

DEVELOPMENT BUREAU
BUILT HERITAGE CONSERVATION FUND

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Guide to Application

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Funding Scheme for Public Engagement Projects
(Batch II Round II)

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Note: This Guide to Application, including the appendices, has been translated into Chinese. If there is any inconsistency or ambiguity between the English version and the Chinese version, the English version shall prevail.

I. Introduction

Background

1. The Built Heritage Conservation Fund (“**BHCF**”) was established in 2016 to support public education, community involvement and publicity activities, and academic research for the purpose of promoting the conservation of built heritage. The Funding Scheme for Public Engagement Projects (the “**Funding Scheme**”) was launched under the BHCF in 2017, with a view to enhancing efforts in public education, community engagement, and promotional activities for the conservation of historic buildings. Thus far, the Funding Scheme has provided financial support to seven projects, amounting to \$1,312,000. Relevant project details can be retrieved at the website of the Commissioner for Heritage’s Office (www.heritage.gov.hk).

Objectives

2. Through the BHCF, the Government offers funding for public education, community involvement and publicity projects with a view to –
 - (a) strengthening community awareness and knowledge of built heritage conservation;
 - (b) mobilising the public, private owners of historic buildings and other stakeholders to take direct and positive action to conserve and revitalise the historic buildings; and
 - (c) enhancing public participation and increasing volunteering opportunities in heritage conservation works.
3. All projects supported under the BHCF should target at enhancing the heritage awareness and knowledge of the participants, mobilising action and inducing behavioural changes to conserve built heritage, with positive impact on the heritage conservation and measurable and tangible outcomes against the objectives set for the projects. Projects should identify effective, and where possible, innovative, means to achieve the objectives.

Eligible Applicant

4. Eligible applicant must be a local non-profit making organisation (“NPO”) (e.g. non-government organisation (“NGO”), post-secondary education institution¹, community organisation or professional institution)² having legal capacity to enter into contract and has involved in conservation³ of **built heritage**, which are either **declared monuments** in Hong Kong or **historic buildings** accorded with Grade 1, 2 or 3 grading by the Antiquities Advisory Board.

5. Applicants of the following categories should provide the necessary supporting documents to demonstrate their eligibility when applying for the funding support –
 - (a) Local tax-exempted NPOs⁴ (only accept applications from organisations that have legal personalities)
 - (i) a copy of the letter issued by the Inland Revenue Department on tax exemption under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112);
 - (ii) a copy of the organisation’s registration document;
 - (iii) a copy of the articles of association or other equivalent document; and
 - (iv) a list of the principal persons-in-charge and their positions.

 - (b) Local registered and non-profit-making companies
 - (i) a copy of the certificate of incorporation issued by the Companies Registry pursuant to the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622) or the former Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32);

¹ Post-secondary education institution refers to the degree-awarding higher education institution listed on the Education Bureau’s website (<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/postsecondary/local-higher-edu/institutions/index.html>) and member institutions that provide manpower training under the Vocational Training Council (<https://www.vtc.edu.hk/home/en/member-institutions.html>).

² This excludes operators of projects under the Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme (“Revitalisation Scheme”) that are currently receiving the Government’s one-off grant to meet the starting costs and operating deficits (if any) for the first two years of operation on the date of application for this Funding Scheme.

³ Involvement may include but is not limit to: (i) currently using, operating, or managing historic buildings that are graded by the Antiquities Advisory Board or declared monuments; (ii) having proven experience in organising public engagement activities or other relevant educational activities related to local built heritage conservation; or (iii) having proven work experience in designing tools that aid in the promotion/interpretation of local built heritage conservation.

⁴ Local tax-exempted NPO refers to an organisation which is exempted from tax under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112).

