

# **SUPPORT SERVICE CENTRES FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES PROJECT BRIEF**

## **Background**

Hong Kong is a cosmopolitan city. Out of our 6.9 million strong population, about 340,000 (5%) are ethnic minorities. Some members of these ethnic minority groups encounter difficulties in accessing public services and integration into the community.

2. As a new initiative to provide assistance to these ethnic minority groups in accessing public services and facilitate their integration into the community, the Government will establish, on a trial basis, four support service centres in different regions in the territory.

## **Project Objectives**

3. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are invited to establish and operate the support service centres. All the four centres will offer the following services for ethnic minority groups:

- (a) language training to improve their proficiency in both Chinese and English; and
- (b) other support services which would facilitate their integration into the society.

In addition, one of the four centres will provide centralized interpretation service to assist ethnic minorities' use of public services as well as essential non-government services which are crucial to them.

## **Eligibility of Applicants**

4. Eligible applicants (NGOs) should be bona fide non-profit making organizations which are: -

(a) statutory organizations or organizations registered under the laws of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (e.g. the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32), the Societies Ordinance (Cap. 151)); and

(b) charitable institutions or trusts of a public character granted a tax-exemption status under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112).

5. Each application should be made by one eligible applicant. Joint applications involving more than one applicant organization are not accepted. In case an applicant NGO plans to partner or collaborate with other organizations in operating some of the services, it should follow the arrangements in paragraph 12 of this Project Brief.

6. Each applicant NGO may apply to run up to two centres provided that it can demonstrate the ability to deliver the services. A separate application should be made for each centre proposed. Any applicant NGO submitting more than two applications will automatically be disqualified.

## **Location of Centres**

7. Two support service centres will be set up in the New Territories, one in Kowloon and one on Hong Kong Island. Applicant NGOs are required to identify appropriate premises for the proposed centres, such as in areas with dense populations of ethnic minorities. The application should give

justifications to support the selected location(s).

8. An applicant may propose alternative locations within the same region for establishing a centre. In that case, the applicant should clearly set out the priority of the locations in its application.

9. If the premises, facilities and equipment used for the support centre are shared with another organization or another service unit of the same organization, the applicant should obtain approval from that organization / service unit on the shared use of the premises, facilities or equipment and provide details of the sharing arrangement in its application.

### **Mode of Services**

10. Most services of the centres should be provided to ethnic minorities free of charge. If applicant NGOs intend to charge fees for any particular service, they should provide a detailed fee schedule with relevant justifications.

11. The services provided by the centres should be open to members of the ethnic minorities on a territory-wide basis. Under no circumstances should a centre confine its services to only ethnic groups in its locality.

### **Partnership and Collaboration**

12. Services of the centres should be run by the centre operators with their own staff. In case an applicant NGO plans to partner or collaborate with other organizations in operating some of the services, it should provide in its application the relevant justifications for consideration by the Government.

## **Opening Hours**

13. The interpretation service should be provided from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm seven days a week, except on general holidays stipulated in sections (b) to (r) in the Schedule to General Holidays Ordinance (Cap. 149). Applicant NGOs should also propose in their applications the arrangement for providing interpretation service to meet emergency needs outside these hours and on general holidays.

14. The support service centres for provision of language training and other support services should be open for at least 12 hours a day for six days a week. The centres are not required to open on general holidays stipulated in sections (b) to (r) in the Schedule to General Holidays Ordinance (Cap. 149).

## **Interpretation Service**

15. Interpretation service will be provided centrally by one centre to deliver a territory-wide service. The aim of the service is to help ethnic minority groups overcome the language barriers in their access to services provided either by the Government / public organizations or by private organizations of which the services are critical to ethnic minorities. Under normal circumstances, services of public / private organizations which provide interpretation support on their own (such as medical services at public clinics / hospitals under the Department of Health and Hospital Authority) are outside the centre's scope of service so that the centre can focus on other services for which interpretation assistance is essential.

16. Interpretation service will be provided to ethnic minorities primarily by telephone and, subject to pre-booking and availability of resources, on site. The provision of on-site interpretation is expected to be confined to special circumstances.

17. The centre will provide interpretation service between two official languages (i.e. Chinese and English) and seven ethnic minority languages for which the demand for interpretation is greater, namely (1) Urdu; (2) Hindi; (3) Punjabi; (4) Nepalese; (5) Tagalog; (6) Bahasa Indonesia; and (7) Thai. If applicant NGOs expect that due to operational reasons the interpretation service for different languages would have to commence in different phases, they should set out in their applications the timetable for the phased implementation.

