In addition, in order to promote the development of life and health industry in Hong Kong, the InnoLife Healthtech Hub will be set up in the HSITP in the Loop to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines. To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP, the Government will allocate \$2 billion from the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop, and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

The ITIB will continue to take forward the development of the HSITP with existing manpower and resources. Please refer to the Estimates of “Head 135 — Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau” for details.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB023**

**(Question Serial No. 3772)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 92 of the Budget Speech that the Government has commissioned an expert group to undertake an in-depth study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong. In this connection, please advise this Committee on the following:

- 1) the members of the expert group and their expertise;
- 2) the direction of the study and the countries/regions from which experiences will be drawn;
- 3) the progress of the study and the preliminary proposals; and
- 4) the specific time schedule.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 45)

Reply:

The Government has recently commissioned an expert group comprising a few members from the Digital Economy Development Committee and representatives of relevant government departments, covering professional fields such as information technology, commerce and industry, finance and data source, to undertake an in-depth study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong. The scope of which includes Hong Kong's role as a "super connector" in data trading as well as promoting the formulation of international data trading rules. The presence of a highly efficient data ecosystem is one of the considerations for many enterprises to establish a foothold in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is underpinned by its distinctive advantages under "One Country, Two Systems" and endowed with the

characteristics of an international city. From supply and demand of data to application scenarios, we are equipped with a robust foundation and possess an abundance of favourable conditions for developing international data trading. We believe a robust data trading ecosystem can help empower the upgrade and transformation of industries and enterprises. Details of the study, including the specific scope and timetable, are yet to be determined.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB024**

**(Question Serial No. 3773)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the innovation and technology ecosystem, please advise this Committee of:

- 1) the respective numbers of tenants and incubatees of the Science Park and Cyberport in the past 5 years (2019-20 to 2023-24) with year-on-year comparison, broken down by field of business and set out in tabular form;
- 2) the names of companies that have listed and the amount of capital raised, broken down by field of business and set out in tabular form;
- 3) the names of companies currently applying for listing and the estimated amount of capital to be raised, broken down by field of business and set out in tabular form; and
- 4) the names of existing unicorns and their respective latest valuation, broken down by field of business and set out in tabular form.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 46)

Reply:

The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and Cyberport, as Hong Kong's innovation and technology (I&T) flagships, have been committed to providing I&T start-ups with infrastructure, incubation programmes and one-stop support. Our reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

- 1) The numbers of tenants and incubatees of the Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport in the past 5 financial years (as at February 2024) with year-on-year change, broken down by business areas, are respectively listed at **Annexes 1 and 2**.

2) to 4) As at February 2024, among the tenants together with current and graduated incubatees of the HKSTPC and Cyberport, 16 companies have been listed. Moreover, according to the research on Hong Kong unicorns conducted by Invest Hong Kong, the HKSTPC and Cyberport have by now witnessed the birth of 9 Hong Kong unicorns (i.e. unlisted enterprises valued at over US\$1 billion), among them 2 have been listed. The companies concerned and their business areas are listed at **Annexes 3 and 4**. We do not maintain information on the amount of capital raised by the listed companies, companies currently applying for listing and the estimated amount of capital to be raised, or the latest valuation of the unicorns.

**Numbers of tenants and incubatees of the Hong Kong Science Park  
from the 2019-20 to 2023-24 financial years**

| Business area   |           | Number of companies (year-on-year change) |                |                |               |  |
|---|-----------|---|----------------|----------------|---------------|--|
|   |           | 2019-20                                   | 2020-21        | 2021-22        | 2022-23       | 2023-24<br>(as at<br>February<br>2024) |
| Information and communications technology                       | Tenant    | 167                                       | 156<br>(-6.6%) | 146<br>(-6.4%) | 200<br>(+37%) | 244<br>(+22%)                          |
|   | Incubatee | 164                                       | 155<br>(-5%)   | 120<br>(-23%)  | 127<br>(+6%)  | 185<br>(+46%)                          |
| Electronics   | Tenant    | 124                                       | 137<br>(+10%)  | 147<br>(+7%)   | 162<br>(+10%) | 179<br>(+10%)                          |
|   | Incubatee | 58  | 64<br>(+10%)   | 57<br>(-11%)   | 47<br>(-18%)  | 45<br>(-4%)                            |
| Biomedical technology   | Tenant    | 121                                       | 126<br>(+4%)   | 135<br>(+7%)   | 153<br>(+13%) | 189<br>(+24%)                          |
|   | Incubatee | 24  | 30<br>(+25%)   | 39<br>(+30%)   | 57<br>(+46%)  | 57<br>(0%)                             |
| Material and precision engineering                              | Tenant    | 64  | 86<br>(+34%)   | 65<br>(-24%)   | 74<br>(+14%)  | 81<br>(+9%)                            |
|   | Incubatee | 32  | 46<br>(+44%)   | 52<br>(+13%)   | 54<br>(+4%)   | 62<br>(+15%)                           |
| Green technology  | Tenant    | 61  | 65<br>(+7%)    | 87<br>(+35%)   | 85<br>(-3%)   | 79<br>(-7%)                            |
|   | Incubatee | 10  | 16<br>(+60%)   | 24<br>(+50%)   | 43<br>(+79%)  | 51<br>(+19%)                           |
| Others<br>(including companies providing professional services) | Tenant    | 12  | 42<br>(+250%)  | 46<br>(+10%)   | 47<br>(+2%)   | 50<br>(+6%)                            |
|   | Incubatee | -   | -              | -              | -             | -                                      |

**Numbers of tenants and incubatees of Cyberport  
from the 2019-20 to 2023-24 financial years**

| Business area                        |           | Number of companies (year-on-year change) |               |               |               |  |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|--|
|                                      |           | 2019-20                                   | 2020-21       | 2021-22       | 2022-23       | 2023-24<br>(as at<br>February<br>2024) |
| Smart living                         | Tenant    | 242                                       | 295<br>(+22%) | 255<br>(-14%) | 260<br>(2%)   | 256<br>(-2%)                           |
|                                      | Incubatee | 74  | 83<br>(+12%)  | 109<br>(+31%) | 103<br>(-6%)  | 85<br>(-17%)                           |
| Financial technology                 | Tenant    | 198                                       | 209<br>(6%)   | 188<br>(-10%) | 194<br>(+3%)  | 204<br>(+5%)                           |
|                                      | Incubatee | 55  | 58<br>(+5%)   | 68<br>(+17%)  | 56<br>(-18%)  | 50<br>(-11%)                           |
| Digital entertainment                | Tenant    | 49  | 49<br>(-)     | 42<br>(-14%)  | 44<br>(+5%)   | 40<br>(-9%)                            |
|                                      | Incubatee | 30  | 33<br>(10%)   | 24<br>(-27%)  | 25<br>(+4%)   | 31<br>(+24%)                           |
| Artificial intelligence/<br>big data | Tenant    | 74  | 84<br>(14%)   | 71<br>(-15%)  | 65<br>(-8%)   | 87<br>(+34%)                           |
|                                      | Incubatee | 39  | 41<br>(5%)    | 25<br>(-39%)  | 13<br>(-48%)  | 8<br>(-38%)                            |
| Blockchain                           | Tenant    | 6   | 5<br>(+17%)   | 16<br>(+220%) | 39<br>(+144%) | 61<br>(+56%)                           |
|                                      | Incubatee | 4   | 7<br>(+75%)   | 13<br>(+86%)  | 26<br>(+100%) | 41<br>(+58%)                           |
| Cybersecurity                        | Tenant    | 4   | 8<br>(+100%)  | 10<br>(+25%)  | 9<br>(-10%)   | 10<br>(+11%)                           |
|                                      | Incubatee | 2   | 5<br>(+150%)  | 3<br>(-40%)   | 2<br>(-33%)   | 3<br>(+50%)                            |
| Others                               | Tenant    | 123                                       | 127<br>(+3%)  | 139<br>(+9%)  | 153<br>(+10%) | 162<br>(+6%)                           |
|                                      | Incubatee | 11  | 19<br>(+73%)  | 30<br>(+58%)  | 28<br>(-7%)   | 21<br>(-25%)                           |
| Corporate services<br>company        | Tenant    | 0   | 0<br>(-)      | 48<br>(-)     | 42<br>(-13%)  | 39<br>(-7%)                            |
|                                      | Incubatee | -   | -             | -             | -             | -                                      |

**Listed companies and Hong Kong unicorns among the tenants, current incubatees and graduated incubatees of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation**

**Listed companies (in alphabetical order of company name)**

|     | <b>Company name</b>              | <b>Business area</b>                      |
|-----|----------------------------------|---|
| 1.  | Aptorum                          | Biomedical technology                     |
| 2.  | China Resources Microelectronics | Electronics                               |
| 3.  | Cordlife                         | Biomedical technology                     |
| 4.  | Credo                            | Electronics                               |
| 5.  | HighTide Therapeutics            | Biomedical technology                     |
| 6.  | KingMed                          | Biomedical technology                     |
| 7.  | Medpace                          | Biomedical technology                     |
| 8.  | OrbusNeich                       | Biomedical technology                     |
| 9.  | Purapharm                        | Biomedical technology                     |
| 10. | SenseTime                        | Information and communications technology |
| 11. | SinoMab                          | Biomedical technology                     |
| 12. | Solomon Systech                  | Electronics                               |
| 13. | UBTech Robotics                  | Material and precision engineering        |
| 14. | XiaoI Robotics                   | Electronics                               |
| 15. | Zhaoke                           | Biomedical technology                     |

**Hong Kong unicorns (cumulative)(in alphabetical order of company name)**

|    | <b>Company name</b>           | <b>Business area</b>                      |
|----|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Lalamove                      | Information and communications technology |
| 2. | SenseTime<br>(Listed in 2021) | Information and communications technology |
| 3. | SmartMore                     | Material and precision engineering        |

**Listed company and Hong Kong unicorns among the tenants, current incubatees and graduated incubatees of Cyberport**

**Listed company**

|    | <b>Company name</b> | <b>Business area</b> |
|----|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | GOGOX               | Smart living         |

**Hong Kong unicorns (cumulative)(in alphabetical order of company name)**

|    | <b>Company name</b>       | <b>Business area</b>  |
|----|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. | Animoca Brands            | Digital entertainment |
| 2. | GOGOX<br>(Listed in 2022) | Smart living          |
| 3. | Hashkey                   | Financial technology  |
| 4. | Klook                     | Smart living          |
| 5. | TNG                       | Financial technology  |
| 6. | WeLab                     | Financial technology  |

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB025**

**(Question Serial No. 2587)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks and the Cyberport are undergoing expansion works, and the Loop will also attract innovation and technology (I&T) industries to establish presence. However, the profit model and development level of local I&T industries see no significant results. Please advise on the following.

1. In the course of supporting the development of I&T industries, has the Financial Secretary quantified the input-output ratio and released any figures to the public?
2. In the course of subsidising I&T industries, is there any assessment on the profitability of the funded enterprises?
3. After granting subsidies to the relevant I&T enterprises, does the Government have any plan to set a minimum threshold, i.e. the funded enterprises must have a certain amount of business turnover in Hong Kong within a certain period of time?

Asked by: Hon KONG Yuk-foon, Doreen (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

Innovation and technology (I&T) is a key engine driving our economy and society towards high-quality development. The Government has been devoting resources to building a vibrant I&T ecosystem by focusing on enhancing I&T infrastructure, research capacity, talent, etc. Our reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

1. In recent years, Hong Kong has performed quite well in a number of I&T-related international rankings and growth has been recorded in various I&T-related figures. For example, Hong Kong ranked second in the world and first in Asia in Emerging Ecosystems of the Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2023. In the Global Innovation Index 2023 published by the World Intellectual Property Organization, the “Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Guangzhou” science and technology cluster ranked second globally for four consecutive years. Hong Kong’s ranking remained fifth in Asia, and was 17th globally among 132 economies. The gross domestic expenditure on research and development of Hong Kong in 2022 amounted to \$30.138 billion, rising to 1.07% of the Gross Domestic Product. The number of start-ups rose to nearly 4 300 last year, about a fourfold increase compared to 2014. Over the same period, the number of people employed by related start-ups increased by about 7 times to over 16 000. In general, various I&T initiatives are gradually taking effect.
2. & 3. At present, there are 18 funding schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF), which is administered by the Innovation and Technology Commission. Each of these funding schemes has its own objective, scope, and modus operandi, supporting five I&T areas, namely supporting research and development, facilitating technology adoption, nurturing I&T talent, supporting technology start-ups, and fostering an I&T culture. To ensure the proper use of public funds, the Government has established fair and reasonable assessment criteria for the funding schemes and conducted assessment in accordance with the relevant criteria.

The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and Cyberport provide pre-incubation support for entrepreneurial technology talent through various incubation programmes. Applications for these incubation programmes are subject to a rigorous selection and assessment process. After admission, incubatees will have to undergo milestone assessments regularly before they are awarded with the corresponding amount of funding. For incubatees that fail to achieve the pre-set targets or submit convincing proposals to meet the milestones, HKSTPC/ Cyberport will review with them and may request them to withdraw from the programmes.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0086)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Programme that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau promotes sustained and diversified economic and social development through developing local innovation and technology industries, driving the upgrading and transformation of the overall economic structure, thereby enhancing Hong Kong's competitiveness and improving people's quality of life. In this regard, will the Government inform this Committee of the followings?

- a. Please provide a breakdown, by year, of the names and numbers of the world-class scholars participating in the "Global STEM Professorship Scheme" and their research teams, as well as the local universities in which they worked/work, since the implementation of the scheme by the Bureau.
- b. Further to the above, please provide a breakdown, by year, of the amounts of expenditure involved.
- c. Please provide a breakdown, by year, of the names and numbers of the companies participating in the "New Industrialisation Funding Scheme", as well as the amounts of expenditure involved, since the implementation of the scheme by the Bureau.
- d. Further to the above, will the Bureau review the effectiveness of the scheme? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

a. and b.

The Global STEM Professorship Scheme (the Scheme) supports local universities funded by the University Grants Committee in attracting research and development (R&D) talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. As at the end of February 2024, over 90 nominations for outstanding scholars have been supported. 57 have already taken up their posts in Hong Kong. Details of these scholars are provided in **Annex**. The remaining scholars will be arriving gradually. Under the Scheme, the Research Talent Hub has subsidised nearly 140 relevant research team members. We do not maintain other statistical information about the research team members.

The Scheme provides remuneration subsidy to a university employing a selected scholar, which is capped at 50% of the actual remuneration offered by the university and subject to an annual ceiling of \$1 million for each selected scholar, over a period of up to 5 years. Under the Scheme, a selected scholar can receive subsidy from the Research Talent Hub for recruiting up to 4 research team members to assist in his/her R&D work over a period of up to 3 years. If needed, a selected scholar may apply for subsidy from The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for setting up a laboratory. The Scheme was estimated to cost \$2 billion. As at end-February 2024, about \$1.62 billion has been spent and committed.

c.

Launched in July 2020, the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS; formerly known as the Re-industrialisation Funding Scheme) under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) aims to subsidise manufacturers, on a 1 (Government): 2 (enterprise) matching basis, to set up new smart production lines in Hong Kong. The funding ceiling is one-third of the total cost of the approved project or \$15 million, whichever is lower.

As at March 2024, 38 applications were supported by the NIFS Vetting Committee (Vetting Committee), involving 62 production lines, with a total project costs of approximately \$966 million. The total funding amount of the NIFS was about \$271 million. The project costs involved in the 38 applications supported by the Vetting Committee are set out as follows:

| <b>Year</b>  | <b>Number of applicant companies</b> | <b>Total Project Cost (approximate amount)</b> | <b>Funding Amount (approximate amount)</b> |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| 2020-2021    | 6                                    | \$130 million                                  | \$39 million                               |
| 2021-2022    | 11                                   | \$381 million                                  | \$94 million                               |
| 2022-2023    | 10                                   | \$350 million                                  | \$103 million                              |
| 2023-2024    | 11                                   | \$105 million                                  | \$35 million                               |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>38<sup>Note</sup></b>             | <b>\$966 million</b>                           | <b>\$271 million</b>                       |

Note: As at March 2024, a total of 38 applications were supported by the Vetting Committee, of which 32 have signed the funding agreements. The relevant applicants and industrial sectors of the projects are: Chewy International Foods (rice packaging), CK One (food processing), So Li Ah (coupler friction welding for steel reinforcement bars), Hong Kong Beer (beer production), Nanoshields Technology (electrospinning for nanofiber filter

material), Nissin Foods (cup and bowl-type instant noodle products), Casetagram (CASETiFY production line), 2 Plus 3 (HK) Industrial (vegetable juice), Luen Tai Hong Kong Fresh Liquid Eggs (fresh liquid egg products), Focus Industries (nanofiber HEPA filter materials), Johnson Electric Industrial Manufactory (resin-bonded graphite bushing manufacturing), Lee Kum Kee (Hong Kong) Foods (oyster sauce manufacturing), Smart (Technology) Global (rebar precast parts), Catalo Natural Health Foods (supplements), Vita Green Pharmaceutical (HK) (tea capsules), Amoy Food (sauce sachets), Johnson Electric International (smart carbon brush), Luk Yeung Restaurant (mooncake products), Ping's Production (soup, sauce, food and beverage), Wai Yuen Tong Medicine (Chinese medicine production), American Unicorn Laboratories (oral solid dosage), Profit Royal Pharmaceutical (nano-coated fabric and nanofiber respirator), Golden Resources (rice packaging), Sew Solution (knitwear), Bo Charity Foundation (lunchbox, soup, meat and vegetable), Nanodocks Technology (electrospinning for nanofiber filter material), J & S Printing (smart post-printing production line), Cat Dynamics (whisky production), People Printing Press (printing), Nestle Hong Kong (ice-cream cone packaging), Han-Fang Chinese Medicine (Chinese medicine packaging) and Nin Jiom Medicine (herbal product packaging). For the other 6 applications which the Vetting Committee has agreed to support, the Secretariat is following up on the comments of the Vetting Committee on the applications with the applicant companies, so as to finalise the details of their plans and the contents of the funding agreements. After the applicant company concerned signed the funding agreement, the information of the project will be uploaded to the website of the ITF for public viewing.

d.

Since the launch of the NIFS, as at March 2024, the 32 projects which have signed the funding agreements have successfully promoted the setting up of 54 new smart production lines, covering industries such as food manufacturing and processing (including health food), textiles and clothing, construction materials, medical device, nanofiber materials, pharmaceutical production (including Chinese medicine), electronics, printing, and equipment and parts, involving \$656 million of private investments and creating more than 300 employment opportunities.

We will continue to review the operation of the NIFS and introduce enhancement measures in a timely manner. For example, an enhancement measure under the NIFS has been launched in January this year to allow an applicant enterprise to carry out up to 3 projects concurrently with a total maximum funding of \$45 million.

**Global STEM Professorship Scheme  
Selected scholars who have arrived in Hong Kong**

|    | <b>English name</b>  | <b>Employing university</b>                        | <b>Year of arrival in Hong Kong</b> |
|----|----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1  | Prof XIE Ting        | The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology | 2020                                |
| 2  | Prof CHEN Qing-yan   | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2021                                |
| 3  | Prof Takashi HIBIKI  | City University of Hong Kong                       | 2021                                |
| 4  | Prof HO Tsung-yi     | The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 2021                                |
| 5  | Dr JIANG Hai-bo      | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2021                                |
| 6  | Prof Kazuhiro KOSUGE | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2021                                |
| 7  | Prof LI Lain-jong    | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2021                                |
| 8  | Prof LUK Kam-biu     | The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology | 2021                                |
| 9  | Prof REN Yang        | City University of Hong Kong                       | 2021                                |
| 10 | Prof WENG Qi-hao     | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2021                                |
| 11 | Prof YAN Ren-bin     | The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 2021                                |
| 12 | Prof YIN Xiao-bo     | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2021                                |
| 13 | Prof ZHANG Wei-xiong | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2021                                |
| 14 | Prof ZHOU Xiao-fang  | The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology | 2021                                |
| 15 | Prof Kyongtae BAE    | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2022                                |
| 16 | Dr CHAU Lap-pui      | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2022                                |
| 17 | Prof Stephen DALTON  | The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 2022                                |
| 18 | Prof FANG Xuanlai    | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2022                                |
| 19 | Prof FANG Yuguang    | City University of Hong Kong                       | 2022                                |
| 20 | Prof JIN Bang-ti     | The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 2022                                |
| 21 | Prof LEE Tu-chung    | City University of Hong Kong                       | 2022                                |
| 22 | Prof LIANG Shunlin   | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2022                                |

|    | <b>English name</b>   | <b>Employing university</b>                        | <b>Year of arrival in Hong Kong</b> |
|----|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 23 | Prof LIU Ai-qun       | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2022                                |
| 24 | Prof LOH Kian-ping    | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2022                                |
| 25 | Prof LONG Yi          | The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 2022                                |
| 26 | Prof MAO Chuan-bin    | The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 2022                                |
| 27 | Prof PAN Jialin       | The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 2022                                |
| 28 | Prof David PARKER     | Hong Kong Baptist University                       | 2022                                |
| 29 | Dr SU Hui             | The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology | 2022                                |
| 30 | Prof WANG Xun-gai     | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2022                                |
| 31 | Prof WU Tao           | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2022                                |
| 32 | Prof XU Dong          | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2022                                |
| 33 | Prof ZENG Xiaocheng   | City University of Hong Kong                       | 2022                                |
| 34 | Prof ZHAO Xiao-lin    | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2022                                |
| 35 | Prof ZHOU Qiang       | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2022                                |
| 36 | Prof BU Guojun        | The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology | 2023                                |
| 37 | Prof Patrick BUTAYE   | City University of Hong Kong                       | 2023                                |
| 38 | Prof DAI Hong-jie     | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2023                                |
| 39 | Prof Ahmed ELGHAZOULI | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2023                                |
| 40 | Prof HE Mingguang     | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2023                                |
| 41 | Prof HU Shiyan        | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2023                                |
| 42 | Prof Thomas KNOPFEL   | Hong Kong Baptist University                       | 2023                                |
| 43 | Prof LI Jianming      | Hong Kong Baptist University                       | 2023                                |
| 44 | Prof LI Mo            | The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology | 2023                                |
| 45 | Prof LIN Xiaojun      | The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 2023                                |
| 46 | Prof LIU Bin          | City University of Hong Kong                       | 2023                                |

|    | <b>English name</b>  | <b>Employing university</b>                        | <b>Year of arrival in Hong Kong</b> |
|----|----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 47 | Prof LOU Xiong Wen   | City University of Hong Kong                       | 2023                                |
| 48 | Prof MA Yi           | The University of Hong Kong                        | 2023                                |
| 49 | Prof Andreas MOELLER | The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 2023                                |
| 50 | Dr OUYANG Wanli      | The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 2023                                |
| 51 | Dr QIU Anqi          | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2023                                |
| 52 | Prof SUNG Wing Kin   | The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | 2023                                |
| 53 | Prof WANG Xin        | City University of Hong Kong                       | 2023                                |
| 54 | Prof XIE Yuan        | The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology | 2023                                |
| 55 | Prof YUAN Zhiguo     | City University of Hong Kong                       | 2023                                |
| 56 | Prof ZHANG Yong      | City University of Hong Kong                       | 2023                                |
| 57 | Prof Janelle YORKE   | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | 2024                                |

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB027**

**(Question Serial No. 3505)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated under the Programme that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to implement the “Global STEM Professorship Scheme” to strengthen support for local universities to attract world-renowned STEM scholars as well as their teams to work in Hong Kong. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- a. What were the manpower and expenditures involved in the various initiatives to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education in primary schools, secondary schools and post-secondary institutions in the past 3 years?
- b. Regarding the Government’s support measures for STEM-related education in primary schools, secondary schools and post-secondary institutions in the past 2 years, what were the number of beneficiary students, as well as the manpower and expenditures involved?
- c. Further to the above question, will the Bureau regularly assess and review the effectiveness of the Scheme? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 46)

Reply:

The relevant government bureaux and departments have been adopting a multi-pronged approach to enlarge the talent pool for the innovation and technology (I&T) sector through nurturing, attracting and retaining talent with a series of initiatives. On nurturing talents, it is essential to cultivate students’ interest in I&T from a young age. The Education Bureau (EDB) has been stepping up the promotion of STEM/STEAM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics/Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) in primary and secondary schools as well as tertiary institutions by

implementing an array of support measures on STEM/STEAM education. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) has also launched various programmes to nurture I&T talents beyond the curriculum from primary school to university levels. Having coordinated the information provided by the EDB, the consolidated reply to the question is as follows:

**The EDB's** support measures to promote STEM/STEAM education include renewing curriculum, enhancing professional development of teachers, enriching student learning activities, as well as providing resources support for schools.

### ***Primary and secondary schools***

- EDB has been stepping up the promotion of STEAM education in primary and secondary schools through diversified strategies so as to strengthen students' interest and abilities in science, mathematics, and I&T, as well as cultivating their innovativeness. Major initiatives include renewing curriculum, enhancing professional development of teachers and providing resources support for schools. Currently, schools have been actively taking forward STEAM education. In general, teachers implement STEAM education through learning activities across subjects, such as project learning, thematic learning, as well as designs and inventions.
  
- EDB has all along been providing schools with various subventions, including the recurrent subvention under the Expanded/Operating Expenses Block Grant and relevant subject resources, to promote STEAM education. EDB has earmarked about \$200 million and provided each public sector and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) primary school with a one-off grant of \$350,000 in late March this year to support schools in kick-starting Primary Science. In addition, the EDB has been providing public sector and DSS schools with the recurrent Life-wide Learning Grant starting from the 2019/20 school year, with an annual provision of about \$900 million to support schools in organising more out-of-classroom experiential learning activities, including STEAM learning activities. Meanwhile, the Quality Education Fund (QEF) has included STEM/STEAM education as one of the priority themes and implemented the Dedicated Funding Programme for Publicly-funded Schools starting from the 2018/19 school year, under which schools may apply for funding to launch school-based curriculum development and/or student support measures, including the development of school-based STEM/STEAM education. From the 2018/19 to 2022/23 school years, the QEF has approved more than 1 000 projects related to Information Technology (IT) in education and STEM/STEAM education through the Priority Themes Funding Programme and the Dedicated Funding Programme for Publicly-funded Schools, with a total funding of over \$1 billion. In the meantime, QEF has allocated \$500 million for the development of e-learning ancillary facilities that meet local learning and teaching needs through co-operation between the education and business sector, with a view to further promoting STEAM education. There are in total of 22 projects funded under this programme. These projects have commenced in the beginning of the 2023/24 school year and involve a total funding of around \$240 million.

Looking ahead, the EDB will continue to step up the promotion of STEAM education with diversified strategies and supporting measures. It will also review the implementation of various initiatives, including renewing school curricula on STEAM, enhancing professional training for teachers on I&T and providing different resources supports to schools, so as to



foster students' ability in learning science, mathematics and technology, thereby promoting I&T learning for all.

With the exception of the above grants/funding programmes, the expenditure involved in the promotion of STEAM education in primary and secondary schools (including special schools) is subsumed under the overall expenditure of EDB and a breakdown is therefore not available.

### *Post-secondary institutions*

- On post-secondary institutions, the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities have been actively promoting STEM education in recent years. The major initiatives are as follows: in the 2022-25 triennium, more than 10 STEM-related undergraduate programmes will be introduced by the UGC-funded universities. They also offer innovative transdisciplinary programmes by infusing STEM elements into programmes from other disciplines, such as FinTech, ArtTech, Education Technology and Digital Humanities, so as to nurture STEM talents possessing transdisciplinary knowledge. Under the existing regime, the UGC allocates recurrent grants to the 8 UGC-funded universities in the form of a block grant so that they can flexibly deploy the grants to meet different expenditures. As such, the EDB cannot provide a breakdown on the expenditure for the promotion of STEM education.
- With the advent of generative artificial intelligence, innovative and breakthrough technologies have presented new challenges and enormous opportunities for transforming pedagogies and student learning experiences. Meanwhile, the widespread adoption of technologies, such as Web3, may pave way for closer academia-industry collaboration in offering more authentic learning experiences for students. While it is widely acknowledged that digital competency plays a significant role in economic restructuring, there is also growing awareness of the ethical and social issues arising from the use of innovative technologies. In this connection, the UGC announced the launch of the Fund for Innovative Technology-in-Education (FITE) with a funding allocation of \$100 million in June last year. The FITE aims to provide an impetus for universities to harness innovative and breakthrough technologies in transforming pedagogies and enriching student learning experiences, and to nurture a digitally competent and technologically responsible generation, for the future success of their students in the digital economy. The 8 UGC-funded universities are making use of the funding for about 100 new initiatives, covering (i) driving transformation in pedagogies, curriculum, assessment and student development; (ii) advancing digital competency for all; (iii) promoting technological social responsibilities and academic integrity; and (iv) fostering academia-industry collaboration for authentic learning experience. The initiatives under the FITE are expected to be completed in mid-2026.
- With regard to the self-financing post-secondary education sector, the EDB launched the Enhancement and Start-up Grant Scheme for Self-financing Post-secondary Education with a funding of \$1.26 billion in December 2020. It aims to support eligible self-financing post-secondary institutions to develop and enhance programmes that meet market needs but require high start-up costs, and help alleviate the institutions' need to fully recover the set-up costs from tuition fees, thus relieving the financial burden on students. In 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23, 3 STEM-related projects, 3 STEM-related projects and 2 STEM-related projects covering programmes in the areas of FinTech, ArtTech, I&T, building management and engineering, etc. were approved

respectively, involving a total grant of about \$55 million, about \$91 million and about \$57 million in each year respectively.

- Moreover, through the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors launched by the EDB, the Government subsidises students pursuing designated programmes and encourages the self-financing post-secondary education sector to offer programmes in selected disciplines, including STEM-related disciplines, to nurture talent in support of specific industries with keen demand for human resources. In the 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 (up to February 2024) academic years, the grants for the programmes relating to architecture and engineering, computer science, FinTech, as well as testing and certification were about \$78 million, about \$68 million and about \$130 million respectively.

In the long run, the EDB will build on the existing foundation of promoting STEM/STEAM education and strengthen collaboration with the I&T sector, post-secondary institutions, professional bodies and different policy bureaux to enhance the strategies for supporting STEAM education through a multi-pronged approach.

Meanwhile, **the ITIB** launched the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme, the “Knowing More About IT” Programme and the STEM Internship Scheme for primary, secondary and tertiary students to provide more support and promote I&T education beyond the curriculum.

- The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) launched the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme and the “Knowing More About IT” Programme in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 school years respectively to provide funding support for primary and secondary schools in organising IT-related extra-curricular activities. The 2 programmes, targeting all publicly-funded secondary schools and primary schools in Hong Kong respectively, have received overwhelming response from schools and relevant stakeholders since their launch in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 school years respectively. As of February 2024, more than 90% of secondary schools and primary schools have submitted applications, of which more than 480 secondary schools and more than 480 primary schools have their applications approved and the amount of funding involved is about \$385 million and \$164 million respectively. More than 370 000 students benefited from the related programmes. 8 posts in the OGCIO are actually involved in the work relating to the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme and the “Knowing More About IT” Programme.
- Moreover, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) launched the “STEM Internship Scheme” in 2020. As at end-January 2024, the Scheme has provided over 12 000 short-term internship opportunities to university students taking STEM-related programmes, involving a total funding of around \$300 million. The scheme was expanded in June 2023 to cover internship opportunities offered by the 5 government-funded Research and Development Centres and the Hong Kong Productivity Council to students studying STEM programmes at local and non-local universities (including the campuses at Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area established by designated local universities). The ITC implements and coordinates the scheme with its existing manpower, and no breakdown of the expenditure is available.

In addition, the Global STEM Professorship Scheme supports local universities funded by the UGC in attracting research and development (R&D) talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. As at the end of February 2024, over 90 nominations for outstanding scholars have been supported. About 60 outstanding scholars have taken up their posts in Hong Kong while the remaining will be arriving gradually. The Scheme was estimated to cost \$2 billion. As at end-February 2024, about \$1.62 billion has been spent and committed. The University Grants Committee Secretariat (UGC Secretariat) provides secretariat support for the Scheme. In 2023-24, the actual manpower involves 4 time-limited contract posts in the UGC Secretariat. The ITIB implements the work under the Scheme with its existing manpower and resources. The Government will maintain close liaison with the universities and review the implementation of the Scheme as and when appropriate. Meanwhile, taking into account the views of stakeholders, the Government launched the Sub-scheme for Visiting Professors on a pilot basis in January this year.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1842)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As regards the development of start-ups, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) whether there are any statistics on the Government's expenditure spent on Cyberport and the Science Park in support of the development of start-ups in each of the past 5 years;
- (2) in respect of the Cyberport Incubation Programme (CIP), (i) the number of applications received; (ii) the number of approved applications; (iii) the average amount of financial subsidy and rental subsidy granted to the approved applications and (iv) the average processing time for each application in each of the past 5 years;
- (3) the number of technology start-ups admitted to the CIP since its launch in 2005 by type of field, and among them, the respective numbers and percentages of those which have continued to operate upon completion of incubation for (i) 3 years or more; (ii) 5 years or more and (iii) 10 years or more;
- (4) the number of "unicorn" start-ups (i.e. unlisted start-ups with a valuation of US\$1 billion) incubated by Cyberport so far, as well as (i) the names of these start-ups; (ii) the nature of their businesses; (iii) the years they became "unicorns" and (iv) the awards and achievements obtained in recent years;
- (5) since the launch of (a) the Incubation Programme and (b) the Incu-Bio Programme in 2021, (i) the number of applications received; (ii) the number of approved applications; (iii) the average amount of funding support granted to the approved applications and (iv) the average processing time for each application respectively in each year;
- (6) the total numbers of technology start-ups participating in the above programmes launched by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Park Corporation (HKSTPC) since 2001 by type of field, and among them, the respective numbers and percentages of those

which have continued to operate upon successful graduation for (i) 3 years or more, (ii) 5 years or more and (iii) 10 years or more; and

- (7) the number of “unicorn” start-ups (i.e. unlisted start-ups with a valuation of US\$1 billion) incubated by the HKSTPC so far, as well as (i) the names of these start-ups; (ii) the nature of their businesses; (iii) the years they became “unicorns” and (iv) the awards and achievements obtained in recent years?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and Cyberport, as Hong Kong’s innovation and technology (I&T) flagships, have been committed to providing I&T start-ups with infrastructure, incubation programmes and one-stop support. Our reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

(1)

In the past 5 financial years (as at February 2024), HKSTPC’s expenditure on different I&T incubation programmes is tabulated below:

| <b>Financial Year</b>            | <b>Expenditure (\$ million)</b> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2019-20                          | 39.22                           |
| 2020-21                          | 122.53                          |
| 2021-22                          | 239.08                          |
| 2022-23                          | 339.73                          |
| 2023-24<br>(as at February 2024) | 451.1                           |

In the past 5 financial years (as at February 2024), Cyberport’s expenditure on public mission activities for supporting start-ups is tabulated below:

| <b>Financial Year</b>            | <b>Expenditure (\$ million)</b> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2019-20                          | 153.4                           |
| 2020-21                          | 187.5                           |
| 2021-22                          | 180.6                           |
| 2022-23                          | 186.7                           |
| 2023-24<br>(as at February 2024) | 163.7<br>(estimate)             |

(2)

The Cyberport Incubation Programme (CIP) provides each incubatee with funding up to \$500,000, which will be disbursed by stages upon completion of progress reviews. Successful enterprises can opt for incubation on-site or off-site, with the former offering rent-free office accommodation at Cyberport. Most of the graduated incubatees could receive the total funding of \$500,000. It normally takes about 2 months to process the applications

between close of application to result announcement. In the past 5 financial years (as at February 2024), the numbers of applications received and approved under the CIP (including the Cyberport Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups) are as follows:

| <b>Financial Year</b>            | <b>Number of Applications Received</b> | <b>Number of Applications Approved</b> |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| 2019-20                          | 607                                    | 129                                    |
| 2020-21                          | 649                                    | 130                                    |
| 2021-22                          | 465                                    | 130                                    |
| 2022-23                          | 460                                    | 129                                    |
| 2023-24<br>(as at February 2024) | 750                                    | 99                                     |

(3)

As at February 2024, 1 254 technology start-ups have been admitted to the CIP, covering the following business areas:

| <b>Business Area</b>  | <b>Number of Enterprises</b> |
|---|------------------------------|
| Smart living (including E-commerce, education technology and health technology, etc.) | 535                          |
| Financial technology  | 256                          |
| Digital entertainment   | 147                          |
| Artificial intelligence (AI)/ Big data  | 97                           |
| Blockchain  | 61                           |
| Cybersecurity   | 9                            |
| Others  | 149                          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>1 254</b>                 |

Of the 559 enterprises which have graduated from the CIP for 3 years or more, 463 (over 80%) remain in operation. Cyberport does not maintain information on the respective numbers of start-ups which have continued to operate for 5 and 10 years or more upon completion of the incubation programme.

(4) and (7)

According to the research on Hong Kong unicorns conducted by Invest Hong Kong, the HKSTPC and Cyberport have by now witnessed the birth of 9 unicorns (i.e. unlisted enterprises with a valuation of over US\$1 billion), among them 2 have been listed. The companies concerned and their business nature, the years they became unicorns, and their awards and achievements obtained in recent years are tabulated at **Annexes 1 and 2**.

(5)

The Incubation Programme and the Incu-Bio Programme under HKSTPC provide each incubatee with funding up to \$1.29 million and \$6 million respectively, which will be disbursed by stages upon completion of milestone assessments. Most of the graduated incubatees could receive the maximum amount. The average processing time for each

application under the two incubation programmes are 45 days and 110 days respectively. In the past 3 financial years (as at February 2024), the numbers of applications received and approved under the two incubation programmes are as follows:

| Financial Year                   | Incubation Programme            |                                 | Incu-Bio Programme              |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                                  | Number of eligible applications | Number of applications approved | Number of eligible applications | Number of applications approved |
| 2021-22                          | 191                             | 123                             | 27                              | 13                              |
| 2022-23                          | 274                             | 150                             | 26                              | 19                              |
| 2023-24<br>(as at February 2024) | 364                             | 173                             | 26                              | 8                               |

(6)

As at February 2024, 1 744 technology start-ups have been admitted to the HKSTPC's incubation programmes, covering the following business areas:

| Business Areas                            | Number of Enterprises |
|---|-----------------------|
| Information and communications technology | 1 050                 |
| Electronics                               | 270                   |
| Material and precision engineering        | 179                   |
| Green technology                          | 114                   |
| Biomedical technology                     | 113                   |
| Others                                    | 18                    |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>1 744</b>          |

Of the 220 start-ups which had graduated from the HKSTPC's incubation programmes for 3 years, 196 (nearly 90%) were still in operation. HKSTPC does not maintain information on the respective numbers of start-ups which have continued to operate for 5 and 10 years or more upon completion of the incubation programmes.

**Hong Kong unicorns among the tenants, current incubatees and graduated incubatees of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (cumulative)**

Note: The list is arranged in alphabetical order of company name.

|   | <b>Company name</b> | <b>Nature of business</b>  | <b>Year of acquiring unicorn status</b> | <b>Recent awards and achievements</b>   |
|---|---------------------|--|---|---|
| 1 | Lalamove            | Smart logistics services   | 2019                                    | Its business covers over 40 cities in Asia and Latin America, as well as 350 cities in the Mainland.  |
| 2 | SenseTime           | Artificial intelligence (AI) solution development for various fields such as business, smart cities and smart vehicles | 2018                                    | It was listed on the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited in 2021, with a presence in a number of countries including the Mainland, Japan, Singapore and Korea currently. |
| 3 | SmartMore           | Computer vision and AI technology development  | 2021                                    | It has served a cumulative total of over 200 top-notch enterprises in the industry.   |



**Hong Kong unicorns among the tenants, current incubatees and graduated incubatees of Cyberport (cumulative)**

Note: The list is arranged in alphabetical order of company name.

|   | <b>Company name</b> | <b>Nature of business</b>   | <b>Year of acquiring unicorn status</b> | <b>Recent awards and achievements</b>   |
|---|---------------------|---|---|---|
| 1 | Animoca Brands      | Mobile application and game development                           | 2021                                    | It possesses an investment portfolio of over 450 entertainment-related companies (gaming, sports, art and culture, etc.), attracting cumulative capital of over US\$800 million.  |
| 2 | GOGOX               | Provision of logistics services by matching customers and drivers | 2017                                    | It was listed on the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited in 2022. With approximately 6.5 million registered drivers in total, it has expanded its business from Hong Kong to Singapore, South Korea, India, Vietnam and Mainland China, covering 340 cities. |
| 3 | Hashkey             | Provision of financial services for digital assets                | 2024                                    | Its virtual asset trading platform is the first licensed trading platform authorised by the Securities and Futures Commission to develop business targeted at retail users in Hong Kong.  |

|   | <b>Company name</b> | <b>Nature of business</b>   | <b>Year of acquiring unicorn status</b> | <b>Recent awards and achievements</b>  |
|---|---------------------|---|---|--|
| 4 | Klook               | A one-stop in-destination travel activity booking platform providing a series of travel information to enable users to explore and book in advance attractions and special activities | 2018                                    | It obtained financing of over US\$200 million in December 2023, with a total booking amount reaching US\$3 billion in 2023.  |
| 5 | TNG                 | Provision of electronic payment tools for consumers   | 2018                                    | As a licensed institution for stored value facilities, it has expanded its business from Hong Kong to Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, India, Japan, Mainland China, etc. |
| 6 | WeLab               | A virtual bank offering customised and smart banking services to its clients  | 2017                                    | It possesses nearly 50 million users and over 700 corporate clients. As at March 2021, its financing scale has exceeded US\$580 million.   |

-End-

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB029**

**(Question Serial No. 0562)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will continue to oversee the operation of the “Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund” (SIE Fund) to provide support for more social entrepreneurs. Please inform this council:

- 1) of the total number of innovative projects funded in the past 3 years, with a breakdown by service nature;
- 2) of the number of beneficiaries in the past 3 years (broken down by beneficiary group);
- 3) how impact assessments are made for the funded innovative projects to ensure the operational effectiveness of the SIE Fund.

Asked by: Hon LAM Lam, Nixie (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

- 1) and 2) The Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) implements innovative programmes with different features through the intermediaries. By leveraging their experience and networks, we can find and nurture budding social entrepreneurs who seek to innovate by integrating social impact into the projects and businesses they create. In the past 3 years (2021 to 2023), 249 projects were funded under the SIE Fund’s innovative programmes, benefiting over 64 000 people in total. Funded projects covers a wide range of service areas and beneficiaries. The service areas mainly include education and learning, job training and opportunities for the disadvantaged, healthcare and community participation, etc. The major beneficiaries include children and

youth, the elderlies, persons with disabilities and low-income families, etc. The breakdown is as follows:

Classified by Service Nature

| Service Nature                                       | Number of Projects |
|--|--------------------|
| Healthcare, Food, Living, Transport                  | 69                 |
| Job Training and Opportunities for the Disadvantaged | 70                 |
| Education and Learning                               | 74                 |
| Community Participation                              | 24                 |
| Others   | 12                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>249</b>         |

Classified by Major Beneficiaries

| Beneficiaries             | Number of persons |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Children and youth        | 25 837            |
| Persons with Disabilities | 10 229            |
| Low-income families       | 4 576             |
| Elderlies                 | 13 373            |
| People of diverse race    | 4 366             |
| Others                    | 5 806             |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>64 187</b>     |

- 3) To assess the performance and impact of the SIE Fund and the evolving development of different ongoing and new initiatives driven, the SIE Fund commissioned the University of Hong Kong to conduct an Evaluation Study of the SIE Fund to evaluate the performance of the initiatives of the SIE Fund in achieving its objectives. In a recent report, the research team affirmed the SIE Fund's adoption of innovative approach for poverty alleviation. In addition to providing funding for innovative projects, the SIE Fund has also put considerable efforts into building the capacity of social entrepreneurs and establishing platforms which foster cross-sector collaboration to create bigger impacts out of social investments. The innovative projects supported by the SIE Fund turned each dollar of grant into more than \$5 worth of impact for society, enabling resources to yield higher value.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB030**

**(Question Serial No. 2708)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In 2023, did the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau engage external lawyers for consultancy services in accordance with the Stores and Procurement Regulations of the Government without first seeking assistance from the Department of Justice? If so, what were the nature of such services and the expenditures incurred?

Asked by: Hon LAM San-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau did not engage external lawyers for consultancy services in 2023.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1764)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government will develop life and health technology and set up life and health technology research institutes. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of: (1) the business coverage, staffing level, output value, etc. of life and health technology research institutes; and (2) the allocation mechanism for the \$6 billion funding for subsidising local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations?

Asked by: Hon LAM Shun-chiu, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to various parts of the question is set out below:

As announced in the 2023-24 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government will allocate \$6 billion to provide subsidies for local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations to set up life and health technology research institutes (LHTRIs). The purpose is to facilitate relevant research and development (R&D) activities and transformation of R&D outcomes, and to attract leading innovation and technology talent and research teams around the world to Hong Kong.

Subsequently, the Government worked on finalising the proposal on the subsidy programme for LHTRIs, and consulted the stakeholders in the course. On 20 February 2024, the Government consulted and secured support from the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology. The Government plans to seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) in the second quarter of 2024. After

FC's funding approval is obtained, the Government will invite applications from universities interested in setting up LHTRIs.

Under the current proposal, an applicant institution must be a local university funded by the University Grants Committee with medical school and/or is offering life and health disciplines. The LHTRI should engage in basic research, translational research as well as transformation of R&D outcomes on themes falling within the field of life and health-related technologies. The themes may include but are not limited to cell and gene therapy, bioinformatics and biology, biomedical engineering, advanced therapy, medical diagnostics, drug and vaccine development, and clinical trial. In the application submitted, the institution should set out clearly relevant information of a proposed LHTRI, including the objectives, expected deliverables, implementation plan, budget and performance indicators, etc. The successful applicant institution is required to enter into an agreement with the Government and the LHTRI is required to commence operation within 18 months from the signing of the agreement.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1765)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As stated in the Budget Speech, the Government will set up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP). In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee on the following:

- (1) how the \$2 billion allocated for the development of the *InnoHK* research clusters will be distributed, including the functions and projects to be developed, the expenditure and manpower involved, and the implementation timetable; and
- (2) the implementation timetable and estimated expenditure for the InnoLife Healthtech Hub for the next 3 years.

Asked by: Hon LAM Shun-chiu, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to various parts of the question is set out below:

Life and health technology industry will be the key direction of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development in the future. As announced in the 2024-25 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government will allocate \$2.2 billion to support setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Loop. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to take forward such work with existing manpower and resources. Please refer to the Estimates of "Head 135 - Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau" for details.



To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and to conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines, the Government will allocate \$2 billion to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc.

The HSITP Limited is progressing with the construction of 8 buildings in Batch 1 of the HSITP. Of these, 4 are wet-lab enabled buildings to tie in with the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Upon completion of the Batch 1 buildings in the HSITP progressively, research teams and enterprises related to the life and health industry are expected to move in. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

- End -

**ITIB033**

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1769)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that during the first phase of the early and pilot implementation of the “Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)”, the healthcare sectors have been invited to participate so that both places may leverage cross-boundary data with a smoother flow. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of: (1) the work plan, timetable and estimated expenditure for the promotion of cross-boundary medical collaboration (e.g. developing cross-boundary mutual access to medical records) under the Contract in 2024-25; and (2) how the Bureau will evaluate the outcomes of pilot implementation in the first phase (including whether key performance indicators will be set) and what tools will be employed to assess the effectiveness?

Asked by: Hon LAM Shun-chiu, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Cyberspace Administration of China jointly announced the facilitation measure on the “Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)” (the GBA Standard Contract) in December 2023 to foster the secure and orderly cross-boundary flow of personal information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). The GBA Standard Contract, to be adopted on a voluntary basis, serves to facilitate and streamline the compliance arrangements for the cross-boundary flow of personal information from the Mainland cities in the GBA to Hong Kong. The GBA Standard Contract, on one hand, facilitates enterprises to reduce their compliance costs of cross-boundary flow of personal information thus promoting the provision of cross-boundary services in the GBA. On the other hand, it presses ahead the

development of digital economy in the GBA and fosters Hong Kong's better integration into the overall national development.

The “early and pilot implementation” arrangement for the GBA Standard Contract was launched in end-2023. The first phase of implementation invited participation from the healthcare, banking and credit referencing sectors which have greater demand for cross-boundary services. As of mid-March 2024, we have received a total of about 100 Expressions of Interest with about one third came from the healthcare sector, suggesting that the facilitation measure has been well received by the industry. We plan to review the arrangement in light of its implementation in mid-2024, and refine relevant details in due course with a view to extending the facilitation measure to different business sectors in the GBA, hence fostering the provision of more cross-boundary services to benefit a wider scope of businesses and members of the public.

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer is responsible for the implementation and coordination of the facilitation measure, and the relevant estimated expenditure in 2024-25 is about \$26 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3831)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As mentioned in the Budget Speech, the Government has reviewed how to adopt an orderly and phased approach in developing the Northern Metropolis. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the amount of funding earmarked for the innovation and technology related projects in the Northern Metropolis (such as funds for the development of supporting facilities and for enterprise development)?

Asked by: Hon LAM Shun-chiu, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

According to the Northern Metropolis Action Agenda published by the Development Bureau in end-2023, the Northern Metropolis will be the foothold for Hong Kong's strategic development, and the new engine for Hong Kong's economy to scale new heights. The Northern Metropolis can be divided into 4 major zones, namely the High-end Professional Services and Logistics Hub, the Innovation and Technology (I&T) Zone, the Boundary Commerce and Industry Zone, and the Blue and Green Recreation, Tourism and Conservation Circle, each with different strategic positioning and development theme.

The I&T land in the Northern Metropolis mainly includes about 300 hectares of such land (including the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (hereinafter referred to as the "HSITP") in Lok Ma Chau) in San Tin Technopole, and about 15 hectares of land in Lau Fau Shan for the development of a digital technology hub, digital infrastructure facilities and supercomputing facilities.

In particular, the HSITP will be developed in 2 phases from west to east. The Phase 1 planning has been completed. In 2021, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved a funding of \$14.3 billion for the HKSAR Government to construct road networks

connecting the Loop and relevant infrastructure, and an injection of \$18.1 billion into the HSITP Limited for the construction of 8 buildings in Batch 1 of Phase 1 and in support of its operation. The first 3 buildings can be completed progressively from the end of 2024 onwards. The HSITP Limited is pressing ahead with the relevant work of leasing and business attraction by using its existing resources. Moreover, the HKSAR Government has announced that it would first release about 5 hectares of land with community isolation and treatment facilities erected thereon for commencing the construction of the remaining 5 buildings in Batch 1 of the HSITP as early as possible. In addition, in order to promote the development of life and health industry in Hong Kong, the InnoLife Healthtech Hub will be set up in the HSITP to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines. To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP, the Government will allocate \$2 billion from the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop, and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is conducting a consultancy study on the I&T industry development plan for the I&T land outside of the Loop, with a view to recommending specific I&T uses in the I&T value chain (i.e. upstream (research and development), midstream (prototype or application development) or downstream (manufacturing) processes) for development on different land parcels in the area, as well as requisite infrastructure and supporting facilities, etc. The study is expected to be completed in 2024.

Moreover, taking into account Lau Fau Shan's proximity to Qianhai just across Deep Bay, the Development Bureau earlier proposed the development of a digital technology hub in the Lau Fau Shan area to capitalise on advanced technology for promoting integration of new and traditional economies, and to serve as an incubation base for young talent and start-ups. Cyberport has been invited to look into the establishment of the digital technology hub at Lau Fau Shan. The Government has initially earmarked about 15 hectares of land therein for the development of a business and technology park. Cyberport will commence a further study in 2024 to ascertain the details of the proposed development at Lau Fau Shan.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1806)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that \$6 billion will be used to set up life and health technology research institutes. Will the Government inform this Committee of the progress of the initiative, including the number of applications received, and whether there is any specific timetable and there are any targets for the transformation of research and development outcomes?

Asked by: Hon LAM Tzit-yuen, David (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

The Government consulted and secured support from the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology on 20 February 2024 on the proposed subsidy programme for the life and health technology research institutes (LHTRIs). The Government plans to seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) in the second quarter of 2024. After FC's funding approval is obtained, the Government will invite applications from universities interested in setting up LHTRIs.

Under the current proposal, an applicant institution must be a local university funded by the University Grants Committee with medical school and/or is offering life and health disciplines. The LHTRI should engage in basic research, translational research as well as transformation of research and development outcomes on themes falling within the field of life and health-related technologies. The themes may include but are not limited to cell and gene therapy, bioinformatics and biology, biomedical engineering, advanced therapy, medical diagnostics, drug and vaccine development, and clinical trial. In the application submitted, the institution should set out clearly relevant information of a proposed LHTRI, including the objectives, expected deliverables, implementation plan and performance indicators, etc. The successful applicant institution is required to enter into an agreement with the

Government and the LHTRI is required to commence operation within 18 months from the signing of the agreement.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2026)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

What is the estimated provision earmarked by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau for attracting enterprises to set up their businesses in Hong Kong? Are there detailed plans on the special measures for attracting enterprises and the time schedule?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chi-pang (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau, in collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, has been reaching out to enterprises from the Mainland and overseas, with a view to actively attracting and assisting high-potential or representative, high value-added innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. We have been taking forward the aforementioned work with existing manpower and resources, and do not have a breakdown of the expenditure involved in individual work items. In the coming year, we will continue to reach out to strategic enterprises to discuss with them and provide them with appropriate assistance, as well as attracting high-potential or representative I&T enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong through different measures. Relevant initiatives include:

- Through the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme, provide each project which sets up smart production line in Hong Kong with up to \$15 million subsidy on a matching basis. The Government announced in the 2023 Policy Address that each company could conduct a maximum of 3 projects under the Scheme at any one time, i.e. an enterprise can receive a total maximum subsidy of \$45 million. This arrangement has been implemented since 8 January 2024.



- Launch the \$10 billion “New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme” (NIAS) within this year to provide each strategic enterprise (i.e. in the fields of life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, and advanced manufacturing and new energy technology) with funding support for the set-up of new smart production facilities in Hong Kong on a matching basis of 1 (government) : 2 (enterprise). The funding amount will range from a minimum of \$100 million to a maximum of \$200 million.
- Enhance the Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) by lifting the local employment requirement, extending the validity period of the quota to 2 years and expanding the coverage to more emerging technology areas. Besides, the Government has proposed to allow enterprises participating in the NIAS to flexibly employ non-local technical personnel equipped with the skills and experience required in setting up and operating large-scale smart production facilities under the TechTAS-NIAS. We will allot quotas to these enterprises for importing technical personnel, so that they can take forward their plans to procure, install and operate the necessary machinery and equipment in Hong Kong.
- Enhance the Research Talent Hub (RTH) Scheme by increasing the subsidies provided for research institutions and I&T enterprises for employing research talents to conduct research and development. The maximum monthly allowance for bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degree holders has been increased to HK\$20,000, HK\$23,000 and HK\$35,000 respectively. Research talents with a doctoral degree will be further provided with a living allowance. The Government has also proposed that in addition to the quotas of engaging 4 research talents for a total engagement period of 144 months under the existing RTH, companies applying for the NIAS may engage an additional 36 research talents for a total engagement period of 3 years on a matching basis of 1 (government) : 1 (enterprise) under the RTH-NIAS.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2037)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

For the \$100 million set aside under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund to take forward digital inclusion initiatives, are there any specific work plans? How will the elderly be drawn to participate? Given the elderly's weaker learning abilities, does the Government have any measures in place to ensure that the initiatives can really help the elderly integrate into the digital era?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chi-pang (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

The Government plans to allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) to subsidise non-governmental organisations to set up community-based help desks at suitable locations (e.g. community centres) to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elderlies aged 60 or above in Hong Kong, particularly the singleton or doubleton elderlies, in the coming three years. Apart from smartphone operation and the use of digital government services (e.g. iAM Smart and other common government mobile applications), we also intend to cover topics such as online shopping, electronic payment and cyber security in the programme, with a view to enhancing the elderlies' capability in adopting digital technologies. Experienced staff (or volunteers) will station at the community-based help desks to provide technical support tailored to the specific needs of the elderlies, so that they can enjoy the benefits brought about by digital services. We expect the programme to benefit at least 50 000 elderlies, and by mid-2024 at the earliest, invite project proposals from institutions/ organisations through open invitation, with the first batch of programme commencing in the fourth quarter of 2024.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2038)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It was proposed last year that life and health technology research institutes would be set up. Will the Government provide a specific implementation timetable, a plan for the use of \$6 billion, details of the work progress and of the various collaborating universities and organisations which have been provided with subsidies?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chi-pang (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

As announced in the 2023-24 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government will allocate \$6 billion to provide subsidies for local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations to set up life and health technology research institutes (LHTRIs). The purpose is to facilitate relevant research and development (R&D) activities and transformation of R&D outcomes, and to attract leading innovation and technology talent and research teams around the world to Hong Kong.

Subsequently, the Government worked on finalising the proposal on the subsidy programme for LHTRIs, and consulted the stakeholders in the course. On 20 February 2024, the Government consulted and secured support from the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology. The Government plans to seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) in the second quarter of 2024. After FC's funding approval is obtained, the Government will invite applications from universities interested in setting up LHTRIs.

Under the current proposal, an applicant institution must be a local university funded by the University Grants Committee with medical school and/or is offering life and health

disciplines. The LHTRI should engage in basic research, translational research as well as transformation of R&D outcomes on themes falling within the field of life and health-related technologies. The themes may include but are not limited to cell and gene therapy, bioinformatics and biology, biomedical engineering, advanced therapy, medical diagnostics, drug and vaccine development, and clinical trial. In the application submitted, the institution should set out clearly relevant information of a proposed LHTRI, including the objectives, expected deliverables, implementation plan, budget and performance indicators, etc. The successful applicant institution is required to enter into an agreement with the Government and the LHTRI is required to commence operation within 18 months from the signing of the agreement.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2042)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Does the Government have plans to make provision for subsidising training and exchange activities between local tertiary institutions and new research teams in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) after the establishment of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub to encourage the development of the HSITP while providing local talents with more training opportunities?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chi-pang (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

Life and health technology industry will be the key direction of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development in the future. To promote the development of this industry, the InnoLife Healthtech Hub will be set up in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) to attract top-notch research teams and talent from the Mainland and overseas to collaborate with local researchers, to conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines.

To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP, the Government will allocate \$2 billion to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc.

The HSITP Limited is progressing with the construction of 8 buildings in Batch 1 of the HSITP. Of these, 4 are wet-lab enabled buildings to tie in with the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Upon completion of the Batch 1 buildings in the HSITP progressively, research teams and enterprises related to the life and health industry are expected to move in. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact

arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB040**

**(Question Serial No. 0309)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government proposes that \$6 billion be used to set up life and health technology research institutes and plans to set up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park. It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that both measures mainly aim to attract innovation and technology enterprises and talents around the world to settle in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the major functions, responsibilities and detailed distribution of business among these life and health technology research institutes and the InnoLife Healthtech Hub;
2. the earliest time these institutes and the Hub come into operation, the estimated manpower establishment and operating expenses in each financial year; and
3. the estimated number of scientific research enterprises, teams and talents attracted to settle in Hong Kong each year and whether key performance indicators will be set in this regard?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to various parts of the question is set out below:

Life and health technology industry will be the key direction of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development in the future. As announced in the 2023-24 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government will allocate \$6 billion to provide subsidies for local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations to set up life and health technology research institutes (LHTRIs). The purpose is to facilitate relevant research and development (R&D) activities and transformation of R&D outcomes, and to attract leading innovation and

technology talent and research teams around the world to Hong Kong. As announced in the 2024-25 Budget, the Government will allocate \$2.2 billion from the aforementioned earmarked funding to support setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Loop. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to take forward such work with existing manpower and resources. Please refer to the Estimates of “Head 135 - Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau” for details.

### Life and Health Technology Research Institutes

The Government consulted and secured support from the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology on 20 February 2024 on the proposed subsidy programme for LHTRIs. The Government plans to seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) in the second quarter of 2024. After FC’s funding approval is obtained, the Government will invite applications from universities interested in setting up LHTRIs.

Under the current proposal, an applicant institution must be a local university funded by the University Grants Committee with medical school and/or is offering life and health disciplines. The LHTRI must adopt cross-universities/institutions and multi-disciplinary approaches to foster long-term R&D collaboration among local universities and top-notch universities/research institutions/research teams from the Mainland and overseas, and to engage in basic research, translational research as well as transformation of R&D outcomes on themes falling within the field of life and health-related technologies. The themes may include but are not limited to cell and gene therapy, bioinformatics and biology, biomedical engineering, advanced therapy, medical diagnostics, drug and vaccine development, and clinical trial. In the application submitted, the institution should set out clearly relevant information of a proposed LHTRI, including the objectives, expected deliverables, implementation plan, manpower and resources commitment, budget and performance indicators, etc. The successful applicant institution is required to enter into an agreement with the Government and the LHTRI is required to commence operation within 18 months from the signing of the agreement.

### InnoLife Healthtech Hub

In addition, to foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and to conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines, the Government will allocate \$2 billion to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc.

The HSITP Limited is progressing with the construction of 8 buildings in Batch 1 of the HSITP. Of these, 4 are wet-lab enabled buildings to tie in with the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Upon completion of the Batch 1 buildings in the HSITP progressively, research teams and enterprises related to the life and health industry are expected to move in. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1611)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 104 of the Budget Speech that the Government will allocate \$100 million under the relevant fund to provide elderly people with digital training courses and technical support in the next 3 years. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the funding distribution and detailed plan concerning the allocation; and
2. further to the above, whether and how the authority will assess the effectiveness of the initiative?

Asked by: Hon LEE Hoey Simon (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

1. The Government plans to allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) to subsidise non-governmental organisations to set up community-based help desks at suitable locations (e.g. community centres) to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elderlies aged 60 or above in Hong Kong, particularly the singleton or doubleton elderlies, in the coming three years. Apart from smartphone operation and the use of digital government services (e.g. iAM Smart and other common government mobile applications), we also intend to cover topics such as online shopping, electronic payment and cyber security in the programme, with a view to enhancing the elderlies' capability in adopting digital technologies. Experienced staff (or volunteers) will station at the community-based help desks to provide technical support tailored to the specific needs of the elderlies, so that they can enjoy the benefits brought about by digital services. We expect the programme to benefit at least 50 000

elderlies, and by mid-2024 at the earliest, invite project proposals from institutions/ organisations through open invitation, with the first batch of programme commencing in the fourth quarter of 2024. The major expenses of the programme will cover the engagement of institutions to provide training courses on digital technologies and technical support services, publicity expenses, etc. and the details are yet to be finalised.

2. Service providers are required to submit regular financial, progress and performance reports (covering key performance indicators such as the numbers of beneficiaries, training sessions and support points, and the level of satisfaction of participants) to the SIE Fund for effective supervision.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2541)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The 1823 Chatbot service was launched by the Government in 2019. By utilising artificial intelligence technologies, Tammy the Chatbot will handle simple enquiries and reports from the public. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the scope of enquiries which can be handled by Tammy currently, with a breakdown by the participating departments of 1823;
- (2) as it is said that Tammy will be trained to handle common enquiries of participating departments of 1823 by phases, the current training progress and the expected scope of enquiries which can be handled by Tammy in the future;
- (3) the number of enquiries handled by Tammy in each of the past 5 years;
- (4) the expenditure incurred in the development of Tammy back then;
- (5) the staff establishment of and the actual expenditure or revised estimated expenditure on the operation and system maintenance of Tammy in the past 5 years; and
- (6) as Tammy only supports traditional/simplified Chinese and English at present, whether there is any plan for Tammy to support other ethnic minority languages which are more commonly used in Hong Kong; if so, the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

Regarding the 1823 Chatbot service, our consolidated reply is as follows:

The Efficiency Office has started to apply chatbot technology to handle 1823 public enquiries since December 2019. The development cost back then was about \$3 million. The operation of Chatbot Tammy is managed by 2 staff members of 1823, while its system maintenance is undertaken by a contractor. The average annual expenditure was about \$420,000 in the past 5 years.

Tammy handled more than 20 000 enquiries a year on average. It has been learning from the frequently asked questions of 1823 participating departments since its launch and can now answer simple enquiries regarding 10 specific areas, such as International Driving Permit application, Old Age Allowance, dog licence, Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme, rates and government rent, as well as electrical worker registration, covering more than 170 frequently asked questions. We also extended the chatbot service to the “Tell me@1823” mobile app in 2022, making it more convenient to use by citizens. 1823 is now fully expanding Tammy’s service to answer frequently asked questions under all of its scope of service, including public housing application, financial assistance for education and working family allowance, employment and employees’ rights, environmental and food hygiene, postal services, company/land registration and tenancy matters. The relevant work is expected to complete by the third quarter of 2024.

As far as languages are concerned, Tammy currently supports traditional/simplified Chinese and English. We will review users’ feedback and decide the way forward upon completion of Tammy’s service expansion. 1823 currently provides telephone interpretation service for ethnic minority language users in collaboration with a non-governmental organisation. Members of the public who need such service may use the 1823 hotline service.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB043**

**(Question Serial No. 2552)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the mobile application “Tell me@1823” launched in 2011, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the number of downloads of “Tell me@1823” in each of the past 3 years;
- (2) the respective numbers of enquiry and complaint cases received by the 1823 Call Centre via “Tell me@1823”, the percentages of such figures in the respective total numbers of the cases concerned, and the average processing time of such enquiry and complaint cases in each of the past 3 years;
- (3) whether there are any malicious acts of abusing “Tell me@1823” by submitting cases in mass volume in the past 3 years; if yes, of the details;
- (4) the annual maintenance cost of “Tell me@1823 v2” in each of the past 3 years; and
- (5) all the forms currently available on “Tell me@1823”, the departments responsible for taking follow-up action, and whether there are any plans to increase the number of forms to be provided on the mobile application in the future?

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

1823 provides various channels to facilitate the use of 1823 service by the public. These include the “Tell me@1823” mobile application (app), online artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot service, frequently-asked-questions (FAQs) webpages, web forms, emails, telephone hotlines, etc. 1823 revamped the “Tell me@1823” app in July 2022 with AI chatbot service and FAQs on participating departments to provide self-enquiry services for the public.

- (1) The revamped “Tell me@1823” app has about 50 000 annual downloads.
- (2) The numbers of cases relating to enquiries and requests for government services or complaints received by 1823 via “Tell me@1823”, as well as the respective percentages of the total caseloads, in the past 3 years are as follows:

| Year | Enquiries       |   | Requests for government services or complaints |   |
|------|-----------------|---|--|---|
|      | Number of cases | Respective percentage of the total caseload | Number of cases                                | Respective percentage of the total caseload |
| 2021 | 8 777           | 0.4%  | 142 155  | 24.1%                                       |
| 2022 | 29 442          | 1.4%  | 141 606  | 27.4%                                       |
| 2023 | 18 429          | 1.0%  | 162 633  | 26.2%                                       |

1823 will answer the enquiries received via “Tell me@1823” by making use of the knowledge base provided by the departments concerned. For requests for government services or complaints, 1823 will record the case details and refer the cases to the appropriate departments for follow-up. In 2023, 1823 answered the enquiries made by the public via “Tell me@1823” and referred the cases to the appropriate departments for follow-up within 20 hours on average. As for 2021 and 2022, 1823 accorded priority to pandemic-related calls and the average handling time of “Tell me@1823” cases exceeded 24 hours.

- (3) Upon receipt of requests for government services or complaints, 1823 will refer the cases to the appropriate departments for them to decide how to follow up or reply. 1823 does not have figures on malicious abuse cases confirmed by these departments after investigation.
- (4) The system maintenance cost of “Tell me@1823” is about \$400,000 each year, including the maintenance, upgrade and simple enhancements of the backend system for receiving and referring cases.
- (5) Currently, “Tell me@1823” provides 4 types of forms for submitting enquiries, suggestions, compliments and requests for government services or complaints. For requests for government services or complaints, there are 12 different forms in total, namely “Refuse Problem”, “Nuisance from Water Dripping Outside Buildings”, “Street Obstruction”, “Obstruction or Hygiene Problems Caused by Food Premises”, “Roads/Traffic Facilities Problems”, “Problems of Public Lighting Facilities”, “Public Transportation Service Issues”, “Tree Problems”, “Unauthorised Building Works”, “Illegal Parking”, “Non-emergency Traffic Offences” and “Others”. Departments responsible for follow-up include the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department,

Transport Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Highways Department, Buildings Department, etc. These online forms are mainly designed to facilitate completion by the public and help 1823 in systematic collection of the required information for follow-up of the referrals by the departments concerned. 1823 will review the service needs of the public from time to time and add, remove or revise forms as necessary to provide better services for the public.

The “Tell me@1823” app provides AI chatbot service to handle simple enquiries. We will fully expand the AI chatbot to answer common enquiries within the service scope of 1823. We will also promote the “Tell me@1823” app and the chatbot to the public through various channels.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB044**

**(Question Serial No. 1130)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

One of the matters requiring special attention in 2024-25 of the Bureau is to “continue to press ahead with the development of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Lok Ma Chau Loop”.

- (1) What are the details of the work and the estimated expenditure involved in this year; and
- (2) With a view to pressing ahead with the development of the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Co-operation Zone at the Loop, will the Government consider proposing to the Central Government various enhanced policies regarding talent and capital, such as providing clearance convenience for local and overseas research talents travelling between parks of the two places, and allowing free exchange of Hong Kong's venture funds within “One Zone, Two Parks” to facilitate free flow of venture funds; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-king, Starry (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to the two parts of the question is set out below:

The Shenzhen-Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Co-operation Zone (Co-operation Zone) in the Loop is one of the major co-operation platforms in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) under the 14th Five-Year Plan. It consists of the 87-hectare Hong Kong Park (i.e. Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park, hereinafter referred to as the “HSITP”) and the 300-hectare Shenzhen Park. Hong Kong and Shenzhen have been maintaining communication on the development of the Co-operation Zone through the Joint Task Force on the Development of the HSITP in the Loop, which was established in



2017. The HKSAR Government will continue to make every effort to foster the synergistic development of the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park with the Shenzhen Municipal Government, and explore innovative measures under the vision of “one river, two banks” and “one zone, two parks”.

On the hardware construction, the Hong Kong Park will be developed in 2 phases from west to east. The Phase 1 planning has been completed. With a total floor area of up to 1 million square metres, the Hong Kong Park will be divided into various clusters with different industry themes (including life and health technology, artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, and industries, academia and research) as well as a talent accommodation area and the commercial and ancillary facilities, with a view to developing a diverse innovation and technology (I&T) ecosystem. The first 3 buildings in Batch 1 will be completed progressively from the end of 2024 onwards. The HSITP Limited is pressing ahead with the leasing and business attraction work by using existing resources. Moreover, the HKSAR Government has announced that it would first release about 5 hectares of land with community isolation and treatment facilities erected thereon for commencing the construction of the remaining 5 buildings in Batch 1 of the Hong Kong Park as early as possible. The HSITP Limited will commence the relevant planning work of the Phase 2 development soon.

On the software provision, cross-boundary innovation elements including talent, materials and data are the key to realising the vision of “one river, two banks” and “one zone, two parks” in the Co-operation Zone. As such, the HKSAR Government will continue active collaboration with Shenzhen, as well as integration into the national development, thereby promoting the advantages of establishing “one zone, two parks” in the Co-operation Zone under the “One country, Two systems” principle and ensuring the smooth flow of talent, capital, materials and data, and serving as the bridgehead for intensive I&T co-operation between the two places. Innovative measures under active exploration by the two sides include:

- **Talent:** The Co-operation Zone will operate under the mode of “one zone, two parks”, with research personnel going to work early and returning home late between the two places every day. As such, it is necessary to provide convenient clearance mode and facilities to allow designated personnel to enjoy travel convenience by, for example, enabling those who have pre-registered to enjoy streamlined access between the two parks and adopting technology to facilitate faster movement. In addition, to facilitate frequent daily travel of I&T personnel between the two sides, the HKSAR Government and the Shenzhen Municipal Government are exploring the construction of a cross-boundary footbridge between the two parks but the exact location is subject to discussion between the two Governments;
- **Capital:** The Co-operation Zone can become an important stronghold for key I&T enterprises from the Mainland or overseas to set up headquarters or research centres in Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government will discuss with relevant Central ministries on facilitating cross-boundary capital flow;
- **Materials:** Both Governments will consider simplifying clearance procedures for research materials and equipment by means of “green channel”, “white list” etc., thereby facilitating exchanges on data and samples (including clinical biological samples) collected for research or trials;

- Data: The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) of the HKSAR Government signed the “Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitating Cross-boundary Data Flow Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area” with the Cyberspace Administration of China in June 2023, which sets out that under national cross-boundary data security management system framework, collaboration on cross-boundary data flow within the GBA will be promoted to facilitate the convenient and orderly cross-boundary flow of personal data from the Mainland to Hong Kong. In response to the specific requirement for cross-boundary research data from enterprises, the HKSAR Government will work with relevant ministries on the premise of complying with national data security laws and regulations and risk controllability, to strive to expand the cross-boundary research data flow from the Mainland to Hong Kong for use by enterprises in the Hong Kong Park.

The HKSAR Government will continue to support the development of the Hong Kong Park, and is drafting an overarching document on its development, which will set out, among others, the development directions, positioning, hardware and software of the Hong Kong Park, targeting to be announced this year.

The ITIB will continue to take forward the development of the Hong Kong Park with existing manpower and resources. Please refer to the Estimates of “Head 135 – Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau” for details.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB045**

**(Question Serial No. 1661)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry, (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Head 135 — Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB), it is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Government will continue to promote the adoption of innovation and technology (I&T) by bureaux/departments to improve government services. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

What were the government departments to which the ITIB promoted the adoption of I&T in the past 3 years? What were the I&T items and expenditures involved respectively?

How effective was the adoption of these I&T items in terms of saving public money and enhancing efficiency in government operations? How was the assessment conducted?

In 2024-25, which fields will be the foci of the Government in promoting the application of I&T? What are the specific measures and timetable?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-wang, Robert (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

The Government is committed to promoting the adoption of innovation and technology (I&T) by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to enhance operational efficiency and continuously improve public services. In the past 3 years, the Efficiency Office (EffO) worked with the 46 B/Ds participating in the “Be the Smart Regulator” and the “Streamlining of Government Services” programmes in proposing over 500 business facilitation and streamlining measures, covering more than 1 000 licences and services. About 80% of the measures involved the adoption of I&T, with a view to providing more electronic services for the trade and the general public. These include provision of online application services through “iAM

Smart”, establishment of various electronic payment channels, development of chatbots to facilitate the handling of enquiries, and provision of end-to-end electronic services, etc.

The EffO has also implemented a series of support measures to departments, such as jointly organising a technology forum with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, showcasing the latest I&T solutions for departments, and arranging business matching for interested departments and companies to help the departments further explore or test whether the relevant solutions are suitable for their services. Moreover, we also introduce the latest I&T solutions and provide matching services to departments through the InnoGov Portal, an intranet website of EffO. Currently, the website provides a total of about 160 I&T solutions in 11 categories. We took forward the relevant work with existing manpower and resources.

B/Ds make use of I&T to enhance public services mainly to provide more options of benefitting the public and facilitating trade. Generally speaking, B/Ds will flexibly redeploy the savings achieved to improve their existing services or to cope with new service demand.

In 2024-25, we will continue to foster the development of digital government and digitalisation of government services. The targets include digitalising all licences, services involving application and approval and forms by mid-2024, and fully implementing the provision of electronic payment option for all government services by the third quarter of 2024.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1664)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 92 of the Budget Speech that the Government has commissioned an expert group to undertake an in-depth study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong. In this regard, please advise this Committee on the following:

What is the expenditure involved in the study? When will the findings of the study be released?

What is the Government's plan for developing a data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong? Please set out the past projects involved in the development of the data trading ecosystem and the amount involved in each project.

How will the data trading ecosystem empower the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries, especially the financial services sector, and mark a major milestone as it becomes a new impetus for growth?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-wang, Robert (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

The Government has recently commissioned an expert group to undertake an in-depth study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong. The scope of which includes Hong Kong's role as a "super connector" in data trading as well as promoting the formulation of international data trading rules. The presence of a highly efficient data ecosystem is one of the considerations for many enterprises to establish a foothold in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is underpinned by its distinctive advantages under "One Country, Two Systems" and endowed with the characteristics of an international city. From supply and demand of data to application scenarios, we are equipped with a robust foundation and possess

an abundance of favourable conditions for developing international data trading. We believe a robust data trading ecosystem can help empower the upgrade and transformation of industries and enterprises. Details of the study, including the specific scope, timetable and budget, are yet to be determined.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3594)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the digital inclusion programmes which promote adoption of information and communications technology (ICT) among the elderly, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. in table form, the details of the work undertaken by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Efficiency Office in promoting adoption of ICT among the elderly in the past 3 years:

| The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer |      |               |             |
|--|------|---------------|-------------|
| Work Item  | Date | Effectiveness | Expenditure |
|  |      |               |             |
|  |      |               |             |
|  |      |               |             |

| The Efficiency Office |      |               |             |
|-----------------------|------|---------------|-------------|
| Work Item             | Date | Effectiveness | Expenditure |
|                       |      |               |             |
|                       |      |               |             |

2. the division of work between the departments mentioned in the question in promoting adoption of ICT among the elderly, and the principles of the division of work;
3. upon merging of the departments mentioned in the question to establish the Digital Policy Office, whether the work currently undertaken by the SIE Fund Task Force in enhancing the capability and interest of the elderly in learning and adopting digital technologies will be taken up directly by the Office; if so, the details; if not, the reasons for that.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 94)

Reply:

1. The work undertaken by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO) in promoting adoption of information and communications technology (ICT) among the elderlies in the past three years is as follows:

| OGCIO   |  |  |                    |
|---|--|--|--------------------|
| Work Item   | Date   | Effectiveness  | Expenditure        |
| ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly (2021-2023)          | Starting from March 2021<br>(For a period of two years)    | Outreach services were provided to more than 44 000 elderlies, covering elderlies living in residential care homes, hidden elderlies and elderlies receiving day care and home care services; the setting up of mobile outreach service stations on a pilot basis served an extra 1 700 elderlies or more in the community.      | About \$10 million |
| Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (2021-2023) | Starting from December 2021<br>(For a period of two years) | A total of around 4 000 elderlies participated in the training.  | About \$10 million |
| ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly (2023-2025)          | Starting from June 2023<br>(For a period of two years)     | As at February 2024, outreach services were provided to more than 18 000 elderlies, covering elderlies living in residential care homes, hidden elderlies and elderlies receiving day care and home care services; the setting up of mobile outreach service stations served an extra 10 000 elderlies or more in the community. | About \$16 million |
| The Elderly IT Learning Portal                              | Starting from March 2021                                   | As at February 2024, over 28 million accesses and over 520 000 visits were recorded.   | About \$4 million  |



| EffO   |                            |  |                     |
|--|----------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Work Item  | Date                       | Effectiveness  | Expenditure (Note)  |
| Four funded projects promoting inter-generational digital inclusion (DI)   | October 2021 to March 2024 | Digital outreach rehabilitation services were launched under the projects. Young people were engaged to teach the elderlies the operations of tablet computers/ smartphones and mobile applications, thereby promoting inter-generational harmony and social cohesion. A total of 600 young people participated in the projects, benefiting more than 4 700 elderlies.   | About \$13 million  |
| 16 innovative projects (involving the use of ICT to help improve elderlies' health/ quality of life) taken forward by intermediaries | 2021 to 2023               | The projects included: using virtual reality technology to provide convenient and affordable rehabilitation programme for elderly patients with aphasia or dementia; using devices to detect falling motion of the elderlies and send alert messages to their family members and carers; providing equipment and support to facilitate elderlies to seek online medical consultation; developing a puzzle game to help dementia patients defer the progressive cognitive deterioration; and setting up an online and offline entertainment platform for the elderlies. The projects benefitted about 3 100 elderlies by improving their daily life as well | About \$4.1 million |

|  |                            |  |                    |
|--|----------------------------|--|--------------------|
|  |                            | as physical and mental health.   |                    |
| An inclusive one-stop “Gerontechnology Platform” | January 2021 to April 2024 | Services introduced include: launching an online knowledge hub to provide various gerontechnology-related information for the industry and members of the public; introducing localisation and testing support service on gerontechnology products, and provided start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises with support and consultancy services on the design/development of over 1 800 gerontechnology products; and releasing the second landscape study report on gerontechnology in December 2021, which gave an in-depth analysis on the opportunities, challenges and limitations faced by Hong Kong in the development or application of gerontechnology. | About \$49 million |

Note: Funded by the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund). The EffO is responsible for overseeing the operation of the SIE Fund.

2. The Government has been committed to taking measures to promote DI and encourage various sectors to play an active part in helping those in need, including the elderlies, get to know and use technology products and services, so that they can fully integrate into the digital society. Over the years, OGCIO has been working with non-profit-making organisations and Elder Academies in putting in place relevant measures such as the provision of ICT outreach services and enriched training courses, etc. The aim is to encourage and facilitate the elderlies to adopt and learn digital technology in their daily life, thereby integrating themselves into smart living. In the implementation of the above measures, OGCIO provides support in relation to digital technology, such as offering advice on the scope and content of the courses, and inviting youth volunteers and digital technology experts to participate in relevant events.

The DI programmes for the elderlies implemented by the OGCIO and SIE Fund have different focuses. The former mainly targets at the elderlies living in residential care homes, receiving day care and home care services. It encourages them to make wider use of digital technologies through a variety of activities to experience digital living. Apart from organising trial classes for the elderlies to learn and use digital products, it also incorporates various technology elements such as using smart robots to teach fitness exercise, demonstrating rehabilitation treatment with virtual reality devices, and using archer games on augmented reality to train up elderlies in strengthening their muscle and hand-eye co-ordination, etc. The service organisations under the Outreach Programme also set up mobile outreach service stations on pilot basis in various districts to introduce commonly used mobile applications to elderlies at irregular times. Regarding the latter, it focuses on the elderlies, especially the singleton or doubleton elderlies who are not conversant with digital technologies. Through the regular and fixed-point services provided by community-based help desks, it enables the elderlies to seek assistance more easily as they can seek one-to-one technical support when encountering problems on digital technology applications and, with specific assistance, have their individual problems resolved, thus ensuring their effective and safe use of digital technologies, such as iAM Smart and other common government mobile applications, online shopping, electronic payment and cyber security, etc. These allow the elderlies to fully integrate into the digital society and achieve the objectives of the SIE Fund, which are to alleviate poverty and social exclusion in Hong Kong as well as foster the well-being and cohesion of the society by promoting social innovation. In finalising the implementation details of the SIE Fund programme, we will complement the services of the OGCIO (including the mobile outreach service stations) to maximise the synergy effect and avoid overlapping of resources.

3. In the 2023 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that the Government would set up the Digital Policy Office by merging the existing OGCIO and the EffO. The newly set up Office will consolidate the resources and take up the work of the two existing offices, which include formulating DI-related measures and implementing DI programmes.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2974)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 123 of the 2024-25 Budget Speech that the Government will set up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park and allocate \$2 billion to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop. It will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to start-ups engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council of the following?

1. How much subsidy will each laboratory receive on average if it is to operate in the InnoLife Healthtech Hub?
2. Of the \$2 billion allocation, how much is related to (a) infrastructure facilities, (b) laboratory equipment, (c) subsidies for talents and (d) expenditures for research and development? (Please tabulate.)
3. According to the information published earlier, 16 laboratories and 8 relevant State Key Laboratories will be used as the basis. The fields include biomedicine, big data and artificial intelligence, which can be applied in various areas, such as prevention, diagnosis, drug discovery, advanced treatment and rehabilitation. How many laboratories are involved in each of these areas? (Please tabulate.) How much subsidy will each laboratory receive? (Please tabulate.)
4. Apart from the InnoLife Healthtech Hub, the Government has a number of programmes to support research on life and health technology. With the setting up of life and health technology research institutes, on what areas will the InnoLife Healthtech Hub be more focused than other programmes? Will different programmes have different focused areas? If so, what are the details? (Please tabulate.)

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to various parts of the question is set out below:

Life and health technology industry will be the key direction of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development in the future. As announced in the 2023-24 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government will allocate \$6 billion to provide subsidies for local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations to set up life and health technology research institutes (LHTRIs). The purpose is to facilitate relevant research and development (R&D) activities and transformation of R&D outcomes, and to attract leading innovation and technology talent and research teams around the world to Hong Kong. As announced in the 2024-25 Budget, the Government will allocate \$2.2 billion from the aforementioned earmarked funding to support setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Loop.

The Government consulted and secured support from the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology on 20 February 2024 on the proposed subsidy programme for LHTRIs. The Government plans to seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee in the second quarter of 2024. Under the current proposal, an applicant institution must be a local university funded by the University Grants Committee with medical school and/or is offering life and health disciplines. The LHTRI must adopt cross-universities/institutions and multi-disciplinary approaches to foster long-term R&D collaboration among local universities and top-notch universities/research institutions/research teams from the Mainland and overseas, and to engage in basic research, translational research as well as transformation of R&D outcomes on themes falling within the field of life and health-related technologies. The themes may include but are not limited to cell and gene therapy, bioinformatics and biology, biomedical engineering, advanced therapy, medical diagnostics, drug and vaccine development, and clinical trial.

In addition, to foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and to conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines, the Government will allocate \$2 billion to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. The HSITP Limited is progressing with the construction of 8 buildings in Batch 1 of the HSITP. Of these, 4 are wet-lab enabled buildings to tie in with the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Upon completion of the Batch 1 buildings in the HSITP progressively, research teams and enterprises related to the life and health industry are expected to move in. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB049**

**(Question Serial No. 2644)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding innovation and technology (I&T) talents and land use arrangements:

1. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint predicts that the number of I&T talents in Hong Kong will reach 100 000 in 2032. However, according to the projection by some reports, there will only be 65 000 I&T talents in 2032. How will the Bureau strengthen its work in the future to enhance the global competitiveness of I&T industries?
2. In the light of the planning of the I&T sites in San Tin Technopole and the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP), the Bureau has reserved about 340 hectares of land for the development of I&T-related industries. How will the Bureau optimise the use of the relevant sites to sustain the development of I&T industries?
3. In tandem with the development of San Tin Technopole and the HSITP, the Government plans to further reserve the land obtainable from the Ma Liu Shui reclamation and relocation of the Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works for I&T uses. How will the Bureau optimise the use of the relevant sites to achieve a balanced development of I&T land?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

Our reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

1. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (Blueprint), promulgated in 2022, sets out 4 broad development directions and 8 major strategies for promoting the innovation and technology (I&T) development in Hong Kong. The Policy Addresses and the Budgets of recent years also announced a series of measures to implement the Blueprint in leading Hong Kong steadily towards its vision of becoming an international I&T centre.

The 2024-25 Budget further announced that more resources will be allocated, and proposed key initiatives in 4 major areas as follows:

- On consolidating Hong Kong's strengths in scientific research and promoting the development of I&T industries, the Government will allocate \$3 billion to launch a 3-year Artificial Intelligence (AI) subsidy scheme to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises, etc. to leverage the AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC)'s computing power, to strengthen cyber security and data protection of the AISC, and to launch promotion and educational activities, etc. It is also announced that the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute will be established this year to support the research and development (R&D) of third-generation semiconductors. From the \$10 billion earmarked to promote the development of life and health technology, \$2 billion will be allocated to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop and another \$200 million to provide assistance to start-ups engaging in life and health technology in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc., thereby facilitating the setting up of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP. The earmarked funding of \$3 billion will be used to launch the Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme to assist the 8 University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities, on a matching basis, in setting up research facilities and conducting research projects spearheaded by leading researchers at home and outside Hong Kong. The Government will also provide an annual funding of not exceeding \$16 million to the Technology Transfer Office of each UGC-funded university;
- On developing I&T infrastructure and promoting new industrialisation, the Government will continue to support the development of the HSITP, with the first batch of 3 buildings therein to be completed and commence operation progressively by the end of this year. Besides, a \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme will be launched this year. Enterprises engaging in life and health technology, AI and data science, advanced manufacturing and new energy technology that invest no less than \$200 million to set up new production facilities in Hong Kong may each receive funding support of up to \$200 million on a 1 (Government): 2 (enterprise) matching basis under the Scheme. Participating enterprises of the Scheme may receive subsidies to engage research talent under the Research Talent Hub, and engage, on a pilot basis, a small number of non-local technical personnel under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme;

- On developing digital economy and promoting digital transformation of the society, Cyberport will invite small and medium enterprises in the food and beverage industry and the retail industry in phases from early this year to apply for the \$500 million Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme. The Government will also launch a “digital identity of enterprises” platform, at an estimate of \$300 million, to facilitate enterprises’ online business transactions and use of electronic services. In addition, the Government has commissioned an expert group to undertake a study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong; and
- On nurturing I&T start-ups and talent, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) will launch the Co-acceleration Programme to pool the efforts of the I&T industry and nurture I&T start-ups with high potential as regional or global enterprises. The Government will also allocate an additional funding of \$134 million to continue subsidising publicly-funded primary schools for 2 academic years under the Knowing More About IT Programme to enhance primary school students’ interests in information technology and its applications.

The Government will continue to promote the I&T development in Hong Kong and to implement various measures relating to I&T talent, with a view to developing Hong Kong into an international I&T centre.

2. San Tin Technopole is to provide about 300 hectares (including the 87-hectare HSITP in Lok Ma Chau) of I&T land. The land will serve as a hub for clustered I&T development, which will not only create synergy with Shenzhen, but also assist Hong Kong in developing into an international I&T centre under the new industry pattern of “South-North dual engine (finance-I&T)”. Its spatial planning will align with the development positioning of the Co-operation Zone elevated to the national strategic level. It will also fully integrate with the strategy on enhancing Hong Kong’s I&T competitiveness to pave way for the future development of the Co-operation Zone in a forward-looking manner. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is conducting a consultancy study on the I&T industry development plan for the I&T land in San Tin Technopole (outside of the Loop), with a view to recommending specific I&T uses in the I&T value chain (i.e. upstream (R&D), midstream (prototype or application development) or downstream (manufacturing) processes) for development on different land parcels in the area, as well as requisite infrastructure and supporting facilities, etc. The study is expected to be completed in 2024.

As for the HSITP, it will be developed in 2 phases from west to east. The Phase 1 planning has been completed. With a total floor area of up to 1 million square metres, the HSITP will be divided into various clusters with different industry themes (including life and health technology, artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, and industries, academia and research) as well as a talent accommodation area and the commercial and ancillary facilities, with a view to developing a diverse I&T ecosystem. The first 3 buildings in batch 1 can be completed progressively from the end of 2024 onwards. The HSITP Limited is pressing ahead with the leasing and business attraction work by using existing resources. Moreover, the Government has announced that it would first release about 5 hectares of land with community isolation and treatment facilities erected thereon for commencing the construction of the remaining 5 buildings in batch 1 of the HSITP as early as possible. Meanwhile, the HSITP Limited



will commence the relevant planning work of the Phase 2 development soon. In addition, in order to promote the development of life and health industry in Hong Kong, the InnoLife Healthtech Hub will be set up in the HSITP in the Loop to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines. To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP, the Government will allocate \$2 billion from the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop, and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the HSITP start-ups engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc.

3. Following the revival of the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project as announced in the 2021 Policy Address, the Civil Engineering and Development Department commissioned the “Engineering Study for Ma Liu Shui Reclamation” in July 2022 in respect of the technical assessment and preliminary design of the reclamation works. It was also proposed in the same Policy Address that the newly reclaimed land should be mainly for innovation and technology development. HKSTPC is now conducting a preliminary study in this regard. Both studies are expected to be completed within 2024. Further information about the proposal will be available by then and suitable announcement will be made in due course.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0728)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to implement the “Global STEM Professorship Scheme” and launch a sub-scheme for visiting professors on a pilot basis to strengthen support for local universities to attract world-renowned STEM scholars to work in Hong Kong. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) A total of 100 professorships are available under the scheme. As at March 2023, 80 scientific research scholars have come to Hong Kong in the 3 years after its launch, and the response has been positive. Will the Bureau review the scheme and consider launching a second phase of it?
- (2) Given the keen global competition for technology talents, will the Bureau put forward more incentive measures to enhance the attractiveness of the scheme so that more overseas scholars will come to Hong Kong to conduct scientific research activities?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to the two parts of the question is set out below-

The Global STEM Professorship Scheme supports local universities funded by the University Grants Committee in attracting research and development (R&D) talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. The target is to recruit 100 internationally renowned innovation and technology (I&T) scholars to conduct teaching and research activities related to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) in Hong Kong. As at the end of February 2024, over 90 nominations for outstanding scholars have been supported. About

60 outstanding scholars have taken up their posts in Hong Kong while the remaining will be arriving gradually. The Government will maintain close liaison with the universities and review the implementation of the Scheme as and when appropriate. Meanwhile, taking into account the views of stakeholders, the Government launched the Sub-scheme for Visiting Professors on a pilot basis in January this year.

Apart from the Global STEM Professorship Scheme, the Government has been adopting a multi-pronged approach to attract R&D talents from the Mainland and overseas through measures such as enhancing the Technology Talent Admission Scheme, strengthening the financial support for research talent under the Research Talent Hub and incorporating a variety of I&T professions into the Talent List.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB051**

**(Question Serial No. 0811)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

One of the responsibilities of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is to promote “new industrialisation” through the development of smart production and high value-added industries. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Regarding the Re-industrialisation Funding Scheme (now known as the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme), are there any statistics compiled on the numbers of applications received and approved with a breakdown by sector, as well as the expenditure incurred by the Scheme, in the past 2 years? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?
2. Established in February this year, the New Industrial Development Office is responsible for co-ordinating and steering the formulation of strategy for new industrialisation and assisting the manufacturing sector in upgrading and transforming by making use of innovation and technology. What are the details of the staffing establishment and expenditure of the Office? What are the details of the focus and priorities of the work plan for 2024-25?
3. It is stated in paragraph 120 of the Budget Speech that enterprises participating in the New Industrial Acceleration Programme may, on a pilot basis, engage a small number of non-local technical personnel under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme. What are the details of the pilot arrangement?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

1. The number of applications received under the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) in 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 were 13, 21, 15 and 17 respectively (66 in total). Since the launch of the NIFS, 38 applications have received support from the NIFS Vetting Committee, involving 62 production lines with a total project cost of approximately \$966 million and funding amount of about \$271 million. Figures by industry are as follows:

| Industrial sector   | Number of applicant companies | Total project cost (approximate) | Matching fund from applicant companies (approximate) | Funding amount (approximate) |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Food manufacturing and processing (including health food) | 17                            | \$449 million                    | \$317 million  | \$131 million                |
| Pharmaceutical production (including Chinese medicine)    | 5                             | \$84 million                     | \$56 million   | \$28 million                 |
| Nanofiber materials                                       | 3                             | \$130 million                    | \$70 million   | \$33 million                 |
| Construction materials                                    | 2                             | \$26 million                     | \$18 million   | \$9 million                  |
| Equipment and parts                                       | 2                             | \$122 million                    | \$130 million  | \$19 million                 |
| Printing  | 2                             | \$29 million                     | \$19 million   | \$10 million                 |
| Electronics   | 3                             | \$25 million                     | \$17 million   | \$8 million                  |
| Medical device  | 1                             | \$70 million                     | \$55 million   | \$15 million                 |
| Textiles and clothing                                     | 1                             | \$49 million                     | \$34 million   | \$15 million                 |
| Others  | 2                             | \$9 million                      | \$6 million  | \$3 million                  |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>38</b>                     | <b>\$966 million</b>             | <b>\$696 million</b>                                 | <b>\$271 million</b>         |

2. The New Industrialisation Development Office (NIDO) is established under the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB). Following the directions and strategies set out in the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology (I&T) Blueprint, the NIDO, led by the Commissioner for Industry (Innovation and Technology), focuses on the development of industries such as life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technology, and is responsible for steering the formulation of development policies and supporting measures for related industries. Adopting an industry-oriented approach, the NIDO supports strategic enterprises to develop their businesses in Hong Kong, assists the local manufacturing sector in upgrading and transformation by making use of I&T, and provides support for start-ups. The ITIB, through its existing manpower, takes forward the work of the NIDO. We do not have a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

3. The approved enterprises under the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) can, on a pilot basis, apply quotas under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme from the Innovation and Technology Commission and submit applications to the Immigration Department for employment visas/entry permits within the 24-month quota validity period in order to engage a small number of non-local technical personnel to expedite the set-up and operation of their advanced manufacturing facilities in Hong Kong. These enterprises have to confirm their difficulties in recruiting local technical personnel with the required experience and professional skills, and offer remuneration package not lower than the prevailing market level for comparable jobs in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. We expect that the NIAS will attract 50 to 100 relevant enterprises and each of them may apply for no more than 5 quotas to admit non-local technical personnel, making a total of no more than 500 quotas.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB052**

**(Question Serial No. 0001)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Efficiency Office is responsible for working closely with bureaux and departments to drive digitalisation of government services to facilitate business and streamline government services. In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

1. the major progress and achievements made in the past 2 years in driving the implementation of digitalisation of the approval process for the construction and engineering sectors by the relevant government departments; and
2. whether the Government will actively respond to the demands of the sectors and strive to establish a one-stop and multi-functional e-government service platform to rationalise the approval process of works projects and expedite the automation process of various departments, and set a specific target and an implementation timetable in this regard. If so, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. The Government has been striving to drive the digitalisation of government services. The targets are to digitalise all licences, services involving application and approval and forms by mid-2024 (if in-person submission or collection of documents is required by law or international practice, applicants will only need to visit the government office concerned once at most), and fully implement the provision of electronic payment (e-payment) option for all government fees by the third quarter of 2024 to provide the public with a choice to settle service payments both online and offline through the Faster Payment System.