- (ii) a copy of the company’s articles of association (which must include clauses prohibiting the distribution of the organisation’s profits or properties amongst its members upon dissolution; and its objects and powers shall not include the distribution of profits to members); and
 - (iii) a list of directors and their positions.
 - (c) Local post-secondary education institutions
 - (i) a copy of the institution’s own ordinance/Post Secondary College Ordinance (Cap. 320) as documentary proof of its establishment, or other documentary proof as accepted by the BHCF Secretariat (“**Secretariat**”) (please confirm with the Secretariat whether the document(s) is/are valid documentary proof before the submission of application); and
 - (ii) a list of board members and their positions.
 - (d) Professional institutions
 - (i) a copy of the certificate of incorporation issued by the Companies Registry pursuant to the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622) or the former Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32); and
 - (ii) a copy of supplementary information, such as the institution’s constitution and memorandum and articles of association, which must include clauses prohibiting the distribution of the organisation’s profits or properties amongst its members upon dissolution; and its objects and powers shall not include the distribution of profits to members.
6. Original copies of the supporting documents should be made available for vetting and verification if and when required.

II. Proposed Project

Essential Requirements

7. Projects that do not meet the following requirements are not eligible for funding support from BHCF and applications will not be considered –
 - (a) The proposed project shall contribute to the overall conservation of local built heritage, raise awareness within the local community (including private owners of historic buildings and other stakeholders) regarding built heritage conservation, or mobilise the community to take action in conserving built heritage;
 - (b) The proposed project shall benefit the district or local community as a whole, and not just individuals, a single private organisation or a consortium of private companies;
 - (c) The proposed project shall be non-profit-making in nature; and
 - (d) The duration for the proposed project (“**Project Duration**”) shall be no less than 12 months and no more than 24 months, commencing from the date of signing the funding agreement with the Government (“**Funding Agreement**”).

Priority Project Themes

8. Subject to the requirements stipulated in paragraph 7 above, priority would be given to applications related to the priority project themes as set out in **Appendix I**. **No score will be given to a proposal that falls outside the scope of the priority project themes in Part (a)(i) of the assessment criteria as set out in paragraph 37 below.** The same assessment criteria shall apply to all the applications received.

Provision of Volunteering Opportunities

9. To enhance public participation in heritage education and community involvement projects supported by the BHCF, applicants are encouraged to

mobilise volunteers, e.g. members from Friends of Heritage⁵ of Antiquities and Monuments Office as well as conservation architects or surveyors through their networks. Volunteers can engage in proposed projects by providing logistical support for public talks, guided tours, workshops and participating in the planning and delivery of the projects, which may involve activities like conducting oral history projects, or creating websites, apps or films related to the project.

10. Applicant should provide proposals for mobilising volunteers to enhance public participation and knowledge transfer in activities related to built heritage conservation. The proposed volunteering initiative would be considered under Part (b) of the assessment criteria, as set out in paragraph 37.

Involvement of Youth

11. Involving young people in the planning and implementation of public engagement activities is an important means of promoting positive youth development and ensuring the transfer of knowledge about built heritage conservation to the next generation. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how young people will be actively engaged in the planning and implementation of the proposed activities. The plan to involve youth would be considered under Part (a) of the assessment criteria as set out in paragraph 37.

Reflecting Chinese History and Culture

12. Projects are encouraged to integrate elements that reflect Chinese history and culture. This could include showcasing significant historical events, cultural traditions, or architectural influences through storytelling, exhibitions, interactive displays, or innovative technologies. Proposals that address Chinese history and culture would be considered under Part (a) of the assessment criteria as set out in paragraph 37.

⁵ The scheme was first launched in 1997 by the Antiquities and Monuments Office with a view to engaging interested individuals, through specially organised programmes, to join hands with them to promote heritage to the public.

Incorporation of Innovative Technologies

13. Innovative technologies play a vital role in built heritage conservation, offering new ways to engage the public and foster appreciation of historic buildings. Technologies such as virtual tours, augmented reality, 3D models, immersive experiences and artificial intelligence are particularly effective in attracting and inspiring younger audiences. Applicants are strongly encouraged to incorporate these innovative technologies into their public engagement activities to enhance public appreciation and understanding of historic buildings. The utilisation of innovative technologies would be considered under Part (c) of the assessment criteria as set out in paragraph 37.

III. Application

Submission of Application

14. This Guide and its Appendices (particularly the *Explanatory Notes for Completing the Application Form (Appendix III) and Budget Plan (Appendix VI)* (“**Explanatory Notes**”) at **Appendix II**) should be read carefully and complied with before completing and submitting an application.
15. Applicant should complete the application form (at **Appendix III**) together with the budget plan (at **Appendix VI**) and submit in duplicate (one original and one set of copies) along with a CD-ROM disc or USB device containing a soft copy of the completed application form in both PDF format (compatible with Adobe Acrobat DC) and Microsoft Word format (compatible with Microsoft Word 2016 version), a soft copy of the budget plan (in Excel format) and all necessary documents in PDF format. If there are discrepancies between the hard copy and the soft copy of the application form and submitted documents, the contents of the hard copy prevail.
16. Applicant shall submit no more than one application and each application must be submitted by a single organisation as described in paragraph 4. Nevertheless, the applicant is allowed to collaborate with other assisting,

supporting or sponsoring bodies to implement the proposed project. The applicant will remain accountable for the proposed project.

17. The application form must be signed by the Person-in-Charge (“PIC”) of the proposed project. The PIC shall be one of the principal PIC, directors, office-bearers, or board members as shown in the documentary proof provided by the applicant in accordance with paragraph 5, or any other individual as accepted by the Secretariat. The PIC shall have the authority to sign the Funding Agreement on behalf of the applicant, be accountable for the project’s implementation, and be responsible for endorsing project submissions. The hard copy of the application form must include the official chop of the organisation or company. Any application without the signature of an acceptable PIC or without the official chop will not be considered. Should there be any uncertainties, the applicant should contact the Secretariat prior to submitting the application.
18. The completed application should reach the Secretariat via email, by post or by hand by the deadline.

If the application is submitted by email, an acknowledgement email from the Secretariat will be sent to the applicant within **seven (7)** working days. Upon receipt of the acknowledgement email, the applicant shall submit the completed application as described in paragraphs 15 to 17 in both original and duplicated hard copies and soft copy to the Secretariat by hand or by post within **ten (10)** working days. Please use “Application for Funding Scheme for Public Engagement Projects (Batch II Round II)” as the subject of the application email.

If the application is submitted by hand or by post, the completed application should reach the Secretariat at the following address by the deadline. Please state “Application for Funding Scheme for Public Engagement Projects (Batch II Round II)” on the envelope.

Address of the Secretariat:

Secretariat, Built Heritage Conservation Fund
Commissioner for Heritage’s Office
Development Bureau
Room 701B, Empire Centre
68 Mody Road, Tsim Sha Tsui East

Kowloon, Hong Kong

Email address of the Secretariat:

bhcf_enquiry@devb.gov.hk

19. For the applications submitted by post or by hand, acknowledgement will be sent by the Secretariat upon receipt of the application within **seven (7)** working days from the date of receipt of the application.
20. Incomplete applications or applications that fail to comply with the requirements set out in this Guide to Application may not be considered and processed, unless the non-compliance is rectified in a timely manner and to the Secretariat's satisfaction.

Request for Supplementary Information

21. The Secretariat may seek clarifications or supplementary information from the applicants regarding the application as and when necessary. Applications will be processed for vetting only after the receipt of all relevant information, including submissions of clarifications or supplementary information. Original copies of the supporting documents should be made available for vetting and verification if and when required.
22. In the event of a request made by the Secretariat referred to in paragraph 20 above, the applicant shall provide a written response within **ten (10)** working days from the date of request, or within such extended period as agreed by the Secretariat, failing which the application may be considered as withdrawn and may not be further processed.
23. For the avoidance of double benefit, the Secretariat would check with other Government bureaux and departments to verify if the applicant is receiving or has received any financial support for the proposed project under any other funding schemes. Unless otherwise approved by the Secretariat, the applicant shall not receive any other funding for the same project funded under this Funding Scheme. Depending on the arrangement of other funding sources⁶ obtained by the applicant, the Secretariat reserves the right to stop processing the application or the Government may adjust the

⁶ The other funding sources also include government subvention schemes supported under the BHCF.

amount of grant. Any excess funding that the applicant has received under this Funding Scheme but that the applicant was not eligible to receive by reason of any parallel funding under other funding sources not approved by the Secretariat shall be returned to the Secretariat forthwith. Should there be any change in the funding status of the proposed project, the applicant shall report to the Secretariat immediately.