Bureaux and departments have made good progress on the implementation of electronic services. As at the end of 2023, out of some 1 450 licences and services, about 90%

involving applications and about 80% involving collection of documents have achieved the digitalisation target, i.e. submission of application, payment and collection of documents by electronic means for the licences and services concerned were enabled. These included licences and services under various works departments, such as applications for permits to erect hoardings, covered walkways or gantries. The remaining licences and services will meet the target by mid-2024. As regards the implementation of e-payment option for all government services, as at the end of 2023, out of some 600 payment items, more than 60% have achieved the target of providing e-payment option.

For the implementation of digitalisation of the approval process for the construction and engineering sectors, the Development Bureau (DEVB) advised that the Buildings Department (BD) had received funding of about \$200 million from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in 2019 for the development of an electronic submission hub (ESH) to receive and process building plans and relevant applications submitted under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123). ESH is being launched in 3 stages, with the first 2 stages launched in June 2022 and March 2023 respectively. While the third stage was originally scheduled for completion in the second quarter of 2025, BD will advance the roll-out of some of the major functions to the second quarter of 2024, and by then the system will be able to accept all types of building plans submitted under the Buildings Ordinance.

Moreover, to tie in with the implementation of digitalisation of government services, DEVB, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer collaborated to launch a pilot e-tendering system (e-TS) in June 2022, providing online processing of the tendering procedures for public works contracts that are to be approved by the Public Works Tender Board or the Central Tender Board, and facilitating submission of tenders by bidders through this system. DEVB has also extended the service to the tendering procedures for architectural and engineering consultancy services, which was launched in the first quarter of 2024 on a pilot basis.

2. Apart from reducing paper consumption, the above e-TS provides one-stop processing of the procedures for procuring works contracts and works consultancy services. As contractors or consultants can submit e-tenders online, the tendering time is more flexible. When processing e-tenders, departments can save the time required for delivering traditional paper tenders, thus speeding up the procurement process. Furthermore, the system is equipped with function for handling bidders' enquiries and responses, thereby streamlining the communication between bidders and departments, and enhancing the efficiency of communication.

So far, the above system has been used in a number of projects in the works departments. Both the performance of the system and the responses of bidders have been very favourable. Therefore, DEVB has set a target that starting from mid-2024, all eligible government public works contracts and architectural and engineering consultancy services are required to use the system to handle the procurement procedures electronically.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0005)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is responsible for taking forward the development of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Lok Ma Chau Loop. In this connection, please advise on:

1. what major progress and achievements were made in the past 2 years; and
2. whether it will set out key tasks in the future and expedite the implementation progress so as to actively fast-track the development of the international innovation and technology hub. If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to the two parts of the question is set out below:

The Shenzhen-Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Co-operation Zone (Co-operation Zone) in the Loop is one of the major co-operation platforms in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area under the 14th Five-Year Plan. It consists of the 87-hectare Hong Kong Park (i.e. Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park, hereinafter referred to as the "HSITP") and the 300-hectare Shenzhen Park. Hong Kong and Shenzhen have been maintaining communication on the development of the Co-operation Zone through the Joint Task Force on the Development of the HSITP in the Loop, which was established in 2017. 10 meetings have been held so far. The HKSAR Government will continue to make every effort to foster the synergistic development of the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park with the Shenzhen Municipal Government, and explore innovative measures under the vision of "one river, two banks" and "one zone, two parks".

The Hong Kong Park will be developed in 2 phases from west to east. The Phase 1 planning has been completed. With a total floor area of up to 1 million square metres, the Hong Kong Park will be divided into various clusters with different industry themes (including life and health technology, artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, and industries, academia and research) as well as a talent accommodation area and the commercial and ancillary facilities, with a view to developing a diverse innovation and technology (I&T) ecosystem. The first 3 buildings in Batch 1 will be completed progressively from the end of 2024 onwards. The HSITP Limited is pressing ahead with the leasing and business attraction work by using existing resources. Moreover, the HKSAR Government has announced that it would first release about 5 hectares of land with community isolation and treatment facilities erected thereon for commencing the construction of the remaining 5 buildings in Batch 1 of the Hong Kong Park as early as possible. The HSITP Limited will commence the relevant planning work of the Phase 2 development soon.

The Government will continue to support the development of the Hong Kong Park, and is drafting an overarching document on its development, which will set out, among others, the development directions, positioning, hardware and software of the Hong Kong Park, targeting to be announced this year.

Life and health technology industry is a key direction of Hong Kong's I&T development in the future. To promote development of the industry, the InnoLife Healthtech Hub will be set up in the Hong Kong Park to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines. 4 wet-lab enabled buildings will be built in Batch 1 of the Hong Kong Park to tie in with the related work. To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong Park, the Government will allocate \$2 billion from the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology to support the InnoHK research clusters to establish presence in the Loop, and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB054**

**(Question Serial No. 0165)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ( )

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is responsible for monitoring and implementing various smart city initiatives. In this connection, please advise on:

1. the major progress and achievements attained since the release of the Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong 2.0 in December 2020; and
2. whether the Government will set its future work priorities and key performance indicators with reference to the successful experience of neighbouring regions, in order to expedite the implementation of various smart city initiatives. If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

1. Since the release of the Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong 2.0, bureaux/departments concerned have been actively taking forward their related smart city initiatives. The majority of the over 130 initiatives in Smart Mobility, Smart Living, Smart Environment, Smart People, Smart Government and Smart Economy have been completed or are ongoing. For example, we implemented the HKeToll free-flow tolling service in 2023, as well as implemented time-varying tolls at the three road harbour crossings. We upgraded "iAM Smart" in 2023 to add various real-time daily-life information on the homepage and will simplify the registration procedures in mid-2024, bringing more convenient services to citizens. We also promoted wider acceptance of electronic payment tools by public and private organisations and extended the payment function of Faster Payment System. In terms of digital infrastructure and facilitating data flow, the Government is developing the Consented Data Exchange Gateway and introduced in the first instance the interfacing with the Commercial Data

Interchange in 2023 to strengthen the interflow of data between the Government and enterprises. In addition, the Government signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitating Cross-boundary Data Flow Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area with the Cyberspace Administration of China to actively explore measures for facilitating cross-boundary data flow, with a view to expediting smart city development.

2. The Government proactively reviews the effectiveness of various smart city initiatives from time to time and draws on the experience of different regions in formulating smart city initiatives which support the long-term development and social needs of Hong Kong. As announced in the 2023 Policy Address, the Government will launch 110 new smart city and digital government initiatives in two years starting from this year. We will also set up the Digital Policy Office, which will be dedicated to promoting the opening up of data and co-ordinating with departments to offer more digital services, bringing the convenience of smart city to citizens. Our goals are, by 2025, to continue to promote “iAM Smart” and increase its annual usage to 17.5 million; to achieve the adoption of “iAM Smart” by all government departments, thereby attaining a “single portal for online government services”; and to increase the annual usage of open data to 58 billion, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2685)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In paragraph 104 of the 2024-25 Budget, it is proposed that the Government will allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund to provide, in the next 3 years, elderly people aged 60 or above with digital training courses and technical support, so that they can integrate into the digital era more easily. It is expected that at least 50 000 elderly persons will be benefitted. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Does the project cost include funding for digital training courses for elderly people? (a) If yes, what is the expenditure involved? (b) Are the courses provided for the elderly free of charge? (c) Which institutions are expected to offer the courses? If no, what are the details?
2. Regarding the digital training courses, (a) when will the Government expect to provide the related courses; (b) what are the contents covered in the courses; and (c) what can be done to address the problems faced by the elderly in using digital technologies?
3. How many elderly people are expected to benefit?
4. Will the Government at the same time allocate funding to provide relevant equipment (e.g. computers and software) for the elderly? If yes, what is the expenditure involved? If no, will the elderly waste their efforts to receive training if no relevant equipment is available?
5. What are the application methods for the elderly?
6. What are the proportions of the estimated expenditure on digital training courses and technical support respectively?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Government plans to allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) to subsidise non-governmental organisations to set up community-based help desks at suitable locations (e.g. community centres) to provide regular and fixed-point free-of-charge training on digital technologies and technical support to elderlies aged 60 or above in Hong Kong, particularly the singleton or doubleton elderlies, in the coming three years. Apart from smartphone operations and the use of digital government services (e.g. iAM Smart and other common government mobile applications), we also intend to cover topics such as online shopping, electronic payment and cyber security in the programme, with a view to enhancing the elderlies' capability in adopting digital technologies. Experienced staff (or volunteers) will station at the community-based help desks to provide technical support tailored to the specific needs of the elderlies, so that they can enjoy the benefits brought about by digital services. We expect the programme to benefit at least 50 000 elderlies, and by mid-2024 at the earliest, invite project proposals from institutions/ organisations through open invitation, with the first batch of programme commencing in the fourth quarter of 2024. The major expenses of the programme will cover the engagement of institutions to provide training courses on digital technologies and technical support services, publicity expenses, etc. and the details are yet to be finalised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB056**

**(Question Serial No. 2686)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Director of Bureau's Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the table that the estimated expenditure for the Director of Bureau's Office for 2024-25 will be 13.5% higher than the original estimate for 2023-24. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council of the following?

1. What spending areas will be involved with the increase in the estimate? (set out in a table)
2. Will additional directorate posts be involved with the increase in the estimate for coordinating the development and planning of new innovation and technology projects? If yes, how many?
3. Will there be any increase in staff emoluments with the increase in the estimate? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the 3 parts of the question is as follows:

The increase in the estimated expenditure for the Director of Bureau's Office for 2024-25 is due to the increased requirement for general expenses, pay adjustment of officers and the increase of 1 non-directorate post. The increase does not involve additional directorate posts. The details are set out in the table below:

| <b>Item</b>  | <b>2023-24<br/>(Original)<br/>(\$ million)</b> | <b>2024-25<br/>(Estimate)<br/>(\$ million)</b> |
|--|--|--|
| Personal emoluments and personnel related expenses | 14.7   | 15.8   |
| General departmental expenses                      | 5.3  | 6.9  |
| Total:   | 20.0   | 22.7   |

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0060)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry  
(Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme, one of the matters requiring special attention in 2024-25 of the Efficiency Office is to continue to promote the adoption of innovation and technology (I&T) by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to improve government services. Please inform this Committee the expenditure incurred by the Government for promoting the relevant work in the past financial year. What is the specific outcome of the efforts made to promote the use of I&T by B/Ds to enhance their services? What are the specific work plans for 2024-25? What are the expenditure involved and the expected outcomes?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

The Government is committed to promoting the adoption of innovation and technology (I&T) by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to enhance operational efficiency and continuously improve public services. In 2023-24, the Efficiency Office (EffO) worked with the 45 B/Ds participating in the "Be the Smart Regulator" and the "Streamlining of Government Services" programmes in proposing nearly 200 business facilitation and streamlining measures, covering over 500 licences and services. About 80% of the measures involved the adoption of I&T, with a view to providing more electronic services for the trade and the general public. These include provision of online application services through "iAM Smart", establishment of various electronic payment channels, development of chatbots to facilitate the handling of enquiries, and provision of end-to-end electronic services, etc.

We have also implemented a series of support measures to departments, such as jointly organising a technology forum with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, showcasing the latest I&T solutions for departments, and arranging business matching for interested departments and companies to help the departments further explore or test whether

the relevant solutions are suitable for their services. Moreover, we also introduce the latest I&T solutions and provide matching services to departments through the InnoGov Portal, an intranet website of EffO. Currently, the website provides a total of about 160 I&T solutions in 11 categories. We took forward the relevant work with existing manpower and resources.

In 2024-25, we will continue to foster the development of digital government and digitalisation of government services. The targets include digitalising all licences, services involving application and approval and forms by mid-2024, and fully implementing the provision of electronic payment option for all government services by the third quarter of 2024. We took forward the relevant work with existing manpower and resources.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0062)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme, among the key areas of work and Matters Requiring Special Attention, the Efficiency Office has to oversee the operation of the 1823 contact centre, provide overall direction and enhancement services for 1823, and further improve the service of 1823 through the application of innovative technologies. Please advise this Committee on the expenditure and manpower involved in the 1823 service in the past year. What is the increase or decrease as compared to the previous year? What are the estimated expenditure and manpower to be involved in the new financial year 2024-25? What specific plans does the Government have to further improve the 1823 service? What kinds of innovative technologies will be introduced to improve the relevant services and reduce manpower?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

In 2023-24, the expenditure required for 1823 was about \$175 million, including salary expenditure, support/maintenance costs of the relevant systems and other operating expenses, representing an increase of about 6.7% over the actual expenditure in 2022-23. On manpower, 1823 employed 9 civil servants on establishment and 498 Non-Civil Service Contract (NCSC) staff (including full-time staff and part-time staff on a full-time equivalent basis) in 2023-24. Due to the turnover of NCSC staff, there was a 5% decrease in manpower as compared with 2022-23. In 2024-25, the estimated expenditure is about \$180 million, including the salary expenditure for 525 NCSC staff.

To continuously improve service quality and efficiency, 1823 will further strengthen the application of technology. In 2024-25, in a bid to enhance the case handling capability and efficiency, 1823 will expand its artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot for enquiry service to answer frequently asked questions under its service scope, and pilot the use of generative AI

technology to assist colleagues in drafting replies to written enquiries from members of the public. It will also adopt AI speech recognition technology to identify callers' enquiries for disseminating the relevant information, etc. 1823 will continue to keep a close watch on the latest technological development and application, and actively explore the possibility of further adoption of innovative technologies, such as AI, in various areas to enhance service efficiency.

Furthermore, 1823 will continue to advise departments concerning the dissemination of information to improve their communication with the public, so as to reduce avoidable enquiries and complaints. It will also continue to optimise its business process and knowledge base to enhance operational efficiency.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB059**

**(Question Serial No. 0063)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme last year, the Efficiency Office of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau would continue to supervise and support the operation of the "Gerontechnology Platform" by the appointed intermediary for fostering the development and application of gerontechnology in Hong Kong. However, this matter is not mentioned in the 2024-25 Estimates of Expenditure. Please inform this Committee of the Government's expenditure and the work done and its effectiveness with regard to fostering the development, application and popularisation of gerontechnology in the past year. In 2024-25, will such work be continued, and what are the estimated expenditure, the specific work plan and the anticipated effectiveness? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

Having consulted the Labour and Welfare Bureau, our reply is as follows:

To promote the use of innovative technologies among service providers, the Government continues to subsidise eligible elderly and rehabilitation service units to procure, rent or trial technology products through the Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care (I&T Fund). As at end February 2024, the I&T Fund had approved grants totalling about \$660 million, subsidising about 1 900 service units to procure or rent over 18 000 technology products. In addition, the Social Welfare Department has expanded the coverage of the Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly to the rental of assistive technology products since September 2023, and expanded the service scope of more than 210 subvented elderly centres in Hong Kong to include the promotion of gerontechnology since October 2023. The Government will inject additional \$1 billion into the I&T Fund in 2024-25 and continue to promote the development and application of gerontechnology.

Moreover, the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund provided a funding of around \$49 million from January 2021 to December 2023 for the development of an inclusive one-stop Gerontechnology Platform (the Platform) to launch various services, including an online knowledge hub to provide various gerontechnology-related information to relevant sectors and members of the public, and to assist gerontechnology product suppliers in establishing direct connection with users to conduct trials and studies in the residential care homes and community and obtain feedback, so as to further assist in the targeted optimisation of gerontechnology products and solutions and the promotion of their use in Hong Kong. The Platform has completed the testing of gerontechnology products in residential care homes in end-2023. The ten themes of the product testing covered fall detection, companion robot, health monitoring, transferring and lifting, infection control, anti-wandering, communications, soft meals (care food), smart environment and cognitive training. The Platform is consolidating the framework documents on product testing, which will be published via the knowledge hub upon completion for reference and adoption by the relevant sectors. At the community level, the Platform encourages the mutual communication between community users and suppliers with the concept of Living Lab. The Platform has also published the “HK Gerontech Living Lab Blueprint Strategy” in October 2023 to share the experience of Australia in developing Living Labs and collaborating with other places globally, which served as an essential reference for establishing Gerontechnology Living Labs in Hong Kong. In the coming three years, the knowledge hub of the Platform will continue to operate to provide members of the public with gerontechnology-related information. Furthermore, the Platform will share with other relevant bureaux/departments the experience and information regarding the project as a reference for the implementation or optimisation of their support measures.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0064)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme, the matters requiring special attention in 2024-25 of the Efficiency Office include to merge with the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer to facilitate the establishment of the Digital Policy Office. Please inform this Committee of the estimated expenditure of the related work, manpower to be increased or decreased, specific work plan, and its anticipated effectiveness or key performance indicators (KPIs).

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the promotion of sharing open data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and smart city, such as establishing the “digital identity of enterprises” platform, promoting cross-boundary data flow, cross-boundary public services and other initiatives that support the development of the “Digital Bay Area”; strengthening the support and supervision of the management of e-government services by B/Ds, etc. To deploy suitable manpower to take forward these key initiatives, we propose to re-organise the existing manpower structure of OGCIO and EffO and transfer the manpower to DPO, and appropriately create one directorate post responsible for strengthening efforts in taking

forward the facilitation of cross-boundary data flow, the development of “Digital Bay Area”, the implementation of “Cross-boundary Public Services”, as well as the liaison with the Mainland, etc. The new Office, upon establishment, will adopt the key performance indicators (KPIs) set by the two existing Offices, and will continue to review and introduce new KPIs. We plan to consult the Legislative Council Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting and Establishment Subcommittee on the proposals and seek support from the Finance Committee in the first half of 2024. Our target is to complete the relevant procedures by mid-2024.

- End -



**ITIB061**

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0297)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As mentioned by the Financial Secretary in paragraph 104 of the Budget Speech about promoting digital inclusion, “We strive to reduce digital exclusion and promote the wider use of information technology by various community groups, including elderly persons. The Government will allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund to provide, in the next 3 years, elderly people aged 60 or above with digital training courses and technical support, so that they can integrate into the digital era more easily and enjoy the benefits that digital technology brings. The first group of projects is expected to commence in the fourth quarter of 2024 at the earliest and benefit at least 50 000 elderly persons”. Please inform this Committee of the details of expenditure of the funding of \$100 million in the next 3 years, as well as its specific work plans and key performance indicators. What are the expenditure, work done and specific outcomes for promoting the adoption of information and communications technology among the elderly through the Elderly Outreach and Training Programmes in 2023-24? Will such work be continued in the coming year? If yes, what are the details and will there be any overlapping with the above funding of \$100 million? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

The Government has been committed to taking measures to promote digital inclusion and encourage various sectors to play an active part in helping those in need, including the elderlies, get to know and use technology products and services, so that they can fully integrate into the digital society.

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) launched the “ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly” (the Outreach Programme) in June 2023 for a period of

two years. Through six engaged non-profit-making organisations and their service networks, visits are organised to elderlies across the territory, including those living in residential care homes, receiving day care and home care services and the hidden elderlies, etc. A variety of activities have been organised for elderlies to experience digital living, encouraging them to make wider use of digital technology. Furthermore, OGCIO has included the pilot mobile outreach service stations as a part of the Outreach Programme with the set up of over 300 mobile outreach service stations across the territory to assist elderlies in the community in using smartphones and mobile applications. As of February 2024, the number of participating elderlies under the Outreach Programme was over 18 000, and the mobile outreach service stations also served more than 10 000 elderlies in the community. It is estimated that the number of participating elderlies in the Outreach Programme will be over 68 000, including 20 000 elderlies to be benefitted from the mobile outreach service stations.

Moreover, the Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (the Training Programme) launched by the OGCIO in 2021 was completed in December 2023. By subsidising 11 Elder Academies, the Training Programme provided free advanced ICT training courses to elderlies in the community with basic knowledge on digital technology. In addition to commonly used Government mobile applications like “iAM Smart”, training topics also covered smart healthcare, online shopping, mobile payment, mobile applications frequently used in the Mainland, social media, e-wallet and cyber security, etc., to assist elderlies in equipping relevant skills. A total of about 4 000 elderlies have participated in the recently completed Training Programme.

The total expenditure of the abovementioned Outreach Programmes and Training Programmes in 2023-24 is around \$18 million.

OGCIO will continue to implement the two-year Outreach Programme which was launched in June 2023, and set up more than 300 mobile outreach service stations across the territory at different times to attract the participation of elderlies and introduce to them commonly used mobile applications. It is estimated that the number of participating elderlies in the Outreach Programme will be over 68 000, including 20 000 elderlies to be benefitted from the mobile outreach service stations. In addition, the OGCIO will launch a new round of two-year Training Programme in the second quarter of 2024, and expect that over 3 000 elderlies will benefit. OGCIO will also keep developing and introducing more learning modules for the Elderly IT Learning Portal to meet the needs of elderlies in response to the development of digital technologies and the ever-changing digital lifestyles, and to encourage elderlies to embark on lifelong learning.

The Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) allocated a total of about \$13 million in 2021 to support four innovative projects to promote inter-generational digital inclusion by engaging young people to enhance the capability and interest of the elderlies in learning and adopting digital technologies, and at the same time promote inter-generational harmony and enhance social cohesion. These projects cover a wide range of activities, including providing digital outreach rehabilitation services for the elderlies, training young people to teach elderlies the operations of tablet computers/smartphones and mobile applications, engaging the elderlies after training to volunteer and introduce digital products to their fellows, etc. These four projects will all be completed by April 2024, with a total of 600 participating youths since October 2021, benefiting more than 4 700 elderlies.

In addition, the Government plans to allocate \$100 million under the SIE Fund to subsidise non-governmental organisations to set up community-based help desks at suitable locations (e.g. community centres) in various districts to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elderlies aged 60 or above in Hong Kong, particularly the singleton or doubleton elderlies, in the coming three years. Apart from smartphone operation and the use of digital government services (e.g. iAM Smart and other commonly used government mobile applications), we also intend to cover topics such as online shopping, electronic payment and cyber security in the programme, with a view to enhancing the elderlies' capability in adopting digital technologies. Experienced staff (or volunteers) will station at the community-based help desks to provide technical support tailored to the specific needs of the elderlies, so that they can enjoy the benefits brought about by digital services. We expect the programme to benefit at least 50 000 elderlies, and by mid-2024 at the earliest, invite project proposals from institutions/ organisations through open invitation, with the first batch of programme commencing in the fourth quarter of 2024. The major expenses of the programme will cover the engagement of institutions to provide training courses on digital technologies and technical support services, publicity expenses, etc. and the details are yet to be finalised.

The digital inclusion programmes for the elderlies implemented by the OGCIO and SIE Fund have different focuses. The former mainly targets at the elderlies living in residential care homes, receiving day care and home care services. It encourages them to make wider use of digital technologies through a variety of activities to experience digital living. Apart from organising trial classes for the elderlies to learn and use digital products, it also incorporates various technology elements such as using smart robots to teach fitness exercise, demonstrating rehabilitation treatment with virtual reality devices, and using archer games on augmented reality to train up elderlies in strengthening their muscle and hand-eye co-ordination, etc. The service organisations under the Outreach Programme also set up mobile outreach service stations on pilot basis in various districts to introduce commonly used mobile applications to elderlies at irregular times. Regarding the latter, it focuses on the elderlies, especially the singleton or doubleton elderlies who are not conversant with digital technologies. Through the regular and fixed-point services provided by community-based help desks, it enables the elderlies to seek assistance more easily as they can seek one-to-one technical support when encountering problems on digital technology applications and, with specific assistance, have their individual problems resolved, thus ensuring their effective and safe use of digital technologies, such as iAM Smart and other common government mobile applications, online shopping, electronic payment and cyber security, etc. These allow the elderlies to fully integrate into the digital society and achieve the objectives of the SIE Fund, which are to alleviate poverty and social exclusion in Hong Kong as well as foster the well-being and cohesion of the society by promoting social innovation. In finalising the implementation details of the SIE Fund programme, we will complement the services of the OGCIO (including the mobile outreach service stations) to maximise the synergy effect and avoid overlapping of resources.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0763)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme, the Bureau will pay special attention to, among other matters, “actively promot(ing) Hong Kong’s new opportunities to the Mainland and overseas, including collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises (OASES) to attract high-potential or representative innovation and technology enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong and top-notch innovation and technology talents to bring with them their business or research and development outcomes to Hong Kong”. Please inform this Committee of the efforts made in the past year (2023-24) by, among others, the OASES, the Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport in attracting high-potential and representative innovation and technology enterprises from the Mainland and overseas, and the effectiveness of such efforts; the expenditure involved; the number of enterprises attracted to Hong Kong; and the industries and the innovation and technology categories they belong to. Please provide a breakdown in a table.

In the current year (2024-25), what specific work plans and performance indicators does the Government have in respect of attracting strategic enterprises to Hong Kong, and what will be the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB), in collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises (OASES), has been contacting enterprises from the Mainland and overseas proactively to attract and assist high-potential or representative innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. Since 2023, we have contacted more than 200 Mainland and overseas I&T enterprises and successfully attracted about 50 enterprises to Hong Kong. These enterprises, mainly from

industries of strategic importance: life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technology, are expected to bring more than \$40 billion in investment to Hong Kong, creating more than 13 000 jobs over the next few years. Their presence in Hong Kong will bring in upstream, midstream and downstream partners from their industry chains, thereby promoting a vibrant development of our I&T sector.

The goal of the ITIB is to attract not less than 100 high-potential or representative I&T enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong by 2027, including at least 20 top-notch I&T enterprises, bringing more than \$10 billion in investment to Hong Kong and creating thousands of local job opportunities. The ITIB will continue to contact strategic enterprises proactively to conduct negotiation and provide appropriate assistance, with a view to facilitating the setting up of businesses by Mainland and overseas enterprises in Hong Kong. The ITIB has all along been using existing manpower and resources to implement the relevant work with the OASES. A breakdown of the expenditure involved for individual work items is not available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0822)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Financial Secretary has mentioned in paragraph 126 of the Budget Speech that “We will launch a Frontier Technology Research Infrastructure Support Scheme to assist the 8 University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities, on a matching basis, in procuring facilities and conducting research projects which cover various fields such as AI, quantum information, integrated circuit, clinical medicine and health, and gene and biotechnology. To this end, we will allocate \$3 billion from the sum earmarked in the past.” What are the details of the expenditure of the funding? What are the specific work plan and timetable? What are the anticipated key performance indicators and how many research and development projects will be attracted?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

It is proposed in the 2024-25 Budget that a Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme (the Support Scheme) will be launched to assist the 8 University Grants Committee-funded universities, on a matching basis, in procuring facilities and conducting research projects led by top-notch Mainland and overseas researchers, which cover various fields such as artificial intelligence, quantum information, integrated circuit, clinical medicine and health, and gene and biotechnology. To this end, the Government will allocate \$3 billion from the sum earlier earmarked. The Government is currently working out the detailed arrangements of the Support Scheme and plans to consult the relevant institutions during the year. Consultation with the Legislative Council on the proposal is expected to take place within this year.

- End -

**ITIB064**

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0823)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The latest Budget proposes to provide impetus for the policy of developing innovation and technology in Hong Kong. The Financial Secretary mentioned in paragraph 123 of the Budget Speech that “We will set up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world, with a focus on life and health disciplines, to conduct research. This will be conducive to the development of international I&T centre in the Loop and the GBA. We will allocate \$2 billion from the \$10 billion earmarked to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop. We will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to start-ups engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc.” What are the specific work plan and timetable in respect of the financial provision? What are the key performance indicators?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

Life and health technology industry will be the key direction of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development in the future. As announced in the 2024-25 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government will allocate \$2.2 billion to support setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Loop, including allocating \$2 billion to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop and \$200 million to provide assistance to start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc.

The HSITP Limited is progressing with the construction of 8 buildings in Batch 1 of the HSITP. Of these, 4 are wet-lab enabled buildings to tie in with the development of the

InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Upon completion of the Batch 1 buildings in the HSITP progressively, research teams and enterprises related to the life and health industry are expected to move in. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0824)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The HKSAR Government earmarked \$10 billion in the previous Budget to promote the development of life and health technology. Will the Government please advise this Committee on the result of the work to promote the development of life and health technology in 2023- 24? How much was spent? The Financial Secretary mentioned in paragraph 113 of the Budget Speech that “Of this, \$6 billion will be used to provide subsidies for local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations to set up life and health technology research institutes. The purpose is to facilitate relevant R&D activities and transformation of R&D outcomes, and to attract leading I&T talent and research teams around the world to Hong Kong.” What are the details of the plan and the timetable? What are the key performance indicators?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

Life and health technology industry will be the key direction of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development in the future. As announced in the 2023-24 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government will allocate \$6 billion to provide subsidies for local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations to set up life and health technology research institutes (LHTRIs). The purpose is to facilitate relevant research and development (R&D) activities and transformation of R&D outcomes, and to attract leading innovation and technology talent and research teams around the world to Hong Kong.

Subsequently, the Government worked on finalising the proposal on the subsidy programme for LHTRIs, and consulted the stakeholders in the course. On 20 February 2024, the Government consulted and secured support from the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on

Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology. The Government plans to seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) in the second quarter of 2024. After FC's funding approval is obtained, the Government will invite applications from universities interested in setting up LHTRIs.

Under the current proposal, an applicant institution must be a local university funded by the University Grants Committee with medical school and/or is offering life and health disciplines. The LHTRI should engage in basic research, translational research as well as transformation of R&D outcomes on themes falling within the field of life and health-related technologies. The themes may include but are not limited to cell and gene therapy, bioinformatics and biology, biomedical engineering, advanced therapy, medical diagnostics, drug and vaccine development, and clinical trial. In the application submitted, the institution should set out clearly relevant information of a proposed LHTRI, including the objectives, expected deliverables, implementation plan and performance indicators, etc. The successful applicant institution is required to enter into an agreement with the Government and the LHTRI is required to commence operation within 18 months from the signing of the agreement.

In addition, in order to promote the development of the life and health industry in Hong Kong, the InnoLife Healthtech Hub will be set up in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Loop to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines. To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP, the Government will allocate \$2 billion from the aforementioned \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop, and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

- End -

**ITIB066**

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0825)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Financial Secretary mentioned in paragraph 109 of his Budget Speech that “we will allocate \$3 billion to Cyberport for the launch of the three-year AI Subsidy Scheme to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises to leverage the Centre’s computing power and achieve scientific breakthroughs. The subsidy will also be used to strengthen the cyber security and data protection of the Centre, and launch promotional and educational activities, etc. to encourage Mainland and overseas AI experts, enterprises and R&D projects to come to Hong Kong.” Please inform this Committee of the Government’s expenditure used for the promotion of AI development in 2023-24. What was the work done? What were the outcomes? Please provide a breakdown of the relevant figures. In regard to the \$3 billion funding, what are the specific work plan and timetable for the next 3 years? What are the KPIs of the work?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

Artificial intelligence (AI) as an important driver of the new round of technological and industrial transformation is key to propelling the development of digital economy. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint promulgated by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) in 2022 proposes priority development of technology industries with a competitive edge and of strategic significance, including AI and data science. The Government has been adopting comprehensive and flexible strategy to proactively plan, build and develop the AI ecosystem in Hong Kong.

In respect of policies, guidelines and regulations, the Government and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data have published the Ethical AI Framework and the Guidance on the Ethical Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence respectively for reference by the industry. The Policy Statement on Facilitating Data Flow and Safeguarding

Data Security in Hong Kong issued by the ITIB in end-2023 also sets out specific action items to be implemented by the Government to facilitate data flow and strengthen data security protection in order to better co-ordinate AI development and security, including exploring further enhancement of the Copyright Ordinance.

As for strengthening research capabilities, AIR@InnoHK has set up 15 research and development (R&D) centres focusing on AI and robotics technologies under the InnoHK research clusters, pooling together from around the world some 1 300 researchers in relevant fields. In addition, it was announced in the 2024-25 Budget that \$3 billion will be allocated to launch a Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme to assist the 8 University Grants Committee-funded universities, on a matching basis, in procuring related facilities and conducting research projects led by top-notch Mainland and overseas researchers in various fields such as AI, quantum information and integrated circuit.

Moreover, the Government will launch the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) this year. Enterprises engaging in AI and data science, life and health technology, and advanced manufacturing and new energy technology will each be provided with funding support of up to \$200 million on a matching basis of 1 (Government) : 2 (enterprise). Applicant enterprises shall invest no less than \$200 million in Hong Kong. It is anticipated that the NIAS will attract 50 to 100 enterprises engaging in relevant industries to invest no less than \$20 billion to set up advanced production facilities in Hong Kong.

In the meantime, the Government is dedicated to enlarging the talent pool for innovation and technology. For examples, the Research Talent Hub, the Technology Talent Admission Scheme and the Talent List are all aimed at nurturing and attracting technology talents, including AI specialists, from home and elsewhere. Cyberport and the Science Park have more than 600 AI and big data companies, including top-notch AI companies nurtured locally and a number of leading companies from the Mainland and other regions, which set up R&D centres or expand their business in Hong Kong.

Regarding infrastructure, Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim of enhancing R&D capabilities in different fields and promoting industry development.

To further promote the development of the AI ecosystem, the 2024-25 Budget announced the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres, enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim of providing sufficient financial support to eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of the computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing power resources of the AISC. The Subsidy Scheme can in general provide eligible users with a subsidy of up to 70% of the standard service rates as the computing power subsidy. Cyberport will be asked to set up an independent committee to determine the details on the beneficiaries, terms for disbursement of the subsidies, etc. The independent committee will take into account various factors and endorse the specific amount and duration of the subsidy

to be granted to individual cases to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

The Government will require Cyberport to set up performance indicators, covering the utilisation of the AISC's services, R&D achievement, talent promotion, operation, and promotion of cybersecurity and ecosystem development, for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme.

Upon passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out publicity and promotion, thereby pressing ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0070)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to Programme (3), the Efficiency Office will further improve the service of 1823 in the coming year through the application of innovative technologies. What is the reason for the 1823 contact centre not meeting the target of answering calls within 12 seconds in 2023? Will it recruit additional manpower to raise the percentage of calls that can be answered within 12 seconds? If so, what are the details? As the 1823 enquiry service will fully expand its artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot to answer common enquiries within its service scope, what is the expected completion time of the expansion work? Will the new functions of 1823 be promoted to the public in the coming year? If so, what are the details and the expenditure and manpower to be involved? Will performance targets be set for the AI chatbot? If so, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

The 3 key performance indicators for 1823 are “customer satisfaction rate”, “percentage of callers that have their enquiries addressed at the first time of calling” and “percentage of calls that can be answered within 12 seconds”. In the five-year period from 2019 to 2023, the performance of the first and second indicators were 4.5 points and 99% respectively, both of which exceeded the respective targets of 4.0 points and 95%. As for the “percentage of calls answered within 12 seconds”, the achievement of the target is affected by various external factors (such as the number, distribution and complexity of incoming calls and written contacts) and internal factors (such as staff recruitment and wastage position). With the easing of the epidemic and the society resuming full normalcy, the percentage of calls that can be answered within 12 seconds improved from 61% in 2022 to 74% in 2023.

To continuously improve service quality and efficiency, 1823 will further strengthen the application of technology with a view to coping with the public demand for its service. In 2023, 1823 completed the telephony system upgrade project, including the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) speech recognition technology through which members of the public can use their voice to input the required options without pressing any button. The technology also enables the recognition of callers' enquiries for the provision of relevant information, thereby facilitating public access to information on government services. In 2024-25, 1823 will fully expand its AI chatbot for enquiry service to answer frequently asked questions under all of its scope of service. It will also conduct a project to pilot the use of generative AI technology to assist staff in drafting replies to written enquiries from citizens. In addition, it will apply AI speech-to-text technology to transcribe citizens' voicemail messages into text so as to enhance the handling efficiency. 1823 will adopt AI speech recognition technology to identify callers' enquiry subjects so that callers can receive the requested information by short message service (SMS). We aim at implementing the above enhancements within 2024. 1823 will continue to keep a close watch on the latest technological developments and applications, and actively explore the possibility of further adoption of innovative technologies, such as AI, in various areas to enhance service efficiency. Furthermore, 1823 will continue to advise departments concerning the dissemination of information to improve their communication with the public, so as to reduce avoidable enquiries and complaints. It will also continue to optimise its business process and knowledge base to enhance operational efficiency.

The expansion of the AI chatbot will be carried out by existing manpower and is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2024. The chatbot is one of the electronic services of the 1823 website and mobile application, and no specific performance indicator has been set. On publicity, we plan to introduce the new functions of 1823 to the public through various channels, such as traditional media, social media platforms and the 1823 thematic website (1823.gov.hk), with the existing manpower and resources. We will also set up booths in major exhibitions such as the InnoEX to promote the chatbot to the public.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB068**

**(Question Serial No. 0079)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned under Programme (2) that one of the responsibilities of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is to encourage collaboration among institutions in developing innovation and technology. Will the Government follow the Shenzhen Municipal Government (in setting up a RMB 10 billion Pilot Innovation Fund) and the Chengdu Municipal Government (in setting up a RMB 5 billion Pilot Platform Construction Fund) to establish a Hong Kong Special Fund for Pilot Innovation and a Special Fund for Promoting Common Technology Research and Development, so as to provide funding support for tertiary institutions, public research institutions and industry organisations, etc. and to support relevant institutions in integrating with their respective key development directions, such as setting up pilot innovation studios, pilot platforms for common technologies and pilot bases? If yes, what are the details of the funding schemes involved? What is the manpower involved in implementing the schemes?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

To realise Hong Kong's vision of becoming an international innovation and technology (I&T) centre, the Government promulgated the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint in December 2022, setting out four major development directions, including (a) enhancing the I&T ecosystem and promoting "new industrialisation" in Hong Kong; (b) enlarging the I&T talent pool to create strong impetus for growth; (c) promoting digital economy development and developing Hong Kong into a smart city; and (d) proactively integrating into the overall development of the country and consolidating our role as a bridge connecting the Mainland and the world.



In respect of enhancing the I&T ecosystem and promoting “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong, we need to develop a comprehensive I&T ecological chain encompassing the upstream, midstream and downstream sectors. Along the chain, transformation and commercialisation of upstream research and development (R&D) outcomes will take place in the midstream. R&D products will go through testing and validation at pilot lines before mass production, which will stimulate industry development in the downstream, and in turn generate demands and resources for R&D to support development in the upstream and midstream sectors. Thus, a healthy cycle will be created with various complementary sectors.

The Government is actively taking forward various initiatives to speed up commercialisation and industrialisation of R&D outcomes:

- (a) The Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI) will be established within this year to spearhead and facilitate collaboration among universities, R&D centres and the industry in the field of the third-generation semiconductor core technology, thereby promoting the “1 to N” transformation of R&D outcomes, and assisting the industry in enhancing efficiency as well as achieving upgrading and transformation and realising R&D outcomes by leveraging the well-developed manufacturing industry chains in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. The MRDI will set up two 8-inch pilot lines (one for Silicon Carbide and another one for Gallium Nitride) to assist start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises in addressing their pain points and conducting trial runs with a view to industrialising their R&D outcomes;
- (b) The Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) provides funding, on a matching basis, to research teams in universities to transform and realise R&D outcomes and initiate the commercialisation process. Each approved project will receive funding support ranging from \$10 million to \$100 million. The funding scope includes the manpower, instruments and equipment and other related expenses (e.g. fees for using a pilot test centre, product testing fees etc.) incurred by the research teams in universities for the R&D work to transform R&D outcomes/the production of prototypes/the manufacture of products;
- (c) The \$10 billion “New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme” will be launched within this year, under which funding will be provided on a 1 (government): 2 (enterprise) matching basis for companies in industries of strategic importance (i.e. life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technology) to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong, including pilot production facilities;
- (d) The “Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities” provides funding to six designated universities to support their teams in starting technology businesses and commercialising their R&D results. The funding scope covers expenditure on R&D activities and pilot manufacturing. Meanwhile, an annual funding of \$16 million is provided to the Technology Transfer Office of each designated university, with a view to enhancing their technology transfer capabilities;
- (e) The “Public Sector Trial Scheme” provides funding to R&D projects and technology companies funded under the Innovation and Technology Fund to produce

prototypes/samples of their R&D outcomes for trials in the public sector (including government departments), with a view to realising and commercialising R&D outcomes;

- (f) The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) facilitates start-ups to establish connection with the industry through leveraging its incubation experience and investment/business networks, with a view to promoting technology transfer and commercialisation of R&D outcomes. The HKSTPC has also been actively connecting with the industry to facilitate collaboration between park companies and the local trade and industry; and
- (g) Measures are put in place to attract top-notch I&T enterprises from overseas and the Mainland to set up or expand businesses in Hong Kong, including encouraging those enterprises to invest in the setting up of R&D centres and pilot transformation bases.

We will keep the actual situation under review and formulate appropriate measures where necessary, with a view to accelerating commercialisation and industrialisation of R&D outcomes.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0108)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The “New Industrialisation Funding Scheme” aims to encourage local companies in the traditional manufacturing sector or emerging industries to set up new smart production lines so as to expedite “new industrialisation”. However, quite a number of manufacturers reflect that even though they have invested in bringing in advanced machinery, Hong Kong lacks the corresponding assistance by maintenance professionals. In this connection, what specific measures or plans does the Government have to nurture more local personnel with knowledge in the maintenance of industrial equipment to help promote “new industrialisation”? Will the relevant bureau take the initiative to discuss with the Labour and Welfare Bureau to address manpower shortage as early as possible? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 57)

Reply:

Having consulted the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB), we provide the below consolidated reply.

The Innovation and Technology Commission launched the Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) in June 2018, providing a fast-track arrangement for admitting overseas and Mainland technology talent to conduct research and development activities in designated technology areas in Hong Kong. In view of the manpower demand, in particular that for technical personnel, from enterprises participating in the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme, we plan to increase the flexibility of the TechTAS to allow enterprises participating in the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme to employ a certain number of non-local technical personnel equipped with the skills and experience required in setting up and operating large-scale smart production facilities in Hong Kong. We will allot quotas for importing technical personnel to these enterprises, so that they can take forward their plans to

procure, install and operate the necessary machinery and equipment in Hong Kong. The enterprises concerned may apply for a maximum of 5 quotas with a validity period of 2 years.

We also hope that these technical personnel can share their experience and skills so as to nurture and enhance the skills of their local counterparts.

In addition, the LWB commenced in mid-2023 a new round of Manpower Projection with an enhanced methodology to assess the manpower requirements and shortages for key industries driving Hong Kong's economic growth and essential services supporting the city's operation (including technical trades which require time in manpower training, such as maintenance professionals) in 5 years (i.e. 2023-2028), and to provide an empirical basis for the Government and various stakeholders to grasp the situation of manpower and skills shortages in key industries and trades in Hong Kong, so as to formulate appropriate strategies on manpower development training and employment. Key findings are expected to be available in the third quarter of 2024 whilst a detailed report is tentatively planned to be promulgated in early 2025.

- End -

**ITIB070**

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3132)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to paragraph 97 of the Budget Speech, the Government has set up iAM Smart registration service counters in Guangzhou as well as in Qianhai and Futian of Shenzhen, and introduced the first Hong Kong Cross-boundary Public Services self-service kiosk in Guangzhou, in order to facilitate Hong Kong residents and enterprises in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) cities to access the Cross-boundary Public Services and register for iAM Smart. What are the utilisation figures of the above facilities? Whether manpower has been arranged to assist residents and enterprises in using the Hong Kong Cross-boundary Public Services self-service kiosk, and whether technical support has been provided accordingly? Will additional iAM Smart registration service counters and Hong Kong Cross-boundary Public Services self-service kiosks be set up in other GBA cities in the future? If yes, what are the details? What are the expenditure and manpower involved?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The HKSAR Government is actively collaborating with the Guangdong Provincial Government in the promotion of the Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS), with a view to facilitating residents and enterprises in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to enjoy convenient and quick access to public services of the two places. We have set up “iAM Smart” registration service counters in Guangzhou as well as in Qianhai and Futian of Shenzhen since 2023, facilitating Hong Kong citizens working and living on the Mainland to register for or upgrade “iAM Smart” without the need to return to Hong Kong. The total monthly expenditure is approximately HK\$227,000 and no additional manpower is involved. As of February 2024, more than 300 visits to the registration service counters in Guangzhou as well as in Qianhai and Futian of Shenzhen with successful “iAM Smart” registrations being conducted. The registration service counters will be gradually replaced by self-registration kiosks to provide more cost-effective services in conjunction with the CBPS self-service kiosks. The cost of

each “iAM Smart” self-registration kiosk is about HK\$95,000 and no additional manpower is involved.

Besides, we rolled out the first Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosk at the Guangzhou Municipal Government Service Center (the Center) in February 2024. The total expenditure involved in developing the CBPS thematic website and the self-service kiosk was about HK\$1.08 million. We have engaged contractors to provide on-site support at the Center during the initial operation of the Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosk to assist users in using the self-service kiosk and answer their enquiries.

We will continue to identify and introduce more CBPS of Hong Kong so as to provide greater convenience to the public. In addition, we are discussing with Guangdong Province to set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks in more Mainland cities of the GBA, so as to cope with the demand for Hong Kong government services by GBA residents and enterprises. We will also cater for the needs of the Guangdong Provincial Government by assisting in setting up “Yue Zhi Zhu” self-service kiosks in Hong Kong to facilitate the public’s access to Guangdong’s government services through these self-service kiosks.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1340)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Please provide the following figures regarding the “Global STEM Professorship Scheme” since its implementation:

1. the number of outstanding STEM scholars invited to Hong Kong under the Scheme each year, with a breakdown by nationality, area of expertise, employer institution and place of work before being employed in Hong Kong, as well as the number of research fellows accompanying the STEM scholars subsidised by the Scheme;
2. the average amount of subsidy received by the STEM scholar and the accompanying research fellows in each case under the Scheme; and
3. the total number of STEM scholars who were invited to Hong Kong but have withdrawn from the Scheme so far, as well as the reasons for that.

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

The Global STEM Professorship Scheme supports local universities funded by the University Grants Committee in attracting research and development (R&D) talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. As at the end of February 2024, over 90 nominations for outstanding scholars have been supported, excluding about 30 selected scholars who did not eventually accept the invitation of the nominating universities. Among the supported scholars, 57 have taken up their posts in Hong Kong and are participating in the Scheme, details of which are set out at **Annex**. The remaining selected scholars will be arriving gradually. Under the

Scheme, the Research Talent Hub has subsidised nearly 140 relevant research team members. We do not maintain other statistical information about the research team members.

Under the Scheme, the nominating universities will discuss appointment matters with the selected scholars and provide them with the necessary support. The selected scholars in general need time to consider and make preparatory arrangements for moving to Hong Kong for work. They may be unable to commence work in Hong Kong due to reasons such as job transition and personal circumstances. Besides, the volatile global epidemic situation earlier inevitably lengthened the discussion between universities and scholars, and may also affect some scholars from taking up their posts in Hong Kong.

The Scheme provides remuneration subsidy to a university employing a selected scholar, which is capped at 50% of the actual remuneration offered by the university and subject to an annual ceiling of \$1 million for each selected scholar, over a period of up to 5 years. At present, the average total remuneration subsidy for each selected scholar who has come to Hong Kong is about \$4.8 million for the subsidised period. In addition, under the Scheme, a selected scholar can receive subsidy from the Research Talent Hub for recruiting up to 4 research team members to assist in his/her R&D work over a period of up to 3 years. At present, the average total subsidy for each relevant research team member is about \$1.02 million for the subsidised period.



## Details of Scholars who have come to Hong Kong

Table 1 - Number of Scholars who have come to Hong Kong by Discipline

|                                  | Number of Scholars who have come to Hong Kong (by Year of Arrival) |           |           |           |                           |           |
|----------------------------------|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
|                                  | 2020   | 2021      | 2022      | 2023      | 2024 (as at end February) | Total     |
| Computer Science and Engineering | -  | 7         | 12        | 9         | -                         | 28        |
| Medicine and Life Sciences       | 1  | 1         | 4         | 8         | 1                         | 15        |
| Natural Sciences and Others      | -  | 5         | 5         | 4         | -                         | 14        |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>1</b>   | <b>13</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>1</b>                  | <b>57</b> |

Table 2 - Number of Scholars who have come to Hong Kong by University

|  | Number of Scholars who have come to Hong Kong (by Year of Arrival) |           |           |           |                           |           |
|--|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
|  | 2020   | 2021      | 2022      | 2023      | 2024 (as at end February) | Total     |
| The Hong Kong Polytechnic University               | -  | 3         | 6         | 3         | 1                         | 13        |
| The University of Hong Kong                        | -  | 4         | 5         | 3         | -                         | 12        |
| City University of Hong Kong                       | -  | 2         | 3         | 6         | -                         | 11        |
| The Chinese University of Hong Kong                | -  | 2         | 5         | 4         | -                         | 11        |
| The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology | 1  | 2         | 1         | 3         | -                         | 7         |
| Hong Kong Baptist University                       | -  | -         | 1         | 2         | -                         | 3         |
| <b>Total</b>                                       | <b>1</b>   | <b>13</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>1</b>                  | <b>57</b> |

**Table 3 - Number of Scholars who have come to Hong Kong by Region of Former Appointment**

|                | Number of Scholars who have come to Hong Kong (by Year of Arrival) |           |           |           |                           |           |
|----------------|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
|                | 2020   | 2021      | 2022      | 2023      | 2024 (as at end February) | Total     |
| United States  | 1  | 8         | 9         | 6         | -                         | 24        |
| Singapore      | -  | -         | 5         | 7         | -                         | 12        |
| Australia      | -  | 2         | 4         | 4         | -                         | 10        |
| United Kingdom | -  | -         | 2         | 3         | 1                         | 6         |
| Others         | -  | 3         | 1         | 1         | -                         | 5         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>1</b>   | <b>13</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>21</b> | <b>1</b>                  | <b>57</b> |

- End -

**ITIB072**

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1341)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In 2023-24, it is mentioned under this Programme that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) “continued to take forward the planning of the development of new land earmarked for innovation and technology (I&T) uses to be provided by the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project and relocation of Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works”. However, in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25, it is stated that the ITIB will “continue to take forward the planning of the development of new sites earmarked for I&T uses”. Is it because the Financial Secretary said that capital works would be reviewed and re-prioritised, so the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project has been moved down on or removed from the list of work to be taken forward by the ITIB? If so, has the ITIB assessed the impacts it may have on the development of I&T sites? If not, when are the works expected to commence?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

Following the revival of the Ma Liu Shui reclamation project as announced in the 2021 Policy Address, the Civil Engineering and Development Department commissioned the “Engineering Study for Ma Liu Shui Reclamation” in July 2022 in respect of the technical assessment and preliminary design of the reclamation works. It was also proposed in the same Policy Address that the newly reclaimed land should be mainly for innovation and technology development. The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation is now conducting a preliminary study in this regard. Both studies are expected to be completed within 2024. Further information about the proposal will be available by then and suitable announcement will be made in due course.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1342)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme, it is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Bureau will “continue to implement the ‘Global STEM Professorship Scheme’ and launch a sub-scheme for visiting professors on a pilot basis”. In this connection, will the Bureau inform this Committee of:

1. the reasons for launching the sub-scheme and its details, including the level of subsidy, eligibility of participants, additional requirements imposed on the participants, as well as its comparison with the main scheme; and
2. the estimated number of target scientists to be attracted to Hong Kong under the sub-scheme in this financial year and the amount of subsidy concerned?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

A consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Global STEM Professorship Scheme (the Regular Scheme) supports local universities funded by the University Grants Committee in attracting research and development (R&D) talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. Taking into account the views of stakeholders, the Government launched the Sub-scheme for Visiting Professors (the Sub-scheme) on a pilot basis in January this year, providing universities with funding for attracting more eminent scholars in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines to come to Hong Kong as Visiting Professors, thereby encouraging international collaborations in innovation and technology (I&T) and expanding the local I&T talent pool

in the long run. Subject to the actual circumstances, we expect to support a total of around 20 selected Visiting Professors in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years.

With regard to subsidy, the Regular Scheme provides remuneration subsidy to a university employing a selected scholar, which is capped at 50% of the actual remuneration offered by the university and subject to an annual ceiling of \$1 million for each selected scholar, over a period of up to 5 years. In addition, under the Regular Scheme, a selected scholar can receive subsidy from the Research Talent Hub for recruiting up to 4 research team members to assist in his/her R&D work over a period of up to 3 years. If needed, a selected scholar may apply for subsidy from The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for setting up a laboratory. Similarly, the Sub-scheme provides remuneration subsidy to a university employing a selected Visiting Professor, which is capped at 50% of the actual monthly remuneration offered by the university and subject to a monthly ceiling of \$75,000 for each selected Visiting Professor, over a period of 3 to 6 months. Considering that Visiting Professors would in general engage in local scholars' research projects rather than initiate independent projects in Hong Kong, no subsidy will be provided under the Sub-scheme for recruiting research team members or setting up laboratories, as opposed to the Regular Scheme.

The eligibility criteria of the Regular Scheme and the Sub-scheme are largely the same. The research areas of a nominee may include but are not limited to the disciplines of Natural Sciences, Applied Sciences, Medical and Healthcare Sciences, Engineering, Mathematics and Information and Communications Technology. In addition, a nominee should have rich experience in teaching and research.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB074**

**(Question Serial No. 1343)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the service of 1823, what projects are using or preparing to use artificial intelligence? What are the relevant expenditures?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

1823 has been actively utilising technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), in different areas to enhance operational efficiency and service quality. In 2023, 1823 completed the telephony system upgrade project, including the adoption of AI speech recognition technology through which members of the public can use their voice to input the required options without pressing any button. The technology also enables the recognition of callers' enquiry subjects for the provision of relevant information, thereby facilitating public access to information on government services. In 2024-25, 1823 will fully expand its AI chatbot for enquiry service to answer frequently asked questions under all of its scope of service. It will also conduct a project to pilot the use of generative AI technology to assist staff in drafting replies to written enquiries from citizens. In addition, it will apply AI speech-to-text technology to transcribe citizens' voicemail messages into text so as to enhance the handling efficiency. 1823 will adopt AI speech recognition technology to identify callers' enquiry subjects so that callers can receive the requested information by short message service (SMS).

The estimated total expenditure for the above projects is approximately \$4.6 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3043)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. Please set out the establishments of the existing civil service and non-civil service posts in the Efficiency Office, and how many of them are directorate posts.
2. Please provide a breakdown of the on-going or completed consultancy services provided in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 by bureaux or departments (B/Ds), the scope of these consultancy services, and the implementation progress of the proposals eventually taken by B/Ds for the completed projects.

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

1. In 2023-24, the Efficiency Office (EffO) has an establishment of 94 posts, including 9 directorate posts and 85 non-directorate posts; and a Non-Civil Service Contract staff of about 500 (including full-time staff and part-time staff (in full-time equivalent)), most of which work for 1823.
2. Having regard to the needs of B/Ds, the EffO will provide them with consultancy services, such as application of innovation and technology (I&T) and business process re-engineering studies. The studies being conducted and completed by the EffO for B/Ds in the past 2 years (2022-2024) are set out in the following table. The studies have recommended, inter alia, streamlining of business processes, enhancement of user experience and wider adoption of technology to improve public services and efficiency in operations. The recommendations have been accepted and are implemented by the B/Ds concerned taking into account resources priorities, policy arrangements and the actual circumstances.

|    | <b>B/D Involved</b>  | <b>Project Name</b>  | <b>Project Scope</b>                                |
|----|--|--|---|
| 1. | Various B/Ds (Note)  | Study on Pilot Scheme of Data Interchange for Improving Public Services  | Application of I&T                                  |
| 2. | Customs and Excise Department  | Business Process Re-engineering Study on Integrated Vehicle Clearance System   | Business process re-engineering                     |
| 3. | Education Bureau   | Business Process Re-engineering Study on Regional Education Offices of the Education Bureau  | Business process re-engineering                     |
| 4. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer   | User Experience Design for Upgrade of “iAM Smart”  | Design thinking                                     |
| 5. | Innovation and Technology Commission   | Review of Funding Schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund   | Business process re-engineering                     |
| 6. | EffO   | Second Evaluation Study of the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund   | Social innovation                                   |
| 7. | Home Affairs Department  | Business Process Re-engineering Study on the Redevelopment of the Rates Exemption Information System for Village Houses in the New Territories     | Business process re-engineering                     |
| 8. | Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency   | Provision of Business Process Re-engineering and User-centric Design Consultancy Services for the Implementation of a Centralised e-Service Portal | Business process re-engineering and design thinking |
| 9. | Immigration Department, Department of Health, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and Hospital Authority | Business Process Re-engineering Study on the Application and Processing of After-death Related Services  | Business process re-engineering                     |

Note: Government departments participating in the pilot on data interchange for improving public services include the Social Welfare Department, the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency, etc.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2355)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

This year's Budget has proposed many forward-looking measures on innovation and technology (I&T) development, including the allocation of \$3 billion to launch a Frontier Technology Research Infrastructure Support Scheme. However, many places in the world have already developed mature technologies for operating supercomputing centres, such as OpenAi and Google, and Hong Kong is falling behind on this front. Meanwhile, Hong Kong is facing the bottlenecks of talent, land and data application in I&T development. The Government must put more efforts on nurturing talent, consolidating data and data interchange. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. It is reported that the daily operation of the Supercomputing Centre will incur very high electricity charges as Hong Kong is situated at lower latitudes and the operation of the Supercomputing Centre is not economical in terms of power usage effectiveness. Will the Government consider adopting a public-private partnership approach or a "Build-Operate-Transfer" approach to operate the Supercomputing Centre after its establishment? Such practice will not only effectively alleviate the financial burden on the Government, but will also encourage and support the active participation of commercial organisations and private enterprises in the establishment of the Supercomputing Centre.
2. Further to the above question, will the Government consider importing more clean energy through co-operation with the Mainland, so as to enable the Government to further reduce the high costs incurred in developing the Supercomputing Centre?
3. Many places in the Mainland have also started making great efforts to develop these technologies. However, even when we have established the Supercomputing Centre in Hong Kong, there is no corresponding policies on cross-regional joint technology research, application innovation and sharing of resources. Will the Government consider studying with relevant Mainland departments in the future to achieve cross-

provincial data interflow through opening up cross-regional resources to complement each other, with a view to revitalising the local economy through the enhancement of data infrastructure?

4. Since the Supercomputing Centre will run large-scale models that rely on massive database information, there may be two major hidden risks: leakage of personal data and commercial secrets as well as provision of false information. Will the Government review existing regulations for avoidance of the potential legal risks while appointing a consulting firm to carry out a feasibility study on the development of the Supercomputing Centre?
5. Will the Government consider revitalising the scope of the Technology Voucher Programme (TVP)? For instance, on completion of the Supercomputing Centre in the future, will private enterprises be allowed to pay the charge of using the Centre with TVP funding?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

1. The AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC) to be established in phases from this year onwards will be set up and operated by Cyberport under a market model. Cyberport will formulate the relevant operational arrangements having regard to market demand and its financial and human resources.
2. The Government has devised the decarbonisation strategy of “net-zero electricity generation” in Hong Kong’s Climate Action Plan 2050 promulgated in 2021. Under the overall target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, the Government will progressively increase the use of zero-carbon energy for electricity generation taking into account four important factors, i.e. safety, reliability, affordability and environmental performance. In this connection, the Government will continue to promote the development of renewable energy and, at the same time, explores ways to enhance regional co-operation and identify sources of zero-carbon energy in neighbouring regions, thereby enabling Hong Kong to use more clean fuels and progressively rely less on fossil fuel in electricity generation.

Cyberport will endeavour to adopt appropriate energy saving measures in the course of developing the AISC, with a view to reducing the burden on the environment and operating costs.

3. Data is the key driver for the development of innovation & technology (I&T) and digital economy in Hong Kong. The AISC will strengthen Hong Kong’s digital infrastructure to facilitate data-driven I&T development and cross-boundary co-operation. On cross-boundary data flow, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) and the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) entered into the “Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitating Cross-boundary Data Flow Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area” in June 2023 that provides clear directions on fostering collaboration on facilitating cross-boundary data flow in the Greater Bay Area under the national management framework on safeguarding the security of cross-boundary data.

The co-operation efforts will help facilitate the safe and orderly data flow from the Mainland to Hong Kong. At the same time, the ITIB has also been exploring actively with the Shenzhen authorities measures to facilitate convenient cross-boundary flow of innovation elements in Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone in the Loop, including exploring arrangements to expand cross-boundary research data flow from the Mainland to the Hong Kong Park in the Loop, on the premise of complying with national data security laws and regulations and maintaining risk controllability.

4. Cyberport is committed to ensuring the data and cyber security of the AISC in compliance with all applicable laws, including the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. The 2024-25 Budget proposes to allocate \$3 billion for the launch of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), of which \$100 million is earmarked for strengthening cyber and data security of the AISC.
5. To promote the development of the AI ecosystem and help the industry tap into the computing power of the AISC, the 2024-25 Budget proposes to allocate \$3 billion for the launch of a dedicated 3-year Subsidy Scheme, with the major objective to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises to leverage AISC's computing power, thereby providing sufficient financial support and incentive for eligible users to make good use of AISC's computing power services.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2359)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Earlier on, the Legislative Council Finance Committee approved \$10 billion for the research teams of the 8 universities under the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme to fund the transformation of research and development (R&D) outcomes, with each approved project to receive funding support from \$10 million to \$100 million. Commercialisation of R&D outcomes refers to extracting and converting the value of innovative inventions into economic value by means of commercialised models. Promoting economic development through technological achievements has become one of the important economic development strategies of advanced countries in recent years. Up to 2022, the Hong Kong Government's expenditure on research comprising merely 1.07% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), representing an increased expenditure-to-GDP ratio of 1.3%, still lags far behind the 11 cities in the Greater Bay Area. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. In order to encourage local academia/research institutes to commercialise R&D outcomes, will the Government undertake to optimise procurement procedures in the future as a way to improve the inadequacy of government agencies' procurement of technologies or innovative products developed locally?
2. Will the Government consider stepping up the role of local R&D centres in promoting cross-sector liaison and transformation of R&D outcomes?
3. The allocation and approval of R&D funds regarding the respective government subvented organisations are made basing on their own visions and objectives. To facilitate R&D entities' application for funding, will the Government consider putting in place an overarching strategy or platforms providing applicants with guidance on the allocation in their R&D funding applications and integrating fragmented sources of R&D resources?

4. Will the Government establish an Innovation and Enterprise platform bringing together stakeholders in the Government, industry, academia and research sectors to provide them with a platform for sharing knowledge, expertise and technology, and to support the industries to accelerate transformation of R&D outcomes into market-ready products and applicable business solutions for the benefit of more enterprises?
5. Will the Government consider taking supportive policy measures, such as a trial programme of procurement and “early and pilot implementation”, requiring each policy bureau to procure at least 4 items of local R&D outcomes or at least 60 items in total by all 15 bureaux every year to lead by example in demonstrating the commercialisation of R&D outcomes, thus enhancing the effectiveness of R&D in the city?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

Promoting research is an indispensable part of innovation and technology (I&T) development. The Government has been proactively promoting the I&T development of Hong Kong. Various policies and initiatives, including measures for promoting research and development (R&D), have achieved good progress, making the overall I&T ecosystem in Hong Kong increasingly vibrant. The R&D quality of Hong Kong’s universities is internationally recognised, with 5 universities ranked in the world’s top 100 and 2 medical schools ranked in the global top 40. Our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

In recent years, the Government has introduced various measures to support R&D, such as injecting capital into the Research Endowment Fund to increase research grants for post-secondary institutions; facilitating the research development of local universities through recurrent grants and various research funding schemes under the University Grants Committee; subsidising various R&D projects through different funding schemes of the Innovation and Technology Fund; setting up the *InnoHK* Research Clusters to promote global research collaboration; providing funding support for the development of life and health scientific research; making use of the Green Tech Fund to support R&D projects which aim to help Hong Kong decarbonise and enhance environmental protection; and supporting local medical and health research through the Health and Medical Research Fund. These various measures cater to the needs and characteristics of different stakeholders of the I&T ecosystem, and support R&D in a flexible manner.

In 2022, Hong Kong’s gross domestic expenditure on R&D (GERD) increased to about \$30.138 billion, and the GERD as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) went up to 1.07%. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint, promulgated at the end of 2022, has put forth reference development indicators with the target of raising the ratio of GERD to GDP to 2% by 2032.

The 5 R&D centres set up by the Government (namely the Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute, Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel, Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre and Nano and Advanced Materials Institute) have been in liaison with various parties. These R&D centres play an important role in creating a vibrant I&T ecosystem, acting as a focal point for technology collaboration among the Government,

industry, academia and research sectors. The R&D Centres not only carry out industry-driven applied R&D work that suits market needs but also transfer technologies to the industries through contract researches and licensing arrangements to commercialise their R&D outcomes. As at the end of March 2023, there were altogether 405 on-going projects undertaken by the 5 R&D centres (including 243 projects involving industry participation). These projects have garnered the participation of 470 companies, indicating their alignment with industry needs. In addition, the Innovation Hub@HK website of the Innovation and Technology Commission aims at showcasing R&D outcomes of Hong Kong's public research institutes to facilitate commercialisation and technology transfer to the industries.

With a view to taking the leading role, the Government has been actively introducing and applying I&T products and services from local start-ups. The key measures in recent years are as follows:

- (i) The Public Sector Trial Scheme under the Innovation and Technology Fund provides eligible local companies/organisations with funding support for the production of prototypes or samples and conduct of trials of R&D outcomes in the public sector (including government departments) so as to facilitate the realisation and commercialisation of R&D outcomes. As at end-February 2024, the Scheme has funded 465 projects with a total funding commitment of about \$970 million, benefiting over 200 different organisations to conduct more than 630 trials;
- (ii) The Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) under the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer promotes and invites industry players to assist government departments in adopting I&T solutions (such as artificial intelligence, robotics technologies, data analytics and Internet of Things applications) so as to enhance public service and city management, creating more business opportunities for local start-ups as well as small and medium enterprises (SMEs). In the past 5 years, the Smart Lab matched solutions with over 100 business needs from about 30 government departments. Proof-of-concept trials for more than 70 technology solutions were conducted in collaboration with the departments concerned, among which over 40 projects have been planned or are in pilot implementation;
- (iii) The E&M InnoPortal of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department lists the technological needs of government departments, the public sector and electrical and mechanical (E&M) trades. Organisations such as start-ups and academic institutions can propose I&T solutions via the portal for matching. In the past 5 years, about 310 I&T wishes and about 1 080 I&T solutions were collected via the portal, and trials of about 150 I&T projects were launched; and
- (iv) The I&T Solution Day organised by the Efficiency Office encourages and helps government departments introduce and apply I&T products and solutions from local start-ups and SMEs, facilitating more business matching to achieve a win-win situation.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB078**

**(Question Serial No. 2381)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

One of the main responsibilities of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is to continue to implement the “Global STEM Professorship Scheme” to strengthen support for local universities to attract world-renowned Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) scholars as well as their teams to work in Hong Kong. Will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What were the figures on the flow of such academic personnel and the effectiveness of the Scheme in the last financial year and what are the estimated figures and effectiveness of the Scheme in the coming year?
2. To support Hong Kong to develop into an international innovation and technology (I&T) centre, which areas need to enhance the training of I&T talent for Hong Kong in the long run and the number involved? What are the specific measures to further promote STEM education in more primary and secondary schools and to attract more university students to enrol in I&T-related programmes?
3. Is there any comprehensive review of the performance and effectiveness of the implementation of the existing measures in relation to talent development for I&T? If yes, what are the results? Has consideration been given to integrating some of the measures for implementation?
4. What are the anticipated changes in the demand and supply of I&T talent in the next 3 years? In response to such changes, what measures will be taken? What are the details and expenditures of these measures?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

## Reply:

The relevant government bureaux and departments have been adopting a multi-pronged approach to enlarge the talent pool for the innovation and technology (I&T) sector through nurturing, attracting and retaining talent with a series of initiatives. Having consolidated the information provided by the Education Bureau (EDB) and the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB), our reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

1.

The Global STEM Professorship Scheme supports local universities funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC) in attracting research and development (R&D) talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. As at the end of February 2024, over 90 nominations for outstanding scholars have been supported. About 60 outstanding scholars have taken up their posts in Hong Kong while the remaining will be arriving gradually. In addition, under the Scheme, the Research Talent Hub has subsidised nearly 140 relevant research team members, including 74 research team members who were granted subsidies in the 2023-24 financial year (as at the end of February).

Taking into account the views of stakeholders, the Government launched the Sub-scheme for Visiting Professors on a pilot basis in January 2024, providing universities with funding for attracting more eminent scholars in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines to come to Hong Kong as Visiting Professors, thereby encouraging international collaborations in I&T and expanding the local I&T talent pool in the long run. Subject to the actual circumstances, we expect to support a total of around 20 selected visiting professors in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years.

2. and 3.

On nurturing talents, it is essential to cultivate students' interest in I&T from a young age. The EDB has stepped up the promotion of STEM/STEAM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics/Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) in primary and secondary schools as well as tertiary institutions by implementing an array of support measures on STEM/STEAM education. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) has also launched various programmes to nurture I&T talents beyond the curriculum from primary school to university levels. The relevant work taken forward by the 2 policy bureaux are summarised as follows:

**The EDB's** support measures to promote STEM/STEAM education include renewing curriculum, enhancing professional development of teachers, enriching student learning activities, as well as providing resources support for schools.

### ***Primary and secondary schools***

- EDB has been stepping up the promotion of STEAM education in primary and secondary schools through diversified strategies so as to strengthen students' interest and abilities in science, mathematics, and I&T, as well as cultivating their innovativeness. Major initiatives include renewing curriculum, enhancing professional development of teachers and providing resources support for schools.



Currently, schools have been actively taking forward STEAM education. In general, teachers implement STEAM education through learning activities across subjects, such as project learning, thematic learning, as well as designs and inventions.

- EDB has all along been providing schools with various subventions, including the recurrent subvention under the Expanded/Operating Expenses Block Grant and relevant subject resources, to promote STEAM education. EDB has earmarked about \$200 million and provided each public sector and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) primary school with a one-off grant of \$350,000 in late March this year to support schools in kick-starting Primary Science. In addition, the EDB has been providing public sector and DSS schools with the recurrent Life-wide Learning Grant starting from the 2019/20 school year, with an annual provision of about \$900 million to support schools in organising more out-of-classroom experiential learning activities, including STEAM learning activities. Meanwhile, the Quality Education Fund (QEF) has included STEM/STEAM education as one of the priority themes and implemented the Dedicated Funding Programme for Publicly-funded Schools starting from the 2018/19 school year, under which schools may apply for funding to launch school-based curriculum development and/or student support measures, including the development of school-based STEM/STEAM education. From the 2018/19 to 2022/23 school years, the QEF has approved more than 1 000 projects related to Information Technology (IT) in education and STEM/STEAM education through the Priority Themes Funding Programme and the Dedicated Funding Programme for Publicly-funded Schools, with a total funding of over \$1 billion. In the meantime, QEF has allocated \$500 million for the development of e-learning ancillary facilities that meet local learning and teaching needs through co-operation between the education and business sector, with a view to further promoting STEAM education. There are in total of 22 projects funded under this programme. These projects have commenced in the beginning of the 2023/24 school year.

As reflected by the survey results from the questionnaire issued by EDB to schools in January 2024, currently all publicly-funded primary and secondary schools have designated co-ordinators to holistically plan STEAM education within and beyond the classroom; all publicly-funded primary and secondary schools also organise or arrange students to participate in quality STEAM activities of reasonable scale every year; the vast majority of publicly-funded primary schools have implemented enriched coding education at the upper primary level in this school year as recommended by EDB and the vast majority of publicly-funded secondary schools have implemented the curriculum module relating to artificial intelligence (AI) education at the junior secondary level, and they have made good progress. Looking ahead, the EDB will continue to step up the promotion of STEAM education with diversified strategies and supporting measures. It will also review the implementation of various initiatives, including renewing school curricula on STEAM, enhancing professional training for teachers on I&T and providing different resources supports to schools, so as to foster students' ability in learning science, mathematics and technology, thereby promoting I&T learning for all.

### ***Post-secondary institutions***

- On post-secondary institutions, the UGC-funded universities have been actively promoting STEM education in recent years. The major initiatives are as follows: in the 2022-25 triennium, more than 10 STEM-related undergraduate programmes will be

introduced by the UGC-funded universities. They also offer innovative trans-disciplinary programmes by infusing STEM elements into programmes from other disciplines, such as FinTech, ArtTech, Education Technology and Digital Humanities, so as to nurture STEM talents possessing transdisciplinary knowledge. The Planning Exercise for the 2025-28 triennium will commence within this year. The UGC will tie in with the Government's policy direction and conduct a review with the 8 universities to encourage them to continuously and actively respond to the community's aspirations for I&T development and the market needs.

- With the advent of generative AI, innovative and breakthrough technologies have presented new challenges and enormous opportunities for transforming pedagogies and student learning experiences. Meanwhile, the widespread adoption of technologies, such as Web3, may pave way for closer academia-industry collaboration in offering more authentic learning experiences for students. While it is widely acknowledged that digital competency plays a significant role in economic restructuring, there is also growing awareness of the ethical and social issues arising from the use of innovative technologies. In this connection, the UGC announced the launch of the Fund for Innovative Technology-in-Education (FITE) with a funding allocation of \$100 million in June last year. The FITE aims to provide an impetus for universities to harness innovative and breakthrough technologies in transforming pedagogies and enriching student learning experiences, and to nurture a digitally competent and technologically responsible generation, for the future success of their students in the digital economy. The 8 UGC-funded universities are making use of the funding for about 100 new initiatives, covering (i) driving transformation in pedagogies, curriculum, assessment and student development; (ii) advancing digital competency for all; (iii) promoting technological social responsibilities and academic integrity; and (iv) fostering academia-industry collaboration for authentic learning experience. The initiatives under the FITE are expected to be completed in mid-2026.
- With regard to the self-financing post-secondary education sector, the EDB launched the Enhancement and Start-up Grant Scheme for Self-financing Post-secondary Education with a funding of \$1.26 billion in December 2020. It aims to support eligible self-financing post-secondary institutions to develop and enhance programmes that meet market needs but require high start-up costs, and help alleviate the institutions' need to fully recover the set-up costs from tuition fees, thus relieving the financial burden on students. The STEM-related projects approved in recent years cover programmes in the areas of FinTech, ArtTech, I&T, building management and engineering, etc.
- Moreover, through the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors launched by the EDB, the Government subsidises students pursuing designated programmes and encourages the self-financing post-secondary education sector to offer programmes in selected disciplines, including STEM-related disciplines, to nurture talent in support of specific industries with keen demand for human resources. In the 2024/25 academic year, the STEM-related programmes approved under the subsidy scheme cover the fields of architecture and engineering, computer science, FinTech, as well as testing and certification.

In the long run, the EDB will build on the existing foundation of promoting STEM/STEAM education and strengthen collaboration with the I&T sector, post-secondary institutions,

professional bodies and different policy bureaux to enhance the strategies for supporting STEAM education through a multi-pronged approach.

Meanwhile, **the ITIB** launched the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme, the “Knowing More About IT” Programme and the STEM Internship Scheme for primary, secondary and tertiary students to provide more support and promote I&T education beyond the curriculum.

- The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer launched the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme and the “Knowing More About IT” Programme in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 school years respectively to provide funding support for primary and secondary schools in organising IT-related extra-curricular activities. The 2 programmes, targeting all publicly-funded secondary schools and primary schools in Hong Kong respectively, have received overwhelming response from schools and relevant stakeholders since their launch in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 school years respectively. As of February 2024, more than 90% of secondary schools and primary schools have submitted applications, of which more than 480 secondary schools and more than 480 primary schools have their applications approved. The 2024-25 Budget proposed to allocate an additional funding of \$134 million to extend the existing “Knowing More About IT” Programme and continue to provide a subsidy of up to \$300,000 for each publicly-funded primary school (about 540 in total) across the territory in the next 2 school years from 2024/25 to 2025/26 to organise IT-related extra-curricular activities and procure IT equipment and professional services for these activities. It is anticipated that about 90% of the eligible primary schools will apply for the subsidy.
- Moreover, the Innovation and Technology Commission launched the “STEM Internship Scheme” in 2020. As at end-January 2024, the Scheme has provided over 12 000 short-term internship opportunities to university students taking STEM-related programmes, involving a total funding of around \$300 million. The scheme was expanded in June 2023 to cover internship opportunities offered by the 5 government-funded R&D Centres and the Hong Kong Productivity Council to students studying STEM programmes at local and non-local universities (including the campuses at Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area established by designated local universities).

The Government will maintain close liaison with various stakeholders to review the implementation of various schemes and introduce enhancement measures in a timely manner.

4.

The LWB is conducting a new round of Manpower Projection to assess in 5 years from now the manpower requirements and shortages for key industries (including the I&T industry) driving Hong Kong’s economic growth. It is anticipated that the key findings will be available in the third quarter of this year, while a detailed report is tentatively scheduled for promulgation in early 2025. With the gradual availability and completion of land and infrastructure for I&T uses, more Mainland and overseas I&T enterprises will establish a presence in Hong Kong and create high-quality jobs. As I&T talent will be in great demand to cater for the upgrading and transformation across industries, the long-term demand for I&T manpower in Hong Kong will probably increase further.

In recent years, the number of employees in the I&T sector has increased about 40% from around 35 500 in 2014 to about 49 500 in 2022, and the number of R&D personnel has also risen more than 35% from around 29 200 to around 39 700 in the same period. The Government will continue to introduce various measures related to I&T talents. Apart from the above-mentioned initiatives to nurture and attract talents from home and elsewhere, the Government has also been adopting a multi-pronged approach to enlarge the I&T talent pool of Hong Kong by enhancing the Technology Talent Admission Scheme, increasing the financial support for R&D talents under the Research Talent Hub scheme, and including more I&T professions in the Talent List, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2382)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The aim of the Efficiency Office (EffO) for this financial year is “to accelerate innovation for improvement of services and operations across the Government, and promote cross-sectoral collaboration between the Government and stakeholders to design and implement better services for the community”. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. How many government agencies did the EffO actively assist and how many services were enhanced or newly introduced in the past financial year? What was the total expenditure incurred?
2. Will the EffO take the initiative to review the progress of various government agencies in digitalising their services and assess whether further improvements will be required? In the past financial year, which government departments were reviewed by the EffO, and was proactive assistance offered? Please provide the details of the assistance offered, if any.
3. Did the EffO identify local innovation and technology (I&T) companies for government agencies to assist them in improving their standard of services? How many service items were successfully matched in the past financial year and what was the total expenditure of these items? Please list the expenditures in tabular form.
4. In what ways does the EffO assess the effectiveness after the implementation of service digitalisation? Does the work involve collecting users' feedback on a regular basis? If not, will the Government consider providing funding for such work in the next financial year?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The Government is committed to promoting the adoption of innovation and technology (I&T) by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to enhance operational efficiency and continuously improve public services. In 2023-24, the Efficiency Office (EffO) worked with the 45 B/Ds participating in the “Be the Smart Regulator” and the “Streamlining of Government Services” programmes in proposing nearly 200 business facilitation and streamlining measures, covering over 500 licences and services. About 80% of the measures involved the adoption of I&T, with a view to providing more electronic services for the trade and the general public. These include provision of online application services through “iAM Smart”, establishment of various electronic payment channels, development of chatbots to facilitate the handling of enquiries, and provision of end-to-end electronic services, etc.

The EffO has also implemented a series of support measures to departments, such as jointly organising a technology forum with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, showcasing the latest I&T solutions for departments, and arranging business matching for interested departments and companies to help the departments further explore or test whether the relevant solutions are suitable for their services. Moreover, we also introduce the latest I&T solutions (including those from local I&T companies) and provide matching services to departments through the InnoGov Portal, an intranet website of EffO. Currently, the website provides a total of about 160 I&T solutions in 11 categories, and the majority of them are provided by local I&T companies. The EffO took forward the relevant work with existing manpower and resources.

The Government has all along been striving to foster the development of digital government and digitalisation of government services. The targets include digitalising all licences, services involving application and approval and forms by mid-2024, and fully implementing the provision of electronic payment option for all government services by the third quarter of 2024, etc. The EffO encourages and assists departments to apply design thinking in designing electronic services to enhance user experience, and to regularly collect user feedback on electronic services for continuous service improvement.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3879)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will actively reach out to enterprises from the Mainland and overseas, and proactively attract and assist high value-added technology industries and enterprises to establish a foothold in Hong Kong. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the respective numbers of enterprises reached out, enterprises successfully attracted to establish a foothold in Hong Kong and jobs created in each of the past 3 years; and
2. the action plans and estimated expenditures for 2024-25, and whether any key performance indicators (KPIs) have been set; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

1. & 2.

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB), in collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises (OASES), has been contacting enterprises from the Mainland and overseas proactively to attract and assist high-potential or representative innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. Since 2023, we have contacted more than 200 Mainland and overseas I&T enterprises and successfully attracted about 50 enterprises to Hong Kong. These enterprises are expected to bring more than \$40 billion in investment to Hong Kong, creating more than 13 000 jobs over the next few years.

The goal of the ITIB is to attract not less than 100 high-potential or representative I&T enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong by 2027, including at least 20

top-notch I&T enterprises, bringing more than \$10 billion in investment to Hong Kong and creating thousands of local job opportunities. The ITIB will continue to contact strategic enterprises proactively to conduct negotiation and provide appropriate assistance, with a view to facilitating the setting up of businesses by Mainland and overseas enterprises in Hong Kong. The ITIB has all along been using existing manpower and resources to implement the relevant work with the OASES. A breakdown of the expenditure involved for individual work items is not available.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0164)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to paragraph 113 of the Budget Speech, the Government earmarked \$10 billion in the previous Budget to promote the development of life and health technology. Of this, \$6 billion is to be used this year to provide subsidies for local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations to set up life and health technology research institutes. The purpose is to facilitate relevant research and development (R&D) activities and transformation of R&D outcomes, and to attract leading innovation and technology (I&T) talent and research teams around the world to Hong Kong. In this regard, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the fields of development of life and health technology it plans to inject the \$6 billion subsidy into?
2. the local universities subsidised and their projects? When are these projects expected to commence?

Asked by: Hon SO Cheung-wing (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Government consulted and secured support from the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology on 20 February 2024 on the proposed subsidy programme for life and health technology research institutes (LHTRIs). Under the current proposal, an applicant institution must be a local university funded by the University Grants Committee with medical school and/or is offering life and health disciplines. The LHTRI should engage in basic research, translational research as well as transformation of research and development outcomes on themes falling within the field of life and health-

related technologies. The themes may include but are not limited to cell and gene therapy, bioinformatics and biology, biomedical engineering, advanced therapy, medical diagnostics, drug and vaccine development, and clinical trial.

The Government plans to seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) in the second quarter of 2024. After FC's funding approval is obtained, the Government will invite applications from universities interested in setting up LHTRIs. The successful applicant institution is required to enter into an agreement with the Government, and the LHTRI is required to commence operation within 18 months from the signing of the agreement.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0195)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to paragraph 106 of the Budget Speech, the Government has committed substantial resources to building a vibrant innovation and technology (I&T) ecosystem by focusing on enhancing I&T infrastructure, research capacity, talent, etc. The Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport are I&T flagships and incubators for the city. As at the end of last year, the number of tenants of these 2 flagships, together with past and current incubatees, amounted to some 4 500. Among them, 16 have been listed, 9 have become unicorns, and a total of some \$130 billion has been raised while more than 1 700 local and non-local awards have been won. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. With regard to the 16 I&T companies incubated by the Government which have been listed and the 9 which have become unicorns, what fields are they engaged in? What is the total number of employment places created by the above companies in Hong Kong? Regarding the total of some \$130 billion raised, which countries and regions do the investors mainly come from?

Asked by: Hon SO Cheung-wing (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

As at February 2024, among the tenants together with the current and graduated incubatees of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and Cyberport, 16 companies have been listed. Moreover, according to the research on Hong Kong unicorns conducted by Invest Hong Kong, the HKSTPC and Cyberport have by now witnessed the birth of 9 Hong Kong unicorns (i.e. unlisted enterprises with a valuation of over US\$1 billion), among them 2 have been listed. The business areas of these companies include biomedical technology, electronics, information and communications technology, material and precision engineering, smart living, digital entertainment and financial technology. According to the information provided by the HKSTPC, the above-mentioned park companies have created

more than 900 jobs in Hong Kong, while Cyberport does not maintain relevant information on the number of jobs created. We also do not maintain information on the places of origin of the capital raised by the tenants nor incubatees of the HKSTPC and Cyberport.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0201)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to paragraph 90 of the Budget, the Digital Economy Development Committee (DEDC), has undertaken in-depth studies on promoting the development of digital economy over the past 2 years. The DEDC's report covers recommendations on many areas, including promotion of digital policies, initiatives for enhancing digital infrastructure, facilitation of the safe and orderly flow and usage of data, acceleration of enterprise digital transformation and talent development. Some of these recommendations have been implemented, including making preparations for the establishment of the Digital Policy Office. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the key function of the proposed Digital Policy Office? What are the manpower and the estimated annual expenditure involved?
2. As per the studies undertaken over the past 2 years, what are Hong Kong's edges and room for improvement in promoting the development of digital economy? On talent development, how is the existing talent pool of digital economy in Hong Kong? If there is a shortage of talent, what are the resources planned for attracting and nurturing the relevant talent?

Asked by: Hon SO Cheung-wing (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

After one and a half years of work and research, the Digital Economy Development Committee (DEDC) has submitted the report to the Government and put up a number of recommendations covering areas including spearheading digital policies; enhancing digital infrastructure; facilitating the safe and orderly flow and usage of data; expediting digital transformation of enterprises; and talent development. Relevant bureaux have commenced

follow-up actions and studies on the implementation of individual feasible recommendations while the DEDC is deliberating on these recommendations. For example, regarding top-level design and policies, the Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and smart city, such as establishing the “digital identity of enterprises” platform; promoting cross-boundary data flow, cross-boundary public services and other initiatives that support the development of the “Digital Bay Area”; strengthening the support and supervision of the management of e-government services by B/Ds, etc. To deploy suitable manpower to take forward these key initiatives, we propose to re-organise the existing manpower structure of OGCIO and EffO and transfer the manpower to DPO, and appropriately create 1 directorate post responsible for strengthening efforts in taking forward the facilitation of cross-boundary data flow, the development of “Digital Bay Area”, the implementation of “Cross-boundary Public Services”, as well as the liaison with the Mainland, etc.

Manpower resources are key success factors in promoting Hong Kong’s digital economy. The Government has been adopting a multi-pronged approach to enlarge the innovation and technology (I&T) talent pool through nurturing, attracting and retaining talent with a series of initiatives. The number of employees in the I&T sector has increased by about 40% from around 35 500 in 2014 to around 49 500 in 2022. In the same period, the number of research and development (R&D) personnel has also risen by over 35% from around 29 200 to around 39 700.

As regards nurturing talents, the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme and the “Knowing More About IT” Programme have been put in place to provide respective funding support for primary and secondary schools to organise extra-curricular activities related to information technology apart from their school curriculum. The Government also sponsors the “Innovation and Technology Scholarship” and implements the “STEM Internship Scheme” to encourage university students to participate in I&T-related exchange activities and gain I&T-related work experience respectively. In addition, the “Research Talent Hub” subsidises qualified organisations and enterprises to engage university graduates to carry out R&D work, while the “New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme” subsidises local enterprises for their staff to receive training in advanced technologies. In addition, the Vocational Training Council established the Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology in 2023 to provide pre-employment and on-the-job training for the information technology sector, so as to consolidate Hong Kong’s information technology capabilities and nurture talent. On attracting talents, the “Technology Talent Admission Scheme” provides a fast-track arrangement for admitting overseas and Mainland technology talents to undertake R&D work in Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1904)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

A series of measures on promoting new industrialisation development have been mentioned in paragraphs 118 to 121 of the Budget Speech. Our country's Report on the Work of the Government this year has also stated that the tasks for the current year would include forging ahead vigorously with the modernisation of the industrial system, accelerating the development of new quality productivity and expediting the promotion of new industrialisation. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What specific work and strategies will the Government adopt in the coming year to further promote and assist the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries in order to promote new industrialisation under a two-pronged approach?
2. Noting that the estimate of Programme (2) "Innovation, Technology and Industry" for 2024-2025 is \$251.1 million, representing an increase of 28.6% over the revised estimate for the previous year, what are the reasons for the increase in the estimate of expenses and what will the provision be mainly used for?
3. The New Industrialisation Development Office (NIDO) has been officially established some time ago. Under the leadership of the newly appointed Commissioner for Industry, what specific strategies and approaches will be adopted by the NIDO in promoting the development of new industrialisation?
4. What are the estimated expenditure and staff establishment of the NIDO in 2024-25? Will the Government consider and plan for increasing the estimated expenditure and staff establishment of the NIDO in order to further promote the development of new industrialisation?
5. In the Budget, it is announced that \$10 billion will be earmarked for launching the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme. When will the scheme expected to be officially

open for application? What is the estimated time for granting approval to the first successful application? What is the expected average processing time for approving a project? What approaches and criteria will be adopted for approving applications under the scheme? How will the Government monitor the use of the funding?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

Our reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

1., 3. & 4. The Government promulgated the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (the Blueprint) in December 2022, setting out major policies under 4 broad development directions. One of the development directions is to enhance the innovation and technology (I&T) ecosystem and promote “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong. Focusing on attracting technology industries with a competitive edge and of strategic significance to develop in Hong Kong, we aim to expand the local industrial chain and supply chain, and bring more business opportunities to traditional industries. On another front, through proactively promoting “new industrialisation” in 5 major areas, namely, infrastructure and facilities, scientific research, technology, capital and talent, and facilitating the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries, the Government has been developing the advanced manufacturing industries which are based on new technologies, smart production, and green sustainability with minimal land and labour requirements, while at the same time promoting the upgrading and transformation of Hong Kong’s traditional manufacturing industries to enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong’s manufacturing industries with I&T.

The New Industrialisation Development Office (NIDO) is established under the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB). Following the directions and strategies set out in the Blueprint, the NIDO, led by the Commissioner for Industry (Innovation and Technology), focuses on the development of industries such as life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technology, and is responsible for steering the formulation of development policies and support measures for these industries. Adopting an industry-oriented approach, the NIDO supports strategic enterprises to develop and set up their businesses in Hong Kong, assists the local manufacturing sector in upgrading and transformation by making use of I&T, and provides support for start-ups.

In collaboration with government departments including the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises and Invest Hong Kong, we have successfully attracted about 50 strategic enterprises to Hong Kong. We have also proactively reached out to several high-quality enterprises in anticipation that they will gradually set up their businesses in Hong Kong in the near future. As an important facilitator for the development of these strategic enterprises in Hong Kong, the NIDO will strive to provide facilitation and assistance to these strategic enterprises if they encounter



problems and difficulties as they develop their businesses in Hong Kong, in particular on the implementation of support policies and measures.

The NIDO will maintain close communication with the relevant local chambers of commerce and trade associations to keep abreast of the latest trend and demand of the manufacturing industry in Hong Kong. In collaboration with various government departments, and through other public organisations and research institutes including the Hong Kong Productivity Council, solid technical support for upgrading and transformation of the traditional industries will be provided. Moreover, the NIDO will encourage and promote exchanges and co-operation among local enterprises, as well as between local enterprises and strategic enterprises from the Mainland and overseas which have already set up businesses in Hong Kong, so as to build up collaboration and form new supply chains, as well as promote the development of producer services and create a synergy effect. In addition, the NIDO will communicate with experts, academics and think tanks from time to time to come up with policies or support measures in response to industry needs, with a view to further improving the construction of a new industrial development ecology in Hong Kong.

Moreover, the NIDO will maintain close liaison with the Hong Kong Science & Technology Parks Corporation, the Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited and the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park, in a bid to further enhance the support services for start-ups, attract overseas accelerators and other professional start-up service organisations, as well as venture capital firms to develop their businesses in Hong Kong. This will further strengthen Hong Kong's ecosystem for nurturing start-ups and create a vibrant I&T atmosphere for the robust growth of start-ups in Hong Kong.

The relevant work of the NIDO will be handled with the existing manpower of the ITIB.

2. Provision for the ITIB under Programme (2) for 2024-25 is \$55.9 million (28.6%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24. This is mainly due to the increased cash flow of about \$27.54 million for the TechConnect (block vote) and the increase in provision of about \$28.36 million for operational expenses.
5. The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that a \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) will be set up to expedite the development of "new industrialisation" in Hong Kong. We have consulted the Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology of the Legislative Council on the implementation details of the NIAS and will seek approval from the Finance Committee with a view to launching the NIAS as early as possible in 2024.

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will first conduct a preliminary assessment of the application received, including checking of basic eligibility and conducting initial assessment of the financial capability of the applicant enterprise. After the initial assessment, the NIDO will confirm whether the proposed new smart production facilities are from industries of strategic importance and whether they could fulfil the advanced manufacturing element.

After going through the relevant procedures, the application will be submitted to the Vetting Committee (VC) of the NIAS. Applications supported by the VC will be submitted to the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology for approval. We are unable to estimate the processing time for vetting application at this stage as it will depend on the project requirements of the applicant enterprise and whether all required documents are comprehensively submitted.

ITC will enter into a funding agreement with the successful applicant enterprise of the NIAS. Grant will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis after completion of the project and the Government's approval of the final project report and final audited accounts submitted by the applicant enterprise. ITC will also monitor the progress of the approved projects, review the operation of the NIAS, and make recommendations to improve the modus operandi of NIAS, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 1913)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It was announced in paragraph 103 of the Budget Speech that the “iAM Smart” business version will be launched at an estimated expenditure of about \$300 million, targeted to be rolled out progressively from end-2026 onwards. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Has the Government drawn up any specific work schedules regarding the launch of the “iAM Smart” business version to set out the completion timelines for platform development, platform debugging testing and invitation to businesses for a trial run?
2. What will be the major uses of the estimated expenditure of \$300 million for launching the “iAM Smart” business version?
3. What is the number of government services or subsidy schemes planned to be included in the “iAM Smart” business version?
4. At a Legislative Council panel meeting at end-2022, the Government advised that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Hong Kong Monetary Authority had taken forward a trial scheme for the “iAM Smart” business version, which was expected to be completed in early 2023. What are the trial outcomes? Will the trial outcomes be used for the implementation work in relation to the launch of the “iAM Smart” business version?
5. In the face of fiscal deficits, the Government needs to increase revenue and reduce expenditure. How will the Government streamline its administrative processes and reduce costs in the future through greater application of innovation and technology, together with integration of the Smart Government vision?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

- 1.-3. To further promote the development of digital economy and create a business-friendly environment, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is planning to set up a “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, just like the business version of “iAM Smart”, to facilitate corporations to go through corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification in a secure, convenient and efficient manner when they use e-government services or conduct online business transactions, thus saving the need to go through the complicated procedures of submitting and verifying duplicate copies of related original documents and company seals. Moreover, corporations will no longer be required to repeatedly provide their corporate information when they use different online services, thus saving time and reducing the risk of human error, which will be conducive to their digital transformation.

Our preliminary plan is that the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform will provide services to all companies established or registered under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622) and all businesses (such as sole proprietorship or partnership) registered under the Business Registration Ordinance (Cap. 310). To encourage the corporations to adopt the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, OGCIO will first launch several functions in collaboration with the departments which have more business dealings with corporations (e.g. the Inland Revenue Department and the Companies Registry) in order to connect the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the e-government services commonly used by the corporations. In the long run, we hope all corporate-related e-government services to support the use of “Digital Corporate Identity”.

OGCIO is currently drafting the detailed plan for the implementation of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform. To promote widespread adoption by corporations, we propose to publicise and promote the convenience and the main functions of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the industry through diversified means and different channels, including thematic websites, social media platforms, promotional videos, etc. We also plan to collaborate with relevant departments and industry associations to jointly organise promotional events and explore appropriate support measures to further facilitate the corporations to adopt the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform.

We plan to seek a funding allocation of \$300 million from the Finance Committee (FC) for establishing the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform upon obtaining support from the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting of the Legislative Council in mid-2024. Subject to the FC’s approval, OGCIO will immediately commence the related work including the tender preparation for system design and development, etc. It is anticipated that the platform will be progressively rolled out from end-2026.

4. OGCIO and the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) commenced in the third quarter of 2022 a Proof-of-Concept (PoC) study and testing on digital corporate identity in the Commercial Data Interchange (CDI). It aimed at exploring the use of Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) technology to improve and simplify the process of corporate identity verification, with a view to supporting the process for corporate users to provide consent on data sharing in the CDI. The relevant PoC, being a testing

platform, has not been released to corporations for production use. Relevant tests and study were completed in April 2023 and the findings have served as a reference for the use of PKI technology and the Fast Identity Online technology, etc in the development of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform. The abovementioned work was undertaken with the existing manpower and resources of OGCIO and the HKMA. The expenditure involved cannot be separately singled out and itemized.

5. The Government is committed to promoting the adoption of innovation and technology (I&T) by bureaux and departments (B/Ds), streamlining administrative procedures and strengthening co-ordination among B/Ds, so as to enhance operational efficiency and continuously improve public services. In 2023-24, the Efficiency Office (EffO) worked with the 45 B/Ds participating in the “Be the Smart Regulator” and the “Streamlining of Government Services” programmes in proposing nearly 200 business facilitation and streamlining measures, covering over 500 licences and services. These measures help shorten the time for processing and approval as well as lower departments’ administrative costs. The Government will continue to drive B/Ds to enhance operational efficiency and improve public services through wider adoption of I&T, business or regulatory reviews, process streamlining and cross-B/D collaboration and data sharing.

In addition, the 2023 Policy Address announced that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office, which will be dedicated to promoting the opening up of data and co-ordinating with departments to offer more digital services, bringing the convenience of smart city to citizens. We will also launch over a hundred of digital government initiatives to promote digital government and the smart city in two years starting from this year. These projects include issuing and verifying certain licences and certificates electronically by using blockchain technology; enhancing security in public cargo areas by employing artificial intelligence (AI) technology; developing smart search-and-rescue mobile applications; and enhancing the 1823 enquiry service through AI chatbot.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB086**

**(Question Serial No.1916)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Budget Speech mentions, from paragraphs 107 to 111, the implementation of a series of measures to foster artificial intelligence (AI) development and R&D of microelectronics in Hong Kong. In this connection, please advise this Committee on the following:

1. The three-year AI Subsidy Scheme will support local universities, research institutes and enterprises to leverage the AI Supercomputing Centre's computing power and achieve scientific breakthroughs. What are the specific details of the Scheme? When does invitation for applications commence? What is the maximum amount of subsidy for each applicant? Is the subsidy granted on a matching basis?
2. What is the estimated provision earmarked for launching promotional and educational activities serving to encourage Mainland and overseas AI experts, enterprises and R&D projects to come to Hong Kong? What are the specific measures to encourage Mainland and overseas AI experts, enterprises and R&D projects to come to Hong Kong for the coming year?
3. How will the authorities work with R&D centres and research institutes to jointly promote AI development in Hong Kong in the coming year?
4. What is the estimated provision earmarked for supporting the capital costs and operating expenses of the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (HKMSRDI)? How can we ensure that the Institute is able to operate without any funding support from the Innovation and Technology Fund in the long run?
5. Apart from establishing the HKMSRDI, are there any specific measures to foster robust R&D of microelectronics in Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

- 1., 2. & 3. Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim of enhancing R&D capabilities in different fields and promoting industry development.

The 2024-25 Budget announced the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), which mainly provides funding support to local universities, research and development (R&D) centres, enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim of providing sufficient financial support to eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of the computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing power resources of the AISC. The Subsidy Scheme can in general provide eligible users with a subsidy of up to 70% of the standard service rates as the computing power subsidy. Cyberport will be asked to set up an independent committee to determine the details on the beneficiaries, terms for disbursement of the subsidies, etc. The independent committee will take into account various factors and endorse the specific amount and duration of the subsidy to be granted to individual cases to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

In addition, we have set aside \$100 million out of the \$3 billion provision to strengthen cyber and data security. Another \$44 million was set aside for the promotional and educational activities to foster the AI ecosystem development and enhance the interface and collaboration between the upstream, midstream and downstream components of the AISC.

Upon passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out publicity and promotion, thereby pressing ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

4. & 5. To capture a market with such huge potential, and dovetail with the national strategy for technological development, the Government is actively taking forward the establishment of the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI) in 2024, and plans to propose to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the second quarter of this year the creation of a new commitment of about \$2.84 billion, among which about \$2.48 billion is for procuring the pilot lines equipment and the remaining amount of about \$360 million is for the operating expenditure of the first five years (2024-25 to 2028-29 financial years), covering the remuneration of headquarters staff, rent and general administrative expenditure. In addition, the MRDI will seek funding support from the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) and through industry income and commercialisation to cover the expenses on R&D projects and personnel of the four R&D divisions.

The vision of the MRDI is to become one of the leading institutions for supporting microelectronics development in the Asia-Pacific region. It will provide a multi-purpose common platform to pool together top-notch researchers from universities, R&D centres and industries to achieve collaboration among the Government, industry, academic and research institutes, thereby attracting Mainland and overseas enterprises to set up their businesses and enhancing the I&T ecosystem in Hong Kong for the benefit of our economy. The funds of the MRDI, as with other similar institutions, come from diversified sources including the industry and the Government, which will be used to support the development and research efforts of the industry and the realisation of the MRDI's public mission. The Government and the MRDI will jointly establish an assessment mechanism with key performance indicators for measuring the service performance and technology transfer outcomes of the MRDI, so as to ensure the proper use and allocation of funding.

Meanwhile, the Microelectronics Centre in the Yuen Long InnoPark will be commissioned within 2024 and equipped with dedicated facilities such as high standard cleanrooms, dangerous goods storage and waste treatment facilities for gradual move-in of the newly established MRDI and other tenants. The Government will also continue to support R&D centres, universities, research institutes, etc. through various funding schemes under the ITF to conduct R&D projects in different fields, including AI and microelectronics.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2016)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding innovation and technology (I&T) talent, please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) Considerable resources have been allocated for the development of artificial intelligence (AI) in Hong Kong. Has the Government compiled any statistics on the number of experienced AI talent attracted to Hong Kong from overseas over the past year? What is the estimated shortfall in the number of technology professionals in this field?
- 2) Training I&T talent is an important part of education in Hong Kong. How many talent in the field of new industrialisation will be trained by our local tertiary institutions in the next 3 to 5 years?

Asked by: Hon TAN Yueheng (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

The relevant government bureaux and departments have been adopting a multi-pronged approach to enlarge the talent pool for the innovation and technology (I&T) sector through nurturing, attracting and retaining talent with a series of initiatives. Having consolidated the information provided by the Education Bureau (EDB), the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) and relevant departments, our reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

- 1) The Government has included in the Talent List a number of professions with local manpower shortage in the I&T segment, including “experienced artificial intelligence (AI) specialists”, to facilitate the industry in the admission of technology talents through relevant admission schemes. According to information of the Immigration Department, a total of 22 applications fulfilling the qualifications for “experienced AI specialists” on the Talent List were approved last year under the Quality Migrant

Admission Scheme, the General Employment Policy and the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals. In addition, a total of 28 non-local persons from the AI sector were approved for entry under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme during the same period.

Meanwhile, the Government has established the *InnoHK* research clusters for developing Hong Kong into a hub for global research collaboration. AIR@InnoHK, which focuses on AI and robotics technologies, has been set up and pooled together from around the world some 1 300 researchers in related fields so far. With the establishment of the AI Supercomputing Centre by Cyberport in phases starting from this year, the 2024-25 Budget announced the launch of a 3-year AI subsidy scheme, which can help attract Mainland and overseas AI experts, enterprises, and research and development projects to Hong Kong, thereby boosting the development of the local AI ecosystem.

The LWB is conducting a new round of Manpower Projection to assess in 5 years from now the manpower requirements and shortages for key industries (including the I&T industry) driving Hong Kong's economic growth. It is anticipated that the key findings will be available in the third quarter of this year, while a detailed report is tentatively scheduled for promulgation in early 2025.

- 2) The Government has all along encouraged the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities to enhance the quality of their academic programmes for building a strong pool of talents. According to the EDB's information, the UGC-funded universities currently provide a total of 15 000 first-year first-degree undergraduate intake places per academic year, as well as 5 000 senior year undergraduate intake places per academic year to provide articulation opportunities for sub-degree holders. In the 2022 Policy Address, the Government has set key performance indicators (KPIs) of having 35% of students in the UGC-funded universities studying STEAM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) and 60% studying subjects relevant to Hong Kong's development into the "eight centres" (including the international I&T centre) as announced in the National 14<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan by the 2026/27 academic year. Since the 2022/23 academic year, the universities have gradually introduced relevant new programmes, some of which are related to fields of new industrialisation, such as microelectronics engineering and smart manufacturing. The UGC-funded universities are taking steady steps in achieving the above-mentioned targets, so as to nurture more I&T talents for Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB088**

**(Question Serial No. 2146)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the work to foster the development of innovation and technology and related industries in Hong Kong to complement the development of our country, will the Bureau please inform this Committee of:

1. the details, expenditure involved and outcomes of its work in the past 3 years; and
2. the specific work plans and estimated expenditure to be incurred in the 2024-25 financial year?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

Innovation and technology (I&T) is a key engine driving our economy and society towards high-quality development. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint, promulgated in 2022, formulates strategic plans and clear roadmaps for Hong Kong's I&T development over the next 5 to 10 years, leading Hong Kong steadily towards its vision of becoming an international I&T centre.

1. In the past few years, the Government's efforts in promoting I&T development mainly include the following:
  - On developing I&T infrastructure, the major initiatives include allocating funding in 2021 for the development of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Lok Ma Chau Loop and Cyberport 5 development;
  - On promoting research and development (R&D), the major initiatives include

earmarking \$10 billion to provide more comprehensive support on life and health technology in Hong Kong as announced in 2022, of which \$6 billion will be used to provide subsidies for local universities to set up cross-university and multi-disciplinary life and health technology research institutes; as well as earmarking \$3 billion to support the development of facilities for the basic research in frontier technology fields as announced in 2023;

- On promoting the commercialisation of R&D outcomes, the major initiatives include allocating \$10 billion to launch the “Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme” as announced in 2022;
- On pooling I&T talent, the major initiatives include launching the IT Innovation Lab in Schools in 2020, as well as the Global STEM Professorship Scheme and the Knowing More About IT Programme in 2021;
- On supporting the development of I&T enterprises, the major initiatives include injecting capital into the Corporate Venture Fund of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and the Cyberport Macro Fund as announced in 2021, launching the Cyberport Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups in 2023, as well as launching the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme as announced in 2023;
- On facilitating I&T application, the major initiatives include exploring with the Mainland the facilitation arrangements for the flow of cross-boundary data from the Mainland to Hong Kong as announced in 2022, publishing the Policy Statement on Facilitating Data Flow and Safeguarding Data Security in Hong Kong in 2023, as well as establishing an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases by Cyberport as announced in 2023; and
- On complementing the development of our country, the major initiatives include continuing to foster the synergistic development of the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone in the Loop, as well as enhancing I&T collaboration with different provinces and municipalities (especially the Mainland cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA)) to facilitate the development of the GBA into an international I&T centre. In addition, Hong Kong has signed a number of co-operation agreements with various Mainland provinces and municipalities on I&T development, including the “Co-operation Agreement on Technology and Innovation Exchange between Guangdong and Hong Kong”, the “Co-operation Agreement between Guangdong and the HKSAR on Co-developing a Smart City Cluster” and the “Co-operation Agreement between Guangdong and the HKSAR on Cross-boundary Public Services” signed with Guangdong, the “Arrangement on Comprehensive Promotion of Hong Kong/Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Co-operation” signed with Shenzhen, the “Co-operation Memorandum on Innovation and Technology between Hong Kong and Chongqing” signed with Chongqing, as well as the “Memorandum of Understanding on Launching Innovation and Technology Co-operation” signed with Jiangsu.

All in all, the various measures for promoting I&T development are gradually taking effect. Hong Kong has shown outstanding performance in quite a number of

I&T-related international rankings, and there has been growth in many I&T-related figures in recent years. For instance, in the Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2023, Hong Kong ranks second in the world and first in Asia in the Emerging Startup Ecosystems category. According to the Global Innovation Index 2023 published by the World Intellectual Property Organization, the “Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Guangzhou” science and technology cluster ranks second globally for 4 consecutive years. Hong Kong’s ranking remains the fifth in Asia, and is the 17th globally among 132 economies. The gross domestic expenditure on research and development (GERD) of Hong Kong in 2022 amounted to \$30.138 billion while the GERD as a ratio to the Gross Domestic Product increased to 1.07%. The number of start-ups rose to nearly 4 300 last year, about a fourfold increase compared to 2014. Over the same period, the number of people employed by related start-ups increased by about 7 times to over 16 000.

2. The 2024-25 Budget further announced that more resources will be allocated to lead Hong Kong steadily towards its vision of becoming an international I&T centre, and proposed key initiatives in 4 major areas as follows:

On consolidating Hong Kong’s strengths in scientific research and promoting the development of I&T industries, the Government will allocate \$3 billion to launch a 3-year AI subsidy scheme to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises, etc. to leverage the AISC’s computing power, to strengthen cyber security and data protection of the AISC, and to carry out promotion and educational activities, etc. It is also announced that the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute will be established this year to support the R&D of third-generation semiconductors. From the \$10 billion earmarked to promote the development of life and health technology, \$2 billion will be allocated to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop and another \$200 million to provide assistance to start-ups engaging in life and health technology in the HSITP in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc., thereby facilitating the setting up of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP. The earmarked funding of \$3 billion will be used to launch the Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme to assist the 8 University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities, on a matching basis, in setting up research facilities and conducting research projects spearheaded by leading researchers at home and outside Hong Kong. The Government will also provide an annual funding of not exceeding \$16 million to the Technology Transfer Office of each UGC-funded university;

On developing I&T infrastructure and promoting new industrialisation, the Government will continue to support the development of the HSITP, with the first batch of 3 buildings therein to be completed and commence operation progressively by the end of this year. Besides, a \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme will be launched this year. Enterprises engaging in life and health technology, AI and data science, advanced manufacturing and new energy technology that invest no less than \$200 million to set up new production facilities in Hong Kong may each receive funding support of up to \$200 million on a 1 (Government): 2 (enterprise) matching basis under the Scheme. Participating enterprises of the Scheme may receive subsidies to engage research talents under the Research Talent Hub, and engage, on a pilot basis, a small number of non-local technical personnel under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme;

On developing digital economy and promoting digital transformation of the society, Cyberport will invite small and medium enterprises in the food and beverage industry and the retail industry in phases from early this year to apply for the \$500 million Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme. The Government will also launch a “digital identity of enterprises” platform, at an estimate of \$300 million, to facilitate enterprises’ online business transactions and use of electronic services. In addition, the Government has commissioned an expert group to undertake a study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong.; and

On nurturing I&T start-ups and talent, the HKSTPC will launch the Co-acceleration Programme to pool the efforts of the I&T industry and nurture I&T start-ups with high potential as regional or global enterprises. The Government will also allocate an additional funding of \$134 million to continue subsidising publicly-funded primary schools for 2 academic years under the Knowing More About IT Programme to enhance primary school students’ interests in information technology and its applications.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB089**

**(Question Serial No. 2147)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

To complement the National 14th Five-Year Plan, the HKSAR Government has engaged in a lot of work in recent years to promote the development of Hong Kong into an international centre for innovation and technology (I&T). In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

1. the work details and expenditure involved in promoting the development of Hong Kong into an international centre for I&T in the past 3 years, and the estimated expenditure for 2024-25;
2. the percentage shares of I&T industry to Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product in the past 3 years; and
3. the means adopted by the Bureau to assess the contributions of I&T industry to the continuous economic and social development of Hong Kong, and the key performance indicators set in this respect.

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

1. In the past few years, the Government's efforts in promoting I&T development mainly include the following:
  - On developing I&T infrastructure, the major initiatives include allocating funding in 2021 for the development of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Lok Ma Chau Loop and Cyberport 5 development;
  - On promoting research and development (R&D), the major initiatives include earmarking \$10 billion to provide more comprehensive support on life and health technology in Hong Kong as announced in 2022, of which \$6 billion will be used to provide subsidies for local universities to set up cross-university and multi-disciplinary life and health technology research institutes; as well as earmarking \$3 billion to support the development of facilities for the basic research in frontier technology fields as announced in 2023;
  - On promoting the commercialisation of R&D outcomes, the major initiatives include allocating \$10 billion to launch the "Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme" as announced in 2022;
  - On pooling I&T talent, the major initiatives include launching the IT Innovation Lab in Schools in 2020, as well as the Global STEM Professorship Scheme and the Knowing More About IT Programme in 2021;
  - On supporting the development of I&T enterprises, the major initiatives include injecting capital into the Corporate Venture Fund of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and the Cyberport Macro Fund as announced in 2021, launching the Cyberport Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups in 2023, as well as launching the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme as announced in 2023;
  - On facilitating I&T application, the major initiatives include exploring with the Mainland the facilitation arrangements for the flow of cross-boundary data from the Mainland to Hong Kong as announced in 2022, publishing the Policy Statement on Facilitating Data Flow and Safeguarding Data Security in Hong Kong in 2023, as well as establishing an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases by Cyberport as announced in 2023; and
  - On complementing the development of our country, the major initiatives include continuing to foster the synergistic development of the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone in the Loop, as well as enhancing I&T collaboration with different provinces and municipalities (especially the Mainland cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA)) to facilitate the development of the GBA into an international I&T centre. In addition, Hong Kong has signed a number of co-operation agreements with various Mainland provinces and municipalities on I&T development, including the "Co-operation Agreement on Technology and Innovation Exchange between Guangdong and Hong Kong", the "Co-operation Agreement between



Guangdong and the HKSAR on Co-developing a Smart City Cluster” and the “Co-operation Agreement between Guangdong and the HKSAR on Cross-boundary Public Services” signed with Guangdong, the “Arrangement on Comprehensive Promotion of Hong Kong/Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Co-operation” signed with Shenzhen, the “Co-operation Memorandum on Innovation and Technology between Hong Kong and Chongqing” signed with Chongqing, as well as the “Memorandum of Understanding on Launching Innovation and Technology Co-operation” signed with Jiangsu.

All in all, the various measures for promoting I&T development are gradually taking effect. Hong Kong has shown outstanding performance in quite a number of I&T-related international rankings, and there has been growth in many I&T-related figures in recent years. For instance, in the Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2023, Hong Kong ranks second in the world and first in Asia in the Emerging Startup Ecosystems category. According to the Global Innovation Index 2023 published by the World Intellectual Property Organization, the “Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Guangzhou” science and technology cluster ranks second globally for 4 consecutive years. Hong Kong’s ranking remains the fifth in Asia, and is the 17th globally among 132 economies. The gross domestic expenditure on research and development (GERD) of Hong Kong in 2022 amounted to \$30.138 billion while the GERD as a ratio to the Gross Domestic Product increased to 1.07%. The number of start-ups rose to nearly 4 300 last year, about a fourfold increase compared to 2014. Over the same period, the number of people employed by related start-ups increased by about 7 times to over 16 000.

The 2024-25 Budget further announced that more resources will be allocated to lead Hong Kong steadily towards its vision of becoming an international I&T centre, and proposed key initiatives in 4 major areas as follows:

- On consolidating Hong Kong’s strengths in scientific research and promoting the development of I&T industries, the Government will allocate \$3 billion to launch a 3-year AI subsidy scheme to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises, etc. to leverage the AISC’s computing power, to strengthen cyber security and data protection of the AISC, and to carry out promotion and educational activities, etc. It is also announced that the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute will be established this year to support the R&D of third-generation semiconductors. From the \$10 billion earmarked to promote the development of life and health technology, \$2 billion will be allocated to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop and another \$200 million to provide assistance to start-ups engaging in life and health technology in the HSITP in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc., thereby facilitating the setting up of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP. The earmarked funding of \$3 billion will be used to launch the Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme to assist the 8 University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities, on a matching basis, in setting up research facilities and conducting research projects spearheaded by leading researchers at home and outside Hong Kong. The Government will also provide an annual funding of not exceeding \$16 million to the Technology Transfer Office of each UGC-funded university;
- On developing I&T infrastructure and promoting new industrialisation, the

Government will continue to support the development of the HSITP, with the first batch of 3 buildings therein to be completed and commence operation progressively by the end of this year. Besides, a \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme will be launched this year. Enterprises engaging in life and health technology, AI and data science, advanced manufacturing and new energy technology that invest no less than \$200 million to set up new production facilities in Hong Kong may each receive funding support of up to \$200 million on a 1 (Government): 2 (enterprise) matching basis. Participating enterprises of the Scheme may receive subsidies to engage research talents under the Research Talent Hub, and engage, on a pilot basis, a small number of non-local technical personnel under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme;

- On developing digital economy and promoting digital transformation of the society, Cyberport will invite small and medium enterprises in the food and beverage industry and the retail industry in phases from early this year to apply for the \$500 million Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme. The Government will also launch a “digital identity of enterprises” platform, at an estimate of \$300 million, to facilitate enterprises’ online business transactions and use of electronic services. In addition, the Government has commissioned an expert group to undertake a study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong; and
  - On nurturing I&T start-ups and talent, the HKSTPC will launch the Co-acceleration Programme to pool the efforts of the I&T industry and nurture I&T start-ups with high potential as regional or global enterprises. The Government will also allocate an additional funding of \$134 million to continue subsidising publicly-funded primary schools for 2 academic years under the Knowing More About IT Programme to enhance primary school students’ interests in information technology and its applications.
2. The percentage shares of I&T industry to the Gross Domestic Product in 2020, 2021 and 2022 remain at around 1%.
  3. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (Blueprint), promulgated in end-2022, outlined the macro I&T development targets for Hong Kong in the coming 5 to 10 years which cover reference development indicators over 4 areas, namely R&D, start-ups, talent and industry development, to facilitate the review of the implementation of the various strategies of the Blueprint. In the Policy Addresses of 2022 and 2023, a series of indicators (including performance indicators) for Hong Kong’s development into an international I&T centre were also set out to facilitate the tracking of the progress and effectiveness of policy initiatives and the making of timely improvements.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB090**

**(Question Serial No. 2148)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

One of the responsibilities of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) is to monitor the implementation of the “Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme”. Will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the details and amount of funding provided by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government to various local bodies for conducting research and development (R&D) activities in the last 3 years;
2. the ratio of government funding to the operational funds of various local bodies for conducting R&D activities in the last 3 years;
3. the ratio of the overall expenditures incurred by various local bodies for conducting R&D activities to the gross domestic product (GDP) of Hong Kong in the last 3 years;
4. its policy to motivate the industrial and commercial sectors to play a heavier role in relation to R&D projects?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

Promoting research is an indispensable part of innovation and technology (I&T) development. A reply to the respective parts of the question is provided as follows:

1. The Government has been implementing various initiatives to support research. For example, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) endeavours to promote and support applied research and development (R&D) activities which can contribute

to exploitation of innovative ideas as well as upgrading of technology levels by industries. It provides funding support to applied R&D projects through 6 of such funding schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) (including the Innovation and Technology Support Programme, the Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme, the Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme, the Partnership Research Programme, the Enterprise Support Scheme and the R&D Cash Rebate Scheme). Applications are subject to internal selection or assessment by assessment panels composed of independent experts from the I&T sector. In the last 3 years (i.e. from 2021-22 to 2023-24 (as at January 2024)), the relevant schemes under the ITF have supported some 1 160 projects, involving a total commitment of around \$3.03 billion. ITC has also set up the *InnoHK* Research Clusters to promote global research collaboration, which has successfully attracted over 30 world-renowned universities and research institutes to collaborate with local universities and research institutes in setting up 29 R&D centres. As at January 2024, the ITF has disbursed about \$4 billion subsidies in total to the 29 R&D centres in the last 3 years (2021-22 to 2023-24).

On the other hand, we will also provide stable resources for universities and research institutes to conduct R&D work. For example, a maximum annual funding of \$440 million is allocated to the 16 State Key Laboratories in Hong Kong and 6 Hong Kong Branches of Chinese National Engineering Research Centres for them to conduct R&D activities, nurture talent and enhance co-operation and exchanges with Mainland organisations. Besides, we will provide each designated university with an annual subsidy of \$16 million under the Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities to facilitate their realisation of R&D outcomes with stable resources. Moreover, the 5 R&D centres set up by the Government, which have been liaising with various parties, play an important role in creating a vibrant I&T ecosystem and act as a focal point for technology collaboration among the Government, industry, academia and research sectors. The Government has provided \$1.14 billion in total to support the operation of these R&D centres in the last 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23).

In addition, the Government announced in 2022 that \$10 billion would be earmarked for launching the “Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme” (RAISE+ Scheme) and \$10 billion for providing more comprehensive support for the development of life and health technology. It also announced in 2023 that \$3 billion would be earmarked for enhancing the facilities for basic research in frontier technological fields and \$2.84 billion for the establishment of Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute in 2024. As for the computing infrastructures, Cyberport is now actively making preparation for the establishment of AI Supercomputing Centre in phases from this year onwards, so as to support the strong demand for computing power among universities, research institutions, government departments and related sectors, enhance Hong Kong’s R&D capabilities in various technological research and application fields and promote industrial development. We will allocate \$3 billion for launching a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises to leverage the Centre’s computing power and achieve scientific breakthroughs.

- 2.&3. Based on the data of the Census and Statistics Department, the details of the gross domestic expenditure on R&D by performing sector are set out in the following table:

| <b>Gross domestic expenditure on R&amp;D (\$ million)</b> |             |             |             |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|   | <b>2020</b> | <b>2021</b> | <b>2022</b> |
| <b>Government and higher education sectors</b>            | 15,509.7    | 16,127.5    | 17,767.7    |
| <b>Business sector</b>                                    | 11,043.9    | 11,699.3    | 12,370.7    |
| <b>Total</b>  | 26,553.6    | 27,826.9    | 30,138.4    |
| <b>Ratio to Gross Domestic Product</b>                    | 0.99%       | 0.97%       | 1.07%       |

4. To motivate the business sector to put more resources into R&D, the Government amended the Inland Revenue Ordinance in 2018 to provide enhanced tax deduction for qualifying R&D expenditure incurred by enterprises on or after 1 April 2018. The deduction is 300% for the first \$2 million of the aggregate amount of the relevant expenditure, and 200% for the remaining amount. There is no cap on the amount of the relevant tax deduction. Among the tax returns received as at end-February 2024, the claims for tax deduction on R&D expenditure for the year of assessment 2022-23 has reached about \$3.84 billion. Besides, some funding schemes under the ITF encourage enterprises to invest in R&D. For instance, the Enterprise Support Scheme provides funding to companies conducting in-house R&D projects. The Research and Development Cash Rebate Scheme encourages companies to enhance co-operation with local public research institutions. The Research and Development Cash Rebate Scheme encourages local enterprises to establish stronger partnership with local public research institutes. The RAISE+ Scheme mentioned above funds research teams in universities on a matching basis so that they can translate R&D outcomes into applications and solutions as well as initiating the commercialisation of R&D outcomes; which can facilitate relevant collaboration among the Government, industries, universities, and research sectors.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB091**

**(Question Serial No. 2149)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Budget Speech that artificial intelligence (AI), as an important driver of a new round of technological and industrial transformation, is also the key to propelling the development of digital economy in Hong Kong. AI is undergoing rapid development. In view of the development of AI in Hong Kong, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the current programmes for nurturing talents in the AI field of Hong Kong and their effectiveness; the strategies the Government has to attract and retain these talents;
2. the proportion of Hong Kong's investment in AI research to the total research and development expenditure in the past 3 years;
3. the investment the Government has made in the hardware infrastructure to support the development of AI; the proportion of such investment to the total expenditure on innovation and technology facilities;
4. the arrangements for the 3-year \$3 billion AI subsidy scheme mentioned in the Budget Speech;
5. the policy to ensure the safety of AI and the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

- 1., 2. and 3. Artificial intelligence (AI) as an important driver of the new round of technological and industrial transformation is key to propelling the development of digital economy. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint promulgated by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau in 2022 proposes priority development of technology industries with a competitive edge and of strategic significance, including AI and data science. The Government has been adopting comprehensive and flexible strategy to proactively plan, build and develop the AI ecosystem in Hong Kong.

In respect of talents, the Government is dedicated to enlarging the talent pool for innovation and technology. For examples, the Research Talent Hub, the Technology Talent Admission Scheme and the Talent List are all aimed at nurturing and attracting technology talents, including AI specialists, from home and elsewhere. AIR@InnoHK, which focuses on AI and robotics technologies, has been established under the InnoHK research clusters, pooling together from around the world some 1 300 researchers in relevant fields. Cyberport and the Science Park have more than 600 AI and big data companies, including top-notch AI companies nurtured locally and a number of leading companies from the Mainland and other regions, which set up research and development (R&D) centres or expand their business in Hong Kong.

As for strengthening research capabilities, AIR@InnoHK has set up 15 R&D centres for AI and robotics technologies. In addition, it was announced in the 2024-25 Budget that \$3 billion will be allocated to launch a Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme to assist the 8 University Grants Committee-funded universities, on a matching basis, in procuring related facilities and conducting research projects led by top-notch Mainland and overseas researchers in various fields such as AI, quantum information and integrated circuit.

Regarding infrastructure, Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases, with a view to meeting the huge local demand for computing power and enhancing Hong Kong's R&D capabilities in various fields. Besides, the Government will launch a \$3 billion AI Subsidy Scheme to further promote the development of the AI ecosystem.

4. The 2024-25 Budget announced the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme, which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres, enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim of providing sufficient financial support to eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of the computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing power resources of the AISC. The Subsidy Scheme will provide eligible users with a subsidy of up to 70% of the service rates under normal

circumstances. Cyberport will be required to set up an independent committee to determine the details on the beneficiaries, terms of disbursement of the subsidies, etc. The independent committee will take into account various factors and endorse a specific amount and duration of the subsidy to be granted to individual cases to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

Upon passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out publicity and promotion, thereby pressing ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

5. The Government and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data have published the Ethical AI Framework and the Guidance on the Ethical Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence respectively for reference by the industry. Besides, we have set aside \$100 million out of the above-mentioned \$3 billion provision of the AI Subsidy Scheme to strengthen cyber and data security. The budget for cyber security mainly covers services such as data protection and security monitoring, as well as audits and risk assessment. The budget also includes the provision of training and educational activities on cyber and data security for users of the AISC services, with a view to ensuring the cyber security of the AISC.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB092**

**(Question Serial No. 0451)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 104 of the Budget Speech that the Government will allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund to provide elderly people aged 60 or above with digital training courses and technical support in the next 3 years to reduce digital exclusion and help them integrate into the digital era more easily. The first group of projects is expected to commence in the fourth quarter of 2024 at the earliest and benefit at least 50 000 elderly persons. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. How will the Government assess whether the participants have benefited therefrom? Will participants' feedback be collected and published regularly?
2. Given the tight labour supply, will the project objectives include providing support to help participants enter the job market? If so, will it include arranging employment briefings or collaborating with enterprises to train perspective employees?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

1. The Government plans to allocate \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) to subsidise non-governmental organisations to set up community-based help desks at suitable locations (e.g. community centres) to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elderlies aged 60 or above in Hong Kong, particularly singleton or doubleton elderlies, in the coming three years. Apart from smartphone operation and the use of digital government services (e.g. iAM Smart and other common government mobile applications), we also intend to cover topics such as online

shopping, electronic payment and cyber security in the programme, with a view to enhancing the elderlies' capability in adopting digital technologies. Experienced staff (or volunteers) will station at the community-based help desks to provide technical support tailored to the specific needs of the elderlies, so that they can enjoy the benefits brought about by digital services. We expect the programme to benefit at least 50 000 elderlies, and by mid-2024 at the earliest, invite project proposals from institutions/organisations through open invitation, with the first batch of programme commencing in the fourth quarter of 2024. Service providers are required to submit regular financial, progress and performance reports (covering key performance indicators such as the numbers of beneficiaries, training sessions and service points, and the level of satisfaction of participants) to the SIE Fund for effective supervision.

2. The main objective of the programme is to help the elderlies get to know and use technology products and services and fully integrate into the digital society by providing them with training courses on digital technologies and technical support, which does not include providing support to help participants enter the job market.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB093**

**(Question Serial No. 0766)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As put forward in the Budget, the InnoLife Healthtech Hub (the Hub) will be set up in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world, with a focus on life and health disciplines, to conduct research. This will be conducive to the development of international innovation and technology (I&T) centre in the Lok Ma Chau Loop (the Loop) and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). The Government will allocate \$2 billion from the \$10 billion earmarked to support the InnoHK research clusters to establish presence in the Loop. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Are there any arrangements for the Hub to move in upon completion of the first batch of buildings in Hong Kong Park in the HSITP this year?
2. As the HSITP buildings are still under construction, will the Government start any preparation work in advance so that the Hub can move in as soon as possible?
3. How will the \$2 billion be allocated to items such as the development of the technology centre, procurement of equipment and manpower expenditure?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to various parts of the question is set out below:

Life and health technology industry will be the key direction of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development in the future. As announced in the 2024-25 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the

Government will allocate \$2.2 billion to support setting up of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Loop. To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and to conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines, the Government will allocate \$2 billion to support the InnoHK research clusters to establish presence in the Loop and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc.

The HSITP Limited is progressing with the construction of 8 buildings in Batch 1 of the HSITP. Of these, 4 are wet-lab enabled buildings to tie in with the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Upon completion of the Batch 1 buildings in the HSITP progressively, research teams and enterprises related to the life and health industry are expected to move in. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

- End -

**ITIB094**

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2343)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Estimates that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau supported the work of the Digital Economy Development Committee (DEDC) in 2023-24. In this connection, please provide this Committee with a list of the annual numbers of meetings held, the studies conducted and the specific recommendations on digital economy development made by the DEDC since its establishment, together with disclosure of the specific recommendations implemented, regarding 4 areas, respectively: 1) the top-level architecture in respect of the policy, governance and implementation of digital economy, 2) the acceleration of digital infrastructure building, 3) the promotion of the secure and orderly flow and use of data, and 4) the acceleration of digital transformation. If there have not been any announcements on the recommendations regarding the above 4 areas, when will they be announced?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

Since its establishment in June 2022, the Digital Economy Development Committee (DEDC) has held 8 meetings while its 4 sub-groups have held a total of 27 working meetings and dozens of interview sessions with different experts, academics and industry representatives, with a view to undertaking in-depth studies on areas such as cross-boundary data flow, digital infrastructure, digital transformation and talent training. After one and a half years of work and research, the DEDC has submitted the report to the Government and put up a number of recommendations covering areas including spearheading digital policies; enhancing digital infrastructure; facilitating the safe and orderly flow and usage of data; expediting digital transformation of enterprises; and talent development. Relevant bureaux have commenced follow-up actions and studies on the implementation of individual feasible recommendations while the DEDC is deliberating on these recommendations. For example, regarding top-

level design and policies, the 2023 Policy Address announced that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office, which will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology as well as co-ordinating relevant departments in the implementation of measures relating to digital infrastructure, data flow and digital services. The Government has also promulgated the “Policy Statement on Facilitating Data Flow and Safeguarding Data Security in Hong Kong” in December 2023, putting forward 18 specific action items to promote the consolidation, application, opening up and sharing of data on one hand, and to enhance safeguards for data security and planning of related infrastructural facilities on the other. Regarding the facilitation of digital transformation in the society and the enhancement of digital infrastructure, the Government took the lead in 2023 to allocate \$500 million to Cyberport for launching the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme. In order to strengthen the promotion of electronic payment, government services will fully support electronic payment within a year, and will also provide the option of using Mainland e-wallets for payment of government services commonly used by Mainland visitors. In addition, Cyberport will establish the AI Supercomputing Centre in phases this year, and the Government will also implement the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to enhance the local digital infrastructure.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB095**

**(Question Serial No. 2344)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie Mak)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Estimates that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is mainly responsible for, inter alia, fostering digital government and smart city development. In fact, the satellite technology concerned and the related innovative application are becoming increasingly common and they play an important part in smart city development in respect of disaster prevention and mitigation, carbon neutrality monitoring and smart traffic. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of whether resources have been earmarked for studying the application of satellite technology in smart city building and development? If yes, what is the provision earmarked? If no, will resources be allocated for conducting the study?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

Promoting innovative application is the cornerstone of building a smart city. The aerospace satellite technology and industry has been growing vibrantly in recent years. It is also one of the options for advanced manufacturing, which contributes to the promotion of “new industrialisation” and the development of smart city. In recent years, the Government has been creating favourable conditions for the development of advanced manufacturing in terms of infrastructure, talent, capital and technology. Currently, there are 13 satellite or satellite-related enterprises setting up their businesses in Hong Kong Science Park and InnoParks, and they can all enjoy the support provided by these parks to their tenants. Besides, the Government supported a local university through the Innovation and Technology Fund in 2023 to develop and launch a small optical satellite, which will be used in researches about landslide monitoring, carbon neutrality and sustainable development etc. The Government has also provided funding support to a local university through the Smart Traffic Fund for

research about utilising satellite remote sensing technology to conduct periodic wide-area monitoring of vehicle flow on urban roads in Hong Kong. This provides more comprehensive vehicle-kilometrage estimates.

The Government will continue to closely monitor the development of the aerospace satellite industry in Hong Kong and conduct timely review on the relevant support measures.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2351)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Budget Speech that the Government will allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to start-ups engaging in life and health technology in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the expected number of start-ups to be assisted with the above provision and whether a funding ceiling will be set for each enterprise? If yes, what is the funding ceiling? In addition, whether the assistance is limited to the HSITP? Is the relevant assistance still applicable if the operation of a start-up straddles two parks in one zone?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 42)

Reply:

Life and health technology industry is a key direction of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development in the future. To promote development of the industry, the InnoLife Healthtech Hub will be set up in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Loop to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines.

4 wet-lab enabled buildings will be built in Batch 1 of the HSITP to tie in with the related work. To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP, the Government will allocate \$200 million from the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on

setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Details of relevant programmes, including the amount of subsidy and mode of operation, will be announced in due course.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB097**

**(Question Serial No. 3824)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In connection with further facilitating access to government services of Guangdong and Hong Kong by residents and enterprises in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area, please inform this Committee of the expenditure on introducing the first self-service kiosk for Hong Kong's Cross-boundary Public Services in Guangzhou, and whether there are plans to set up additional self-service kiosks in other places. If so, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok, Kingsley (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

We rolled out the first Hong Kong Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) self-service kiosk at the Guangzhou Municipal Government Service Center in February 2024, involving an expenditure of about \$80,000. We are discussing with Guangdong Province to set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks in more Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area (GBA), so as to cope with the demands of GBA residents and enterprises for Hong Kong government services.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 2859)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Budget Speech mentioned that, at present, there are over 220 enterprises specialising in related technologies in Cyberport, including three unicorns.

1. Please list the types of the enterprises as well as the scales and numbers of staff of the companies in the past 3 years;
2. Please list the total amounts of subsidies granted, the numbers of the enterprises and the types of the enterprises in respect of the Cyberport Creative Micro Fund, the Cyberport Incubation Programme, the Cyberport Accelerator Support Programme and the Overseas/Mainland Market Development Support Scheme under the Cyberport Macro Fund in the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

1. In early 2023, Cyberport established the Web3 Hub@Cyberport focusing on third-generation Internet (Web3) technologies. At present, over 220 enterprises including three unicorns that engage in Web3-related technologies have become members of the Cyberport community. Apart from Fintech or virtual assets, there are different application areas of Web3-related technologies covered by these enterprises, including smart living and digital entertainment. For example, an enterprise had leveraged blockchain and Internet of Things technologies to assist farmers in real-time monitoring of the location, health conditions and growth of their livestock, and conversion of the same into reliable and immutable data for banks' reference. While the scale and stage of development of these Web3 enterprises vary, Cyberport estimates that the number of persons employed by each enterprise ranges from several to over 100.

2. Statistics on Cyberport-related entrepreneurship support schemes for the past three years are as follows:

|  | 2023-24<br>(as at February 2024) <sup>1</sup>  |                      |   | 2022-23  |                      |   | 2021-22  |                      |  |
|--|--|----------------------|---|--|----------------------|---|--|----------------------|--|
|  | Funding/<br>Investment<br>involved<br>(\$'000) | Projects<br>approved | Major<br>clusters of<br>enterprises   | Funding/<br>Investment<br>Involved<br>(\$'000) | Projects<br>approved | Major<br>clusters<br>of enter-<br>prises                                    | Funding/<br>Investment<br>Involved<br>(\$'000) | Projects<br>approved | Major<br>clusters<br>of enter-<br>prises                         |
| Cyberport Creative Micro Fund                          | 6,900  | 69                   | Smart Living (20), Fintech (17), Artificial Intelligence (AI)/Big Data (10) | 9,800  | 98                   | Smart Living (49), Digital Entertainment (10), Fintech (8), AI/Big Data (8) | 9,700  | 97                   | Smart Living (49), Fintech (16), AI/Big Data (11)                |
| Cyberport Incubation Programme <sup>2</sup>            | 49,500   | 99                   | Block-chain (28), Smart Living (27), Fintech (21)                           | 64,500   | 129                  | Smart Living (54), Fintech (26), Digital Entertainment (17)                 | 65,000   | 130                  | Smart Living (56), Fintech (30), Block-chain (11)                |
| Cyberport Accelerator Support Programme                | 3,300  | 11                   | Smart Living (8), Digital Entertainment (1), Cyber Security (1)             | 10,200   | 34                   | Smart Living (14), Fintech (9), AI/Big Data (5)                             | 7,500  | 25                   | Smart Living (11), Fintech (6), AI/Big Data (2), Block-chain (2) |
| Cyberport Overseas/Mainland Market Development Support | 18,800   | 94                   | Smart Living (39), Fintech (23), Digital Entertainment (10)                 | 18,200   | 91                   | Smart Living (38), Fintech (27), Digital Entertainment (9), AI/Big Data (9) | 6,200  | 31                   | Smart Living (17), Fintech (6), Digital Entertainment (4)        |

|                      |             |   |                  |              |   |                  |        |   |                               |
|----------------------|-------------|---|------------------|--------------|---|------------------|--------|---|-------------------------------|
| Cyberport Macro Fund | About 7,800 | 1 | Smart Living (1) | About 12,500 | 4 | Smart Living (4) | 41,600 | 5 | Smart Living (4), Fintech (1) |
|----------------------|-------------|---|------------------|--------------|---|------------------|--------|---|-------------------------------|

<sup>1</sup> Funding applications under processing in the first quarter of 2024 not included.

<sup>2</sup> Figures on Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups launched in 2023 included.

- End -

**ITIB099**

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0669)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the first batch of buildings in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Lok Ma Chau Loop (the Loop) will commence operation progressively by the end of this year, and that various tasks such as attracting enterprises, investment and talent are underway. In this connection, please advise whether the Government has any plan to set aside dedicated fund to support mega enterprise groups in setting up innovation and technology headquarters in the Loop.

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Loop will be developed in two phases from west to east. The Phase 1 planning has been completed. With a total floor area of up to 1 million square metres, the HSITP will be divided into various clusters with different industry themes (including life and health technology, artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, and industries, academia and research) as well as a talent accommodation area and the commercial and ancillary facilities, with a view to developing a diverse innovation and technology ecosystem. The first 3 buildings will be completed progressively from the end of 2024 onwards. The HSITP Limited is pressing ahead with the leasing and business attraction work by using existing resources.

Moreover, to promote the development of the life and health industry in Hong Kong, the InnoLife Healthtech Hub will be set up in the HSITP to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines. To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the HSITP, the Government will allocate \$2 billion from the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to

establish presence in the Loop, and will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in HSITP engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. The Government will discuss with the HSITP Limited on the exact arrangements on setting up the InnoLife Healthtech Hub. Relevant details will be announced in due course.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0679)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that in the previous Budget, the Government earmarked \$10 billion to promote the development of life and health technology. Of this, \$6 billion will be used to provide subsidies for local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations to set up life and health technology research institutes. In this connection, please advise this Committee: will consideration be given to allocating a portion of the \$6 billion funding to subsidise renowned Mainland universities in setting up life and health technology research institutes and other related ones in Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

As announced in the 2023-24 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government will allocate \$6 billion to provide subsidies for local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations to set up life and health technology research institutes (LHTRIs). The purpose is to facilitate relevant research and development (R&D) activities and transformation of R&D outcomes, and to attract leading innovation and technology talent and research teams around the world to Hong Kong.

The Government consulted and secured support from the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology on 20 February 2024 on the proposed subsidy programme for LHTRIs. The Government plans to seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) in the second quarter of 2024. After FC's funding approval is obtained, the Government will invite applications from universities interested in setting up LHTRIs.

Under the current proposal, an applicant institution must be a local university funded by the University Grants Committee with medical school and/or is offering life and health disciplines. The LHTRI must adopt cross-universities/institutions and multi-disciplinary approaches to foster long-term R&D collaboration among local universities and top-notch universities/research institutions/research teams from the Mainland and overseas, and to engage in basic research, translational research as well as transformation of R&D outcomes on themes falling within the field of life and health-related technologies.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0681)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government will launch a Frontier Technology Research Infrastructure Support Scheme (the Support Scheme) to assist the 8 University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities, on a matching basis, in procuring facilities and conducting research projects led by top-notch Mainland and overseas researchers, which cover various fields such as artificial intelligence, quantum information, integrated circuit, clinical medicine and health, and gene and biotechnology. To this end, \$3 billion will be allocated from the sum earmarked in the past. In this connection, please inform this Committee: if the overseas experts engaged by the 8 universities successfully apply for the matching fund under the Support Scheme, but their research projects cannot be launched or completed for a prolonged period of time due to various reasons, does the Government have a recovery mechanism in place to ensure the proper use of the expenditure?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

It is proposed in the 2024-25 Budget that a Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme (the Support Scheme) will be launched to assist the 8 University Grants Committee-funded universities, on a matching basis, in procuring facilities and conducting research projects led by top-notch Mainland and overseas researchers, which cover various fields such as artificial intelligence, quantum information, integrated circuit, clinical medicine and health, and gene and biotechnology. To this end, the Government will allocate \$3 billion from the sum earlier earmarked. The Government is currently working out the detailed arrangements of the Support Scheme. To ensure proper use of public funds, the Government will put in place appropriate monitoring mechanism and funding conditions, such as requiring the funded institutions to submit regular progress reports, audited accounts and other information to ensure that the implementation progress and expected outcome of their projects and the

amount of matching fund involved are in line with those committed at the time of application. The Government will also reserve the right to cease funding, demand return of the disbursed funds and take other actions to safeguard the Government's rights in the event of violation of the funding conditions. The Government plans to consult the relevant institutions on the detailed arrangements of the Support Scheme this year, and expects to consult the Legislative Council within this year.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB102**

**(Question Serial No. 1414)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Efficiency Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the 1823 service, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the current staff establishment of 1823 (including for handling both telephone and non-telephone enquiries/complaints), their ranks and relevant expenditure;
2. the reasons why the Government expects that the percentage of calls that can be answered within 12 seconds will further increase in 2024 and the expenditure involved;
3. the average time required for 1823 to handle a telephone and non-telephone enquiry and complaint in the past 3 years; and
4. the details of applying innovation and technology in improving the 1823 service, including the details of application, percentage of cases applied, specific timetable for implementation, number of updates and relevant expenditure in respect of the introduction of artificial intelligence in handling enquiries?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The consolidated reply on the 1823 service is as follows:

The staff establishment and strength of 1823 and its revised salary expenditure for 2023-24 are set out below:

| <b>Establishment of Civil Servants</b> | <b>Strength of Civil Servants (percentage)</b> | <b>Number of Non-Civil Service Contract Staff (including full-time staff and part-time staff (in full-time equivalent))</b> | <b>Salary Expenditure</b> |
|--|--|---|---------------------------|
| 9 (Note)                               | 8 (Note)                                       | 498   | \$148 million             |

Note: The staff establishment includes 1 Chief Executive Officer, 1 Chief Management Services Officer, 1 Senior Management Services Officer, 1 Executive Officer I, 2 Management Services Officers I, 2 Management Services Officers II and 1 Assistant Clerical Officer. One of the posts of Management Services Officers II is now vacant.

The average handling time for 1823 to handle a phone call and a written contact in the past 3 years is as follows:

|  | <b>2021</b> | <b>2022</b> | <b>2023</b> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| The average call handling time for a phone call (second) | 462         | 522         | 427         |
| The average handling time for a written contact (second) | 363         | 353         | 349         |

In 2024, 1823's planned target percentage for "calls that can be answered within 12 seconds" is 80%. 1823 will endeavour to achieve the target by using different approaches, including actively utilising technologies and artificial intelligence (AI). In 2023, 1823 completed the telephony system upgrade project, including the adoption of AI speech recognition technology through which members of the public can use their voice to input the required options without pressing any button. The technology also enables the recognition of callers' enquiry subjects for the provision of relevant information, thereby facilitating public access to information on government services. In 2024-25, 1823 will fully expand its AI chatbot for enquiry service to answer frequently asked questions under all of its scope of service. It will also conduct a project to pilot the use of generative AI technology to assist staff in drafting replies to written enquiries from citizens. In addition, it will apply AI speech-to-text technology to transcribe citizens' voicemail messages into text so as to enhance the handling efficiency. 1823 will adopt AI speech recognition technology to identify callers' enquiry subjects so that callers can receive the requested information by short message service (SMS). We aim at implementing the above enhancements within 2024. The estimated total expenditure involved is approximately \$4.6 million. 1823 will continue to keep a close watch on the latest technological developments and applications, and actively explore the possibility of further utilising innovative technologies, such as AI, in various areas to enhance service efficiency. Furthermore, 1823 will continue to advise departments concerning the

dissemination of information to improve their communication with the public, so as to reduce avoidable enquiries and complaints. It will also continue to optimise its business process and knowledge base to enhance operational efficiency.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB103**

**(Question Serial No. 1428)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the "Global STEM Professorship Scheme", will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the numbers of applications received and successful applicants in each year since the launch of the "Global STEM Professorship Scheme";
2. further to the above question, any approved cases in which the applicants eventually did not come to Hong Kong; if yes, the number and the reasons;
3. the average years of stay of the scientific research scholars coming to Hong Kong under the "Global STEM Professorship Scheme";
4. the number, establishment and ranks of the government staff responsible for the "Global STEM Professorship Scheme" and the expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

1. to 3.

The Global STEM Professorship Scheme supports local universities funded by the University Grants Committee in attracting research and development (R&D) talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. The number of nominations received and approved each year since the launch of the Scheme are as follows:



| <b>Year</b>  | <b>Number of nominations</b> | <b>Number of approved nominations*</b> |
|--------------|------------------------------|--|
| 2021         | 185                          | 67                                     |
| 2022         | 67                           | 28                                     |
| 2023         | 86                           | 30                                     |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>338</b>                   | <b>125</b>                             |

\* Including those who did not eventually accept the invitation of the nominating universities

As at the end of February 2024, over 90 nominations for outstanding scholars have been supported, excluding about 30 selected scholars who did not eventually accept the invitation of the nominating universities. Among the supported scholars, about 60 have taken up their posts in Hong Kong and are participating in the Scheme, while the remaining will be arriving gradually. Nominating universities are expected to employ the selected scholars for at least 5 years.

Under the Scheme, the nominating universities will discuss appointment matters with the selected scholars and provide them with the necessary support. The selected scholars in general need time to consider and make preparatory arrangements for moving to Hong Kong for work. They may be unable to commence work in Hong Kong due to reasons such as job transition and personal circumstances. Besides, the volatile global epidemic situation earlier on inevitably prolonged the discussion between universities and scholars, and may also affect some scholars from taking up their posts in Hong Kong.

4.

The University Grants Committee Secretariat (UGC Secretariat) provides secretariat support for the Scheme. In 2023-24, the actual manpower involves 4 time-limited contract posts in the UGC Secretariat. These include 1 executive equivalent to Senior Executive Officer in the civil service, 2 executives equivalent to Executive Officer I and 1 clerical staff. The total salary is about \$3.48 million. Meanwhile, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau implements the work under the Scheme with its existing manpower and resources.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB104**

**(Question Serial No. 1434)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the promotion of the development of life and health technology, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the staff (in terms of the number, establishment, rank and related expenses) responsible for the work of the life and health technology research institutes;
2. the estimated implementation timetable, manpower requirement, number of talents and scientific research teams attracted to Hong Kong and related expenses in respect of the life and health technology research institutes;
3. the estimated number of collaborative projects, project contents and related expenses paid out of the \$6 billion earmarked for subsidising local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations; and
4. the number, contents, types and related expenses of projects to promote the development of life and health technology in each of the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

Our reply to various parts of the question is set out below:

- 1., 2. & 3. Life and health technology industry will be the key direction of Hong Kong's innovation and technology development in the future. As announced in the 2023-24 Budget, of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government will allocate \$6 billion to

provide subsidies for local universities to collaborate with Mainland and overseas organisations to set up life and health technology research institutes (LHTRIs). The purpose is to facilitate relevant research and development (R&D) activities and transformation of R&D outcomes, and to attract leading innovation and technology talent and research teams around the world to Hong Kong.

The Government consulted and secured the support from the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology on 20 February 2024 on the proposed subsidy programme for LHTRIs. The Government plans to seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) in the second quarter of 2024. After FC's funding approval is obtained, the Government will invite applications from universities interested in setting up LHTRIs.

Under the current proposal, an applicant institution must be a local university funded by the University Grants Committee with medical school and/or is offering life and health disciplines. The LHTRI must engage in basic research, translational research as well as transformation of R&D outcomes on themes falling within the field of life and health-related technologies. The themes may include but are not limited to cell and gene therapy, bioinformatics and biology, biomedical engineering, advanced therapy, medical diagnostics, drug and vaccine development, and clinical trial. In the application submitted, the institution should set out clearly relevant information of a proposed LHTRI, including the objectives, expected deliverables, implementation plan, budget and performance indicators, etc. The successful applicant institution is required to enter into an agreement with the Government and the LHTRI is required to commence operation within 18 months from the signing of the agreement.

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will set up a secretariat to take forward the subsidy programme for LHTRIs. Apart from deploying existing resources, ITC will create 5 non-directorate posts, including 1 Chief Executive Officer, 2 Executive Officers I, 1 Senior Scientific Officer and 1 Scientific Officer, to undertake the relevant work. The additional salary expenditure incurred in 2024-25 will be about \$5.97 million.

4. There are different schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) of ITC to fund R&D and technology adoption in various technology areas by universities, R&D centres, other designated public research institutes and private companies. Among these, the Innovation and Technology Support Programme, Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme, Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme, Partnership Research Programme, Enterprise Support Scheme and R&D Cash Rebate Scheme all aim to support projects relevant to R&D, including those in technology areas related to life and health such as biotechnology and Chinese medicine. In the past 3 years (i.e. 2021-22 to 2023-24 (up to January 2024)), the total funding committed by ITF to the related technology areas under these programmes was about \$350 million.

In addition, there are currently 8 life and health-related State Key Laboratories in Hong Kong. ITC provides the laboratories with an annual funding of not more than \$20 million each through ITF, enabling them to map out a longer term development plan, strengthen their research capability and build up the necessary infrastructural support. In the past 3 years (i.e. 2021-22 to 2023-24), the total funding amount provided to the laboratories by ITF was about \$400 million (Note).

The Government has also established the *InnoHK* research clusters to promote global research collaboration, successfully attracting more than 30 world-renowned universities and research institutes to collaborate with their local counterparts. Among the 29 R&D centres established under *InnoHK*, 16 are life and health-related with research areas covering drug discovery, personalised medicine, molecular diagnostics, bioengineering, chemical biology, bioinformatics, vaccine development, medical instrumentation, etc. In the past 3 years (i.e. 2021-22 to 2023-24 (up to January 2024)), the funding granted by ITF to these 16 R&D centres was about \$2.1 billion.

Note: Since ITF provides funding to State Key Laboratories in Hong Kong on an annual reimbursement basis and the funded institutions would submit their funding applications only after the end of each financial year, the funding amounts in 2023-24 are estimated at their maximum funding level and the actual funding amounts are subject to confirmation upon ITC's approval of the applications concerned.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB105**

**(Question Serial No. 3766)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As regards paragraph 31 of the Budget Speech, please inform this Committee of:

1. the number of promotion activities launched in the Mainland and overseas by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) in the previous year and the manpower and expenditure incurred;
2. the number of enterprises brought in by the ITIB in the past year, their place of origin, the type of business they engage in, the amount of their investment and the jobs they created; and
3. the specific plans of the ITIB for attracting enterprises in the coming year and performance indicators for such work.

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

- 1.&2. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB), in collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises (OASES), has been contacting enterprises from the Mainland and overseas proactively to attract and assist high-potential or representative innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. Since 2023, we have contacted more than 200 Mainland and overseas I&T enterprises and successfully attracted about 50 enterprises to Hong Kong. These enterprises, mainly from industries of strategic importance, including life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technology, are expected to bring more than \$40 billion in investment to Hong Kong, creating more than 13 000 jobs over the next few years.

Their presence in Hong Kong will bring in upstream, midstream and downstream partners from their industry chains, thereby promoting a vibrant development of our I&T sector. The ITIB has all along been using existing manpower and resources to implement the relevant work with the OASES. A breakdown of the expenditure involved for individual work items is not available.

3. The goal of the ITIB is to attract not less than 100 high-potential or representative I&T enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong by 2027, including at least 20 top-notch I&T enterprises, bringing more than \$10 billion in investment to Hong Kong and creating thousands of local job opportunities. The ITIB will continue to contact strategic enterprises proactively to conduct negotiation and provide appropriate assistance, with a view to facilitating the setting up of businesses by Mainland and overseas enterprises in Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 3101)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In the current year, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau continued to support the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTP) with the Innovation and Technology Commission to explore with the Hospital Authority (HA) the use of its clinical data for research and development (R&D). Will the Government advise on the following:

- 1) The HKSTP HA Data Collaboration Lab at the Hong Kong Science Park (HKSP) was commissioned in October last year. It is the first and only access portal to the HA's database for non-academic R&D purposes and provides more than 1 400 HKSP companies and partners with direct access to anonymous clinical data from around 200 000 HA patients. Since the commissioning of the Lab, how many R&D projects and companies have made use of the relevant data?
- 2) Is there any plan to collaborate with Mainland medical institutions to collect data from patients in the Greater Bay Area to enrich the above-mentioned database? If yes, what are the timetable and estimated expenditure?
- 3) Is there any assessment on the benefits brought by the above-mentioned clinical data to biomedical and medical innovation technology companies, and any plan to use it as a selling point to attract more companies to establish a presence in Hong Kong? If yes, what is the estimated manpower requirement?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and the Hospital Authority (HA) launched a pilot programme on the "Data Collaboration Lab" (the Lab) from October to December 2023 and invited 2 park companies for trial use of the HA's medical

data. In view of the positive feedback from these two companies after the trial and that the data were considered to be of high research value, the HKSTPC and the HA officially opened the Lab to eligible innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises in the Science Park for applications to use the data starting from 28 March 2024.

Opening up the HA data platform may help more scientific research institutions explore the applications of healthcare data, thereby enhancing healthcare quality for the benefit of the patients; and it in parallel assists I&T enterprises to advance their research and development (R&D) efforts, and promotes the transformation of R&D outcomes for the benefit of the general public. The HKSTP and the HA will continue to support the Government's policy to support and promote scientific research, timely review and assess the effectiveness of the Lab in order to map out the way forward.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB107**

**(Question Serial No. 0941)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (6) Subvention: Hong Kong Productivity Council, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute Company Limited

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in Programme (6) that the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) is committed to providing green technology support to drive smart and green living and contribute to carbon neutrality. In the coming year, the HKPC will promote smart and green living by accelerating the adoption of green technologies and providing support to enterprises in managing their Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) performance. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- a) the amount of resources deployed by the Government for providing green technology support and the outcomes achieved in the past 3 years;
- b) the specific measures and timetable for accelerating the adoption of green technologies; and
- c) the ways of providing support to enterprises in managing their ESG performance in the coming year and the expected impact on future economic benefits?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

The Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) has been dovetailing with Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 and the Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong 2.0 and is committed to providing support services in green technologies, in order to bolster and promote the research and development (R&D) of green technologies with a view to taking forward smart and green living. In consultation with the Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB), a consolidated reply to the questions are as follows:

In the past 3 years, the HKPC endeavoured to complement the various initiatives of the Government and actively respond to the demands of the industry and the community, driving Hong Kong in pursuit of a green and smart city with innovative technologies and high-quality services:

- a) Fully dovetailing with the Government by providing support to the industry: Appointed by EEB, the HKPC assists the industry in achieving green development through undertaking the secretariat work of the Cleaner Production Partnership Programme (Partnership Programme) and the Recycling Fund. From 2021-22 to 2023-24 (as at February 2024), over 600 projects have been approved under the Partnership Programme, involving a funding amount of over \$120 million, supporting about 500 Hong Kong-invested factories in Hong Kong and Guangdong Province to adopt cleaner production technologies and practices to improve the environmental hygiene in the region. Regarding the Recycling Fund, over 950 applications have been approved with a total funding amount of about \$220 million to support the operation and development of more than 780 recycling enterprises in Hong Kong.
- b) Promoting green innovation to enhance industry standard with advanced technologies: From 2021-22 to 2023-24 (as at February 2024), the innovative environmental technologies developed by the HKPC have been commended with over 30 international and local awards in total, including the R&D 100 Awards and Edison Awards. In addition, more than 10 patents were obtained in the past 3 years, providing an array of green technologies and services for over 300 enterprises every year.

The HKPC provides practical solutions to solve the problems faced by enterprises by targeting their operational difficulties. For instance, to tackle the problem of food waste disposal, the HKPC has developed a pioneering technology in the industry - the “Food TranSmarter” to substantially reduce manual work, resolve odour and hygiene problems as well as significantly lower carbon emissions and transportation costs. After the technology was successfully rolled out for trial at The Chinese University of Hong Kong for 1 year, the HKPC licensed this technology to its partners for adoption and joint promotion in May 2022. As at February 2024, there are 17 “Food TranSmarter” systems with different processing capacities commissioned or to be commissioned in Hong Kong. Promotion for adoption will be continued with different trades and at different venues, such as hospitals, residential estates, hotels, shopping centres, markets, wholesale food markets, correctional institutions and theme parks. At the same time, the HKPC has been promoting the related technology in the Mainland and overseas, enabling green technologies in Hong Kong to go global.

In order to promote the adoption of green technologies, the HKPC established the Green Hall and the Future FoodTech Lab to build connections for pooling together and facilitating collaborations among the Government, industry, academic and research sectors with a view to promoting the translation of more innovative GreenTech ideas into practical use to benefit the industry and community and fostering the achievement of carbon neutrality in Hong Kong.

- c) Expanding the connections of the industry to foster multilateral co-operations and interactions: The HKPC has been organising seminars and forums on different topics

such as climate change and carbon neutrality, inviting different industry practitioners to join. In the past 3 years, the HKPC organised over 400 green training courses with over 15 000 participants. Meanwhile, the HKPC attaches great importance to strengthening cooperation and liaison with universities, research institutions, chambers of commerce and Mainland organisations. In 2022-23, the HKPC signed Memorandums of Understanding with the Vocational Training Council, City University of Hong Kong, The Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong, the Shenzhen Academy of Environmental Sciences, Zhongguancun Qingchuang (Beijing) International Technology Co., Ltd. and amfori respectively, with a view to further developing international in-depth exchange and cooperation, and promoting jointly the development of green technologies and environmental protection as well as the understanding in supply chain, ESG and carbon neutrality.

In the coming year, the HKPC will continue to provide support to enterprises in managing their ESG performance, including the launch of a new ESG One community with an aim to enhance enterprises' awareness of and capabilities in ESG and build an ESG ecosystem for Hong Kong's enterprises. ESG One will pool together stakeholders with the same goal to exchange and share information and resources on a mutual basis. Market surveys generally reflect that Mainland and overseas enterprises with good ESG performance indeed bring operational benefits, including easier to raise funds for business expansion, building reputation and boosting product sales, enhancing operational resilience, and even easier to recruit and retain talents.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB108**

**(Question Serial No. 0942)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Launched in October 2023, the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) aims to unleash potential of local universities in transformation and commercialisation of research and development outcomes, and facilitate relevant collaboration among the Government, industries, universities, and research sectors. It is stated in the Budget that the Government will continue to monitor the implementation of the RAISe+ Scheme. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- a) the current progress of the RAISe+ Scheme; whether a specific timetable on the implementation progress is available;
- b) the vetting and screening procedures to be followed for processing the 94 applications received in the first round; and
- c) the mechanism for the Government to oversee the implementation of the RAISe+ Scheme; and whether any reviews will be conducted in a timely manner to evaluate its effectiveness? If yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

A total of 94 applications were received under the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) in the first application solicitation period. These applications have been assessed through a peer review on their technical aspect by 150 experts from different technology areas and subject to a business viability assessment by the consultant commissioned by the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC). The above preliminary assessment results have been submitted to the Steering Committee of the Scheme for reference. The Steering Committee has, upon completion of the assessment,

recommended that the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology give in-principle support to more than 20 applications. ITC has also informed the universities concerned of the results in end March 2024. After completion of the follow-up work with the successful applicant universities, ITC will make a final decision on those applications, and decide on the next application solicitation period.

The applications for the RAISe+ Scheme will be vetted in accordance with the established assessment criteria, including (i) innovation and technology component of the project, (ii) commercial viability of project outcomes, (iii) technical and management capability of the team, (iv) relevance of the project with government policies or in overall interest of the community, and (v) financial considerations of the project.

ITC will also devise overall performance indicators for the Scheme, such as the number of product outcomes transformed and realised, external investment attracted, and whether the start-ups have further developed and grown, so as to closely monitor its implementation and the benefits brought by it to Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB109**

**(Question Serial No. 2415)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that a \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) will be launched this year. In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

1. the specific details of the NIAS, including the implementation timetable, eligibility, scope of funding and approval mechanism, etc.;
2. the staffing establishment and expenditure involved for the implementation of the NIAS; and
3. the expected outcomes of the NIAS and whether any performance indicators will be set to evaluate its effectiveness; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons for that.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

1. Under the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS), all applicant enterprises must be companies that are incorporated in Hong Kong under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622), which have committed an investment of no less than \$200 million of funding that is within the approved funding scope in the setting up of the new smart production facilities in Hong Kong in the designated technology areas of life and health technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and data science, and advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies. The smart production facilities should be advanced in nature, i.e. the integrated and intelligent use of "smart" technologies such as Internet of Things, real-time data acquisition, application of data analytics and advanced human-machine interfaces, AI/machine learning/deep learning, automation and robotics, sustainable technology, sensors and actuators, etc. in the production process.

The funding of the NIAS will cover expenses directly related to the establishment of the new production line in Hong Kong, including the costs of procurement, set-up, installation and commissioning of the machinery/software and equipment/apparatus, as well as fees for engaging technical consultancies for the design and setting up of the production line concerned, including testing and staff training. As we envisage that production facilities to be established under the NIAS will be of much larger scale than the existing New Industrialisation Funding Scheme, the NIAS will also provide funding for specialised facilities that are necessary for the operation of the production facilities (for example, the costs of procurement, installation and commissioning of clean rooms, anti-seismic structure for micro-electronic factory, specified storage facilities, etc., including but not limited to the related fitting-out costs). Expenditure items under the NIAS shall not receive funding from any other funding schemes of the Government as well as those administered by public bodies. General business operating expenses of the applicant enterprise will not be funded.

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will first conduct a preliminary assessment of the application received, including checking of basic eligibility and conducting initial assessment of the financial capability of the applicant. After the initial assessment, endorsement of the New Industrialisation Development Office (NIDO) under the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will be sought on whether the proposed new smart production facilities are from industries of strategic importance and whether they could fulfil the advanced manufacturing element. After going through the relevant procedures, the application will be submitted to the Vetting Committee (VC) of the NIAS. The VC will be responsible for drawing up a set of application guidelines as well as assessment and funding criteria, considering and recommending applications, overseeing the implementation and evaluating the outcome of approved projects, regularly reviewing and monitoring the overall progress of the NIAS and evaluating its effectiveness. Applications supported by the VC will be submitted to the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology for approval. ITC have consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology in April 2024 on the implementation details of the NIAS, and will seek approval from the Finance Committee to create a new dedicated subhead with \$10 billion commitment under the Innovation and Technology Fund, with a view to launching the NIAS within 2024.

2. ITC will set up a secretariat comprising 5 staff members to handle the administrative work related to the NIAS, for instance, carrying out preliminary assessment of the applications, monitoring the progress of approved projects, disbursing funds, as well as performing the assessment of Research Talent Hub-NIAS applications, arranging for the disbursement of funds and monitoring the progress of approved projects.
3. The Government aims to attract around 50 to 100 enterprises to set up new production facilities in Hong Kong with a corresponding direct investment of no less than \$20 billion from these enterprises under the NIAS starting from 2024-25 over a period of around 5 to 8 years. The NIDO expects these investments to be able to further enhance the local I&T ecosystem, boost the upstream, midstream and downstream development of new industry and create more quality job opportunities.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB110**

**(Question Serial No. 2418)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government expected that the applications to be received and processed under the Technology Voucher Programme (TVP) in 2024 are 9 985, representing a decrease of 1 542 applications (13.4%) compared to that of 2023. In this connection, please advise this Committee on:

1. the reasons for the decrease in the expected number of applications to be received and processed in 2024;
2. the breakdown of the expenditures and staffing establishment for the implementation of the TVP in 2022 and 2023; and
3. the breakdown of the estimated expenditure and staffing establishment required for the implementation of the TVP in 2024.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

1. The numbers of applications received and processed under the Technology Voucher Programme (TVP) in 2022 and 2023 were significantly higher than that of 2021. The increase was considered to be resulting from the heightened awareness of enterprises of the need for digital transformation under the new normal of the COVID-19 epidemic. As it is expected that the industry requires time to complete the TVP projects approved during such period and consider other upgrading and transformation solutions, the number of applications to be received and processed in 2024 will be relatively stable.

2&3. The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) appointed the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) to be the Secretariat of the TVP in June 2021. The



establishment for the implementation of the TVP in HKPC is about 110 staff and outsourced service contract will be used to increase manpower when needs arise, so as to meet the additional workload from the additional applications and final project reports with an enhanced processing capability. HKPC's expenditure for implementing the TVP covered staff remuneration, system enhancement and maintenance, organisation of promotional events and promotional expenses, etc. The expenditures involved are \$55.68 million, \$81.37 million and \$104 million in the recent 3 years respectively.

As mentioned above, the numbers of applications received and processed in 2022 and 2023 were significantly higher than that of 2021. Since the second half of 2023, the projects concerned were completed progressively and the Secretariat needed to deploy additional manpower to process the increased final projects reports, resulting in a corresponding increase in the overall estimated expenditure. The Secretariat will make adjustment to the manpower with reference to the workload so as to achieve the optimal cost-effectiveness.

For ITC, the implementation of the TVP is undertaken by 8 staff (2 of them have to carry out other duties as well), covering duties like the policy issues of the TVP, monitoring the progress of some of the projects, assessing and approving their final project reports, as well as monitoring the work of the Secretariat, etc. The emoluments involved are \$6.91 million, \$7.08 million and \$7.34 million in the recent 3 years respectively.

ITC will continue to monitor closely the operation of the TVP and enhance its workflow and adjust the manpower required for the above work in a timely manner.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB111**

**(Question Serial No. 1710)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS):

- (1) What are the objectives of implementing the NIAS, including the number of enterprises to be attracted, the distribution of enterprises in various sectors, the number of companies participating in the matching and the number of Mainland and overseas talents and the amount of capital to be attracted to Hong Kong?
- (2) What are the specific details of the NIAS, including the eligibility and requirements for application, implementation period, funding arranging, requirements for the participating matching companies, application procedures, approval mechanism, and monitoring mechanism, etc.?
- (3) Who will be responsible for approving and monitoring the implementation of the NIAS; and when will the NIAS be expected to be announced and launched at the earliest this year?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

- (1) The Government aims to attract around 50 to 100 enterprises to set up new production facilities in Hong Kong with a corresponding direct investment of no less than \$20 billion from these enterprises under the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) starting from 2024-25 over a period of around 5 to 8 years. The Government has not imposed any quota on the allocation of approved funding to be received by enterprises in each of the specific sectors.

- (2) Under the NIAS, funding will be provided on a 1 (government): 2 (company) matching basis, with the Government covering a maximum of one-third of the approved project expenditure or \$200 million per project, whichever is lower. In other words, the applicant has to contribute no less than two-thirds of the total approved project expenditure. Grant will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis.

All applicant enterprises must be companies that are incorporated in Hong Kong under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622), which have committed an investment of no less than \$200 million of funding that is within the approved funding scope in the setting up of the new smart production facilities in Hong Kong in the designated technology areas of life and health technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and data science, and advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies. The smart production facilities should be advanced in nature, i.e. the integrated and intelligent use of “smart” technologies such as Internet of Things, real-time data acquisition, application of data analytics and advanced human-machine interfaces, AI/machine learning/deep learning, automation and robotics, sustainable technology, sensors and actuators, etc. in the production process.

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will first conduct a preliminary assessment of the application received, including checking of basic eligibility and conducting initial assessment of the financial capability of the applicant. After the initial assessment, endorsement of the New Industrialisation Development Office under the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will be sought on whether the proposed new smart production facilities are from industries of strategic importance and whether they could fulfil the advanced manufacturing element. After going through the relevant procedures, the application will be submitted to the Vetting Committee (VC) of the NIAS. The VC will be responsible for drawing up a set of application guidelines as well as assessment and funding criteria, considering and recommending applications, overseeing the implementation and evaluating the outcome of approved projects, regularly reviewing and monitoring the overall progress of the NIAS and evaluating its effectiveness. Applications supported by the VC will be submitted to the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology for approval.

- (3) ITC will set up a secretariat to handle the administrative work related to the NIAS, for instance, carrying out preliminary assessment of the applications, monitoring the progress of approved projects, disbursing funds, reviewing the operation of the NIAS, as well as assessing Research Talent Hub-NIAS applications, arranging for the disbursement of funds and monitoring progress of approved projects. ITC have consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology in April 2024 on the implementation details of the NIAS, including the staffing establishment of the secretariat, and will seek approval from the Finance Committee to create a new dedicated subhead with \$10 billion commitment under the Innovation and Technology Fund, with a view to launching the NIAS within the second half of 2024.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB112**

**(Question Serial No. 1711)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

From 2024-25 onwards, the Government will provide up to \$16 million annual funding to the Technology Transfer Office of each of the 8 University Grants Committee-funded universities. What criteria will be adopted by the Government to determine the amount of funding provided to each of the universities; and what are the application requirements and vetting mechanisms respectively?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

The scope of the funding support provided to the Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) of designated universities under the Innovation and Technology Fund by the Government covers the following expenditures:

- (a) professional services for technology transfer;
- (b) promotion of technology transfer;
- (c) intellectual property support; and
- (d) staff training on technology transfer-related matters.

The funding is disbursed on an accountable and reimbursement basis after the close of each financial year. To ensure the proper use of the funding, the funded universities have to submit a certified reimbursement request for the expenditure incurred in the previous financial year together with a financial report or auditors' report as requested by the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) after the close of each Government financial year. The universities have to certify that the various expenses so reported are correct and accurate, and they may be subject to on-site inspection. Only after verification of the required documents and information will ITC disburse the funding. Moreover, the funded universities have to submit annual reports to ITC to report their developments, including the overall funding

sources and expenditures of their TTOs, the technology transfer-related activities and trainings organised by them as well as their performances against the various performance indicators, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB113**

**(Question Serial No. 3225)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) which aims to subsidise manufacturers to set up new smart production lines in Hong Kong, what were the cumulative number of production lines that were supported to be set up and the number of applications as at end-2023? Among them, how many enterprises were newly set up in Hong Kong? How many positions were technical ones and what was the amount of private investment?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

As at end March 2024, the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) Vetting Committee has agreed to support 38 applications involving 62 production lines, of which 32 projects have signed the funding agreements, involving 54 production lines, over 300 job opportunities in technical positions and \$656 million of private investment.

All companies incorporated in Hong Kong under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622) are welcome to apply for funding under the NIFS. As at end March 2024, there were 4 newly established (not more than 2 years) applicant companies among the 38 applicant companies supported by the Vetting Committee.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB114**

**(Question Serial No. 3226)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme (NITTP) was launched in August 2018.

1. Please provide in tabular form the cumulative funding amounts approved under the NITTP so far (with the percentages of the various funding categories); the numbers of beneficiary enterprises, the numbers of funded projects under the various categories and their respective percentages each year; and the percentages of public courses and tailor-made courses in the above period respectively.
2. Among the funded projects, what were the numbers of funded companies engaging in the traditional manufacturing sector, their industry types and funding amounts in each of the past years? Among these beneficiary companies engaging in the traditional manufacturing sector, what were the respective percentages of public courses and tailor-made courses their staff received as trainings?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The Innovation and Technology Commission launched the New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme (NITTP) in August 2018 to subsidise, on a 2(Government):1(company) matching basis, local enterprises to train their staff in advanced technologies, especially those related to “new industrialisation”. Our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows –

As at end-February 2024, the NITTP has approved around 16 020 training grant applications from about 5 170 enterprises, involving total funding of over \$610 million. The number of applications for registering public courses, the number of applications for registering tailor-

made courses, the number of approved enterprises, and the total funding amount under the NITTP in each of the past 5 years are tabulated as follows –

| <b>Year</b>  | <b>Number of applications for registering public courses</b> | <b>Number of applications for registering tailor-made courses</b> | <b>Number of approved enterprises</b> | <b>Total funding amount</b> |
|--------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2019         | 347<br>(92%)   | 32<br>(8%)  | 507                                   | \$10,915,897                |
| 2020         | 722<br>(96%)   | 33<br>(4%)  | 598                                   | \$12,582,867                |
| 2021         | 1 515<br>(97%)   | 50<br>(3%)  | 1 153                                 | \$49,498,534                |
| 2022         | 1 680<br>(96%)   | 67<br>(4%)  | 1 734                                 | \$163,103,374               |
| 2023         | 2 036<br>(98%)   | 39<br>(2%)  | 2 386                                 | \$366,072,862               |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>6 300</b><br>(97%)  | <b>221</b><br>(3%)  | <b>6 505<sup>(1)</sup></b>            | <b>\$602,173,535</b>        |

Note<sup>(1)</sup>: The companies which have submitted NITTP applications in different years are counted separately in each of the year concerned.

As at end-February 2024, the number of trainees whose training grant applications for training have been approved under the NITTP by the top 10 industries of their enterprises is tabulated below –

|   | <b>Industry<sup>(2)</sup></b>                     | <b>Number of approved trainees for public courses</b> | <b>Number of approved trainees for tailor-made courses</b> | <b>Number of enterprises</b> | <b>Funding amount</b> |
|---|---|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Innovation and Technology                         | 14 796<br>(99%)                                       | 159<br>(1%)  | 1 478                        | \$221,324,730         |
| 2 | Management and Consulting                         | 4 503<br>(98%)  | 101<br>(2%)  | 422                          | \$65,883,842          |
| 3 | Retail Trade                                      | 4 041<br>(95%)  | 208<br>(5%)  | 410                          | \$61,347,841          |
| 4 | Building, Engineering and Civil Built Environment | 3 112<br>(99%)  | 38<br>(1%)   | 406                          | \$33,431,554          |
| 5 | Media and Communications                          | 2 983<br>(100%)                                       | 6<br>(0%)  | 327                          | \$40,520,724          |
| 6 | Import/Export and Wholesale Trades                | 2 830<br>(95%)  | 148<br>(5%)  | 357                          | \$43,101,621          |



|    | <b>Industry<sup>(2)</sup></b>      | <b>Number of approved trainees for public courses</b> | <b>Number of approved trainees for tailor-made courses</b> | <b>Number of enterprises</b> | <b>Funding amount</b> |
|----|------------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 7  | Banking and Finance                | 2 014<br>(88%)  | 282<br>(12%)   | 176                          | \$27,018,778          |
| 8  | Beauty Care and Hairdressing       | 1 536<br>(99%)  | 21<br>(1%)   | 141                          | \$24,678,839          |
| 9  | Hotel, Catering and Tourism        | 1 225<br>(90%)  | 130<br>(10%)   | 169                          | \$19,655,298          |
| 10 | Electronics and Telecommunications | 1 192<br>(99%)  | 17<br>(1%)   | 164                          | \$11,567,454          |

Note<sup>(2)</sup>: An enterprise may involve more than one industry. The enterprises are categorised by their declared principal industry in the above table.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB115**

**(Question Serial No. 3227)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Please provide the following information on the first Advanced Manufacturing Centre (AMC) located in the Tseung Kwan O InnoPark:

1. In October last year, there was an incident involving the collapse of a non-structural wall serving as the corridor partition. What were the details? What was the nature of assistance provided by the Government to the tenants who have been impacted? What was the expenditure involved? What were the results of the inspections conducted by the independent third party engaged by the Government? What was the expenditure involved? What were the results of the investigation report submitted by the main contractor? What further follow-up work has been done by the Government? What were the manpower and resources involved?
2. Please tabulate the current number of tenants in the AMC, percentage of the total leased area, business types of the tenants, length of tenancy, number of tenants who have moved in and commenced operation as well as floor area involved.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

1. In October 2023, a non-structural wall serving as corridor partition collapsed at the Advanced Manufacturing Centre (AMC). No injuries were reported and the overall structural safety of the building was not affected. Since then, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) has been following up on the incident seriously to ensure the safe operation of AMC. The main contractor of AMC has submitted a preliminary investigation report to HKSTPC, and has completed the safety inspections of similar corridor partition walls on all floors of AMC and taken temporary precautionary measures. Furthermore, the independent third party engaged by

HKSTPC has also submitted a preliminary investigation report and recommended follow-up actions. The liability issues related to the incident are still under investigation. HKSTPC will continue to liaise with tenants who have been impacted and provide assistance as appropriate. As the above follow-up actions are undertaken by HKSTPC, no additional manpower and resources from the Government are involved.

2. As at February 2024, a total of 9 companies have moved into the AMC with a lease period ranging from 3 to 10 years. The overall occupancy rate is about 41% and the relevant breakdown is tabulated below:

| <b>Business</b>   | <b>Number of tenants</b> | <b>Leased area (sq.ft.)</b> |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Smart logistics and supply chain management                               | 1                        | 62 785                      |
| Manufacturing of satellites and relevant tracking and control instruments | 3                        | 194 281                     |
| Medical supplies and testing tools  | 2                        | 75 487                      |
| Nanofiber materials   | 1                        | 36 786                      |
| Smart security products   | 1                        | 24 448                      |
| Application of research and development technology in textile and apparel | 1                        | 20 382                      |

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB116**

**(Question Serial No. 3228)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development  
(4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the research and development (R&D) of microelectronics:

1. What are the details of the newly-built Microelectronics Centre (MEC) which is to be commissioned this year? What are the numbers of confirmed tenants, leased areas involved and specific businesses of the tenants concerned? What are the expenditure and manpower resources involved in the MEC each year?
2. The Government will establish the Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (HKMSRDI) this year and has indicated that it has earmarked about \$2.48 billion for procuring the pilot lines equipment and about \$360 million for the operating expenditure of the first 5 years. HKMSRDI will spearhead and facilitate research collaboration on the third-generation semiconductors among universities, research and development (R&D) centres and the industry, and to realise R&D outcomes by making use of the comprehensive manufacturing industry chain in the Greater Bay Area. Please provide details of the relevant work and the breakdown of the 2 expenditure items above.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

1. The Microelectronics Centre (MEC) will be managed and operated by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC). The construction of the MEC has been substantially completed. The HKSTPC is preparing for the installation of the dedicated facilities such as high standard cleanrooms, dangerous goods storage and waste treatment facilities with a view to commissioning the MEC within 2024 for

gradual move-in of the newly established Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI) and other tenants. Meanwhile, the HKSTPC is also conducting the leasing exercise. Therefore, information on the numbers of tenants, leased areas and specific businesses of the tenants is currently unavailable.

2. The aim of establishing the MRDI is to spearhead and facilitate collaboration among universities, research and development (R&D) centres and the industry, including exploring the third-generation semiconductor core technology. The Innovation and Technology Commission has been actively establishing contacts with a number of related enterprises and R&D centres in Hong Kong and the Mainland and exploring the feasibility of collaboration, so as to commercialise R&D outcomes by making full use of the outstanding scientific research technologies in Hong Kong for conducting trial runs and leveraging the well-developed manufacturing industry chains in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), and to promote the GBA to become a leader in the world-class high-end industrial chain.

The Government plans to propose to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the second quarter of this year the creation of a new commitment of about \$2.84 billion, among which about \$2.48 billion is for procuring 2 pilot lines equipment to assist start-ups, and small and medium-sized enterprises in addressing their pain points and conducting trial runs with a view to commercialising their R&D outcomes. The remaining amount of about \$360 million is for the operating expenditure of the first 5 years (2024-25 to 2028-29 financial years), covering the remuneration of headquarters staff, rent and general administrative expenditure. Staff of the MRDI will be recruited in phases and it is expected to include 170 researchers and 30 headquarters staff providing management and administrative support.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB117**

**(Question Serial No. 0396)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

One of the tasks of the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) is to provide funding support to State Key Laboratories (SKLs) in Hong Kong and Hong Kong Branches of Chinese National Engineering Research Centres to enhance their research capabilities. As shown in the Programme, the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 from ITC include to continue with the restructuring exercise of the SKLs in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Since the Government initiated the restructuring exercise, what are the work progress and expenditure involved so far?
2. In order to give full play to Hong Kong's research and development strengths, does the Government have any plans to apply to our country for the increase of the number of SKLs in Hong Kong, or the adjustment or update of the research areas of the existing SKLs? If yes, what is the expected change in the amount of subsidy to be borne in the future?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) has commenced the re-organisation exercise of the State Key Laboratories (SKLs) in Hong Kong to better leverage Hong Kong's international and geographical advantages and align with the national overall development plan. We have been maintaining close communication with the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) over the re-organisation exercise and have invited relevant universities in Hong Kong to submit re-organisation proposals. They were encouraged to re-organise the SKLs through adjustment of research directions, optimisation of resources, integration of research teams and/or establishment of new laboratories, etc. ITC plans to engage experts

to conduct an assessment within 2024, and upon completion of the assessment, a list of recommendations will be submitted to MOST for consideration. Laboratories which are approved after passing the assessment will be named “State Key Laboratories” and receive an annual funding from ITC (the prevailing annual funding ceiling is \$20 million per SKL). The total number of SKLs after re-organisation will be determined by the re-organisation proposals submitted by universities and subject to the agreement from MOST. The preparatory work of the re-organisation exercise has been carried out by existing staff of ITC so far. As the manpower concerned concurrently execute other duties under ITC, we do not have a breakdown of the manpower and expenditure.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB118**

**(Question Serial No. 0397)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Budget that a \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) will be launched this year and enterprises will each be provided with funding support of up to \$200 million on a matching basis of 1 (Government): 2 (enterprise). The Government anticipated that the NIAS will attract 50 to 100 enterprises engaging in relevant industries to invest no less than \$20 billion in Hong Kong. As stated in the Programme, the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 from the Innovation and Technology Commission include taking forward the NIAS. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. Since the announcement of the NIAS in last year's Policy Address, how many potential target enterprises have the Government approached? Among them, how many have expressed interest or already submitted applications to the Government? If there is any, please set out the places of origin of the target enterprises, the industries they engage in and the amount of investment they plan to make in Hong Kong.
2. The Government anticipated that the NIAS will attract 50 to 100 enterprises engaging in the relevant industries. How long does it take for the NIAS to achieve the set target? What is the estimated number of enterprises that will apply to invest in Hong Kong under the NIAS in the coming year?
3. Compared with the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme, the application threshold of the newly introduced NIAS has been substantially raised by requiring applicant enterprises to make an investment of no less than \$200 million in Hong Kong. Will the Government consider relaxing appropriately the definition of eligible investment when calculating the amount of investment made by enterprises in Hong Kong? For example, not limited to the setting up of new smart production lines.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)



Reply:

1. The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will, upon confirmation of the implementation details for the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS), promote the NIAS to the industry, including organising briefing sessions in collaboration with chambers of commerce and industry associations so as to actively promote the NIAS to the industry. At the same time, the New Industrialisation Development Office under the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will also assist in the promotion of the NIAS to industries and manufacturers in the Mainland and overseas through various online communication channels and platforms.
2. The Government aims to attract 50 to 100 enterprises to set up new production facilities in Hong Kong through the NIAS in 5 to 8 years starting from 2024-25, with corresponding direct investment from the enterprises of not be less than \$20 billion. As the number of applications under the NIAS depends on various factors, such as the market environment and identification of suitable sites by the enterprises, an estimation on the specific number of applications to be received under the NIAS in the first year is not available at this stage.
3. The scope of funding of the NIAS can be used to cover expenses directly related to the establishment of the new production line in Hong Kong, including the costs of procurement, set up, installation and commissioning of the machinery/software and equipment/apparatus, fees for engaging technical consultant(s) for the design and establishment of the relevant production line, including testing and staff training involved. As we expect that the scale of the production facilities to be established under the NIAS will be much larger than that of the existing New Industrialisation Funding Scheme, the NIAS will also provide funding for specialised facilities that are necessary for the operation of the production facilities (for example, the costs of procurement, installation and commissioning of clean rooms, anti-seismic structure for micro-electronic factory, specified storage facilities, etc., including but not limited to the related fitting-out costs). Expenditure items under an approved NIAS project shall not receive funding support from other Government funding schemes as well as those administered by public bodies. General business operating expenses of the applicant enterprise will not be funded under the NIAS.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB119**

**(Question Serial No. 0398)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (6) Subvention: Hong Kong Productivity Council, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute Company Limited

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Programme that one of the important tasks of the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) is to nurture future innovation and technology talents, and the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 include strengthening training relating to new industrialisation. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. How many training courses relating to new industrialisation were launched by the HKPC in the past 3 years? Among them, how many were training courses introduced by or co-organised with the Mainland and overseas countries with an advanced manufacturing sector?
2. Please list by category of the training courses the numbers of staff enrolling in them in the past 3 years. Among them, what were the numbers of staff receiving government funding and the total funding amounts?
3. What are the specific plan and details of the HKPC's proposal for strengthening training relating to new industrialisation? What are the manpower and expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

1. The numbers of training courses relating to new industrialisation organised by the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) in the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) are provided as follows:

|  | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of training courses relating to new industrialisation   | 293     | 306     | 350     |
| (The figures inside the brackets indicate the numbers of training courses and activities introduced by or co-organised with the Mainland and overseas countries with an advanced manufacturing sector) | (16)    | (20)    | (40)    |

2. The HKPC does not have a breakdown of the training courses relating to new industrialisation. Regarding the training courses, the numbers of staff enrolling in them, those receiving government funding and the total funding amounts in the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23) are provided as follows:

|   | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|
| Number of staff enrolling in the training courses relating to new industrialisation organised by the HKPC                             | 6 937   | 7 171   | 8 715   |
| (The figures inside the brackets indicate the numbers of staff funded by the New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme) | (698)   | (1 398) | (1 068) |
| Total funding amount (\$ million)   | 3.61    | 6.91    | 5.92    |

3. In order to enhance the skills of local technical staff in new industrialisation, the HKPC will strengthen the provision of relevant training. The training aims to support local enterprises in nurturing new industrialisation talents, and the specific course details are as follows:

- (a) Online courses: Online courses, learning videos and interactive exercises will be provided to current staff through the HKPC Academy online learning platform to enable them to learn, in a flexible manner, new industrialisation-related topics anytime and anywhere. Learners who have completed the courses and achieved the learning objectives will be awarded online course certificates to prove their completion of the relevant courses.
- (b) New Industrialisation Advanced Workshop: This training will be conducted face-to-face and mainly targeted at current staff. The course content will include digital economy and new industrialisation, intelligence and digitalisation, artificial intelligence and robotics, etc. In the long run, the HKPC will consider recommending this course for qualification recognition under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework.

- (c) Greater Bay Area New Industrialisation Workshop: This workshop is conducted in the form of study tour for high-level supervisors and current staff of enterprises to understand the opportunities and technology adoption of new industrialisation as well as the latest industrial development in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). The activities include visits to some factories in the GBA, seminars and demonstration sessions relating to new industrialisation.

Regarding the new training relating to new industrialisation, the Government will provide about \$11 million for the HKPC in 3 years to cover the course development cost, and the HKPC will bear the relevant recurrent expenditure. On manpower, the HKPC expects to deploy 10 full-time staff to take up the new training relating to new industrialisation, and their duties include drawing up the content of the training courses, developing teaching materials, arranging for tutors and venues as well as conducting market promotions, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB120**

**(Question Serial No. 1994)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In order to realise Hong Kong's positioning as an international innovation and technology centre, the Government launched the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme) in 2023 to incentivise collaboration among the industry, academic and research sectors and promote the transformation and commercialisation of research and development outcomes from universities. In respect of the RAISE+ Scheme, please advise this Committee of the following:

- a. What were the numbers of applications submitted and approved in the first and second stages respectively?
- b. What were the average funding amounts of the approved applications in the first and second stages respectively? What were the project categories?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

Under the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme), a university team may, depending on the maturity of the transformation of its research and development (R&D) outcomes, apply to join the Scheme starting from either the first stage (transformation and realisation of R&D outcomes) or the second stage (initiation of the commercialisation of R&D outcomes). Among the 94 applications received in the first application solicitation period under the Scheme, there were 87 and 7 applications under the above two categories respectively.

These applications have already been assessed through a peer review on their technical aspect by 150 experts from different technology areas and subject to a business viability assessment by the consultant commissioned by the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC). The

above assessment results have been submitted to the Steering Committee for reference. The Steering Committee has, upon completion of the assessment, recommended that the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology give in-principle support to more than 20 applications. ITC has also informed the universities concerned of the results in end March 2024. After completion of the follow-up work with the successful applicant universities, ITC will make a final decision on those applications. Hence, no information on the final number of applications approved nor other breakdowns is available at this moment.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB121**

**(Question Serial No. 2740)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme, the Innovation and Technology Commission is responsible for administering the Research Talent Hub (RTH). In this connection, please advise this Committee on:

1. the expenditures involved for the RTH in the past 5 financial years;
2. the numbers of applications received and processed;
3. the numbers of posts funded for the research talents; and
4. the educational levels of the research talents (by bachelor's degree, master's degree and doctoral degree).