Deadline for Application

24. The deadline for application is **1 pm, 30 July 2026 (Thursday)**. If a black rainstorm warning or typhoon signal No. 8 or above is issued or the “extreme conditions after super typhoons” announced by the Government is in force between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. on the closing date for receipt of the applications, the deadline shall be extended to 1 p.m. on the following working day (excluding Saturday). Late applications will not be considered.
25. If the application is submitted by post, the postmark should be dated on or before the deadline.

Notification of Results

26. Normally, a successful applicant will be notified of the results of the application through a letter of Approval-in-Principle (“**AIP Letter**”).
27. Under no circumstances shall an application be deemed to be successful unless and until the applicant receives the AIP Letter from the Secretariat.
28. The Government is not bound to accept any application submitted and reserves the right to announce the application results and to disclose the identity of the applicants to the public without the consent of the applicants or any other applicants.

Withdrawal

29. Any applicant may write to the Secretariat to withdraw its application at any time before a Funding Agreement is signed with the Government. Once the withdrawal request is submitted, it shall be deemed final and

irrevocable upon confirmation by the Secretariat.

Intellectual Property Rights in respect of the Application Form

30. The Government, the Advisory Committee on Built Heritage Conservation (“ACBHC”), and their respective/ authorised users, assigns and successors-in-title shall have the right to do any acts restricted by the copyright under sections 22 to 29 of the Copyright Ordinance (Cap. 528 of the Laws of Hong Kong) in respect of the application form and all the related documents or materials submitted by the applicant, for purposes including the assessment of the applicant’s application, management of the Funding Scheme, the disclosure made pursuant to paragraph 28 and all other purposes incidental thereto.

IV. Assessment of Application

Assessment Procedure

31. All eligible applications will be assessed by the ACBHC, which will give recommendations to the Secretary for Development (“SDEV”) on the allocation of funds under BHCF. Please refer to <https://www.heritage.gov.hk/en/advisory-committee-on-built-heritage-conservation/background/index.html> for details of the ACBHC.
32. The assessment evaluates the overall merits of the applications and will not involve categorization or selection by priority project themes. There is also no limit on the number of approved projects under each theme.
33. In addition to the checking mentioned in paragraph 23 above, the Secretariat will consult relevant Government bureaux and departments for advice on the proposed project when necessary. The applicant’s track record on implementing other Government funded projects will also be taken into consideration. Any unsatisfactory performance identified, such as breaching of agreement terms, termination of agreement or serious delay in submission of deliverables, will be taken into account in the assessment and may result in disqualification of the application. The information will be consolidated by the Secretariat and reported to the

ACBHC for consideration.

34. The offer of an advantage to any government officers or members of the ACBHC with a view to influencing the outcome of the applications is an offence under the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Cap. 201). Any such offer by the applicants or his employee(s) or agent(s) will cause the application to be disqualified.
35. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the application documents, the Government reserves the right to disqualify an application on the grounds that the applicant has engaged in acts or activities that are likely to cause or constitute the occurrence of offences endangering national security or otherwise the exclusion is necessary in the interest of national security, or is necessary to protect the public interest of Hong Kong, public morals, public order or public safety.
36. Decisions of SDEV in respect of funding applications will be final.