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

In the past 5 financial years (i.e. from 2019-20 to 2023-24 (as at 31 January 2024)), a total of 9 498 research talent applications were received and processed under the Research Talent Hub, of which 8 081 received funding support, involving a total amount of about \$4.2 billion. Among the research talents receiving funding support, 2 267 of them were bachelor's degree holders, 2 051 master's degree holders, and 3 763 doctoral degree holders.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB122**

**(Question Serial No. 3774)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the nurture of start-ups, please inform this Committee of:

- 1) the numbers of start-ups supported by the Corporate Venture Fund and the investment amounts by business area in the past 5 years (2019-20 to 2023-24) respectively in tabular form; and
- 2) the details of the Co-acceleration Programme to be launched soon by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 47)

Reply:

- 1) Since its inception in 2015, the Corporate Venture Fund (CVF) under the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) has invested close to \$400 million in 31 start-ups, attracting private investment of about \$12.6 billion. In the past 5 years from 2019-20 to 2023-24 (as at February 2024), the numbers of start-ups invested by the CVF and the investment amounts by business area are provided as follows:

| Business area                            | Number of investee companies | Investment amount (HK\$ million) |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Artificial intelligence and Data science | 6                            | 117.2                            |
| Biotechnology                            | 5                            | 55.3                             |
| Advanced manufacturing                   | 4                            | 98.8                             |



| Business area               | Number of investee companies | Investment amount (HK\$ million) |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Microelectronics            | 4                            | 54.1                             |
| Financial technology        | 2                            | 15.6                             |
| New energy/green technology | 1                            | 5.7                              |

- 2) It is announced in the 2024-25 Budget that the HKSTPC will soon launch the Co-acceleration Programme (the Programme) to pool the efforts of the innovation and technology (I&T) industry and provide value-added support services to I&T start-ups with high potential and to nurture them as regional or global enterprises. By consolidating the existing Acceleration Programme and injecting an additional \$110 million, the HKSTPC will launch the Co-acceleration Programme with partners from the business and university sectors to provide deeper and broader value-added support services to I&T start-ups, including testing scenarios, business consulting, investment matching, talent recruitment, manufacturing and launching of products. The HKSTPC is finalising the arrangements of the Programme and will announce the details in due course.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB123**

**(Question Serial No. 3506)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (6) Subvention: Hong Kong Productivity Council, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute Company Limited

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Innovation and Technology Commission indicates that it will continue to contribute to the development of local high-technology human capital by recruiting local engineering graduates as research fellows under the Research Talent Hub (RTH) of the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF). In this connection, please advise this Committee on:

- a. the number of local engineering graduates recruited as research fellows under the RTH of the ITF and the expenditure involved in the past 3 years;
- b. the turnover rate of local engineering graduates who were recruited as research fellows under the RTH of the ITF in the past 3 years; and
- c. whether the Government has evaluated and follow-up on the turnover rate issue; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons for that.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 47)

Reply:

The Research Talent Hub (RTH) under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) aims to encourage university graduates to pursue careers in the innovation and technology (I&T) field and nurture more I&T talents. It provides funding for conducting research and development (R&D) projects funded by the ITF as well as start-ups and technology companies which conduct R&D activities in Hong Kong to engage up to 4 bachelor's/master's/doctoral degree graduates in a STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics)-related discipline awarded by a local university or a well-recognised non-local institution to conduct R&D work, with a maximum funding period of 3 years. All research talents receiving funding

support must be Hong Kong permanent residents or persons permitted by the Immigration Department to work in Hong Kong.

A breakdown of the number of local engineering graduates is not available. Meanwhile, among the new applications with funding support under the RTH in the past 3 years (2021-2023), there were around 2 400 research talents with Hong Kong permanent resident status, involving a funding amount of approximately \$1.2 billion. In order to collect information on the employment situation of the research talents engaged, we have been inviting research talents who received funding support to submit evaluation reports after the completion of their engagement periods. From the evaluation reports collected in 2023, about 66% of the research talents had secured R&D-related jobs, while another 27% expressed that they decided to further their studies or were still searching for jobs and about 8% expressed that they had secured jobs not related to R&D.

In order to nurture and attract Mainland and overseas talents, we proposed 2 measures to enhance the RTH in the 2022 Policy Address, which have been implemented since 1 April 2023. The measures include increasing the current maximum monthly allowance provided to each research talent with a bachelor's, a master's and a doctoral degree under the RTH by about 10% respectively and providing an additional living allowance of \$10,000 per month to doctoral degree holders under the RTH for a maximum period of 3 years. We will also continue to review the implementation of the RTH in a timely manner and introduce enhancement measures as and when necessary.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB124**

**(Question Serial No. 3509)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Innovation and Technology Commission indicates that it has administered the STEM Internship Scheme (the Scheme) to provide allowance to students studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programmes in universities funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC) to undertake short-term full-time internships in innovation and technology (I&T)-related work. In this connection, please advise this Committee on:

- a. the numbers of participating institutions and beneficiary students, as well as the amount of expenditure and manpower involved in the Scheme as at 31 January 2024;
- b. the numbers of students who experienced I&T-related work through undertaking short or medium-term full-time internships under the Scheme as well as the numbers of companies or organisations which participated in the Scheme by opening up their internship opportunities in the past 3 years; and
- c. the percentage of graduates who engaged in related occupations and work after undertaking short or medium-term full-time internships under the Scheme in the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 50)

Reply:

Since the launch of the STEM Internship Scheme (the Scheme) by the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) in May 2020, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Education University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and The University of Hong Kong have already participated in the Scheme.

Lingnan University has joined the Scheme since 2023-24. In addition, the coverage of the Scheme has already been expanded in June 2023 to cover internship opportunities offered by the 5 government-funded Research and Development Centres and the Hong Kong Productivity Council to students studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programmes at local and non-local universities (including the campuses at Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area established by designated local universities). Hong Kong Metropolitan University will join the Scheme starting from 2024-25.

As at end-January 2024, the Scheme has provided over 12 000 internship opportunities for university students. The numbers of participating interns and participating companies or organisations as well as the Government’s funding amount in the past 3 years (as at end-January 2024) are tabulated as follows:

| Financial year                      | Number of participating interns | Number of participating companies or organisations | Government’s funding amount (including administrative overheads to participating institutions) |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--|
| 2021-22                             | 3 038                           | 1 541  | 75.4 million   |
| 2022-23                             | 3 524                           | 1 699  | 88.4 million   |
| 2023-24<br>(as at end-January 2024) | 3 843                           | 1 784  | 100.7 million  |

According to the surveys conducted by the participating universities after the end of the student internships, more than 95% of the students expressed upon completion of the internships that they would consider pursuing a career in innovation and technology (I&T) after graduation. It is difficult to track whether students who participated in the Scheme had pursued careers in the I&T field after graduation due to various reasons, for example, students participating in the Scheme in the same year may graduate in different years and students may have taken up more than 1 job after graduation. In fact, relevant surveys had been conducted by the universities but the response rate was unsatisfactory and therefore statistics with much reference value are not available.

ITC implements and coordinates the Scheme with its existing manpower, and no breakdown of the expenditure is available. The participating universities, R&D Centres and the HKPC are responsible for administering the Scheme, such as seeking suitable I&T-related internship opportunities, matching eligible students with the I&T related placements available and assisting ITC in disbursing internship allowance to students, etc. ITC will provide these participating institutions with an overhead equivalent to 15% of the total allowance disbursed to student interns to cover their administrative expenses.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB125**

**(Question Serial No. 1829)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

With an aim to nurture technology talents, the Innovation and Technology Commission has launched measures such as the New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme (NITTP), STEM Internship Scheme and Research Talent Hub (RTH) progressively to subsidise companies to train and employ these talents. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the following information on the NITTP for each of the past 5 years: (i) the numbers and nature of the training courses, (ii) the numbers of trainees participated in the trainings, (iii) lists of participating enterprises and course providers and (iv) the expenditures involved;
- (2) the following information on the STEM Internship Scheme for each of the past 3 years: (i) lists of participating enterprises; (ii) the numbers of participants (including local and non-local undergraduates and postgraduates), (iii) the average durations of internship per trainee and (iv) the expenditures involved; and
- (3) the following information on the RTH for each of the past 3 years: (i) the numbers and lists of the approved enterprises; (ii) the numbers of innovation and technology talents funded (including local and non-local talents); and (iii) the average lengths of their period of employment.

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows –

**New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme**

The New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme (NITTP) subsidises, on a 2 (Government):1 (enterprise) matching basis, local enterprises to train their staff in advanced technologies, especially those related to new industrialisation. The number of applications for registering public courses, the number of applications for registering tailor-made courses, number of trainings for staff of local enterprises subsidised to participate in such courses, number of approved enterprises, and total funding amount under the NITTP in each of the past 5 years are tabulated as follows:

| <b>Year</b>  | <b>Number of applications for registering public courses</b> | <b>Number of applications for registering tailor-made courses</b> | <b>Number of trainings for staff of local enterprises subsidised</b> | <b>Number of approved enterprises</b> | <b>Total funding amount</b> |
|--------------|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2019         | 347  | 32  | 1 795  | 507                                   | \$10,915,897                |
| 2020         | 722  | 33  | 2 130  | 598                                   | \$12,582,867                |
| 2021         | 1 515  | 50  | 6 228  | 1 153                                 | \$49,498,534                |
| 2022         | 1 680  | 67  | 12 316   | 1 734                                 | \$163,103,374               |
| 2023         | 2 036  | 39  | 22 619   | 2 386                                 | \$366,072,862               |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>6 300<sup>(1)</sup></b>                                   | <b>221</b>  | <b>45 088</b>  | <b>6 505<sup>(2)</sup></b>            | <b>\$602,173,535</b>        |

Note<sup>(1)</sup>: As at end-February 2024, about 5 130 public courses provided by over 140 course providers have been approved under the NITTP.

Note<sup>(2)</sup>: The companies which have submitted NITTP applications in different years are counted separately in each of the year concerned.

As at end-February 2024, the number of trainees whose training grant applications for training have been approved under the NITTP by the top 10 industries of their enterprises is tabulated below –

|   | <b>Industry<sup>(3)</sup></b> | <b>Number of approved trainees for public courses</b> | <b>Number of approved trainees for tailor-made courses</b> | <b>Number of enterprises</b> | <b>Funding amount</b> |
|---|-------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Innovation and Technology     | 14 796  | 159  | 1 478                        | \$221,324,730         |
| 2 | Management and Consulting     | 4 503   | 101  | 422                          | \$65,883,842          |

|    | <b>Industry<sup>(3)</sup></b>                     | <b>Number of approved trainees for public courses</b> | <b>Number of approved trainees for tailor-made courses</b> | <b>Number of enterprises</b> | <b>Funding amount</b> |
|----|---|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 3  | Retail Trade                                      | 4 041   | 208  | 410                          | \$61,347,841          |
| 4  | Building, Civil Engineering and Built Environment | 3 112   | 38   | 406                          | \$33,431,554          |
| 5  | Media and Communications                          | 2 983   | 6  | 327                          | \$40,520,724          |
| 6  | Import/Export and Wholesale Trades                | 2 830   | 148  | 357                          | \$43,101,621          |
| 7  | Banking and Finance                               | 2 014   | 282  | 176                          | \$27,018,778          |
| 8  | Beauty Care and Hairdressing                      | 1 536   | 21   | 141                          | \$24,678,839          |
| 9  | Hotel, Catering and Tourism                       | 1 225   | 130  | 169                          | \$19,655,298          |
| 10 | Electronics and Telecommunications                | 1 192   | 17   | 164                          | \$11,567,454          |

Note<sup>(3)</sup>: An enterprise may be involved in more than one industry. The enterprises are categorised by their declared principal industry in the above table.

### **STEM Internship Scheme**

In the past 3 years (as at end-January 2024), the STEM Internship Scheme provided over 10 400 internship opportunities for university students in total. The relevant figures are tabulated as follows –

| <b>Financial year</b>                                     | <b>2021-22</b> | <b>2022-23</b> | <b>2023-24<br/>(as at end-January 2024)</b> |
|---|----------------|----------------|---|
| <b>Number of participating companies or organisations</b> | 1 541          | 1 699          | 1 784                                       |
| <b>Number of participating interns,<br/>of which</b>      | 3 038          | 3 524          | 3 843                                       |
| <i>local students</i>                                     | 2 679          | 3 042          | 2 950                                       |
| <i>non-local students<sup>(4)</sup></i>                   | 359            | 482            | 893   |
| <i>undergraduates</i>                                     | 3 015          | 3 508          | 3 737                                       |
| <i>postgraduates</i>                                      | 23             | 16             | 106   |



| <b>Financial year</b>   | <b>2021-22</b> | <b>2022-23</b> | <b>2023-24<br/>(as at end-January 2024)</b> |
|---|----------------|----------------|---|
| <b>Average duration of each internship position (days)</b>  | 61.68          | 62.34          | 61.05                                       |
| <b>Government's funding amount (including administrative overheads to participating institutions)</b> | \$75.4 million | \$88.4 million | \$100.7 million                             |

Note<sup>(4)</sup>: Non-local students are allowed to enrol in internships in Hong Kong only, subject to the conditions of stay of their visa/entry permit issued by the Immigration Department.

### **Research Talent Hub**

A total of over 5 500 research talent applications were approved under the Research Talent Hub (RTH) in the past 3 years. The number of funded organisations or enterprises, number of research talent applications approved, and average length of the period of funded employment are tabulated by year as follows –

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Number of funded organisations or enterprises</b> | <b>Number of research talent applications approved</b> | <b>Average length of the period of funded employment (days)</b> |
|-------------|--|--|---|
| 2021        | 374  | 1 849  | 560   |
| 2022        | 380  | 1 897  | 564   |
| 2023        | 355  | 1 839  | 618   |

Regarding the request to provide the lists of participating/approved enterprises under the 3 schemes, namely the NITTP, the STEM Internship Scheme and the RTH as stated in the question, the lists concerned are unavailable as there are over 10 000 enterprises involved and restrictions on the source of information.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****ITIB126****(Question Serial No. 0559)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will continue to oversee the implementation of the Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS). Please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) What were the respective numbers of applicants and successful applicants, and the average time taken to process the applications under TechTAS in the past 3 years?
- 2) What were the major sectors and technology areas in which the talents admitted to Hong Kong engaged in the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon LAM Lam, Nixie (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

In the past three financial years (as at February 2024), the Innovation and Technology Commission received a total of 680 quota applications under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) and 411 quotas were allotted. After receipt of all the information and documents required, it usually takes about three working days to process the quota application. The Immigration Department approved a total of 254 visa/entry permit applications in accordance with the relevant quotas. The technology areas involved are categorised as follows:

| Technology area         | Number of non-local persons approved for entry under TechTAS |         |                                  |
|-------------------------|--|---------|----------------------------------|
|                         | 2021-22  | 2022-23 | 2023-24<br>(as at February 2024) |
| Artificial intelligence | 17   | 11      | 33                               |

| Technology area                     | Number of non-local persons approved for entry under TechTAS |           |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------|----------------------------------|
|                                     | 2021-22  | 2022-23   | 2023-24<br>(as at February 2024) |
| Biotechnology                       | 8  | 21        | 24                               |
| Cybersecurity                       | 1  | 1         | 4                                |
| Data analytics                      | 6  | 5         | 14                               |
| Financial technologies              | 3  | 18        | 8                                |
| Material science                    | 5  | 14        | 5                                |
| Robotics                            | 3  | 0         | 7                                |
| Advanced communication technologies | 4  | 0         | 1                                |
| Digital entertainment               | 0  | 7         | 5                                |
| Green technology                    | 2  | 3         | 7                                |
| Integrated circuit design           | 3  | 1         | 3                                |
| Internet-of-Things                  | 1  | 1         | 4                                |
| Microelectronics                    | 0  | 0         | 4                                |
| Quantum technology                  | 0  | 0         | 0                                |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>53</b>  | <b>82</b> | <b>119</b>                       |

The Government does not have the breakdown on the sectors involved as raised in the question.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB127**

**(Question Serial No. 2973)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 111 of the 2024-25 Budget Speech that the Government will establish the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (HKMSRDI) this year. It will spearhead and facilitate research collaboration on the third-generation semiconductors among universities, research and development (R&D) centres and the industry, and to realise R&D outcomes by making use of the comprehensive manufacturing industry chain in the Greater Bay Area. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The Government has earmarked \$2.48 billion for the establishment of the HKMSRDI to put in place in the future 4 R&D divisions dedicated to the process and technology, design and application, packaging and modules, and quality control and reliability of the third-generation semiconductors.
  - (a) How much funding has been earmarked for each division respectively (please list in tabular form)?
  - (b) Does the operating expenditure of \$360 million for the first 5 years announced earlier covers the same of the above-mentioned 4 divisions? If yes, what are the details (please list in tabular form)?
2. The HKMSRDI will be set up at the Yuen Long InnoPark, which is where the Microelectronics Centre currently locates. Will the Government carry out alteration works at the above-mentioned site to achieve greater result with minimal effort? If yes, what is the cost of alteration involved? If no, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

To leverage the well-developed manufacturing industry chains and enormous market in the Greater Bay Area, and dovetail with the national strategy for technological development, the Government is actively taking forward the establishment of the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI) in 2024. It will strengthen collaboration among universities, research and development (R&D) centres and the industry, expedite the “1 to N” transformation of technological outcomes and bring together Mainland and overseas talents in relevant fields, thereby further improving the innovation and technology ecosystem of Hong Kong. Staff of MRDI will be recruited in phases and it is expected to include 170 researchers who will be assigned to the four R&D divisions and 30 headquarters staff providing management and administrative support. The MRDI will set up two 8-inch pilot lines in the Microelectronics Centre (MEC) in the Yuen Long InnoPark (one for Silicon Carbide and another for Gallium Nitride) to assist start-ups, and small and medium-sized enterprises in addressing their pain points and conducting trial runs.

The Government plans to propose to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the second quarter of this year the creation of a new commitment of about \$2.84 billion, among which about \$2.48 billion is for procuring the pilot lines equipment and the remaining amount of about \$360 million is for the operating expenditure of the first five years (2024-25 to 2028-29 financial years), covering the remuneration of headquarters staff, rent and general administrative expenditure. In addition, the MRDI will seek funding support from the Innovation and Technology Fund and through industry income and commercialisation to cover the expenses on R&D projects and personnel of the four R&D divisions.

The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation positioned the Yuen Long InnoPark as the key axle focusing on the promotion of the microelectronics industry to support development and trial production of the third-generation semiconductor products. The MEC will be commissioned within 2024 and equipped with dedicated facilities such as high standard cleanrooms, dangerous goods storage and waste treatment facilities for gradual move-in of the newly established MRDI and other tenants.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB128**

**(Question Serial No. 2983)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 120 of the 2024-25 Budget that enterprises participating in the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) may receive subsidies to engage research talent under the Research Talent Hub (RTH). They may also, on a pilot basis, engage a small number of non-local technical personnel under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme to expedite the set-up and operation of advanced manufacturing facilities in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Since the launch of the RTH in July 2020, how much subsidy has been received by enterprises in total to engage research talent (please tabulate by year)?
2. How many enterprises have been successfully matched with talents under the RTH?
3. Currently, how many programmes and projects are participating in the matching under the RTH (please list in tabular form)?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

A consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

In order to nurture and pool together more technology talents and encourage them to pursue a career in innovation and technology and scientific research, the Research Talent Hub (RTH) provides funding for conducting research and development (R&D) projects funded by the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) as well as start-ups and technology companies which conduct R&D activities in Hong Kong to engage up to 4 bachelor's/master's/doctoral degree graduates in a STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics)-related discipline awarded by a local university or a well-recognised non-local institution to conduct R&D

work, with a maximum funding period of 3 years. The maximum monthly salary allowance for research talents with a bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree are \$20,000, \$23,000 and \$35,000 respectively together with the corresponding contributions paid to the Mandatory Provident Fund by the employer. For talents with a doctoral degree, an additional monthly living allowance of \$10,000 will be provided. The RTH is one of the funding schemes under the ITF and it does not offer matching for enterprises and talents. The applicant company has to first select and recruit technology talents on their own for conducting R&D work through an open and fair procedure.

Since the launch of the RTH in July 2020, the financial commitments for supporting organisations/companies to engage research talents, the numbers of funded organisations/companies and approved RTH applications are as follows:

| <b>Year</b>                | <b>Financial Commitments<sup>Note</sup> (million)</b> | <b>Number of funded organisations/companies</b> | <b>Number of approved RTH applications</b> |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| 2020<br>(July to December) | 347   | 124   | 725  |
| 2021                       | 1,046   | 374   | 1 849                                      |
| 2022                       | 981   | 380   | 1 897                                      |
| 2023                       | 1,373   | 355   | 1 839                                      |

Note: The commitments were the total approved amounts in the years concerned. Subject to the engagement period of the research talents, the relevant amounts may be spread over more than 1 year.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB129**

**(Question Serial No. 0810)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in paragraph 111 of the Budget Speech that the Government will establish the Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (HKMSRDI) this year. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. The Government indicated that it will set up 2 pilot lines in the HKMSRDI for Silicon Carbide and Gallium Nitride respectively. What are the details of the expenditure involved? Has any assessment been made in respect of whether the scale of the facilities is adequate to meet the needs of the industry? If yes, what are the details?
2. Apart from providing pilot tests for the semiconductor industry, does the Government have any plans to provide pilot facilities for other industries as well? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

1. The Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI) will set up two 8-inch pilot lines (1 for Silicon Carbide and another for Gallium Nitride) and the estimated expenditure for the procurement of the equipment is about \$2.48 billion in total.

As there is no pilot line equipment for third-generation semiconductors in Hong Kong, enterprises have to conduct pilot line tests in the Mainland or even overseas for trial run and improvement before mass production. Leveraging Hong Kong's advantage in innovation and technology (I&T) development, the MRDI will bring together researchers from universities, research and development (R&D) centres and the industry to improve the I&T ecosystem, so as to attract more Mainland and overseas related enterprises and talent to come and develop in Hong Kong. Although we cannot



accurately estimate the number of start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises that will collaborate with the MRDI for pilot line test at this stage, it is believed that the MRDI can assist the industry in addressing their pain points, conducting trial runs, promoting technological innovation, assisting the industry in achieving upgrading and transformation, and realising the R&D outcomes by leveraging the enormous market and well-developed manufacturing industry chains in the Greater Bay Area.

2. In order to accelerate the development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong, the Government is attracting top-notch I&T enterprises from overseas and the Mainland to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong, including encouraging enterprises to invest in the setting up of R&D centres and pilot transformation bases, of which pilot production is also included. The Government will introduce appropriate measures by examining the practical needs of the industry and marginal effect with reference to the development of the industry.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB130**

**(Question Serial No. 0166)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Innovation and Technology Commission will take forward the establishment of the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute to lead and promote the third-generation semiconductor core technology in Hong Kong. In this connection, please advise on:

1. the resources and manpower expected to be deployed at the initial stage; and
2. whether the Government will draw up any plans and seek co-operation with the relevant Mainland authorities, including expediting the realisation of research and development outcomes by making use of the comprehensive manufacturing industry chain in the Greater Bay Area? If yes, what are the details; if no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

1. The Government plans to propose to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the second quarter of this year the creation of a new commitment of about \$2.84 billion, among which about \$2.48 billion is for procuring two pilot lines equipment to assist start-ups, small and medium-sized enterprises in addressing their pain points and conducting trial runs with a view to commercialising their research and development (R&D) outcomes. The remaining amount of about \$360 million is for the operating expenditure of the first five years (2024-25 to 2028-29 financial years), covering the remuneration of headquarters staff, rent and general administrative expenditure. Staff of the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI) will be recruited in phases and it is expected to include 170 researchers and 30 headquarters staff providing management and administrative support.

2. The aim of establishing the MRDI is to spearhead and facilitate collaboration among universities, R&D centres and the industry, including exploring the third-generation semiconductor core technology. The Innovation and Technology Commission has been actively establishing contacts with a number of related enterprises and R&D centres in Hong Kong and the Mainland and exploring the feasibility of collaboration, so as to commercialise R&D outcomes by making full use of the outstanding scientific research technologies in Hong Kong for conducting trial runs and leveraging the well-developed manufacturing industry chains in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), and to promote the GBA to become a leader in the world-class high-end industrial chain.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB131**

**(Question Serial No. 1466)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in Programme (2) under Head 135 that the Government will continue to monitor the implementation of the Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) in 2024-25. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What was the total number of overseas and Mainland research and development talents engaged by enterprises through TechTAS in the past?
2. What were the numbers of trainees under TechTAS and their employment rates each year?
3. What are the specific details of TechTAS, and the annual staffing establishment and expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon LUK Chung-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

The Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) was launched in June 2018, providing a fast-track arrangement for eligible companies to admit overseas and Mainland technology talents to undertake research and development (R&D) work in Hong Kong. By allotting applicant companies with quotas to admit talents with specific requirements, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) provides certainty for them to proceed with their recruitment. Furthermore, TechTAS streamlines and shortens the procedures to expedite the processing of visas for non-local technology talents. TechTAS covers 14 technology areas, including R&D work in advanced communication technologies, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, cybersecurity, data analytics, digital entertainment, financial technologies, green technology, integrated circuit design, Internet-of-Things, material science, microelectronics, quantum technology and robotics.

As at end February 2024, a total of 965 quotas were allotted by ITC and the Immigration Department approved a total of 486 visa/entry permit applications in accordance with the relevant quotas. The breakdown of the statistics involved is as follows:

|                      | <b>Number of non-local persons approved for entry under TechTAS</b> |
|----------------------|---|
| Mainland persons     | 358   |
| Non-Mainland persons | 128   |
| Total                | 486   |

TechTAS is part of the work under Programme (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development. No breakdown of expenditures for the individual work items is available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB132**

**(Question Serial No. 1467)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In respect of the task to continue to monitor the implementation of the various funding schemes and support programmes under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF), will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What were the new research and development (R&D) projects launched under the ITF in the past 2 years?
2. What are the on-going R&D projects under the ITF?
3. Are there any R&D indicators being drawn up? What are the ways to measure if an R&D project has met the valid indicators?

Asked by: Hon LUK Chung-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) has all along been financing projects that contribute to the innovation and technology (I&T) upgrading of our manufacturing and service industries so as to promote the long-term development of Hong Kong. Currently, there are 18 funding schemes under the ITF, each having its own objectives, scope and modus operandi, to support 5 I&T areas, namely supporting research and development (R&D), facilitating technology adoption, nurturing I&T talent, supporting technology start-ups, and fostering an I&T culture. Among them, the Innovation and Technology Support Programme, the Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme, the Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme, the Partnership Research Programme, the Enterprise Support Scheme and the R&D Cash Rebate Scheme all aim to support R&D-related projects. During the 2 financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23, a total of over 810 applications were approved under the aforementioned 6 funding schemes which support

R&D, involving a total funding commitment of nearly \$2.2 billion. As at end-January 2024, there were 1 010 on-going R&D projects, involving a funding commitment of nearly \$3.1 billion.

The Innovation and Technology Commission has put in place a robust control mechanism, and regularly reviews the operations of the various ITF funding schemes to enhance their effectiveness and ensure that public money is properly disbursed and used. We will also introduce enhancement measures in a timely manner to meet the development and needs of the society. In addition, we have set different key performance indicators (KPIs) for the ITF. For example, a KPI was set in the 2022 Policy Address to increase the commitment of private capital in R&D projects under various ITF schemes from \$800 million in 2022 to \$1.6 billion in 2027.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB133**

**(Question Serial No. 1689)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

From the indicators, both the applications received and processed as well as the projects funded and being monitored in 2023 under the Enterprise Support Scheme recorded a significant decrease. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- a) Apart from the explanation stated in the Note that the diminished investment was mainly because of the tight financial conditions resulting in weak investment sentiment by private enterprises, are there any other factors such as restrictions in talent training, technology and patent as well as complexities in applying for fund, which resulted in a greater decrease in the investment in research and development by the private innovation and technology enterprises?
- b) What are the prevailing results of the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme? Does the Government have any statistics for the related matters over the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

- a) The number of applications received in 2023 was lower than that of the previous year. According to our estimation, this was probably due to the relatively tight financial conditions which result in less incentive for private companies to invest in research and development. The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) does not have any information which indicates enterprises not applying for the Enterprise Support Scheme or terminating funded projects is due to other factors mentioned in the question.
- b) ITC launched the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) in October 2023 and a total of 94 applications were received in the first



application solicitation period. The Steering Committee of the Scheme has, upon completion of the assessment, recommended that the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology give in-principle support to more than 20 applications. ITC has also informed the universities concerned of the results in end March 2024. After completion of the follow-up work with the successful applicant universities, ITC will make a final decision on those applications. Hence, no statistics on the related matters over the past 3 years are available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**(Question Serial No. 0046)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to paragraph 119 of the Budget Speech, the Government will launch a \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) this year for enterprises engaging in life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, advanced manufacturing and new energy technology. What are the estimated manpower and expenditure to be involved in vetting cases under the NIAS in the coming year? The Government intends to attract 50 to 100 enterprises engaging in relevant industries through the NIAS. What is the estimated expenditure for promoting the NIAS to the enterprises in the coming year? What are the details of the manpower involved? Enterprises participating in the NIAS may, on a pilot basis, engage a small number of non-local technical personnel under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme. Can more details on this be disclosed?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will, upon confirmation of the implementation details for the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS), carry out the promotional work to the industry, including briefing sessions in collaboration with chambers of commerce and industry associations, etc. to actively promote the NIAS to the industry. Meanwhile, the New Industrialisation Development Office under the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will also assist in the promotion of the NIAS to manufacturers in the Mainland and overseas through various online communication channels and platforms.

In addition, ITC will set up a secretariat comprising 5 staff members to carry out the administrative work related to the NIAS, for instance, preliminary assessment of applications, monitoring the progress of approved projects, disbursement of funds, as well as performing

the assessment of Research Talent Hub-NIAS applications and arranging for the disbursement of funds and monitoring progress of approved projects.

The approved enterprises under the NIAS can, on a pilot basis, apply for a quota under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme from ITC and submit an application to the Immigration Department for an employment visa/entry permit within the 24-month quota validity period, in order to engage a small number of non-local technical personnel to expedite the set-up and operation of their advanced manufacturing facilities in Hong Kong. These enterprises have to confirm their difficulties in recruiting local technical personnel with the required experience and professional skills, and offer remuneration package not lower than the prevailing market level for comparable jobs in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. We expect that the NIAS will attract 50 to 100 related enterprises, and each of them can apply for no more than 5 quotas to admit non-local technical personnel, making a total of no more than 500 quotas.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB135**

**(Question Serial No. 0072)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Programme 2, the Government will continue to oversee the implementation of the "Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme" (RAISe+ Scheme) in the coming year so as to promote the transformation and commercialisation of research and development (R&D) outcomes from universities through the Scheme. What are the manpower and expenditures involved in vetting the applications under the Scheme in the current and coming years respectively? How many applications have been received in total in the current year? Among these applications, how many of them have been approved and rejected? What is the average funding amount for the approved applications? Will the Government extend the practice of the Scheme, such as allowing other existing programmes/schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund to include the service fees of the pilot test centres in the funding scope, in order to enhance the success rate of the commercialisation of R&D outcomes? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) launched the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) in 2023-24 and a total of 94 applications were received in the first application solicitation period. These applications have been assessed through a peer review on their technical aspect by 150 experts from different technology areas and subject to a business viability assessment by the consultant commissioned by ITC. The above preliminary assessment results have been submitted to the Steering Committee for reference. The Steering Committee has, upon completion of the assessment, recommended that the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology give in-principle support to more than 20 applications. ITC has also informed the universities concerned of the results in end March 2024. After completion of the follow-up work with

the successful applicant universities, ITC will make a final decision on those applications. Hence, no information on the final number of approved and rejected applications, as well as other breakdowns is available at this moment.

The expenditure involved for the above assessments of the applications received in 2023-24 was about \$3.7 million in total. ITC expects to organise 2 application solicitation exercises in 2024-25 and the estimated expenditure will be about \$13 million.

Moreover, the Secretariat comprising 7 ITC staff members conducts basic administrative assessment on the applications, but they are also responsible for other work related to the RAISe+ Scheme, such as preparing guide to application, forms, funding and administrative guidelines, and answering enquiries of the Scheme, etc. The manpower and expenditure involved for the assessment under the Scheme have been subsumed under the overall manpower and expenditure of the Secretariat, and cannot be quantified separately. The estimated total expenditure on salary and other expenses of the Secretariat each year is approximately \$7 million.

Currently, the funding schemes for supporting research and development (R&D) under the Innovation and Technology Fund, such as the Enterprise Support Scheme, not only cover the expenses related to R&D work but also that for promoting the commercialisation of R&D outcomes, such as the production of samples/prototypes (e.g. integrated circuit (IC) tape-out, printed circuit board fabrication, Multiple Project Wafer, and IC packaging), industrial standards (e.g. product safety) and compliance test as well as functionality testing or certification for products or technologies, etc. The assessment panel of the funding scheme will take into account the project's actual circumstances and needs when assessing the expenses related to promoting the commercialisation of R&D outcomes.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB136**

**(Question Serial No. 0085)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Programme 1, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will increase the maximum funding provided for the Technology Transfer Office of the specified universities in the coming year, enabling universities to strengthen their support on technology transfer and expand marketing services. Meanwhile, ITC will also attract more renowned Mainland and overseas start-up services agencies to set up their operations in Hong Kong for providing incubation services and development guidance. Will the Government introduce a “technology transfer broker system” to serve as the contact person for the daily communication between scientific research units and enterprises as well as the coordination manager for the collaborative projects between the industry and research sector? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

It is announced in the Budget this year that up to \$16 million annual funding will be provided to the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) of each of the eight University Grants Committee-funded universities from 2024-25 onwards. Increasing the funding provided for the TTOs will enable universities to have more resources and flexibility in carrying out patent and licensing activities; organising various activities for promoting entrepreneurship; connecting with industry players, investors, public and private incubators/accelerators, as well as the local, Mainland and overseas research and development (R&D) teams/communities to provide assistance to technology start-ups incubated by them; and procuring professional services and engaging professionals of related areas to assist in enhancing the application and management of patents, expanding their networks in the industry, and implementing business plans, etc. Expenditure incurred by the TTOs in adopting/engaging the services of professionals such as technology transfer brokers is also covered in the scope of the funding support. With the increase of the funding ceiling, the TTOs of universities may continue to

adopt/engage suitable individuals or teams to provide support in technology transfer according to their own development and needs.

To nurture talents in technology transfer, the Knowledge Transfer and Entrepreneurship Office of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the Knowledge Transfer Office of City University of Hong Kong, with the support of the Government, jointly organise the “AUTM Professional Development Course” (Note) every year. The main target audience of the courses covers personnel from the local universities, particularly the staff in the universities’ TTOs and members engaging in research and technology transfer. The courses seek to promote, through presentations and experience sharing, the best industry practices by enhancing participants’ understanding of practical issues, such as the use of patents to protect R&D outcomes and the transformation process of R&D outcomes (e.g. the use of licensing terms to protect the interests of all parties).

Note: AUTM, formerly known as the Association of University Technology Managers, is a world-leading association for knowledge and technology transfer headquartered in the United States with close to 3 000 technology transfer professionals.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB137**

**(Question Serial No. 1344)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Please set out the project titles of the new research and development (R&D) projects and the funding amount for each R&D project under the 5 R&D Centres respectively (namely the Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre, R&D Centre for Information and Communications Technologies, Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre, Nano and Advanced Materials Institute and Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel).

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

The new projects commenced by the 5 research and development (R&D) Centres (namely the Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre (APAS), Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute (ASTRI), Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA), Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre (LSCM), and Nano and Advanced Materials Institute (NAMI)) and the funding amounts involved in 2022-23 are set out at Annex.



**Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre**

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Development of Novel Ironless Lightweight In-Wheel Motor Drives for Electric Vehicles (EVs)  | 1,198,300                  |
| New Generation Visual Assisted Driving System Based on Augmented Reality (AR) Technology   | 7,650,000                  |
| Development of Anti-Corrosion, Fast Heat Dissipation and Mass Stampable Aluminum-Manganese-Copper Alloy and Phase Change Materials Bi-polar Plate for Hydrogen Fuel Cell | 1,973,685                  |
| Development of Thermochromic Glass Mediated with Ultra-Stable Phase Change Material for Smart and Energy-efficient Automotive Window                                     | 3,038,715                  |
| Field Programme Gate Array-Enhanced Visual-Inertial Navigation Systems and Their Application to Autonomous Driving   | 2,955,500                  |
| Development of Mobile 3-in-1 Hydrogen Refueling System   | 8,550,000                  |
| R&D of In-Vehicle Road Surface Condition Detection System based on AI Sensor Fusion  | 2,712,933                  |
| Lightweight High-Efficiency Multi-layered Axial Flux Motor Control System  | 2,437,500                  |
| Efficient Object Detection with Processing-in-memory System for Autonomous Driving   | 4,760,000                  |
| Development of Smart Autonomous Platform for EV Auto-charging System   | 2,650,130                  |
| AR based EIV Maintenance ePlatform with Machine Learning and Computer Vision   | 2,381,980                  |
| Next Generation Artificial Intelligence (AI) Video Analytics Detection System on Driving Behavior and Mental Factors   | 1,950,000                  |
| Development of Solid-state Aluminum based Hydrogen Storage Material for Fuel Cell Vehicle (FCV) Application  | 2,796,758                  |
| Novel Reduced Platinum Loading Fuel Cell for FCellV Application  | 2,593,933                  |
| Development of Automatic Generation Tool for Autonomous Driving High Definition Map in Hong Kong   | 2,695,979                  |
| Development of Freestanding, Multi-layer Electrospinning Nanofiber for Battery Separator in EIV  | 2,793,688                  |
| Trial: Contactless AI Drowsiness Detection System Based on Sensor Fusion   | 1,109,859.95               |

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Trial: A Solution for the In-house Production of Thermoplastic Composite Prepreg for the Production of Lightweight Auto parts                       | 1,353,314                  |
| Trial: Industrial Trial of Sandwich Metal-Plastic/Fibre Sheet Forming with Development of Hybrid Sheet Warm Pressing Technology                     | 1,857,549                  |
| AI Driving Behaviour Prediction for Delivery Fleet  | 1,891,865                  |
| AI-Powered Automated Localization and Intelligent Inspection System in Tunnel   | 4,673,620                  |
| Development of GB/T charging standard to International Electrotechnical Commission / Combined Charging System / CHARGE de MOVE EV Charging Adaptors | 2,746,362                  |

## Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute

| Project name  | Funding amount<br>(\$) |
|---|------------------------|
| Prompt Learning for ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) report analysis  | 2,800,000              |
| Digital front-end study for 5th Generation Mobile Network Sub-6GHz and mmWave Systems   | 2,787,025              |
| Minimally Invasive Sentry Platform for Next Generation Power Conversion   | 2,796,800              |
| Digital Arc-less Socket for Direct Current (DC) Building Applications   | 2,781,850              |
| Architecture of Non-terrestrial Network Radio Frequency Transceiver towards 5G-A/6th Generation Mobile Network Applications         | 2,800,000              |
| Study of the Fusion of 5G and Sensor Positioning Technologies   | 2,792,775              |
| Reference Validation System for Federated Learning  | 2,799,100              |
| An End-to-End Vehicle-to-everything(V2X) Traffic Simulation and Planning Platform to Optimize the V2X Infrastructure Deployment     | 2,741,025              |
| Intelligent Assessment for Elderly Fall Risk  | 2,800,000              |
| Multiple-modality Image Enhancement   | 2,783,000              |
| Inertial Aided Multi-Sensor System for High-Speed Moving Sensing  | 2,799,017              |
| An Unclonable Optical Security Label for Object Authentication  | 2,791,050              |
| Multi-vector Low Frequency Acoustic Internet of Things (IoT) Sensor Array   | 2,799,100              |
| Hyperspectral Imaging Optical System for Extreme Environment  | 2,786,220              |
| Modularized Energy Storage System for Metro Applications  | 12,577,000             |
| Trusted Robotic System Platform for Smart City  | 8,999,900              |
| Ultra-Efficient & Reliable High Power Silicon Carbide Module and the Development Platform for Traction Application                  | 12,534,137.5           |
| Relative-Spatial-linkage and Contextual Understanding Platform for Document Processing and Decision-making through Machine Learning | 7,487,880              |
| System and Chip for High-speed Data Transmission within the Human Body  | 12,957,395             |

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Privacy Enhancing Platform for Alternative Credit Scoring   | 5,218,125                  |
| Intelligent Platform for Smart Hospital Ward  | 7,090,000                  |
| Multi-phase Power Management Integrated Circuit for Smart City Applications   | 13,000,750                 |
| AI agent supporting Contextual Assessment with Reasoning and Decision Visualization                                   | 9,281,190                  |
| 5G Open Radio Access Network Base Station   | 9,432,300                  |
| Content Personalization Framework to Enhance Customer Experience with Efficiency and Accuracy                         | 6,865,500                  |
| All-round Optical System for Smart Jewelry Inspections  | 3,820,300                  |
| Sensing Fusion Platform for Accurate and Smart Dispensing   | 9,393,240                  |
| Intelligent Modelling and Simulation of 3 Dimensional (3D) Geographic Information System                              | 8,521,776                  |
| Energy-efficient Green Energy Storage System  | 10,432,225                 |
| Digital and Physical Twins of Autonomous Inspection Robotic System for Underground Stormwater Drainage Infrastructure | 9,890,000                  |
| Advanced Federated Learning for Insurance Applications  | 7,085,035                  |
| Secure Metaverse Identity for Businesses  | 6,515,440                  |
| Trial: DC Lighting Parking Garage at Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks   | 5,475,437.5                |
| Trial: Hands-free AR remote assistance with 3D vision and AI analytics for healthcare                                 | 4,994,450                  |
| Trial: Enhancing Resource Conservation through Wireless LoRaWAN Smart Water Metering System                           | 3,400,000                  |
| Trial: Voice-assisting Solution for Smart Hospital Operation with Cross-modal Machine Learning                        | 7,225,325                  |
| Trial: Trusted Credential Verification Platform for Construction Industry   | 5,862,700                  |
| AI Enables Façade Glass Inspection  | 5,482,270                  |
| Future Classroom with AIoT System for SEN Students  | 2,648,899.99               |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Open Distributed Unit and Open Radio Unit Commercialization for Mobile Operators   | 2,489,700                  |
| 3D Integrated Power Management Modules for Industrial Control  | 2,461,000                  |
| 5G Base Station Solution for Integrated Access Link and Multi-Hop Wireless Backhaul Link Using Network Coding Technologies | 1,238,600                  |
| High-Precision and Effective Image Guided Bronchoscopy Navigation System   | 2,981,437                  |
| Virtual Key Opinion Leader Video Production Platform by Deep Neural Network  | 2,951,000                  |
| Cloud Native Open Radio Access Network   | 1,494,011                  |

**Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel**

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount<br/>(\$)</b> |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Development of an Ultra-breathable and Light Textile Structure for Multidimensional Moisture Management  | 4,094,489.11                   |
| Development of Scalable Process Technology for Particle-void Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) Passive Cooling Fiber                                    | 2,786,450                      |
| Intelligent Wearable System for Impact Safety Protection and Real-Time Monitoring  | 3,028,777.78                   |
| High Value-added Warming Fibers with Middle Infra-red Reflection & Low Conductivity  | 1,603,100                      |
| Breathable Lightweight Hip Protectors for Elderly in Nursing Homes   | 1,793,770                      |
| Bio-fabricated Leather-like Film of Bacteria Cellulose   | 2,558,119                      |
| Development of Sustainable Circular Coloration Technology  | 989,115                        |
| Study of Polypropylene Carbonate for Textiles Application  | 3,102,700                      |
| Development of Eco-spraying Method for Denim Textiles  | 1,278,225                      |
| Solid State Decolorization and Durability Enhancement for Recycled PET   | 2,286,315                      |
| Recycle of Fine Woven Cotton Fabric by Wet Spinning  | 2,746,800                      |
| Development of Robust Electrostatic Gripper for Fabric Manipulation in Manufacturing   | 2,796,471                      |
| Trial: Thermal, Touch and Biomechanical Comfort of Bedding System  | 2,396,600                      |
| Trial: Compression Socks for Exercises   | 1,300,125.77                   |
| Trial: Intelligent Compression Stockings for Promoting Active Health   | 2,818,282                      |
| Trial: Innovation of Highly Efficient Far Infrared Functional Textiles   | 1,831,355                      |
| Trial: Chitosan Handheld Cushion for Rehabilitation  | 1,823,124.65                   |
| Trial: Manufacturing Metallic Silk and Polyester Textiles Using the Developed Roll-to-Roll Sputtering System — Traditional Costumes for Performing Art | 943,000                        |

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount<br/>(\$)</b> |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Development of Graphene Oxide/Polymer Composite Nanofiber Fabrics with Antimicrobial Function for High-Performance Medical Personal Protective Equipment Applications | 3,403,281                      |
| Bio-based Synthetic Leather for the Automotive Industry   | 1,283,653                      |
| Development of a Blended Textile Upcycling System   | 16,769,938                     |

## Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre

| Project name  | Funding amount<br>(\$) |
|---|------------------------|
| Scan-to-Building Information Modelling Automation System for Built Assets Digitalization in Hong Kong                             | 5,209,500              |
| AI-aided Toxicological Evaluation for Pharmaceutical Products in Hong Kong  | 2,074,830              |
| Soft Material Handling Using Reinforcement Learning   | 2,799,100              |
| Enabling Technologies for Intelligent Human-Robot Interactions In Warehouse and Logistics Industries                              | 2,795,650              |
| Hong Kong Global Navigation Satellite System Signal Quality Monitoring and Interference Detection System                          | 8,194,845.95           |
| Sensor Fusion Techniques for Glass Detection and Recognition  | 2,777,250              |
| Video Analytics for Tracking Cyclists in Track Cycling Race from Dynamic Pan-Tilt-Zoom Scenes                                     | 2,799,100              |
| Next-generation Imaging Technologies of Rapid Leakage Diagnosis of Underground High-Pressure and Large Water Mains in Carriageway | 6,925,764.6            |
| Human-Robot Direct Tactile Interaction System   | 6,458,400              |
| An e-SmartPort Platform to support Smart Information Infrastructure for Port Development  | 21,304,900             |
| Multi-Purpose Wireless IoT IC Platform for Enabling Hong Kong Re-Industrialization  | 12,877,700             |
| Building A Smart and Safe IoT City to Support Fast Search for Missing People  | 4,179,675              |
| Video Analytics Based Anomaly Detection for Prioritizing Severity of Defective Underground Stormwater Drains                      | 2,769,200              |
| Data Analytics on Faster Payment System   | 2,793,350              |
| Automatic Identification System Vessel Trajectory Analysis for Illegal Fishing  | 2,799,100              |
| Trial: Digital Supply Chain Logistics Management Platform for Cell & Gene Therapy Product Manufacturing                           | 4,790,900              |
| Trial: Indoor Localization, Tracking and Navigation   | 4,991,000              |



| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Trial: Assistant robots for Siu Lam Integrated Rehabilitation Services Complex and Hong Kong Police Work   | 6,928,750                  |
| Trial: Neural Machine Translation With Domain Focus And Microphone Array System  | 6,928,520                  |
| Trial: AI-Driven Inquiry Skills Training   | 3,923,800                  |
| Trial: AI in Assisting Crop Pest and Disease Control   | 3,423,550                  |
| Trial: AI Platform for Sales and Customer Support in the New Era – Applications of Knowledge-Based System in the Government Sector                       | 1,876,800                  |
| Trial: Virtual Reality Content Creator Platform: Career and Life Planning and Comfort Care Service for the Individuals with Special Needs in the Society | 4,987,090                  |
| Digital Twin-based ESG Platform for Property and Facility Management Industries  | 1,339,836.25               |
| An AI-based Beer Management Support System: A Data-Driven Approach   | 1,499,660                  |
| A Cross-sensor Noise Suppression Algorithm for Hill Fire Monitoring Application  | 337,870                    |

### Nano and Advanced Materials Institute

| Project name   | Funding amount<br>(\$) |
|--|------------------------|
| Development of Modified PET with Enhanced Water Vapor / Air Barrier Property for Vacutainers | 1,921,500              |
| Anti Fingerprint NAMI nCoating for Glass Substrate   | 5,700,550              |
| NAMI's Nano Bicatalyst for Biomass Conversion  | 4,999,600              |
| NAMI's 3D Smart Protection Materials   | 2,789,800              |
| NAMI's Encapsulated Probiotics with Targeted Delivery Function for Colonization              | 5,300,000              |
| NAMI eMuscle for Toy Applications  | 2,799,100              |
| Vehicle E-Call Lithium Ion Battery based on NAMI Wide Temperature Materials Technology       | 4,255,000              |
| NAMI Nanobubble Water Treatment Technology for Aquaculture                                   | 2,804,800              |
| NAMI's Sustainable Dye   | 2,783,000              |
| Materials & Design for Product-based Modular Integrated Construction                         | 18,972,700             |
| Eco-materials for Digital Construction by 3D Printing  | 9,993,500              |
| NAMI Lithium Metal Battery (LMB) Cycle and Rate Enhancing Additives                          | 2,799,100              |
| Sustainable Biosynthesis of Proteins with Probiotics System                                  | 4,199,600              |
| NAMI's Bioactive Inoculum Soil for Accelerated Anaerobic Biodegradation                      | 6,095,000              |
| NAMI Gel-Free Binder for High Energy Density LMB   | 3,385,600              |
| NAMI's Low-cost Heavy Duty Plastic Foams   | 2,796,800              |
| NAMI High Voltage and Flashpoint Electrolyte for LMB   | 2,794,500              |
| NAMI Dynamic Molecular Repair Technology for Recycled Polyolefin                             | 2,799,600              |
| NAMI Quasi Solid Electrolyte for High-Performance Lithium Batteries                          | 7,000,050              |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| NAMI's Built-in Anti-fog Plastics & Elastomers   | 6,008,700                  |
| Development of NAMI's Bacterial NanoCellulose  | 6,394,000                  |
| NAMI nCoating for Flexible Ultra-Thin Glass Protector  | 6,637,800                  |
| NAMI's Anti-Microbial Peptides as an Effective Replacement of Chemical Preservatives   | 2,799,560                  |
| Inbuilt Fire Retarding Bio-based Polyurethane Foam Technology  | 2,796,800                  |
| NAMI Biomass Material as Alternative to Plastic Tableware  | 2,799,100                  |
| Trial: Development of Low-carbon, Reusable Cutlery and Food Tray Using Plant Stem Based Material                                       | 2,881,300                  |
| Trial: Flexible Nanogenerator for Healthcare Sensing Pad and Shoe Power Generation   | 2,444,900                  |
| Trial: Development of Hermetically Sealed 1520 Extreme Temperature Battery Pack for IoT Applications                                   | 2,390,850                  |
| Rubber-Plastic-Glass Paving Blocks   | 1,173,700                  |
| Development of Alcohol Degradation Protein Encapsulation for Targeted Delivery   | 1,170,000                  |
| Transparent Anti-microbial Coating for Steel and Plastics  | 1,552,200                  |
| Polypropylene Nonwoven Fibers based on NAMI's Bio-pellets for Personal Hygiene Applications  | 2,191,500                  |
| Antifouling Germ-Spike Materials for Drinking Bottles  | 2,660,000                  |
| A Transparent NAMI nCoating for Wear-Resistant Paper   | 1,223,950                  |
| Development of Bio-based Elastomer with Microwave Curing for Heat Transfer   | 1,714,450                  |
| Development of Green Bio-polymer Sealing Wax for Wood Floor  | 2,224,600                  |
| Eco-Permeable Material with Recycled Rubber Tire Crumb and Geopolymer  | 1,127,000                  |
| Polyethylene based on NAMI's Micropore-enhanced Bio. Pellets for Fertilizer Packaging  | 1,859,600                  |
| Development of Biodegradable Polyethylene Terephthalate Glycol Smart Card Product by Using NAMI's Anaerobic Biodegradation Accelerator | 1,711,000                  |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Development of a Strong Outer Sheath as Enclosure for Flame Retardant Cables                     | 969,500                    |
| High Performance Green Adhesive for Wide Range Substrates in Printing Industry                   | 1,066,500                  |
| Development of a NAMI Anti-bacteria/virus Based Softener for Cotton and Cotton/Polyester Fabrics | 1,674,300                  |

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB138**

**(Question Serial No. 1345)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 of this Programme that the Government will continue to support the activities of the 5 research and development (R&D) centres with emphasis on commercialisation and technology transfer of funded projects. In this connection, will the Innovation and Technology Commission inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please set out respectively the project titles of the funded projects for commercialisation and technology transfer and the funding amounts involved under the 5 R&D centres in the past 3 financial years.
2. Please set out respectively the numbers of funded projects above which have successfully achieved commercialisation and technology transfer under the 5 R&D centres, and the commercial revenue involved.

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

1. The new projects involving commercialisation and technology transfer commenced by the 5 research and development (R&D) Centres (namely the Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre (APAS), Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute (ASTRI), Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA), Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre (LSCM), and Nano and Advanced Materials Institute (NAMI)) and the funding amounts involved in the past 3 financial years (i.e. 2020-21 to 2022-23) are set out at **Annex**.
2. The 5 R&D Centres bear the public mission of conducting technology transfer to the industry. In addition, among the new projects commenced by the 5 R&D Centres in

the past 3 financial years, quite a number of them are still ongoing, while some of the completed ones are upstream (exploratory in nature) and midstream R&D projects by which the technical foundations of downstream projects were laid. These projects still have some miles to go before reaching the commercialisation stage and it takes time to bear fruit. For the downstream projects just completed, it takes time for the R&D Centres to take forward the commercialisation work, such as carrying out promotional activities, discussing with industry partners the way to commercialisation and fine-tuning the technical details. Meanwhile, for projects which have successfully achieved commercialisation and/or technology transfer, they could be a conglomeration of several R&D outcomes from different R&D projects conducted in different time periods. Therefore, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) does not have the information on the numbers of new projects which have successfully achieved commercialisation and technology transfer and the revenue involved in the past 3 financial years. However, in order to measure effectively the commercialisation work of the 5 R&D Centres by way of performance indicators, ITC has been collecting the statistics on “commercialisation and other incomes” of these Centres in each financial year. The commercialisation and other incomes of the 5 R&D Centres in the past 3 financial years are tabulated as follows:

**Commercialisation and Other Incomes (\$ million)**

|               | <b>2020-21</b> | <b>2021-22</b> | <b>2022-23</b> |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>APAS</b>   | 2.2            | 3.4            | 12.5           |
| <b>ASTRI</b>  | 10.0           | 43.3           | 48.3           |
| <b>HKRITA</b> | 5.6            | 13.0           | 39.4           |
| <b>LSCM</b>   | 24.1           | 21.1           | 14.4           |
| <b>NAMI</b>   | 17.8           | 14.1           | 14.6           |

**Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre**2020-21

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Development of Autonomous Vehicle Platform for Shuttle Minibus in Confined Park Area*  | 5,130,000                  |
| Development of Thermal Management System for Stability and Life Enhancement of Electric Car Battery with the Use of High Heat Capacity Phase Change Materials*   | 2,099,720                  |
| Robust Cognitive System With Thermal Imaging For Autonomous Vehicles*  | 2,018,238                  |
| Advanced Method of Catalytic Layer Fabrication for Reducing Platinum Loading in Fuel Cell for Automotive Application*  | 2,756,758                  |
| Autonomous Driving Simulation Platform for Algorithm Development with Augmented Traffic Environment in Hong Kong*  | 2,667,000                  |
| Development of Crucible Melt Extraction Flexible Metallic Fiber Physical Porous Part Fabrication Process and Machine Tools Retrofit Mechanism for 3 Dimensional (3D) Lightweight and Thermal Management Auto Parts Production* | 3,416,580                  |
| Ammonia-powered Fuel-Cell Electric Vehicles (EVs) in Hong Kong*  | 8,997,600                  |
| A Flexible Machine Vision Inspection System for Decorative Surfaces of Automotive Parts*   | 2,684,036                  |
| Visual-audio Cross-modal Artificial Intelligence (AI) Platform for Identifying Vehicle Noise*  | 2,793,320                  |
| Development of a Smart Autonomous Electric Transporter*  | 2,403,000                  |
| R&D of a Vision System based on Fusion of AI Convolutional Neural Network and Novel 79GHz Millimeter-Wave Radar for Autonomous Vehicle*  | 2,800,000                  |
| Trial: 12-Metre Plug-in Hybrid Range Extender Electric Coach   | 4,625,685                  |
| Trial: 16-Tonne Full-Electric Truck with Hook Lift for Solid Waste Collection  | 10,080,000                 |
| Study and Develop an Intelligent System for Standardized and Automated Vehicle Surfaces Inspection using Cloud Computing and AI^   | 1,520,500                  |
| Development of a Vehicle-to-everything enabled Road Pavement Health Monitoring System with Positioning Enhancement for Autonomous Driving^   | 1,904,616                  |

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Research and Development (R&D) of a 28-seat Low-Entry and Lightweight Full Electric Minibus with AI-Enhanced Advanced Driver Assistance System and Geofencing System^ | 8,890,000                  |
| Development of High Efficient Hydrogen Fuel Cell Hybrid System for Electric Forklifts^  | 7,132,000                  |
| Development of Integrated Energy Management platform for Fast EV Charging Facilities^   | 2,607,550                  |
| Development of Active Electromagnetic Interference Filter for Automotive Applications^  | 794,180                    |

\*denotes platform project where industry sponsorship should generally account for a least 10% of the total project cost.

^denotes collaborative project where industry sponsorship should generally account for a least 50% of the total project cost.

#### 2021-22

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Next Generation High Performance and Regenerative Brake-by-Wire System for Smart EVs*   | 2,515,000                  |
| Development of Integrated and High-Efficient Silicon Carbide (SiC) Dual-Mode Drive Control System for Electric Trucks*                            | 5,600,000                  |
| Development of Thin Aluminum-Silicon Coating Technology for Automotive Lightweighting Steels to Solve the Critical Problem of Delayed Fracture*   | 789,130                    |
| Development of a Novel Segmented, Modular, Direct-Drive, Fault-Tolerant Motor for Power-Assisted Wheelchair Application*                          | 1,200,000                  |
| Feasibility Study on Graphene Applications for Automotive Cabin Heating*  | 1,995,472                  |
| Development of Cooperative Autonomous Roadwork Vehicle Cluster Using 5G Vehicle-to-everything (V2X) Communication*                                | 5,495,745                  |
| Development of Severe Plastic Deformation and Sheet Stamping Technologies for Customized Engineering High Entropy Alloy Auto Parts Manufacturing* | 2,399,970                  |
| R&D of AI Enhanced In-Vehicle Life Presence Detection System Based on Millimeter Wave Radar Technology*   | 2,800,000                  |
| Next Generation AI Robotic Indoor Positioning System by Fusion of 3D Magnetic Sensor and Depth Camera*  | 2,760,318                  |



| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Development of Multi-Point Forming Technology with Process Parameters Optimization Mechanism for Manufacturing of Automotive Complex 3D Forming Aluminum Sheet Parts*                        | 1,694,520                  |
| R&D of Advanced AI Imaging System for Adverse Atmospheric Conditions for Autonomous Driving*   | 2,746,000                  |
| Development of In-Motion-Charging Self-Resonant Wireless In-Wheel Motor for Next-Generation EVs*   | 1,199,450                  |
| Development of Fixed-route Autonomous Driving for Light Vehicles with Smart Steering and Enhanced Power Regeneration - the Ultimate Solution for Smart Steering and Smart Energy Management* | 3,510,541                  |
| Development of Autonomous People Mover System*   | 2,564,286                  |
| Trial: Low-speed Autonomous Mobility for Delivery and Inspection   | 896,855                    |
| Trial: Smart EV Charging Station based on Dynamic Power Management System  | 1,932,000                  |
| Trial: Intelligent Electric Bus with Light Body Structure and High Efficient Traction Motor System   | 7,069,257.5                |
| Development of Electric Motorcycle with Integrated and High-efficient Powertrain System^   | 3,480,000                  |
| Development of Hybrid Electric Drum Driveline System for Concrete Mixer Trucks^  | 2,665,668                  |
| Development of an Integrated Intelligent System for High value-added Critical Automotive Components MultiStage Manufacturing^  | 4,722,830                  |
| R&D of 19-Seater Low-Entry Full Electric Light Bus with Modular Battery and Smart Driving Systems^   | 5,990,105                  |

\*denotes platform project where industry sponsorship should generally account for a least 10% of the total project cost.

^denotes collaborative project where industry sponsorship should generally account for a least 50% of the total project cost.

2022-23

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Development of Novel Ironless Lightweight In-Wheel Motor Drives for EVs*                  | 1,198,300                  |
| New Generation Visual Assisted Driving System Based on Augmented Reality (AR) Technology* | 7,650,000                  |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Development of Anti-Corrosion, Fast Heat Dissipation and Mass Stampable Aluminum-Manganese-Copper Alloy and PCM Bi-polar Plate for Hydrogen Fuel Cell* | 1,973,685                  |
| Development of Thermochromic Glass Mediated with Ultra-Stable PCM for Smart and Energy-efficient Automotive Window*                                    | 3,038,715                  |
| Field Programme Gate Array (FGPA)-Enhanced Visual-Inertial Navigation Systems and Their Application to Autonomous Driving*                             | 2,955,500                  |
| Development of Mobile 3-in-1 Hydrogen Refueling System*  | 8,550,000                  |
| R&D of In-Vehicle Road Surface Condition Detection System based on AI Sensor Fusion*   | 2,712,933                  |
| Lightweight High-Efficiency Multi-layered Axial Flux Motor Control System*   | 2,437,500                  |
| Efficient Object Detection with Processing-in-memory System for Autonomous Driving*  | 4,760,000                  |
| Development of Smart Autonomous Platform for EV Auto-charging System*  | 2,650,130                  |
| AR-based E V Maintenance ePlatform with Machine Learning and Computer Vision*  | 2,381,980                  |
| Next Generation AI Video Analytics Detection System on Driving Behavior and Mental Factors*  | 1,950,000                  |
| Development of Solid-state Aluminum based Hydrogen Storage Material for Fuel Cell Vehicle (FCV) Application*   | 2,796,758                  |
| Novel Reduced Platinum Loading Fuel Cell for FCellV Application*   | 2,593,933                  |
| Development of Automatic Generation Tool for Autonomous Driving High Definition Map in Hong Kong*  | 2,695,979                  |
| Development of Freestanding, Multi-layer Electrospinning Nanofiber for Battery Separator in EV*  | 2,793,688                  |
| Trial: Contactless AI Drowsiness Detection System Based on Sensor Fusion   | 1,109,859.95               |
| Trial: A Solution for the In-house Production of Thermoplastic Composite Prepreg for the Production of Lightweight Auto parts                          | 1,353,314                  |
| Trial: Industrial Trial of Sandwich Metal-Plastic/Fibre Sheet Forming with Development of Hybrid Sheet Warm Pressing Technology                        | 1,857,549                  |
| AI Driving Behaviour Prediction for Delivery Fleet^  | 1,891,865                  |
| AI-Powered Automated Localization and Intelligent Inspection System in Tunnel^   | 4,673,620                  |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount<br/>(\$)</b> |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Development of GB/T charging standard to International Electrotechnical Commission / Combined Charging System / CHARGE de MOVE EV Charging Adaptors^ | 2,746,362                      |

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## Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute

2020-21

| Project name  | Funding amount<br>(\$) |
|---|------------------------|
| Feasibility Study of Low-Cost Optical Coherence Tomography Technology                                       | 2,800,000              |
| Deep Text Analysis and Named Entity Recognition for Financial Documents                                     | 2,794,500              |
| Optical Probe for Non-contact Aqueous Sensing   | 2,800,000              |
| Visual-based Heart-rate Monitoring  | 2,800,000              |
| Cognitive Robotic Process Automation for Digital Banking  | 2,791,050              |
| Architecture for Wireless Connectivity System-on-chip in Next Generation Capsule Endoscopy                  | 2,800,000              |
| Polarization Controlled Multi-Focal Optical System for Biometrics   | 2,796,560              |
| 5G New Radio (NR) Open Radio Access Network (O-RAN) for Configurable Network Deployment                     | 2,779,550              |
| Reduced Instruction Set Computer-V Based Architecture for Narrow Band Internet of Things (IoT) Applications | 2,776,767              |
| Multi-phase Power Management Integrated Circuit (IC) for Gallium Nitride (GaN)-based Power Converters       | 2,800,000              |
| Intelligent Image Signal Processor for Video Enhancement under Extreme Light Conditions                     | 2,800,000              |
| Deployment Environment of Privacy Preserving Profiling Applications for Federated Learning                  | 2,799,100              |
| SiC Diode with Deep Superjunction to Achieve High Current Density & Breakdown Voltage                       | 2,799,100              |
| Ultra-Efficient Ultra-Wide Load Range Power Conversion Platform for Direct Current Building Applications    | 2,782,885              |
| Smart Power Hub with SiC Module*  | 10,120,000             |
| Multi-Factor Human Centric Sensing Fusion*  | 12,806,310             |
| Smart Personal Assistant for Open Banking*  | 10,350,000             |
| 3D Metrology Technologies for Cross-platform Applications*  | 10,340,800             |

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Adopting the Digital and Physical Twins Approach for the Realization of Robotic Manipulation System for Manufacturing Assembly Process* | 14,076,000                 |
| Customs Crime Analytics System for Customs and Excise Department*   | 13,334,250                 |
| Hardware-enabled Privacy and Security Technology for Smart Home*  | 13,133,000                 |
| 3D Geographic Information System, Indoor Navigation, and Feasibility Study on 5G Edge Rendering of 3D Indoor Map*                       | 5,565,264                  |
| Robust Form Recognition Platform*   | 7,999,995                  |
| 5G Standalone Core Network*   | 24,190,637                 |
| 3D Integrated Wireless Power Transmission Platform for Robotics Applications*   | 16,560,000                 |
| Noise Recognition Platform With Decentralized AI for Active Noise Management in Hong Kong*  | 4,973,175                  |
| Automation System for Water Quality Monitoring*   | 5,997,940                  |
| Next Generation Bluetooth Low Energy for Audio Streaming Applications*  | 15,494,761                 |
| Smart Visual Recognition for e-Armory Management*   | 4,189,507                  |
| Trial: Multilingual Speech Transcribing On Specialized Domains  | 4,199,800                  |
| Trial: Intelligent Knowledge Management Platform - by AI and Natural Language Processing for Smart Government                           | 4,549,400                  |
| Continuous Intelligence Platform for Actionable Multimedia Analytics^   | 4,632,000                  |
| AI Analytic Engine for Providing Tailor-made Trainings Targeting Students with Special Education Needs (SEN)^                           | 2,504,627                  |
| Non-contact Healthcare Multimeter   | 1,725,000                  |

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2021-22

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Small Data AI for Smart Manufacturing – Quality Inspection | 2,779,550                  |

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Metalens Design for Mobile 3D Sensing   | 2,799,100                  |
| A Novel Electromagnetic Interference Filter for GaN-based Power Converters  | 2,796,800                  |
| Online Battery State Inspection Module for Smart City Applications  | 2,681,800                  |
| Heterogeneous FPGA Architecture for AI Computing  | 2,724,350                  |
| Microscopic Hyperspectral Imaging   | 2,789,325                  |
| Smart Handheld Ultrasound Device with Improved Image Quality  | 2,797,950                  |
| Optimal Charging Control of Energy Storage System in Automated Guided Vehicle (AGV) Application   | 2,794,500                  |
| Fast Motion and Static Status Analysis with Dynamic Vision Sensing  | 2,794,500                  |
| Pantoscopic Optical System for Wearable Medical Display   | 2,787,025                  |
| Sandbox Environment for Smart Contract Assessment   | 2,799,100                  |
| Advanced Collaborative Mobile Manipulator for 3D Navigation and Manipulation  | 2,800,000                  |
| Early Threat Hunting and Anticipation Network   | 2,668,000                  |
| Embedded Smartphone Spectrometer  | 2,799,100                  |
| Multispectral Acoustic Sensor for On-Site Plastic Sorting   | 2,799,100                  |
| Data Packet Handling Mechanisms Study in 5G Core for Deterministic Network  | 2,778,400                  |
| Automated AI Generation System for Smart Manufacturing - Defect Inspection and Vision Guiding System for Auto Pick and Place Application* | 14,950,000                 |
| Evolution of Mission Critical IoT - Medium Access Control (MAC) Procedure and Edge Applications*  | 15,243,480                 |
| IoT Cyber Intrusion Detection and Prevention System*  | 6,933,350                  |
| Intelligent Audio Indexer Based on Semantic and Non-semantic Information*   | 5,779,893                  |
| Evolution of Mission Critical IoT – Physical Layer System (PHY)*  | 13,627,442                 |
| Affective Computing for Education*  | 8,690,000                  |
| 5G NR Spectrum Sharing – MAC Procedure*   | 15,361,700                 |
| 5G NR Spectrum Sharing – PHY Reference Design*  | 8,899,850                  |
| Accelerator for Smart AGV Perception*   | 9,200,000                  |
| Trusted Execution Environment for IoT Devices*  | 10,350,000                 |

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Visual Content Search Platform with Transfer Learning for Smart Police*                                       | 5,057,700                  |
| Application of AR and AI for Vehicle Examination and Associated Trainings*                                    | 8,338,075                  |
| IoT and Distributed Ledger for 5G*  | 7,044,187                  |
| High-Precision Mid-Range 3D Sensing Platform*   | 9,694,500                  |
| Adapting High-Speed Input/Output System for Electronic Design Automation Cloud Computing Platform*            | 9,740,270                  |
| Flexible Diffractive Optics for Object Authentication*  | 7,940,750                  |
| Flood Monitoring and Forecasting with Intelligent Long Range Mesh Networking and Machine Learning Methods*    | 5,636,150                  |
| 5G Core for Virtual and Enterprise Operations*  | 11,052,650                 |
| Enabling High Efficiency AI on Multi-Configuration Edge Computing Platform for Medical Image Analytics*       | 6,264,050                  |
| Smart Virtual Agent accelerated with Transfer Learning for Customer Service*                                  | 7,851,625                  |
| Neuromorphic Optical Sensing System*  | 8,253,435                  |
| Cost-effective Miniature Ultrasonic Probe Diagnosis Platform*   | 7,109,875                  |
| Trial: AI-based Online Product Review System for Enhancing Efficiency and Automation                          | 3,941,280                  |
| Data Visualization and Computer Vision Framework for Enterprise AR Applications^                              | 3,038,000                  |
| Cross-platform Advertising Optimization for Decision Intelligence^  | 3,490,000                  |
| Customized Transient Voltage Suppression Diode Fabrication Process for Surge Protection Based on Virtual Fab^ | 2,099,225                  |

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2022-23

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Prompt Learning for ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) Report Analysis | 2,800,000                  |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Digital Front-end Study for 5G Sub-6GHz and mmWave Systems   | 2,787,025                  |
| Minimally Invasive Sentry Platform for Next Generation Power Conversion  | 2,796,800                  |
| Digital Arc-less Socket for Direct Current (DC) Building Applications  | 2,781,850                  |
| Architecture of Non-terrestrial Network Radio Frequency Transceiver towards 5G-Advanced /6th Generation Mobile Network Applications  | 2,800,000                  |
| Study of the Fusion of 5G and Sensor Positioning Technologies  | 2,792,775                  |
| Reference Validation System for Federated Learning   | 2,799,100                  |
| An End-to-End V2X Traffic Simulation and Planning Platform to Optimize the V2X Infrastructure Deployment                             | 2,741,025                  |
| Intelligent Assessment for Elderly Fall Risk   | 2,800,000                  |
| Multiple-modality Image Enhancement  | 2,783,000                  |
| Inertial Aided Multi-Sensor System for High-Speed Moving Sensing   | 2,799,017                  |
| An Unclonable Optical Security Label for Object Authentication   | 2,791,050                  |
| Multi-vector Low Frequency Acoustic IoT Sensor Array   | 2,799,100                  |
| Hyperspectral Imaging Optical System for Extreme Environment   | 2,786,220                  |
| Modularized Energy Storage System for Metro Applications*  | 12,577,000                 |
| Trusted Robotic System Platform for Smart City*  | 8,999,900                  |
| Ultra-Efficient & Reliable High Power SiC Module and the Development Platform for Traction Application*                              | 12,534,137.5               |
| Relative-Spatial-linkage and Contextual Understanding Platform for Document Processing and Decision-making through Machine Learning* | 7,487,880                  |
| System and Chip for High-speed Data Transmission within the Human Body*  | 12,957,395                 |
| Privacy Enhancing Platform for Alternative Credit Scoring*   | 5,218,125                  |
| Intelligent Platform for Smart Hospital Ward*  | 7,090,000                  |
| Multi-phase Power Management IC for Smart City Applications*   | 13,000,750                 |
| AI agent supporting Contextual Assessment with Reasoning and Decision Visualization*   | 9,281,190                  |
| 5G O-RAN Base Station*   | 9,432,300                  |
| Content Personalization Framework to Enhance Customer Experience with Efficiency and Accuracy*                                       | 6,865,500                  |
| All-round Optical System for Smart Jewelry Inspections*  | 3,820,300                  |



| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Sensing Fusion Platform for Accurate and Smart Dispensing*  | 9,393,240                  |
| Intelligent Modelling and Simulation of 3D Geographic Information System*   | 8,521,776                  |
| Energy-efficient Green Energy Storage System*   | 10,432,225                 |
| Digital and Physical Twins of Autonomous Inspection Robotic System for Underground Stormwater Drainage Infrastructure*      | 9,890,000                  |
| Advanced Federated Learning for Insurance Applications*   | 7,085,035                  |
| Secure Metaverse Identity for Businesses*   | 6,515,440                  |
| Trial: DC Lighting Parking Garage at Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks   | 5,475,437.5                |
| Trial: Hands-free AR) remote assistance with 3D vision and AI analytics for healthcare                                      | 4,994,450                  |
| Trial: Enhancing Resource Conservation through Wireless LoRaWAN Smart Water Metering System                                 | 3,400,000                  |
| Trial: Voice-assisting Solution for Smart Hospital Operation with Cross-modal Machine Learning                              | 7,225,325                  |
| Trial: Trusted Credential Verification Platform for Construction Industry   | 5,862,700                  |
| AI Enables Façade Glass Inspection^   | 5,482,270                  |
| Future Classroom with AIoT System for SEN Students^   | 2,648,899.99               |
| Open Distributed Unit and Open Radio Unit Commercialization for Mobile Operators^   | 2,489,700                  |
| 3D Integrated Power Management Modules for Industrial Control^  | 2,461,000                  |
| 5G Base Station Solution for Integrated Access Link and Multi-Hop Wireless Backhaul Link Using Network Coding Technologies^ | 1,238,600                  |
| High-Precision and Effective Image Guided Bronchoscopy Navigation System^   | 2,981,437                  |
| Virtual Key Opinion Leader Video Production Platform by Deep Neural Network^  | 2,951,000                  |
| Cloud Native Open Radio Access Network^   | 1,494,011                  |

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## Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel

2020-21

| Project name  | Funding amount<br>(\$) |
|---|------------------------|
| Develop Eco-friendly Yarn and Fabric for Sporty Fashion*  | 3,054,400              |
| Development of a System for Post-consumer Leather Products Recycling*   | 5,658,000              |
| Silk Recycling into Non-Woven Fabric for Garment Coat Application*  | 7,808,787              |
| Development of High Value-added Vortex Yarns and Fabrics with Enhanced Flame-resistance and Comfort*  | 1,541,000              |
| Microplastic Fiber Separation System by Sweeping Acoustic Waves*  | 3,627,169              |
| Removal of Indigo Blue Color in Denim Plant Wastewater by Macroalgae – A Preliminary Study*   | 2,904,011              |
| Development of Self-powered Functional Textiles*  | 1,696,250              |
| Development of A Sustainable Approach for Indigo Dye Removal in Textile Wastewater by a Combinative Adsorption and Catalytic Regeneration System* | 2,799,949              |
| Denim Fabric Cotton Recovery by Mechanical Warp-Weft Separation*  | 4,319,209              |
| Wearable Personal Cooling and Dehumidifying System for People Wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*  | 3,996,940              |
| Smart Composite Reinforced with Anisotropic Cellulose Particles*  | 2,799,100              |
| Development of a Pilot Scale System for the Production of (Fertilizer-containing) Cellulosic Superabsorbent Polymer*                              | 4,119,546              |
| Intelligent Inspiration Image Generation Platform for Fashion Design*   | 4,698,210              |
| Development of an Automatic Measuring System for Vertical Wicking*  | 671,931.2              |
| Cellulosic 3D Printing Flexible Material for Apparel*   | 3,187,800              |
| Smart Garment Sorting for Recycling*  | 5,245,000              |
| Trial: Intrinsic Antimicrobial Textiles for Reduction of Hospital-acquired Infections   | 3,631,182              |
| Trial: Innovation of Highly Efficient Far Infrared Functional Textiles  | 2,491,571.6            |
| Development of Multifunctional Fabrics with Graphene Coating for Smart Wearable Applications^   | 1,470,000              |

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Surgical Mask with Unidirectional Moisture Transport Property^                              | 543,833.85                 |
| Development of Thermally Insulating Aerogel Composite Fiber^                                | 1,149,540                  |
| Development of Flexible Surface Enhanced Raman Scattering System for Food Safety Detection^ | 2,008,999.99               |

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### 2021-22

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Development of Regenerated Cellulose Fibers from Sustainable Source*   | 2,798,216                  |
| Microbial Consortium for Microplastic Degradation*   | 2,870,400                  |
| Separation and Recovery of Nylon from Textile Waste*   | 3,519,000                  |
| Automatic Garment Accessories and Trims Removal for Recycling with Hard Trims Sorting*   | 4,582,750                  |
| Development of Soft Robotic Clothing for Adaptive Thermal Management*  | 1,659,926.23               |
| Development of Fabric Surface Modification Method for Natural Coloration Application based on Metal Organic Framework*                       | 2,797,759                  |
| Decentralized Intelligent Platform for Made-to-measure Mass Customization*   | 5,251,360                  |
| Development of 3D Crimped Polylactic Acid Filaments and Knitted Products with Improved Bulkiness and Thermal Insulation*                     | 2,400,000                  |
| High-Efficiency Eco-Friendly Antiviral/Antimicrobial Materials and Their Applications in Personal Protection Equipment and Hygiene Products* | 6,295,813                  |
| Design-thinking Creation of a Swelling-controllable Composite Tubular Fabric for Regenerative Agriculture*                                   | 6,358,709.95               |
| Hydroponic Farming of Extra Long Staple Cotton Fibers - A Preliminary Study*   | 2,798,025                  |
| Sound Insulation by Soft Acoustic Metamaterial*  | 2,800,000                  |
| Smart Vest for Improving Behavioral Performance of School-aged Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*                       | 2,284,048.3                |

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Textile Cycling Creative Economy: Sustainable Design of an Innovative Nonwoven-Yarn Spinning System*  | 6,292,649.35               |
| Trial: Antibacterial Chitosan Fiber Blended Textiles for Healthcare Applications  | 2,066,722.5                |
| Trial: Thermal Comfort, Light Weight and Recyclable Bedding Products Made from Air Splitting Technology   | 2,637,704.4                |
| Trial: Sustainable Energy Shoes for Energy Harvesting Trials of Night Runners   | 1,923,950                  |
| Trial: Asymmetric Competition Footwear for Hong Kong Olympic Fencing Team- Development of Occupational Safety and Health Shoes for Contractual Street Cleansing Teams of Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) | 2,098,750                  |
| Trial: High Performance Sportswear and Devices - Development of Functional Uniform for FEHD   | 880,900                    |
| Agile Omnichannel Business Platform for School Uniform Ordering and Manufacturing^  | 1,153,169                  |

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### 2022-23

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Development of an Ultra-breathable and Light Textile Structure for Multidimensional Moisture Management*             | 4,094,489.11               |
| Development of Scalable Process Technology for Particle-void Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) Passive Cooling Fiber* | 2,786,450                  |
| Intelligent Wearable System for Impact Safety Protection and Real-Time Monitoring*                                   | 3,028,777.78               |
| High Value-added Warming Fibers with Middle Infra-red Reflection & Low Conductivity*                                 | 1,603,100                  |
| Breathable Lightweight Hip Protectors for Elderly in Nursing Homes*  | 1,793,770                  |
| Bio-fabricated Leather-like Film of Bacteria Cellulose*  | 2,558,119                  |
| Development of Sustainable Circular Coloration Technology*   | 989,115                    |
| Study of Polypropylene Carbonate for Textiles Application*   | 3,102,700                  |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Development of Eco-spraying Method for Denim Textiles*   | 1,278,225                  |
| Solid State Decolorization and Durability Enhancement for Recycled PET*  | 2,286,315                  |
| Recycle of Fine Woven Cotton Fabric by Wet Spinning*   | 2,746,800                  |
| Development of Robust Electrostatic Gripper for Fabric Manipulation in Manufacturing*  | 2,796,471                  |
| Trial: Thermal, Touch and Biomechanical Comfort of Bedding System  | 2,396,600                  |
| Trial: Compression Socks for Exercises   | 1,300,125.77               |
| Trial: Intelligent Compression Stockings for Promoting Active Health   | 2,818,282                  |
| Trial: Innovation of Highly Efficient Far Infrared Functional Textiles   | 1,831,355                  |
| Trial: Chitosan Handheld Cushion for Rehabilitation  | 1,823,124.65               |
| Trial: Manufacturing Metallic Silk and Polyester Textiles Using the Developed Roll-to-roll Sputtering System — Traditional Costumes for Performing Art | 943,000                    |
| Development of Graphene Oxide/Polymer Composite Nanofiber Fabrics with Antimicrobial Function for High-Performance Medical PPE Applications^           | 3,403,281                  |
| Bio-based Synthetic Leather for the Automotive Industry^   | 1,283,653                  |
| Development of a Blended Textile Upcycling System^   | 16,769,938                 |

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## Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre

2020-21

| Project name   | Funding amount<br>(\$) |
|--|------------------------|
| Building Blocks of Robot-Infrastructure- Interactions for Vertical Logistics*  | 2,799,100              |
| Smart Transporters for Material Handlings in Hospitals*  | 2,712,850              |
| IoT Data Analytics Platform in an Intermittent & Abundant Signal Environment*  | 2,296,550              |
| A Computer Vision-enabled Digital Twin for Construction Resource and Progress Management*  | 7,205,900              |
| Development of Integrated Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar (InSAR) and Mobile Surveying Technologies for Monitoring Land Subsidence*   | 5,064,600              |
| Enhance Performance of Hong Kong Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) positioning infrastructure with Beidou III and other GNSS constellations*                                   | 5,062,043              |
| N-Dimensional Blockchain for ESG Reporting*  | 5,288,045              |
| Blockchain and i-Core-enabled Multi-stakeholder Building Information Modelling Platform for Construction Logistics and Supply Chain Management in Hong Kong*                           | 7,275,009.25           |
| A Simulation-Based Decision Support Platform for Service Planning at a Boundary Control Point*   | 1,927,975              |
| An Acoustic Signal Pattern and Vital Sign Wireless Wearable Device Integrated System for Living Behavioral Anomaly Detection using Deep Learning AI Models*                            | 2,788,980              |
| Reconfiguration and Augmentation of Wristband Device for an Environmental Factor Aware Location Tracking of People for Community Services using City-Wide IOT Network Infrastructures* | 2,688,700              |
| Spoof Resistance Evaluation Toolkit for Remote Authentication Applications*  | 2,754,020              |
| Next Generation End-to-End Healthcare Community Support System*  | 3,152,725              |
| Novel IoT and Multi-modal Analytic Technologies for a Smart City*  | 6,599,850              |
| A Multi Sensor Platform for Predictive Analytics and Real Time Junction Traffic Signal Control*  | 17,774,902.55          |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Security-minded Common Data Environment for Building Data Management Using Distributed Ledger Technology*                                  | 5,144,954.64               |
| Deep Vision Automation and Deliverbot Assisted Medicine Dispensary and Delivery System in Traditional Chinese Medicine Hospital Logistics* | 15,891,850                 |
| Trial: AI Vision Technology for Heat Source Detection to Enhance the Effectiveness of Automated Hill Fire Surveillance                     | 1,515,517.15               |
| Trial: 3D Spatial Data Platform for Modular Integrated Construction (MiC)  | 3,148,700                  |
| Trial: Energy Saving Tracking Devices and Platform Services for Assets / Materials Tracking for Registration and Electoral Office          | 3,712,099.95               |
| Trial: e-Cheque Payment and Food Safety on Cross-boundary Vegetable Trading  | 4,069,850                  |
| Self-leveling and Variable Chassis Size Mechanism for Service Robot^   | 1,114,450                  |
| Enabling Technologies for Wireless Synchronized Electronic Door Lock System for Versatile Space Sharing^                                   | 1,411,078                  |
| Development of InSAR Deformation Analysis Technologies for Urban Infrastructural Safety Diagnosis^   | 3,602,375                  |
| IoT-enabled Fit-out Construction: Core Technologies and Building Information Modelling (BIM) Implementation for Chun Wo^                   | 1,463,920                  |

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## 2021-22

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Cross-boundary Blockchain for Pharmaceutical Logistics Information Management*                     | 2,091,850                  |
| Smart Data-Driven Building Management Framework for Environmental and Sustainability Applications* | 5,100,020                  |
| 3D Visualization with Sensor Data for Sustainable Project Development*                             | 11,321,410.75              |
| Secure Enclave Assisted & Reliable Agreement in Distributed System*                                | 2,784,150                  |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount<br/>(\$)</b> |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Efficient Logistic Regression on Encrypted Data for Privacy Preserving Data Sharing*   | 2,764,600                      |
| Secure & identity Unlinked Provenance Traced Blockchain *  | 2,729,525                      |
| FPGA based Edge Computing AI System for Video Analytic in Transportation Applications*   | 2,799,100                      |
| 3D Light Detection And Ranging Technology for In-Bed Monitoring Applications*  | 2,783,575                      |
| Multiple Input Energy Harvesting IC using Silicon-On-Insulator Technology*   | 2,799,100                      |
| A Decision-Support Platform for COVID-19 Pandemic Control*   | 7,776,300                      |
| Smart Robotics Coordination System for Hospital Logistics*   | 19,946,750                     |
| Study of Operation Visibility and Data Acquisition Software Robot for Responsive Community Centre Deployment During Anti-Epidemic Operations*            | 2,731,250                      |
| Graph and Cluster Based Text Analytics Technology for Discovering Meaningful Relationship Patterns from Economic and Innovation Development Corporates*  | 2,798,974.65                   |
| Thermal Management Technologies for Robots Work at Sub-zero Temperature*   | 2,610,415.67                   |
| Trial: A Wireless Sensor Network System for Monitoring Drainage Tunnel Inlets  | 3,907,023.80                   |
| Trial: Robo-9 with Multi-Sensor Fusion Technologies for Visually Impaired  | 4,387,043                      |
| Trial: IoT Platform Infrastructure for Tele-practice Applications of HKCSS   | 9,870,335                      |
| Trial: Vision-based Badminton Match Analysis   | 7,779,750                      |
| Trial: Smart Government Logistics Department warehouse   | 13,901,775                     |
| Trial: Integration of Differential InSAR and SAR Offset Tracking Technologies for Large Deformation Monitoring of Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities | 3,820,070                      |
| Trial: Augmented Recommendation System to Identify Potential Inward Investment in Hong Kong  | 3,194,881.7                    |
| Trial: An Internet of Medical Things-based Location Analytics System for Smart Accident and Emergency Department Operations at Tin Shui Wai Hospital     | 4,752,789                      |
| Trial: AI-empowered Smart e-book Features for e-publishing   | 5,847,497                      |
| Trial: Digital Credentials Hub   | 4,451,650                      |



| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Edge Controlling Unit for Multi Functional and Configurable Service Robot^ | 1,087,300                  |

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### 2022-23

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Scan-to-BIM Automation System for Built Assets Digitalization in Hong Kong*  | 5,209,500                  |
| AI-aided Toxicological Evaluation for Pharmaceutical Products in Hong Kong*  | 2,074,830                  |
| Soft Material Handling Using Reinforcement Learning*   | 2,799,100                  |
| Enabling Technologies for Intelligent Human-Robot Interactions In Warehouse and Logistics Industries*                              | 2,795,650                  |
| Hong Kong GNSS Signal Quality Monitoring and Interference Detection System*  | 8,194,845.95               |
| Sensor Fusion Techniques for Glass Detection and Recognition*  | 2,777,250                  |
| Video Analytics for Tracking Cyclists in Track Cycling Race from Dynamic Pan-Tilt-Zoom Scenes*                                     | 2,799,100                  |
| Next-generation Imaging Technologies of Rapid Leakage Diagnosis of Underground High-Pressure and Large Water Mains in Carriageway* | 6,925,764.6                |
| Human-Robot Direct Tactile Interaction System*   | 6,458,400                  |
| An e-SmartPort Platform to support Smart Information Infrastructure for Port Development*  | 21,304,900                 |
| Multi-Purpose Wireless IoT IC Platform for Enabling Hong Kong Re-Industrialization*  | 12,877,700                 |
| Building A Smart and Safe IoT City to Support Fast Search for Missing People*  | 4,179,675                  |
| Video Analytics Based Anomaly Detection for Prioritizing Severity of Defective Underground Stormwater Drains*                      | 2,769,200                  |
| Data Analytics on Faster Payment System*   | 2,793,350                  |
| Automatic Identification System Vessel Trajectory Analysis for Illegal Fishing*  | 2,799,100                  |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Trial: Digital Supply Chain Logistics Management Platform for Cell & Gene Therapy Product Manufacturing  | 4,790,900                  |
| Trial: Indoor Localization, Tracking and Navigation  | 4,991,000                  |
| Trial: Assistant robots for Siu Lam Integrated Rehabilitation Services Complex and Hong Kong Police  | 6,928,750                  |
| Trial: Neural Machine Translation With Domain Focus And Microphone Array System  | 6,928,520                  |
| Trial: AI-Driven Inquiry Skills Training   | 3,923,800                  |
| Trial: AI in Assisting Crop Pest and Disease Control   | 3,423,550                  |
| Trial: AI Platform for Sales and Customer Support in the New Era – Applications of Knowledge-Based System in the Government Sector                       | 1,876,800                  |
| Trial: Virtual Reality Content Creator Platform: Career and Life Planning and Comfort Care Service for the Individuals with Special Needs in the Society | 4,987,090                  |
| Digital Twin-based ESG Platform for Property and Facility Management Industries <sup>^</sup>   | 1,339,836.25               |
| An AI-based Beer Management Support System: A Data-Driven Approach <sup>^</sup>  | 1,499,660                  |
| A Cross-sensor Noise Suppression Algorithm for Hill Fire Monitoring Application <sup>^</sup>   | 337,870                    |

\*denotes platform project where industry sponsorship should generally account for a least 10% of the total project cost.

<sup>^</sup>denotes collaborative project where industry sponsorship should generally account for a least 50% of the total project cost.

## Nano and Advanced Materials Institute

2020-21

| Project name  | Funding amount<br>(\$) |
|---|------------------------|
| NAMI nCoating*  | 6,799,950              |
| Germ-Repellent Engineering Plastics*  | 2,797,950              |
| Cost-effective Nanoparticles for Various Water Repelling Applications in Construction*      | 2,794,615              |
| 2.5 Dimensional Concrete Printing Technology For On-site Construction*                      | 4,799,985              |
| NAMI Nanocomposite Packaging Materials*   | 5,072,999.6            |
| Development Of Rubberized Asphalt By Dry Process For Structural Layer Of Flexible Pavement* | 5,477,450              |
| NAMI Self-supporting Graphene Film for High Power Thermal Management Application*           | 2,799,100              |
| NAMI Battery for Power Devices*   | 4,002,000              |
| Development of Probiotics Families for Personal Care Application*                           | 6,786,305              |
| NAMI Anti-virus/bacteria Nano-W Based Catalyst*   | 2,795,535              |
| NAMI Immersion Coolant for Thermal Management*  | 4,498,800              |
| NAMI Super Fiber*   | 2,777,250              |
| Washable Antimicrobial & Deodorizing Fiber and Fabric*                                      | 6,486,000              |
| Antibacterial and Antiviral Coating for PPE and Garment*                                    | 4,492,935              |
| NAMI Biodegradable Non-woven Replacement Material*  | 6,149,050              |
| NAMI Thin Film Tactile Sensor*  | 2,799,100              |
| NAMI Biodegradable Composite*   | 5,424,550              |
| NAMI Hot Water Soluble Biodegradable Materials  | 5,709,750              |
| Trial: NAMI Smart Reactive Color Changing Materials   | 2,499,640              |
| Trial: Development of Self-Cleaning Antibacterial Vitreous Enamel Panel                     | 2,714,882.28           |
| Trial: Development of an Antibacterial and Anti-dust Coating for Air Ducting                | 2,310,350              |
| Trial: Germ-Repellent Bathroom Fixtures for Healthy Living                                  | 2,720,900              |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Trial: Anti-Pollution Nanofiber Window Screen  | 2,521,835                  |
| Trial: A Drinking Bottle with Components made of Germ-Repellent Plastics   | 2,304,600                  |
| Trial: Development of a Highly Efficient Filtration Cartridge as Reverse Osmosis Alternative for Water Dispenser | 2,410,285                  |
| Nano-Modified High-Performance Functional Eco-Blocks^  | 1,656,169.6                |
| Controllable Crystal Growing with Chromic Feature for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Education Kit^  | 1,077,720                  |
| Development of Ozone Nano Bubble Air Purifier^   | 1,763,960                  |
| Anti-glare High Transmission, Low E Coating for Building Glass^  | 1,370,250                  |
| Polypropylene (PP) based on NAMI's Bio-foamed Pellets for Disposable Takeaway Box and Cup^                       | 1,276,590                  |
| Development of Two Herbal NanoPatches for Anti-inflammation and Muscle Strain Recovery^                          | 2,345,322.9                |
| Adhesive for Flexible Polishing PET Pad based on NAMI nCoating^  | 1,122,400                  |
| Development of Virus Inactivation Catalyst for Spray and Coating^  | 2,106,390                  |
| Bio-inspired Structural Silicone Sealant for Wet Surface Adhesion^   | 1,751,850                  |
| Development of Ceramifiable Board with Fire Retardant & Thermal Insulation Properties^                           | 3,499,050                  |
| Development of Antimicrobial Tablet Formulation as Spray on Wood, Glass, Metal and Fabric Substrates^            | 3,143,000                  |
| Recycled PET for Bottles^  | 2,374,800                  |
| Extrusion Blowing Molded Polyethylene (PE) and PP Bottles based on NAMI's Micro-Foaming Pellets^                 | 2,497,650                  |
| NAMI Smart Protection Materials-based Injury Prevention Smart Bandages^  | 1,748,950                  |
| Trial: Development of Integrated Plasma Driven Catalyst and Functionalized Filter for Air Purification           | 1,825,625                  |
| Trial: Centralized Nano Bubble System for Surface Cleaning and Sanitization                                      | 1,972,250                  |
| Trial: Waterborne Anti-microbial Coatings for Transportation Vehicles  | 1,973,400                  |

\*denotes platform project where industry sponsorship should generally account for a least 10% of the total project cost.

^denotes collaborative project where industry sponsorship should generally account for a least 50% of the total project cost.

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| NAMI Low Loss Nanofiber for 5G Antenna*  | 4,795,500                  |
| NAMI Tunable Hydrogel*   | 2,799,100                  |
| NAMI Reprocessable Silicone*   | 2,794,500                  |
| NAMI Nano-encapsulated PCM for Textiles and Cold Logistics*                      | 3,995,100                  |
| NAMI's Versatile Self-adhesive Modifiers for Silicone*                           | 4,478,100                  |
| NAMI Dispensable Thermal Gel*  | 2,764,600                  |
| NAMI Acoustic Materials*   | 3,470,700                  |
| NAMI Highly-Tunable Pressure Sensing Technologies*                               | 5,594,750                  |
| NAMI Seaweed-based Biodegradable Foam*   | 2,799,100                  |
| Creation and Development of NAMI's Ionic Nanofibers*                             | 7,598,700                  |
| Visible Light Activated Air Purification System*                                 | 4,505,240                  |
| Highly Sensitive NAMI e-Skin Sensor*   | 2,794,500                  |
| NAMI Printable Smart Protection Materials*                                       | 4,496,500                  |
| Development of NAMI's Super Aggregate for High Performance Lightweight Concrete* | 2,794,500                  |
| NAMI Nanocomposite Hydrophobic Oleophobic Biodegradable Packaging*               | 4,956,431                  |
| NAMI Low Dielectric Constant Anisotropic Thermal Pad*                            | 2,799,100                  |
| NAMI Environmentally Friendly Dry Cathode Technology for Lithium Ion Battery*    | 2,799,100                  |
| Development of NAMI's Sustainable Aerogel Fiber*                                 | 5,451,000                  |
| NAMI Antifouling Germ-Spike Technology*  | 6,295,100                  |
| NAMI's High Temperature Resistant Probiotics for Food and Beverages*             | 2,799,215                  |
| NAMI Impact Dissipating Bollard*   | 5,508,500                  |
| Non-porous Breathable Transparent Film*  | 2,798,525                  |
| Development of Anti-microbial Compound Technology for Building*                  | 2,795,650                  |
| Trial: Nanotechnology for Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement                             | 4,140,000                  |
| Trial: SPM for Ski and Security Guard Protection Clothing                        | 2,712,850                  |
| Trial: Water Capsule Enabled Cellular Concrete                                   | 3,534,076                  |

| <b>Project name</b>  | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Trial: Development of Homogeneous Wood Plastic Composites for Outdoor Decking and Wall Panels                        | 2,000,000                  |
| Trial: Development of Extremely Durable Lithium Battery  | 2,044,240                  |
| Trial: Development of Innovative Self-Compacting Backfilling Material for Pavements in Hong Kong Road Network        | 4,878,270                  |
| Human Centric Indoor Lighting^   | 1,222,800                  |
| Auto Fitting and Supporting Foam for Sports Gear Based on NAMI eMuscle Technology^                                   | 1,567,300                  |
| Development of Peelable Protective Coating for Finished Surfaces of Building^  | 1,861,600                  |
| Wrinkle Resistant and High Contrast Flexible Screen Material for Spontaneous Pop-Up Display^                         | 1,073,400                  |
| Development of an Airborne Disinfectant for Vehicle Cabin^   | 2,449,680                  |
| Novel Bio-capsule Technology for Wastewater Pollutant Removal^   | 1,750,000                  |
| Deodorizing and Anti-irritating Coating for Brassiere Applications^  | 1,269,000                  |
| Development of a Cell Sampler for Human Papillomavirus DNA^  | 1,171,825.6                |
| High Performance Lithium Thionyl Chloride Primary Battery^   | 1,127,000                  |
| Development of Three Paper Varnishes Based on NAMI Antifouling Germ-Spike Technology^                                | 2,062,220                  |
| Development of Flexible 3D Porous Ceramic Material for Vaporizer^  | 979,850                    |
| Development of Biodegradable Materials for Surgical Mask Based on NAMI's Biodegradable Technologies^                 | 1,469,200                  |
| High Rate Lithium Metal Battery^   | 2,447,900                  |
| Impact Dissipating Padding Materials for Cycling Helmet^   | 1,219,985                  |
| Development of Natural-Based Smoothing & pH Regulating Agents on Natural-Based Non-Woven Top Sheet for Pad Products^ | 1,469,200                  |
| Development of Nano Bubble External System for Laundry Service^  | 1,711,000                  |
| Development of Eco-friendly Superhydrophobic Coating on Stainless Steel for Surface Mount Technology Stencil^        | 1,747,800                  |
| Polyamide Polishing Brush Filament based on NAMI nCoating Technology^  | 1,275,300                  |
| Development of a Lasting and Breathable Nano-sealing System for Stone^   | 1,556,800                  |
| Development of Six Herbal Capsule Formulations based on NAMI Nanocrystallization Technology^                         | 2,082,930                  |

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Reactive Pressure Sensor Mat for Smart Pillow and Cushion Applications^ | 1,567,300                  |
| Adaptive Straps for Brassiere Products^                                 | 1,078,000                  |
| Novel Module Frame & Connection by High Performance Concrete^           | 4,023,390                  |

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^denotes collaborative project where industry sponsorship should generally account for a least 50% of the total project cost.

2022-23

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Development of Modified PET with Enhanced Water Vapor / Air Barrier Property for Vacutainers^ | 1,921,500                  |
| Anti Fingerprint NAMI nCoating for Glass Substrate*   | 5,700,550                  |
| NAMI's Nano Bicalyst for Biomass Conversion*  | 4,999,600                  |
| NAMI's 3D Smart Protection Materials*   | 2,789,800                  |
| NAMI's Encapsulated Probiotics with Targeted Delivery Function for Colonization*              | 5,300,000                  |
| NAMI eMuscle for Toy Applications*  | 2,799,100                  |
| Vehicle E-Call Lithium Ion Battery based on NAMI Wide Temperature Materials Technology*       | 4,255,000                  |
| NAMI Nanobubble Water Treatment Technology for Aquaculture*                                   | 2,804,800                  |
| NAMI's Sustainable Dye*   | 2,783,000                  |
| Materials & Design for Product-based MiC*   | 18,972,700                 |
| Eco-materials for Digital Construction by 3D Printing*  | 9,993,500                  |
| NAMI Lithium Metal Battery (LMB) Cycle and Rate Enhancing Additives*                          | 2,799,100                  |
| Sustainable Biosynthesis of Proteins with Probiotics System*                                  | 4,199,600                  |
| NAMI's Bioactive Inoculum Soil for Accelerated Anaerobic Biodegradation*                      | 6,095,000                  |
| NAMI Gel-Free Binder for High Energy Density LMB*   | 3,385,600                  |
| NAMI's Low-cost Heavy Duty Plastic Foams*   | 2,796,800                  |
| NAMI High Voltage and Flashpoint Electrolyte for LMB*   | 2,794,500                  |

| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| NAMI Dynamic Molecular Repair Technology for Recycled Polyolefin*   | 2,799,600                  |
| NAMI Quasi Solid Electrolyte for High-Performance Lithium Batteries*  | 7,000,050                  |
| NAMI's Built-in Anti-fog Plastics & Elastomers*   | 6,008,700                  |
| Development of NAMI's Bacterial NanoCellulose*  | 6,394,000                  |
| NAMI nCoating for Flexible Ultra-Thin Glass Protector*  | 6,637,800                  |
| NAMI's Anti-Microbial Peptides as an Effective Replacement of Chemical Preservatives*   | 2,799,560                  |
| Inbuilt Fire Retarding Bio-based Polyurethane Foam Technology*  | 2,796,800                  |
| NAMI Biomass Material as Alternative to Plastic Tableware*  | 2,799,100                  |
| Trial: Development of Low-carbon, Reusable Cutlery and Food Tray Using Plant Stem Based Material  | 2,881,300                  |
| Trial: Flexible Nanogenerator for Healthcare Sensing Pad and Shoe Power Generation  | 2,444,900                  |
| Trial: Development of Hermetically Sealed 1520 Extreme Temperature Battery Pack for IoT Applications                                    | 2,390,850                  |
| Rubber-Plastic-Glass Paving Blocks^   | 1,173,700                  |
| Development of Alcohol Degradation Protein Encapsulation for Targeted Delivery^   | 1,170,000                  |
| Transparent Anti-microbial Coating for Steel and Plastics^  | 1,552,200                  |
| PP Nonwoven Fibers based on NAMI's Bio-pellets for Personal Hygiene Applications^   | 2,191,500                  |
| Antifouling Germ-Spike Materials for Drinking Bottles^  | 2,660,000                  |
| A Transparent NAMI nCoating for Wear-Resistant Paper^   | 1,223,950                  |
| Development of Bio-based Elastomer with Microwave Curing for Heat Transfer^   | 1,714,450                  |
| Development of Green Bio-polymer Sealing Wax for Wood Floor^  | 2,224,600                  |
| Eco-Permeable Material with Recycled Rubber Tire Crumb and Geopolymer^  | 1,127,000                  |
| PE based on NAMI's Micropore-enhanced Bio. Pellets for Fertilizer Packaging^  | 1,859,600                  |
| Development of Biodegradable Polyethylene Terephthalate Glycol Smart Card Product by Using NAMI's Anaerobic Biodegradation Accelerator^ | 1,711,000                  |



| <b>Project name</b>   | <b>Funding amount (\$)</b> |
|---|----------------------------|
| Development of a Strong Outer Sheath as Enclosure for Flame Retardant Cables^                     | 969,500                    |
| High Performance Green Adhesive for Wide Range Substrates in Printing Industry^                   | 1,066,500                  |
| Development of a NAMI Anti-bacteria/virus Based Softener for Cotton and Cotton/Polyester Fabrics^ | 1,674,300                  |

\*denotes platform project where industry sponsorship should generally account for a least 10% of the total project cost.

^denotes collaborative project where industry sponsorship should generally account for a least 50% of the total project cost.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB139**

**(Question Serial No. 1350)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Please provide the following information regarding the new Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme since its launch in October 2023:

1. What are the total numbers of applications received and projects approved, and the average funding amount?
2. What are the respective institutions of the approved projects and the details of the research projects involved?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) launched the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme) in October 2023 and a total of 94 applications were received in the first application solicitation period. These applications have been assessed through a peer review on their technical aspect by 150 experts from different technology areas and subject to a business viability assessment by the consultant commissioned by ITC. The above preliminary assessment results have been submitted to the Steering Committee of the Scheme for reference. The Steering Committee has, upon completion of the assessment, recommended that the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology give in-principle support to more than 20 applications. ITC has also informed the universities concerned of the results in end March 2024. After completion of the follow-up work with the successful applicant universities, ITC will make a final decision on those applications. Hence, no information on the final number of applications approved nor other breakdowns is available at this moment.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB140**

**(Question Serial No. 1351)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Innovation and Technology Commission will continue to organise promotional and educational activities to enhance public awareness of innovation and technology (I&T) development. In this connection, is there any plan to enhance the understanding of the Hong Kong people on the I&T development of our country through introducing national I&T projects to Hong Kong for exhibition and carrying out public promotional activities? If yes, what are the specific plan and expenditure involved in the coming year? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

To enhance public understanding of innovation and technology (I&T), the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) has all along been organising on its own and jointly with various sectors of the community and other government departments different types of I&T activities, such as the InnoCarnival as an annual flagship event organised by ITC with over 50 programme partners. Through an array of interesting activities, the 9-day InnoCarnival held at the Hong Kong Science Park aims to promote I&T culture in the community by enhancing public knowledge and interest in I&T. To mark our country's first open recruitment of payload specialists in Hong Kong in 2022, an Aerospace Showcase was set up at the InnoCarnival that year to showcase, among others, precision space instruments used in the country's space exploration missions, which were locally developed and produced by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The Information Services Department subsequently arranged the aerospace exhibition content to be displayed in different districts so that the public can understand more about Hong Kong's contribution to the aerospace development of our country.

Separately, the General Support Programme (GSP) under the Innovation and Technology Fund administered by ITC supports non-research and development projects that contribute to the fostering of an I&T culture as well as promoting popular science, such as conferences, exhibitions, seminars, workshops, promotional events and popular science activities, etc. Among the approved projects, there were large-scale activities that introduce the I&T development of our country to the general public. For examples, the Future Science Prize Week held by the Hong Kong Academy of Sciences in October 2023 which invited Mainland Fellows and Future Science Prize laureates to share a variety of research outcomes, and the Global Conference on Climate Change: Polar Studies, Environment and Climate Change to be hosted by The Chinese University of Hong Kong in April 2024 which sought to demonstrate to the public our country's major achievements in polar scientific research etc. These projects are conducive to the enhancement of the knowledge and understanding of the Hong Kong people on the technology development of our country.

In addition, the second InnoEX jointly organised by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council to be held from 13 to 16 April 2024 is going to attract participation from a number of countries as well as Mainland provinces and cities take part in the event, with an aim to enable the I&T industry at home and outside Hong Kong to understand the latest development in the relevant technology areas. The Digital Economy Summit (DES) 2024, jointly organised by the ITIB and Cyberport, will also be held from 12 to 13 April 2024. Themed “Smarter Technovation for All: Forging a Sustainable Future”, DES 2024 will gather, from local and overseas, leaders and pioneers of the information and communications technology industry as well as business leaders, to share their insights on topics related to the development of the digital economy. We will continue to organise these exhibition and summit again in 2025-26.

We will continue to work with various sectors of the community or provide necessary assistance to organise different types of I&T activities, with a view to enhancing public understanding on the I&T development of Hong Kong and our country.

ITC will continue to organise the InnoCarnival this year with our existing manpower and resources. The specific plan and expenditure are still under preparation. As for the GSP, the expenditure involved in the coming year will be subject to the progress of the projects approved and the approval of new applications.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB141**

**(Question Serial No. 1352)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (5) Quality Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. Although the Government has repeatedly stated it has enhanced the work for the brand of "Tested in Hong Kong, Certified in Hong Kong", no corresponding increase has been reflected from the indicators under the Standards and Calibration Laboratory (SCL), the Hong Kong Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (HOKLAS), the Hong Kong Certification Body Accreditation Scheme (HKCAS) and the Hong Kong Inspection Body Accreditation Scheme (HKIAS) in the Budget of the Innovation and Technology Commission. Has the Government looked into the reasons for that?
2. Is there any plan to facilitate the work for the brand of "Tested in Hong Kong, Certified in Hong Kong", and step up the promotion of the SCL, HOKLAS, HKCAS and HKIAS both in the Mainland and overseas in the coming year? If yes, what are the specific plan and expenditure involved? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

The Government established the Hong Kong Council for Testing and Certification (HKCTC) to advise on the overall strategy to support the development of the industry. The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) is responsible for providing support to the HKCTC and serving as its Secretariat. The Hong Kong Accreditation Service (HKAS) of ITC has been continuously providing high-quality accreditation services to the organisations of the testing and certification (T&C) sector through 3 voluntary accreditation schemes, namely the Hong Kong Laboratory Accreditation Scheme, the Hong Kong Certification Body Accreditation Scheme and the Hong Kong Inspection Body Accreditation Scheme, as well as introducing new accreditation services according to the constantly changing social environment and the needs of the industry. Through the Mutual Recognition Arrangements signed with international and regional organisations of accreditation bodies, the endorsed test reports and

accredited certificates issued by organisations accredited by the HKAS are recognised by over 120 accreditation bodies in over 115 economies in total (including the major trading partners of Hong Kong).

In the past 5 years, there was a steady increase in the total number of organisations accredited by the HKAS from 273 in 2019 to 286 in 2023. There were organisations newly accredited each year, and in 2023, there were 6 additional accredited laboratories. However, since 12 laboratories ceased accreditation due to service suspension as a result of the epidemic and external economic impacts, internal reorganisation, merger with other organisations and other reasons, the number of accredited laboratories in 2023 was slightly lower than that in 2022. With the gradual recovery of the global economy, the HKAS expects that the number of organisations participating in the accreditation schemes will slightly increase to 293 in 2024.

Moreover, the Standards and Calibration Laboratory (SCL) of ITC is the custodian of Hong Kong's reference standards of physical measurements. The SCL provides comprehensive accredited calibration services to users of measurement standards and measuring instruments to ensure measurement accuracy and metrological traceability to the International System of Units (SI). The figure of calibration services in 2022 was higher than usual due to the surge in demands from local and overseas users as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic. It has returned to a normal level starting from 2023.

ITC will continue to closely work with the HKCTC to promote internationally accepted conformity assessment and calibration services through the HKAS and SCL to underpin technological development and international trade, and the development of the T&C sector in Hong Kong. The major areas of work include –

- proactively participate in trade fairs organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council in Hong Kong, the Mainland (targeting mainly the Greater Bay Area) and overseas (such as the China Hi-tech Fair and the Nuremberg International Toy Fair in Germany), as well as carry out publicity campaigns through online and offline channels to actively reinforce the branding of “Tested in Hong Kong, Certified in Hong Kong” to impress upon potential users on the strengths of Hong Kong's accredited T&C services;
- organise seminars, talks, proficiency testing programmes and other activities on an ongoing basis with a view to upgrading the technological levels of the industry, promoting the use of accreditation services, attracting talents and facilitating the stakeholders of different sectors to have a better understanding of the latest development in T&C as well as its associated benefits; and
- the HKAS proactively participates in the activities and meetings of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation, the International Accreditation Forum and the Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation; and the SCL also proactively participates in the meetings and international comparison activities of the General Conference on Weights and Measures, the International Committee for Weights and Measures, the International Bureau of Weights and Measures and the Asia Pacific Metrology Programme, which are conducive to worldwide recognition of Hong Kong's conformity assessment and calibration results.

The overall budgeted provision for the above areas of work under Programme (5) Quality Support for 2024-25 is \$142.6 million (covering the salaries of the personnel concerned, recurrent and non-recurrent departmental expenses). No breakdown of the expenditure for promoting the brand of “Tested in Hong Kong, Certified in Hong Kong” is available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB142**

**(Question Serial No. 3047)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In 2024-25, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to oversee the work of InnoHK research clusters (InnoHK) in the Hong Kong Science Park to foster collaboration with international science and research institutions and oversee the establishment of the third InnoHK research cluster. In this connection, will the Government advise on:

1. whether any evaluations of the effectiveness of InnoHK in fostering collaboration with international science and research institutions have been carried out; if yes, the details;
2. the details of the preparation for the establishment of the third InnoHK research cluster, including the objectives, timetable, performance indicators, expected benefits and breakdown of the estimated expenditures, etc.; and
3. whether any considerations have been given to the suggestions of the public, including strengthening collaboration with the higher education institutions in the Mainland as well as providing living allowances and other kinds of support to non-local researchers in order to encourage them to reside permanently in Hong Kong; if yes, the details.

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

1. The InnoHK research clusters (InnoHK) are committed to fostering global research collaborations, and have successfully established collaborative relationships with over 30 top-notch universities and research institutions in the Mainland and overseas so far, including the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), Peking University, Harvard University, Stanford University, University of Oxford and University of Cambridge, etc. The collaborating non-local universities and research and development (R&D)



institutions come from 11 different economies (including the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, Germany, France, Sweden, Switzerland, Japan, the Mainland and Macao), involving a total of about 2 500 researchers from Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas.

2. The Government will commence in the second half of 2024 the preparation work for the establishment of the third InnoHK research cluster focusing on advanced manufacturing, materials, energy and sustainable development. It is initially expected that the third InnoHK research cluster will provide support to no fewer than 50 research projects in the first phase. The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will deploy existing resources and create 2 non-directorate posts to take up the relevant preparation work. The estimated additional remuneration and related expenses for 2024-25 will be about \$2.07 million.
3. InnoHK has established collaborative relationships with higher education institutions/R&D institutions in the Mainland, and its partners include Peking University, Guangzhou Institutes of Biomedicine and Health, CAS, and Institute of Automation, CAS, etc.

As for attracting overseas and Mainland researchers to work in Hong Kong, the Research Talent Hub (RTH) administered by ITC aims to encourage university graduates in a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)-related discipline to pursue careers in the innovation and technology (I&T) field and nurture more I&T talents. It provides funding for eligible organisations/companies (including the R&D centres under InnoHK) to engage Hong Kong permanent residents or research talents permitted by the Immigration Department to work in Hong Kong to assist in conducting R&D work. The RTH provides a monthly salary allowance and the contribution to the Mandatory Provident Fund by the employer to research talents with a bachelor's/master's/doctoral degree. Research talents with a doctoral degree will be provided with an additional monthly living allowance of \$10,000. The maximum engagement period for each research talent is 36 months in general.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB143**

**(Question Serial No. 1910)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In order to facilitate Hong Kong's development into a platform for global innovative collaboration amongst the industry, academic and research sectors, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has earmarked \$10 billion to launch the "Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme" (RAISE+ Scheme). It will fund, on a matching basis, at least 100 research teams in universities which have good potential to become start-ups. Each team should complete its project in 2 stages. It is stated in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under Programme (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) will continue to monitor the implementation of the RAISE+ Scheme. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The first application solicitation period of the RAISE+ Scheme was from 18 October to 30 November 2023. How many applications have been received by the Government in total so far? How many applications have been approved? Which universities did the approved applications come from?
2. As stated by the Innovation and Technology Commission, the RAISE+ Scheme will invite applications for funding from eligible universities twice every 12 months. Will the Government advise on the next application solicitation period?
3. Under the RAISE+ Scheme, the approved projects are to be completed in 2 stages, including the first stage for the transformation and realisation of research and development (R&D) outcomes and the second stage for the initiation of the commercialisation of R&D outcomes. In this connection, what measures have been taken by the Government to support and assist the funded research teams from universities, so as to ensure that they can successfully complete the project plans in both stages?

4. It is also stated in Programme (2) that the ITIB will actively promote Hong Kong's new opportunities to the Mainland and overseas in 2024-25, including collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises to attract high-potential or representative innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong and top-notch I&T talents to bring with them their business or R&D outcomes to Hong Kong. Supporting the transformation, realisation and extensive commercialisation of R&D outcomes is an important element in promoting new industrialisation. Apart from the RAISE+ Scheme, what other specific work and measures have been taken by the Government to promote the commercialisation of R&D outcomes of other stakeholders including enterprises and research institutions?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme) received a total of 94 applications in the first application solicitation period. These applications have been assessed through a peer review on their technical aspect by 150 experts from different technology areas and subject to a business viability assessment by the consultant commissioned by the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC). The above preliminary assessment results have been submitted to the Steering Committee for reference. The Steering Committee has, upon completion of the assessment, recommended that the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology give in-principle support to more than 20 applications. ITC has also informed the universities concerned of the results in end March 2024. After completion of the follow-up work with the successful applicant universities, ITC will make a final decision on those applications, and decide on the next application solicitation period. Hence, no information on the final number of applications approved nor other breakdowns is available at this moment.

Under the RAISE+ Scheme, university research teams may join the RAISE+ Scheme starting from either the first stage (the transformation and realisation of research and development (R&D) outcomes) or the second stage (the initiation of the commercialisation of R&D outcomes) depending on the maturity of the transformation of its R&D outcomes. The teams can make use of the project funding to strengthen the teams and relevant equipment conducive to the R&D, commercialisation of R&D outcomes and business operation of the relevant projects. External investors such as venture capital companies will also provide support and assistance in project development and business networking, etc. Furthermore, funded teams are required to submit through their universities annual progress reports, annual audited accounts and other supporting documents required (e.g. proof showing receipt of funding) to ITC. We believe that the above measures can help the funded teams to complete both stages of the project smoothly.

Apart from the RAISE+ Scheme, Government bureaux/departments such as the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) and ITC have also put in place other specific work and measures, with a view to promoting the commercialisation of R&D outcomes by stakeholders such as enterprises and research institutes. For example, the Technology

Start-up Support Scheme for Universities of ITC provides funding to designated universities to support their teams in starting technology businesses and commercialising their R&D outcomes; the Public Sector Trial Scheme supports the Innovation and Technology Fund-funded R&D projects and those undertaken by technology companies for producing prototypes/samples of their R&D outcomes and conducting trials in the public sector (including government departments). Also, ITC provides funding to the Technology Transfer Offices of designated universities to enhance their technology transfer capabilities. The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation facilitates start-ups to establish connection with the industry through leveraging its incubation experience and investment/business networks, with a view to promoting technology transfer and commercialisation of R&D outcomes; the 5 R&D Centres (namely Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute, Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel, Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre and Nano and Advanced Materials Institute) are committed to transferring technology to the industry in order to commercialise R&D outcomes; and the Innovation Hub@HK of ITC aims at showcasing R&D outcomes of Hong Kong's public research institutes.

Meanwhile, the ITIB will collaborate with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises to attract high-potential or representative innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong and top-notch I&T talents to bring with them their businesses or R&D outcomes to Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****ITIB144****(Question Serial No. 1911)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) was launched in July 2020 to subsidise manufacturers, on a 1 (Government): 2 (company) matching basis, to set up new smart production lines in Hong Kong. The funding ceiling is one-third of the total cost of an approved project or \$15 million. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Will the Government provide the numbers of the NIFS applications and approved applications, total project costs of the approved applications, average funding amounts for each approved project, and average processing time in each of the past 3 years?
2. Please set out in tabular form the funding amounts of the approved projects under the NIFS in the past 3 years:

| Year      | Manufacturer with projects approved | Industrial sector | Project information | Total project cost | Matching fund from manufacturer | Funding amount approved |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2021-2022 |                                     |                   |                     |                    |                                 |                         |
| 2022-2023 |                                     |                   |                     |                    |                                 |                         |
| 2023-2024 |                                     |                   |                     |                    |                                 |                         |

3. Some manufacturers reflected that if they had to complete their entire projects with their final project reports and final audited accounts accepted before the funding would be disbursed by the Government on a reimbursement basis, some enterprises might hesitate to apply due to worry of insufficient cash flow or the funding would not be disbursed eventually. Does the Government have any plans of or would it consider enhancing the NIFS, such as relaxing the funding ratio, expediting the vetting process and streamlining

the application procedures, with a view to attracting more enterprises to submit the NIFS applications?

4. The 2022 Policy Address proposed to subsidise the setting up of more smart production lines in Hong Kong under the Re-industrialisation Funding Scheme, with the target of increasing the cumulative number of smart production lines by 4 times from about 30 at present to over 130 in 5 years. Regarding the performance indicator mentioned above, what is the number of smart production lines in Hong Kong as at March this year? How many outstanding smart production lines need to be set up in order to meet the relevant performance indicator?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

1. and 2. The New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) (formerly known as the Re-industrialisation Funding Scheme) was launched under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) in July 2020 to subsidise manufacturers, on a 1 (Government): 2 (company) matching basis, to set up new smart production lines in Hong Kong. The funding ceiling is one-third of the total cost of an approved project or \$15 million.

The numbers of applications under the NIFS in 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 were 13, 21, 15 and 17 respectively (66 in total). 38 applications were supported by the NIFS Vetting Committee (Vetting Committee) since the launch of the NIFS, involving 62 production lines and a total project cost of approximately \$966 million. The total funding amount of the NIFS was about \$271 million, and the average amount of funding for a project was around \$7.1 million. The average time between receiving all required information from applicant companies and informing them of the vetting results from the Vetting Committee is around 35 working days.

The funding amounts involved in the 38 applications supported by the Vetting Committee in 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 are set out as follows:

| <b>Year</b>  | <b>Number of applicant companies</b> | <b>Total project cost (approximate)</b> | <b>Matching fund from applicant companies (approximate)</b> | <b>Funding amount (approximate)</b> |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2020-2021    | 6                                    | 130 million                             | 92 million  | 39 million                          |
| 2021-2022    | 11                                   | 381 million                             | 287 million   | 94 million                          |
| 2022-2023    | 10                                   | 350 million                             | 247 million   | 103 million                         |
| 2023-2024    | 11                                   | 105 million                             | 70 million  | 35 million                          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>38<sup>Note</sup></b>             | <b>966 million</b>                      | <b>696 million</b>  | <b>271 million</b>                  |

Note: As at March 2024, a total of 38 applications were supported by the Vetting Committee, of which 32 have signed the funding agreements. The applicants, their industrial sectors and the details of their projects are: Chewy International Foods (rice packaging), CK One (food processing), So Li Ah (coupler friction welding for steel reinforcement bars), Hong Kong Beer (beer production), Nanoshields Technology (electrospinning for nanofiber filter material), Nissin Foods (cup and bowl-type instant noodle products), Casetagram (CAsETiFY production line), 2 Plus 3 (HK) Industrial (vegetable juice), Luen Tai Hong Kong Fresh Liquid Eggs (fresh liquid egg products), Focus Industries (nanofiber HEPA filter materials), Johnson Electric Industrial Manufactory (resin-bonded graphite bushing manufacturing), Lee Kum Kee (Hong Kong) Foods (oyster sauce manufacturing), Smart (Technology) Global (rebar precast parts), Catalo Natural Health Foods (supplements), Vita Green Pharmaceutical (HK) (tea capsules), Amoy Food (sauce sachets), Johnson Electric International (smart carbon brush), Luk Yeung Restaurant (mooncake products), Ping's Production (soup, sauce, food and beverage), Wai Yuen Tong Medicine (Chinese medicine production), American Unicorn Laboratories (oral solid dosage), Profit Royal Pharmaceutical (nano-coated fabric and nanofiber respirator), Golden Resources Foods (rice packaging), Sew Solution (knitwear), Bo Charity Foundation (lunchbox, soup, meat and vegetable), Nanodocks Technology (nanofiber filter material) and J & S Printing (smart post-printing production line), Cat Dynamics (whiskey manufacturing), People Printing Press (printing), Nestle Hong Kong (packaging line for ice-cream cone), Han-Fang Chinese Medicine (Chinese medicine formula granules) and Nin Jiom Medicine (package for Chinese herbal products). For the other 6 applications which the Vetting Committee has agreed to support, the Secretariat is following up on the comments of the Vetting Committee on the applications with the applicant companies, so as to finalise the details of their plans and the contents of the funding agreements. After the applicant company concerned signed the funding agreement, the information of the project will be uploaded to the website of the ITF for public viewing.

3. The NIFS launched an enhancement measure in January this year, allowing an applicant enterprise to carry out up to 3 projects concurrently with a total maximum funding of \$45 million under the NIFS. To ease the liquidity pressure of enterprises, the NIFS provides interim payment not exceeding 50% of the approved funding amount for projects with a duration of over 12 months, with the actual amount determined having regard to its progress and actual recognisable expenditures.

As smart production line involves new technologies, the Government provides subsidy instead of loan to the applicant enterprises under the NIFS, with a view to lowering the investment cost of funded enterprises in order to encourage more enterprises to establish smart production lines in Hong Kong. Although the enterprises still have to invest in two-thirds of the cost of production lines concerned, there is no need for them to return the subsidy granted. Moreover, an enterprise could obtain a maximum of \$45 million funding after the enhancement of the NIFS in January this year. We consider the existing 1 (Government): 2 (company) fund matching ratio appropriate. It could on one hand attract enterprises to put more resources on new industrialisation by establishing

production lines in Hong Kong, and ensure that enterprises would carefully consider if the projects have potential and would be cost-effective on the other, contributing to the diversified development of Hong Kong's economy. The Innovation and Technology Commission will review the operation of the NIFS in a timely manner and introduce enhancement measures as and when appropriate.

4. The target of the NIFS is to increase the number of funded smart production lines to over 130 by 2027. Since the launch of the NIFS in July 2020 to March 2024, 54 new smart production lines have been taken forward and established in Hong Kong under the 32 projects which have signed the funding agreements, covering food manufacturing and processing (including health food), textiles and clothing, construction materials, medical device, nanofiber materials, pharmaceutical production (including Chinese medicine), electronics, printing and equipment and parts, etc., involving \$656 million private investments and more than 300 job opportunities in technical positions created.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB145**

**(Question Serial No. 1914)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Innovation and Technology Commission mentioned in Head 155 that the Public Sector Trial Scheme (PSTS) supports the production of prototypes/samples and/or conducting of trials in the public sector to promote the realisation and commercialisation of local research and development (R&D) results. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. Please provide the numbers of applications, numbers of applications approved, average amounts of funding approved, project areas, and the specific applications of the R&D projects in each of the past 3 years.
2. From 2020 to 2022, excluding the special and one-off call for projects in response to the COVID-19 epidemic, the average number of applications approved in these 3 years was about 40. What measures will the Government take in the future to attract more research teams to participate in the PSTS?
3. Whether any enhancements to the PSTS have been made by the Government, such as expanding the scope of the PSTS, streamlining the vetting procedures or increasing the project funding, so as to facilitate and promote the realisation and commercialisation of local R&D results?
4. Apart from the PSTS, what will the Government do in the future to further facilitate and encourage the realisation and commercialisation of R&D results, their market launch and application in different Government bureaux/departments?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The Public Sector Trial Scheme (PSTS) provides funding to research and development (R&D) projects under the Innovation and Technology Fund, start-ups and technology companies conducting R&D activities in Hong Kong for producing prototypes/samples of their R&D outcomes and conducting trials in the public sector (including government departments) so as to promote the realisation and commercialisation of R&D outcomes. The numbers of applications, numbers of applications approved, average amounts of funding approved, and the major technology areas of the approved projects under the PSTS in the past 3 years are tabulated below:

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Number of applications</b> | <b>Number of applications approved</b> | <b>Average amount of funding approved (\$'000)</b> | <b>Technology areas involved in the projects</b>   |
|-------------|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 2021        | 40                            | 31                                     | 2,250  | - Information technology<br>- Environmental technology<br>- Biotechnology<br>- Materials science |
| 2022        | 57                            | 40                                     | 2,590  | Same as above  |
| 2023        | 54                            | 49                                     | 2,710  | Same as above  |

Some examples on the application of the PSTS projects are as follows:

- The Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel conducted a trial on beddings products, such as mattress, mattress cover, duvet, duvet cover, pillow, pillowcase and bedding sheet with enhanced thermal, touch and biomechanical comfort at the Helping Hand Po Lam Jockey Club Housing for the Elderly, with a view to further improving the design of the bedding products through understanding how the elderly feel about their sleep comfort in real-life environment.
- The Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech Research and Development Centre has developed a combination-type wireless Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tag for road toll collection systems. The system consists of a wireless RFID identification card and a card slot. The driver's personal road toll account information is stored in the independent wireless RFID identification card. When the user inserts the wireless RFID identification card into the card slot, the reading distance of the antenna can be extended to over six metres. The Transport Department has applied this technology to HKeToll, enabling simultaneous data collection on both the driver and the vehicle as they pass through tunnels.
- The Hong Kong Polytechnic University conducted a trial on the use of body-shaping vests in 2 local aided secondary schools. Developed for adolescents with early scoliosis, the vest is equipped with a Biofeedback System that encourages active coordination and control of the back muscles of the patients. Through progressive

training, muscle balance can be restored, thereby reducing displacement on both sides of the spine and improving daily posture.

In the past few years, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) has made a number of enhancements to the PSTS, including extending the scope of funding to cover incubatees and graduate tenants of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport in 2016, as well as further extending the funding scope to cover all technology companies conducting R&D activities in Hong Kong in 2020, and setting up the Helpdesk to assist in matching applicants with Government bureaux/departments and public bodies in 2018. ITC will continue to encourage Government bureaux/departments and public bodies to actively participate in the PSTS.

Apart from the PSTS, ITC launched the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) in October 2023 to further promote the transformation and commercialisation of R&D outcomes. The RAISe+ Scheme provides funding support to research teams from universities on a matching basis for the transformation and realisation of R&D outcomes and the initiation of the commercialisation of R&D outcomes in 2 stages within around 5 years. The funding amount for each approved project ranges from \$10 million to \$100 million. In addition, starting from 2024-25, ITC will double the maximum annual funding provided for the Technology Transfer Office of each designated university to \$16 million, enabling universities to strengthen their support on technology transfer and expand marketing services. ITC will also continue to provide funding support to teams in designated universities to start technology businesses and commercialise their R&D outcomes through the Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB146**

**(Question Serial No. 1915)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The aim of the Innovation and Technology Commission is to promote and support applied research and development (R&D) activities which can contribute to innovation and technology (I&T) upgrading in industry. The R&D projects carried out by the 5 R&D Centres, namely the Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre (APAS), Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute (ASTRI), Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA), Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre (LSCM) and Nano and Advanced Materials Institute (NAMI), except for those contract researches the full costs of which are borne by sponsoring companies, are funded mainly by the Innovation and Technology Fund. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. It is stated in paragraph 111 of the Budget Speech that to capture a market with huge potential and dovetail with the national strategy for technological development, the Government is fostering R&D of microelectronics. We will establish the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (HKMSRDI) this year to spearhead and facilitate research collaboration on the third-generation semiconductors among universities, R&D Centres and the industry. In this connection, does the Government have any measures to facilitate and coordinate the cooperation and communication between HKMSRDI and the R&D Centres relevant to the development of microelectronics?
2. The Northern Metropolis Action Agenda was published at the end of last year to clearly outline the development blueprint of the Northern Metropolis, including the development themes, industry positioning, major facilities, industry-driven planning and development timetable, of the four major zones therein. In the planning of the Northern Metropolis, will considerations be given to reserve lands for setting up footholds for R&D Centres, such as HKRITA, to facilitate the transformation and realisation of R&D outcomes of the R&D Centres, for example supporting the R&D

Centres to set up pilot smart production lines and customised product production lines in Hong Kong?

3. Will the Government consider exploring the setting up of operational branches and footholds at cities in the Greater Bay Area on behalf of the R&D Centres, such as HKRITA, as well as allowing their operations to cross the border so that technical personnel hired from the Mainland or stationed there can coordinate the testing and production processes with Mainland factories more directly and efficiently? If yes, what are the details; if not; what are the reasons?
4. Over the years, HKRITA has spared no effort in promoting innovation and technology, including green technology capable of enhancing the functions of materials and upcycling. Please inform this Committee of the ways the Government are going to support and make use of the R&D organisations, such as HKRITA, to better promote the development of green technology, including whether HKRITA's role as a major R&D Centre will be strengthened and more resources be allocated, etc.

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

The reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

1. The Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI) will establish effective multilateral collaborations with various stakeholders, including universities from the Mainland and overseas, research and development (R&D) institutions, the industry and relevant R&D Centres. Through cross-sector, government-industry-research cooperation and the development of a platform for talent and technology exchanges, MRDI will make good use of the resources and education training to actively promote the R&D of the third-generation semiconductor technology.

Currently, the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute (ASTRI) is undertaking some R&D projects related to third-generation semiconductors. The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) has already initiated discussion with ASTRI on the coordination and division of work in the respective R&D areas of ASTRI and MRDI to avoid duplication of resources in the future.

2. As for the new land for innovation and technology (I&T) uses around San Tin/Lok Ma Chau, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is conducting a consultancy study on the I&T industry development plan with a view to recommending specific I&T uses in the I&T value chain (i.e. upstream (R&D), midstream (prototype or application development) or downstream (manufacturing) processes) for development on different land parcels in the above area as well as requisite infrastructure and supporting facilities, etc. The study is expected to be completed within 2024.
3. ITC will continue to encourage the 5 R&D Centres to exchange and link with the Mainland cities in the Greater Bay Area (GBA). The 5 R&D Centres have participated jointly in R&D projects with their GBA partners in recent years (e.g. Logistics and

Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre has cooperated with Guangzhou Institute of Software Application Technology to commence R&D projects in respect of cross-border logistics), and organised promotional activities like seminars and exchange sessions, with a view to strengthening the I&T cooperation in the GBA and promoting the understanding of the R&D Centres among peers and enterprises so as to facilitate the development of the R&D Centres in the GBA. The R&D Centres will formulate appropriate strategies for their development in the GBA by taking into account the needs of their respective industries and their operational plans, including exploring the establishment of a foothold in the Mainland cities in the GBA. For example, ASTRI has just moved into the Hong Kong Science Park Shenzhen branch in Futian in January 2024; and Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA) will collaborate with The Hong Kong Polytechnic University to conduct experiments and research at the latter's Shenzhen Research Institute.

4. The Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) administered by ITC has been actively supporting R&D in various technology areas, including "Green Development". Various funding schemes that support R&D under the ITF have funded around 140 R&D projects relevant to green technology so far, with a total funding of around \$433 million. The R&D Centres are also involved in some of these projects. For instance, HKRITA has developed for the industry a novel smart garment sorting system for recycling and Green Machine: the blended textile separation technology by hydrothermal treatment; Nano and Advanced Materials Institute has also been actively developing new materials and technologies that contribute to the protection of green ecosystem and energy saving. ITC will continue to support projects conducive to the development of green technology through the ITF.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB147**

**(Question Serial No. 0364)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in the coming year that it will continue to administer the STEM Internship Scheme (the Scheme). In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the numbers of students and employers participating in the Scheme in each of the past 3 years;
2. the percentage of students engaging in the same industry for career development upon completion of the Scheme; and
3. as there are currently 8 universities participating in the Scheme and the Hong Kong Metropolitan University will join the Scheme in 2024/25, is there any plan for the Scheme to cover students studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)-related programmes from other self-financing post-secondary institutions? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

1. In the past 3 years (as at end-January 2024), the STEM Internship Scheme (the Scheme) has provided over 10 400 internship opportunities for university students. The numbers of participating interns and participating companies or organisations each year are tabulated as follows:

| Financial year                      | Number of participating interns | Number of participating companies or organisations |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| 2021-22                             | 3 038                           | 1 541  |
| 2022-23                             | 3 524                           | 1 699  |
| 2023-24<br>(as at end-January 2024) | 3 843                           | 1 784  |

2. According to the surveys conducted by the participating universities after the end of the student internships, more than 95% of the students expressed upon completion of the internships that they would consider pursuing a career in innovation and technology (I&T) after graduation. It is difficult to track whether students who participated in the Scheme had pursued careers in the I&T field after graduation due to various reasons, for example, students participating in the Scheme in the same year may graduate in different years and students may have taken up more than 1 job after graduation. In fact, relevant surveys had been conducted by the universities but the response rate was unsatisfactory and therefore statistics with much reference value are not available.
  
3. Since the launch of the Scheme in May 2020, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Education University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and The University of Hong Kong have already participated in the Scheme. Lingnan University has joined the Scheme since 2023-24 and the Hong Kong Metropolitan University will join the Scheme starting from 2024-25. In addition, the coverage of the Scheme has already been expanded in June 2023 to cover internship opportunities offered by the 5 government-funded Research and Development Centres and the Hong Kong Productivity Council to students studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programmes at local and non-local universities (including the campuses at Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area established by designated local universities). The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will continue to review from time to time the institutions covered by the Scheme. Local institutions offering STEM-related programmes but not funded by the University Grants Committee are welcome to contact ITC if they are interested in joining the Scheme.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB148**

**(Question Serial No. 2337)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 125 of the Budget that the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) will launch the Co-acceleration Programme (new programme) to pool the efforts of the innovation and technology (I&T) industry and provide value-added support services to I&T start-ups with high potential and to nurture them as regional or global enterprises. In fact, the HKSTPC is implementing the Acceleration Programme (original programme) also. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the difference between the new programme and the original programme;
2. the estimated additional amount of resources to be deployed for launching the new programme and the expenditure involved; and
3. the expected number of enterprises to which the new programme can provide support services each year?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

Under the modus operandi of the existing Acceleration Programme (existing Programme), the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) is solely responsible for funding and provided related support, including market promotion, business expansion and enterprise development. In order to strengthen the support to technology start-ups, HKSTPC plans to consolidate the existing Programme and inject an additional \$110 million to launch the Co-acceleration Programme (the Programme) by pooling the efforts from industry partners to provide deeper and broader value-added support services to technology start-ups, including testing scenarios, business consulting, investment matching, talent recruitment, manufacturing and launching of products, with a view to nurturing these start-ups

as regional or global enterprises. HKSTPC's initial target is to support 10 to 15 technology start-ups each year within the first 3 to 4 years after the launch of the Programme, of which about 50% of them are engaged in deep technology.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB149**

**(Question Serial No. 2338)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 119 of the Budget Speech that the Government will launch a \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) this year, with an aim to provide funding support on a matching basis of 1 (Government): 2 (enterprise) to enterprises engaging in life and health technology, Artificial Intelligence and data science, advanced manufacturing and new energy technology of up to \$200 million to each of them. However, applicant enterprises shall undertake to invest no less than \$200 million in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee on the following aspects of the NIAS:

1. What is the mechanism to screen the applicant enterprises? How long does it take from application to receiving the funding?
2. Are there any designated areas for the enterprises to use the funding, for instance, investment in research, setting up of production lines or procurement of raw materials, etc.?
3. Do the funded enterprises need to report to the Government the usage of the funding? If yes, is it required to make a report in each financial year?
4. Upon implementation, in what ways will the Government monitor the development progress of the funded enterprises? Is additional manpower required to perform the monitoring task? If yes, what is the number of additional staff member required?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

Our reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Under the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS), all applicant enterprises must be companies that are incorporated in Hong Kong under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622), which have committed an investment of no less than \$200 million of funding that is within the approved funding scope in the setting up of the new smart production facilities in Hong Kong in the designated technology areas of life and health technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and data science, and advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies. The smart production facilities should be advanced in nature.

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will first conduct a preliminary assessment of the application received. After the initial assessment, endorsement of the New Industrialisation Development Office under the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will be sought on whether the proposed new smart production facilities are from industries of strategic importance and whether they could fulfil the advanced manufacturing element. After going through the relevant procedures, the application will be submitted to the Vetting Committee (VC) of the NIAS. Applications supported by the VC will be submitted to the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology for approval.

The funding of the NIAS will cover expenses directly related to the establishment of the new production line in Hong Kong, including the costs of procurement, set-up, installation and commissioning of the machinery/software and equipment/apparatus, as well as fees for engaging technical consultancies for the design and setting up of the production line concerned, including testing and staff training. As we envisage that production facilities to be established under the NIAS will be of much larger scale than the existing New Industrialisation Funding Scheme, the NIAS will also provide funding for specialised facilities that are necessary for the operation of the production facilities (for example, the costs of procurement, installation and commissioning of clean rooms, anti-seismic structure for micro-electronic factory, specified storage facilities, etc., including but not limited to the related fitting-out costs). Expenditure items under the NIAS shall not receive funding from any other funding schemes of the Government as well as those administered by public bodies. General business operating expenses of the applicant enterprise will not be funded.

Grant will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis after completion of the project and the Government's approval of the final project report and final audited accounts submitted by the enterprises. Interim reimbursement arrangement will be made available in accordance with the duration of the project. If the project duration exceeds 12 months, the applicant company is required to submit a progress report and audited accounts for each 12-month period of the project, so as to facilitate ITC's work in monitoring the project progress and disbursing interim funding. We expect that most approved projects will be completed within 36 months. The actual time required for enterprises to receive the funding under the NIAS varies, depending on factors such as the nature of individual projects and the comprehensiveness of the documents provided.

ITC will set up a secretariat comprising 5 staff members to handle the administrative work related to the NIAS, for instance, carrying out preliminary assessment of the applications, monitoring the progress of approved projects, disbursing funds, reviewing the operation of the NIAS, as well as assessing Research Talent Hub-NIAS applications, arranging for the disbursement of funds and monitoring the progress of approved projects.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB150**

**(Question Serial No. 2352)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government has invited experts from the Mainland and overseas to conduct a mid-term scientific review of the work of research laboratories in the InnoHK research clusters with the aim of supporting the continuous development of the research clusters and promoting Hong Kong as a hub for global research collaboration. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee when will the review be completed and whether the results of the review be disclosed? If yes, when will it be announced?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 43)

Reply:

We have invited 45 experts from the Mainland and overseas to form an InnoHK Scientific Committee (the Committee) for conducting peer reviews on the work of the Research and Development (R&D) centres under the InnoHK research clusters (InnoHK), with a view to supporting the continuous development of the research clusters. The Committee assesses the research outcomes of the InnoHK R&D centres mainly from the scientific and professional perspectives in terms of, inter alia, their scientific merits and contributions, societal impacts as well as capabilities and potential for technology transfer/commercialisation.

During the mid-term review, the Government and the InnoHK Steering Committee will make reference to the above expert reports and the annual reports submitted by the InnoHK R&D centres, as well as conduct a comprehensive examination on their research progress, administration, governance, operation and finance, etc. The mid-term review is expected to be completed in the first half of 2024. We will invite the R&D centres which have successfully passed the mid-term review to submit their second 5-year proposal. The amount of Government funding will be considered with reference to a number of factors from

various aspects, such as the content of the proposals submitted by individual R&D centres and the latest status of the overall budget allocation for InnoHK, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB151**

**(Question Serial No. 2353)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that while there were 173 applications received and processed under the Patent Application Grant in 2023, representing an increase of 30 applications over that of the previous year, there were only 107 projects funded, representing a decrease of 6 projects over that of the previous year. Has any evaluation been made by the Government in respect of the reasons for the increase in the number of applications but a decrease in the projects funded? If yes, what are the details? What are the criteria for the Government to set the expected number of applications to be 158 next year? If the number of applications exceeds the expected number, are there adequate manpower and time to process and vet the applications in time?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 44)

Reply:

The Patent Application Grant (PAG) under the Innovation and Technology Fund has appointed the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) as its implementation agent. The PAG aims to encourage local companies and individual inventors who are first-time patent-seekers to protect and capitalise their intellectual work through patent registration. The maximum amount of grant for each approved application is \$250,000.

The PAG is a scheme for applicants to submit funding applications for their inventions. Therefore, the number of applications each year varies subject to the objective factors, such as the number of inventions in the year concerned. Regarding the number of applications approved each year, it depends on the complexity of the applications, and readiness of individual applicants, such as the completeness of the application documents and information, the progress of the patent search-cum-technical assessment of the projects, and the face-to-face interviews with the inventor(s) concerned, etc.

The number of applications to be received and processed under the PAG in 2024 is projected based on the actual number of applications in 2022 and 2023. If the number of applications exceeds the expected number, the Innovation and Technology Commission will coordinate with the HKPC and deploy manpower resources in a flexible manner so as to process and vet the applications.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB152**

**(Question Serial No. 2860)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 125 of the Budget Speech that the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation will soon launch the Co-acceleration Programme to pool the efforts of the innovation and technology (I&T) industry and provide value-added support services to I&T start-ups with high potential and to nurture them as regional or global enterprises. Please advise on the total estimated expenditure involved, estimated number of funded projects and specific implementation timetable for the above Programme.

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

It is announced in the 2024-25 Budget that the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) will launch the Co-acceleration Programme (the Programme) to pool the efforts of the innovation and technology (I&T) industry and provide value-added support services to I&T start-ups with high potential and to nurture them as regional or global enterprises. By consolidating the existing Acceleration Programme and injecting an additional \$110 million, the HKSTPC will launch the Programme with partners from the business and university sectors to provide deeper and broader value-added support services to technology start-ups, including testing scenarios, business consulting, investment matching, talent recruitment, manufacturing and launching of products. The HKSTPC is finalising the details of the Programme and will kick-start the preparatory work. It is expected that 10 to 15 technology start-ups will be benefited each year within the first 3 to 4 years after the launch of the Programme, of which about 50% of them are engaged in deep technology.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB153**

**(Question Serial No. 3107)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Innovation and Technology Commission is making preparation for the establishment of the third InnoHK research cluster which focuses on advanced manufacturing, materials, energy and sustainable development, with a view to expanding our world-class research and development (R&D) collaboration and enhancing the R&D development of Hong Kong. Will the Government advise on the specific implementation timetable, the manpower and estimated expenditure involved for the relevant work?

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no. 40)

Reply:

The Government will commence in the second half of 2024 the preparation work for the establishment of the third InnoHK research cluster focusing on advanced manufacturing, materials, energy and sustainable development. It is initially expected that the third InnoHK research cluster will provide support to no fewer than 50 research projects in the first phase. The Innovation and Technology Commission will deploy existing resources and create 2 non-directorate posts to take up the relevant preparation work. The estimated additional remuneration and related expenses for 2024-25 will be about \$2.07 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB154**

**(Question Serial No. 3204)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

While the Government set up the HK\$2 billion Innovation and Technology Venture Fund (ITVF) in 2017 with a view to attracting more venture capital (VC) funds to co-invest in local innovation and technology (I&T) start-ups in Hong Kong, local banks and financial institutions generally prefer collateral lending rather than financing I&T start-ups. The aim of the ITVF is to achieve an overall matching investment ratio of Government fund to VC funds of approximately 1:2. Given that the Government will continue to administer the ITVF, including the appointment of new co-investment partners, please advise on:

1. the number of VC funds with which the Government collaborated, the types and numbers of projects approved as well as the approved amounts in the past 3 years; and
2. whether there is any specific plan for identifying more high-quality VC funds for collaboration in order to control the risk exposure? If yes, the details; if not, the reasons.

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

1. The Innovation and Technology Venture Fund (ITVF) aims to encourage venture capital (VC) funds to invest in local innovation and technology (I&T) start-ups. The Innovation and Technology Commission has selected a total of 20 VC funds as co-investment partners (CPs) since the third quarter of 2018 to co-invest at a matching ratio of approximately 1 (Government): 2 (CPs). Since the completion of the first co-investment in April 2019 and up to end-February 2024, the ITVF has completed capital injection into 39 investment projects and invested a total of about \$212 million in 28 (Note) local I&T start-ups whose business areas include supply chain management, e-commerce, financial technology, biotechnology and artificial intelligence, attracting

over \$2.3 billion private investment. The project types approved under the ITVF in the past 3 years include biotechnology, financial technology, logistics and software, etc. The numbers of injected investment projects and investment amounts each year are provided in the table below:

| Year | Number of injected investment projects | Investment amounts (\$million)* |
|------|--|---------------------------------|
| 2021 | 7                                      | 70.1                            |
| 2022 | 6                                      | 31.2                            |
| 2023 | 3                                      | 6.8                             |

\* The investment amounts are rounded to one decimal place.

Note: Some of the local I&T start-ups have received capital injection from the ITVF more than once.

2. In selecting VC funds as CPs under the ITVF, selection criteria such as each VC fund's general background, personnel, investment strategy and process, investment performance, and local presence and support will form the basis of selection in conjunction with the advice of the ITVF Advisory Committee (the Committee). In the past 2 years, the ITVF has added 9 more CPs whose key investment sectors cover biotechnology, financial technology and healthcare, etc. We believe that by partnering with more high-quality VC funds, possible risk exposure can be controlled. Meanwhile, to avoid over-concentration of risks, for each CP, the maximum aggregate amount of matching investments from the Government is capped at \$400 million; the investment amount in each investment deal should not be more than 40% of the total amount of investment sought by the investee company in the same round of financing or \$30 million (whichever is lower); and the Government's aggregate amount of investment in each investee company is capped at \$50 million. We will determine the actual time for the next round of CP selection with reference to the investment position of the ITVF and factors like market conditions as well as the advice of the Committee.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB155**

**(Question Serial No. 0663)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The budget for 2024-25 has increased by 35.5%, representing a significant increase compared with the expenditures over the last 2 years. The key performance indicators show that the numbers of projects funded and being monitored under the General Support Programme, the Technology Voucher Programme and the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme are expected to rise significantly. With the rapid development of the innovation and technology industry in Hong Kong and the implementation of more Government funding schemes, there will be a continuous flow of new funding applications and the workload in administering the funding and monitoring the projects subsequently will keep growing in the future. In this connection, please inform this Committee of: whether the Government will further enhance the relevant workflow and technical means, so as to effectively control the increase in posts and administrative expenses arising from the implementation of the relevant schemes and administration of the projects?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

According to the Controlling Officer's Report of the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC), the provision for 2024-25 under Programme (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development is 35.5% higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24 (or 14.2% higher than the 2023-24 original estimate). This is mainly due to the increased provision for launching the second cohort of the City I&T Grand Challenge and salary for the soon to be launched New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS). In 2024-25, there will be an addition of 5 time-limited posts under ITC to execute the duties related to the upcoming NIAS.

In order to support effectively the operation of funding schemes, ITC reviews the operations of the General Support Programme, the Technology Voucher Programme (TVP) and the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme from time to time, including their work flows and relevant

technical support required, so as to enhance the efficiency in processing applications and project monitoring. We will continue to make good use of the existing manpower and resources of the Secretariat to handle the possible increase in workload under the above 3 funding schemes. When there is a practical need, additional manpower and resources will be sought in accordance with the prevailing mechanism.

Take the TVP as an example, ITC and the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) who serves as the TVP Secretariat, have been enhancing the administration system of the TVP with a view to enhancing the efficiency in processing applications, improving the quality of service provided by the Secretariat and strengthening the monitoring of projects. For instance, functions like online appointment for signing funding agreements and reminders on the due date to be sent automatically by the system to the applicant in advance have been introduced. Besides, the TVP electronic procurement platform introduced in October 2022 offered enterprises/organisations a brand new and convenient procurement means in addition to the traditional channel. Procurement made on the platform not only allows applicants to obtain quotations of competitive prices in a completely open, fair and transparent manner and provides opportunities for more service providers to participate in TVP projects by way of fair competition, but also streamlines the vetting process of the Secretariat. In March 2024, ITC and the HKPC introduced the Digital Signing service for TVP funding agreement signing with “iAM Smart+”. As the Digital Signing has legal backing, applicants can make use of the “iAM Smart+” application in their mobile devices to sign the funding agreements and relevant documents instantly without the need to sign the same at the Secretariat in person. This function streamlines the process in signing the agreement and saves the time and workload required in processing the paper agreements by the Secretariat.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB156**

**(Question Serial No. 0680)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Corporate Venture Fund under the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation has invested a total of nearly \$400 million in 31 start-ups and attracted private investment of about \$12.6 billion since its inception. In this connection, please inform this Committee of: the operational results and development trend of the investee enterprises under the \$400 million venture capital expenditure.

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

The Corporate Venture Fund (CVF) under the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation co-invests on a matching basis with angel investors or venture capital funds in start-ups, which are currently located in the Science Park or have participated in its incubation programmes. Since its inception in 2015, the CVF has invested close to \$400 million in 31 technology start-ups, attracting private investment of about \$12.6 billion. Among the 31 technology start-ups invested by the CVF, 18 of them received further investments from private funds and raised a total of \$8.2 billion in subsequent rounds of fundraising, and 12 of them recorded an increase in their valuation with an average of twofold increase. The CVF will continue to focus on investing in enterprises which are related to the major technology clusters of the Science Park, such as life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technology, with a view to fostering the development of the innovation and technology ecosystem in Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB157**

**(Question Serial No. 1435)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS), will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the numbers of applicants, successful applicants and persons actually admitted to Hong Kong, and their highest, lowest and average ages as well as their duration of stay in Hong Kong under TechTAS in the past 5 years;
2. the breakdown of the number of persons admitted to Hong Kong under TechTAS by technology area;
3. the breakdown of the number of persons admitted to Hong Kong under TechTAS by nationality; and
4. the number, establishment, rank and relevant expenditure involved of the staff responsible for TechTAS.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

In the past five financial years (as at February 2024), the Innovation and Technology Commission has received a total of 1 086 applications for quotas under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) and 740 quotas were allotted. The Immigration Department approved a total of 438 visa/entry permit applications in accordance with the relevant quotas. The technology areas involved and their respective regions are categorised as follows:



| Technology area                     | Number of non-local persons approved for entry under TechTAS |            |           |           |                                  |            |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------------|------------|
|                                     | 2019-20  | 2020-21    | 2021-22   | 2022-23   | 2023-24<br>(as at February 2024) | Total      |
| Artificial intelligence             | 14   | 26         | 17        | 11        | 33                               | 101        |
| Biotechnology                       | 6  | 17         | 8         | 21        | 24                               | 76         |
| Cybersecurity                       | 5  | 8          | 1         | 1         | 4                                | 19         |
| Data analytics                      | 8  | 15         | 6         | 5         | 14                               | 48         |
| Financial technologies              | 10   | 14         | 3         | 18        | 8                                | 53         |
| Material science                    | 11   | 13         | 5         | 14        | 5                                | 48         |
| Robotics                            | 8  | 11         | 3         | 0         | 7                                | 29         |
| Advanced communication technologies | 0  | 11         | 4         | 0         | 1                                | 16         |
| Digital entertainment               | 0  | 0          | 0         | 7         | 5                                | 12         |
| Green technology                    | 0  | 1          | 2         | 3         | 7                                | 13         |
| Integrated circuit design           | 0  | 2          | 3         | 1         | 3                                | 9          |
| Internet-of-Things                  | 0  | 4          | 1         | 1         | 4                                | 10         |
| Microelectronics                    | 0  | 0          | 0         | 0         | 4                                | 4          |
| Quantum technology                  | Not applicable <sup>^</sup>                                  |            |           | 0         | 0                                | 0          |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>62</b>  | <b>122</b> | <b>53</b> | <b>82</b> | <b>119</b>                       | <b>438</b> |

<sup>^</sup> The Government expanded the coverage of TechTAS in December 2022 to include one new technology area (i.e. Quantum technology) and rename 5G communications as Advanced communication technologies.

| Region         | Number of non-local persons approved for entry under TechTAS |            |           |           |  |            |
|----------------|--|------------|-----------|-----------|--|------------|
|                | 2019-20  | 2020-21    | 2021-22   | 2022-23   | 2023-24<br>(as at<br>February<br>2024) | Total      |
| Mainland China | 45   | 70         | 35        | 64        | 110                                    | 324        |
| South Korea    | 3  | 26         | 5         | 1         | 0                                      | 35         |
| USA            | 4  | 1          | 7         | 2         | 2                                      | 16         |
| Malaysia       | 1  | 2          | 0         | 2         | 1                                      | 6          |
| UK             | 1  | 3          | 1         | 1         | 0                                      | 6          |
| Australia      | 0  | 2          | 1         | 1         | 0                                      | 4          |
| Others         | 8  | 18         | 4         | 11        | 6                                      | 47         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>62</b>  | <b>122</b> | <b>53</b> | <b>82</b> | <b>119</b>                             | <b>438</b> |

The Government does not have the breakdown of the number of persons actually admitted to Hong Kong, their age as well as their duration of stay in Hong Kong as raised in the question.

TechTAS is part of the work under Programme (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development. No breakdown of expenditures for the individual work items is available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB158**

**(Question Serial No. 1004)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In respect of continuing the rollout of electronic recordkeeping system to bureaux and departments in collaboration with the Government Records Service and the Efficiency Office, please advise on the following:

1. During the rampant outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, work from home arrangement was implemented in most of the government departments. Can the electronic recordkeeping system mentioned above be used for work from home arrangement to enhance work efficiency? How does it work? At present, how many government departments can operate this system?
2. In case of extremely adverse weather, can the above system be used for work from home arrangement so as to maintain the operation and work efficiency of government departments?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer is collaborating with the Government Records Service and the Efficiency Office to roll out an Electronic Recordkeeping System (ERKS) for bureaux/departments (B/Ds). It is expected that the system will be fully rolled out in about 75 B/Ds by end-2025. Subject to compliance with relevant government regulations and guidelines, B/Ds may allow their staff to use the ERKS when working from home (including during extremely adverse weather conditions).

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB159**

**(Question Serial No. 1071)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) continues to support bureaux and departments to implement the recommended digital government initiatives as proposed in the e-government audit this year. Will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What roles does OGCIO play in the replacement/upgrade of government departments' computer systems? The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) developed a new booking system, the SmartPLAY at a cost of \$500 million and repeatedly gave rise to problems such as "double bookings" after system commissioning in last November. How many staff members have been deployed by OGCIO to participate in the replacement of this system?
2. There was a Electronic Poll Register (EPR) system failure in all polling stations on the polling day of the District Council Ordinary Election last year. Has OGCIO conducted a system load assessment for conducting a large-scale polling in Hong Kong? What measures will be put in place to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents? What is the estimated expenditure if the EPR system is to be enhanced?
3. Is it normal to encounter problems in the launch of large-scale electronic platform? Will OGCIO assist in conducting tests prior to the launch of similar platforms in order to reduce system failures? If yes, what will be the manpower involved?
4. The Government introduced a new measure in November 2023 requiring respective departments to subject their large-scale electronic systems to additional tests to be conducted by an independent third party arranged by OGCIO. What are the items and expenditures involved for the additional tests?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

Bureaux/departments (B/Ds) are responsible for managing and implementing their Information Technology (IT) projects required for their business operation and service needs, including replacement/upgrade of computer systems, etc. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is committed to working in collaboration with B/Ds and support them in implementing IT projects at different stages, including the formulation of policy, guidelines and technical standards, the establishment of central infrastructure platforms and shared services, and the provision of technical training, etc. Prior to project initiation, B/Ds will set up a “Project Steering Committee” (PSC), chaired by a senior official of the concerned B/D, to oversee the implementation of the project and monitor the project progress and expenditure. For large-scale or high-risk projects, OGCIO representatives will also participate in PSC meetings as the IT advisor who offers advice in relation to technologies and work progress.

Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and Registration and Electoral Office (REO) are responsible for implementing and managing the SmartPLAY system and the Electronic Poll Register (EPR) system respectively. OGCIO had provided various technical supports mentioned above during the project development process. As the supporting work was absorbed within the internal manpower and resources of OGCIO, the manpower involved has not been separately singled out and itemised.

To ensure the implementation and smooth operation of government IT systems, OGCIO put in place a new measure in November last year. B/Ds are required to, prior to rolling out large-scale electronic services, subject their designated systems to additional load and stress tests to be conducted by an independent third party arranged by OGCIO and to obtain positive confirmation from OGCIO. This will strengthen the support to B/Ds in assessing the system’s resilience to abnormal or extreme loading as well as cyberattacks with a view to strengthening the preparatory work of B/Ds prior to the rollout of their systems. Since the introduction of the new measure, the additional tests completed or being arranged are as follows:

|    | <b>Items</b>   |
|----|--|
| 1. | Second Stage of Time-varying Toll Plan for the Transport Department  |
| 2. | Phase 2 of Development of Smart Inventory Management System for Designated Garbage Bags and Designated Labels under Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Charging (Public website and administration portal) and Mobile Apps for MSW Charging for the Environment Protection Department |
| 3. | Central and Unified Platform for Online Application for Light Public Housing for the Housing Bureau  |
| 4. | Youth App for the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau  |
| 5. | Smart Library System Phase 1: Computer Facilities Management, Digital Resource Management and other sub-systems for the Leisure and Cultural Services Department   |

The manpower and related expenses involved for additional tests will vary subject to the scale of the relevant systems. The total expenditure involved in the additional tests of the above items is around \$2 million.

According to the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, in future elections, REO will, in accordance with relevant requirements, subject the EPR system and its modifications to additional load and stress tests to be conducted by an independent third party arranged by OGCIO, and review and follow up the results and recommendations confirmed by OGCIO. The Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) has put forward a series of improvement suggestions on the failure of the EPR system in the Report on the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election, including improving the reliability and stability of election-related systems to ensure that future elections will be conducted smoothly in a safe and orderly manner. REO will actively follow up and implement relevant suggestions and EAC will announce the contents and recommendations of the report in due course. The expenditure for the maintenance and the enhancement of the EPR system is absorbed within the recurrent expenditure of REO and has not been itemised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB160**

**(Question Serial No. 1072)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) completed the implementation of the Multi-functional Smart Lampposts pilot scheme ("Smart Lampposts") and established a mechanism for its ongoing implementation in this year. Will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. It is learnt that the "Smart Lampposts" are to collect real-time city data such as air quality and traffic flow with a view to promoting smart city development. Will OGCIO review the functions of "Smart Lampposts" on a regular basis and expand its service scope? If yes, what are the expected timetable and manpower involved?
2. Does OGCIO have a plan to implement "Smart Lampposts" throughout the territory on completion of the pilot scheme? If yes, what are the expected timetable and expenditure?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

Under the Multi-functional Smart Lampposts Pilot Scheme (Pilot Scheme), smart lampposts with smart devices have been installed in 4 urban locations (namely Central and Admiralty, Wan Chai district, Yau Tsim Mong district and Kwun Tong / Kai Tak Development Area) in the territory with higher pedestrian and vehicular flow. The purpose of the installation is to collect real-time city data such as air quality and traffic flow as well as to support the development of digital infrastructure for 5G services. Besides assisting relevant departments in enhancing city management, the data collected are also released at the Public Sector Information portal (data.gov.hk) as open datasets for free use by the general public and facilitating the industry to develop more innovative applications with these data.

The Pilot Scheme was completed in December 2023. At present, over 400 Multi-functional Smart Lampposts are in operation at the above-mentioned locations as well as Kowloon City district and Sai Kung district.

To further promote the smart city development in Hong Kong, smart lamppost will be a standard infrastructure to be installed in new development areas under planning or construction, facilitating Bureaux/Departments to install suitable smart devices and applications in accordance with their operational needs for enhancing city management and developing innovative services. As for developed areas, we will replace existing lampposts with smart lampposts in suitable urban locations according to the requirements of individual departments. We will continue to promote and facilitate departments in utilising smart lampposts for more innovative applications to address their business and operational needs. The implementation expenses and time required for individual smart devices are subject to the solutions to be deployed by departments.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB161**

**(Question Serial No. 2296)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 90 of the Budget Speech that the Digital Economy Development Committee's report covers recommendations on many areas, including promotion of digital policies, initiatives for enhancing digital infrastructure, facilitation of the safe and orderly flow and usage of data, acceleration of enterprise digital transformation and talent development. Some of these recommendations have been implemented, including making preparations for the establishment of the Digital Policy Office. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the estimated expenditure and manpower involved for the aforementioned Office?
2. What are the details of the HKSAR Government's recommendations on acceleration of enterprise digital transformation and talent development?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Man-ki, Maggie (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

1. The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology (IT). The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of

digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and smart city, such as establishing the “digital identity of enterprises” platform; promoting cross-boundary data flow, Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) and other initiatives that support the development of the “Digital Bay Area”; strengthening the support and supervision of the management of e-government services by B/Ds, etc. To deploy suitable manpower to take forward these key initiatives, we propose to re-organise the existing manpower structure of OGCIO and EffO and transfer the manpower to DPO, and appropriately create 1 directorate post responsible for strengthening efforts in taking forward the facilitation of cross-boundary data flow, the development of “Digital Bay Area”, the implementation of CBPS, as well as the liaison with the Mainland, etc.

2. The Government has been dedicated to supporting enterprise to undergo digital transformation through different channels. The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million in July 2023 for Cyberport to launch the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme). Under the Pilot Programme, subsidies will be provided on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) of the food and beverage (F&B) and retail industries in applying ready-to-use basic digital solutions under the 3 categories (digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems) to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. Cyberport invited relevant SMEs to submit funding applications in March 2024. It is anticipated that at least 8 000 eligible enterprises can benefit from the Pilot Programme.

As regards nurturing talent, the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme and the “Knowing More About IT” Programme have been put in place to provide respective funding support for primary and secondary schools to organise extra-curricular activities related to IT apart from their school curriculum. The Government also sponsors the “Innovation and Technology Scholarship” and implements the “STEM Internship Scheme” to encourage university students to participate in innovation and technology (I&T)-related exchange activities and gain I&T-related work experience respectively. Moreover, the “Research Talent Hub” subsidises qualified organisations and enterprises to engage university graduates to carry out research and development work, while the “New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme” subsidises local enterprises for their staff to receive training in advanced technologies. In addition, the Vocational Training Council established the Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology in 2023 to provide pre-employment and on-the-job training for the IT sector, so as to consolidate Hong Kong’s IT capabilities and nurture talent.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB162**

**(Question Serial No. 2414)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned under Programme (1) that in 2023-24, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer completed the implementation of the Multi-functional Smart Lampposts pilot scheme and established a mechanism for its ongoing implementation. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. Please give a breakdown of the expenditure, staffing establishment and emoluments involved in the scheme over the 3 financial years of its implementation.
2. Please give a breakdown of the number of smart lampposts installed, their locations and the types of sensing devices on them.
3. What is the progress of the establishment of a mechanism for the implementation of smart lampposts and what will be the follow-up work? What are the staffing establishment and expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

Under the Multi-functional Smart Lampposts Pilot Scheme (Pilot Scheme), smart lampposts with smart devices have been installed in 4 urban locations (namely Central and Admiralty, Wan Chai district, Yau Tsim Mong district and Kwun Tong / Kai Tak Development Area) in the territory with higher pedestrian and vehicular flow. The purpose of the installation is to collect real-time city data such as air quality and traffic flow as well as to support the development of digital infrastructure for 5G services. Besides assisting relevant departments in enhancing city management, the data collected are also released at the Public Sector Information portal (data.gov.hk) as open datasets for free use by the general public and facilitating the industry to develop more innovative applications with these data.

The Pilot Scheme was completed in December 2023. At present, over 400 Multi-functional Smart Lampposts are in operation at the above-mentioned locations as well as Kowloon City district and Sai Kung district. Details are as below:

| <b>District</b>  | <b>No. of Installed Lampposts</b> | <b>Type of Smart Devices*</b>  |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Kwun Tong / Kowloon City District / Kai Tak Development Area / Sai Kung District | 202                               | LED lighting, meteorological sensors, air quality sensors, thermal detectors, radio-frequency identification tags, Geo-QR codes, Bluetooth beacons, Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR), Wi-Fi hotspots and 5G radio base stations |
| Yau Tsim Mong District   | 110                               |  |
| Wan Chai District  | 46                                |  |
| Central / Admiralty  | 59                                |  |

\*Remarks: Smart devices installed on each smart lamppost are subject to the practical needs of the departments

As of February 2024, the expenditure involved for the Pilot Scheme was about \$89 million, covering the procurement and installation of smart lampposts and smart devices, management of smart devices and data transmission systems, telecommunications network connection facilities as well as the operating expenditure. During the Pilot Scheme, a total of 13 time-limited civil service posts have been created in the Environmental Protection Department, Highways Department and Transport Department, whereas the manpower required by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer is met by internal deployment.

To further promote the smart city development in Hong Kong, smart lamppost will be a standard infrastructure to be installed in new development areas under planning or construction, facilitating Bureaux/Departments to install suitable smart devices and applications in accordance with their operational needs for enhancing city management and developing innovative services. As for developed areas, we will replace existing lampposts with smart lampposts in suitable urban locations according to the requirements of individual departments. The expenses and manpower required are subject to the solutions to be deployed by departments.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB163**

**(Question Serial No. 2417)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government will allocate \$3 billion for the launch of a three-year Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises to leverage the AI Supercomputing Centre's computing power and achieve scientific breakthroughs. The subsidy will also be used to strengthen the cyber security and data protection of the Centre, and launch promotional and educational activities, etc. to encourage Mainland and overseas AI experts, enterprises and research and development (R&D) projects to come to Hong Kong. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the details of the allocation of the \$3 billion? What is the implementation timetable?
2. What are the staffing establishment and expenditure involved in supporting the implementation of the Subsidy Scheme in 2024-25?
3. Will Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be formulated for the Subsidy Scheme? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim to enhance research and development (R&D) capabilities in different fields and promote industry development.

It is announced in the 2024-25 Budget the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing power resources of the AISC, and the Subsidy Scheme can in general provide eligible users with a subsidy of up to 70% of the standard service rates as the computing power subsidy. Cyberport will be asked to set up an independent committee to determine the details on the beneficiaries and terms for disbursement of the subsidies, etc. The independent committee will, upon taking into account various factors, approve the specific amount and duration of the subsidy to be granted to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

In addition, we have set aside \$100 million out of the \$3 billion provision to strengthen the cyber and data security. The budget has also earmarked \$44 million to conduct promotional and educational activities for promoting the AI ecosystem development to enhance the interface and collaboration between the upstream, midstream and downstream components of the AISC and AI ecosystem development.

The Government will require Cyberport to set up performance indicators, covering the utilisation of the AISC's services, R&D achievement, talent promotion, operation and promotion of cybersecurity and environmental protection, for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme.

Upon the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out the publicity and promotion, so as to press ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

In terms of economic benefits, according to the consultancy study commissioned by the Government earlier, it is expected that the AISC will bring about a growth of \$6 billion to \$16 billion in Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product in the next 3 to 5 years. In addition, it is anticipated that 700 to 1 300 professional jobs will be directly or indirectly created in the next 3 to 5 years in relation to the establishment of the AISC. It is also expected that R&D institutes, talents and projects from overseas and the Mainland will be attracted to Hong Kong, thereby promoting the development of local AI R&D and industry ecosystem.

Cyberport will be responsible for implementing the detailed operation of the Subsidy Scheme. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer will coordinate and oversee the implementation of the Subsidy Scheme with its existing manpower and resources.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB164**

**(Question Serial No. 2419)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under Programme (1), it is mentioned that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will take forward the merging of OGCIO with the Efficiency Office. The provision for 2024-25 under Programme (1) is \$389.4 million (43.3%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24. The reasons are mainly due to the increases of departmental expenses and the creation of 34 posts. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. What is the total amount of increased provision for departmental expenses?
2. What are the job details of the 34 posts to be created and the breakdown of the expenditure involved?
3. What are the timetable for setting up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) and the staffing establishment and estimated expenditure involved?
4. What are the staffing establishment and estimated expenditure for taking forward the merging?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

1. and 2. Under Programme (1) of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO), the estimate for the "Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government" is about \$390 million higher than the revised estimate for the previous year, which includes an increased provision of about \$330 million mainly for meeting the increased requirement for the departmental expenses of hiring of services and professional fees and supporting the tasks mentioned below.

Under Programme (1) in 2024-25, 41 posts will be created in the establishment of OGCI0 and 7 posts will be deleted, resulting in a net increase of 34 posts. Among the newly created posts, 13 posts will be responsible for supporting the National Games Coordination Office to develop the IT systems required for co-hosting the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th Special Olympics Games in Hong Kong; 12 posts will be responsible for enhancing the performance and network security of the government email system and the “iAM Smart”; 10 posts will assist the handling of the round-the-clock operation of the Government Data Centre Complex; 5 posts will be responsible for supporting the collaboration with relevant mainland authorities on IT aspects as well as strengthening government data sharing and governance; and 1 post will assist the handling of the daily financial and accounting work. The estimated annual expenditure for the net increase of 4 posts based on notional annual mid-point salary value is about \$37 million.

3. and 4. The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCI0) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and smart city, such as establishing the “digital identity of enterprises” platform; promoting cross-boundary data flow, Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) and other initiatives that support the development of the “Digital Bay Area”; strengthening the support and supervision of the management of e-government services by B/Ds, etc. To deploy suitable manpower to take forward these key initiatives, we propose to re-organise the existing manpower structure of OGCI0 and EffO and transfer the manpower to DPO, and appropriately create 1 directorate post responsible for strengthening efforts in taking forward the facilitation of cross-boundary data flow, the development of “Digital Bay Area”, the implementation of CBPS, as well as the liaison with the Mainland, etc. We plan to consult the Legislative Council Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting and Establishment Subcommittee on the proposals and seek support from the Finance Committee in the first half of 2024. Our target is to complete the relevant procedures by mid-2024.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB165**

**(Question Serial No. 2420)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under Programme (2) that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will continue to support the co-ordination and monitoring of initiatives for smart city development, including development of the Digital Corporate Identity Platform. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What were the details of OGCIO's support and monitoring of the implementation of the smart city development by the bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in the past 2 years? Please set out the details by B/Ds.
2. On the development of the Digital Corporate Identity Platform, what are the specific breakdowns of the estimated expenditure, timetables for its development and implementation, and the manpower and expenditure involved?
3. Whether the Government will, by drawing reference from the experience of Mainland's establishment of a digital government to support enterprises, develop the business version of the "iAM Smart" platform into a one-stop service platform with multiple functions, including handling enquiries and application for funding support as well as conducting business?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

1. Since the release of the Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong 2.0, bureaux/departments (B/Ds) have been actively taking forward the smart city initiatives under their purview. Over 130 initiatives under smart mobility, smart living, smart environment, smart people, smart government and smart economy

have been launched. Most of the initiatives have been completed or are ongoing, which include the implementation of HKeToll free-flow tolling service in 2023 as well as time-varying tolls at the three road harbour crossings; the upgrading of the functions of “iAM Smart” in 2023 with a number of real-time information related to daily life added to its homepage, and the introduction of a simplified registration process by mid-2024 to provide more convenient services to the public; as well as promoting more public and private organisations to support electronic payment tools and extending the payment function of the Faster Payment System, etc. Regarding the development of digital infrastructure and the facilitation of data flow, the Government is implementing the Consented Data Exchange Gateway and has taken the lead to connect it to the Commercial Data Interchange in 2023 to enhance data interchange between the Government and enterprises. Besides, the Government has signed the “Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitating Cross-boundary Data Flow within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area” with the Cyberspace Administration of China to actively explore management measures that facilitate the cross-boundary flow of data in order to expedite the smart city development. B/Ds will continue to keep abreast of the latest developments in smart city and technology innovation, and to launch new measures as appropriate to tie in with the latest situation of smart city development in Hong Kong.

2. and 3. To further promote the development of the digital economy and create a business-friendly environment, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is planning to set up a “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, just like the business version of “iAM Smart”, to facilitate corporations to go through corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification in a secure, convenient and efficient manner when they use e-government services or conduct online business transactions, thus saving the need to go through the complicated procedures of submitting and verifying duplicated copies of related original documents and company seals. Moreover, corporations will no longer be required to repeatedly provide their corporate information when they use different online services, thus saving time and reducing the risk of human error, which will be conducive to their digital transformation.

Our preliminary plan is that the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform will provide services to all companies established or registered under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622) and all businesses (such as sole proprietorship or partnership) registered under the Business Registration Ordinance (Cap. 310). To encourage the corporations to adopt the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, OGCIO will launch several functions in collaboration with the departments which have more business dealings with corporations (e.g. the Inland Revenue Department and the Companies Registry) in order to connect the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the e-government services commonly used by the corporations. In the long run, we will require all corporate-related e-government services to support the use of “Digital Corporate Identity”.

OGCIO is currently drafting the detailed plan for the implementation of the “Digital Corporation Identity” platform. To promote widespread adoption by the corporations, we propose to publicise and promote the convenience and the main

functions of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the industry through diversified means and different channels, including thematic websites, social media platforms, promotional videos, etc. We also plan to collaborate with relevant departments and industry associations to jointly organise promotional events and explore appropriate support measures to further facilitate the corporations to adopt the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform.

We plan to seek a funding allocation of \$300 million from the Finance Committee (FC) for establishing the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform upon obtaining support from the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting of the Legislative Council in mid-2024. Subject to the FC’s approval, OGCIO will immediately commence the related work including the tender preparation for system design and development, etc. in order to roll out the platform progressively from end-2026. OGCIO will deploy its existing manpower in the implementation task of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform. No additional manpower will be required.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB166**

**(Question Serial No. 2421)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned under Programme (1) that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) completed the e-government audit for bureaux and departments (B/Ds) in 2023-24, and it is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that OGCIO will support bureaux and departments to implement the recommended digital government initiatives from the e-government audit and take forward the merging of OGCIO with the Efficiency Office to set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO). In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the details for the audit?
2. What are the details of the plan and implementation timetable for supporting B/Ds to implement the recommended digital government initiatives from the audit?
3. In light of the establishment of the DPO after merging OGCIO and the Efficiency Office, has the Government consolidated the TechConnect (block vote), "Be the Smart Regulator" and the "Streamlining of Government Services" programmes, etc., so as to promote the adoption of IT supportive measures by B/Ds? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

1. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has completed the e-Government audit work for all bureaux/departments (B/Ds). The digital government initiatives recommended in the audit include: issuing and verifying certain licences and certificates electronically by using blockchain technology; enhancing security in public

cargo working areas by employing artificial intelligence (AI) technology; developing smart search-and-rescue mobile applications; and enhancing the 1823 enquiry service through AI chatbot, etc. B/Ds will launch over 110 digital government and smart city initiatives progressively from 2024 to 2025.

2. To support B/Ds in implementing the digital government initiatives recommended by the e-Government audit, OGCIIO has set up the required digital infrastructures and shared services such as the Government Cloud Infrastructure Services, Big Data Analytics Platform, Shared Blockchain Platform and Chatbot-as-a-Service, etc. B/Ds will also adopt “iAM Smart”, the one-stop personalised digital services platform, to realise “single portal for online government services” for enhancing user experience. Besides, B/Ds can procure relevant products and services through various Standing Offer Agreements coordinated by OGCIIO to expedite the implementation of their digital government initiatives.
3. OGCIIO and the Efficiency Office (EffO) have been actively promoting B/Ds to enhance operational efficiency and improve public services continuously through innovation and technology (I&T), and to help promote the digitalisation of government services. In 2023-24, EffO worked with the 45 bureaux and departments participating in the “Be the Smart Regulator” and the “Streamlining of Government Services” programmes in proposing nearly 200 business facilitation and streamlining measures, covering over 500 licenses and services. About 80% of these measures involved the adoption of I&T to provide more electronic services for the trade and the general public. These include provision of online application services through “iAM Smart”, establishment of various electronic payment channels, development of chatbots to facilitate the handling of enquiries, and provision of end-to-end electronic services, etc.

It was announced in the 2023 Policy Address that a Digital Policy Office (DPO) will be established, which is dedicated for formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology, leading government B/Ds and industries to open up data sharing and promoting the use of digital technology so as to launch more digital services for the convenience and benefit of the public and the business sector, upgrade the levels of public services and assist in building digital economy, and promoting the work of digital government and smart city. The newly established office will take up and review in a timely manner the existing schemes and projects of the OGCIIO and EffO, and promote B/Ds to continuously adopt I&T so as to enhance and launch more digital services. Meanwhile, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) will continue to provide funding support via the TechConnect (block vote) (the Scheme) to assist B/Ds in planning and implementing technology projects, including pilot projects and researches, with a view to improving operational efficiency, quality of public services and the ability to ensure public safety. ITIB will review the Scheme in a timely manner as well as the opportunity for collaboration or integration among the work of its departments with a view to effectively supporting B/Ds in adopting I&T to improve service efficiency and performance.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB167**

**(Question Serial No. 2331)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Programme (3) of Head 47 in 2024-25, it is mentioned that the Government will continue to support local information and communications technology (ICT) industry to take part in international competitions and major ICT collaboration activities with the Mainland. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the details of the participation of local ICT industry in international competitions and the awards received?
2. How does the Government attract more talent to take part in international competitions, and what are the estimated expenditure involved and the assessment of effectiveness?
3. What are the operational expenses, including expenses on venue setup, publicity and staff recruitment earmarked by the Government for organising major ICT collaboration activities with the Mainland?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-yan, Joephy (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is committed to promoting and supporting the participation of local information and communications technology (ICT) industry in international competitions, and organising large-scale ICT activities in collaboration with the Mainland, such as organising the “Hong Kong Information and Communications Technology Awards” (HKICTA) jointly with relevant industry bodies. We have also been actively assisting award winners and other participating teams to enter into different regional and international competitions, including the “Asia Pacific Information and Communications Technology Alliance (APICTA) Awards”, the “Global Innovation and Tech

Excellence Award”, the “Hong Kong/Shanghai Co-operation Open Data Challenge 2023”, etc. The ICT teams representing the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) have achieved brilliant results in these competitions. For example, they achieved record-breaking results in APICTA Awards 2023, winning a total of 7 Winner and 13 Merit Awards. They also won 2 runner-up awards and 1 merit in “Global Innovation and Tech Excellence Award” 2023. In addition, in the “Hong Kong/Shanghai Co-operation Open Data Challenge 2023”, 2 HKSAR teams won the top-four honours and 1 of them won the “Grand Awards”.

We will continue to organise the HKICTA with local innovation and technology (I&T) industry organisations and professional bodies. We will also strive to promote this award to attract the participation of more local I&T industry elites, enterprises and students so that they can gain recognition on the international stage through locally recognised awards. The estimated expenditure for related activities in 2024 is approximately \$6.7 million.

As regards the organisation of large-scale ICT activities in collaboration with the Mainland, OGCIO will continue to co-organise the “Hong Kong/Shanghai Co-operation Open Data Challenge 2024” with Shanghai authorities in 2024-25 to facilitate the exchange of data technology talent of the two places through competitions, training and meetings, and to promote the development and collaborations of data trade ecosystems of the two places. The estimated total expenditure for the event is about \$3.4 million. In addition, OGCIO organised the “Maker in China” SME Innovation and Entrepreneurship Global Contest - Hong Kong Chapter (the Contest) in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the HKSAR in 2019, 2021 to 2023 respectively. The Contest aims to showcase top-notch I&T products and solutions from Hong Kong industry players to Mainland enterprises and investors. It also facilitates I&T-related small and medium enterprises to develop business opportunities in the Mainland.

The Contest 2023 was held in September 2023, attracting the participation of nearly 150 I&T teams. The total expenditure was about \$1.2 million, covering the operational expenses for project coordination, venue setup, marketing and promotion, etc. OGCIO will continue to organise the Contest with the relevant Mainland authorities in 2024-25. The estimated total expenditure will be about \$1.4 million.

Moreover, OGCIO has been leading local industry to participate regularly in various ICT events in the Mainland, namely the World Internet Conference, the Guangdong-Hong Kong Cloud Computing Conference, the China International Software Expo, the Beijing-Hong Kong Economic Cooperation Symposium and the Guangdong-Hong Kong IoT Summit, etc., with a view to promoting the development of digital economy and the next-generation digital technologies and showcasing high quality ICT products and services of Hong Kong, thus creating business opportunities for our local industry. OGCIO will continue to support Hong Kong industry players and I&T-related enterprises to participate in related events in 2024-25. The estimated total expenditure will be about \$1.2 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB168**

**(Question Serial No. 2332)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under Programme (1) of Head 47, it is mentioned that the Government will support the National Games Co-ordination Office to develop digital services for co-hosting the 15th National Games, 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the details of the specific implementation plan, including the expenditure involved, implementation timetable and specific staffing establishment?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-yan, Joephy (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) supports the National Games Coordination Office to develop the Information Technology (IT) systems required for co-hosting the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games in Hong Kong. These IT systems include network and communication systems, competition information systems, games management systems, as well as necessary infrastructure and facility. The estimated expenditure is about \$260 million. OGCIO plans to create 13 time-limited posts in the coming 2 years dedicated to undertake the related work.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB169**

**(Question Serial No. 1603)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Work progress of the “Smart Lampposts”. Regarding the captioned matter, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What is the current average construction cost for the smart lampposts? What specific functions these lampposts provide? What are the overall policy objective/objective of developing the smart city?
2. How many smart lampposts have already been installed in Hong Kong currently? What are their distributions in the Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories? What is the expected number of smart lampposts to be installed in 2024?
3. In light of the implementation of municipal solid waste charging in this August, is the functionality of the existing smart lampposts helpful in law enforcement, such as tackling illegal disposal of refuse black spots in rural areas and illegal dumping?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

Under the Multi-functional Smart Lampposts Pilot Scheme (Pilot Scheme), smart lampposts with smart devices have been installed in 4 urban locations (namely Central and Admiralty, Wan Chai district, Yau Tsim Mong district and Kwun Tong / Kai Tak Development Area) in the territory with higher pedestrian and vehicular flow. The purpose of the installation is to collect real-time city data such as air quality and traffic flow as well as to support the development of digital infrastructure for 5G services. Besides assisting relevant departments in enhancing city management, the data collected are also released at the Public Sector Information portal (data.gov.hk) as open datasets for free use by the general public and facilitating the industry to develop more innovative applications with these data.

The Pilot Scheme was completed in December 2023. At present, over 400 Multi-functional Smart Lampposts are in operation at the above-mentioned locations as well as Kowloon City district and Sai Kung district. Details are as below:

| <b>District</b>  | <b>No. of Installed Lampposts</b> | <b>Type of Smart Devices*</b>  |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Kwun Tong / Kowloon City District / Kai Tak Development Area / Sai Kung District | 202                               | LED lighting, meteorological sensors, air quality sensors, thermal detectors, radio-frequency identification tags, Geo-QR codes, Bluetooth beacons, Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR), Wi-Fi hotspots and 5G radio base stations |
| Yau Tsim Mong District   | 110                               |  |
| Wan Chai District  | 46                                |  |
| Central / Admiralty  | 59                                |  |

\*Remarks: Smart devices installed on each smart lamppost are subject to the practical needs of the departments

The average cost per smart lamppost is around \$140,000. As of February 2024, the expenditure involved for the Pilot Scheme was about \$89 million, covering the procurement and installation of smart lampposts and smart devices, management of smart devices and data transmission systems, telecommunications network connection facilities as well as the operating expenditure.

To further promote the smart city development in Hong Kong, smart lamppost will be a standard infrastructure to be installed in new development areas under planning or construction, facilitating Bureaux/Departments to install suitable smart devices and applications in accordance with their operational needs for enhancing city management and developing innovative services. As for developed areas, we will replace existing lampposts with smart lampposts in suitable urban locations according to the requirements of individual departments. We will continue to promote and facilitate departments in utilising smart lampposts for more innovative applications to address their business and operational needs.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB170**

**(Question Serial No. 1706)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will set up a “digital identity of enterprises” platform that involves an estimated expenditure of about \$300 million and the goal is to roll out the platform progressively from end-2026 onwards. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) What enterprises will be connected at the early stage of the launch of the business version of “iAM Smart”? Are these enterprises mainly the banks and financial firms? What publicity and promotion on the platform will be undertaken by the Government to the industrial and commercial sectors before its official launch?
- (2) How many phases will it take for the Government to launch the complete “digital identity of enterprises” platform? What trades will be covered in each phase? What functions and services will be provided by the platform?
- (3) Whether it is the Government or other outsourced contractors who will take up the operation and management of the business version of “iAM Smart” platform? If the Government will take up such work, whether any additional manpower is required?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- (1) and (2) To further promote the development of digital economy and create a business-friendly environment, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is planning to set up a “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, just like the business version of “iAM Smart”, to facilitate corporations to go through corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification in a secure, convenient and efficient manner when they use e-government services

or conduct online business transactions, thus saving the need to go through the complicated procedures of submitting and verifying duplicate copies of related original documents and company seals. Moreover, corporations will no longer be required to repeatedly provide their corporate information when they use different online services, thus saving time and reducing the risk of human error, which will be conducive to their digital transformation.

Our preliminary plan is that the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform will provide services to all companies established or registered under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622) and all businesses (such as sole proprietorship or partnership) registered under the Business Registration Ordinance (Cap. 310). To encourage the corporations to adopt the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, OGCIO will launch several functions in collaboration with the departments which have more business dealings with corporations (e.g. the Inland Revenue Department and the Companies Registry) in order to connect the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the e-government services commonly used by the corporations. In the long run, we will require all corporate-related e-government services to support the use of “Digital Corporate Identity”.

OGCIO is currently drafting the detailed plan for the implementation of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform. To promote widespread adoption by corporations, we propose to publicise and promote the convenience and the main functions of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the small and medium enterprises (SME) and the industry through diversified means and different channels, including thematic websites, social media platforms, promotional videos, etc. We also plan to collaborate with relevant departments and industry associations to jointly organise promotional events and explore appropriate support measures to further facilitate the corporations to adopt the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform.

We plan to seek a funding allocation of \$300 million from the Finance Committee (FC) for establishing the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform upon obtaining support from the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting of the Legislative Council in mid-2024. Subject to the FC’s approval, we will immediately commence the related work including the tender preparation for system design and development, etc. It is anticipated that the platform will be progressively rolled out from end-2026.

- (3) OGCIO plans to engage an outsourced service contractor to undertake the tasks of implementation and operation of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform. OGCIO will make use of the proposed funding allocation of \$300 million and deploy its existing manpower in the implementation and operation of the “Digital Corporate Identity” project. No additional manpower will be required.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB171**

**(Question Serial No. 1708)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As regard the allocation of \$3 billion for the launch of a three-year Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme,

1. What are the specific details of the subsidy scheme, including the eligibility and requirements for application, form of financial support (such as a one-off subsidy or subsidy disbursed in stages), the subsidy ceiling, size of enterprise, application procedures, mechanism for approval, monitoring mechanism, etc?
2. What are the respective number of universities, research institutions and enterprises to be funded?
3. Who or what units will be responsible for approving the applications? What is the expected date open for application at the earliest?
4. What are the expected numbers of Mainland and overseas AI experts, enterprises and research projects to come to Hong Kong? What is the expected size of investment that will come from the Mainland and overseas?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim to enhance research and development (R&D) capabilities in different fields and promote industry development.

It is announced in the 2024-25 Budget the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing power resources of the AISC, and the Subsidy Scheme can in general provide the eligible users with a subsidy of up to 70% of the standard service rates as the computing power subsidy. Cyberport will be asked to set up an independent committee to determine the details on the beneficiaries and terms for disbursement of the subsidies, etc. Members of the independent committee will be appointed by the Government, including members from representatives of AI industry, academia, innovation and technology industry and the Government, etc. The independent committee will, upon taking into account various factors, approve the specific amount and duration of the subsidy to be granted to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

A funding agreement will be signed between the Government and Cyberport for the Subsidy Scheme, setting out details of the financial arrangements and utilisation of funds. Cyberport will be required to submit reports to the Government on an annual basis covering the performance, security audit of the AISC and financial position of the Subsidy Scheme. In addition, the Government will require Cyberport to set up performance indicators, covering the utilisation of the AISC's services, R&D achievement, talent promotion, operation and promotion of cybersecurity and environmental protection, for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme. Successful applicants of the computing power subsidy will also be required to sign an agreement with Cyberport, including the submission of regular progress reports for review by Cyberport and the independent committee.