Assessment Criteria

37. The ACHBC will examine and assess the applications in accordance with the following marking scheme:

| Area of assessment | Maximum Scores |
|---|-----------------------|
| <p>(a) <u>Objectives and Project Theme</u></p> <p>(i) Whether the applicant has selected one or more priority themes from Appendix I⁷;</p> <p>(ii) Whether the proposed project aligns with the objectives of the Funding Scheme as detailed in paragraphs 2 and 3 in the Guide to Application;</p> <p>(iii) Whether the proposed project and the selected historic buildings demonstrate a clear and direct connection to the selected project theme(s);</p> <p>(iv) Whether young people can actively be involved in planning and implementation of the proposed project; and</p> <p>(v) Whether the proposed project showcases elements reflecting Chinese history and culture.</p> | 20 |
| <p>(b) <u>Project Outcome, Impact and Sustainability</u></p> <p>(i) Whether the proposed project can effectively raise awareness and foster appreciation of built heritage conservation among relevant stakeholders in the community;</p> <p>(ii) Whether the proposed project can effectively promote positive behavioural changes regarding the conservation of built heritage among the target beneficiaries;</p> <p>(iii) Whether the proposed project can remain accessible to the public after its conclusion in enduring formats, such as websites, applications, videos, and online publications;</p> <p>(iv) Whether conservation professionals, private owners of historic buildings and volunteers from diverse background can be engaged in meaningful roles; and</p> <p>(v) Whether the proposed project fosters long-term interest and involvement in heritage conservation among participants.</p> | 25 |

⁷ No marks will be awarded if none of the priority project themes specified in Appendix I are selected

| Area of assessment | Maximum Scores |
|---|----------------|
| <p>(c) <u>Creativity, Innovation and Publicity</u></p> <p>(i) Whether the proposed project introduces new ideas and knowledge;</p> <p>(ii) Whether the proposed project adopts innovative technologies, methods or approaches to make built heritage conservation accessible;</p> <p>(iii) Whether the proposed project employs innovative tools or technologies and effectively enhances the participants' experience;</p> <p>(iv) Whether a reasonable number of participants can be engaged with the proposed innovative tools or technologies; and</p> <p>(v) Whether a clear and reasonable plan for promoting the proposed activities to target participants and local communities has been provided.</p> | 25 |
| <p>(d) <u>Project Management</u></p> <p>(i) Whether the project team includes members with relevant expertise in built heritage conservation, project management, and community engagement;</p> <p>(ii) Whether the implementation plan is clear, logical, and well-sequenced;</p> <p>(iii) Whether the proposed activities are realistic given the resources, timeframe, and budget;</p> <p>(iv) Whether the proposal includes performance indicators that are specific, quantifiable and suitable for evaluating the project's public engagement activities; and</p> <p>(v) Whether the applicant has previously received Government funding support and demonstrated satisfactory performance.</p> | 20 |
| <p>(e) <u>Budgetary Management</u></p> <p>(i) Whether the proposed budget complies with the requirements outlined in the Guide to Application and whether each income and expenditure item is fully justified and supported by relevant documents (e.g. support letters for income, quotations for expenditures);</p> <p>(ii) Whether the proposed budget is well worked out, cost-</p> | 10 |

| Area of assessment | Maximum Scores |
|--|----------------|
| <p>effective, realistic and adequately covers various expenses;</p> <p>(iii) Whether there is a complete and itemised budget that has been accurately calculated and prepared (i.e. accuracy and consistency);</p> <p>(iv) Whether the proposed disbursement schedule is reasonable; and</p> <p>(v) Whether alternative sources of funding support are available for the proposed project.</p> | |

V. Approval of Funds and Funding Agreement

37. This round of applications will provide funding to no more than four (4) applications that receive the highest scores and comply with the essential requirements stated in paragraph 4 of this Guide to Application. For the avoidance of doubt, the Government may award funding to fewer than four applications and reserves the right not to award funding to any application.
38. The maximum amount of funding to be granted is HK\$2 million for each project.
39. Upon receiving the AIP Letter, the successful applicant shall enter into a Funding Agreement (upon which the applicant becomes the “**Grantee**”) within **fourteen (14)** working days to confirm, amongst others, compliance with all the terms and conditions laid down in the Funding Agreement, including *Conditions for the Use of Funds* and *Funding Guidelines* at **Appendix IV** and **Appendix V** of this Guide respectively, and all instructions and directions on all matters issued by the ACBHC or the Government from time to time in relation to the Funding Scheme.
40. The Grantee should commence and carry out the project within three months from the date of signing of the Funding Agreement (“**Commencement Date**”).

41. By submitting an application for this Funding Scheme, the applicant is deemed to have accepted and agreed to be bound by this Guide to Application.

VI. Enquiries

42. Enquiries regarding the submission of application should be made to the Secretariat. The contact method is detailed on the cover of this document.
43. Information provided in response to enquiries may be shared with other applicants.