Upon the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out the publicity and promotion, so as to press ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

In terms of economic benefits, according to the consultancy study commissioned by the Government earlier, it is expected that the AISC will bring about a growth of \$6 billion to \$16 billion in Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product in the next 3 to 5 years. In addition, it is anticipated that 700 to 1 300 professional jobs will be directly or indirectly created in the next 3 to 5 years in relation to the establishment of the AISC. It is also expected that R&D institutes, talents and projects from overseas and Mainland will be attracted to Hong Kong, thereby promoting the development of local AI R&D and industry ecosystem.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB172**

**(Question Serial No. 1714)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government is implementing the “Knowing More About IT” Programme in primary schools. It is proposed in the Budget Speech that an additional funding of \$134 million will be allocated for the provision of subsidies of up to \$300,000 for each publicly-funded primary school in the next 2 academic years. While allocating additional resources, will the Government conduct a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of the Programme’s implementation, including whether the activities launched under the Programme can effectively enhance primary students’ interest, knowledge and application of technology, and whether these activities can enable them to acquire the basic knowledge of innovation and technology (I&T) that will give them the competitive edge, such as artificial intelligence (AI), programming and computational thinking? Will appropriate adjustments be made to the specific arrangements for the Programme? Moreover, will there be any restrictions imposed on the use of the additional funding, for example, only the use for activities in specific technology areas such as AI, programming and computational thinking is allowed?

Asked by: Hon Duncan CHIU (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer has launched the “Knowing More About IT” Programme since the 2021/22 school year to help primary students gain exposure through information technology (IT) extra-curricular activities to basic IT concepts and technical knowledge such as coding, logical thinking and problem solving using technology, and be introduced to the latest technology development as early as possible, thereby enhancing their interest and awareness in innovation and technology (I&T), and assisting them in integrating themselves into the development of knowledge-based economy and digital society. We will evaluate the effectiveness of the Programme through various means, including reviewing the participation rate and assessing the effectiveness of the activities through surveys. As at February 2024, the participation rate of the eligible primary schools

has reached 90%, reflecting that the Programme is well received by schools. According to the results of student surveys on the Programme, nearly 90% of the primary students participating in the funded activities agreed or strongly agreed that the contents of the activities were attractive and creative, and conducive to enhancing their IT knowledge.

To cater for the teaching and learning needs of individual schools, no restrictions are imposed on the categories or technology areas of the IT extra-curricular activities. This provides schools with the flexibility to organise suitable IT-related activities by making use of the subsidies flexibly, taking into consideration their actual circumstances and students' needs. We will review the arrangements of the Programme in due course in the light of the experience gained in the course of implementation and the latest development of the STEAM education in primary schools.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB173**

**(Question Serial No. 1719)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Budget Speech that in 2024-25, the Government will maintain its target of zero growth in the civil service establishment. Although there is no plan to increase the civil service establishment, does the Government have any plan to further enhance the application of artificial intelligence (AI) and other innovative technologies in government departments, so as to improve its overall efficiency and service performance and, at the same time, reduce the manpower requirements for some types of work, thereby streamlining the civil service? If yes, what are the specific details and the target for streamlining the manpower requirements?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

To ensure the sustainability of public finances, the Government has strictly controlled the civil service establishment since 2021-22. In 2024-25, the Government will continue to implement this initiative, and maintain its target of zero growth in the civil service establishment in 2024-25, with the aim of containing the establishment at a level not exceeding that as at end-March 2021. Bureaux/departments (B/Ds) will take forward the new policies and initiatives of the Government through re-prioritisation, internal redeployment, streamlining of work processes and enhancement of efficiency. We also encourage members of the civil service to make good use of technology proactively with a view to delivering quality public services efficiently.

The Government has been actively applying artificial intelligence (AI) and other innovative technologies to promote the development of smart city and digital government. In the past few years, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has completed the implementation of a number of digital infrastructure and shared services, including the launch of the Big Data Analytics Platform in 2020 that aims to promote B/Ds' adoption of

technologies such as AI and big data analytics in a more efficient and cost-effective manner to roll out more e-government services for the convenience and benefit of the public and the business sectors. The year 2020 also saw the launch of the Government Cloud Infrastructure Services (GCIS). The GCIS provides information technology resources to B/Ds to accelerate the development of e-government services, and with the Consented Data Exchange Gateway (CDEG) being set up by OGCIO, it will facilitate data interchange and sharing amongst B/Ds. The Companies Registry already established its link with the Commercial Data Interchange of Hong Kong Monetary Authority through CDEG in December last year to provide banks with access to corporate information on the Companies Register. As regards the Shared Blockchain Platform launched in 2022, it enables B/Ds to develop blockchain application systems more conveniently and quickly on the platform, thereby providing citizens with various quality e-government services in a more effective manner. OGCIO also launched a new shared chatbot infrastructure in 2023 with ready-to-use building blocks required for implementing chatbots, to assist B/Ds in developing chatbots relevant to their business.

Besides, OGCIO has completed the e-Government audit to review the information technology systems and services of B/Ds and put forward digital government solutions that leverage advanced technologies (e.g. AI, blockchain, big data analytics, geospatial analytics, etc.) to enhance public services. Based on the recommendations of the e-Government audit, B/Ds will launch over 110 digital government initiatives progressively from 2024 to 2025 to bring convenience of the members of the public, improve operational efficiency and enhance user experience.

To encourage and assist government departments in wider adoption of innovation and technology (I&T), OGCIO established the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) to match business needs from different departments with technology solutions and arrange thematic workshops. The Smart Lab also arranges proof-of-concept for solutions with potential, in collaboration with relevant departments, and promotes departments to adopt relevant technologies and equipment, thus assisting departments in streamlining workflow, enhancing work efficiency and improving public services, etc.

To further promote wider adoption of I&T such as Internet of Things, blockchain, data analytics, natural language processing, robotics technologies and AI, etc. by government departments, the Smart Lab will, taking into account the business needs of departments and the latest development of technologies, arrange a series of thematic seminars, workshops and technology forums, to enhance government departments' understanding in I&T, and spur their creativity. The Smart Lab will also invite I&T industry players (including local start-ups and small and medium enterprises) to introduce their technology solutions to government departments, explore the adoption of AI and other I&T in public services in collaboration with departments, and arrange matching, testing and proof-of-concept (PoC) for solutions that meet the needs of relevant departments. The Smart Lab also launched an "Innovative Application with AI" innovation competition last year, which has matched participating department teams with the technology solutions of the industry players (including local start-ups) and conducted PoC, with a view to assisting various departments in developing more innovative services.

OGCIO will take forward the above initiatives with its existing manpower and resources. We will also continue to encourage and support B/Ds to actively leverage AI and other I&T

to assist the Government in implementing various policy objectives, and enhancing its internal efficiency and service performance.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB174**

**(Question Serial No. 1723)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage industry and the retail industry will be invited to select suitable options among ready-to-use basic digital solutions and apply for subsidies on a matching basis early this year under the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme. As of now, what are the numbers of SMEs in the food and beverage industry and the retail industry that have selected suitable options? Of the options selected, what are the proportions among digital payment and shopfront sales, online promotion and customer-management solutions? Besides, what will the Government do to enhance the promotion of the programme to more enterprises and people?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million in July 2023 for Cyberport to launch the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme). Under the Pilot Programme, subsidies will be provided on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage (F&B) and retail industries in applying the ready-to-use basic digital solutions under three categories (i.e. digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems) so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. It is estimated that at least 8 000 eligible enterprises can benefit from the Pilot Programme. Cyberport invited relevant SMEs to submit funding applications in March 2024 with application deadline set in April 2024. Thus, details of the approved applications are not yet available.

In addition to financial assistance, Cyberport will also actively conduct promotional activities on the Pilot Programme for the groups from the trade, organise seminars and issue relevant guidelines for the SMEs on a regular basis, which include the provision of training on digital transformation, in order to assist SMEs in identifying Information Technology solutions that

suit their business and budget requirements. Cyberport has actively engaged more than 30 trade associations to promote the Pilot Programme and encourage more relevant SMEs to submit funding applications.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB175**

**(Question Serial No. 1739)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In 2024-25, which departments will be the targets of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) to give assistance in sourcing innovative Information Technology solutions to meet their business needs and enhance public services through the Smart Government Innovation Lab? What are the expected number of solutions and expenses to be involved? Will priority be given to local technology companies for their solutions? Will extra credits be given to solutions supported by government funding?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

The Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) has been actively promoting and inviting industry players to assist government departments in adopting innovation and technology (I&T) solutions, such as artificial intelligence, robotics technologies, data analytics and Internet of Things applications, etc., with a view to enhancing public services and city management, and creating more business opportunities for local start-ups as well as small and medium enterprises (SMEs). In 2024-25, the Smart Lab will, taking into account the business needs of departments and the latest development of technologies, continue to arrange promotional activities to enhance government departments' understanding in I&T, and invite the I&T industry (including local start-ups and SMEs) players to introduce their technology solutions to government departments, explore the adoption of I&T in public services in collaboration with departments, arrange matching, testing and proof-of-concept (PoC) for solutions that meet the needs of relevant departments. The procurement of the PoC arranged through the Smart Lab will be conducted in accordance with the Stores and Procurement Regulations and relevant guidelines. Based on the needs of individual projects, tenders with innovative suggestions will stand a better chance of winning the contracts by raising the technical weighting in tender assessment.

In 2024-25, the estimated expenditure of Smart Lab is about \$4.9 million. It is estimated that PoC testing will be arranged for around 20 solutions. The estimated expenditure involved cannot be separately singled out and itemised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB176**

**(Question Serial No. 3255)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the 2023-24 Budget Speech that \$500 million was earmarked to launch a Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme to assist SMEs in implementing digital transformation. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. How many applications have been received and approved since the launch of the Programme?
2. What is the total amount of funding approved?
3. What is the average time required for processing the applications, and what is the manpower involved?
4. Whether the Government has continued to follow up on the situation of digital transformation of the enterprises after granting funding approval to ensure that the Programme has been effectively implemented?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million in July 2023 for Cyberport to launch the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme). Under the Pilot Programme, subsidies will be provided on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage (F&B) and retail industries in applying the ready-to-use basic digital solutions under the 3 categories (i.e. digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems) so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. It is



estimated that at least 8 000 eligible enterprises can benefit from the Pilot Programme. Cyberport invited relevant SMEs to submit funding applications in March 2024 with application deadline set in April 2024. Cyberport will review and announce the funding application results as soon as possible. Cyberport has set up a thematic website, hotline and email channels for SMEs to enquire about the approval status of their applications.

Cyberport will monitor and review the implementation of the Pilot Programme and the funded projects. To ensure proper use of public funds, any enterprise or solution provider failing to comply with the relevant terms of funding, such as failure of the enterprise to settle the committed amount, or failure of the solution provider to deliver within the deadline, may be required by the Government and Cyberport to return the disbursed funding in full or in part. Cyberport will conduct spot-checks to ensure optimal use of the funded technology solutions.

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer will oversee the implementation of the Pilot Programme with its existing manpower.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB177**

**(Question Serial No. 2003)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The HKSAR Government has repeatedly emphasised the need to promote the development of “Smart Government”, especially the “iAM Smart” platform. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- a. According to the reply by the Government last year, “iAM Smart” recorded a recurrent service usage unrelated to anti-epidemic services of about 5 million and 14 million in 2021 and 2022 respectively. What were the usage rates in 2023?
- b. What are the expected numbers of services that will adopt “iAM Smart” by end-2024?
- c. What is the progress of the “iAM Smart” enhancement to realise “single portal for online government services”?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

- a. The recurrent service usage of “iAM Smart” in 2023 is about 30 million.
- b. It is anticipated that around 40 new services will adopt “iAM Smart” within 2024.
- c. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (“OGCIO”) updated the design of the homepage for the “iAM Smart” mobile app in October 2023, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical daily-life information, such as local real-time weather, traffic conditions, waiting time for accident and emergency services in hospitals, locations of automated external defibrillator, real-time cross-harbour tunnel tolls, Scameter, etc., by just opening the “iAM Smart” mobile app. The enhanced features to be launched progressively from 2024 to 2025 include:

- Setting up dedicated pages that encompass a range of common government service applications, enquiries and information, and simplifying the searching services and user workflow, so as to provide a more unified user experience;
- Enabling citizens to authorise the share use of their personal data collected by different government departments through the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway”, so as to obviate the need to input or submit the same information repeatedly when they use different government services;
- Introducing “one-tap login” for government services to allow citizens to directly access some commonly-used government services with their “iAM Smart” accounts;
- Introducing a digital personal document wallet function to facilitate citizens to manage their digital personal documents issued by different government departments; and
- Simplifying the registration process and setting up additional self-registration kiosks.

Bureaux and departments will start to enhance their existing online services orderly and integrate the services into the new “iAM Smart” platform, with a view to providing a better user experience. By revamping the overall system design and enhancing the functionalities of “iAM Smart”, we will be able to consolidate existing online services of various government departments in a more systematic and organised manner, and to simplify the overall workflow, allowing citizens to directly access relevant government services through the “one-tap login” function of their “iAM Smart” accounts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB178**

**(Question Serial No. 2004)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

For following up on the progress of the establishment of the Digital Policy Office (DPO), please advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the progress of the coordination work and schedule for the establishment of the DPO ? What are the estimated expenditure and manpower involved in the work of merging the Offices? Is there any assessment on the impact of the relevant work on the promotion of measures related to the “Digital Bay Area”?
2. What are the key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Commissioner for Digital Policy?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and smart city, such as establishing the “digital identity of enterprises” platform; promoting cross-boundary data flow, Cross-boundary

Public Services (CBPS) and other initiatives that support the development of the “Digital Bay Area”; strengthening the support and supervision of the management of e-government services by B/Ds, etc.

To deploy suitable manpower to take forward these key initiatives, we propose to re-organise the existing manpower structure of OGCIO and EffO and transfer the manpower to DPO, and appropriately create 1 directorate post responsible for strengthening efforts in taking forward the facilitation of cross-boundary data flow, the development of “Digital Bay Area”, the implementation of CBPS, and the liaison with the Mainland authorities etc. Moreover, the DPO will continue to work with the Government Services and Data Management Bureau (GSDMB) of Guangdong Province to further enhance and upgrade the functionality of the CBPS, as well as jointly explore and expand areas of cooperation and accelerate the promotion of the initiatives relating to the development of the “Digital Bay Area”.

We plan to consult the Legislative Council Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting and Establishment Subcommittee on the proposals and seek support from the Finance Committee in the first half of 2024. Our target is to complete the relevant procedures by mid-2024. The DPO, once established, will adopt the key performance indicators (KPIs) set by the two existing Offices, and keep the KPIs under review in an ongoing manner.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB179**

**(Question Serial No. 1378)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government will set up a “digital identity of enterprises” platform, i.e. the business version of “iAM Smart”. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What is the specific timetable for the launch of the business version of “iAM Smart”?
2. Will the Government consider launching the business version of “iAM Smart” together with the “Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme” in order to encourage enterprises to adopt the business version?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. To further promote the development of digital economy and create a business-friendly environment, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is planning to set up a “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, just like the business version of “iAM Smart”, to facilitate corporations to go through corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification in a secure, convenient and efficient manner when they use e-government services or conduct online business transactions, thus saving the need to go through the complicated procedures of submitting and verifying duplicate copies of related original documents and company seals. Moreover, corporations will no longer be required to repeatedly provide their corporate information when they use different online services, thus saving time and reducing the risk of human error, which will be conducive to their digital transformation. We plan to seek a funding allocation of \$300 million from the Finance Committee (FC) for establishing the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform upon obtaining support from the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting of the Legislative Council in

mid-2024. Subject to the FC's approval, we will immediately commence the related work including the tender preparation for system design and development, etc. It is anticipated that the platform will be progressively rolled out from end-2026 at the earliest.

2. The "Digital Corporate Identity" platform aims to provide corporations with secure services for corporate identity authentication and signature verification. Its objective is different from that of the "Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme" which aims to provide the small and medium enterprises in the food and beverage and retail industries with subsidies for their adoption of ready-to-use basic digital solutions. To encourage corporations to adopt the "Digital Corporate Identity" platform, we will launch several functions in collaboration with the departments which have more business dealings with corporations (e.g. the Inland Revenue Department and the Companies Registry) in order to connect the "Digital Corporate Identity" platform to the e-government services commonly used by the corporations. In the long run, we will require all corporate-related e-government services to support the use of "Digital Corporate Identity". We will publicise and promote the convenience and the main functions of the "Digital Corporate Identity" platform to the industry through diversified means and different channels, including thematic websites, social media platforms, promotional videos, etc. We will also collaborate with relevant departments and industry associations to jointly organise promotional events and explore appropriate support measures to further facilitate the corporations to adopt the "Digital Corporate Identity" platform.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB180**

**(Question Serial No. 1380)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will endeavor to build a digitally inclusive society in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. In 2024-25, what specific plan does OGCIO have in promoting digital inclusion? What is the timetable?
2. Will the Government consider working in collaboration with the community care teams in districts to promote digital inclusion among the elderly, ethnic minorities and children?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

1. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) launched a new round of the ICT Outreach Programme for the elderly (the Outreach Programme) in June 2023. Through 6 engaged non-profit-making organisations and their service networks, visits are made to the elderly across the territory, including those living in residential care homes, receiving day care and home care services and the hidden elderly etc. A variety of activities have been organised for the elderly to experience digital living, encouraging them to make wider use of digital technology. We will also organise over 300 mobile outreach service station activities across the territory to assist the elderly in the community in using smartphones and mobile applications.

Moreover, OGCIO will launch a new round of the two-year Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (the Training Programme) in the second quarter of 2024. By subsidising 12 Elder Academies, the Training Programme provides free advanced information and communications technology (ICT) training courses to elderly in the



community with basic knowledge on digital technology. In addition to commonly used Government mobile applications like “iAM Smart”, training topics also cover smart healthcare, online shopping, mobile payment, Mainland mobile apps frequently used by the elderly, social media, e-wallet and cyber security, etc., to assist the elderly in equipping relevant skills.

On the other hand, the Elderly IT Learning Portal (the Portal) of OGCI will update its content regularly to facilitate the elderly in learning digital technologies anywhere and anytime according to their personal needs and interests. As of February 2024, the Portal has launched 35 learning modules, covering online shopping, “iAM Smart”, “HKeMobility”, cloud-based tools, electronic payment tools and electronic food ordering applications, etc. We will continue to develop and introduce more modules that meet the needs of the elderly in response to the development of digital technologies and the ever-changing digital lifestyles to encourage the elderly to embark on lifelong learning.

On digital accessibility, we will continue to promote accessibility of all government websites and mobile applications. OGCI conducts accessibility compliance audits regularly, and assists concerned departments in making continuous enhancement to ensure that the existing and newly developed government websites and mobile apps are in compliance with the prevailing accessibility standards. For public and private organisations, we support the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited (HKIRC) to continue organising the Digital Accessibility Recognition Scheme (the Scheme) in 2024-25, so as to encourage more enterprises as well as public and private organisations to adopt accessible design for their websites and mobile applications. The awards ceremony for the Scheme is expected to be held in the second quarter of 2025.

2. OGCI is currently collaborating with the Care Teams to provide relevant information and support to the elderly, by offering them various information and learning resources on common digital technologies, during daily contacts or visits by the Care Teams. Moreover, the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) has also funded projects that involve promotion of digital inclusion or use of digital technologies for service enhancement, for example, provision of convenient and affordable rehabilitation programme to elderly patients with aphasia or dementia through virtual reality technology, development of smart glasses to provide real-time visual assistance to visually impaired persons, and use of robots to teach social and behavioral skills to children and youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder, etc. Beneficiaries of the projects include the elderly, persons with disabilities, children/youth and people of different races.

To further promote digital inclusion for the elderly, the SIE Fund plans to allocate \$100 million to provide training courses on digital technologies and technical support to the senior citizens aged 60 or above in Hong Kong in the coming 3 years, so as to help them integrate into the digital era more easily and enjoy the benefits brought about by digital technologies.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB181**

**(Question Serial No. 2738)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned under this Programme that the Efficiency Office and the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will be merged to set up the Digital Policy Office. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the current staffing establishment and departmental estimated expenditure for the Efficiency Office and OGCIO?
2. What are the staffing establishment and departmental estimated expenditure for the Digital Policy Office to be set up?

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

1. As at 31 March 2024, the establishment of the Efficiency Office (EffO) is 94 and the estimate is \$367.2 million while the establishment of the OGCIO is 750 and the estimate is \$1,957.5 million.
2. The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing OGCIO and EffO. By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government

and smart city, such as establishing the “digital identity of enterprises” platform; promoting cross-boundary data flow, Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) and other initiatives that support the development of the “Digital Bay Area”; strengthening the support and supervision of the management of e-government services by B/Ds, etc. To deploy suitable manpower to take forward these key initiatives, we propose to re-organise the existing manpower structure of OGCIIO and EffO and transfer the manpower to DPO, and appropriately create 1 directorate post responsible for strengthening efforts in taking forward the facilitation of cross-boundary data flow, the development of “Digital Bay Area”, the implementation of CBPS, as well as the liaison with the Mainland authorities, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB182**

**(Question Serial No. 2104)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is indicated in paragraph 96 of the Budget Speech that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Cyberspace Administration of China launched an “early and pilot implementation” arrangement for the “Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)” last December. The banking, credit referencing and healthcare sectors have been invited to participate in the first phase of implementation. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the numbers of enterprises in the banking, credit referencing and healthcare sectors that have participated in the “early and pilot implementation” arrangement?
2. What are the outcomes of the “early and pilot implementation” arrangement and the specific responses from these sectors?
3. Which industry sectors will be invited in the next phase?
4. What promotion efforts have been made and what were the manpower and actual expenditure involved?
5. What promotion efforts are expected to be made and what will be the estimated manpower and expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Cyberspace Administration of China jointly announced the facilitation measure on the “Standard Contract for the

Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)” (the GBA Standard Contract) in December 2023 to foster the secure and orderly cross-boundary flow of personal information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). The GBA Standard Contract, to be adopted on a voluntary basis, serves to facilitate and streamline the compliance arrangements for the cross-boundary flow of personal information from the Mainland cities in the GBA to Hong Kong. The GBA Standard Contract, on one hand, facilitates enterprises to reduce their compliance costs of cross-boundary flow of personal information thus promoting the provision of cross-boundary services in the GBA. On the other hand, it presses ahead the development of digital economy in the GBA and fosters Hong Kong’s better integration into the overall national development.

The “early and pilot implementation” arrangement for the GBA Standard Contract was launched at end-2023. The first phase of implementation invited participation from the banking, credit referencing and healthcare sectors which have greater demand for cross-boundary services. As of mid-March 2024, we have received a total of about 100 Expressions of Interest with about half of them submitted by the banking and credit referencing sectors, and about one third came from the healthcare sector, suggesting that the facilitation measure has been well received by the industries. We plan to review the arrangement in light of its implementation in mid-2024, and refine relevant details in due course with a view to extending the facilitation measure to different business sectors in the GBA, hence fostering the provision of more cross-boundary services to benefit a wider scope of businesses and members of the public.

To enhance the awareness of the facilitation measure of the GBA Standard Contract amongst the industries, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has arranged publicity through multiple channels, including setting up a thematic webpage to provide details of the facilitation measure, relevant documents and frequently asked questions, etc.; organising introductory briefings and exchange sessions with experts and industry representatives on the facilitation measure; participating in seminars organised by industry organisations or professional bodies; and promulgating the facilitation measure to the public through media interviews and feature reports, and responding to public enquiries about the facilitation measure. OGCIO will create 9 posts responsible for the implementation, coordination and promotion work of the facilitation measure. The estimated expenditure in 2024-25 is about \$26 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB183**

**(Question Serial No. 2105)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In connection with the promotion of the development of digital economy, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) What are the organisation, establishment, duties and responsibilities and reporting line of the Digital Policy Office (DPO) upon merging the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO)?
- 2) How will the DPO enhance the collaboration with offices such as the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, etc?
- 3) What are the details, manpower and actual expenditure involved in relation to the promotion of digital economy in the past year? What are the details, manpower and actual expenditure involved in the related work this year?
- 4) It is mentioned in paragraph 103 of the Budget Speech that the Government will launch the business version of "iAM Smart" that aims to roll out the platform progressively from end-2026 onwards. What are the details of the plan? Why it has to be rolled out from end-2026 onwards?
- 5) What are the numbers of Web 3.0 enterprises at present? Please list by technical area and country of origin/region of founders.
- 6) Please list, by technical areas, the numbers of applications, approved enterprises and the funding amount under the Proof-of-Concept Subsidy Scheme.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

- 1) and 2) The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and smart city, such as establishing the “digital identity of enterprises” platform; promoting cross-boundary data flow, Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) and other initiatives that support the development of the “Digital Bay Area”; strengthening the support and supervision of the management of e-government services by B/Ds, etc.

To deploy suitable manpower to take forward these key initiatives, we propose to re-organise the existing manpower structure of OGCI and EffO and transfer the manpower to DPO, and appropriately create 1 directorate post responsible for strengthening efforts in taking forward the facilitation of cross-boundary data flow, the development of “Digital Bay Area”, the implementation of CBPS, as well as the liaison with the Mainland, etc. We plan to consult the Legislative Council Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting and Establishment Subcommittee on the proposals and seek support from the Finance Committee (FC) in the first half of 2024. Our target is to complete the relevant procedures by mid-2024. The new office will continue to maintain close communication with B/Ds, such as the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, etc. with a view to fostering the development of digital economy in Hong Kong with concerted efforts.

- 3) To promote the development of digital economy in Hong Kong, the Digital Economy Development Committee (DEDC) led by the Financial Secretary has held 8 meetings since its establishment in June 2022, and its 4 sub-groups have held a total of 27 working meetings as well as dozens of interviews with different experts, academics and industry representatives, and has undertaken in-depth studies on cross-boundary data flow, digital infrastructure, digital transformation and talent development, etc. After one and a half years of work and research, the DEDC has submitted the report to the Government and made a number of recommendations covering areas including guiding digital policy, enhancing digital infrastructure; facilitating the safe and orderly flow and usage of data; accelerating digital transformation of enterprises; and talent development.

Relevant bureaux have commenced their follow-up actions and studied the implementation of individual feasible recommendations while the DEDC is deliberating on these recommendations. For example, regarding top-level design

and policies, apart from the aforementioned establishment of the DPO by the Government, the Government has also promulgated the “Policy Statement on Facilitating Data Flow and Safeguarding Data Security in Hong Kong” in December 2023, putting forward 18 specific action items to promote the consolidation, application, opening up and sharing of data on one hand, and to enhance safeguards for data security and planning of related infrastructural facilities on the other. Regarding the facilitation of digital transformation in society and the enhancement of digital infrastructure, the Government took the lead in 2023 to allocate \$500 million to Cyberport for launching the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme. In order to strengthen the promotion of electronic payment, government services will fully support electronic payment within one year, and will also provide the option of using Mainland e-wallets for payment of government services commonly used by the Mainland visitors. In addition, Cyberport will establish an artificial intelligence supercomputing center in phases this year, and the Government will also implement a “digital identity of enterprises” platform to enhance the local digital infrastructure.

The related works cover various parts of the overall work schedule of the B/Ds concerned, the manpower and expenditure involved cannot be separately listed.

- 4) To further promote the development of digital economy and create a business-friendly environment, OGCIO is planning to set up a “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, just like the business version of “iAM Smart”, to facilitate corporations to go through corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification in a secure, convenient and efficient manner when they use the e-government services or conduct online business transactions, and thus saving the need to go through complicated procedures of submitting and verifying the duplicate copies of the related original documents and company seals. Moreover, corporations are also no longer required to repeatedly provide their corporate information when they use different online services, thus saving time and reducing the risk of human error, which will be conducive to their digital transformation.

The proposed “Digital Corporate Identity” platform is a new and complex digital infrastructure that serves as a platform for verifying digital corporate identity and facilitating convenience in doing business. We have to ensure that the platform operates very efficiently, securely and reliably. We plan to seek a funding of \$300 million from the FC for setting up the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform upon obtaining approval from the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting of the Legislative Council in mid-2024. Upon obtaining approval from the FC, we will immediately commence the related work including the tender preparation for system design and development, in order to roll out the platform progressively from end-2026 onwards. To encourage the corporations to use the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform and enhance the effectiveness of the platform, OGCIO will launch several functions in collaboration with the departments which have more business dealings with corporations (e.g. the Inland Revenue Department and the Companies Registry) in order to connect the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the e-government services commonly used by the corporations. In the long run, we will require all corporate-related e-government services to support the use of “Digital Corporate Identity”.



- 5) So far, Cyberport has gathered over 220 Web3.0 enterprises. The distribution of the enterprises based on relevant technology areas and the country/region of their founders, are listed as follows.

| <b>Technical Area</b>   | <b>Number of Enterprises (Around)</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Application and Content | 180                                   |
| Middleware              | 30                                    |
| Infrastructure Services | 10                                    |

| <b>Country /Regions of Founders</b>   | <b>Number of Enterprises (Around)</b> |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Local   | 120                                   |
| Asia (including Mainland, Taiwan region, India, South Korea, Japan, Singapore and Malaysia) | 80                                    |
| North America (including the United States and Canada)                                      | 10                                    |
| Europe (including France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Austria, Sweden and Russia)          | 10                                    |

- 6) Cyberport has received a total of over 120 applications for “Web3 Proof-of-Concept (PoC) Subsidy Scheme” (the Scheme). Up to 40 projects will be selected for concept testing and each successfully tested project will be subsidised under the Scheme with a funding of up to \$150 000. As the deadline of the application just ended at end-February 2024 and applications are still being reviewed, relevant data regarding the number of approved enterprises and funding amount is not yet available at this stage.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB184**

**(Question Serial No. 2586)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Although the innovation and technology (I&T) industry is a new economic growth spot, its development has been tepid. Take Cyberport as an example. It does not borrow the necessary fund from elsewhere, but it has been operating at a deficit for many years despite that it has received government funding and supplements. This inevitably raises concerns from the Government, and it has to suitably adjust the development direction. It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government will allocate \$3 billion for the development of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre in Hong Kong with the emphasis of “the first phase” plan. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What is the basis of an additional allocation of \$3 billion for the plan, that is, how does the Government arrive at the amount of \$3 billion? What are the specific conditions of use?
2. What are the monitoring mechanisms in place for the use of above funding? What are the details of the regulation rules and penalty scheme?
3. What is the targeted economy of scale of the AI Supercomputing Centre plan? What is the major profit model for the plan? At present, are there any related Information Technology enterprises or organisations making good profit?
4. What is the phasing of the plan?

Asked by: Hon KONG Yuk-foon, Doreen (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim to enhance research and development (R&D) capabilities in different fields. As its major digital infrastructure, Cyberport will operate AISC based on a market model. Cyberport is making preparation for the relevant operational arrangements.

It is announced in the 2024-25 Budget the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing power resources of the AISC, and the Subsidy Scheme can in general provide eligible users with a subsidy up to 70% of the standard service rates as the computing power subsidy. Cyberport will be asked to set up an independent committee to determine the details on the beneficiaries and terms for disbursement of the subsidies, etc. Members of the independent committee will be appointed by the Government, including members from representatives of AI industry, academia, innovation and technology industry and the Government, etc. The independent committee will, upon taking into account various factors, approve the specific amount and duration of the subsidy to be granted to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

In addition, we have set aside \$100 million out of the \$3 billion provision to strengthen the cyber and data security. The budget has also earmarked \$44 million to conduct promotional and educational activities for promoting the AI ecosystem development to enhance the interface and collaboration between the upstream, midstream and downstream components of the AISC and AI ecosystem development.

A funding agreement will be signed between the Government and Cyberport for the Subsidy Scheme, setting out details of the financial arrangements and utilisation of funds. Cyberport will be required to submit reports to the Government on an annual basis covering the performance, security audit of the AISC and financial position of the Subsidy Scheme. In addition, the Government will require Cyberport to set up performance indicators, covering the utilisation of the AISC's services, R&D achievement, talent promotion, operation, and promotion of cybersecurity and environmental protection, for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme. Successful applicants of the computing power subsidy will also be required to sign an agreement with Cyberport, including the submission of regular progress reports for review by Cyberport and the independent committee.

In terms of economic benefits, according to the consultancy study commissioned by the Government earlier, it is expected that the AISC will bring about a growth of \$6 billion to \$16 billion in Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product in the next 3 to 5 years. In addition, it is anticipated that 700 to 1 300 professional jobs will be directly or indirectly created in the next 3 to 5 years in relation to the establishment of the AISC. It is also expected that R&D

institutes, talents and projects from overseas and the Mainland will be attracted to Hong Kong, thereby promoting the development of local AI R&D and industry ecosystem.

Upon the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out the publicity and promotion, so as to press ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB185**

**(Question Serial No. 2596)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat: Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The establishment ceiling in 2024-25 has risen from an estimated 735 non-directorate posts as at 31 March 2024 by 42 posts to 777 posts as at 31 March 2025. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the establishment of the posts to be created, the details of their responsibilities and the average annual salary expenditure involved with a breakdown of the figures?

Asked by: Hon KONG Yuk-foon, Doreen (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

As regards the establishment of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer in 2024-25, 49 non-directorate posts will be created while 7 posts will be deleted, resulting in a net increase of 42 non-directorate posts. The estimated annual expenditure based on notional annual mid-point salary value is about \$44 million.

Among the newly created posts, 13 posts will be responsible for supporting the National Games Coordination Office to develop the information technology (IT) systems required for co-hosting the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th Special Olympics Games in Hong Kong; 12 posts will be responsible for enhancing the performance and network security of the government email system and the "iAM Smart" platform; 10 posts will assist in handling the 24-hour operation of the Government Data Centre Complex; 9 posts will be responsible for fostering the cross-boundary flow of personal information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in a secure and orderly manner; 4 posts will support the collaboration with relevant Mainland authorities on IT aspects as well as strengthening government data sharing and governance; and 1 post will assist in the handling of daily financial and accounting work.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB186**

**(Question Serial No. 2609)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government will allocate \$3 billion for the launch of a three-year Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises to achieve scientific breakthroughs. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. How will the proposed provision be allocated? What is the maximum funding for each application?
2. For applications made by local universities, research institutes and enterprises, etc under the Scheme, how long will it be expected to take, in months, to go through the procedures from submission of application to obtaining the approval? What will be the time given, in months, to those successful applicants under the Scheme to submit their research results on receiving the subsidies from the Government?

Asked by: Hon KONG Yuk-foon, Doreen (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim to enhance research and development (R&D) capabilities in different fields.

It is announced in the 2024-25 Budget the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of computing power resources of the AISC. The funding

allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing power resources of the AISC, and the Subsidy Scheme can in general provide eligible users with a subsidy of up to 70% of the standard service rates as the computing power subsidy. Cyberport will be asked to set up an independent committee to determine the details on the beneficiaries and terms for disbursement of the subsidies, etc. The independent committee will, upon taking into account various factors, approve the specific amount and duration of the subsidy to be granted to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

In addition, we have set aside \$100 million out of the \$3 billion provision to strengthen the cyber and data security. The budget has also earmarked \$44 million to conduct promotional and educational activities for promoting the AI ecosystem development to enhance the interface and collaboration between the upstream, midstream and downstream components of the AISC and AI ecosystem development.

The Government will require Cyberport to set up performance indicators, covering the utilisation of the AISC's services, R&D achievement, talent promotion, operation and promotion of cybersecurity and environmental protection, for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme.

Upon the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out the publicity and promotion, so as to press ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB187**

**(Question Serial No. 0202)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Programme that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is to strengthen the role of Hong Kong's business establishments in the local, Mainland and global markets for information and communications technology (ICT) and digital content services. The programme also aims to enable residents, businesses and public organisations to utilise and share information and knowledge in promoting sustainable development and improving the quality of life. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What is the estimated expenditure on the hardware and software solutions for the programmes of promoting ICT adoption among the elderly by OGCIO?
2. Continuing from the above question, what is the estimated expenditure on the publicity and promotion work for the programme?
3. Will OGCIO set the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)? What are the respective numbers of the participating elderly and the participants who have successfully facilitated the elderly to pursue self-learning?
4. How will OGCIO assess the effectiveness of the programmes? What are the details?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has been striving to promote digital inclusion over the years. Through the provision of information and communications technology (ICT) outreach services and the offering of enriched training



courses etc., we have encouraged and facilitated the elderly to adopt digital technology in their daily life, thereby integrating themselves into smart living.

OGCIO has launched the ICT Outreach Programme for the elderly (the Outreach Programme) since 2014. 6 non-profit-making organisations are engaged to organise visits to the elderly across the territory, including those living in residential care homes, receiving day care and home care services and the hidden elderly, etc., by leveraging their service network. A variety of activities are being organised to help the elderly experience digital living, thus encouraging them to make wider use of digital technology. We launched a new round of the Outreach Programme in June 2023 for a period of two years, in which over 300 mobile outreach service stations will also be set up across the territory to assist the elderly in the community in using smartphones and mobile applications. As of February 2024, over 18 000 elderly have participated in the Outreach Programme and the mobile outreach service stations have also served more than 10 000 elderly in the community. We expect that the number of participating elderly in the new round of the Outreach Programme (including the mobile outreach service stations) will exceed 68 000.

Moreover, OGCIO has launched the Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (the Training Programme) since 2019 to organise free advanced ICT training courses for the elderly with basic knowledge on digital technology in partnership with Elder Academies in the community. In addition to commonly used Government mobile applications like “iAM Smart”, the training courses also cover smart healthcare, online shopping, mobile payment, Mainland mobile applications frequently used by the elderly, social media, e-wallet and cyber security, etc., to equip the elderly with relevant skills. The recent round of Training Programme launched in 2021 was completed in December 2023 with the participation of about 4 000 elders. We will launch a new round of the two-year Training Programme in the second quarter of 2024, and expect that over 3 000 elders will benefit.

On the other hand, OGCIO has launched the Elderly IT Learning Portal (the Portal) since October 2019, with its contents being updated regularly to facilitate the elderly in learning digital technologies anywhere and anytime based on their personal needs and interests. As of February 2024, the Portal has launched 35 learning modules, covering online shopping, “iAM Smart”, “HKeMobility”, cloud-based tools, electronic payment tools and electronic food ordering applications, etc.

We have conducted post-activity/post-course surveys for the Outreach Programme and the Training Programme upon their completion in March and December 2023 respectively. The findings revealed that 99% of the elderly respondents were satisfied with the activities or the courses.

The total expenditure of the abovementioned Outreach Programme, Training Programme and Portal in 2023-24 was around \$19.8 million, which included expenses for promotion and marketing, as well as procurement of hardware and software for programme implementation.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB188**

**(Question Serial No. 0142)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) indicated last year that it was implementing a new shared chatbot infrastructure (infrastructure) with the ready-to-use chatbot building blocks required. It is expected that the infrastructure will be ready for use by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) in mid-2023. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. the current development progress of the infrastructure;
2. the revised estimate of expenditure involved for implementing the infrastructure in 2023-24;
3. the manpower establishment involved for implementing the infrastructure in 2023-24;
4. the number of chatbots launched by B/Ds so far , as well as the number of infrastructure adopted among them; and
5. the names of chatbots already launched or to be launched by B/Ds, these chatbots' respective departments, major functions and service commencement dates?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

To facilitate bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to develop new chatbots in a faster and more cost-effective manner, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) launched a new shared chatbot infrastructure (namely "Chatbot-as-a-Service") with ready-to-use building blocks (including cloud platform, natural language processing engine and knowledgebase, etc.) in June 2023 for use by B/Ds. At present, B/Ds have already

launched 11 chatbots and planned to launch another 27 chatbots. Relevant information is set out at **Annex**.

The expenditure for implementing the “Chatbot-as-a-Service” platform in 2023-24 was about \$2 million. The coordination and implementation tasks were undertaken by 3 staff members of OGCIO.

**Examples of Chatbots Already or to be Launched by B/Ds****1. Chatbots Already Launched by B/Ds**

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Chatbot Name</b>  | <b>B/D</b>   | <b>Adopted<br/>“Chatbot-<br/>as-a-<br/>Service”<br/>(Y/N)</b> | <b>Major Functions</b>  | <b>Launch<br/>Date</b>   |
|------------|--|--|---|---|--|
| 1.         | Bonny  | Office of the<br>Government<br>Chief<br>Information<br>Officer     | Y   | Assist the public to<br>search for<br>government forms<br>and services  | Launched in<br>December<br>2019 and<br>adopted<br>“Chatbot-as-<br>a-Service”<br>in June 2023 |
| 2.         | Chatbot on the<br>“Chief<br>Executive’s<br>Award for<br>Teaching<br>Excellence”<br>website | Education<br>Bureau  | Y   | Answer questions<br>from teachers and the<br>public related to the<br>Chief Executive’s<br>Award for Teaching<br>Excellence           | September<br>2023  |
| 3.         | BIMate   | Civil<br>Engineering<br>and<br>Development<br>Department<br>(CEDD) | Y   | Assist surveyors of<br>CEDD to search for<br>internal information<br>related to Building<br>Information Modeling<br>(BIM)             | November<br>2023   |
| 4.         | Genie  | Agriculture,<br>Fisheries and<br>Conservation<br>Department        | Y   | Assist in answering<br>frequently asked<br>questions related to<br>dog licences   | December<br>2023   |
| 5.         | GeoFun   | Development<br>Bureau  | Y   | Assist in answering<br>public questions<br>related to Common<br>Spatial Data<br>Infrastructure, spatial<br>data and Geospatial<br>Lab | December<br>2023   |

| No. | Chatbot Name  | B/D   | Adopted<br>“Chatbot-<br>as-a-<br>Service”<br>(Y/N) | Major Functions   | Launch<br>Date |
|-----|---|---|--|---|----------------|
| 6.  | Big Waster Chatbot on the “Carbon Neutrality and Sustainable Development” website | Environment and Ecology Bureau                | Y  | Assist in answering public enquiries on the content of “Carbon Neutrality and Sustainable Development” website  | January 2024   |
| 7.  | Chatbot on the “Reimbursement Easy Portal” website                                | Labour and Welfare Bureau / Labour Department | Y  | Assist in answering questions related to the Reimbursement of Maternity Leave Pay Scheme  | January 2024   |
| 8.  | Single Window-bot   | Customs and Excise Department                 | Y  | Assist in answering frequently asked questions related to “Trade Single Window”   | March 2024     |
| 9.  | Chatbot Tammy   | Efficiency Office                             | N  | Provide 1823 virtual assistant service and answer public enquiries  | December 2019  |
| 10. | Dr. Tin   | Hong Kong Observatory                         | N  | Assist users in obtaining the latest weather or astronomical related information  | February 2020  |
| 11. | XiaoHui   | Customs and Excise Department                 | N  | Provide virtual ambassador service, offering real-time answers to general enquiries from the public and travelers regarding customs work, and providing information on control points | November 2023  |

## 2. Chatbots to be Launched by B/Ds

The names of the chatbots are to be confirmed as the related chatbots are not yet launched.

| No. | B/D  | To Adopt<br>“Chatbot-<br>as-a-<br>Service”<br>(Y/N) | Major Functions   | Planned<br>Launch<br>Date |
|-----|--|---|---|---------------------------|
| 1.  | Civil Aviation<br>Department<br>(CAD)                      | Y   | Assist the public in searching for CAD forms and answering application related enquiries  | Second half<br>of 2024    |
| 2.  | Civil Service<br>Bureau                                    | Y   | Assist in answering general enquiries regarding the recruitment process for positions of Administrative Officer (AO) /Executive Officer (EO)  | Second half<br>of 2024    |
| 3.  | Correctional<br>Services<br>Department                     | Y   | Assist in answering general public enquiries related to correctional facilities and services  | Second half<br>of 2024    |
| 4.  | Innovation,<br>Technology and<br>Industry Bureau<br>(ITIB) | Y   | Introduce chatbot to the website of ITIB to provide real-time answers to public enquiries about ITIB and guide them to relevant websites or service channels, enabling the public to obtain information quickly at any time | Second half<br>of 2024    |
| 5.  | Marine<br>Department                                       | Y   | Provide real-time responses to public enquiries and guide them to access the relevant application forms for local vessel licensing, examination and port management   | Second half<br>of 2024    |
| 6.  | Lands Department<br>(LandsD)                               | Y   | Assist staff of LandsD in searching for internal service application forms  | End of 2024               |
| 7.  | Commerce and<br>Economic<br>Development<br>Bureau          | Y   | Handle public enquiries and guide the public to websites with the relevant application forms  | First half of<br>2025     |
| 8.  | Labour<br>Department                                       | Y   | Assist in answering questions regarding the use of the employee compensation website  | First half of<br>2025     |
| 9.  | Labour and<br>Welfare Bureau                               | Y   | Handle general enquiries and guide the public to access relevant webpages or application forms  | First half of<br>2025     |

| No. | B/D   | To Adopt<br>“Chatbot-<br>as-a-<br>Service”<br>(Y/N) | Major Functions  | Planned<br>Launch<br>Date |
|-----|---|---|--|---------------------------|
| 10. | Legal Aid<br>Department                                     | Y   | Assist in answering general enquiries on pre-application of legal aid  | First half of 2025        |
| 11. | Office of the<br>Government Chief<br>Information<br>Officer | Y   | Assist in answering frequently asked questions about the “Smart Government Innovation Lab”   | First half of 2025        |
| 12. | Social Welfare<br>Department<br>(SWD)                       | Y   | Assist in handling general enquiries from the public regarding major welfare services and guide them to relevant webpages on the SWD website to obtain required information conveniently                                     | First half of 2025        |
| 13. | Trade and Industry<br>Department                            | Y   | Assist in handling frequently asked questions related to applications and subsidy schemes and guide the public to access the relevant application forms (e.g. Import/Export Licence Application Form)                        | First half of 2025        |
| 14. | Department of<br>Health                                     | Y   | Provide chatbot service on the website of the Centre for Health Protection, facilitating the public to obtain useful health information more conveniently and quickly  | Second half of 2025       |
| 15. | Independent<br>Commission<br>Against<br>Corruption          | Y   | Assist in answering general enquiries related to the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption (HKIAAC), Corruption Prevention Advisory Service, Hong Kong Business Ethics Development Centre and Integrity Charter | Second half of 2025       |
| 16. | Rating and<br>Valuation<br>Department<br>(RVD)              | Y   | Provide AI-equipped chatbot service on the online platform of RVD for commercial users, offering round-the-clock automated responses to general enquiries and handling specific cases, such as progress follow-up enquiries  | Second half of 2025       |

| No. | B/D   | To Adopt<br>“Chatbot-<br>as-a-<br>Service”<br>(Y/N) | Major Functions  | Planned<br>Launch<br>Date |
|-----|---|---|--|---------------------------|
| 17. | Transport and Logistics Bureau                            | Y   | Assist in answering enquiries related to the “Professional Training and Examination Refund Scheme”   | Second half of 2025       |
| 18. | Civil Engineering and Development Department              | Y   | Handle public enquiries and guide them to webpages for related application forms   | First half of 2026        |
| 19. | Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and Tourism Commission | Y   | Answer frequently asked questions and enquiries related to applications under cultural subsidy schemes   | Second half of 2026       |
| 20. | Lands Department (LandsD)                                 | Y   | Assist the public in searching for the public forms of the LandsD  | 2026                      |
| 21. | Home and Youth Affairs Bureau                             | N   | Provide real-time responses to general enquiries from the public on youth life planning  | First half of 2024        |
| 22. | Education Bureau  | N   | Provide real-time responses to general enquiries from the public regarding primary and secondary school places allocation  | Second half of 2024       |
| 23. | Radio Television Hong Kong                                | N   | Provide real-time responses to general enquiries and guide the public to relevant programmes and webpages  | First half of 2025        |
| 24. | Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK)                         | N   | Utilising voice recognition technology to assist in handling phone enquiries from the public regarding the services of RTHK  | First half of 2025        |
| 25. | Census and Statistics Department                          | N   | Answer public enquiries regarding statistical products and services, assist the public in searching for statistical products and provide the definitions and release dates of statistical data | Second half of 2025       |
| 26. | Office of the Communications Authority                    | N   | Assist in handling public enquiries related to the application for licences/permits/certificates   | Second half of 2025       |



| <b>No.</b> | <b>B/D</b>    | <b>To Adopt<br/>“Chatbot-<br/>as-a-<br/>Service”<br/>(Y/N)</b> | <b>Major Functions</b>   | <b>Planned<br/>Launch<br/>Date</b> |
|------------|---------------|--|--|------------------------------------|
| 27.        | Land Registry | To be confirmed  | Provide real-time responses to general enquiries from the public regarding the online search service of the “Integrated Registration Information System” | Second half of 2025                |

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB189**

**(Question Serial No. 0558)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will “monitor the implementation of various initiatives by Cyberport including promoting digital transformation of small-and-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)”, and launched a Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme in 2023-24 to enhance support for the development of the information and communications technology sector, related industries and digital economy. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. How many applications have been received since the launch of the programme? What is the average processing time of the applications?
2. What is the number of applications approved? What are the beneficiary enterprises categorised by sectors and the actual expenditure?
3. Some of the SMEs failed to meet the assessment criteria and thus delaying the vetting process. What measures will be put in place by the Government to facilitate the industry to check the vetting status?
4. Since there is a myriad of funding schemes, quite a number of SMEs find it difficult to choose a scheme for themselves and make an application. What measures will be put in place by the Government to help the SMEs understand their own needs and then apply for an appropriate funding programme?

Asked by: Hon LAM Lam, Nixie (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million in July 2023 for Cyberport to launch the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme

(Pilot Programme). Under the Pilot Programme, subsidies will be provided on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage (F&B) and the retail industries in applying the ready-to-use basic digital solutions under the 3 categories (i.e. digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems) so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. It is estimated that at least 8 000 eligible enterprises can benefit from the Pilot Programme.

Cyberport invited relevant SMEs to submit funding applications in March 2024 with application deadline set in April 2024. Cyberport will review and announce the funding application results as soon as possible. Cyberport has set up a thematic website, hotline and email channels for SMEs to enquire about the approval status of their applications.

In addition to financial assistance, Cyberport will also actively conduct promotional activities on the Pilot Programme for the groups from the trade, organise seminars and issue relevant guidelines for the SMEs on a regular basis, which include the provision of training on digital transformation, in order to assist SMEs in identifying Information Technology solutions that suit their business and budget requirements. Cyberport has actively engaged more than 30 industry associations to promote the Pilot Programme, encouraging more relevant SMEs to submit funding applications.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB190**

**(Question Serial No. 0560)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will continue to oversee the planning for and implementation of smart city infrastructure projects including “iAM Smart” Platform. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) What were the respective numbers of users who have registered for “iAM Smart” and “iAM Smart+” platforms in the past three years?
- 2) At present, how many “iAM Smart+” self-registration kiosks have been set up across the territory? What are the work details, expenditure and manpower required for the promotion of “iAM Smart” in 2023-24?
- 3) In 2023-24, what are the expenditure and manpower deployed for the enhancement of the “iAM Smart” service and promoting the adoption of “iAM Smart” by the trade?
- 4) Taking into account users’ feedback on using the system, how many resources will be deployed by the Government to pursue the technology enhancement and upgrade (such as pursuing an increase in server capacity, enhancement of webpage and improvement of network connection) so as to improve user experience?

Asked by: Hon LAM Lam, Nixie (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

- 1) Since the launch of the “iAM Smart” platform in December 2020, over 2.6 million citizens have registered for “iAM Smart”, and among them, 1.2 million are “iAM Smart+” users.

- 2) and 3) At present, 40 “iAM Smart” self-registration kiosks have been set up in different districts throughout Hong Kong and 1 self-registration kiosk in Guangzhou. The estimated expenditure for “iAM Smart” in 2023-24 is about \$114 million, which includes the expenditure for system operation and maintenance, publicity and promotion, design and development of new features and services, and the connection of the “iAM Smart” with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, etc. The above-mentioned tasks are supported by 20 government staff members.

With regard to “iAM Smart” promotion, in 2023-24, we publicised and promoted through various online channels, including advertisements in different formats on various social media, online news channels, popular websites and discussion forums, as well as short clips produced in collaboration with various government departments on television and radio, to enhance the promotion effectiveness. We also utilised physical channels, including registration service counters at Post Offices, participation in different industry and community events to introduce “iAM Smart” and its popular services to the public, and deployment of mobile registration teams to provide on-site registration services at different locations. With the launch of cross-boundary public services, we have also invited dozens of key opinion leaders and micro influencers to post videos on “Xiaohongshu” and “Douyin” to introduce the convenience of using “iAM Smart”, reaching over 3 million viewers.

With regard to promoting industry adoption, the “iAM Smart” Sandbox Programme is now open to financial, information and communications technology, telecommunications, healthcare, education, culture, sports, tourism, accounting, legal, transport and logistics sectors, enabling industries to conduct proof-of-concept testing on adopting “iAM Smart” for their online services. In October 2023, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) organised a technology forum themed on “iAM Smart” and invited 11 technology companies to share their “iAM Smart” solutions and products in the forum, facilitating industries and government departments to understand how to adopt “iAM Smart” to enhance their service efficiency. We are also actively promoting and deliberating suitable “iAM Smart” use cases with stakeholders from different sectors so as to assist them in designing different business solutions with the use of “iAM Smart” and expediting the development and rollout of more online services.

- 4) OGCIO obtained funding allocation of \$193 million from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in May 2023 to drive the comprehensive upgrade of “iAM Smart”. We updated the design of the homepage for the “iAM Smart” mobile app in October 2023, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical daily-life information, such as local real-time weather, traffic conditions, waiting time for accident and emergency services in hospitals, locations of automated external defibrillator, real-time cross-harbour tunnel tolls, Scameter, etc., by just opening the “iAM Smart” mobile app, and conducted system capacity upgrade for the “iAM Smart” platform. The enhanced features to be launched progressively from 2024 to 2025 include:

- Setting up dedicated pages that encompass a range of common government service applications, enquiries and information, and simplifying the searching services and user workflow, so as to provide a more unified user experience;
- Enabling citizens to authorise the share use of their personal data collected by different government departments through the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway”, so as to obviate the need to input or submit the same information repeatedly when they use different government services;
- Introducing “one-tap login” for government services to allow citizens to directly access some commonly-used government services with their “iAM Smart” accounts;
- Introducing a digital personal document wallet function to facilitate citizens to manage their digital personal documents issued by different government departments; and
- Simplifying the registration process and setting up additional self-registration kiosks.

Bureaux and departments will start to enhance their existing online services orderly and integrate the services into the new “iAM Smart” platform, with a view to providing a better user experience. By revamping the overall system design and enhancing the functionalities of “iAM Smart”, we will be able to consolidate the existing online services of various government departments in a more systematic and organised manner, and to simplify the overall workflow, allowing citizens to directly access relevant government services through the “one-tap login” function of their “iAM Smart” accounts.

The revised estimated expenditure for the “iAM Smart” platform upgrade project for 2023-24 is \$9.8 million, and the estimated expenditures for 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 are about \$38 million, \$54.5 million and \$91 million respectively. OGCIO has created 6 time-limited civil service posts to undertake the tasks of upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform, coordinating with bureaux/departments for the integration of online services, etc. The non-recurrent expenditure involved from 2023-24 to 2025-26 is around \$17.7 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB191**

**(Question Serial No. 0561)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government has been actively taking forward the development of smart city in recent years. Regarding the promotion of the “Wi-Fi.HK” service, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please set out the total numbers of public Wi-Fi hotspots and Wi-Fi high-speed access points in the territory, as well as their numbers in each district.
2. What was the maintenance cost for operating the “Wi-Fi.HK” equipment and system contributed by the Government in each of the past 3 years?
3. Has the Government regularly conducted surveys and collected feedback on the “Wi-Fi.HK” service from users? What are the details and the number of complaints received?
4. Has the Government regularly compiled statistics on the usage of each Wi-Fi hotspot and upgraded those Wi-Fi hotspots with higher demand to high-speed access points, so as to benefit more members of the public?

Asked by: Hon LAM Lam, Nixie (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

1. As at February 2024, the number of hotspots under the “Wi-Fi.HK” brand was about 45 000, including 10 high-speed access points at popular tourist attractions. Apart from the 3 600 mobile Wi-Fi hotspots installed in buses, taxis and the Airport Express, more than 41 000 Wi-Fi hotspots are distributed in the 18 districts across the territory as listed below:

| District                     | Number of hotspots |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Hong Kong Island</b>      |                    |
| Central and Western District | 3 863              |
| Eastern District             | 1 966              |
| Southern District            | 2 702              |
| Wan Chai                     | 2 475              |
| <b>Kowloon</b>               |                    |
| Kowloon City                 | 5 183              |
| Yau Tsim Mong                | 4 104              |
| Sham Shui Po                 | 1 439              |
| Wong Tai Sin                 | 1 087              |
| Kwun Tong                    | 1 801              |
| <b>New Territories</b>       |                    |
| Tai Po                       | 872                |
| Yuen Long                    | 1 452              |
| Tuen Mun                     | 2 269              |
| North District               | 841                |
| Sai Kung                     | 2 106              |
| Sha Tin                      | 4 350              |
| Kwai Tsing                   | 1 367              |
| Tsuen Wan                    | 1 063              |
| Islands                      | 2 073              |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>41 013</b>      |

2. The Government's expenditures on the Wi-Fi Connected City programme in the past 3 years were as follows:

| Year  | Expenditure<br>(\$ million) |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 2021-22 (Actual)                              | About 38                    |
| 2022-23 (Actual)                              | About 45                    |
| 2023-24 (Revised Estimate) <sup>Remarks</sup> | About 82                    |

Remark: Since most of the contracts for Government Wi-Fi services will gradually expire and require equipment replacement, the expenditure for 2023-24 is expected to increase.

3. In order to solicit users' views on the Government Wi-Fi services, we have set up a random online survey on the landing page of "Wi-Fi.HK" to collect users' feedback. According to the survey results, users are generally satisfied with the free Wi-Fi services provided by the Government.

In 2023-24 (as at February 2024), we have received a total of 49 complaints about the "Wi-Fi.HK" services, which were mainly related to Wi-Fi connectivity and signal issues of individual venues. On receiving the complaints, Office of the Government Chief



Information Officer has immediately liaised with the Wi-Fi service providers and taken follow-up actions to address the issues properly to ensure the service quality.

4. The average connection speed of “Wi-Fi.HK” hotspots exceeds 20 megabits per second (Mbps) which is sufficient for general Internet use. We will continue to monitor the performance of Government Wi-Fi services and adjust the network speed and Wi-Fi coverage at individual venues in a timely manner, taking into account factors such as Wi-Fi usage, technical feasibility and cost-effectiveness, to ensure that the service quality meets the requirement.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB192**

**(Question Serial No. 0563)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Government departments have actively developed mobile apps in recent years. Will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) The list of names of the mobile apps developed by government departments and relevant organisations, their development expenditure and annual system maintenance expenditure.
- 2) Continuing from the above question, what were the number of downloads of the above mobile apps and the number of active users in the past 3 years (list separately by each mobile app)?
- 3) What will the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) and the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) do to strengthen the coordinating and leading roles they play in consolidating the mobile apps with similar functions so as to save the unnecessary expenditure on system development and maintenance?

Asked by: Hon LAM Lam, Nixie (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

- 1) and 2) As of end-January 2024, bureaux/departments (B/Ds) have provided a total of 78 mobile applications (apps) for download by the public. Information of these mobile apps including names, expenditures and number of downloads for the past 3 years is set out at **Annex**.
- 3) The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will regularly issue relevant guidelines to B/Ds, reminding them to launch and update mobile apps or to consolidate existing mobile apps in a cost-effective manner with

reference to the “Practice Guide for Developing Mobile Apps”.

When developing their mobile apps, B/Ds will take into account their operational needs, mode of service and other factors, including the objectives and usage of the apps, the needs of target user groups, resources required for the development and maintenance of the mobile apps, and whether the functions incorporated will render the apps complicated and difficult to use, etc., to determine whether to launch new mobile apps or consolidate the existing ones. For example, in 2018, the Transport Department consolidated “eTraffic News”, “HKeRouting” and “HKeTransport” into the existing “HKeMobility” mobile app.

Moreover, OGCIO will request B/Ds to conduct regular reviews after the launch of mobile apps, including whether the apps have met users’ needs and achieved the expected outcomes and cost-effectiveness. If the projects/initiatives relating to the mobile apps have been completed, or there are other more effective ways to provide same service, or the needs of the target user groups have changed, or the app download rates are lower than expected, B/Ds should consider decommissioning the apps.

It was announced in the 2022 Policy Address that the government services would provide one-stop digital services by fully adopting “iAM Smart” within 3 years so as to realise “single portal for online government services”. OGCIO is currently driving the comprehensive upgrade of the “iAM Smart” platform and its mobile application to enhance their functionalities, optimising user experience, as well as developing and consolidating more government services that are convenient and beneficial to the public. Our goal is to achieve “single portal for online government services” by 2025.

**Information on the mobile apps provided by B/Ds  
(As at 31 January 2024)**

| No. | B/D  | Name                               | Development Cost   | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|--|------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1.  | Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department | Enjoy Hiking                       | \$38,000   | \$57,000   | 430 000                                  | 450 000                                  | 470 000                                  |
| 2.  | Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department | Reef Check Hong Kong               | \$95,000   | \$49,500   | 12 000                                   | 13 000                                   | 14 000                                   |
| 3.  | Buildings Department                               | Quick Guide for MBIS/MWIS          | \$299,000  | \$326,200<br>(Including the costs for maintenance and upgrade of mobile app. No separate cost breakdown is available.) | 21 000                                   | 25 000                                   | 25 200                                   |
| 4.  | Buildings Department                               | MWCS - Quick Guide for Minor Works | \$290,000  | \$334,200<br>(Including the costs for maintenance and upgrade of mobile app. No separate cost breakdown is available.) | 58 000                                   | 63 000                                   | 67 000                                   |
| 5.  | Buildings Department                               | WIN SAFE                           | The total cost of the project is around \$2,618,000. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app. | \$121,000  | N/A<br>(Launched in May 2022)            | 2 500                                    | 6 000                                    |
| 6.  | Civil Aviation Department                          | eSUA                               | \$277,000  | \$64,000   | N/A<br>(Launched in May 2022)            | 21 000                                   | 33 000                                   |
| 7.  | Civil Engineering and Development Department       | HK Geology                         | Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.  | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 34 000                                   | 35 000                                   | 38 000                                   |

| No. | B/D                              | Name  | Development Cost  | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|----------------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| 8.  | Civil Service Bureau             | Government Vacancies                                  | \$980,000   | \$587,000<br>(Including the costs for mobile app maintenance, backend system maintenance and website maintenance. The related costs cannot be separated) | 840 000                                  | 930 000                                  | 1 000 000                                |
| 9.  | Correctional Services Department | Hong Kong Correctional Services Department Mobile App | \$308,000   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 31 000                                   | 37 000                                   | 43 000                                   |
| 10. | Customs and Excise Department    | HK Car First Registration Tax                         | \$230,000   | \$50,000   | 25 000                                   | 28 000                                   | 31 000                                   |
| 11. | Department of Health             | IMPACT  | \$296,000   | \$48,000   | 49 000                                   | 50 000                                   | 51 000                                   |
| 12. | Department of Health             | Quit Smoking App                                      | \$295,000   | \$40,000   | 68 000                                   | 73 000                                   | 87 000                                   |
| 13. | Department of Health             | 衛生署DH   | \$600,000   | \$65,000   | N/A<br>(Launched in Jan 2024)            | N/A<br>(Launched in Jan 2024)            | 690                                      |
| 14. | Development Bureau               | My Kowloon East                                       | Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.   | \$97,000   | 14 000                                   | 17 000                                   | 20 000                                   |
| 15. | Education Bureau                 | Educational Multimedia                                | \$49,000  | \$278,500  | 160 000                                  | 200 000                                  | 204 000                                  |
| 16. | Education Bureau                 | KG Profile  | Included in the cost of the whole project of the Profile of Kindergartens. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available. | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 160 000                                  | 210 000                                  | 270 000                                  |

| No. | B/D   | Name                                      | Development Cost   | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 17. | Education Bureau                            | e-Navigator                               | Developed with the related website. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.                     | \$132,000  | 220 000                                  | 230 000                                  | 250 000                                  |
| 18. | Education Bureau                            | History Trip Go Easy                      | Developed as a part of the e-book and e-portal project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available. | \$50,000   | 47 000                                   | 52 000                                   | 54 000                                   |
| 19. | Efficiency Office                           | Tell me@1823 v2                           | \$2,500,000 (including user experience design, infrastructure setup and development of mobile app and backend system)                | \$400,000 (Including the costs for maintenance and upgrade of mobile application and backend system) | N/A (Launched in Jul 2022)               | 50 000                                   | 110 000                                  |
| 20. | Electrical & Mechanical Services Department | E&M Connect                               | \$800,000  | \$398,000  | 16 000                                   | 21 000                                   | 27 000                                   |
| 21. | Electrical & Mechanical Services Department | E&M Trade                                 | \$492,000  | \$159,000  | 48 000                                   | 61 000                                   | 69 000                                   |
| 22. | Environmental Protection Department         | EV-Charging Easy                          | \$482,000  | The system maintenance and support cost is included in the development cost.                         | N/A (Launched in Jun 2022)               | 7 800                                    | 18 000                                   |
| 23. | Environmental Protection Department         | Hong Kong Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) | \$1,395,000  | \$54,000   | 140 000                                  | 180 000                                  | 190 000                                  |
| 24. | Environmental Protection Department         | Waste Less                                | \$690,000  | \$150,000  | 80 000                                   | 96 000                                   | 110 000                                  |
| 25. | Environmental Protection Department         | HoHoSkips                                 | \$550,000  | \$98,000   | 5 200                                    | 18 000                                   | 34 000                                   |

| No. | B/D                                       | Name                         | Development Cost  | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|---|------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| 26. | Environmental Protection Department       | GREEN\$ Mobile App           | \$1,300,000<br>(Including the costs for mobile app development, maintenance and enhancement)  |  | N/A<br>(Launched in Jan 2022)            | 130 000                                  | 423 000                                  |
| 27. | Environmental Protection Department       | Beach Water Quality Forecast | The total cost of the project is around \$1,650,000. No separate cost breakdown is available. | The maintenance cost (first year) is included in the development cost of the mobile app.                             | N/A<br>(Launched in Aug 2023)            | N/A<br>(Launched in Aug 2023)            | 1 900                                    |
| 28. | Environmental Protection Department       | Plastic-Free Rewards         | \$1,400,000   | The maintenance cost is included in the development cost of the mobile app.  | N/A<br>(Launched in Nov 2023)            | N/A<br>(Launched in Nov 2023)            | 2 800                                    |
| 29. | Fire Services Department                  | HKFSD                        | \$1,010,000   | The maintenance cost (first year) is included in the development cost of the mobile app.                             | N/A<br>(Launched in Mar 2023)            | N/A<br>(Launched in Mar 2023)            | 74 000                                   |
| 30. | Food and Environmental Hygiene Department | Nutrition Calculator         | \$150,000   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 136 000                                  | 142 000                                  | 150 000                                  |
| 31. | Food and Environmental Hygiene Department | Internet Memorial Service    | \$300,000   | The maintenance of the mobile app is included in the whole system maintenance contract of Internet Memorial Service. | 17 000                                   | 23 000                                   | 30 000                                   |

| No. | B/D                     | Name                                      | Development Cost   | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|-------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 32. | Health Bureau           | eHealth                                   | The development of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available. | The maintenance of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. No separate cost breakdown is available.                                   | 2 000 000                                | 2 900 000                                | 3 200 000                                |
| 33. | Home Affairs Department | Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses | \$178,000  | \$203,000  | 16 000                                   | 17 000                                   | 19 000                                   |
| 34. | Hong Kong Observatory   | MyObservatory                             | Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.  | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 9 100 000                                | 9 700 000                                | 11 000 000                               |
| 35. | Hong Kong Observatory   | MyWorldWeather                            | Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.  | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 320 000                                  | 330 000                                  | 450 000                                  |
| 36. | Hong Kong Police Force  | Junior Police Call Mobile App             | \$1,379,000 (Including the fees for mobile app, backend system, website, system hosting services and system license.)                                      | \$1,039,000 (Including the fees for mobile app maintenance, backend system maintenance, website maintenance, system hosting services and system license) | 16 000                                   | 26 000                                   | 47 000                                   |
| 37. | Hong Kong Police Force  | Hong Kong Police Mobile App               | \$750,000  | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 200 000                                  | 210 000                                  | 320 000                                  |



| No. | B/D                    | Name             | Development Cost   | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|------------------------|------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 38. | Hong Kong Police Force | HKSOS            | This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.                                    | This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the "Smart Rescue Solution", and the Hong Kong Police Force has not kept a record of specific expenditure items              | N/A<br>(Launched in Jan 2024)            | N/A<br>(Launched in Jan 2024)            | 43 000                                   |
| 39. | Hong Kong Police Force | Scameter+        | This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the "Prevention and Detection of Crime", and the Hong Kong Police Force does not keep a record of specific expenditure items | This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the "Prevention and Detection of Crime", and the Hong Kong Police Force does not keep a record of specific expenditure items | N/A<br>(Launched in Feb 2023)            | N/A<br>(Launched in Feb 2023)            | 230 000                                  |
| 40. | Hongkong Post          | Hongkong Post    | \$328,000  | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 510 000                                  | 590 000                                  | 660 000                                  |
| 41. | Hongkong Post          | ShopThruPost 2.0 | Included in the implementation cost of the Redevelopment of On-line Shopping Platform Project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.        | The maintenance cost of the mobile app is included in the total system maintenance cost of the whole on-line shopping platform. No cost breakdown is available.                    | 40 000                                   | 51 000                                   | 57 000                                   |

| No. | B/D                              | Name                           | Development Cost  | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| 42. | Immigration Department           | Contactless e-Channel          | The App was developed under a contract with quotation value at \$1,397,000 while this procurement included other relevant system enhancement service of contactless e-Channel | The contractor will provide system maintenance service as required in the contract | 21 000                                   | 170 000                                  | 1 100 000                                |
| 43. | Immigration Department           | HK Immigration Department      | \$130,000   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.        | 810 000                                  | 1 000 000                                | 1 400 000                                |
| 44. | Information Services Department  | news.gov.hk                    | \$270,000   | \$50,000   | 180 000                                  | 210 000                                  | 220 000                                  |
| 45. | Intellectual Property Department | "No Fakes Pledge" Shop Search  | \$580,000   | \$40,200   | 64 000                                   | 67 000                                   | 70 000                                   |
| 46. | Labour Department                | Interactive Employment Service | \$125,000   | \$82,000   | 1 200 000                                | 1 300 000                                | 1 400 000                                |
| 47. | Labour Department                | Work Safety Alert              | \$75,000  | \$49,000   | 26 000                                   | 26 000                                   | 28 000                                   |
| 48. | Labour Department                | Youth Employment Start         | \$149,000 (Including the maintenance cost for the first year)   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.        | 26 000                                   | 26 000                                   | 28 000                                   |
| 49. | Lands Department                 | MyMapHK                        | Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.        | 550 000                                  | 580 000                                  | 650 000                                  |
| 50. | Lands Department                 | VoiceMapHK                     | Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.        | 8 500                                    | 8 900                                    | 9 600 (Serves visually impaired)         |

| No. | B/D                                      | Name                            | Development Cost  | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|--|---------------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|
| 51. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department | My Library                      | The total cost of the project is around \$3,320,000. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.  | \$223,000  | 650 000                                   | 720 000                                  | 780 000                                  |
| 52. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department | URBTIX                          | Included in the service contract of URBTIX. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.                                | Included in the service contract of URBTIX. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.       | N/A<br>(New version launched in Dec 2022) | 120 000                                  | 580 000                                  |
| 53. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department | Star Hoppers                    | \$700,000   | \$199,980  | 340 000                                   | 360 000                                  | 380 000                                  |
| 54. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department | iM Guide                        | “iM Guide” is a part of the Museum Multimedia Guide System (MMGS) project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available. | Included in the routine maintenance cost of MMGS. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available. | 32 000                                    | 47 000                                   | 62 000                                   |
| 55. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department | My SmartPLAY                    | The total cost of the project is \$294,500,000. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.   | The total maintenance cost of the project is \$23,500,000. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.         | N/A<br>(Launched in Jul 2023)             | N/A<br>(Launched in Jul 2023)            | 370 000                                  |
| 56. | Marine Department                        | eSeaGo                          | \$600,000   | \$163,000  | 94 000                                    | 96 000                                   | 100 000                                  |
| 57. | Office of the Communications Authority   | OFCA Broadband Performance Test | Covered by OFCA Trading Fund.   | Covered by OFCA Trading Fund   | 110 000 000<br>(no. of tests)             | 117 000 000<br>(no. of tests)            | 123 000 000<br>(no. of tests)            |

| No. | B/D  | Name                | Development Cost  | Annual Maintenance Cost   | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021                | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023                | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024                |
|-----|--|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 58. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | EventHK             | Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.   | 100 000   | 118 000   | 119 000   |
| 59. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | GovHK Apps          | \$600,000   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.   | 350 000   | 400 000   | 420 000   |
| 60. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | GovHK Notifications | Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.   | 890 000   | 940 000   | 950 000   |
| 61. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | Wi-Fi.HK            | \$340,000   | \$59,000  | 340 000   | 360 000   | 400 000   |
| 62. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | iAM Smart           | The app is developed together with the “iAM Smart” platform. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available. | The app is developed together with the “iAM Smart” platform. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available. | More than 1 000 000 users who have registered iAM Smart | More than 1 800 000 users who have registered iAM Smart | More than 2 600 000 users who have registered iAM Smart |
| 63. | Radio Television Hong Kong                         | RTHK 中華五十年#         | \$450,000   | \$78,000  | 180 000   | 200 000   | 203 000   |
| 64. | Radio Television Hong Kong                         | RTHK Radio          | \$409,000   | \$155,000   | 480 000   | 510 000   | 540 000   |
| 65. | Radio Television Hong Kong                         | RTHK News           | \$336,000   | \$53,636  | 520 000   | 670 000   | 710 000   |
| 66. | Radio Television Hong Kong                         | RTHK on the Go      | \$200,000   | \$93,638  | 2 400 000   | 2 500 000   | 2 540 000   |
| 67. | Radio Television Hong Kong                         | RTHK TV             | \$250,000   | \$100,500   | 600 000   | 640 000   | 660 000   |

| No. | B/D                        | Name                       | Development Cost  | Annual Maintenance Cost   | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|
| 68. | Radio Television Hong Kong | RTHK Audio Description     | The app is part of the Audio Description services project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available. | \$259,750   | 1 800                                    | 2 700                                    | 5 200 (Serves visually impaired)         |
| 69. | Security Bureau            | Safeguard HK               | \$610,000   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.   | 250 000                                  | 262 000                                  | 280 000                                  |
| 70. | Social Welfare Department  | Senior Citizen Card Scheme | \$147,000   | \$37,000  | 140 000                                  | 160 000                                  | 190 000                                  |
| 71. | Tourism Commission         | A Symphony of Lights       | \$537,000   | \$77,000  | 28 000                                   | 29 000                                   | 34 000                                   |
| 72. | Transport Department       | HKeMeter                   | Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.                 | Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.   | 400 000                                  | 630 000                                  | 770 000                                  |
| 73. | Transport Department       | HKeMobility                | \$600,000   | Included in the cost of the whole project. Apart from function enhancements, it also provides services to other associated systems, therefore the cost could not be breakdown separately. | 2 600 000                                | 2 610 000                                | 2 700 000                                |
| 74. | Transport Department       | HKeToll                    | Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.                 | Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.   | N/A (Launched in Jan 2023)               | 120 000                                  | 730 000                                  |

| No. | B/D                       | Name                     | Development Cost  | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023 | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024       |
|-----|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| 75. | Water Supplies Department | WSD GA Product Directory | \$175,000   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 13 000                                   | 15 000                                   | 17 000   |
| 76. | Water Supplies Department | WSD Mobile App           | \$1,573,000   | The maintenance of WSD Mobile App is included in the system maintenance contract of Customer Care and Billing System (CCBS). | 140 000                                  | 200 000                                  | 270 000  |
| 77. | Water Supplies Department | H2OPE Centre             | Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available. | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 1 100                                    | 1 700                                    | 2 000<br>(Serves visitors of the H2OPE Centre) |
| 78. | Water Supplies Department | WSD AMR System           | \$220,000   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 5 600                                    | 13 000                                   | 20 000   |

Note: B/Ds' names in alphabetical order.

# Mobile app with Chinese name only.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB193**

**(Question Serial No. 0584)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

On supporting bureaux and departments to implement the recommended digital government initiatives from the e-government audit, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please give a detailed breakdown of the improvement initiatives recommended by the audit and the estimated expenditure involved.
2. Please give a detailed breakdown of the completed recommendations and the estimated expenditure involved.
3. What are the expected timetables for completing the remaining improvement initiatives?

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has completed the e-Government audit work for all bureaux/departments (B/Ds). Some of the digital government initiatives recommended by the audit include:

- **The Fire Services Department (FSD):** To issue e-licences/certificates, such as licences related to dangerous goods, by adopting blockchain technology so as to enable applicants to obtain relevant e-licences/certificates in a more convenient way. It also minimises the chance of forged licences and facilitates verification of the e-licences/certificates in order to enhance the licensing procedures and user experience;
- **The Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF):** To develop a new system to enhance the efficiency of emergency relief services, facilitate inter-departmental coordination and expedite Search and Rescue (SAR) operations. The initiative aims to (i) improve the monitoring of rescuers' location and their physical condition to ensure their safety and

completeness of their responsible search coverage; (ii) reduce the required time for rescue coordination work and strengthen information sharing and communication among departments (HKPF, FSD, the Government Flying Service, the Civil Aid Service) involved in the SAR operations; and (iii) enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of rescue missions and increase the chance of successful rescue;

- **The Marine Department (MD):** To set up a pilot project at the Tuen Mun Public Cargo Working Area to monitor the cargo working area under dim lightings or adverse weather by adoption of video analytics. The system can monitor security incidents, including unauthorised access to the working areas, illegal cargo handling and noise nuisance, and alert MD or other relevant enforcement agencies to take follow-up actions;
- **The Efficiency Office (EffO):** To adopt artificial intelligence (AI) speech-to-text technology to transcribe voicemail messages from the public into text so as to enhance the handling efficiency and to adopt AI speech recognition technology to identify callers' enquiry subjects so that callers can receive the requested information through Short Message Service (SMS). Besides, the 1823 Chatbot will be connected with the GovHK Chatbot "Bonny" to help the public to look for e-Government services and e-forms;
- **The Home Affairs Department (HAD):** To establish the Care Team Community Resources Management Platform with the adoption of geospatial analytics and big data analytics technologies. Starting the pilot in Sham Shui Po district, Southern district and Tsuen Wan district, HAD can supervise Care Teams' work execution, manage relevant Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and analyse data collected from the geographic information system, enabling the department to further understand the needs of citizens of the relevant district and formulate corresponding policies to meet the community needs. The initiative will be extended to all 18 districts in Hong Kong by phases;
- **The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC):** To develop the Digital Integrity Management System (DIMS) with the adoption of chatbot, workflow automation and data analytics technologies to support the work under the Integrity Charter initiative and to provide instant responses to related general enquiries from citizens, thus improving service efficiency and quality. Besides, the initiative will also issue e-certificates by adoption of blockchain technology to facilitate regulatory bodies to verify ICAC's training records; and
- **The Buildings Department (BD):** To implement a geographic dashboard on the Buildings Department Geographic Information System (BDGIS) by utilising 2D heatmap and the building condition information from various systems of BD to display and track the overall conditions of private buildings across different geographical locations through a visualisation approach. This initiative will assist BD to effectively select target buildings for site inspections so as to enhance efficiency.

B/Ds are studying in details on the digital government initiatives recommended by the audit and formulating specific implementation details and estimated expenditures, etc. Our target is that the B/Ds will launch their respective digital government initiatives progressively from 2024 to 2025.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB194**

**(Question Serial No. 0585)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

On merging the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) with the Efficiency Office (EffO) to set up the Digital Policy Office, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What is the preparation work currently and when will it be announced?
2. Upon merging OGCI0 and EffO, what will be the tasks, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), manpower arrangements and the estimated expenditure?
3. Will the Government review the related legislations and regulations on digital policy? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

1. and 2. The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and smart city, such as establishing the

“digital identity of enterprises” platform; promoting cross-boundary data flow, Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) and other initiatives that support the development of the “Digital Bay Area”; strengthening the support and supervision of the management of e-government services by B/Ds, etc. To deploy suitable manpower to take forward these key initiatives, we propose to re-organise the existing manpower structure of OGCIO and EffO and transfer the manpower to DPO, and appropriately create 1 directorate post responsible for strengthening efforts in taking forward the facilitation of cross-boundary data flow, the development of “Digital Bay Area”, the implementation of CBPS, as well as the liaison with the Mainland, etc. The new Office, upon establishment, will undertake the key performance indicators (KPIs) set by the two existing Offices, and will continue to review and introduce new KPIs. We plan to consult the Legislative Council Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting and Establishment Subcommittee on the proposals and seek support from the Finance Committee in the first half of 2024. Our target is to complete the relevant procedures by mid-2024.

3. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and OGCIO jointly promulgated the “Policy Statement on Facilitating Data Flow and Safeguarding Data Security in Hong Kong” (Policy Statement) at end-2023, setting out the Government’s management principles and key strategies on data governance, and putting forward 18 specific action items. The items include enhancing data governance and reviewing the existing arrangements on the collection, use, processing, protection and sharing of data. The policies and guidelines related to data governance will also be updated or formulated in a timely manner. The DPO will follow up on the related work.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB195**

**(Question Serial No. 0615)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In respect of completing the implementation of the Multi-functional Smart Lampposts pilot scheme and establishing a mechanism for its ongoing implementation, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the details of the smart lampposts that have been installed, including their number, the districts where they are located, their functions and the expenditure involved?
2. What are the installation timetable of the remaining smart lampposts and the additional expenditure incurred when comparing with the original scheme in terms of the number of lampposts?
3. What are the details of the mechanism in place for the ongoing implementation of the scheme?

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

Under the Multi-functional Smart Lampposts Pilot Scheme (Pilot Scheme), smart lampposts with smart devices have been installed in 4 urban locations (namely Central and Admiralty, Wan Chai district, Yau Tsim Mong district and Kwun Tong / Kai Tak Development Area) in the territory with higher pedestrian and vehicular flow. The purpose of the installation is to collect real-time city data such as air quality and traffic flow as well as to support the development of digital infrastructure for 5G services. Besides assisting relevant departments in enhancing city management, the data collected are also released at the Public Sector Information portal (data.gov.hk) as open datasets for free use by the general public and facilitating the industry to develop more innovative applications with these data.

The Pilot Scheme was completed in December 2023. At present, over 400 Multi-functional Smart Lampposts are in operation at the above-mentioned locations as well as Kowloon City district and Sai Kung district. Details are as below:

| <b>District</b>  | <b>No. of Installed Lampposts</b> | <b>Type of Smart Devices*</b>  |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Kwun Tong / Kowloon City District / Kai Tak Development Area / Sai Kung District | 202                               | LED lighting, meteorological sensors, air quality sensors, thermal detectors, radio-frequency identification tags, Geo-QR codes, Bluetooth beacons, Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR), Wi-Fi hotspots and 5G radio base stations |
| Yau Tsim Mong District   | 110                               |  |
| Wan Chai District  | 46                                |  |
| Central / Admiralty  | 59                                |  |

\*Remarks: Smart devices installed on each smart lamppost are subject to the practical needs of the departments

As of February 2024, the expenditure involved for the Pilot Scheme was about \$89 million, covering the procurement and installation of smart lampposts and smart devices, management of smart devices and data transmission systems, telecommunications network connection facilities as well as the operating expenditure.

To further promote the smart city development in Hong Kong, smart lamppost will be a standard infrastructure to be installed in new development areas under planning or construction, facilitating Bureaux/Departments to install suitable smart devices and applications in accordance with their operational needs for enhancing city management and developing innovative services. As for developed areas, we will replace existing lampposts with smart lampposts in suitable urban locations according to the requirements of individual departments.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB196**

**(Question Serial No. 2036)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Apart from the launch of the Business Version of “iAM Smart”, does the Government have any plan and budget to improve and promote the “iAM Smart” for personal use by citizens, so as to facilitate them to handle more day-to-day chores?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chi-pang (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) obtained funding allocation of \$193 million from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in May 2023 to drive the comprehensive upgrade of “iAM Smart”. We updated the design of the homepage for the “iAM Smart” mobile app in October 2023, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical daily-life information, such as local real-time weather, traffic conditions, waiting time for accident and emergency services in hospitals, locations of automated external defibrillator, real-time cross-harbour tunnel tolls, Scameter, etc., by just opening the “iAM Smart” mobile app. The enhanced features to be launched progressively from 2024 to 2025 include :

- Setting up dedicated pages that encompass a range of common government service applications, enquiries and information, and simplifying the searching services and user workflow, so as to provide a more unified user experience;
- Enabling citizens to authorise the share use of their personal data collected by different government departments through the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway”, so as to obviate the need to input or submit the same information repeatedly when they use different government services;

- Introducing “one-tap login” for government services to allow citizens to directly access some commonly-used government services with their “iAM Smart” accounts;
- Introducing a digital personal document wallet function to facilitate citizens to manage their digital personal documents issued by different government departments; and
- Simplifying the registration process and setting up additional self-registration kiosks.

Bureaux and departments will also start to enhance their existing online services orderly and integrate the services into the new “iAM Smart” platform, with a view to providing a better user experience.

In 2023-24, we publicised and promoted through various online channels, including advertisements in different formats on various social media, online news channels, popular websites and discussion forums, as well as short clips produced in collaboration with various government departments on television and radio, to enhance the promotion effectiveness. We also utilised physical channels, including registration service counters at Post Offices, participation in different industry and community events to introduce “iAM Smart” and its popular services to the public, and deployment of mobile registration teams to provide on-site registration services at different locations. With the launch of cross-boundary public services, we have also invited dozens of key opinion leaders and micro influencers to post videos on “Xiaohongshu” and “Douyin” to introduce the convenience of using “iAM Smart”, reaching over 3 million viewers. We are planning to establish thematic pages focusing on the promotion of “iAM Smart” on more social media in 2024-25. We will also set up more self-registration kiosks and deploy mobile registration teams to events organised by different sectors and district bodies to encourage more citizens to register for and use “iAM Smart”.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB197**

**(Question Serial No. 0302)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat: Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government, (3) IT in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The provisions for Programmes (1) and (3) in 2024-25 have increased by \$389.4 million (43.3%) and \$651.4 million (98.9%) respectively as compared with the revised estimates for 2023-24, and there are a net increase of 34 and 9 posts respectively. In this connection, will the Government please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the reasons for the significant increase in the revised estimates and what are the details? Please give a detailed breakdown.
2. What are the (i) departments, (ii) posts, (iii) duties and (iv) remuneration involved in the increase in establishment?
3. What are the specific plans and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

1. and 3. The estimate for the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) in 2024-25 is about \$389.4 million higher than the revised estimate for the previous year under the Programme (1) "Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government". The details and key performance indicators of the major items with increase in expenditure are as follows:

- (i) Supporting the National Games Coordination Office to develop IT systems required for co-hosting the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th Special Olympics Games in Hong Kong to ensure that the required IT systems will be smoothly completed;

- (ii) Expansion of the capacity of the government cloud infrastructure, which will be completed and put into service within 2024 to support the effective execution and smooth operation of the new facilities as planned and for the use of various bureaux/departments (B/Ds);
- (iii) Enhancing the performance and network security of the government email system and the “iAM Smart” platform to ensure the security and high availability of the system so as to support the daily operations of B/D’s to provide reliable email services and to ensure the reliability of “iAM Smart” related public services. The system upgrade is expected to be completed by the end of 2026; and
- (iv) Supporting operating expenses after more IT systems being hosted in the Government Data Centre Complex (the Complex). As the Complex operates 24 hours a day, sufficient manpower is required to undertake the daily operations and handle any ad hoc incident for supporting the smooth operation of B/Ds’ IT systems in the Complex.

The estimate for OGCIO in 2024-25 is about \$651.4 million higher than the revised estimate for the previous year under Programme (3) “IT in the Community”. The details and key performance indicators of the major items with increase in expenditure are as follows:

- (i) Implementing a three-year Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme) mainly to provide funding support to local universities, research and development centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the Cyberport’s AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC), with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of the computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities. The Subsidy Scheme will come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. The Government will require Cyberport to set performance indicators for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme;
- (ii) Managing the operation of free public Wi-Fi services. As of February 2024, the number of “Wi-Fi.HK” brand hotspots is about 45,000. OGCIO will continue to provide free public Wi-Fi services in government premises with high patronage and strong public demand. We will also continue to promote the “Wi-Fi.HK” brand and encourage public and private organisations to provide self-financed Wi-Fi hotspots and participate in the “Wi-Fi.HK” brand in order to expand the coverage of “Wi-Fi.HK” brand hotspots; and
- (iii) Fostering the cross-boundary flow of personal information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) in a secure and



orderly manner. OGCIO is responsible for administering and co-ordinating the related work of the facilitation measure on the “Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)”, to streamline the compliance arrangements for the cross-boundary flow of personal information from the Mainland cities in the GBA to Hong Kong. As at mid-March 2024, we received a total of about 100 Expressions of Interest. We plan to review the arrangement in light of its implementation in mid-2024, and refine relevant details in due course with a view to extending the facilitation measure to different business sectors in the GBA, hence fostering the provision of more cross-boundary services to benefit a wider scope of businesses and members of the public.

2. As regards the establishment of OGCIO under Programme (1) and Programme (3) in 2024-25, 50 posts will be created and 7 posts that are no longer have operational needs will be deleted, resulting in a net increase of 34 posts and 9 posts respectively. The estimated annual expenditure based on notional annual mid-point salary value is about \$37 million and \$9 million respectively. Details of the ranks of the increased posts and duties are as follows:

| <b>Programme</b> | <b>Duties</b>  | <b>Rank</b>   | <b>Number of posts</b> |
|------------------|--|---|------------------------|
| (1)              | Supporting the National Games Coordination Office to develop the IT systems required for co-hosting the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games in Hong Kong | Including Senior Systems Manager, Systems Manager, Analyst/Programmer I, Analyst/Programmer II                      | 13                     |
|                  | Enhancing the government email system and “iAM Smart” platform   | Including Senior Systems Manager, Systems Manager, Analyst/Programmer I, Analyst/Programmer II                      | 12                     |
|                  | Handling the 24-hour operation of the Complex  | Including Assistant Computer Operation Manager, Senior Computer Operator, Computer Operator I, Computer Operator II | 10                     |

| <b>Programme</b> | <b>Duties</b>   | <b>Rank</b>   | <b>Number of posts</b> |
|------------------|---|---|------------------------|
| (1)              | Supporting the collaboration with relevant mainland authorities on IT aspects as well as strengthening government data sharing and governance | Including Assistant Director of Information Technology Services, Senior Systems Manager, Systems Manager, Analyst/Programmer I, Analyst/Programmer II | 5                      |
|                  | Handling the daily financial and accounting work  | Accounting Officer II   | 1                      |
| (3)              | Fostering Cross-boundary Data Flow in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA   | Including Senior Systems Manager, Systems Manager, Analyst/Programmer I, Analyst/Programmer II, Executive Officer I                                   | 9                      |
|                  |   | <b>Total</b>  | <b>50</b>              |

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB198**

**(Question Serial No. 3052)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will allocate \$3 billion for the launch of a three-year Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises to leverage the AI Supercomputing Centre's computing power, strengthen the cyber security and data protection of the Centre, and launch promotional and educational activities, etc. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What is the proportion of resources allocation and support given to the aforementioned three major policy objectives under the Scheme?
2. Will the Government set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the aforementioned three major policy objectives? For example, what are the expected numbers of the local universities and research institutes to be funded to use the AI Supercomputing Centre and how many promotional activities are expected to be launched during the period?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim to enhance research and development (R&D) capabilities in different fields.

It is announced in the 2024-25 Budget the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise

them to make the best use of computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing power resources of the AISC, and the Subsidy Scheme can in general provide eligible users with a subsidy of up to 70% of the standard service rates as the computing power subsidy. Cyberport will be asked to set up an independent committee to determine the details on the beneficiaries and terms for disbursement of the subsidies, etc. The independent committee will, upon taking into account various factors, approve the specific amount and duration of the subsidy to be granted to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

In addition, we have set aside \$100 million out of the \$3 billion provision to strengthen the cyber and data security. The budget has also earmarked \$44 million to conduct promotional and educational activities for promoting the AI ecosystem development to enhance the interface and collaboration between the upstream, midstream and downstream components of the AISC and AI ecosystem development.

The Government will require Cyberport to set up performance indicators, covering the utilisation of the AISC's services, R&D achievement, talent promotion, operation, and promotion of cybersecurity and environmental protection, for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme.

Upon the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out the publicity and promotion, so as to press ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****ITIB199****(Question Serial No. 1933)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated under this Programme that the Government will launch the enhanced “iAM Smart” platform in phases and continue to support bureaux and departments to provide citizens with one-stop digitalised services by adopting “iAM Smart”. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. Please list by year the total number of users and their gender and age group distributions since the launch of the “iAM Smart” application.
2. What are the specific details of the enhancement of the “iAM Smart” platform?
3. Has the Government anticipated any increase in the percentage of citizens using the “iAM Smart” platform after its enhancement?
4. What is the estimated annual expenditure on administrative manpower, operation and system maintenance of the “iAM Smart” platform after its enhancement?

Asked by: Hon LEE Chun-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

1. As at March 2024, over 2.6 million citizens have registered for “iAM Smart”, with gender and age group distribution as follows:

| <b>Age Group</b> | <b>Male</b>      | <b>Female</b>    | <b>Total</b>     |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 11 to 30         | 277 000          | 266 000          | 543 000          |
| 31 to 50         | 560 000          | 618 000          | 1 178 000        |
| 51 to 70         | 419 000          | 361 000          | 780 000          |
| 71 or above      | 58 000           | 43 000           | 101 000          |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>1 314 000</b> | <b>1 288 000</b> | <b>2 602 000</b> |

Remarks: The figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

2. We updated the design of the homepage for the “iAM Smart” mobile app in October 2023, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical daily-life information, such as local real-time weather, traffic conditions, waiting time for accident and emergency services in hospitals, locations of automated external defibrillator, real-time cross-harbour tunnel tolls, Scameter, etc., by just opening the “iAM Smart” mobile app, and conducted system capacity upgrade for the “iAM Smart” platform. The enhanced features to be launched progressively from 2024 to 2025 include :

- Setting up dedicated pages that encompass a range of common government service applications, enquiries and information, and simplifying the searching services and user workflow, so as to provide a more unified user experience;
- Enabling citizens to authorise the share use of their personal data collected by different government departments through the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway”, so as to obviate the need to input or submit the same information repeatedly when they use different government services;
- Introducing “one-tap login” for government services to allow citizens to directly access some commonly-used government services with their “iAM Smart” accounts;
- Introducing a digital personal document wallet function to facilitate citizens to manage their digital personal documents issued by different government departments; and
- Simplifying the registration process and setting up additional self-registration kiosks.

Bureaux and departments will start to enhance their existing online services orderly and integrate the services into the new “iAM Smart” platform, with a view to providing a better user experience. By revamping the overall system design and enhancing the functionalities of “iAM Smart”, we will be able to consolidate the existing online services of various government departments in a more systematic and organised manner, and to simplify the overall workflow, allowing citizens to directly access relevant government services through the “one-tap login” function of their “iAM Smart” accounts.

3. We will upgrade the functions and services of the “iAM Smart” platform, streamline the registration process and set up more self-registration kiosks, strengthen the publicity and promotion, as well as collaborate with district bodies and organisations, etc., to encourage more citizens to register for and use “iAM Smart”.
4. The revised estimated expenditure for the “iAM Smart” platform upgrade project for 2023-24 is \$9.8 million, and the estimated expenditures for 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 are about \$38 million, \$54.5 million and \$91 million respectively. Office of the Government Chief Information Officer has created 6 time-limited civil service posts to undertake the tasks of upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform, coordinating with

bureaux/departments for the integration of online services, etc. The non-recurrent expenditure involved from 2023-24 to 2025-26 is around \$17.7 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB200**

**(Question Serial No. 1934)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Last year, the Government collaborated with the relevant authorities of the Guangdong Province to launch the “Cross-boundary Public Services”, using “iAM Smart” as a means of real name identity authentication for Hong Kong residents to register for an account on the “Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province”, thereby enabling residents and enterprises in Hong Kong and Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to access government services of the two places online without the need for cross-boundary travel in person. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the staffing establishment and estimated expenditure involved in the Platform?
2. Is there any plan to extend the “Cross-boundary Public Services” to cover more Mainland cities and government services in the future? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEE Chun-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

1. In November 2023, we set up the connection linking “iAM Smart” with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents who have registered for the Guangdong Provincial Administrative Service to directly login to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile app through “iAM Smart” for using various Guangdong’s public services in a more convenient and efficient manner. The work involved in connecting “iAM Smart” with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province is part of the operation of “iAM Smart”. As such, the expenditure and manpower involved cannot be separately singled out and itemised.



2. The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR Government) is actively collaborating with the Guangdong Provincial Government in the promotion of the Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS), with a view to facilitating residents and enterprises in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to enjoy quick access to public services of the two places in a convenient manner. As an initial phase, the HKSAR Government launched the CBPS thematic website in November 2023, providing a total of 54 CBPS of Hong Kong, encompassing 6 service areas commonly used by GBA residents and enterprises, including taxation, company registration, property and vehicle enquiry and registration, applications for personal identification documents and entry of talents, welfare and education and healthcare. As at February 2024, the number of services under Hong Kong CBPS has increased to 61, with additional service areas like immigration clearance and urgent assistance, etc. Moreover, we have set up “iAM Smart” registration service counters in Guangzhou and Shenzhen, and launched the first Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosk and “iAM Smart” self-registration kiosk in the Guangzhou Municipal Government Service Center in February 2024 to facilitate GBA residents and enterprises to access the CBPS of Hong Kong. We are discussing with the Guangdong Province Government on setting up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks in more Mainland cities of the GBA, so as to cope with the demands of GBA residents and enterprises for Hong Kong government services. Meanwhile, we will continue to co-ordinate bureaux and departments’ participation and provision of cross-boundary public services through different service delivery modes, and understand the needs of GBA residents and enterprises for Hong Kong government services through various channels with a view to introducing more CBPS of Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB201**

**(Question Serial No. 2542)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government launched an artificial intelligence chatbot “Bonny” on the GovHK portal in 2019 to facilitate the public to search government forms and e-government services. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the respective numbers of forms that “Bonny” is providing for the departments (set out by departments)?
2. Are there any government forms that cannot be provided by “Bonny” currently? If yes, what are the details? When will the improvement plan be put in place?
3. What were the numbers of enquiries handled by “Bonny” annually in the past five years?
4. What was the expenditure for developing “Bonny” then?
5. What were the manpower, actual expenditure or revised estimate involved for operating and maintaining the system of “Bonny” in the past five years?
6. Since “Bonny” only supports traditional Chinese, simplified Chinese and English, does the Government have any plan to support other ethnic minority languages that are widely used in Hong Kong? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

1. The chatbot “Bonny” on the GovHK Portal is currently capable of searching for over 3 400 government forms. The numbers of forms listed by bureaux/departments (B/Ds) are set out in **Annex**.

2. Generally speaking, government forms can be searched through “Bonny”. However, government forms and related e-Government services of B/Ds may be updated, added or deleted from time to time according to their business needs. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will regularly remind B/Ds to submit updated information of government forms, enabling timely updates to the services of “Bonny” and facilitating the public in the search and use of government forms and related e-Government services.
3. The chatbot “Bonny” was launched at the end of December 2019 and its usage was measured in terms of number of users. The numbers of users in the past 5 years were as follows:

| <b>Year</b>           | <b>Number of Users</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 2020                  | 103 187                |
| 2021                  | 240 281                |
| 2022                  | 265 184                |
| 2023                  | 608 493                |
| 2024 (as of February) | 157 750                |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>1 374 895</b>       |

4. The expenditure for developing “Bonny” was about \$1.3 million.
5. The work of system operation and maintenance of “Bonny” was absorbed by OGCIO’s existing staff. The expenditure for operating and maintaining the system of “Bonny” is as follows:

| <b>Year</b>                | <b>Expenditure<br/>(\$’000)<br/>(approximate)</b> |
|----------------------------|---|
| 2019-20 (Actual)           | 0   |
| 2020-21 (Actual)           | 300   |
| 2021-22 (Actual)           | 400   |
| 2022-23 (Actual)           | 500   |
| 2023-24 (Revised Estimate) | 500   |

6. The major function of “Bonny” is to facilitate citizens in the search and use of government forms and related e-Government services. As the interfaces of general government forms and e-Government services only support Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese and English, we have no plan to support other languages in the near future.

**The Numbers of Forms Searchable by “Bonny”  
(as of February 2024)**

| <b>B/Ds</b>  | <b>Number of Forms</b> |
|--|------------------------|
| Department of Health   | About 200              |
| Leisure and Cultural Services Department                             | About 200              |
| Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department                   | About 150              |
| Companies Registry   | About 150              |
| Electrical and Mechanical Services Department                        | About 150              |
| Marine Department  | About 150              |
| Civil Aviation Department  | About 120              |
| Education Bureau   | About 120              |
| Environment and Ecology Bureau / Environmental Protection Department | About 120              |
| Immigration Department   | About 120              |
| Inland Revenue Department  | About 120              |
| Labour Department  | About 120              |
| Office of the Communications Authority                               | About 120              |
| Buildings Department   | About 100              |
| Customs and Excise Department  | About 100              |
| Food and Environmental Hygiene Department                            | About 100              |
| Home Affairs Department  | About 100              |
| Hong Kong Police Force   | About 100              |
| Transport Department   | About 100              |
| Intellectual Property Department                                     | About 80               |
| Social Welfare Department  | About 80               |
| Trade and Industry Department  | About 80               |
| Civil Engineering and Development Department                         | About 40               |
| Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau                                   | About 40               |
| Highways Department  | About 40               |
| Innovation and Technology Commission                                 | About 40               |
| Lands Department   | About 40               |
| Rating and Valuation Department                                      | About 40               |
| Water Supplies Department  | About 40               |
| Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency               | About 40               |

| <b>B/D</b>   | <b>Number of Forms</b> |
|--|------------------------|
| Chief Secretary for Administration's Office                                  | About 20               |
| Development Bureau (Works Branch)  | About 20               |
| Drainage Services Department   | About 20               |
| Fire Services Department   | About 20               |
| Health Bureau  | About 20               |
| Home and Youth Affairs Bureau  | About 20               |
| Hong Kong Observatory  | About 20               |
| Hongkong Post  | About 20               |
| Independent Commission Against Corruption                                    | About 20               |
| Land Registry  | About 20               |
| Office of the Government Chief Information Officer                           | About 20               |
| Registration and Electoral Office  | About 20               |
| Auxiliary Medical Service  | About 10               |
| Census and Statistics Department   | About 10               |
| Correctional Services Department   | About 10               |
| Department of Justice  | About 10               |
| Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (Treasury Branch)                 | About 10               |
| Government Logistics Department  | About 10               |
| Information Services Department  | About 10               |
| Labour and Welfare Bureau  | About 10               |
| Legal Aid Department   | About 10               |
| Official Receiver's Office   | About 10               |
| Planning Department  | About 10               |
| Security Bureau  | About 10               |
| Architectural Services Department  | About 5                |
| Chief Executive's Office   | About 5                |
| Civil Aid Service  | About 5                |
| Civil Service Bureau   | About 5                |
| Commerce and Economic Development Bureau                                     | About 5                |
| Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau                                   | About 5                |
| Efficiency Office  | About 5                |
| Government Flying Service  | About 5                |
| Government Laboratory  | About 5                |
| Government Property Agency   | About 5                |
| Housing Department   | About 5                |
| Radio Television Hong Kong   | About 5                |
| Secretariat, Commissioner on Interception of Communications and Surveillance | About 5                |
| Transport and Logistics Bureau   | About 5                |
| The Treasury   | About 5                |

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB202**

**(Question Serial No. 1662)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in point 90 of the Budget Speech that the Government is making preparations for the establishment of the Digital Policy Office (DPO). In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. Why is there the need to establish the DPO? It is particularly noted that quite a number of government departments or the Hong Kong Monetary Authority already have their dedicated staff to work on digital finance. Will there be any duplication of efforts?
2. What is the progress of the preparations for the DPO, including the expected time required for its establishment, budget, annual operating expenditure, number of office staff and the duties of the DPO?
3. Will the Government seek input the financial and innovation and technology sectors for the DPO? If not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-wang, Robert (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is set out set out below :

The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and

industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and smart city, such as establishing the “digital identity of enterprises” platform; promoting cross-boundary data flow, Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) and other initiatives that support the development of the “Digital Bay Area”; strengthening the support and supervision of the management of e-government services by B/Ds, etc. To deploy suitable manpower to take forward these key initiatives, we propose to re-organise the existing manpower structure of OGCIO and EffO and transfer the manpower to DPO, and appropriately create 1 directorate post responsible for strengthening efforts in taking forward the facilitation of cross-boundary data flow, the development of “Digital Bay Area”, the implementation of CBPS, as well as the liaison with the Mainland, etc. We plan to consult the Legislative Council Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting and Establishment Subcommittee on the proposals and seek support from the Finance Committee in the first half of 2024. Our target is to complete the relevant procedures by mid-2024.

We will continue to collaborate closely with various B/Ds and listen attentively to the views of different sectors of the community (including the finance sector and the innovation and technology (I&T) sector), with a view to fostering the further development of I&T, digital economy and smart city in Hong Kong and driving our digital economy towards high-quality development with concerted efforts.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB203**

**(Question Serial No. 1663)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 98 of the Budget Speech that in last year's Budget, the Government proposed to expedite development of the Web3.0 ecosystem and made good progress over the past year. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

How was the \$50 million allocated for Web3.0 in last year's Budget used over the past year? Please list the projects funded, and the funding amount and outcome of each project.

What are the reasons that the Government has not provided appropriation for developing the Web3.0 ecosystem this year? Has the Government deployed other resources for the development of Web3.0?

What has been done by the Task Force on Promoting Web3 Development established by the Government last year? What was the funding amount involved?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-wang, Robert (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

In consultation with the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, our consolidated reply to the above questions is as follows:

To expedite the development of Web3.0 in Hong Kong, the Government has earmarked \$50 million for Cyberport to accelerate the Web3.0 ecosystem development by, among other things, organising large-scale international seminars to enable the industry and enterprises to better grasp frontier development, and promoting cross-sectoral business collaboration. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) allocated about \$35.8 million in 2023-24 for Cyberport to carry out the relevant work, and Cyberport was required to submit



reports on a regular basis in respect of the numbers of on-campus enterprises and event participants, etc. So far, Cyberport has gathered over 220 related enterprises, including 3 unicorns (1 of them is a licensed virtual asset trading platform), with their founders coming from over 15 countries or regions around the world. As of February 2024, the events hosted by Cyberport to promote the Web3.0 ecosystem had drawn an attendance of over 30 000 participants. OGCIO will allocate about \$14.2 million in the coming two years for Cyberport to further promote the development of the Web3.0 industry and ecosystem, including the provision of various relevant training and internship opportunities for young people starting from the second half of 2024.

Besides, the Financial Secretary established the Task Force on Promoting Web3 Development (Task Force) on 1 July 2023, comprising of experts and professionals from relevant industries, as well as members from relevant policy bureaux and financial regulators, to provide recommendations to the Government. The Task Force has commenced its work. The expenses related to the Task Force will be absorbed within existing resources. We do not have a separate breakdown.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB204**

**(Question Serial No. 1665)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 103 of the Budget Speech that the Government will set up a “digital identity of enterprises” platform, i.e. the business version of “iAM Smart”. The estimated expenditure involved is about \$300 million. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

Please list by item how will the estimated expenditure of \$300 million be used and the amounts involved.

Last year, the Government indicated that it would earmark a sum of about \$200 million to enhance the operation of the “iAM Smart” platform. Please list by item how the \$200 million is being used, including the expenditure and staff cost for each item and the balance.

Has the Government considered other feasible options to reduce the estimated expenditure of \$300 million for the business version of “iAM Smart”?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-wang, Robert (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

To further promote the development of the digital economy and create a business-friendly environment, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is planning to set up a “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, just like the business version of “iAM Smart”, to facilitate corporations to go through corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification in a secure, convenient and efficient manner when they use e-government services or conduct online business transactions, thus saving the need to go through the complicated procedures of submitting and verifying duplicated copies of related original documents and company seals. Moreover, corporations will no longer be required to repeatedly provide their corporate information when they use different online services, thus

saving time and reducing the risk of human error, which will be conducive to their digital transformation. We plan to seek a funding allocation of \$300 million from the Finance Committee for establishing the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform upon obtaining support from the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting of the Legislative Council in mid-2024. OGCI is currently drafting the details for the implementation of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, including the estimated expenditures for the design, development and operation of the platform, which will be submitted to the Legislative Council in due course.

With regard to the “iAM Smart” platform upgrade, we updated the design of the homepage for the “iAM Smart” mobile app in October 2023, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical daily-life information, such as local real-time weather, traffic conditions, waiting time for accident and emergency services in hospitals, locations of automated external defibrillator, real-time cross-harbour tunnel tolls, Scameter, etc., by just opening the “iAM Smart” mobile app, and conducted system capacity upgrade for the “iAM Smart” platform. The enhanced features to be launched progressively from 2024 to 2025 include:

- Setting up dedicated pages that encompass a range of common government service applications, enquiries and information, and simplifying the searching services and user workflow, so as to provide a more unified user experience;
- Enabling citizens to authorise the share use of their personal data collected by different government departments through the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway”, so as to obviate the need to input or submit the same information repeatedly when they use different government services;
- Introducing “one-tap login” for government services to allow citizens to directly access some commonly-used government services with their “iAM Smart” accounts;
- Introducing a digital personal document wallet function to facilitate citizens to manage their digital personal documents issued by different government departments; and
- Simplifying the registration process and setting up additional self-registration kiosks.

The revised estimated expenditure for the “iAM Smart” platform upgrade project for 2023-24 is \$9.8 million, and the estimated expenditures for 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 are about \$38 million, \$54.5 million and \$91 million respectively. OGCI has created 6 time-limited civil service posts to undertake the tasks of upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform, coordinating with bureaux/departments for the integration of online services, etc. The non-recurrent expenditure involved from 2023-24 to 2025-26 is around \$17.7 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB205**

**(Question Serial No. 3592)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding government information security policies and guidelines, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. Last year, there were a number of suspected intrusions involving the computer systems of government departments or public organisations. Some of them had their data stolen, and some of them even fell victims to malicious ransomware attacks by hackers who demanded a ransom. In this connection, what are the annual estimated manpower and expenditure involved in implementing information security policies and guidelines?
2. In view of last year's considerable number of intrusions, has the Government completed investigations on its internal computer systems? What are the manpower and resources involved and the time required? Is there any plan to extend the investigations to public organisations? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
3. The Electoral Affairs Commission stated that the main cause of the failure of the Electronic Poll Register system of the District Council Ordinary Election last year was that when altering the system design, the technical team of the Registration and Electoral Office did not conduct sufficient and comprehensive load testing. In this connection, will the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) review the existing procedures? Apart from giving advice to departments when they submit tenders for their systems, will OGCIO also take the initiative to give advice to other departments when they revise the design of their crucial systems, so as to prevent similar incidents from recurring? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
4. Apart from issuing security guidelines to departments, will the Government make reference to the common practices of large technology companies and hire ethical hackers or introduce an award scheme for ethical hackers to test the vulnerabilities of departmental systems? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 90)

Reply:

1. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has formulated comprehensive Government IT Security Policy and Guidelines (Policy and Guidelines). In response to the increasing cyber security risks, the Policy and Guidelines are updated from time to time with reference to the latest national and international information security management standards and industry best practices. A review of the existing Policy and Guidelines commenced in August 2022, and the revised version is expected to be issued to all bureaux/department (B/Ds) in the first half of 2024. The expenditure for the above project is implemented through internal deployment of existing manpower and resources.
2. Generally speaking, public organisations should formulate and adopt information technology management strategies and cybersecurity protection measures that meet their needs based on the nature of their organisation and business, the operation mode and setting of their computer facilities. They should also manage relevant risks having regard to the actual situation and the latest technological developments. B/Ds will also request public organisations under their purview to review and step up their information and cyber security measures in a timely manner. As soon as the computer systems of individual public organisations were suspected of being intruded last year, OGCIO had reminded all B/Ds of the relevant security guidelines, offered technical support, and requested B/Ds including public organisations under their purview to instantly assess and strengthen their current information security and cybersecurity measures in order to guard against cyberattacks and minimise the potential security risks. These tasks were implemented with existing manpower and resources of OGCIO and the expenses involved could not be itemised separately.
3. To ensure the smooth rollout and operation of government information technology (IT) systems, OGCIO promulgated new guidelines and launched a series of new measures to all B/Ds in February 2024, covering B/Ds' IT project initiation, procurement, system development, pre-launch cybersecurity and stress testing, etc, in order to take a multi-pronged approach to assist all B/Ds in comprehensively strengthening their management of large-scale and high-risk IT projects at different key stages of the project development cycle.

During the project initiation stage, all B/Ds should assess whether their IT projects are by nature large-scale and/or high-risk. When procuring system development services for relevant IT projects, the weighting of technical assessments in tender-marking schemes should be raised to 70% in order to help B/Ds engage the most capable service contractors with suitable technical expertise, thereby improving the quality of IT projects. During the system development stage of large-scale or high-risk IT systems, OGCIO will work with B/Ds to engage an independent consultant with relevant expertise and experience to conduct regular third-party review and assessment on the system design and development progress. Furthermore, the respective B/Ds are required to subject the relevant systems to additional tests to be arranged by OGCIO before the system rollout for B/Ds to assess the system's resilience to abnormal or extreme loading as well as cyberattacks.

4. All government departments are required to adopt a risk-based approach to identify security risks in an ongoing manner for their information systems by regularly conducting independent information security risk assessments and reviewing and enhancing current security measures to ensure that the relevant measures are up-to-date and effective in tackling the latest cyber risks. On the other hand, concerning the management of large-scale and high-risk IT projects, OGCIO has introduced a series of enhanced measures to all B/Ds, which include arranging additional cybersecurity tests prior to the rollout of relevant projects by, for example, conducting attack simulations with a view to assisting all B/Ds in identifying and addressing system vulnerabilities at early stages as well as assessing the system's detection and resilience in response to cyberattacks.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB206**

**(Question Serial No. 3593)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In respect of the implementation of big data analytics and the Consented Data Exchange Gateway, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What were the number and details of the Consented Data Exchange Gateway implemented last year? What are the expected number and details of this initiative this year? What are the proportion of manpower and expenditure involved?
2. Regarding the internal big data analytics platform launched in 2020, what were the usage rates in the past 3 years? Please give a list of the top 10 departments with the highest usage rates.
3. There are views that although government departments are in possession of a considerable amount of personal data of citizens, due to departmental regulations that have restricted the sharing of such data, there are quite a number of hidden loopholes particularly in respect of social welfare and public housing resources, which have been repeatedly reported. In this connection, has the Government prioritised the implementation of data sharing between departments and the use of big data for analytics? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 91)

Reply:

1. The Consented Data Exchange Gateway (CDEG) is a common digital infrastructure to connect the systems and data of different government bureaux/departments (B/Ds). Upon obtaining consents from the citizens, CDEG enables B/Ds to share the citizens' personal data collected with other B/Ds, thus obviating the need for repeated input of the same information which brings convenience in applying and using different public

services. CDEG is also a channel connecting government systems with the Commercial Data Interchange of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority. It avoids duplicating the effort of B/Ds in setting up of the same infrastructure, and also strengthens the overall security management of government systems and data.

Expenditures on the development of CDEG for 2023-24 and 2024-25 are \$2.5 million and \$12 million respectively, including expenses on system development services, cloud facilities services and contract staff services. CDEG is implemented with the existing manpower of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO).

2. OGCIO launched the Big Data Analytics Platform in 2020. In the past 3 years, the platform had supported the implementation of over 18 big data projects, including:
  - 1) OGCIO and the Transport Department jointly developed the Traffic Data Analytics System to apply big data analytics on various traffic, transport and weather data for facilitating the Transport Department to perform more accurate analysis and assessment on traffic conditions and enhance traffic management and efficiency;
  - 2) the Census and Statistics Department utilised deep learning techniques to detect anomalies in trade declarations, which can detect misreported information more effectively and reduce manual checking, thereby improving the accuracy of trade statistics and work efficiency;
  - 3) the Hongkong Post analysed historical data for predicting the volume of airmail shipments to some major cities in the world and the required airfreight storage space, thereby optimising postal management and improving efficiency;
  - 4) the Architectural Services Department, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department conducted data analytics on maintenance records and public complaints of public toilets to assist relevant departments in studying and optimising the management and maintenance measures;
  - 5) the Water Supplies Department explored the use of the Big Data Analytics Platform to improve the efficiency of the “Water Intelligent Network” in identifying abnormal flow and pressure data of water mains;
  - 6) the Environmental Protection Department developed an application using artificial intelligence to detect illegally-modified vehicles which created excessive noises, for law enforcement departments to consider for adoption;
  - 7) the Lands Department used image analytics technology to mask human faces and car plates in street view images used internally for privacy protection; and
  - 8) OGCIO used the platform to analyse the usage and the search history of GovHK portal to get a better understanding of user needs for enhancing the portal and improving user experience.



3. In compliance with the data protection principles of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance, B/Ds can share amongst themselves the personal data of the citizens stored upon obtaining their consents. OGCIO is implementing the CDEG to provide a unified channel for consented data exchange to accelerate the process of data sharing within the Government.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB207**

**(Question Serial No. 3597)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As regards the merging of OGCIO with the Efficiency Office for setting up the Digital Policy Office (DPO), will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. The DPO will be set up by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Efficiency Office, and staff from analyst/programmer (AP) grade and management services officer (MSO) grade will be its backbone. Since the daily duties of the officers of the above two grades do not involve the promotion of business and economic development, what measures will the Government put in place to enhance their business knowledge?
2. How will the Government measure the contributions that the development of government digital services development will bring to the local digital economic development so as to avoid allocating resources to the government services which have no bearing on the economic development?
3. Will the Government invite business talent to join the DPO? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 98)

Reply:

1. The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the

promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy, as well as pressing ahead with the development of digital government and smart city. In the Government, it is the duty of officers of Analyst/Programmer grade and Management Services Officer grade to undertake the tasks of developing digital government services and smart city initiatives. These officers are familiar with the internal operation and work of the Government, and maintain close contact with the industry to keep abreast of market development. Upon the establishment of the new office, the two grades will collaborate and continue to leverage their professional knowledge and expertise to promote the work of the DPO.

2. and 3. Digital economy has become a new driving force for economic development. To push forward the development of digital economy in Hong Kong, the Government established the Digital Economy Development Committee (DEDC) in June 2022, with members comprising various industry representatives, experts and scholars to undertake in-depth studies on how to promote the digital economy. After one and a half years of work and research, the DEDC has submitted the report to the Government and made a number of recommendations covering areas including guiding digital policy, enhancing digital infrastructure; facilitating the safe and orderly flow and usage of data; accelerating digital transformation of enterprises; and talent development. The recommendations provide reference for the Government in promoting the development of digital economy and digital government.

In fact, relevant bureaux have commenced their follow-up actions and studied the implementation of individual feasible recommendations while the DEDC is deliberating on these recommendations. For example, regarding top-level design and policies, apart from the aforementioned establishment of the DPO, the Government has also promulgated the “Policy Statement on Facilitating Data Flow and Safeguarding Data Security in Hong Kong” in December 2023, putting forward 18 specific action items to promote the consolidation, application, opening up and sharing of data on one hand, and to enhance safeguards for data security and planning of related infrastructural facilities on the other. Regarding the facilitation of digital transformation in the society and the enhancement of digital infrastructure, the Government took the lead in 2023 to allocate \$500 million to Cyberport for launching the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme. In order to strengthen the promotion of electronic payment, government services will fully support electronic payment within a year, and will also provide the option of using Mainland e-wallets for payment of government services commonly used by Mainland visitors. In addition, Cyberport will establish an artificial intelligence supercomputing center in phases this year, and the Government will also implement a “digital identity of enterprises” platform to enhance the local digital infrastructure.

The DPO, once established, will continue to keep abreast of the development of digital government and digital economy, and take into account views and advice

from different sectors, experts and academics. More measures conducive to the digital development will be updated and implemented in a timely manner.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB208**

**(Question Serial No. 2957)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 178 of the 2024-25 Budget Speech that the Government has launched a “Knowing More About IT” Programme and will allocate an additional funding of \$134 million for the provision of subsidies of up to \$300,000 for each publicly-funded primary school in the next 2 academic years. Whereas in paragraph 139 of the 2023-24 Budget Speech, it was mentioned that the Government would make an additional funding of \$300 million to continue providing subsidies of up to \$1 million for each publicly-funded secondary school in the next 3 academic years. In comparison, the amount of subsidies announced in the latest Budget has been substantially decreased. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. Has the Government conducted any site visit and comprehensive assessment before reducing the funding? What are the reasons for the reduction?
2. Each publicly-funded primary school will be provided with subsidies of up to \$300,000. Are they required to submit a list or proposal of expenditure for approval?

Asked by: Hon Dennis LEUNG Tsz-wing (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) launched the “Knowing More About IT” Programme in the 2021/22 school year to provide funding support up to \$400,000 in the 3 school years from 2021/22 to 2023/24 for each publicly-funded primary school to organise extra-curricular activities related to information technology (IT) and to procure IT equipment and professional services required for these activities. With the overwhelming response from schools and relevant stakeholders, it is proposed in the 2024-25 Budget the extension of the Programme for two school years to the 2025/26 school year for the provision of subsidies of up to \$300,000 for each publicly-funded primary school. The

proposed adjustment in the funding amount is mainly due to the reduction of the Programme duration from 3 school years to 2 years. According to the implementation experience of the Programme, the proposed funding amount is sufficient for schools to organise IT-related extra-curricular activities. The approval process under the new round of the Programme will remain unchanged. Schools are required to submit funding applications with information about the content and arrangements of proposed IT-related activities, the equipment and services to be procured and the estimated funding amount needed.

The Programme mentioned in Paragraph 139 of the 2023-24 Budget Speech refers to the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme applicable to secondary schools. It is different from the “Knowing More About IT” Programme, which is applicable to primary schools. Since the extra-curricular activities of primary schools are relatively more simple as compared with those of secondary schools, fewer professional services and activity equipment are required, and the numbers of participating students are fewer as most of them are senior primary students, a direct comparison of the two programmes cannot be made.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB209**

**(Question Serial No. 2972)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 108 of the 2024-25 Budget Speech that Cyberport is expediting the establishment of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre to meet the demand of research institutes and the industry for computing power. The first phase facility is expected to commence operation within this year at the earliest. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What will be the amount of provision allocated by the Government for establishing the AI Supercomputing Centre?
2. It was reported earlier that the AI Supercomputing Centre will adopt a commercial mode of operation by charging the users. Will the Government regulate and cap the fees it may charge to ensure that public funds taken from the people are to be used for the convenience and benefit of the people?
3. How much data in the Government will be computed by the AI Supercomputing Centre in the future?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

1. and 2. Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim to enhance research and development (R&D) capabilities in different fields. As its major digital infrastructure, Cyberport will operate AISC based on a market model. Cyberport is making preparation for the relevant operational arrangements.

It is announced in the 2024-25 Budget the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing power resources of the AISC, and the Subsidy Scheme can in general provide eligible users with a subsidy of up to 70% of the standard service rates as the computing power subsidy. Cyberport will be asked to set up an independent committee to determine details on the beneficiaries and terms for disbursement of the subsidies, etc. Members of the independent committee will be appointed by the Government, including members from representatives of AI industry, academia, innovation and technology industry and the Government, etc. The independent committee will, upon taking into consideration various factors, approve the specific amount and duration of the subsidy to be granted to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

Upon the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out the publicity and promotion, so as to press ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

3. Quite a number of government departments have started to use AI technologies to enhance public services, such as using conversational AI technologies to handle public enquiries, as well as using AI technologies and aerial photography to assist with external wall inspection for government buildings, etc. We envisage that the relevant government departments will leverage AI and the computing power resources of the AISC in various areas, such as planning, land administration, buildings, construction works, city management, transportation, population, meteorology, environment, etc. to formulate big data modelling for enhancing public services. The specific demand for computing power by government departments is yet to be determined.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB210**

**(Question Serial No. 2981)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat: Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): (001) Salaries

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The provision for 2024-25 is \$1,040.8 million higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24. The reasons are mainly due to the increased provision for departmental expenses and personal emoluments as there will be a net increase of 43 posts. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the estimated staffing establishment and total expenditure in 2024-25?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

The estimate for the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) in 2024-25 is about \$1,040.8 million higher than the revised estimate for the previous year. There is also a net increase of 43 posts. This is mainly due to the increase in expenditure and establishment under (1) "Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government" and Programme (3) "IT in the Community".

Under Programme (1), the estimate is about \$389.4 million higher than the revised estimate for the previous year. The increase in expenditure is mainly used for meeting the requirement for the items and manpower as follows:

- Supporting the National Games Coordination Office to develop the IT systems required for co-hosting the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th Special Olympics Games in Hong Kong;
- Expansion of the capacity of the government cloud infrastructure;
- Enhancing the performance and network security of the government email system and the "iAM Smart" platform;

- Handling the 24-hour operation of the Government Data Centre Complex;
- Supporting the collaboration with relevant Mainland authorities on IT aspects as well as strengthening government data sharing and governance; and
- Handling the daily financial and accounting work.

A total of 41 posts will be created for the above items. After the deletion of 7 posts that are no longer have operational needs, there will be a net increase of 34 posts.

Under Programme (3), the estimate is about \$651.4 million higher than the revised estimate for the previous year. The increase in expenditure is mainly used for meeting the requirement for the items and manpower as follows:

- Implementing a three-year Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme mainly to provide funding support to local universities, research and development centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC), with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of the computing power resources of the AISC;
- Managing the operation of free public Wi-Fi services; and
- Fostering the cross-boundary flow of personal information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in a secure and orderly manner. The creation of 9 posts to undertake the dedicated tasks is required;

In addition, the cash flow requirement of other general non-recurrent items is lower than that of the previous year, which partly offset the increase in the estimate for 2024-25.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB211**

**(Question Serial No. 2985)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under Programme (2) of Head 47, it is mentioned that the Government will launch the enhanced “iAM Smart” platform in phases and continue to support bureaux and departments to provide citizens with one-stop digitalised services by adopting “iAM Smart”. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the targets to be achieved in the first phase of enhancement and the estimated expenditure for each phase?
2. How will the enhanced “iAM Smart” attract citizens to use it?
3. What are the expected time required for the completion of the “iAM Smart” platform enhancement and the estimated total expenditure?
4. What are the respective numbers of registered users of “iAM Smart” and “iAM Smart+” with a digital signing function?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

1. to 3. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) obtained the funding allocation of \$193 million from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in May 2023 to drive the comprehensive upgrade of “iAM Smart”. We updated the design of the homepage for the “iAM Smart” mobile app in October 2023, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical daily-life information, such as local real-time weather, traffic conditions, waiting time for accident and emergency services in hospitals, locations of automated external defibrillator,

real-time cross-harbour tunnel tolls, Scameter, etc., by just opening the “iAM Smart” mobile app, and conducted system capacity upgrade for the “iAM Smart” platform. The enhanced features to be launched progressively from 2024 to 2025 include :

- Setting up dedicated pages that encompass a range of common government service applications, enquiries and information, and simplifying the searching services and user workflow, so as to provide a more unified user experience;
- Enabling citizens to authorise the share use of their personal data collected by different government departments through the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway”, so as to obviate the need to input or submit the same information repeatedly when they use different government services;
- Introducing “one-tap login” for government services to allow citizens to directly access some commonly-used government services with their “iAM Smart” accounts;
- Introducing a digital personal document wallet function to facilitate citizens to manage their digital personal documents issued by different government departments; and
- Simplifying the registration process and setting up additional self-registration kiosks.

Bureaux and departments will also start to enhance their existing online services orderly and integrate the services into the new “iAM Smart” platform,, with a view to providing a better user experience.

The revised estimated expenditure for the “iAM Smart” platform upgrade project for 2023-24 is \$9.8 million, and the estimated expenditures for 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 are about \$38 million, \$54.5 million and \$91 million respectively. OGCIO has created 6 time-limited civil service posts to undertake the tasks of upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform, coordinating with bureaux/departments for the integration of online services, etc. The non-recurrent expenditure involved from 2023-24 to 2025-26 is around \$17.7 million.

4. Since the launch of the “iAM Smart” platform in December 2020, over 2.6 million citizens have registered for “iAM Smart”, and among them, 1.2 million are “iAM Smart+” users.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB212**

**(Question Serial No. 2988)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat: Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony Wong)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Question:

It is stated in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under Programme (1) of Head 47 that the estimated expenditure for 2024-25 is \$1,287.9 million, representing a tremendous increase of 43.3% (i.e. \$ 898.5 million) when compared with the revised estimate for 2023-24. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee what are the main purposes and specific measures for the expected increase in expenditure? With the tremendous increase in the financial provision, what are the new targets, new directions and new scopes that enable the Government to implement its policy initiatives, internal efficiency, enhance its service transparency and public engagement?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The estimate for the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) in 2024-25 is \$389.4 million higher than the revised estimate for the previous year under Programme (1) "Use of Information Technology (IT) in Government". The details of the major items with increase in expenditure are as follows:

- (i) Supporting the National Games Coordination Office to develop the IT systems required for co-hosting the 15th National Games, 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th Special Olympics Games in Hong Kong to ensure that the required IT systems will be smoothly completed;
- (ii) Expansion of the capacity of the government cloud infrastructure, which will be completed and put into service within 2024 to support the effective execution and smooth operation of the new facilities as planned and for the use of various bureaux/departments (B/Ds);

- (iii) Enhancing the performance and network security of the government email system and the “iAM Smart” platform to ensure the security and high availability of the system so as to support the daily operations of B/D’s to provide reliable email services and to ensure the reliability of “iAM Smart” related public services. The system upgrade is expected to be completed by the end of 2026; and
- (iv) Supporting operating expenses after more IT systems being hosted in the Government Data Centre Complex (the Complex). As the Complex operates 24 hours a day, sufficient manpower is required to undertake the daily operations and handle any ad hoc incident for supporting the smooth operation of B/Ds’ IT systems in the Complex.

To further promote the development of digital government, the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO). By re-organising the manpower structure of OGCIO and the Efficiency Office and transfer the manpower to DPO, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and IT. The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government B/Ds and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and smart city.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB213**

**(Question Serial No. 2989)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is indicated under Programme (3) of Head 47 that the original estimated expenditure for 2023-24 is \$240 million, but the actual expenditure is 174.4% more than the revised estimate by \$658.6 million. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee, in details, of the specific projects and main purposes that the increased expenditure used for and the effectiveness of the additional provision?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

Under the Programme (3) "Information Technology in the Community" in the estimate for 2023-24, the increase of about \$400 million in the revised estimate in comparison with the original estimate is mainly used for supporting Cyberport to launch the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme). The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million in July 2023 to Cyberport for launching the Pilot Programme, under which subsidies will be provided on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) of the food and beverage and retail industries in applying the ready-to-use basic digital solutions under 3 categories (i.e. digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems) so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. The Government allocated \$395 million to Cyberport in 2023-24. Cyberport has invited relevant SMEs to submit funding applications in March 2024.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****ITIB214****(Question Serial No. 3785)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned under this Programme that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will launch the enhanced "iAM Smart" platform in phases and continue to support bureaux and departments to provide citizens with one-stop digitalised services by adopting "iAM Smart". In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What is the number of users registered, their age distribution, the registration method categorisation and average number of the system users of "iAM Smart" and "iAM Smart+" on a daily basis?
2. How will the Department optimise and enhance the services of "iAM Smart"? What additional services will be provided in the platform in the coming year?
3. How will the Government enhance the promotion of "iAM Smart" so that more people will be motivated to register for an account?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Yuk-wai, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 55)

Reply:

1. As at March 2024, "iAM Smart" platform has over 2.6 million registrations with age group distribution as follows:

| Age Group    | "iAM Smart"<br>Users | "iAM Smart+"<br>Users | Total            |
|--------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| 11 to 30     | 389 000              | 154 000               | 543 000          |
| 31 to 50     | 534 000              | 644 000               | 1 178 000        |
| 51 to 70     | 434 000              | 346 000               | 780 000          |
| 71 or above  | 58 000               | 43 000                | 101 000          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1 415 000</b>     | <b>1 187 000</b>      | <b>2 602 000</b> |

Remarks: The figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.



In terms of the registration, about 1.4 million users have registered for “iAM Smart” with their mobile phones, and about 1.2 million users through Post Offices, mobile registration stations or self-registration kiosks.

The usage of “iAM Smart” in 2023 was about 30 million, with daily average usage of about 82 000.

2. We updated the design of homepage for the “iAM Smart” mobile app in October 2023, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical daily-life information, such as local real-time weather, traffic conditions, waiting time for accident and emergency services in hospitals, locations of automated external defibrillator, real-time cross-harbour tunnel tolls, Scameter, etc., by just opening the “iAM Smart” mobile app. The enhanced features to be launched progressively from 2024 to 2025 include:
  - Setting up dedicated pages that encompass a range of common government service applications, enquiries and information, and simplifying the searching services and user workflow, so as to provide a more unified user experience;
  - Enabling citizens to authorise the share use of their personal data collected by different government departments through the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway”, so as to obviate the need to input or submit the same information repeatedly when they use different government services;
  - Introducing “one-tap login” for government services to allow citizens to directly access some commonly-used government services with their “iAM Smart” accounts;
  - Introducing a digital personal document wallet function to facilitate citizens to manage their digital personal documents issued by different government departments; and
  - Simplifying the registration process and setting up additional self-registration kiosks.

Bureaux and departments will start to enhance their existing online services orderly and integrate the services into the new “iAM Smart” platform, with a view to providing a better user experience. By revamping the overall system design and enhancing the functionalities of “iAM Smart”, we will systematically consolidate, categorise and organise the existing online services of various government departments, and to simplify the overall workflow, allowing citizens to directly access relevant government services through the “one-tap login” function of their “iAM Smart” accounts. We expect that there will be about 40 new online services adopting “iAM Smart” this year.

3. We will upgrade the functions and services of the “iAM Smart” platform, streamline the registration process and install more self-registration kiosks, strengthen the publicity and promotion, as well as collaborate with district bodies and organisations, etc., to encourage more citizens to register for and use “iAM Smart”.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB215**

**(Question Serial No. 3786)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Department mentioned that it “will continue to implement the Knowing More About IT Programme and the IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools Programme”. In this connection, will the Department advise this Committee of the following:

1. What were the numbers of the secondary and primary schools which had submitted their applications under the two programmes in the past two years? What were the projects and amounts of funding involved?
2. Continuing from the above question, what are the numbers of secondary and primary students benefiting from the above two programmes?
3. How will the Government encourage more schools to apply for the programmes in the coming year?

Asked by: Hon Kenneth LEUNG Yuk-wai (LegCo internal reference no.: 56)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer launched the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” and “Knowing More About IT” Programmes in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 school year respectively, providing funding support for all publicly-funded primary and secondary schools in the territory to organise extra-curricular activities related to information technology (IT). These two Programmes have been well received by schools and relevant stakeholders since their launch. As at February 2024, over 90% of eligible schools have applied for the funding. The details are as follows:

| (As at February 2024)                                  | <b>“IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme</b>  | <b>“Knowing More About IT” Programme</b>   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Number of Eligible Schools</b>                      | 513  | 537  |
| <b>Number of Applied Schools</b>                       | 486  | 492  |
| <b>Number of Schools Approved</b>                      | 482  | 482  |
| <b>Number of Schools with Applications in Progress</b> | 4  | 10   |
| <b>Approved Amount (\$ million)</b>                    | 384  | 163  |
| <b>Number of Funded Activities</b>                     | 2 872  | 1 861  |
| <b>Scope of Activities (Examples)</b>                  | Artificial intelligence, coding, drones, robotics, augmented reality/virtual reality, Internet of Things, blockchain, big data and cloud computing, etc. | Artificial intelligence, coding, drones, robotics, augmented reality/virtual reality, Internet of Things, etc. |
| <b>Number of Students Benefited</b>                    | About 211 000  | About 164 000  |

To encourage more schools to apply for the Programmes, we will regularly organise briefing and sharing sessions to introduce successful cases of the Programmes to secondary and primary schools and invite participating schools to share their experiences in the implementation of the related activities. In addition, we will continue to co-organise solution days with different organisations, including Cyberport, Hong Kong Science and Technology Park and various education associations, etc. with a view to keeping schools abreast of the latest IT-related activities and developments in the market.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB216**

**(Question Serial No. 2642)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the smartphone mobile applications that related to government services and information technology,

1. please tabulate:

- 1a. the total numbers and names of smartphone mobile applications developed by the Government;
- 1b. whether these applications are still available for download/providing services or information?
- 1c. the numbers of downloads and usage statistics in the past year (2023);
- 1d. the maintenance costs of these applications in the past year (2023)?

2. There are some opinions that the smartphone mobile applications developed by different government departments have resulted in overlapping functions. For example, since "iAM Smart" already has the function of verifying personal identity, whether it can replace the "Contactless e-Channel" app developed by the Immigration Department for travelers on their arrival or departure at control points? Will the Government consolidate these applications to ensure the proper use of public funds?

3. Prior to the development of the new smartphone mobile applications related to government services and information, is there any mechanism in place for government departments to consider incorporating the services into the "iAM Smart"? If yes, what are the details. If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

1. Over the past 5 years, bureaux/departments (B/Ds) launched a total of 116 mobile applications (apps), 38 of which had been decommissioned. Information of the mobile apps currently available for download by the public is listed in Annex I and that of the decommissioned mobile apps in Annex II. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has not kept records on the numbers of downloads and usage statistics in the past year for the concerned mobile apps.
2. and 3. OGCIO has formulated and regularly published relevant guidelines on the development of mobile apps for circulations, reminding B/Ds to launch and update mobile apps, or to consolidate existing mobile apps, in a cost-effective manner with reference to the “Practice Guide for Developing Mobile Apps”. B/Ds will take into account their operational needs, mode of service and other factors, including the objectives and usage of the apps, needs of the target user groups, resources required for development and maintenance of the mobile apps, and whether the functions incorporated will render the apps complicated and difficult to use, etc. to determine whether to develop new mobile apps or to consolidate the existing ones. OGCIO also requests B/Ds to conduct regular reviews after the launch of mobile apps, including whether the apps have met users’ needs and achieved the expected outcomes and cost-effectiveness. If the projects/initiatives related to the mobile apps have been completed, or there are other more effective ways to provide the same service, or the needs of the target user groups have changed, or the app download rates are lower than expected, B/Ds should consider decommissioning the apps.

On the other hand, we are driving the comprehensive upgrade of the overall system design and functionalities of “iAM Smart” to facilitate B/Ds to integrate their existing e-services into the new “iAM Smart” platform, and simplify their overall workflow, so that the members of the public can obtain government services in a more convenient manner and enjoy a more unified user experience.

**1. B/Ds' Mobile apps currently available for download (As at 31 January 2024)**

| No. | B/D  | Name                      | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost   | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|--|---------------------------|--|---|--|
| 1.  | Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department | Enjoy Hiking              | The mobile app supports speedy mountain rescue operations. By activating the "Hiker Tracking Service" and Global Positioning System (GPS) of the mobile phone before a user's trip, the system will record the user's tracking location which could be retrieved to shorten the rescue time if the need arises. The mobile app also links to the "Enjoy Hiking" website, which adopts a responsive design for viewing on mobile phones. The website features different hiking trails, hiking routes and attractions across the country parks, enabling users to choose a suitable route based on personal interest, physical fitness and experience to enjoy the countryside in Hong Kong. | \$57,000  | 470 000                                  |
| 2.  | Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department | Reef Check Hong Kong      | Citizens may use this app to browse the coral coverage rate of the 33 survey sites in the eastern waters of Hong Kong as well as the distribution and photos of 48 indicator species including reef building corals, fish and invertebrates.   | \$49,500  | 14 000                                   |
| 3.  | Buildings Department                               | Quick Guide for MBIS/MWIS | To provide the public with a convenient way to understand MBIS/MWIS via pictures, flowcharts, FAQ, etc.  | \$326,200<br>(Including the costs for maintenance of mobile app, upgrade of functions and operating system. No separate cost breakdown is available.) | 25 200                                   |

| No. | B/D  | Name                               | Description   | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|--|------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| 4.  | Buildings Department                         | MWCS - Quick Guide for Minor Works | To provide the public with a handy way to access information about the procedures and requirements for carrying out minor works.<br>To allow users to easily identify class/type/item of minor works, to search the registers of registered building professional/registered contractors for minor works; and to provide information on Validation Schemes for Household Minor Works and Unauthorised Signboards, and Designated Exempted Building Works. | \$334,200<br>(Including the costs for maintenance of mobile app, upgrade of functions and operating system. No separate cost breakdown is available.)    | 67 000                                   |
| 5.  | Buildings Department                         | WIN SAFE                           | To enable property owners to search for and appoint Qualified Persons (QPs) for early compliance of Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (MWIS) notices issued by the BD so as to ensure building safety  | \$121,000  | 6 000                                    |
| 6.  | Civil Aviation Department                    | eSUA                               | To register a Small Unmanned Aircraft (SUA) and remote control pilot to obtain safety information, relevant regulatory documents and guidelines, and the latest SUA restricted flight zone map.   | \$64,000   | 33 000                                   |
| 7.  | Civil Engineering and Development Department | HK Geology                         | To give a simplified account of the geology of Hong Kong as a reference tool in field, which is useful for teachers, students, members of the public and geotechnical practitioners.  | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 38 000                                   |
| 8.  | Civil Service Bureau                         | Government Vacancies               | To facilitate the public to browse or search for information of government vacancies by mobile communication devices.   | \$587,000<br>(Including the costs for mobile app maintenance, backend system maintenance and website maintenance. The related costs cannot be separated) | 1 000 000                                |

| No. | B/D                              | Name  | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost   | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|----------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| 9.  | Correctional Services Department | Hong Kong Correctional Services Department Mobile App | To enhance communication of the Department with all sectors of the community. It enables the public to receive the latest and important information and services of the Department (including the locations and visiting hours of correctional facilities as well as travel routes), and learn more about the Department.  | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved. | 43 000                                   |
| 10. | Customs and Excise Department    | HK Car First Registration Tax                         | To provide the public with information on the motor vehicle first registration tax.  | \$50,000  | 31 000                                   |
| 11. | Department of Health             | IMPACT  | IMPACT provides “Reducing bacterial resistance with IMPACT guidelines”. This app has search function. Users can use this app to browse the antibiograms uploaded by the Clusters of the Hospital Authority and to perform calculator functions using pre-set medical formulae. This app aims to enhance the awareness of medical staff on using antibiotics and is a very important reference.   | \$48,000  | 51 000                                   |
| 12. | Department of Health             | Quit Smoking App                                      | This app provides a wealth of information on quitting smoking, and introduces quitting methods as well as offers users tips to cope with withdrawal symptoms through video clips featuring local celebrities. The app also offers appropriate quitting advice, keeps track of their quitting progress and issues regular reminders according to their smoking habit.<br><br>Non-smokers can learn more about quitting smoking and recommend the app to their family and friends. | \$40,000  | 87 000                                   |



| No. | B/D                  | Name                   | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost   | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|----------------------|------------------------|--|---|--|
| 13. | Department of Health | 衛生署DH                  | <p>@DH App is the designated digital front door of the Department of Health (DH). It serves as a quick channel for Healthcare Professionals, Institutions &amp; Schools, Business &amp; Workplace and General Public to access the Department's information, eServices and Resources such as electronic application forms, public health advice, publication, videos, infographics and upcoming events offered by DH.</p> <p>@DH has exclusive collection of Lazy Lion Whatsapp stickers available for download to share with friends and family.</p> <p>@DH also has notification function to receive instant messages on public health, and any updates on events you are interested in.</p> | \$65,000  | 690<br>(Launched in Jan 2024)            |
| 14. | Development Bureau   | My Kowloon East        | A comprehensive mobile app for Kowloon East. Using information and communications technology in conjunction with the information in Kowloon East to promote the "Smart City" initiative and the concept of "Walkable Kowloon East".  | \$97,000  | 20 000                                   |
| 15. | Education Bureau     | Educational Multimedia | It provides a convenient platform for students, teachers and parents to access over 1 200 Educational Multimedia (EMM) curriculum-based resources currently on the EDB EMM website anytime and anywhere.   | \$278,500   | 204 000                                  |
| 16. | Education Bureau     | KG Profile             | To provide relevant information of kindergartens across the territory and enhance the transparency of the kindergartens to help parents make informed school choices for their children.   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved. | 270 000                                  |
| 17. | Education Bureau     | e-Navigator            | "e-Navigator" is a life planning tool that helps students search for course information across different local institutions and levels (e.g. degree and sub-degree programmes, Diploma of Applied Education and other programmes from the Qualifications Register), so as to assist them in planning for their future studies according to their interests and abilities.  | \$132,000   | 250 000                                  |

| No. | B/D               | Name                 | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost   | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|-------------------|----------------------|--|---|--|
| 18. | Education Bureau  | History Trip Go Easy | This mobile app contains an e-book with guideline on field trips and exemplars of learning and teaching activities. It also adopts augmented reality (AR) which creatively incorporates field trips into the learning and teaching activities of intangible cultural heritage (Cheung Chau Jiao Festival) and provides virtual reality (VR) activities to enhance students' motivation to learn. | \$50,000  | 54 000                                   |
| 19. | Efficiency Office | Tell me@1823 v2      | This mobile app is the revamped version of Tell me@1823, which enables citizens to submit cases to 1823, receive replies from departments, follow up on the submitted cases and obtain instant information via chatbot and 1823 FAQ search engine.   | \$400,000<br>(Including the costs for maintenance and upgrade of mobile application and backend system) | 110 000                                  |

| No. | B/D   | Name        | Description   | Annual Maintenance Cost | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|---|-------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| 20. | Electrical & Mechanical Services Department | E&M Connect | <p>EMSD Mobile Apps 《E&amp;M Connect》 provides updated EMSD news and e-services, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Energy Saver: To use camera to capture the reference number of energy label by OCR to instantly show and compare the energy performance, projected annual electricity or fuel bills and recommendations of more energy efficient models of 10 prescribed products under the Mandatory Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme (excluding compact fluorescent lamps) to facilitate the public in choosing energy efficient products.</li> <li>2. E&amp;M Finder: Using the current location of smart phone or specified location to show the nearby Registered Vehicle Maintenance Workshops, Registered Electrical Contractors and LPG Cylinder Distributors (with icons of their corresponding gold, silver or bronze rating under the LPG Cylinder Distributor Safety Performance Recognition Scheme) on the map. It also supports the users to dial the telephone numbers of service providers conveniently to request for services.</li> <li>3. E&amp;M Trade App: The subapp provides information about safety alerts, code of practice and other relevant documents updates, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) courses, etc. to Registered Electrical Workers, Registered Lifts / Escalators Engineers, Registered Lifts / Escalators Workers and Registered Gas Installers. Users can sign up a mobile app account and store the information of their certificate of registration so as to enroll for relevant courses directly on the app, record training hours, show their “Digital E&amp;M Licences” to the public and receive push notification reminders on registration expiry. The mobile application also provides “Digital E&amp;M Licences” service to the Gas related Competent Persons and the Approved Competent Persons for Locating Underground Electricity Cables.</li> <li>4. Scan Fast: Using mobile phone camera and Optical Character Recognition (OCR) function to capture the image of registration cards of the Registered Gas Installers (RGI) to show the related RGI information and registered classes.</li> <li>5. EMYA: Using the mobile application for browsing the latest activity information, newsletter, and quiz games of the E&amp;M Youth Ambassador programme, as well as logging in to the member domain via the activity information page to sign up for activities.</li> </ol> | \$398,000               | 27 000                                   |

| No. | B/D   | Name                                      | Description   | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|---|---|---|--|--|
| 21. | Electrical & Mechanical Services Department | E&M Trade                                 | The target users of “E&M Trade App” are the Registered Electrical Workers, Registered Lifts / Escalators Engineers, Registered Lifts / Escalators Workers, Registered Gas Installers and Registered Vehicle Mechanics. The app provides information about safety alerts, code of practice and other relevant documents updates, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) courses, etc. to E&M practitioners. Users can sign up a mobile app account and store the information of their certificate of registration so as to enroll for relevant courses directly on the app, record training hours, show their “Digital E&M Licences” to the public and receive push notification reminders on registration expiry. The mobile application also provides “Digital E&M Licences” service to the Registered Vehicle Mechanics, the Gas related Competent Persons and the Approved Competent Persons for Locating Underground Electricity Cables. | \$159,000  | 69 000                                   |
| 22. | Environmental Protection Department         | EV-Charging Easy                          | To provide information on real-time EV Charger availability in Hong Kong by EPD.  | The system maintenance cost is included in the development cost. | 18 000                                   |
| 23. | Environmental Protection Department         | Hong Kong Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) | To provide real-time AQHI recorded at the 15 general and 3 roadside air quality monitoring stations of EPD.   | \$54,000   | 190 000                                  |
| 24. | Environmental Protection Department         | Waste Less                                | To provide information of over 7 000 recyclable collection points all over Hong Kong and the latest news and knowledge about waste treatment, reduction and recycling. To enable members of the public to obtain information on waste reduction and recycling more easily; and share the contents and messages of the “Waste Less” app with their friends.  | \$150,000  | 110 000                                  |
| 25. | Environmental Protection Department         | HoHoSkips                                 | Mobile application “HoHoSkips” assists citizens and renovation workers in properly disposing of small quantity of construction waste. It provides construction waste collection booking services, real-time positions of waste collection vehicles, tools for communicating with staff of recyclers, etc.   | \$98,000   | 34 000                                   |

| No. | B/D                                 | Name                         | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 26. | Environmental Protection Department | GREEN\$ Mobile App           | “GREEN\$ Mobile App” is a mobile app developed by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Its primary function is to facilitate the public to participate the GREEN\$ Electronic Participation Incentive Scheme (ePIS) using smartphone. Members of the GREEN\$ ePIS will earn GREEN\$ for redemption of gift items when submitting recyclables at Recycling Stations, Recycling Stores and Recycling Spots for clean recycling.   | \$1,300,000<br>(Including the costs for mobile app development, maintenance and enhancement) | 423 000                                  |
| 27. | Environmental Protection Department | Beach Water Quality Forecast | The “Beach Water Quality Forecast System” aims to provide daily water quality forecasts for all gazetted beaches in Hong Kong. Members of the public can handily acquire the latest daily beach water quality forecast information via the mobile application to facilitate early planning of water recreation activities.   | The maintenance cost (first year) is included in the development cost of the mobile app.     | 1 900<br>(Launched in Aug 2023)          |
| 28. | Environmental Protection Department | Plastic-Free Rewards         | This app facilitates participation in the “Plastic-Free Takeaway, Use Reusable Tableware” Campaign of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) to encourage members of the public to go plastic-and-disposable-free when ordering takeaways so as to reduce the use of disposable plastic tableware at source.<br><br>“Plastic-Free Rewards Mobile App” is a mobile app developed by (EPD of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Its primary function is to facilitate the public to participate in the “Plastic-Free Takeaway, Use Reusable Tableware” Campaign using smartphone. Members of the campaign will earn electronic stamps when ordering takeaway without obtaining disposable tableware at the participating eateries. The stamps earned can be used for redemption of rewards. | The maintenance cost is included in the development cost of the mobile app.                  | 2 800<br>(Launched in Nov 2023)          |
| 29. | Fire Services Department            | HKFSD                        | The Hong Kong Fire Services Department (HKFSD) Mobile Application is designed to provide information of fire safety and ambulance service, so that the public can have a better understanding of the work and services of the department. The Mobile Application will be updated and enhanced on an ongoing basis to meet the needs of the community.  | The maintenance cost (first year) is included in the development cost of the mobile app.     | 74 000                                   |

| No. | B/D                                       | Name                                      | Description   | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|---|---|---|--|--|
| 30. | Food and Environmental Hygiene Department | Nutrition Calculator                      | Help the public make better food choices by using nutrition labels.   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 150 000                                  |
| 31. | Food and Environmental Hygiene Department | Internet Memorial Service                 | A memorial website provided for the public, facilitating them to pay tribute and show condolence to their lost loved ones at anytime and anywhere.  | The maintenance of the mobile app is included in the whole system maintenance contract of Internet Memorial Service.   | 30 000                                   |
| 32. | Health Bureau                             | 醫健通eHealth                                | One-stop access of useful health information and health records.  | The maintenance of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. No separate cost breakdown is available. | 3 200 000                                |
| 33. | Home Affairs Department                   | Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses | Users can search for the latest details of licensed hotels, guesthouses, holiday flats and holiday camps in Hong Kong. They can also report suspected unlicensed guesthouses through the “Report” function. | \$203,000  | 19 000                                   |
| 34. | Hong Kong Observatory                     | MyObservatory                             | To provide weather information to mobile users.   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 11 000 000                               |

| No. | B/D                    | Name                          | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost   | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|------------------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 35. | Hong Kong Observatory  | MyWorldWeather                | To provide official city weather forecast worldwide to mobile users.   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.   | 450 000                                  |
| 36. | Hong Kong Police Force | Junior Police Call Mobile App | The app serves as a digital platform which offers Junior Police Call (JPC) membership application, event enrolment, e-learning packages and loyalty reward programme for JPC members. It aims to strengthen interaction among JPC members and Police.  | \$1,039,000<br>(Including the fees for mobile app maintenance, backend system maintenance, website maintenance, system hosting services and system license)           | 47 000                                   |
| 37. | Hong Kong Police Force | Hong Kong Police Mobile App   | To engage the community and strengthen the communication with different sectors of society, the Police launched the first “Hong Kong Police Mobile Application” on 18 July 2012. By using this mobile app on smartphones, users can access the latest police information anytime and anywhere. | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.   | 320 000                                  |
| 38. | Hong Kong Police Force | HKSOS                         | HKSOS is the most important outdoor safety app designed to save lives and speed up the response time of rescue services in life-critical missions. It is directly linked to the 999 Call Centre and becomes your lifeline in an emergency.   | This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the “Smart Rescue Solution”, and the Hong Kong Police Force has not kept a record of specific expenditure items | 43 000                                   |

| No. | B/D                    | Name             | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|------------------------|------------------|--|--|--|
| 39. | Hong Kong Police Force | Scameter+        | To help the public identify frauds and online pitfalls and increase their crime prevention awareness.  | This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the “Prevention and Detection of Crime”, and the Hong Kong Police Force does not keep a record of specific expenditure items | 230 000                                  |
| 40. | Hongkong Post          | Hongkong Post    | The app aims to provide information on the services provided by Hongkong Post (HKP). Its functions include: checking and tracking of the latest delivery status of mail items; calculating postages and comparing different postal services; searching postal facilities and providing relevant information; providing the latest notices or press releases of HKP; finding the correct presentation of Hong Kong local addresses; arranging pickup services of mail items of SpeedPost and Local CourierPost; providing information electronically for customs clearance; uploading e-Cheque to settle HKP bills; changing mail collection office; applying for mail redelivery service; and settling surcharge for underpaid mail. | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 660 000                                  |
| 41. | Hongkong Post          | ShopThruPost 2.0 | The app aims to provide an online platform to place advance order for or make purchases of the latest philatelic products and postal stationeries supported by Hongkong Post local and cross-border delivery services.   | The maintenance cost of the mobile app is included in the total system maintenance cost of the whole on-line shopping platform. No cost breakdown is available.                    | 57 000                                   |



| No. | B/D                              | Name                           | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 42. | Immigration Department           | Contactless e-Channel          | To facilitates eligible Hong Kong residents to enrol for Contactless e-Channel Service. After enrolment, Hong Kong residents can use an encrypted e-Channel QR code generated from the Contactless e-Channel mobile application to enter the contactless e-Channels. During the process, there will be no need to touch shared equipment viz. the fingerprint scanner so as to provide faster, more convenient and hygienic immigration clearance service.                     | The contractor will provide system maintenance service as required in the contract | 1 100 000                                |
| 43. | Immigration Department           | HK Immigration Department      | To facilitate the Hong Kong residents and visitors to use the wide-ranging electronic services and obtain relevant information of the Immigration Department, such as appointment booking, application services, form filling, obtaining information on land boundary control points waiting time, enquiring tag status and application status, submissions of documents, calling the 1868 hotline via network data and accessing Immigration Department YouTube Channel, etc. | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.        | 1 400 000                                |
| 44. | Information Services Department  | news.gov.hk                    | To facilitate the browsing of news.gov.hk with smartphones or mobile devices.  | \$50,000   | 220 000                                  |
| 45. | Intellectual Property Department | “No Fakes Pledge” Shop Search  | To facilitate tourists and consumers in searching for shop information of all participating retail merchants of the “No Fakes Pledge” Scheme.  | \$40,200   | 70 000                                   |
| 46. | Labour Department                | Interactive Employment Service | To facilitate job seekers to search for suitable vacancies in the job vacancy database of the Labour Department with mobile devices anytime and anywhere.  | \$82,000   | 1 400 000                                |
| 47. | Labour Department                | Work Safety Alert              | To alert employers/proprietors/contractors to the occurrences of serious or fatal work injuries and remind them of relevant measures needed to be taken to prevent recurrence of similar accidents.  | \$49,000   | 28 000                                   |

| No. | B/D               | Name                   | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost   | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|-------------------|------------------------|--|---|--|
| 48. | Labour Department | Youth Employment Start | To provide the latest employment support information of Youth Employment Start to young people.  | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved. | 28 000                                   |
| 49. | Lands Department  | MyMapHK                | <p>“MyMapHK” is a pilot mobile map app which provides members of the public convenient and on-the-go access to up-to-date, detailed bilingual maps and integrated geospatial information of over 120 types of public facilities in Hong Kong from 26 bureaux / departments. The public can use “MyMapHK” anytime and anywhere to conveniently and quickly access reliable, detailed and up-to-date maps provided by the government, as well as the location and information of comprehensive public facilities.</p> <p>“MyMapHK” also provides different themes, namely “Map”, “Hiking”, “Old Hong Kong”, “Election”, “SOS”, and “Offline Map” with specific functions to account for different users’ needs.</p>  | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved. | 650 000                                  |
| 50. | Lands Department  | VoiceMapHK             | <p>“VoiceMapHK” is a digital inclusion mobile map app. Making use of the “voice-over feature” of smartphones, “VoiceMapHK” facilitates users, especially the visually impaired, to locate their current positions and retrieve geographic information about surrounding areas. The location information provided by the App will be supplemented by orientation and distance information, which further helps the visually impaired users understand the surrounding environment.</p> <p>“VoiceMapHK” provides the following functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “My Location” function which allows users to locate their current position.</li> <li>- “Nearby Facilities” function which searches for the nearby buildings, facilities, MTR accesses, bus stops, etc.</li> <li>- “Voice Over” feature which facilitates the visually impaired users to retrieve location information.</li> <li>- Available in Chinese and English versions and operates on iOS 8.1 or higher operating systems.</li> </ul> | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved. | 9 600<br>(Serves the visually impaired)  |

| No. | B/D                                      | Name         | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|--|--------------|--|--|--|
| 51. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department | My Library   | <p>“My Library” provides a safe and convenient channel to access the services of the Hong Kong Public Libraries. Through the app, members of the public can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- log in their library accounts</li> <li>- search for, reserve and renew library materials</li> <li>- save and retrieve library materials in My List</li> <li>- check the addresses and opening hours of public libraries</li> </ul> <p>The app also uses push notification technology to provide personalised alert services, including pick-up notice and due date reminder.</p>   | \$223,000  | 780 000                                  |
| 52. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department | URBTIX       | <p>URBTIX (Urban Ticketing System) provides convenient and reliable ticketing services for event presenters and members of the public. The brand new “URBTIX” mobile app has been launched since 1 December 2022 to facilitate ticket buyers to make purchases online using smart phones more conveniently. For ticket buyers who have registered as members, this app will further provide a wide range of personalised functions to enhance their buying experience including bookmark on favourite events, email reminder to attend purchased events, keeping and transfer of e-tickets, use of biometric authentication features such as fingerprint / face ID for member log-in, etc.</p> | Included in the service contract of URBTIX. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.       | 580 000                                  |
| 53. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department | Star Hoppers | <p>Equipped with Chinese and Western star charts which simulate the star field with bilingual audio recordings of information on celestial objects and asterisms. The latest information on astronomical events and activities of the Space Museum is also provided.</p>   | \$199,980  | 380 000                                  |
| 54. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department | iM Guide     | <p>“iM Guide” is a museum mobile multimedia guide platform. Visitors can have a deeper understanding of exhibits through text, audio, video and multimedia contents. It makes use of indoor positioning technique and outdoor GPS to provide location-based information and navigation services for exhibits and facilities.</p>   | Included in the routine maintenance cost of MMGS. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available. | 62 000                                   |

| No. | B/D  | Name                            | Description   | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|--|---------------------------------|---|--|--|
| 55. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department           | My SmartPLAY                    | “My SmartPLAY” (app) developed and maintained by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region provides a safe and convenient way to enjoy LCSD services. Citizens can create a SmartPLAY user account and update user profile information through the app. Booking functionality for other leisure facilities and programmes will be available in future versions of the app.   | The total maintenance cost of the project is \$23,500,000. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app. | 370 000                                  |
| 56. | Marine Department                                  | eSeaGo                          | “eSeaGo” offers simple and convenient solution for displaying the chart information of the Hong Kong waters free of charge. Through “eSeaGo”, users can download the chart information provided by the Hydrographic Office of the Marine Department and display it in offline mode. With mobile device’s positioning function, “eSeaGo” will assist sailing in Hong Kong waters. Meanwhile, the information provided on “eSeaGo” can also be read in an offline mode. “eSeaGo” provides content and information in raster images which should not be used as a substitute for paper nautical charts or electronic navigational charts. “eSeaGo” is not designed to be used for navigational purposes or as a substitute for any navigational equipment that is required under applicable regulations or laws. | \$163,000  | 100 000                                  |
| 57. | Office of the Communications Authority             | OFCA Broadband Performance Test | A platform that enables consumers to measure the performance of their broadband connections. For details, please refer to the OFCA’s website <a href="https://speedtest.ofca.gov.hk/index.html">https://speedtest.ofca.gov.hk/index.html</a> .  | Covered by OFCA Trading Fund   | 123 000 000 (no. of tests)               |
| 58. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | EventHK                         | A one-stop inter-departmental platform that provides users with a convenient way to look for public events organised by government departments or in government premises.   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 119 000                                  |

| No. | B/D  | Name                | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost   | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024       |
|-----|--|---------------------|--|---|--|
| 59. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | GovHK Apps          | A one-stop inter-departmental platform for members of the public to search for and download an array of government mobile apps.  | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.   | 420 000  |
| 60. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | GovHK Notifications | An inter-departmental mobile app that provides a convenient way for members of the public to receive government information and alerts via smart phones.   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.   | 950 000  |
| 61. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | Wi-Fi.HK            | To facilitate the public and visitors in searching for the locations of hotspots providing Wi-Fi service that is either completely free or free for a limited period of time under the Common Hong Kong Wi-Fi Brand “Wi-Fi.HK”.  | \$59,000  | 400 000  |
| 62. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | iAM Smart           | “iAM Smart” mobile app facilitates members of the public to log in and use online services with a single digital identity using their personal mobile phone through the one-stop personalised digital services platform of “iAM Smart”.  | The app is developed together with the “iAM Smart” platform. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available. | More than 2 600 000 registered iAM Smart users |
| 63. | Radio Television Hong Kong                         | RTHK 中華五千年#         | Flourishing ages including the Han and Tang Dynasties are selected in the long Chinese history. Heroes and stories in these two dynasties are featured in audio drama, cartoon and text for easy understanding of the Chinese history. World events at the same period will also be shown. | \$78,000  | 203 000  |

| No. | B/D                        | Name                   | Description   | Annual Maintenance Cost | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|----------------------------|------------------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| 64. | Radio Television Hong Kong | RTHK Radio             | It provides live webcasts of RTHK radio channels, radio archive, highlighted video clips, programme archive, traffic news and weather forecast. Users can also customise their favourite playlist by making use of personalised settings such as “Favourites” and “Play Later”, and share with friends popular programmes and video clips via social media.   | \$155,000               | 540 000                                  |
| 65. | Radio Television Hong Kong | RTHK News              | It provides instant news, news programmes, weather forecast and traffic news in both Chinese and English, which contain texts, photos and audio-visual contents. Users can listen to live programmes of RTHK Radio 1 or Radio 3. The “Push Alert” function instantly brings the latest world and local news to users.   | \$53,636                | 710 000                                  |
| 66. | Radio Television Hong Kong | RTHK on the Go         | Its functions include listening to live RTHK radio programmes, access to instant news, photo news and video news as well as weather forecast. Users can listen to/watch the 10 newest episodes of some 100 RTHK podcasts available at Podcast Station.  | \$93,638                | 2 540 000                                |
| 67. | Radio Television Hong Kong | RTHK TV                | It provides live webcast of RTHK TV 31 and 32, video-on-demand and download to enable users to access video programmes anytime and anywhere. Users can also customise their favourite playlist by making use of the programme subscription function.  | \$100,500               | 660 000                                  |
| 68. | Radio Television Hong Kong | RTHK Audio Description | RTHK Audio Description is a TV programme mobile app developed by the Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK). Simply with a mobile device, you can enjoy the Audio Description (AD) service through listening to the AD sound tracks when the selected live programmes are broadcast on RTHK TV 31. In this way, visually impaired people cannot only enjoy RTHK’s TV programmes with AD on their own, but they can also share the experience with their family members sitting together, who listen to the original sound track from TV sets simultaneously. | \$259,750               | 5 200<br>(Serves the visually impaired)  |

| No. | B/D                       | Name                       | Description   | Annual Maintenance Cost   | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|---------------------------|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| 69. | Security Bureau           | Safeguard HK               | Safeguard HK is a one-stop platform providing useful information on safeguarding life and property in daily life and while travelling.  | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.   | 280 000                                  |
| 70. | Social Welfare Department | Senior Citizen Card Scheme | It facilitates both the elderly and their family members in searching for and selecting the concessions and services under the “Senior Citizen Card Scheme” of the Social Welfare Department.   | \$37,000  | 190 000                                  |
| 71. | Tourism Commission        | A Symphony of Lights       | It lets visitors and the public to tune into the music of “A Symphony of Lights” and obtain information on this spectacular show.   | \$77,000  | 34 000                                   |
| 72. | Transport Department      | HKeMeter                   | It provides real-time occupancy information of metered parking spaces so as to facilitate motorists in finding vacant on-street parking spaces. Motorists could also pay the parking fee remotely with multiple payment means through the app. The key features of “HKeMeter” include:<br>1. Real-time metered parking spaces information<br>2. Remote payment for parking time with multiple electronic payment means<br>3. Notification to users before expiry of parking time  | Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.   | 770 000                                  |
| 73. | Transport Department      | HKeMobility                | “HKeMobility” is an all-in-one traffic and transport mobile application with an enhanced user interface which facilitates fast and convenient search for routes of different transportation mode, journey times and fares, and disseminates real-time traffic and transport news to enable users to plan for the most appropriate travel arrangements. The key features of it include:<br>(a) one-stop route search for public transport, driving and walking;<br>(b) real-time traffic and transport information;<br>(c) promoting walking by offering barrier-free walking route search information covering all districts of Hong Kong ; and<br>(d) HKeMobility also provides an elderly mode to facilitate senior citizens in obtaining public transport information. | Included in the cost of the whole project. Apart from function enhancements, it also provides services to other associated systems, therefore the cost could not be broken down separately. | 2 700 000                                |

| No. | B/D                       | Name                     | Description   | Annual Maintenance Cost  | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024 |
|-----|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|--|
| 74. | Transport Department      | HKeToll                  | <p>The Transport Department (TD) launched a new mobile application “HKeToll”. It provides a one-stop platform for the public to easily manage the toll fee with efficiency. Motorists could pay tolls of government tolled tunnels and Tsing Sha Control Area with ease by remote means through the mobile application. It will bring convenience to motorists with a smooth road driving experience. Its key features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Apply Vehicle Tag</li> <li>(2) Sign Up for HKeToll Account</li> <li>(3) Activate Class Tag</li> <li>(4) Payment Arrangement and Top Up HKeToll Account</li> <li>(5) Check tunnel usage records, payment status and view e-monthly statements</li> <li>(6) Customer Service Centre/Service Outlet Booking</li> </ul> <p>For more information, please refer to the HKeToll website: <a href="http://www.hketoll.gov.hk">www.hketoll.gov.hk</a></p> | Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.      | 730 000                                  |
| 75. | Water Supplies Department | WSD Product Directory GA | Users can make use of the “WSD GA Product Directory” to search for plumbing products with the WSD’s General Acceptance by entering category, brand or model number.   | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved.  | 17 000                                   |
| 76. | Water Supplies Department | WSD Mobile App           | Members of the public can browse water bill summary, bill reminder, water suspension notices and important notifications of the WSD through their smart phones.   | The maintenance of WSD Mobile App is included in the system maintenance contract of Customer Care and Billing System (CCBS). | 270 000                                  |



| No. | B/D                       | Name           | Description  | Annual Maintenance Cost   | Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024       |
|-----|---------------------------|----------------|--|---|--|
| 77. | Water Supplies Department | H2OPE Centre   | “H2OPE Centre” mobile app for use of the “H2OPE Centre” can link a number of elements of the visit together including planning of visit, additional information related to the visit, recap on water conservation messages after visit, and additional activities and educational programme linking with water and the work of the WSD.                    | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved. | 2 000<br>(Serves visitors of the H2OPE Centre) |
| 78. | Water Supplies Department | WSD AMR System | “WSD AMR System” provides customers with timely water consumption information, benchmarking of water usage, alerting of suspected water leakage and water saving tips. Users are required to log on using their registered user IDs and passwords for the Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) Services of the Water Supplies Department to access the functions. | Maintained by deploying internal resources. No additional cost is involved. | 20 000   |

Note: B/Ds' names in alphabetical order.

# Mobile app with Chinese name only.

**2. B/Ds' Mobile apps already decommissioned (As at 31 January 2024)**

| <b>No.</b> | <b>B/D</b>   | <b>Name</b>                     |
|------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 1.         | Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department | Country Parks Tree Walks        |
| 2.         | Architectural Services Department                  | Architour                       |
| 3.         | Companies Registry                                 | CR eFiling                      |
| 4.         | Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau         | A Basic Law Quiz A Day          |
| 5.         | Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau         | Read the Basic Law with JOY!    |
| 6.         | Department of Health                               | Student Weight for Height Check |
| 7.         | Department of Health                               | Framework@PC                    |
| 8.         | Department of Health                               | Info for Nursing Mum            |
| 9.         | Department of Health                               | CookSmart: EatSmart Recipes     |
| 10.        | Department of Health                               | Snack Check                     |
| 11.        | Department of Health                               | 1069 Test Finder                |

| No. | B/D                                 | Name   |
|-----|-------------------------------------|--|
| 12. | Department of Health                | EatSmart Restaurant Star+  |
| 13. | Drainage Services Department        | DSD Connect  |
| 14. | Education Bureau                    | E-book of Understanding the Law, Access to Justice – Basic Law Learning Package (Junior Secondary) |
| 15. | Education Bureau                    | 說話加油站#   |
| 16. | Education Bureau                    | Reading Town 1   |
| 17. | Education Bureau                    | Reading Town 2   |
| 18. | Education Bureau                    | Reading Town 3   |
| 19. | Education Bureau                    | ApL應用學習  |
| 20. | Efficiency Office                   | 1823 Online mobile app   |
| 21. | Environmental Protection Department | Hong Kong T ▪ PARK   |
| 22. | Fire Services Department            | Live safe, be watchful   |
| 23. | Fire Services Department            | Catch time, save life  |

| No. | B/D  | Name                            |
|-----|--|---------------------------------|
| 24. | Fire Services Department                           | Stay Calm & Collected           |
| 25. | Food and Environmental Hygiene Department          | Food Safety                     |
| 26. | Home Affairs Bureau                                | “M” Mark Events App             |
| 27. | Hongkong Post                                      | HKPostStamps                    |
| 28. | Independent Commission Against Corruption          | ICAC Smartphone App             |
| 29. | Invest Hong Kong                                   | InvestHK News & Events          |
| 30. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department           | Bruce Lee: Kung Fu • Art • Life |
| 31. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department           | My URB TIX                      |
| 32. | Leisure and Cultural Services Department           | Multimedia Information          |
| 33. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | QR Code Verification Scanner    |
| 34. | Office of the Government Chief Information Officer | LeaveHomeSafe                   |
| 35. | Radio Television Hong Kong                         | RTHK Vox                        |

| <b>No.</b> | <b>B/D</b>                 | <b>Name</b>   |
|------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 36.        | Radio Television Hong Kong | RTHK Memory   |
| 37.        | Social Welfare Department  | 3E Mobile App |
| 38.        | Tourism Commission         | HK Food Truck |

Note: B/Ds' names in alphabetical order.

# Mobile app with Chinese name only.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB217**

**(Question Serial No. 2646)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding data interchange among government departments, please advise on the following:

1. Establishing a data bank, turning government services online and using big data are the powerful tools for streamlining government administration in the future. In respect of implementing the Consented Data Exchange Gateway, what is progress achieved? How many government departments have participated in the relevant work?
2. Does the Government have any plan to encourage and promote citizens' consent to the sharing of their personal data among government departments through the Consented Data Exchange Gateway? What are the items and amount of provision involved?
3. Does the Government have any long term goal to develop a comprehensive community-wide electronic database with statistics from the Population Census for use among government departments? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

1. To provide the public with greater convenience and facilitate data sharing among bureaux/departments (B/Ds), the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is implementing the Consented Data Exchange Gateway (CDEG) for roll-out before end-2024 for adoption by B/Ds. Upon obtaining consent from citizens, the CDEG will allow relevant government departments to share use personal data of the citizens stored in the systems of the participating B/Ds when the citizens apply for other government services, thus obviating the need for repeated input of the same personal data which will then enhance the user experience of the services and bringing convenience and facilitation to the public. OGCIO and the Efficiency Office are

working with individual B/Ds, including the Water Supplies Department, the Social Welfare Department, and the Working Family and the Student Financial Assistance Agency, on the arrangements of data interchange.

Moreover, OGCIO has already launched the CDEG functions of linking up with the Commercial Data Interchange (CDI) of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) since end-2023 to facilitate the sharing of data from government departments to financial institutions upon the authorisation of their enterprise clients. Currently, the Companies Registry (CR) has linked with the CDI through CDEG, through which financial institutions are able to obtain or check their clients' data stored in the system of CR upon obtaining authorisations from their clients, thus provide more convenient banking services to the clients. HKMA is now exploring with other B/Ds, such as the Land Registry, on the feasibility of data interchange with financial institutions.

2. We are driving the comprehensive upgrade of “iAM Smart”, including facilitating citizens to authorise through CDEG the use of their information collected by other departments on different government services, thus obviating the need to input or submit the same information repeatedly. By end-2025, the Government will fully adopt “iAM Smart” to realise the goal of “single portal for online government services”. We believe that more B/Ds will be able to further improve their services by utilising the data sharing functions of CDEG through “iAM Smart”. When CDEG is launched, we will collaborate with different existing channels of “iAM Smart” to publicise and promote the new features to the public, thereby enabling them to realise the convenience brought by the new functions of “iAM Smart”. We have earmarked provisions for the overall publicity of “iAM Smart”.
3. The Population Census is conducted under the Census and Statistics Ordinance (Cap. 316). According to the Ordinance, information collected in the Census is for statistical purposes only and the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) is not allowed to disclose the information provided by respondents in connection with the Census to any third party, including other government departments. All information collected from the Census that can be used to identify individuals or households, such as names and addresses, shall also be destroyed within one year after completion of data collection.

In order to reduce the reporting burden of respondents, C&SD has been exploring with relevant B/Ds the feasibility of utilising their administrative data, with a view to trimming some census questions (e.g. government subsidies and allowances received, rent and floor area of public housing units, etc.). The CDEG can exactly provide a secure technical platform to facilitate B/Ds to transmit administrative data directly to C&SD and promote data interchange.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB218**

**(Question Serial No. 0809)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 include continuing to promote and assist government departments in sourcing innovative Information Technology solutions to meet their business needs and enhance public services through the Smart Government Innovation Lab. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. In 2023-24, how many solutions from start-ups and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) were adopted and what types of public services were involved? What are the details of the expenditure?
2. In 2024-25, how many bidding opportunities are expected to be available for the industry and what types of public services will be involved? What are the details of the expenditure to be incurred?
3. What standards and monitoring mechanism have been put in place by the Government to safeguard the quality of the digital services procured?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

1. The Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) has been actively promoting and inviting industry players to assist government departments in adopting innovation and technology (I&T) solutions, such as artificial intelligence (AI), robotics technologies, data analytics and Internet of Things (IoT) applications, etc., with a view to enhancing public services and city management, and creating more business opportunities for local start-ups as well as small and medium enterprises (SMEs). In 2023-24, the Smart Lab matched 30 business needs from 15 government departments with solutions, including 27 solutions from local start-ups and SMEs, and collaborated with relevant departments



to conduct proof-of-concept (PoC) for 23 solutions with potential, covering various public service applications, such as assessing the safety risks of public facilities through the use of AI and video analytics technologies, assisting staff in enhancing the efficiency of telephone enquiry service through the use of automatic speech recognition and machine learning technologies, accelerating the workflow and shortening the document processing time through the use of AI and robotic process automation, etc. The total expenditure for the relevant PoC testing was around \$2.9 million.

2. In 2024-25, the Smart Lab will, taking into account the business needs of departments and the latest development of technologies, continue to arrange promotional activities to enhance government departments' understanding in I&T, and invite the I&T industry (including local start-ups and SMEs) players to introduce their technology solutions to government departments, explore the adoption of I&T in public services in collaboration with departments, arrange matching, testing and PoC for solutions that meet the needs of relevant departments. In 2024-25, the estimated expenditure for Smart Lab is around \$4.9 million. It is estimated that PoC testing will be arranged for around 20 solutions.
3. To encourage the departments to adopt innovative proposals in procurement and better facilitate the participation of start-ups and SMEs in the Government's procurement exercise, the Government introduced the pro-innovation government procurement policy in respect of non-works procurement in April 2019, under which procuring departments have to raise the weighting of technical scores and product quality in tender assessment, raising the technical weighting in the marking schemes to between 50% to 70%, of which certain scores are reserved for assessing innovative suggestions, including innovative suggestions related to applied technology, environmental protection and social well-being, etc. The price weighting has been adjusted downwards accordingly. The new marking scheme for assessing tenders puts more emphasis on technical assessment. Such adjustment is conducive to the support given to bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in engaging quality contractors, thereby enhancing the quality of procured electronic services.

Furthermore, Office of the Government Chief Information Officer has issued the Practice Guide to Project Management for IT Projects under an Outsourced Environment, covering project initiation, planning, implementation and completion. The Practice Guide also recommends a set of good practices for B/Ds to follow. B/Ds would monitor their contractors with reference to the contracts. If the performance of contractors fail to fulfil the service requirements and standards specified in the contracts, B/Ds may take actions based on the contractual clauses. These actions include issue warnings, demand for compensation or even initiate early termination of contract.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB219**

**(Question Serial No. 0812)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25, it is mentioned that a Digital Policy Office (DPO) will be set up to promote the digital government development and enhance data governance. The Government indicated that the DPO will be responsible for formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology, including the launch of up to 110 digital government and smart city initiatives from 2024 to 2025 so as to realise “single portal for online government services”. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the details of the estimated manpower and expenditure for promoting “single portal for online government services” by the DPO?
2. What are the details and implementation timetable of the 110 digital government and smart city initiatives?
3. The DPO will promote the connection with Guangdong Province to promote the Cross-boundary Public Services initiative. Does it involve any cross-boundary flow of Hong Kong data? If yes, what actions will the Government take in handling the potential privacy issues?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

1. The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of

data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy, as well as pressing ahead with the development of digital government and smart city.

The upgrade of the “iAM Smart” platform is one of the core initiatives to realise the goal of “single portal for online government services”. The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved in May 2023 an allocation of \$193 million to support OGICO in taking forward a comprehensive upgrade of “iAM Smart” platform. 6 time-limited civil service posts will be created to undertake the duties such as upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform, coordinating with various departments to consolidate their online services, etc. Other supporting work related to the promotion of e-Government services will be taken up by OGCIO with its existing manpower and resources. The new DPO will continue to take forward the aforementioned tasks.

2. OGCIO has completed the e-Government audit work for all B/Ds. Based on the recommendations of the e-Government audit, B/Ds will complete and launch over 110 digital government initiatives progressively from 2024 to 2025. These initiatives include, among others, issuing and verifying certain licences and certificates electronically by using blockchain technology; enhancing security in public cargo areas by employing artificial intelligence (AI) technology; developing smart search-and-rescue mobile applications; and enhancing the 1823 enquiry service through AI chatbot.
3. The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is actively collaborating with the Guangdong Provincial Government in the promotion of the Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS), with a view to facilitating residents and enterprises in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to access public services of the two places. In November 2023, we launched the CBPS thematic website, and set up the connection linking “iAM Smart” with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents who have registered for the Guangdong Provincial Administrative Service to directly login to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile application through “iAM Smart” to use various government services of the Guangdong Province in a more convenient and efficient manner. Moreover, the first Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosk was set up in Guangzhou in February 2024 for the convenience of the residents and enterprises in the GBA. We will continue to identify and roll out more CBPS of Hong Kong to bring greater convenience to the public.

CBPS are currently provided through the Hong Kong CBPS thematic website and self-service kiosks. The thematic website and self-service kiosks consolidate relevant information on some commonly used CBPS and links to online application for these services. When members of the public click on the hyperlink of individual services, the thematic website and self-service kiosks will directly link to the electronic platforms or application systems of the B/Ds concerned so as to facilitate members of the public to proceed with their applications. During the process, no cross-boundary flow of Hong Kong’s data is involved.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB220**

**(Question Serial No. 0002)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will take forward the merger of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office to set up the Digital Policy Office. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the respective resources and staffing required for OGCIO and the Efficiency Office before merger and the newly set up Digital Policy Office?
2. Will the Government set future work priorities and corresponding Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Digital Policy Office? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and smart city, such as establishing the “digital identity of enterprises” platform; promoting cross-boundary data flow, Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) and other initiatives that support the development of the “Digital Bay

Area”; strengthening the support and supervision of the management of e-government services by B/Ds, etc. To deploy suitable manpower to take forward these key initiatives, we propose to re-organise the existing manpower structure of OGCIO and EffO and transfer the manpower to DPO, and appropriately create 1 directorate post responsible for strengthening efforts in taking forward the facilitation of cross-boundary data flow, the development of “Digital Bay Area”, the implementation of CBPS, as well as the liaison with the Mainland, etc. The new Office, upon establishment, will undertake the key performance indicators (KPIs) set by the two existing Offices, and will continue to review and introduce new KPIs. We plan to consult the Legislative Council Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting and Establishment Subcommittee on the proposals and seek support from the Finance Committee in the first half of 2024. Our target is to complete the relevant procedures by mid-2024.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB221**

**(Question Serial No. 0003)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government indicated that its cooperation with the Government Services and Data Management Bureau (GSDMB) of Guangdong Province would be continued and both sides would jointly promote the “Cross-boundary Public Services” in the Greater Bay Area. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. In deliberating the cooperation between the two places on the “Cross-boundary Public Services” in the past, what were the major difficulties encountered? What are the obstacles to be overcome presently?
2. Will the Government seek active cooperation with the Guangdong Provincial Government on the development of the “Digital Bay Area”, including the promotion of mutual access of cross-boundary software facilities such as digital identity verification, electronic payment and data network, and deliberate on a specific implementation timetable? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

To deepen the co-operation in government services between Hong Kong and the Guangdong Province, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) and the Government Services and Data Management Bureau (GSDMB) of Guangdong Province signed the “Co-operation Agreement between Guangdong and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) on Cross-boundary Public Services” on 2 November 2023. The Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) service area/thematic website were launched on the same day, providing a total of around 110 online government services of the two places. We have also set up the connection between “iAM Smart” and the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents who have registered for the

Guangdong Provincial Administrative Service to directly log in to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile application through “iAM Smart” to enjoy the government services of the Guangdong Province in a more convenient and efficient manner. We have also been assisting the Guangdong Provincial Government in setting up “Yue Zhi Zhu” self-service kiosks in Hong Kong, and the first Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosk was set up in Guangzhou in February 2024 to facilitate residents of the two places to access government services via websites or self-service kiosks without the need for cross-boundary travel in person.

The process of developing the Hong Kong CBPS thematic website and self-service kiosks has been smooth. As the target users are residents and enterprises located in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area (GBA), in addition to the standard functional testing for implementing the website and self-service kiosks, we have arranged on-site testing in the Mainland cities of the GBA for the relevant government services provided via the Hong Kong CBPS thematic website and self-service kiosks. Based on the test results, corresponding system modifications and optimisations have been made to ensure that residents and enterprises located in the GBA can smoothly access the CBPS provided by the HKSAR Government.

To expedite the development of full digitalisation in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA; promote the economic development of the three places; and facilitate their in-depth integration in respect of public services and social governance, the HKSAR Government proactively participates in taking forward the initiatives of the “Three-Year Action Plan for the Construction of the Digital Greater Bay Area” announced by the Guangdong Province in November 2023, thereby fostering the development of the GBA into the most digitalised bay area in the world. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer is now working in collaboration with the GSDMB of Guangdong Province for setting up a joint task force to discuss and take forward the implementation of the “Digital GBA”.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB222**

**(Question Serial No. 0004)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will support the National Games Co-ordination Office to develop digital services for co-hosting the 15th National Games, 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games in Hong Kong. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the respective resources and manpower allocated by the Government for this purpose?
2. Will the Government formulate a comprehensive contingency plan to effectively tackle some extreme conditions that may arise such as large-scale system failure and cyberattacks? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

1. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) supports the National Games Coordination Office to develop the Information Technology (IT) systems required for co-hosting the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games in Hong Kong. These IT systems include network and communication systems, competition information systems, games management systems, as well as necessary infrastructures and facilities. The estimated expenditure is about \$260 million. OGCIO plans to create 13 time-limited posts in the coming 2 years dedicated to undertake the related work.
2. To ensure smooth running of the aforementioned systems, we will, apart from urging the project team to conduct comprehensive system testing, engage industry experts to



perform independent stress tests, emergency drills, as well as attack and defense exercises on the related networks and systems to ensure that their operations are secure and capable of coping with the possible scenarios of extreme system traffic and cyberattacks. Furthermore, the National Games Coordination Office will put in place a comprehensive contingency plan and monitoring mechanism for the entire project to ensure that the games will proceed as planned.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB223**

**(Question Serial No. 1463)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under Programme (1) of Head 47 that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will continue to provide technical advice and support to bureaux and departments in implementing big data analytics and blockchain applications. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. Have the Government's big data analytics and blockchain applications become mature? Has the Government conducted any exchanges with the Mainland enterprises?
2. Has the Government put in place any plan on big data applications for the future?
3. What will be the expected expenditure for building and maintaining databases?

Asked by: Hon LUK Chung-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

1. The Government has been actively applying big data analytics and blockchain technology to facilitate the development of smart city and digital government. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) launched the Big Data Analytics Platform (BDAP) in 2020 to promote the use of technologies such as big data analytics and artificial intelligence by bureaux/departments (B/Ds) more efficiently and cost-effectively. Currently, the BDAP has already supported the implementation of more than 18 big data projects. For example, OGCIO and the Transport Department jointly developed the Traffic Data Analytics System to apply big data analytics on various traffic, transport and weather data; the Census and Statistics Department is utilising deep learning techniques to detect anomalies in trade declarations, which can detect misreported

information more effectively and reduce manual checking, thereby improving the accuracy of trade statistics and work efficiency; and the Water Supplies Department is exploring the use of the BDAP to improve the efficiency of the “Water Intelligent Network” in identifying abnormal flow and pressure data of water mains.

OGCIO also launched the “Shared Blockchain Platform” in June 2022, enabling B/Ds to develop blockchain application systems on the platform more conveniently and quickly, thereby providing citizens with various high-quality e-government services in a more effective manner, such as the “Dealers in Precious Metals and Stones Registration System” launched by the Customs and Excise Department.

We also exchange views with local and the Mainland industries on big data analytics and blockchain technologies from time to time through exhibitions, exchange programmes, technology forums and competitions, etc., to promote the development and application of related technologies.

2. and 3. Data is a key element of new quality production in the digital economy era. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau published the Policy Statement on Facilitating Data Flow and Safeguarding Data Security in Hong Kong in end-2023 to set out the Government’s key management principles and strategies on facilitating data flow and safeguarding data security, being two important components of data governance. It puts forward specific action items to further facilitate the efficient flow of data and to strengthen protection of data security, supporting the development of innovation and technology, digital economy and smart city in Hong Kong. Relevant measures include the establishment of the Digital Policy Office, which will be commissioned to formulate policies on digital government, data governance and information technology to spearhead the opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government departments and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital services that bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and the smart city.

The Government will continue to facilitate the integration, application, opening up and sharing of different data and promote big data analytics and application. For instance, the Consented Data Exchange Gateway (CDEG) is being developed to provide a unified data exchange channel and standard which will facilitate B/Ds to share personal data in the systems within the Government upon obtaining the consent of the citizens, thereby obviating the need for repeated submission of related information when citizens apply different government services. Through data interchange, B/Ds can also develop more innovative e-government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public. Currently, B/Ds build and maintain their databases having regard to the needs of their public services and business. The relevant costs and expenses will depend on the functions, scale and operational needs of individual systems. In general, B/Ds will maintain their

databases with their existing manpower and resources. OGCIO does not maintain the relevant information.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB224**

**(Question Serial No. 1464)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Programme (1) of Head 47, it is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will explore with the Development Bureau the use of cavern to develop a new government data centre. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the details and plan of the development of a new government data centre in a cavern?
2. By comparison, what is the percentage of increase/decrease in developing the existing industrial buildings and land into a data centre?

Asked by: Hon LUK Chung-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) are jointly exploring the development of Government data centre in caverns. In January 2024, the CEDD engaged a consultant to conduct the Investigation, Design and Construction (IDC) technical study on setting up a Government data centre in caverns. The study covers a series of investigation and assessment work, including devising detailed technical requirements (including land requirements), preparing the expenditure estimates, conducting preliminary design and implementation plans, etc. We will take into account the recommendations of the technical study and all relevant factors in the formulation of a suitable and feasible plan for the development of a Government data centre in caverns. Details will be worked out in due course.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB225**

**(Question Serial No. 1465)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned under Programme (3) of Head 47 that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer will continue to work with bureaux and departments and related organisations to open up more data in machine-readable format for free use by the public and update their open data plans in 2024-25. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the specific types of open data, the numbers and size of data involved?
2. What is the expenditure involved and what is the expected cycle of open data?

Asked by: Hon LUK Chung-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

1. At present, there are over 5 300 datasets being opened up on the DATA.GOV.HK portal, covering 19 categories (listed in Annex), provided by 79 bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and 39 public and private organisations. These include real-time meteorological data, digital maps, real-time arrival data of all franchised buses, Green Minibus, MTR railway lines (Airport Express, Tung Chung Line, Tseung Kwan O Line, Tuen Ma Line, Island Line, South Island Line, Tsuen Wan Line, Kwun Tong Line, East Rail Line and Light Rail Line) and its feeder buses, etc. Moreover, the Development Bureau has set up the Common Spatial Data Infrastructure Portal, providing over 800 spatial datasets from more than 50 B/Ds. Open data are well received by the industry with a record of over 54 billion total downloads in 2023. Open data facilitates the industry to develop innovative applications and promotes the development of smart city. We will continue to encourage B/Ds as well as public and private organisations to open up more data.

2. In 2023-24, the annual expenditure for operating the DATA.GOV.HK portal by Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) was around \$2.2 million. In general, B/Ds will undertake the work related to open data with their existing manpower and resources. OGCIO does not maintain information on the expenditures of individual B/Ds for implementing their open data plans. Regarding the cycle of open data, B/Ds will publish the annual open data plans on their departmental websites, detailing the new datasets to be opened up in the next 3 years. According to the latest annual open data plans published by B/Ds, over 240 new datasets will be opened up in 2024.

**Categories of Open Data on DATA.GOV.HK portal**

- (1) Population
- (2) Commerce and Industry
- (3) Community and Social Welfare
- (4) Law and Security
- (5) Housing
- (6) City Management and Utilities
- (7) Technology and Broadcasting
- (8) Food
- (9) Climate and Weather
- (10) Finance
- (11) Education
- (12) Recreation, Sports and Culture
- (13) Employment and Labour
- (14) Development, Geography and Land Information
- (15) Transportation
- (16) Election and Legislature
- (17) Health
- (18) Environment
- (19) Miscellaneous

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB226**

**(Question Serial No. 1468)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Programme (3) of Head 47, it is mentioned that the Government has organised the “Maker in China” SME Innovation and Entrepreneurship Global Contest 2023 - Hong Kong Chapter to connect local small and medium-sized technology enterprises with investors and business networks in the Mainland to explore business opportunities. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the specific details?
2. Which industry sectors are covered?
3. What are the expected numbers of small and medium-sized enterprises which will participate in the “Maker in China” SME Innovation and Entrepreneurship Global Contest 2023?
4. What are the operational expenses, including expenses on venue setup, publicity and staff recruitment earmarked by the Government for organising the “Maker in China” SME Innovation and Entrepreneurship Global Contest 2023?

Asked by: Hon LUK Chung-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

The Office of the Chief Information Officer organised the “Maker in China” SME Innovation and Entrepreneurship Global Contest - Hong Kong Chapter (the Contest) in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2019, 2021 to 2023 respectively. The Contest serves to facilitate Mainland investors and enterprises to learn about Hong Kong’s top-notch innovation and technology (I&T) products and solutions.

The Contest of the 2023 edition covered 10 different I&T fields, namely artificial intelligence and big data; industrial internet and advanced manufacturing; fintech; new materials; biomedicine and biotechnology; internet of things; smart living, mobility and healthcare; next generation information technology; new energy, energy saving and environmental protection; and digital entertainment and Web 3.0 applications. The Contest also arranged one-on-one business matching sessions between top 10 finalists of the Hong Kong Chapter and Mainland enterprises and investors so as to provide a platform for Hong Kong start-ups and small and medium enterprises to explore business opportunities in the Mainland. Apart from representing Hong Kong to join the “Maker in China” Final in the Mainland China, the top three teams of the Hong Kong Chapter will also be arranged to connect with the Mainland investors and visit the Mainland science and technology parks to promote their projects to the industry players in the Mainland.

The 2023 edition of the Contest was held in September 2023, attracting the participation of nearly 150 I&T teams. The total expenditure was about \$1.2 million, covering expenses for project coordination, venue setup, marketing and promotion, and supporting award-winning teams to participate in the events held in the Mainland.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB227**

**(Question Serial No. 1469)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will continue to promote web/mobile app accessibility in public and private organisations, and conduct compliance audit on accessibility of its websites and mobile apps. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the plans and contents of promoting its websites? What are the expected manpower and expenditures involved?
2. What are the plans and contents of auditing its website functions? What are the expected manpower and expenditures involved?
3. At present, which web/mobile app accessibility designs have been audited?

Asked by: Hon LUK Chung-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

1. To encourage public and private organisations to adopt accessible design for webpages/mobile applications, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has been supporting the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited (HKIRC) in organising the Digital Accessibility Recognition Scheme (formerly known as the Web Accessibility Recognition Scheme) since 2018, so as to motivate more enterprises as well as public and private organisations to adopt accessible design in their websites and mobile applications. The Advisory Committee of the Digital Accessibility Recognition Scheme comprises representatives from different sectors. In addition to different groups of people with disabilities, it includes the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, the Hong Kong Association of Banks, the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, the Association of I.T. Leaders in Education, and the Hong Kong Institute of Directors,

etc. Through the connection of the representatives of these sectors, HKIRC can reach out to more local public and private organisations, enterprises, non-governmental organisations and academic institutions and promote to them the accessible design. Free assessments and advisory services are also provided to help them enhance the accessibility of their websites and mobile applications. Websites and mobile applications meeting the judging criteria after assessment will be recognised in the Digital Accessibility Recognition Scheme. The next awards ceremony is expected to be held in the second quarter of 2025.

The aforementioned Digital Accessibility Recognition Scheme is organised by HKIRC. OGCIO provides support with internal staff resources without additional expenses involved.

2. and 3. OGCIO conducts regular compliance audits for the websites and mobile applications of all government departments to ensure that they are in compliance with the prevailing accessibility standards. We have just completed an audit exercise for around 200 government websites and mobile applications in February 2024, so as to assist departments in making continuous enhancement. A new round of two-year accessibility design compliance audit exercise will commence in June 2024, covering around 200 other government websites and mobile applications.

The aforementioned accessibility design compliance audit exercise is coordinated by OGCIO staff. The estimated expenditure for relevant audit exercise in 2024-25 is about \$5 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB228**

**(Question Serial No. 1470)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 under Programme (1) of Head 47 that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will support bureaux and departments to implement the recommended digital government initiatives from the e-government audit. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What is the plan put in place by OGCIO to support bureaux and departments to implement e-government and the contents of such plan? What are the expected manpower and expenditure involved?
2. Regarding the digital government as proposed in the audit, which initiatives have met targets?
3. How long is it expected to take for an e-government to be fully established?

Asked by: Hon LUK Chung-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

1. To support bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in implementing the digital government initiatives recommended by the e-Government audit, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has set up the required digital infrastructures and shared services such as the Government Cloud Infrastructure Services, Big Data Analytics Platform, Shared Blockchain Platform and Chatbot-as-a-Service, etc. B/Ds will also adopt "iAM Smart", the one-stop personalised digital services platform, to realise "single portal for online government services" for enhancing user experience. Besides, B/Ds can procure relevant products and services through various Standing Offer Agreements coordinated by OGCIO to expedite the implementation of their initiatives. The

abovementioned supporting work is undertaken by the existing manpower of OGCIO. In addition, B/Ds can also apply funding through the block allocation under Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation to implement their digital government initiatives recommended by the e-Government audit.

2. OGCIO has completed the e-Government audit work for all B/Ds. The digital government initiatives recommended in the audit include: issuing and verifying certain licences and certificates electronically by using blockchain technology; enhancing security in public cargo working areas by employing artificial intelligence (AI) technology; developing smart search-and-rescue mobile applications; and enhancing the 1823 enquiry service through AI chatbot, etc. B/Ds will launch over 110 digital government and smart city initiatives progressively from 2024 to 2025.
3. Implementing digital government is an on-going process. During the course of implementation, the Government will make good use of innovation and technology and adopt a people-oriented thinking in working closely with various stakeholders with a view to ensuring the successful implementation and sustainable development of e-Government services.

The Government has completed the implementation of various digital infrastructures and shared services. Not only can they provide information technology resources to facilitate B/Ds in expediting development of e-Government, but also can assist data interchange and sharing among bureaux and departments. To bring convenience to the public and facilitate further sharing of data among B/Ds, the Government is implementing the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway” (CDEG), and has already launched the CDEG functions of linking up with the Commercial Data Interchange of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority since end-2023 to facilitate the sharing of data from government departments to financial institutions upon the authorisation of their enterprise clients. CDEG will be rolled out before end-2024 for adoption by B/Ds to facilitate data sharing among B/Ds.

In addition, the Government will implement the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, resembling the enterprise version of “iAM Smart”, which enables business entities to authenticate corporate identity and verify corporate signature in a secured and convenient manner when using e-Government services or performing online transactions, thereby simplifying the complicated workflow and minimising processing time and human errors. These projects and measures can further enhance the digital services of the Government.

During the past few years, the Government has been striving to promote the development of digital government and turning all government services online. The targets include digitalising all licences, government services involving application and approval and forms by mid-2024, and fully implementing the provision of electronic payment option for all government fees by the third quarter of 2024. As at the end of 2023, out of some 1 450 licences and services, about 90% involving applications and about 80% involving collection of documents have achieved the digitalisation target, i.e. submission of application, payment and collection of documents by electronic means for the licences and services concerned were enabled. If in-person submission or collection of documents is required by law or international practice, applicants will only need to visit the government office concerned once at most. The remaining licences and services will

meet the target by mid-2024. Meanwhile, more than 3 400 government forms (over 95%) can already support electronic submission. Out of some 600 fee items, more than 60% have achieved the related target. Furthermore, the Government will also provide an option for making payment by Mainland e-wallets for government services commonly used by Mainland visitors (e.g. booking of various leisure facilities, application for immigration-related services and settling public medical consultation services fees, etc.) to bring convenience to Mainland visitors, covering about 80 services.

The Chief Executive has announced in the 2023 Policy Address to establish the Digital Policy Office, which is dedicated for formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology, leading government B/Ds and industries to open up data sharing and promoting the use of digital technology so as to launch more digital services for the convenience and benefit of the public and the business sector, upgrade the levels of public services and assist in building digital economy, and promoting the work of digital government and smart city. We have planned to consult the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting and the Establishment Subcommittee of Legislative Council and seek support from the Finance Committee for the proposal in the first half of 2024 and targeted to complete related processes by mid-2024.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB229**

**(Question Serial No. 0288)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme in the past year, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) mentioned that it would continue the promotion of information security awareness in the Government and the monitoring of the compliance of bureaux and departments with the Government's information security requirements. Please inform this Committee of the expenditure on the work mentioned above in 2023-24. What had been done? What was the effectiveness of the promotion of information security among government departments? In 2024-25, these matters were no longer mentioned in relevant work and in the Matters Requiring Special Attention. Instead, it was mentioned under the Programme that: "completed the review and update of the government information security policies and guidelines", "promote the updated government information security policies and guidelines and monitor their implementation within the Government". What are the expenditure estimates of relevant work plans? What are the specific work plans, implementation timetable and Key Performance Indicators (KPI)? Regarding the recent incidents involving the government departments' information systems, including the computer systems of Cyberport, Consumer Council, and the Hong Kong Ballet that have been maliciously hacked, what precautionary measures will the Government put in place and what are the effective initiatives proposed?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has formulated and updated from time to time comprehensive regulations related to government information security and Government IT Security Policy and Guidelines (Policy and Guidelines), covering management structure, policies and technical measures for compliance and use by departments. OGCIO has also uploaded the Policy and Guidelines to its website for reference by all public and private organisations. Individual organisations may adopt those



principles and measures on security risk management recommended in the Policy and Guidelines having regard to their own circumstances.

OGCIO has been making efforts to enhance the information security awareness within the Government. In 2023-24, OGCIO continued to organise various seminars and training programmes on information security, including refresher courses on information security management and response for Incident Response Teams of all bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and Information Technology (IT) Security Officers; thematic seminars and professional training on cybersecurity for IT security management staff and professionals; information security awareness training for all B/Ds' staff; and large-scale inter-departmental cybersecurity drills, etc. These seminars and training programmes were implemented with existing manpower and resources and the expenses involved could not be itemised separately.

In 2022-23, OGCIO launched independent information security compliance audits for B/Ds to ensure their strict compliance with government security requirements. We have completed the compliance audits and provided recommendations to assist B/Ds in the continuous optimisation of the security management system to cope with emerging security threats. We plan to start a new round of information security compliance audits in the second half of 2024 to ensure the strict compliance by B/Ds with the revised government security regulations as mentioned below. The estimated expenditure for the relevant work in 2023-24 and 2024-25 are approximately \$6.85 million and \$5.95 million respectively.

OGCIO commenced the work pertaining to review of the Policy and Guidelines in August 2022, and the revised Policies and Guidelines are planned to be issued in the first half of 2024. A series of briefings, workshops and solution showcases will be organised subsequent to the release of the revised Policies and Guidelines in order to further promote and raise awareness and understanding among the government staff. We will also continue to monitor closely the trends of cyberattacks around the world and the associated security threats, and to arrange seminars and training on information security. The related tasks are implemented through internal redeployment of resources and no additional expenditure is involved.

In response to the recent cybersecurity incidents in individual public organisations, OGCIO has immediately reminded all B/Ds of the relevant security guidelines, offered technical support, and requested B/Ds including public organisations under their purview to instantly assess and strengthen their current cybersecurity measures in order to guard against cyberattacks. OGCIO will continue to work closely with various stakeholders and industry associations, remind and request government departments, public organisations and the industry to raise their cybersecurity prevention alertness, strengthen their monitoring mechanisms and protective measures, as well as to enhance public education, so as to cope with the latest trends in cyberattacks and security risks.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB230**

**(Question Serial No. 0289)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme, the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer include the launch of the enhanced “iAM Smart” platform in phases and continue to support bureaux and departments to provide citizens with one-stop digitalised services by adopting “iAM Smart”. Please inform this Committee of the expenditure on such work in the past year. How was the effectiveness? What was the progress of realising “single portal for online government services”? What are the specific work plans and implementation timetable in the 2024-25 new financial year? What is the expected expenditure required? What are the key performance indicators (KPIs)?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) obtained funding allocation of \$193 million from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in May 2023 to drive the comprehensive upgrade of “iAM Smart”. We updated the design of homepage for the “iAM Smart” mobile app in October 2023, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical daily-life information, such as local real-time weather, traffic conditions, waiting time for accident and emergency services in hospitals, locations of automated external defibrillator, real-time cross-harbour tunnel tolls, Scameter, etc., by just opening the “iAM Smart” mobile app. The enhanced features to be launched progressively from 2024 to 2025 include :

- Setting up dedicated pages that encompass a range of common government service applications, enquiries and information, and simplifying the searching services and user workflow, so as to provide a more unified user experience;

- Enabling citizens to authorise the share use of their personal data collected by different government departments through the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway”, so as to obviate the need to input or submit the same information repeatedly when they use different government services;
- Introducing “one-tap login” for government services to allow citizens to directly access some commonly-used government services with their “iAM Smart” accounts;
- Introducing a digital personal document wallet function to facilitate citizens to manage their digital personal documents issued by different government departments; and
- Simplifying the registration process and setting up additional self-registration kiosks.

Bureaux and departments will start to enhance their existing online services orderly and integrate the services into the new “iAM Smart” platform,, with a view to providing a better user experience.

The revised estimated expenditure for the “iAM Smart” platform upgrade project for 2023-24 is \$9.8 million, and the estimated expenditures for 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 are about \$38 million, \$54.5 million and \$91 million respectively. OGCIO has created 6 time-limited civil service posts to undertake the tasks of upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform, coordinating with bureaux/departments for the integration of online services, etc. The non-recurrent expenditure involved from 2023-24 to 2025-26 is around \$17.7 million.

Our targets set out in 2023 are to gradually increase the annual usage of “iAM Smart” (total transactions) from 10 million in 2023 to 17.5 million in 2025; and to provide one-stop digital services by fully adopting “iAM Smart” by 2025, so as to realise the goal of “single portal for online government services”.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB231**

**(Question Serial No. 0290)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO), the provision for 2024-25 is \$651.4 million (98.9%) higher than the revised estimate for 2023-24. The reasons are mainly due to the increased cash flow requirement for general non-recurrent expenses, and the increased provision for departmental expenses and personal emoluments. There will be a net increase of 9 posts in 2024-25. Please inform this Committee of the detailed reasons accounting for the expenses that nearly double the estimate last year, the details of the 9 posts to be created with a breakdown, as well as the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the coming year.

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

Under Programme (3) "Information Technology in the Community", the estimated expenditure for the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) in 2024-25 is about \$650 million higher than the revised estimate for the previous year. There is a total increase of about \$968 million mainly due to the requirements in additional cash flow of the launch of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), an increase in departmental expenses for the management of the operation of free public Wi-Fi services and the initiatives of facilitating cross-boundary data flow within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), as well as additional expenditure for personal emoluments for the creation of new posts. On the other hand, the increment was partly offset by the decreased cash flow requirement for other items of general non-recurrent expenditure, a reduction of about \$316 million in total as compared with last year. The major expenditure and new posts for the concerned projects and their performance indicators are detailed as follows:

- (i) The implementation of a three-year Subsidy Scheme that mainly to provide funding support to local universities, research and development centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC), with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of the computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities. The Subsidy Scheme will come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. The Government will require Cyberport to set up performance indicators for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme. The estimated expenditure for this item in 2024-25 is about \$905 million;
- (ii) Managing the operation of free public Wi-Fi service. As of February 2024, the number of hotspots under the "Wi-Fi.HK" brand was about 45 000. OGCIO will continue to provide free public Wi-Fi service at government premises with high patronage and strong public demand, promote the "Wi-Fi.HK" brand, and encourage public and private organisations to provide Wi-Fi hotspots by joining the "Wi-Fi.HK" brand, so as to extend the coverage of hotspots under "Wi-Fi.HK" brand. The estimated expenditure for this item in 2024-25 is about \$28 million; and
- (iii) Fostering the secure and orderly cross-boundary data flow of personal information within the GBA. OGCIO is responsible for the implementation and coordination work of the facilitation measure on "Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)" to streamline the compliance arrangements for the flow of personal information in the Mainland cities in the GBA to Hong Kong. As at mid-March 2024, we received a total of about 100 Expressions of Interest. We plan to review the arrangement in light of its progress in mid-2024, and refine relevant details in due course, with a view to extending the facilitation measure to different business sectors, hence fostering the provision of more cross-boundary services to benefit more businesses and members of the public. The estimated expenditure for 2024-25 is about \$26 million. Besides, 9 posts will be created, which include 1 Senior Systems Manager, 2 Systems Managers, 3 Analyst/Programmer Is, 2 Analyst/Programmer IIs and 1 Executive Officer I, and the estimated expenditure on personal emoluments is about \$9 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB232**

**(Question Serial No. 0291)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme, the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) include continuing to support local information and communications technology (ICT) industry to take part in international competitions and organising major ICT collaboration activities with the Mainland. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following: What was the expenditure on the related work in the past year? What international competitions have been participated by the local industry with support from the Government? What activities have been co-organised with the Mainland? What were the results of these activities? What are the new plans in the new financial year 2024-25? What are the expected expenditure and implementation timetable? What are the Key Performance Indicators (KPI)? Please give the details of the initiatives with figures.

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is committed to promoting and supporting the participation of local information and communications technology (ICT) industry in international competitions and organising large-scale ICT activities in collaboration with the Mainland. The major events include:

**1) “Maker in China” SME Innovation and Entrepreneurship Global Contest - Hong Kong Chapter**

OGCIO organised the “Maker in China” SME Innovation and Entrepreneurship Global Contest - Hong Kong Chapter (the Contest) in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2019, 2021 to 2023 respectively.

The Contest serves to facilitate Mainland investors and enterprises to learn about Hong Kong's top-notch innovation and technology (I&T) products and solutions, and at the same time to help I&T-related small and medium enterprises seize the opportunities of developing their business in the Greater Bay Area and the Mainland. The 2023 edition of the Contest was held in September 2023 with a total expenditure of about \$1.2 million, attracting the participation of nearly 150 I&T teams. Among those participants, the top three teams of the Hong Kong Chapter represented Hong Kong to participate in the "Maker in China" Final held at Nansha, Guangzhou. One of the Hong Kong representative teams was awarded the Champion of the global contest. This is the third time the Hong Kong teams named champions at this contest since its debut in 2017. OGCIO will continue to co-organise the Contest with the relevant Mainland authorities in 2024-25. The estimated total expenditure for the event is about \$1.4 million.

## **2) "Hong Kong/Shanghai Co-operation Open Data Challenge"**

OGCIO and the Shanghai Municipal Commission of Economy and Informatisation co-organised the inaugural "Hong Kong/Shanghai Co-operation Data Forum cum Open Data Challenge 2023" (the Challenge) from April to August 2023. The event aimed to facilitate the exchange of data technology talent through competitions, training and meetings, and promote the development of data trading ecosystem in the two places. The Challenge attracted the participation of more than 80 I&T teams. The Hong Kong teams won the top four honours in the "Smart Environment" and "Smart Mobility" categories, and one of them even won the "Grand Award". The total expenditure for the event in 2023 was about \$2.5 million.

OGCIO will continue to co-organise the "Hong Kong/Shanghai Co-operation Open Data Challenge 2024" with the Shanghai authorities in 2024-25 to deepen the data co-operation between Shanghai and Hong Kong and bring further benefits to the I&T talent of the two places. The estimated total expenditure for the Challenge is about \$3.4 million.

## **3) Asia Pacific Information and Communications Technology Alliance Awards**

The Asia Pacific Information and Communications Technology Alliance (APICTA) Awards is an acclaimed event organised annually by the APICTA with the full support from the 16 member economies of the Alliance in the Asia-Pacific region and is highly regarded by the ICT industry. Following 2004 and 2013, the APICTA Awards was hosted again by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in 2023. The event was successfully held in Hong Kong in last December. The representative teams of the HKSAR excelled in the competition and attained a record-breaking total of 7 Winner and 13 Merit Awards among over 250 entries, ranking first among the 16 competing economies. OGCIO provided a funding of about \$6.5 million to the local co-organiser.

The APICTA Awards 2024 will be held in Brunei. The HKSAR will send a delegation to participate. The estimated expenditure will be worked out upon finalisation of the details of the event and taking into account the number of Hong Kong participating teams requiring support.

#### **4) Other Mainland's ICT Events**

In addition, OGCIO has been leading local industry to participate regularly in various ICT events in the Mainland, namely the World Internet Conference, the Guangdong-Hong Kong Cloud Computing Conference, the China International Software Expo, the Beijing-Hong Kong Economic Cooperation Symposium and the Guangdong-Hong Kong IoT Summit, etc., with a view to promoting the development of digital economy and next-generation digital technologies and showcasing high quality ICT products and services of Hong Kong, thus creating business opportunities for our local industry. OGCIO will continue to participate in related events in 2024-25, and the estimated total expenditure is about \$1.2 million.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB233**

**(Question Serial No. 0292)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this programme, the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024-25 of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) in 2024-25 include continuing to support Cyberport to implement the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme and the Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following: What was the expenditure on the above 2 programmes in 2023-24? What has been done and what projects have been supported? What were the specific results? What are the expenditure to be incurred and the specific work plans in the new financial year of 2024-25? What are the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The Finance Committee of Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million and \$265 million in July 2023 for Cyberport to launch Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (the Pilot Programme) and Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups (the Incubation Programme) respectively. Cyberport is actively implementing the two programmes with the latest progress as follows:

**Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme**

The Pilot Programme will provide funding support on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage (F&B) and retail industries in applying the ready-to-use basic digital solutions under the 3 categories (i.e. digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems) so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. It is estimated that at least 8 000 eligible enterprises can benefit from the Pilot Programme. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) allocated \$395 million to Cyberport in 2023-24 for taking

forward various tasks of the Pilot Programme, including formulating the programme details, approving applications, promoting and marketing and providing training to SMEs, etc. The estimated cash flow requirement for 2024-25 is about \$100 million which would be used for continuing the implementation of the Pilot Programme.

Cyberport invited relevant SMEs to submit funding applications in March 2024 with application deadline set in April 2024. Cyberport will review and announce the funding application result as soon as possible. Cyberport has set up a thematic website, hotline and email channels for SMEs to enquire about the approval status of their applications. In addition to financial assistance, Cyberport will also actively conduct promotional activities on the Pilot Programme for the groups from the trade, organise seminars and issue relevant guidelines for the SMEs on a regular basis, which include the provision of training on digital transformation, in order to assist SMEs in identifying Information Technology solutions that suit their business and budget requirements. Cyberport has actively engaged more than 30 industry associations to promote the Pilot Programme, encouraging more relevant SMEs to submit funding applications.

#### Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups

The Incubation Programme enables Cyberport to nurture more start-ups specialised in the area of smart living by providing them with targeted subsidy and support. It is expected that the programme will benefit 450 eligible start-ups in 5 years. In 2023-24, OGCIO has allocated \$85 million to Cyberport, mainly for providing funding and related support to relevant start-ups and for the administrative work for the implementation of the Incubation Programme. The estimated cash flow requirement for 2024-25 is about \$87 million, which would be used for continuing the implementation of the Incubation Programme.

In 2023-24, Cyberport has conducted two intake exercises. The first batch of applications was approved in December 2023 and the related nurturing work has been commenced by providing one-stop entrepreneurial support to incubatees, such as matching with professional entrepreneurial mentors and formulating business plans and development goals with the start-ups, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB234**

**(Question Serial No. 0801)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Financial Secretary mentioned about the promotion of Web3.0 development in paragraphs 98-102 of the Budget Speech, which read: "In last year's Budget, I proposed to expedite development of the Web3.0 ecosystem. We have made good progress over the past year." In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following: What progress was made in the past year? What was the expenditure? What results were achieved? The Financial Secretary also announced in last year's Budget Speech the allocation of \$50 million to expedite the Web3 ecosystem development. How is the allocation being used? What has been done? In the new financial year of 2024-25, what is the expected expenditure for expediting the Web3 ecosystem development? What are the specific work plans and timetable? What are the expected Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

To expedite the development of Web3.0 in Hong Kong, the Government has earmarked \$50 million for Cyberport to accelerate the Web3.0 ecosystem development by, among other things, organising large-scale international seminars to enable the industry and enterprises to better grasp frontier development, and promoting cross-sectoral business collaboration. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) allocated about \$35.8 million in 2023-24 for Cyberport to carry out the relevant work, and Cyberport was required to submit reports on a regular basis in respect of the numbers of on-campus enterprises and event participants, etc. So far, Cyberport has gathered over 220 related enterprises, including 3 unicorns (1 of them is a licensed virtual asset trading platform), with their founders coming from over 15 countries or regions around the world. As of February 2024, the events hosted by Cyberport to promote the Web3.0 ecosystem had drawn an attendance of over 30 000 participants. OGCIO will allocate about \$14.2 million in the coming two years for Cyberport to further promote the development of the Web3.0 industry and ecosystem,

including the provision of various relevant training and internship opportunities for young people starting from the second half of 2024.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB235**

**(Question Serial No. 0045)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to paragraph 109 of the Budget Speech, the Government will allocate \$3 billion for the launch of a three-year artificial intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises to leverage the AI Supercomputing Centre's computing power and achieve scientific breakthroughs. The subsidy will also be used to strengthen the cyber security and data protection of the Centre, and launch promotional and educational activities, etc. When will the Scheme be open for application? Any more details about the Scheme, such as the eligibility criteria and subsidy ceiling can be released? What are the estimated manpower and expenditure involved in the approval process of the Scheme in the next financial year respectively?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim to enhance research and development (R&D) capabilities in different fields and promote industry development.

It is announced in the 2024-25 Budget the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing

power resources of the AISC, and the Subsidy Scheme can in general provide eligible users with a subsidy of up to 70% of the standard service rates as the computing power subsidy. Cyberport will be asked to set up an independent committee to determine the details on the beneficiaries and terms for disbursement of the subsidies, etc. The independent committee will, upon taking into account various factors, approve the specific amount and duration of the subsidy to be granted to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

Upon the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out the publicity and promotion, so as to press ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

Cyberport will be responsible for implementing the detailed operation of the Subsidy Scheme. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer will coordinate and oversee the implementation of the Subsidy Scheme with its existing manpower and resources.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB236**

**(Question Serial No. 0703)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

To press ahead with the digitalisation of government services, the Government plans to set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) within this year by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Efficiency Office. The analyst/programmer (AP) grade and management services officer (MSO) grade will then become the core members of the DPO. On the training for the officers of the above two grades, please advise this Committee of the following:

- Tabulate the details of training for the AP grade arranged by the Government in the past 3 years:

| Month/year | Name of the training programmes | Target trainees (by rank) | Number of participants | Name(s) of co-organisers/ service contractor(s) | Expenditure |
|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---|-------------|
|            |                                 |                           |                        |   |             |
|            |                                 |                           |                        |   |             |
|            |                                 |                           |                        |   |             |

Tabulate the details of training for the MSO grade arranged by the Government in the past 3 years:

| Month/year | Name of the training programmes | Target trainees (by rank) | Number of participants | Name(s) of co-organisers/ service contractor(s) | Expenditure |
|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---|-------------|
|            |                                 |                           |                        |   |             |
|            |                                 |                           |                        |   |             |
|            |                                 |                           |                        |   |             |

- What will be the training programmes and the estimated expenditure in the coming year for enhancing the MSOs' understanding of information and technology as well as innovation and technology?

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has developed a comprehensive training plan for officers at all levels of the Analyst/Programmer (AP) grade having regard to the operational and career development needs. Training takes various forms, including participation in information technology (IT) conferences, face-to-face training, further studies in the Mainland and overseas, e-learning, and visits to other organisations, so that they can keep abreast of the latest professional knowledge and technology expertise. In addition to courses arranged by the Civil Service College, officers have also participated in OGCIO's in-house training as well as courses arranged by different government departments, tertiary institutions, and training institutions (such as the Hong Kong Productivity Council, the Institute of Professional Education And Knowledge, and the Hong Kong Computer Society). The training covers three major areas: (1) induction; (2) innovation and IT application; and (3) management, leadership, communication skills, and other thematic topics.

In the past 3 years, the total expenditure for the AP grade training was \$18.44 million and the total number of trainees was 16 975. The relevant details are set out below:

| <b>Year</b>                                   | <b>Expenditure for AP Grade training<br/>(\$ million)</b> |
|---|---|
| 2021-22 (Actual)                              | 6.13  |
| 2022-23 (Actual)                              | 5.63  |
| 2023-24 (Actual)<br>(As of end-February 2024) | 6.68  |

| <b>Training Area</b>  | <b>Number of Trainees</b> |         |                                      |
|---|---------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------|
|   | 2021-22                   | 2022-23 | 2023-24<br>(As of end-February 2024) |
| Induction   | 1 500                     | 964     | 919                                  |
| Innovation and IT Application   | 2 787                     | 2 744   | 3 124                                |
| Management, Leadership,<br>Communication Skills, and<br>Other Thematic Topics | 1 723                     | 1 538   | 1 676                                |



On the training for the Management Services Officer (MSO) grade, the Efficiency Office (EffO) has developed a comprehensive training plan for officers at all levels having regard to the operational and career development needs. In addition to courses arranged by the Civil Service College, officers have also participated in EffO's in-house training as well as courses, workshops and seminars arranged by different government departments, tertiary institutions, and training institutions (such as the Hong Kong Productivity Council, and the Hong Kong Design Centre), with a view to broadening their horizons and enhancing their professionalism. The training covers three major areas: (1) innovation and technology application; (2) management consulting and other thematic topics; and (3) management, leadership and communication skills.

In the past 3 years, the total expenditure for the MSO grade training was \$1.21 million and the total number of trainees was 1 326. In the coming year, to tie in with the establishment of the Digital Policy Office (DPO), the Government will continue to organise and strengthen the training for the MSO grade at all levels in the area of innovation and technology application, and continue to evaluate the MSOs' development and work needs so as to arrange appropriate training in a timely manner. The estimated expenditure for the MSO grade training in 2024-25 is about \$0.8 million. The relevant details are set out below:

| <b>Year</b>                                   | <b>Expenditure for MSO Grade training<br/>(\$ million)</b> |
|---|--|
| 2021-22 (Actual)                              | 0.33   |
| 2022-23 (Actual)                              | 0.25   |
| 2023-24 (Actual)<br>(As of end-February 2024) | 0.63   |
| 2024-25 (Estimate)                            | 0.80   |

| <b>Training Area</b>                            | <b>Number of Trainees</b> |         |                                      |
|---|---------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------|
|   | 2021-22                   | 2022-23 | 2023-24<br>(As of end-February 2024) |
| Innovation and Technology Application           | 109                       | 102     | 128                                  |
| Management Consulting and Other Thematic Topics | 184                       | 162     | 162                                  |
| Management, Leadership and Communication Skills | 217                       | 151     | 111                                  |

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB237**

**(Question Serial No. 1346)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. In the Brief Description under this Programme, it is stated that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) establishes policies and practices on governance and cybersecurity, invests in Information Technology (IT), supports the IT initiatives of bureaux and departments, and enables them to assure the quality of their IT strategies, projects and operations. In this connection, has OGCIO established any policies or guidelines for bureaux and departments that require them to take into account national security when procuring software, hardware and service contractors in the course of IT transformation, so as to avoid creating any loophole in national security?
2. Regarding the above requirements, does OGCIO have any specific plans of reviewing the policy implementation by bureaux and departments? If yes, what are the establishment and expenditure involved? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

The Government attaches great importance to safeguarding national security and cybersecurity. The prevailing Stores and Procurement Regulations specify that, when conducting procurements, bureaux/departments (B/Ds) shall take all possible measures necessary for safeguarding national security. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) also issued in 2023 the following revised guidelines to strengthen the national security barrier:

- (1) if certain technical specifications are required to be specified for procurement of information and communications technology (ICT) products, B/Ds should include related national and international Information Technology (IT) security standards to

facilitate the selection of optimal information security products in order to ensure the effective protection of government system and data security; and

- (2) to adopt, where appropriate, the ICT equipment from diverse sources, the industry's best practices and open source products, etc. in building up their own systems, so as to avoid over-dependence on a single or a few platforms or products, as well as to better manage the risk arising from potential export control imposed on certain IT products and the possible impact of global supply chain issues.

The Government has also formulated a comprehensive set of Government Information Technology Security Policy and Guidelines (Policy and Guidelines), covering management framework, policies and technical measures, etc. This set of Policy and Guidelines is updated from time to time. The latest round of review has been completed, and it is planned to promulgate the updated version in the first half of 2024 for B/Ds' compliance and adoption. During the review, the Government has made reference to the latest national and international information security management standards to address the increasing cybersecurity threats. OGCIO also conducts compliance audits for B/Ds regularly to ensure effective implementation of the relevant policies and guidelines.

The relevant on-going work is conducted by OGCIO with its existing manpower and resources. A breakdown of the expenditure involved is not available.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB238**

**(Question Serial No. 1347)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. It is mentioned under this Programme that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) provides a range of Information Technology (IT) professional services and facilitation measures to bureaux and departments. In this connection, please list by bureaux and departments the numbers of IT professional services and service types provided to them in the past 3 years.
2. What are the establishment and expenditure involved for undertaking the aforementioned tasks by OGCI O?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

1. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is committed to assisting bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in leveraging information and communications technology to improve public services, enhance operational efficiency, and drive the digitalisation of government services. OGCI O also promotes the opening up and sharing of data among departments to support the smart city development. Over the past 3 years, OGCI O has continuously provided a variety of professional services to B/Ds, primarily focusing on:
  - Promoting and supporting departments to implement digital government initiatives, including the provision of policy guidance, technical standards, central infrastructure, common services and technical training;
  - Implementing and enhancing government cloud infrastructures, including Government Cloud Infrastructure Services, Big Data Analytics Platform, Shared

Blockchain Platform, etc. to support B/Ds in accelerating the development and implementation of digital government services;

- Providing B/Ds with round-the-clock data centre services, internet access services and disaster recovery facilities for mission critical systems;
- Establishing and managing an advanced and secure electronic communications (including electronic mails) infrastructure to enhance communications and collaboration among bureaux and departments , thus enabling efficient and effective operations and delivery of public services;
- Working with B/Ds to open up more data in digital machine-readable format for free use by the public;
- Undertaking the implementation of the Consented Data Exchange Gateway to promote and support the interflow of data among government departments;
- Implementing and continuously enhancing the “iAM Smart” platform to achieve “single portal for online government services”, and assisting B/Ds in adopting “iAM Smart” for providing one-stop digital services to citizens;
- Formulating and implementing multipronged measures to assist departments in strengthening the management of large-scale and high-risk Information Technology (IT) projects at different critical stages so as to enhance the stability and security of digital government services;
- Arranging various centrally organised IT contracts and developing a list of providers to facilitate the procurement of IT products and services by B/Ds;
- Implementing and regularly reviewing the “Government IT Security Policy and Guidelines” to align with technology advancement and international best practices, ensuring the compliance with the security requirements by B/Ds, and monitoring adherence to the policy and guidelines within the Government. The Government Computer Emergency Response Team Hong Kong (GovCERT.HK), under the purview of OGCIO, was dedicated to coordinating and managing responses to information and cyber security incidents in B/Ds to protect their information systems and digital assets;
- Assisting B/Ds in sourcing innovative IT solutions to meet their business needs through the Smart Government Innovation Lab, with a view to expediting adoption of innovative IT products and solutions for enhancing public services;
- Conducting the e-government audit as well as proposing enhancement initiatives for departments and supporting the implementation of recommended digital government initiatives by departments; and
- Collaborating with B/Ds in utilising information technology to support various anti-epidemic related initiatives during the COVID-19, including the isolation and

quarantine arrangements, “LeaveHomeSafe”, booking systems for various community testing programmes and vaccination programmes, health code system for cross boundary travel with Guangdong Province and Macao, and dissemination of Consumption Vouchers,etc.

2. The above tasks are the comprehensive professional services provided by OGCIO to B/Ds, involving cross-sections manpower resources within OGCIO. We do not maintain the itemised figures on the expenditure for these services.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB239**

**(Question Serial No. 1348)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2024–25 that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) continued to promote web/mobile app accessibility in public and private organisations, and monitored the compliance of government websites and mobile apps. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. In the past two years, which public and private organisations have been approached by OGCIO to promote the web/mobile app accessibility? What is the number of promotional campaigns for the private organisations? What are the numbers of public or private organisations which have adopted or are planning to adopt the web/mobile app accessibility design after being promoted by OGCIO?
2. In the past two years, what were the numbers of compliance audit conducted on the government websites and mobile apps accessibility? What was the number of non-compliance cases revealed?
3. What were the manpower and expenditure required for taking forward the above work by OGCIO?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

1. To encourage public and private organisations to adopt accessible design for webpages/mobile applications, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has been supporting the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited (HKIRC) in organising the Digital Accessibility Recognition Scheme (formerly known as the Web Accessibility Recognition Scheme) since 2018, so as to motivate more enterprises

as well as public and private organisations to adopt accessible design in their websites and mobile applications. In the implementation of the Recognition Scheme 2022-23, HKIRC had proactively contacted some 65 public organisations to promote accessible design for webpages/mobile applications, which included the Consumer Council, the Urban Renewal Authority, and the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications, etc., and in parallel promoted the same to around 300 private organisations. According to statistics, around 60 public organisations and 180 private organisations had adopted or further enhanced the accessible design for their webpages/mobile applications, and they had participated in the Recognition Scheme and gained awards.

2. OGCIO conducts compliance audits regularly for websites and mobile applications of all government departments to ensure that they are in compliance with the prevailing accessibility standards. We conducted audits for around 200 government websites and mobile applications in the past two years, and assisted departments in making continuous enhancements, to ensure that relevant websites/mobile applications are in compliance with accessible design requirements.
3. The aforementioned accessible design compliance audit exercise is coordinated by OGCIO staff. The total expenditure for relevant audit exercise was about \$5 million in the past two years.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB240**

**(Question Serial No. 1349)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat: Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under the “Hire of services and professional fees” item of Departmental Expenses of this Subhead, the provision has increased from the revised estimate of \$498,488,000 in 2023-24 to the current estimate of \$765,102,000. What are the reasons for the increase in such expenses and the items involved?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

In the estimate for the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer in 2024-25, the provision for “Hire of services and professional fees” is about \$2,700 million higher than the revised estimate for the previous year. The provision is mainly used for meeting the expenditure on the following items:

- Supporting the National Games Coordination Office to develop the information technology (IT) systems required for co-hosting the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th Special Olympics Games in Hong Kong;
- Expansion of the capacity of the government cloud infrastructure;
- Fostering the cross-boundary flow of personal information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in a secure and orderly manner;
- Managing the operation of free public Wi-Fi services; and
- Supporting the increasing number of users as well as supported online services of the “iAM Smart” platform, etc.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB241**

**(Question Serial No. 2377)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned by the Financial Secretary in the Budget Speech that the Government will set up a “digital identity of enterprises” platform, i.e. the business version of “iAM Smart”, to enable authentication of identity and verification of signature of enterprises using electronic government services or conducting online business transactions in a secure, convenient and efficient manner without having to go through complicated procedures, thus saving time and reducing the risk of human error. The expenditure involved is estimated to be about \$300 million and our goal is to roll out the platform progressively from end-2026 onwards. On the other hand, “iAM Smart” is not the most convenient tool to the general public. There is still room for improvement. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. Members of the public have relayed that they could not upgrade “iAM Smart” to “iAM Smart+” on app stores, thus unable to experience the actual uses of “iAM Smart+”. Does the Government have any plan to facilitate people to upgrade from “iAM Smart” to “iAM Smart+” by means of innovation and technology, thus saving the need to go to designated spots?
2. Has the Government kept collecting the user feedbacks after the launch of “iAM Smart”, and put in place a plan to develop applications that would bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses from the perspectives of users?
3. Even though people make use of the upgraded “iAM Smart+” to make applications to the Government, they are still required to proceed their applications under individual schemes at various off-line counters or other government websites. In this connection, does the Government have any plan to, by drawing reference from the practices of the Mainland, enhance existing “iAM Smart+” application based on the one-stop service platform?

4. Will the Government undertake to achieve paperless workflow for all registration services after the launch of the business version of “iAM Smart+” in 2026, such as business registration and inspection, and to allow people to submit documents without the need to make it in person at relevant government departments?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

1. to 3. To comprehensively enhance the functionalities of “iAM Smart” and optimise user experience, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) engaged consultancy service in June 2023 to redesign the user interface of the “iAM Smart” services. Apart from referencing relevant platforms and mobile apps from the Mainland as well as various countries and regions, we also adopted a “Design Thinking” approach to conduct “User Experience Design”. Citizens of different age groups, education levels and professions were invited to participate in a number of user experience workshops, so as to understand their habits when using mobile apps and their opinions towards “iAM Smart”. To provide citizens with a better user experience, we also co-designed the registration and user workflows as well as the application interface with them.

We updated the design of the homepage for the “iAM Smart” mobile app in October 2023, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical daily-life information, such as local real-time weather, traffic conditions, waiting time for accident and emergency services in hospitals, locations of automated external defibrillator, real-time cross-harbour tunnel tolls, Scameter, etc., by just opening the “iAM Smart” mobile app. The enhanced features to be launched progressively from 2024 to 2025 include :

- Setting up dedicated pages that encompass a range of common government service applications, enquiries and information, and simplifying the searching services and user workflow, so as to provide a more unified user experience;
- Enabling citizens to authorise the share use of their personal data collected by different government departments through the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway”, so as to obviate the need to input or submit the same information repeatedly when they use different government services;
- Introducing “one-tap login” for government services to allow citizens to directly access some commonly-used government services with their “iAM Smart” accounts;
- Introducing a digital personal document wallet function to facilitate citizens to manage their digital personal documents issued by different government departments; and

- Simplifying the registration process with the possibility to register for “iAM Smart+” via the “iAM Smart” mobile app, and setting up additional self-registration kiosks.

Bureaux and departments will start to enhance their existing online services orderly and integrate the services into the new “iAM Smart” platform, with a view to providing a better user experience. By revamping the overall system design and enhancing the functionalities of “iAM Smart”, we will be able to consolidate the existing online services of various government departments in a more systematic and organised manner, and to simplify the overall workflow, allowing citizens to directly access relevant government services through the “one-tap login” function of their “iAM Smart” accounts.

4. To further promote the development of digital economy and create a business-friendly environment, OGCIO is planning to set up a “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, just like the business version of “iAM Smart”, to facilitate corporations to go through corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification in a secure, convenient and efficient manner when they use e-government services or conduct online business transactions, thus saving the need to go through the complicated procedures of submitting and verifying duplicate copies of the related original documents and company seals. Moreover, corporations will no longer be required to repeatedly provide their corporate information when they use different online services, thus saving time and reducing the risk of human error, which will be conducive to their digital transformation. OGCIO will launch several functions in collaboration with the departments which have more business dealings with corporations (e.g. the Inland Revenue Department and the Companies Registry) in order to connect the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the e-government services commonly used by the corporations, thereby fully digitalising the processes of corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification. It is expected that the platform will start to come into service progressively by the end of 2026 at the earliest. In the long run, we will require all corporate-related e-government services to support the use of “Digital Corporate Identity”.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB242**

**(Question Serial No. 2384)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Last year, Cyberport and the Consumer Council, both quasi-government organisations, fell victims to hackers. Their computer systems were attacked by hackers and a sizeable amount of personal data were stolen, including the personal data of their existing and former staff members, and even detailed information such as identity card numbers, residential addresses, dates of birth, resumes and credit card information, etc. The spate of privacy leakage incidents has reflected the inadequacy of information security measures in these organisations. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. It is believed that the hackers intruded the old computer systems through the loopholes. If security tests on computer systems are not frequent enough, or if multiple authentication is not conducted, organisations are at risk of data leakage. Will the Government consider providing more cybersecurity resources to non-profit-making organisations that hold a sizeable amount of personal data in the future? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
2. Although many hackers commit crimes across the border and may not be subject to regulation under the laws of Hong Kong, the enactment of legislation can help raise cybersecurity awareness among enterprises and delineate responsibilities, which can impose a certain degree of deterrence. Does the Government have any plans to carry out legislative work on laws on data classification and cross-boundary data in the future?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

1. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has formulated comprehensive Government IT Security Policy and Guidelines (Policy and Guidelines), which are updated from time to time with reference to the latest national and international information security management standards and industry best practices. OGCIO has uploaded the Policy and Guidelines to its website for reference by all public and private organisations. Individual organisations may adopt those principles and measures on security risk management recommended in the Policy and Guidelines having regard to their own circumstances.

OGCIO has been working closely with the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force, the Hong Kong Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Centre, and the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited (HKIRC) to provide appropriate support to the public, including publishing information and advice related to cybersecurity incidents to the industry and the public; providing website security scan services for small and medium-sized enterprises; setting up cybersecurity staff training platform; promoting good practices in information security; organising seminars and competitions; implementing “CyberDefender” programme; and holding information security talks for schools and non-governmental organisations, etc. OGCIO also partners with HKIRC to operate the collaborative platform Cybersechub.hk to facilitate more public and private organisations in the cross-sector sharing of cybersecurity information with a view to further enhancing Hong Kong’s overall defensive capability and resilience against cyberattacks.

2. The “Policy Statement on Facilitating Data Flow and Safeguarding Data Security in Hong Kong” promulgated in December 2023 puts forward specific action items to promote the efficient flow of data and strengthen data security protection. To enhance the protection of cybersecurity of critical infrastructure, the Government also plans to introduce a legislative bill into the Legislative Council within 2024 to define clearly the cybersecurity obligations of critical infrastructure operators including the establishment of good preventive management system to ensure the secure operation of their information systems and networks. The Government will continue to closely monitor and make reference to the latest development and measures of data protection and cybersecurity in the Mainland and other countries around the world, so as to maintain digital security and enhance the capability in tackling cyber risks.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB243**

**(Question Serial No. 0203)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government will set up a “digital identity of enterprises” platform and the business version of “iAM Smart” to enable enterprises to use electronic government services or conduct online business transactions without having to go through complicated procedures, thus saving time and reducing risks of human error. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the related work details, the expected economic benefits and the estimated expenditure?
2. Will the Government consider setting the relevant key performance indicators (KPIs) for the usage rate and coverage of the business version of “iAM Smart”?
3. What encouragement and assistance will be given to the local small and medium enterprises in using the platforms and measures concerned?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

1. To further promote the development of the digital economy and create a business-friendly environment, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is planning to set up a “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, just like the business version of “iAM Smart”, to facilitate corporations to go through corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification in a secure, convenient and efficient manner when they use e-government services or conduct online business transactions, thus saving the need to go through the complicated procedures of submitting and verifying duplicated copies of related original documents and company seals. Moreover, corporations will no longer be required to repeatedly provide their corporate

information when they use different online services, thus saving time and reducing the risk of human error, which will be conducive to their digital transformation. We plan to seek a funding allocation of \$300 million from the Finance Committee (FC) for establishing the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform upon obtaining support from the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting of the Legislative Council in mid-2024. Subject to the FC’s approval, it is anticipated that the platform will be progressively rolled out from end-2026 at the earliest.

2. Our preliminary plan is that the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform will provide services to all companies established or registered under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622) and all businesses (such as sole proprietorship or partnership) registered under the Business Registration Ordinance (Cap. 310). To encourage the corporations to adopt the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, OGCI will launch several functions in collaboration with the departments which have more business dealings with corporations (e.g. the Inland Revenue Department and the Companies Registry) in order to connect the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the e-government services commonly used by the corporations. In the long run, we will require all corporate-related e-government services to support the use of “Digital Corporate Identity”.
3. OGCI is currently drafting the detailed plan for the implementation of the “Digital Corporation Identity” platform. To promote widespread adoption by the corporations, we propose to publicise and promote the convenience and the main functions of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the small and medium enterprises (SME) and the industry through diversified means and different channels, including thematic websites, social media platforms, promotional videos, etc. We also plan to collaborate with relevant departments and industry associations to jointly organise promotional events and explore appropriate support measures to further facilitate the corporations to adopt the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB244**

**(Question Serial No. 1398)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Budget Speech that the Government will allocate \$3 billion for the launch of a three-year Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises to leverage the AI Supercomputing Centre's computing power and achieve scientific breakthroughs. The subsidy will also be used to strengthen the cyber security and data protection of the Centre, and launch promotional and educational activities, etc. to encourage Mainland and overseas AI experts, enterprises and research and development (R&D) projects to come to Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the details of the Scheme, including the targets/Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), expected benefits and estimated expenditure with a breakdown of the figures?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim to enhance research and development (R&D) capabilities in different fields and promote industry development.

In terms of economic benefits, according to the consultancy study commissioned by the Government earlier, it is expected that the AISC will bring about a growth of \$6 billion to \$16 billion in Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product in the next 3 to 5 years. In addition, it is anticipated that 700 to 1 300 professional jobs will be directly or indirectly created in the next 3 to 5 years in relation to the establishment of the AISC. It is also expected that R&D institutes, talents and projects from overseas and the Mainland will be attracted to Hong Kong, thereby promoting the development of local AI R&D and industry ecosystem.

To further promote the development of AI ecosystem, it is announced in the 2024-25 Budget the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing power resources of the AISC, and the Subsidy Scheme can in general provide eligible users with a subsidy of up to 70% of the standard service rates as the computing power subsidy. Cyberport will be asked to set up an independent committee to determine the details on the beneficiaries and terms for disbursement of the subsidies, etc. The independent committee will, upon taking into account various factors, approve the specific amount and duration of the subsidy to be granted to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

In addition, we have set aside \$100 million out of the \$3 billion provision to strengthen the cyber and data security. The budget has also earmarked \$44 million to conduct promotional and educational activities for promoting the AI ecosystem development to enhance the interface and collaboration between the upstream, midstream and downstream components of the AISC and AI ecosystem development.

The Government will require Cyberport to set up performance indicators, covering the utilisation of the AISC's services, R&D achievement, talent promotion, operation and promotion of cybersecurity and environmental protection, for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme.

Upon the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out the publicity and promotion, so as to press ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB245**

**(Question Serial No. 3046)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology (IT) Infrastructure and Standards, (3) IT in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In 2024-25, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to monitor Cyberport's implementation of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre project and initiatives to support the information and communications technology industry and digital transformation of small-and-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What benefits will the AI Supercomputing Centre project bring to the enterprises in Hong Kong?
2. What are the specific initiatives to support the digital transformation of SMEs and the breakdown of the estimated expenditure? How will the Government encourage the enterprises concerned to make use of these initiatives?

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the main driver for the new round of industrial transformation, as well as the key to propelling the development of digital economy in Hong Kong. Cyberport is actively preparing for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) to assist research institutions and the industry in addressing the demand for computing power. The first phase of the facilities will commence operation in the second half of this year at the earliest.

According to the report on the feasibility study on AISC conducted by the consultant (Consultant) commissioned by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer last year, AI large models have great potential in many fields, including life and health,

data science, robotics, advanced materials and microelectronics, etc. The computing power of the AISC enables related research and development (R&D) teams to build models with different functions that will inject new impetus into their development. In terms of economic benefits, the Consultant anticipated that the AISC will bring about a growth of \$6 billion to \$16 billion in Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product in the next 3 to 5 years and 700 to 1 300 professional jobs will be directly or indirectly created in relation to the establishment of the AISC. The AISC will attract talent and enterprises from the Mainland and overseas to come to Hong Kong. In other words, the AISC will help this city enhance its R&D capacity and the development of the digital economy, as well as foster international and regional cooperation, thereby promoting the development of Hong Kong into an international innovation and technology hub.

2. The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million in July 2023 for Cyberport to launch the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme). Under the Pilot Programme, subsidies will be provided on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage and retail industries in applying the ready-to-use basic digital solutions under the 3 categories (i.e. digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems) so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. Cyberport has invited relevant SMEs to submit funding applications. The estimated expenditure for 2024-25 is about \$390 million, which will be mainly used for supporting the financial assistance for SME applicants, marketing, training for SMEs and administrative expenses, etc.

In addition to financial assistance, Cyberport will also actively conduct promotional activities on the Pilot Programme for the groups from the trade, organise seminars and issue relevant guidelines for the SMEs on a regular basis, which include the provision of training on digital transformation, in order to assist SMEs in identifying Information Technology solutions that suit their business and budget requirements. Cyberport has actively engaged more than 30 industry associations to promote the Pilot Programme, encouraging more relevant SMEs to submit funding applications.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB246**

**(Question Serial No. 0200)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in paragraph 97 of the Budget Speech that to further facilitate access to the public services of Guangdong and Hong Kong by residents and enterprises in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area, the Government collaborated with Guangdong Province in November last year to launch the Cross-boundary Public Services thematic website. The Government also connected iAM Smart with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province. Having set up iAM Smart registration service counters in Guangzhou as well as in Qianhai and Futian in Shenzhen, the Government has also introduced the first self-service kiosk for Hong Kong's Cross-boundary Public Services in Guangzhou. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of :

1. the number of users who have connected with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province through iAM Smart in the past year or so since the launch of the Cross-boundary Public Services? What types of businesses are handled for the public? Please list them in descending order;
2. the number of visits to iAM Smart registration service counters in Guangzhou as well as in Qianhai and Futian in Shenzhen?

Asked by: Hon SO Cheung-wing (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

1. In November 2023, we set up the connection linking "iAM Smart" with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents who have registered for the Guangdong Provincial Administrative Service to directly login to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the "Yue Sheng Shi" mobile app through "iAM Smart" to use Guangdong Province's various public services in a more convenient and efficient manner. As of February 2024, there were over

90 000 accesses to the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province through “iAM Smart”. No data is available on the activities of Hong Kong users after they logged in to the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province.

2. As of February 2024, more than 300 successful “iAM Smart” registrations have been conducted through the registration service counters in Guangzhou, Qianhai and Futian of Shenzhen.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB247**

**(Question Serial No. 1912)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 52 of the Budget Speech that the SMEs in the food and beverage industry and the retail industry will be invited to select suitable options among ready-to-use basic digital solutions and apply for subsidies on a matching basis early this year under the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme. The solutions will focus on three areas: digital payment and shopfront sales, online promotion and customer-management solutions. It is expected that at least 8 000 eligible SMEs will benefit from the pilot programme. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. When will the pilot programme be open for application by SMEs? What is the expected application processing time of each project in average? What are the criteria for processing and approving the applications?
2. Will the Government consider extending the programme to those SMEs apart from the food and beverage industry and the retail industry? What trades will be accorded priority receive the support?
3. Regarding the work to support SMEs' digital transformation, apart from the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme, what other concrete measures and resources of the Government will be put in place to facilitate the progress of digital transformation?
4. Technology Voucher Programme (TVP) is a funding programme that supports local enterprises/organisations in using technological services and solutions to improve productivity, or upgrade or transform their business processes. Will the Government consider any plans for enhancing the Technology Voucher Programme, such as increasing the amount of subsidies and streamlining the application process, so as to attract more applications from SMEs with a view to assisting them in upgrading or transforming their business processes?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

## Reply:

In consultation with the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC), our reply to the above questions is as follows:

1. The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million in July 2023 for Cyberport to launch the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme). Under the Pilot Programme, subsidies will be provided on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage (F&B) and retail industries in applying the ready-to-use basic digital solutions under the 3 categories (i.e. digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems) so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. It is expected that at least 8 000 eligible enterprises can benefit from the Pilot Programme.

Cyberport invited relevant SMEs to submit funding applications in March 2024 with application deadline set in April 2024. Cyberport will review and announce the funding application results as soon as possible. Cyberport has set up a thematic website, hotline and email channels for SMEs to enquire about the approval status of their applications.

2. The F&B and retail industries have been selected as the pilot industries under the Pilot Programme. We will review the effectiveness and operation mode of the Pilot Programme within this year, with a view to mapping out the way forward.
3. and 4. To support the digital transformation of enterprises, ITC has launched the Technology Voucher Programme (TVP), and it will review its funding arrangement and introduce enhancement measures from time to time to encourage and facilitate the utilisation of TVP by the industries in using technological services and solutions to improve productivity, or upgrade and transform their business processes. Since the launch of TVP in 2016, ITC has implemented a series of enhancement measures having regard to its operational experience and the feedback from the industries. These include, from April 2020 onwards, the cumulative funding ceiling of each enterprise/organisation has been increased from the initial \$200,000 to \$600,000, whereas the maximum number of projects funded has been increased from 3 to 6. The Government funding ratio has also been raised from two-thirds to three-quarters.

Meanwhile, ITC and the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) who serves as the TVP Secretariat, have been making continuous efforts to enhance the administration system of the TVP, with a view to enhancing the efficiency in processing applications, improving the quality of service provided by the Secretariat and strengthening the monitoring of projects. ITC and HKPC introduced the TVP electronic procurement platform in October 2022, offering applicant enterprises/organisations a brand new and convenient procurement means in addition to the traditional channel. In March 2024, ITC and the HKPC introduced the Digital Signing service for the TVP funding agreement signing with “iAM Smart+”. As the Digital Signing has legal backing, applicants can make



use of the “iAM Smart+” application in their mobile devices to sign the funding agreements and relevant documents instantly without the need to sign the same at the Secretariat in person. This function streamlines the process in signing the agreement and saves the time and workload required in processing the paper agreements by the Secretariat.

ITC will continue to closely monitor the implementation of the TVP and the feedback from the industries and introduce enhancements in a timely manner in order to assist more enterprises in upgrading and transformation.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB248**

**(Question Serial No. 2136)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme and the “Knowing More About IT” Programme, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. Please list by year the numbers of participating secondary and primary schools and students, the average funding amount for each school and the areas of application since the launch of the Programmes.
2. Please assess the effectiveness of the 2 Programmes separately.

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

1. The “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” and “Knowing More About IT” Programmes are targeted at all publicly-funded secondary and primary schools in Hong Kong respectively. Since the launch of the two Programmes in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 school years respectively, over 90% of eligible schools have applied for the funding. The details of the quantity of participating secondary and primary schools and students, the quantity and scopes of funded activities, and the amounts of funding they received in each school year are as follows:

**“IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme:**

| <b>School Year</b>               | <b>Increase in Number of Schools with Approved Applications</b> | <b>Number of Funded Activities</b> | <b>Scope of Activities (Examples)</b>  | <b>Approved Amount (\$ million)</b> | <b>Number of Students Benefited</b> |
|----------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2020/21                          | 119   | 294                                | Artificial intelligence, coding, drones, robotics, augmented reality/virtual reality, Internet of Things, blockchain, big data and cloud computing, etc. | 46                                  | About 27 000                        |
| 2021/22                          | 242   | 1 012                              |  | 152                                 | About 79 000                        |
| 2022/23                          | 115   | 1 235                              |  | 149                                 | About 82 000                        |
| 2023/24<br>(as at February 2024) | 6   | 331                                |  | 37                                  | About 23 000                        |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>482</b>  | <b>2 872</b>                       |  | <b>384</b>                          | <b>About 211 000</b>                |

**“Knowing More About IT” Programme:**

| <b>School Year</b>               | <b>Increase in Number of Schools with Approved Applications</b> | <b>Number of Funded Activities</b> | <b>Scope of Activities (Examples)</b>  | <b>Approved Amount (\$ million)</b> | <b>Number of Students Benefited</b> |
|----------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2021/22                          | 195   | 545                                | Artificial intelligence, coding, drones, robotics, augmented reality/virtual reality, Internet of Things, etc. | 46                                  | About 44 000                        |
| 2022/23                          | 234   | 728                                |  | 85                                  | About 86 000                        |
| 2023/24<br>(as at February 2024) | 53  | 588                                |  | 32                                  | About 34 000                        |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>482</b>  | <b>1 861</b>                       |  | <b>163</b>                          | <b>About 164 000</b>                |

- As at February 2024, 94.7% of the secondary schools and 91.6% of the primary schools have applied for the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” and “Knowing More About IT” Programmes respectively, reflecting that the Programmes were well received by schools. According to the results of student surveys on the two Programmes, over 80% of the secondary students and nearly 90% of the primary students participating in the funded activities agreed or strongly agreed that the contents of the activities were

attractive and creative, and conducive to enhancing their Information Technology knowledge. Both of the Programmes have been extended to the 2025/26 school year. We will review the Programmes in due course in the light of the experience gained in the course of implementation and the latest development of the STEAM education in secondary and primary schools.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB249**

**(Question Serial No. 2144)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the development and popularisation of artificial intelligence (AI), please advise this Committee of the following:

1. Has the Government conducted any assessment on the impact of AI on the productivity of civil servants? Is there any plan to replace some labour-intensive/repetitive work (e.g. enquiry handling, case vetting, data processing, etc.) by AI? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
2. What were the details of cases in which AI was applied to replace civil service work in the past 3 years, including the departments involved, the content of work, the expenditure on research and development, the establishment and posts reduced, and the emoluments involved?
3. Does any government department have a plan to replace civil service work by AI in 2024-25? If yes, what are the departments involved, the content of work, the expenditure on research and development, the establishment and posts to be reduced, and the emoluments involved?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

The Government has been actively applying artificial intelligence (AI) technology to promote the development of smart city and digital government. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) launched the Big Data Analytics Platform in 2020 that aims to promote bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to adopt technologies such as AI and big data analytics in a more efficient and cost-effective manner to roll out more e-government services for the convenience and benefit of the public and the business sectors. OGCIO also launched a new

shared chatbot infrastructure in 2023 with ready-to-use building blocks required for implementing chatbots, to assist B/Ds in developing chatbots relevant to their business, so as to enhance B/Ds' public service efficiency and improve user experience.

Besides, OGCIO has completed the e-Government audit to review the information technology systems and services of B/Ds and put forward digital government solutions that leverage advanced technologies (e.g. AI, blockchain, big data analytics, geospatial analytics, etc.) to enhance public services. Based on the recommendations of the e-Government audit, B/Ds will launch over 110 digital government initiatives progressively from 2024 to 2025 for the convenience of the members of the public, as well as to improve operational efficiency and enhance user experience.

To encourage and assist government departments in wider adoption of innovation and technology (I&T), OGCIO established the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) to match business needs from different departments with technology solutions and arrange thematic workshops. The Smart Lab also arranges proof-of-concept (PoC) for solutions with potential, in collaboration with relevant departments, and promotes departments to adopt relevant technologies and equipment, thus assisting departments in streamlining workflow, enhancing work efficiency and improving public services, etc. To further promote the use of AI technology by government departments in enhancing public services, the Smart Lab launched last year, an "Innovative Application with AI" innovation competition, which has matched participating department teams with the technology solutions of the industry players (including local start-ups) and conducted PoC, with a view to assisting various departments in developing more innovative services.

Currently, individual B/Ds will take into account their policies, the needs of their service targets, the deployment of manpower and resources as well as the operational needs, etc., prior to taking forward their IT projects and relevant technology applications. OGCIO does not have the specific details on the manpower and resource allocation of individual B/Ds in relation to their application of AI technologies.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB250**

**(Question Serial No. 2076)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Programme (2) of Head 135 in 2024-25, it is mentioned that the Government would continue to oversee the enhancement of public Wi-Fi services. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the expected resources and manpower required for the services in 2023-24?
2. What is the service quality of the local public Wi-Fi at present? Has the Government formulated any specific plans to enhance the Wi-Fi services?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

1. In 2023-24, the revised estimate for the Wi-Fi Connected City Programme was about \$82 million. A team of 8 officers from the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer has given support to programme coordination, service procurement, the monitoring of contractors' performance in project implementation and the daily operations of the Government Wi-Fi services.
2. As of February 2024, the number of hotspots under the "Wi-Fi.HK" brand was about 45 000, including 3 600 mobile Wi-Fi hotspots installed in buses, taxis and the Airport Express. Currently, the average connection speed of Government Wi-Fi services exceeds 20 megabits per second (Mbps), which is sufficient for general Internet use. We will continue to monitor the performance of Government Wi-Fi services and adjust the network speed and Wi-Fi coverage at individual venues in a timely manner, taking into account factors such as Wi-Fi usage, technical feasibility and cost-effectiveness, to ensure that the service quality meets the requirement.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB251**

**(Question Serial No. 0507)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Global cybersecurity threats have become an issue of concern. In respect of the government departments' cybersecurity issue, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. On updating the government information security work, what were the manpower and expenditure required in each of the past 3 years? What were the main tasks involved?
2. Has the Government set up any inter-departmental security incident coordination centre to manage the sudden threats and attacks? If yes, what are the expenditure and manpower involved? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

1. Government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) would implement information security related projects, including conducting information security risk assessment, enhancing information security level, and establishing new security systems, etc. mainly by deploying internal resources and seeking funding support from the "Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation" block allocations. The manpower involved in implementing the abovementioned projects is generally arranged through internal deployment by B/Ds. The expenditure of information security related projects implemented by B/Ds with funding obtained from the "Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation" in the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:



| <b>Year</b>                | <b>Expenditure<br/>(\$ million)</b> |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2021-22 (Actual)           | 312                                 |
| 2022-23 (Actual)           | 422                                 |
| 2023-24 (Revised Estimate) | 626                                 |

2. Since 2015, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer has established the Government Computer Emergency Response Team Hong Kong (GovCERT.HK) through redeployment of internal resources to coordinate the handling of information and cybersecurity incidents within the Government. The GovCERT.HK will continue to collect and analyse cybersecurity threat information from different sources for timely dissemination of security alerts to B/Ds, with a view to ensuring prompt implementation of appropriate preventive measures by B/Ds to safeguard their information systems and data assets.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB252**

**(Question Serial No. 3108)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under the Programme of Information Technology in the Community, the provision for the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer for 2024-25 amounts to \$1,310 million, representing an increase of 98.9% over the revised estimate of \$658.6 million for 2023-24, and a substantial increase of 445.8% over the original estimate of \$240 million for 2023-24.

The Government explained the substantial increase in expenditure only by citing the increase in cash flow requirement for general non-recurrent expenses, and the increase in provision for departmental expenses and personal emoluments. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee on such an increase in expenditure with a detailed breakdown?

Asked by: Hon WONG Chun-sek, Edmund (LegCo internal reference no.: 51)

Reply:

Under Programme (3) "Information Technology in the Community", the estimated expenditure for the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) in 2024-25 is about \$650 million higher than the revised estimate for the previous year. There is a total increase of about \$968 million mainly due to the requirements in additional cash flow of the launch of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), an increase in departmental expenses managing the operation of free public Wi-Fi services and the initiatives of facilitating cross-boundary data flow within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), as well as additional expenditure for personal emoluments for the creation of new posts. On the other hand, the increment was partly offset by the decreased cash flow requirement for other items of general non-recurrent expenditure, a reduction of about \$316 million in total as compared with last year.

Regarding the Subsidy Scheme, it is announced in the 2024-25 Budget the allocation of \$3 billion to implement the Subsidy Scheme, which mainly provides funding support to local

universities, research and development centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC), with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of the computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

Upon the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out the publicity and promotion, so as to press head the development of the AI ecosystem. The estimated cash flow for the general non-recurrent expenditure item in 2024-25 is about \$900 million.

Besides, OGCIO will continue to provide free public Wi-Fi services in government premises with high patronage and public demand. The estimated expenditure for this item in 2024-25 is increased by about \$28 million.

OGCIO is also responsible for administering and co-ordinating the related work of the facilitation measure on "Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)" to foster the cross-boundary flow of personal information within the GBA in a secure and orderly manner. The estimated expenditure for 2024-25 is about \$26 million. Besides, 9 posts will be created, which include 1 Senior Systems Manager, 2 Systems Managers, 3 Analyst/Programmer Is, 2 Analyst/Programmer IIs and 1 Executive Officer I, and the estimated expenditure for personal emoluments is about \$9 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB253**

**(Question Serial No. 0365)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is proposed in the Budget Speech that an additional funding of \$134 million will be allocated for the provision of subsidies of up to \$300,000 for each publicly-funded primary school in the next two academic years. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What were the respective numbers of the primary schools which had successfully applied for the subsidies under the "Knowing More About IT Programme" over the past 3 years? What were the respective percentages of these schools as against the total publicly-funded primary schools in the territory? Were there any primary schools which had never applied for the subsidies? Has the Government gained an understanding of the reasons why some primary schools did not apply for the subsidies?
2. Has the Government compiled statistics on the percentages of the junior and senior primary students who have benefited from the related activities organised by their schools subsidised under the Programme over the past 3 years? If yes, what were the respective figures?
3. Has the Government provided additional subsidies to cover the staff cost involved in organising the activities under the Programme for the participating SEN students? Such subsidies may reduce the schools' pressure on leading the SEN students to participate in the related activities and arouse the students' interest in taking the STEM subjects so as to prepare themselves for integration into the digital society in the future. If yes, what are the specific details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer launched the “Knowing More About IT” Programme in the 2021/22 school year, providing each publicly-funded primary school with a maximum subsidy of \$400,000 in the 3 school years from 2021/22 to 2023/24 to organise extra-curricular activities related to information technology (IT) and to procure the IT equipment and professional services required for the relevant activities. In the past 3 school years, there were 537 primary schools eligible to apply for the Programme. As at February 2024, 492 eligible primary schools have applied to participate in the Programme. Except for 10 primary schools with their applications under review and subject to approval, the remaining 482 primary schools have obtained funding approval for their applications, which accounts for 90% of the eligible primary schools. Details of the number of schools which have obtained funding approval in each school year are as follows:

| <b>School Year</b>               | <b>Increase in Number of Schools with Approved Applications</b> | <b>Percentage out of All Publicly-funded Primary Schools in Hong Kong</b> |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| 2021/22                          | 195   | 36%   |
| 2022/23                          | 234   | 44%   |
| 2023/24<br>(as at February 2024) | 53  | 10%   |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>482</b>  | <b>90%</b>  |

Currently, there are 45 eligible primary schools that have not applied for the Programme. Some of them have indicated that they do not need to apply for the funding. The reasons include that they already have sufficient resources to organise extra-curricular activities, there are adequate extra-curricular activities for students, and the schools have a shortage of manpower, etc.

In the past 3 school years, the number of students benefited from the “Knowing More About IT” Programme was about 164 000. As the activities are open to students of different levels of classes, the respective figures for junior and senior primary students benefited cannot be provided. Details of the number of students benefited in each school year are as follows:

| <b>School Year</b>               | <b>Number of Students Benefited</b> |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2021/22                          | About 44 000                        |
| 2022/23                          | About 86 000                        |
| 2023/24<br>(as at February 2024) | About 34 000                        |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>About 164 000</b>                |

When processing the funding applications, the vetting committee of the “Knowing More About IT” Programme will suitably consider the arrangements for the proposed extra-curricular activities, such as the learning levels and needs of different students, teacher-student ratios and technical levels required for the activities, etc., so as to provide opportunities for students with different learning needs to appreciate emerging technologies and to arouse their interest in applying IT in their daily life.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB254**

**(Question Serial No. 0757)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 52 of the Budget Speech that the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (the Pilot Programme) was launched early this year to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage industry and the retail industry to undergo digital transformation so as to enhance their business efficiency and competitiveness. It is expected that at least 8 000 SMEs will benefit from the Pilot Programme. However, the Technology Voucher Programme (TVP) launched by the Innovation and Technology Commission also provides support to SMEs in the food and beverage industry and the retail industry. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. What were the numbers of applications approved under the TVP in the past 3 years? Please give a breakdown by industry and the number of employees of the applicant enterprises.
2. After the launch of the Pilot Programme, how is the work divided between the Pilot Programme and the existing TVP?
3. Do the eligibility criteria for the 2 programmes include the requirement for enterprises to have operated locally for a certain number of years? Will support be provided to SMEs preparing to start their business?
4. Given that Mainland tourists account for the highest number of visitors to Hong Kong and they mainly use QR codes for payment, will the Government require applicants for the Pilot Programme to include a QR code payment system in their digital transformation plans?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

In consultation with the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC), our reply to the above questions is as follows:

1. In the past 3 years, a total of 28 415 applications were approved under the Technology Voucher Programme (TVP). Their major types of business and number of employees of the applicant enterprises are tabulated as follows:

| <b>Year</b>  | <b>Major types of business <sup>Note</sup></b>                  | <b>Number of applications approved</b> |
|--|---|--|
| 2021-22<br>to<br>2023-24<br>(as at end-<br>February) | Wholesale and retail  | 10 654                                 |
|  | Restaurants and hotels  | 2 397                                  |
|  | Engineering   | 1 978                                  |
|  | Personal care services  | 1 730                                  |
|  | Education services  | 1 288                                  |
|  | Import and export trade   | 1 186                                  |
|  | Transportation and logistics                                    | 1 003                                  |
|  | Advertisement, sales and marketing                              | 863                                    |
|  | Professional services (including legal and accounting services) | 800                                    |
|  | Banking, insurance and other financial services                 | 579                                    |

Note: The 10 major types of businesses are listed in the table above. Each applicant may involve in more than one type of business.

| <b>Year</b>  | <b>Number of employees of the applicant enterprises</b> | <b>Number of applications approved</b> |
|--|---|--|
| 2021-22<br>to<br>2023-24<br>(as at end-<br>February) | 1 to 9  | 23 507                                 |
|  | 10 to 19  | 2 668                                  |
|  | 20 to 29  | 782                                    |
|  | 30 to 39  | 400                                    |
|  | 40 to 49  | 251                                    |
|  | 50 to 99  | 467                                    |
|  | 100 or above  | 340                                    |

2. ITC launched the TVP in November 2016, with an aim to support local enterprises/organisations in using technological services and solutions to improve productivity, or upgrade and transform their business processes. The TVP provides enterprises with funding for the procurement of technology consultancy to assist in formulating relevant technological services or solutions targeting the needs of the enterprise, as well as the purchase, rental or subscription of customised equipment/hardware, software and technological services or solutions, instead of merely procuring off-the-shelf/readily available ones. The Guidance Notes for Applications of the TVP specifies that expenditure under an approved TVP project shall not receive funding support from other local public funding sources. In other words, the same project will not be double-funded.

The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million in July 2023 for Cyberport to launch the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme) with an aim to provide funding support to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with no or little exposure to digital technology and of relatively small scale to adopt suitable ready-to-use basic digital solutions. To address the business pain point of SMEs, these solutions cover the ready-to-use basic digital solutions under the 3 categories, namely digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems, providing them with assessed ready-to-use basic digital solutions to facilitate SMEs taking the first step in digital transformation.

3. Enterprises/organisations applying for the TVP must be registered in Hong Kong under the Business Registration Ordinance (Cap. 310); or incorporated and registered in Hong Kong under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622); or established in Hong Kong by relevant ordinances as statutory bodies. Enterprises/organisations are required, at the time of application, to have substantive business operations in Hong Kong and submit the relevant supporting documents.

The SMEs applying for the funding under the Pilot Programme must belong to the food and beverage (F&B) or retail industries, and must be registered in Hong Kong under the Business Registration Ordinance (Cap. 310) with substantive business operation in Hong Kong. They must not be listed companies, statutory bodies or non-governmental organisations subvented by public funding.

4. The Pilot Programme focuses on the Information Technology solutions under the 3 categories (i.e. digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems) on a pilot basis to provide an array of basic digital solutions for selection by applicants in the F&B and retail industries. QR code payment system is included in the digital payment solution package.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB255**

**(Question Serial No. 0802)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Use of Information Technology in Government

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In paragraph 90 of the Budget Speech, it is mentioned that the Government is making preparations for the establishment of the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). Led by the Commissioner for Digital Policy, the new office will be responsible for formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. It will consolidate information technology-related resources within the Government, promote the opening up of data and co-ordinate with departments to offer more digital services. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. When will the DPO be established?
2. Will the manpower and expenditure required by the DPO exceed that of OGCIO and EffO? If yes, what are the additional provision and manpower required?
3. In the process of establishing the DPO, will priority be given to the local innovation and technology (IT) products and services so as to promote the development of local I&T industries?
4. Has any provision been earmarked for implementing the "Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitating Cross-boundary Data Flow within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area"? If yes, what is the amount of the provision? What is the progress and timetable for extending the GBA Standard Contract to other industries?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

1. and 2. The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address that the Government will set up the Digital Policy Office (DPO) by merging the existing Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Efficiency Office (EffO). By pooling the talent, resources and technical expertise of these two departments, the DPO will be dedicated to formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The new office will spearhead the promotion of opening up and sharing of data and the application of digital technology among government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and industries, with a view to rolling out more digital government services that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public and businesses; enhancing the quality of public services and supporting the development of digital economy. It will also press ahead with the development of digital government and smart city, such as establishing the “digital identity of enterprises” platform; promoting cross-boundary data flow, Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) and other initiatives that support the development of the “Digital Bay Area”; strengthening the support and supervision of the management of e-government services by B/Ds, etc. To deploy suitable manpower to take forward these key initiatives, we propose to re-organise the existing manpower structure of OGCIO and EffO and transfer the manpower to DPO, and appropriately create 1 directorate post responsible for strengthening efforts in taking forward the facilitation of cross-boundary data flow, the development of “Digital Bay Area”, the implementation of CBPS, as well as the liaison with the Mainland, etc. We plan to consult the Legislative Council Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting and Establishment Subcommittee on the proposals and seek support from the Finance Committee in the first half of 2024. Our target is to complete the relevant procedures by mid-2024.
  
3. The Government has been actively creating conditions for introducing and utilising information technology (IT) and innovation technology (I&T) products and services of local enterprises and start-ups with a view to playing a leading role. The major measures in recent years are as follows:
  - (i) To encourage local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to bid for government IT projects, OGCIO has set up a “Minor Group” in the Standing Offer Agreement for Quality Professional Services (SOA-QPS), which covers contracts with value not exceeding \$3 million to facilitate local SMEs to provide IT services to B/Ds. The latest SOA-QPS which took effect from 31 January 2022 has also removed the requirements on service providers’ experiences and adjusted upward the number of participating contractors to attract more local SMEs to participate;
  
  - (ii) To support the Government’s pro-innovation procurement policy, OGCIO has established the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) to encourage and invite industry practitioners to assist government departments in introducing IT solutions, such as artificial intelligence (AI), robotic technology, data analytics and blockchain, etc. with a view to enhancing public services and city management and creating more business

opportunities for local start-ups and SMEs. In 2024-25, the Smart Lab will, taking into the business needs of departments and the latest development of technologies, continue to arrange promotional activities to enhance government departments' understanding in I&T, and invite the I&T industry (including local start-ups and SMEs) players to introduce their technology solutions to government departments, explore the adoption of I&T in public services in collaboration with departments, arrange matching, testing and proof-of-concept (PoC) for solutions that meet the needs of relevant departments; and

- (iii) OGCIO launched in August 2023 a new supplier listing arrangement for government procurement of information technology products (GITP scheme). The new scheme covers 3 major categories, namely network products, server systems and microcomputer equipment, with a number of sub-categories that comprise a wider classification of IT products. The new listing arrangement encourages competition and accelerates the procurement of the latest and most suitable IT products. The prerequisite for admission of suppliers of IT products is relaxed and the experience requirements on supporting staff are also adjusted, with a view to facilitating a wider participation from the IT industry, in particular the local tech start-ups and the SMEs, for offering more new and innovative IT products, including local ones, to the Government.

- 4. On the implementation of the “Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitating Cross-boundary Data Flow within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area”, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) and the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) jointly announced in December 2023 the facilitation measure on “Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)” (the GBA Standard Contract) for fostering the secure and orderly cross-boundary data flow of personal information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). The “early and pilot implementation” arrangement for the GBA Standard Contract was commenced in end-2023 and was expected to run for 3 to 6 months. We plan to review the arrangement in light of its progress in mid-2024, and refine relevant details in due course, with a view to extending the facilitation measure to different business sectors in GBA, hence fostering the provision of more cross-boundary services to benefit more businesses and members of the public.

OGCIO will create 9 posts responsible for the implementation, coordination and promotion work of the facilitation measure. The estimated expenditure in 2024-25 is about \$26 million.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB256**

**(Question Serial No. 0911)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 103 of the Budget Speech that an estimated expenditure of about \$300 million to progressively roll out the business version of “iAM Smart” (the new business version) from end-2026 onwards. In fact, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) have commenced the second stage of development of the “iAM Smart” business version (the original business version). In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

1. Is the development of the new business version based on the original version?
2. For the original business version, how many public and private organisations have adopted “iAM Smart” to access their online services? Can these public and private organisations’ “iAM Smart” original business version migrate to the new business version?
3. Can the original business version remain in use? If yes, what is the estimated number of additional organisations that will adopt the original business version from now on until 2026?
4. What is the total expenditure for promoting the original business version?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) is planning to set up a “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, just like the business version of “iAM Smart”, to facilitate corporations to go through corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification in a secure, convenient and efficient manner when they use e-government services

or conduct online business transactions, thus saving the need to go through the complicated procedures of submitting and verifying duplicate copies of related original documents and company seals. Moreover, corporations will no longer be required to repeatedly provide their corporate information when they use different online services, thus saving time and reducing the risk of human error, which will be conducive to their digital transformation. To encourage corporations to adopt the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform, OGCIO will launch several functions in collaboration with the departments which have more business dealings with corporations (e.g. the Inland Revenue Department and the Companies Registry) in order to connect the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the e-government services commonly used by the corporations. In the long run, we will require all corporate-related e-government services to support the use of “Digital Corporate Identity”.

OGCIO and the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) commenced in the third quarter of 2022 a Proof-of-Concept (PoC) study and testing on digital corporate identity in the Commercial Data Interchange (CDI). It aimed at exploring the use of Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) technology to improve and simplify the process of corporate identity verification, with a view to supporting the process for corporate users to provide consent on data sharing in the CDI. The relevant PoC, being a testing platform, has not been released to corporations for production use. Relevant tests and study were completed in April 2023 and the findings have served as a reference for the use of PKI technology and the Fast Identity Online (FIDO) technology, etc in the development of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform. The abovementioned work was undertaken with the existing manpower and resources of OGCIO and the HKMA. The expenditure involved cannot be separately singled out and itemised.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB257**

**(Question Serial No. 0912)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 109 of the Budget Speech that the Government will allocate \$3 billion for the launch of a three-year Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. How will the \$3 billion be allocated for the purposes of achieving scientific breakthroughs, strengthening the cybersecurity and data protection of the AI Supercomputing Centre, and launching promotional and educational activities?
2. It is learnt that the Government will set up an independent vetting committee to assess whether the computing power demands from applicants are reasonable and to approve their subsidy applications. When will the committee be set up? As the first phase facility of the AI Supercomputing Centre is expected to commence operation within this year at the earliest, will the committee be set up in advance so that subsidy applications can be approved earlier for immediate operation of the facility upon commissioning?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim to enhance research and development (R&D) capabilities in different fields.

It is announced in the 2024-25 Budget the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise

them to make the best use of computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

We propose to subsidise eligible users to make the best use of up to 90% of the computing power resources of the AISC, and the Subsidy Scheme can in general provide eligible users with a subsidy of up to 70% of the standard service rates as the computing power subsidy. Cyberport will be asked to set up an independent committee to determine the details on the beneficiaries and terms for disbursement of the subsidies, etc. The independent committee will, upon taking into account various factors, approve the specific amount and duration of the subsidy to be granted to ensure effective allocation and utilisation of the computing power resources.

In addition, we have set aside \$100 million out of the \$3 billion provision to strengthen the cyber and data security. The budget has also earmarked \$44 million to conduct promotional and educational activities for promoting the AI ecosystem development to enhance the interface and collaboration between the upstream, midstream and downstream components of the AISC and AI ecosystem development.

Upon the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2024, the Government and Cyberport will enter into a funding agreement and set up an independent committee to ensure that the Subsidy Scheme can come into operation in the second half of 2024 to tie in with the implementation timeline for the AISC. Cyberport will announce the details of the Subsidy Scheme and carry out the publicity and promotion, so as to press ahead the development of the AI ecosystem.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB258**

**(Question Serial No. 0913)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Budget Speech that the Government is collaborating with the Government of Guangdong Province to promote smart city development in the Greater Bay Area through various initiatives, including exploring the use of “iAM Smart” as one of the means for real name identity authentication on the “Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province”. In the connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. At present, how many Hong Kong residents have registered for an account on the “Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province” through “iAM Smart”?
2. What is the number of active account users (e.g. users who log in weekly)?
3. What channels have been used to publicise binding “iAM Smart” with the “Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province” account? How much funding has been incurred for the publicity work?
4. Are there any plans to further extend this service to other provinces? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

In November 2023, we set up the connection linking “iAM Smart” with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents who have registered for the Guangdong Provincial Administrative Service to directly login to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile app through “iAM Smart” to use Guangdong Province’s various public services in a more convenient and



efficient manner. As at February 2024, over 8 000 users have bound their accounts to the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province through “iAM Smart”, and there were over 90 000 accesses to the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province through “iAM Smart”.

To promote Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS), the “iAM Smart” thematic website has set up a dedicated page for CBPS, introducing how to login and use cross-boundary services with “iAM Smart”. We have set up “iAM Smart” registration service counters in Guangzhou, Qianhai and Futian in Shenzhen, to facilitate Hong Kong citizens residing or working in the Mainland to register for or upgrade “iAM Smart” without the need to return to Hong Kong. The registration service counters will be gradually replaced by self-registration kiosks to provide more cost-effective services in conjunction with the CBPS self-service kiosks. With the launch of CBPS, we have invited dozens of key opinion leaders and micro influencers to post videos on “Xiaohongshu” and “Douyin” to introduce the convenience of using “iAM Smart”, reaching over 3 million viewers. The expenditure involved for the above promotion arrangements has been included in the estimated expenditure for “iAM Smart”. As such, the expenditure involved cannot be separately singled out and itemised.

We are discussing with the Guangdong Provincial Government on setting up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks in more Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area (GBA), so as to cope with the demands of GBA residents and enterprises for Hong Kong government services. Meanwhile, we will continue to co-ordinate bureaux/departments’ participation and provision of CBPS through different service delivery modes, and understand the needs of GBA residents and enterprises for Hong Kong government services through various channels with a view to rolling out more CBPS of Hong Kong.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY****ITIB259****(Question Serial No. 1520)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

To further facilitate access to the public services of Guangdong and Hong Kong by residents and enterprises in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area, will the Government please advise this Committee of the following:

Please tabulate the numbers of “iAM Smart” registration service counters set up in Guangzhou as well as in Qianhai and Futian in Shenzhen and their utilisation situation.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok, Kingsley (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

Since August 2023, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer has progressively set up “iAM Smart” registration service counters in the Mainland. As of February 2024, more than 300 “iAM Smart” registrations have been conducted successfully through the registration service counters located in Guangzhou, Qianhai and Futian in Shenzhen. Below is the utilisation situation of the registration service:

| <b>Location</b>   | <b>Number of Registration</b> |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Guangzhou         | 120                           |
| Qianhai, Shenzhen | 120                           |
| Futian, Shenzhen  | 80                            |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>320</b>                    |

Remarks: The figures are rounded to the nearest ten.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB260**

**(Question Serial No. 2829)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Information Technology in the Community

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme, it is expected that at least 8 000 eligible enterprises will be provided with a funding of up to \$50,000 for each of them. Retailing and catering will be the designated trade under this programme in the first phase.

1. How will the Government take forward the work, such as promotion and liaison with enterprises? What will be the estimated expenditure? What will be the expected number of participating enterprises in the first phase?
2. When will the effectiveness review be conducted? If the results are satisfactory, will there be any increase in the funding amount and will more trades be included in the programme? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

1. The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million in July 2023 for Cyberport to launch the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme). Under the Pilot Programme, subsidies will be provided on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage (F&B) and retail industries in applying the ready-to-use basic digital solutions under the 3 categories (i.e. digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems) so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. It is estimated that at least 8 000 eligible enterprises can benefit from the Pilot Programme. Cyberport invited relevant SMEs to submit funding applications in March 2024 with application deadline set in April 2024. Cyberport will review and announce the funding application results as soon as possible. Cyberport has

set up a thematic website, hotline and email channels for SMEs to enquire about the approval status of their applications.

In addition to financial assistance, Cyberport will also actively conduct promotional activities on the Pilot Programme for the groups from the trade, organise seminars and issue relevant guidelines for the SMEs on a regular basis, which include the provision of training on digital transformation, in order to assist SMEs in identifying Information Technology solutions that suit their business and budget requirements. Cyberport has actively engaged more than 30 industry associations to promote the Pilot Programme encouraging more relevant SMEs to submit funding applications.

2. We will review the effectiveness and operation mode of the Pilot Programme this year, with a view to mapping out the way forward.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB261**

**(Question Serial No. 0677)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government will set up a “digital identity of enterprises” platform, i.e. the business version of “iAM Smart”, to enable authentication of identity and verification of signature of enterprises using electronic government services or conducting online business transactions in a secure, convenient and efficient manner without having to go through complicated procedures, thus saving time and reducing the risk of human error. The expenditure involved is estimated to be about \$300 million and the goal is to roll out the platform progressively from end-2026 onwards. However, there are views that the Government has already earmarked funding for setting up the aforesaid platform, it is inefficient for the platform to be progressively rolled out 3 years later. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following: How will the Government actively take forward the relevant work and enhance efficiency to ensure the effectiveness, reliability and sustainability of the platform in order to launch it as early as possible for expediting the enhancement of the convenience and security of digital services for enterprises?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The proposed “Digital Corporate Identity” platform is a new and complex digital infrastructure that serves as a platform for verifying digital corporate identity and facilitating convenience in doing business. We have to ensure that the platform operates very efficiently, securely and reliably. Upon obtaining the support from the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting of the Legislative Council by mid-2024, we plan to seek funding allocation of \$300 million from the Finance Committee (FC) for establishing the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform. Subject to the FC’s approval, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will immediately commence the related work including the tender preparation for system design and development, etc. in order to roll out the platform progressively from end-2026. To encourage corporations to adopt the

“Digital Corporate Identity” platform and enhance the platform efficiency, OGCIO will launch several functions in collaboration with the departments which have more business dealings with corporations (e.g. the Inland Revenue Department and the Companies Registry) in order to connect the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform to the e-government services commonly used by the corporations. In the long run, we will require all corporate-related e-government services to support the use of “Digital Corporate Identity”.

OGCIO will also provide the relevant system reference modules to facilitate authentication of corporate identity and verification of corporate signature with a view to expediting the adoption of “Digital Corporate Identity” in e-services provided by government departments and corporations, thus enabling more secure and convenient e-government services and online business transactions.

- End -

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB262**

**(Question Serial No. 0678)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government “will allocate \$3 billion to Cyberport for the launch of a three-year Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme to support local universities, research institutes and enterprises to leverage the Centre’s computing power and achieve scientific breakthroughs. The subsidy will also be used to strengthen the cyber security and data protection of the Centre, and launch promotional and educational activities, etc. to encourage Mainland and overseas AI experts, enterprises and R&D projects to come to Hong Kong.” In this connection, please advise this Committee of whether the Government has proactively considered allocating a provision to set up a Hong Kong computing centre in the Northern Metropolis when the AI Subsidy Scheme is launched? Or will the Government consider capitalising on the country’s advantage in computing by collaborating with the Mainland to set up a computing centre to promote co-ordinated development with Mainland’s computing centres with a view to strengthening the computing capacity of Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

Cyberport is preparing for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Supercomputing Centre (AISC) in phases to meet the strong local demand for computing power, with an aim to enhance research and development (R&D) capabilities in different fields.

It is announced in the 2024-25 Budget the allocation of \$3 billion to implement a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme, which mainly provides funding support to local universities, R&D centres and enterprises, etc. to make use of the computing power of the AISC, with an aim to provide sufficient financial support for eligible users and incentivise them to make the best use of computing power resources of the AISC. The funding allocation also covers the

enhancement of cyber and data security of the AISC, as well as relevant promotional and educational activities.

Cyberport's preparation for AISC is at full steam and making good progress. The first-phase AISC facility is expected to commence operation in the second half of 2024 at the earliest. Upon completion of the Cyberport 5 expansion project, the second-phase AISC facility will be able to provide a computing power of 3 000 petaFLOPS in early 2026 at the earliest. With the first-phase AISC facility coming into operation this year at the earliest, we believe that the AISC will provide the necessary digital infrastructure to explore collaboration opportunities with the Mainland in the development of AI and data industries.

- End -



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**ITIB263**

**(Question Serial No. 1400)**

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards

Controlling Officer: Government Chief Information Officer (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In connection with the enhancement of “iAM Smart”, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. The estimated financial provision for the Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards in 2023-24 is different from the revised provision by about \$200 million. What are the reasons for that?
2. What are the numbers of registered users for “iAM Smart” in the past three years (in two groups: aged 18 or above and aged 11-17)?
3. The 2023-24 Budget Speech mentioned that the Government would earmark \$200 million to enhance the “iAM Smart” platform. What are the details, such as the number of times it has been updated and the contents of updates, the number of new functions added and the use of relevant expenditure?
4. What is the estimated expenditure for enhancing the “iAM Smart” platform in 2024-25? What are the details for launching the enhanced “iAM Smart” platform in phases?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

1. Under the “Information Technology Infrastructure and Standards” Programme, the revised estimate in 2023-24 is lower than the original estimate by about \$200 million. This is mainly due to the decrease of revised cash flow requirement for the general non-recurrent item 894 (i.e. “Enriched IT Programme in Schools”) in 2023-24. The “Enriched IT Programme in Schools” covers the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” and the “Knowing More About IT” Programmes. As some of the participating primary and secondary schools have

not completed their extra-curricular activities of the previous school year (i.e. the 2022/23 school year), and some of the schools have not submitted applications or have submitted applications below the subsidy limit, the relevant estimated expenditure was thus reduced. The balance of the cash flow has been carried forward to 2024-25.

2. Since the launch of the “iAM Smart” platform in December 2020, over 2.6 million citizens have registered for “iAM Smart”, and among them, around 2.53 million users are aged 18 or above and around 70 000 users are aged between 11 and 17.
3. and 4. We updated the design of the homepage for the “iAM Smart” mobile app in October 2023, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical daily-life information, such as local real-time weather, traffic conditions, waiting time for accident and emergency services in hospitals, locations of automated external defibrillator, real-time cross-harbour tunnel tolls, Scameter, etc., by just opening the “iAM Smart” mobile app. The enhanced features to be launched progressively from 2024 to 2025 include:
  - Setting up dedicated pages that encompass a range of common government service applications, enquiries and information, and simplifying the searching services and user workflow, so as to provide a more unified user experience;
  - Enabling citizens to authorise the share use of their personal data collected by different government departments through the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway”, so as to obviate the need to input or submit the same information repeatedly when they use different government services;
  - Introducing “one-tap login” for government services to allow citizens to directly access some commonly-used government services with their “iAM Smart” accounts;
  - Introducing a digital personal document wallet function to facilitate citizens to manage their digital personal documents issued by different government departments; and
  - Simplifying the registration process and setting up additional self-registration kiosks.

The revised estimated expenditure for the “iAM Smart” platform upgrade project for 2023-24 is \$9.8 million and the estimated expenditures for 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 are about \$38 million, \$54.5 million and \$91 million respectively. The Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) has created 6 time-limited civil service posts to undertake the tasks of upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform, coordinating with bureaux/departments for the integration of online services, etc. The non-recurrent expenditure involved from 2023-24 to 2025-26 is around \$17.7 million.

- End -