18. If the applicant NGOs wish to provide interpretation service for other languages in addition to the seven languages set out above, they should provide the relevant details and justifications in their applications.

19. Applicant NGOs are required to propose a practical mechanism, such as by referral to other organizations, to handle interpretation requests from ethnic minority groups whose languages are outside the scope of the centre.

20. As minimum requirements, the interpreters to be employed should:

- (a) be fluent in at least one of the prescribed ethnic minority languages (preferably a native speaker);
- (b) be proficient in Chinese and/or English; and
- (c) have completed Form 5 education or equivalent.

21. The other three centres are not expected to provide telephone interpretation service. All four centres are expected to employ some staff members who are conversant in the relevant ethnic minority languages to facilitate communication with participants in the language programmes and other activities organized by the centres. Applicant NGOs should state in their applications the number of such staff members to be employed for each of languages, the qualification requirements of such staff members and any training to be provided to them.

## **Chinese and English Language Programmes**

22. Each of the four centres will organize Chinese and English language programmes. The objective of the language programmes is to improve the proficiency of ethnic minorities in written and spoken Chinese / English in order to meet their daily needs and to foster their integration into the society.

23. In designing the programmes, applicant NGOs should have due regard to the specific needs of the ethnic groups. It is advisable that the language programmes are at different levels with a view to serving ethnic members of varying language proficiency. The programmes should primarily be delivered by classroom learning supplemented by a range of outside-classroom activities, such as outings or site visits, so as to allow the participants to practice the languages in real lives and enhance their understanding of the local community. The successful applicant NGOs shall be fully responsible for the application for exemption from school registration pursuant to section 9(5) of the Education Ordinance (Cap. 279), as may be necessary.

24. The centres should recruit full-time or part-time tutors holding bachelor degrees from a Hong Kong university or equivalent and preferably with relevant experience of teaching Chinese / English.

## **Integration Programmes**

25. Each of the four centres will provide ethnic minorities with a comprehensive range of programmes to facilitate their early and smooth integration into the local community. The centres should develop programmes with a focus on assisting ethnic minorities in familiarizing themselves with life in the Hong Kong community and meeting their priority needs such as language training, education, employment assistance or other social services.

26. These programmes should include: -

- (a) orientation and familiarization programmes tailored to the needs of ethnic minorities;
- (b) general enquiry service and assistance including referral services and sight translation (i.e. oral translation of short written text) to facilitate their access to and use of various community services;
- (c) support groups and counseling services to assist ethnic minorities to adapt to living in a new environment; and
- (d) other value-added or innovative programmes conducive to their integration into the local community.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of Services**

27. Output and outcome indicators should be submitted to the Government on a regular basis and will be used by the Government to monitor the performance of the centre operators. The Government will meet with the operators on a need basis to review the performance. Applicant NGOs have to state in their applications the attainment levels on an annual basis in respect of the indicators set out below. Applicant NGOs may also suggest additional indicators and other assessment tools in their applications.

(I) Interpretation Service

- Time within which requests for telephone interpretation service will be met
- Time within which requests for on-site interpretation service will be met

(II) Chinese and English Language Programmes

- Number of training hours and sessions for each type of Chinese and English courses to be organized respectively and the grand total of training hours and sessions
- Number of members of ethnic minorities who can be admitted to each type of the Chinese and English courses respectively and the grand total of members of ethnic minorities who can be admitted

(III) Integration Programmes

- Number of each type of integration programmes to be organized and the grand total of integration programmes
- Number of members of ethnic minorities who can be served by each type of programmes respectively and the grand total of members of ethnic minorities who can be served

28. To ensure that the performance of the centre operators is effectively monitored, the successful NGOs will be required to provide regular progress reports and statistical returns on its performance and services. They will also be required to submit quarterly financial reports on its operation. Furthermore, the Government reserves the rights (on its own or through an independent assessor) to conduct independent monitoring and evaluation of the service.

29. Specifically, the Government reserves the right to: -

- (a) pay announced or surprise visits / audits to examine the performance of the centre operators, actual output on key service components, service quality and standards achieved or not achieved, areas of concern / complaints and outcome, as well as financial records;
- (b) commission a body to monitor the operation of the centres and to make recommendations on the future mode of operation and the

scope of services to be provided; and

(c) contact service users and other stakeholders.

30. At all events, the centre operators shall co-operate with the Government or independent assessor in conducting the performance evaluation.

31. The centre operators shall also implement their own in-house on-going monitoring and review mechanism in line with the agreement and conditions of grant to ensure that the programme objectives are met and the intended output and outcome level and service quality could be achieved.

## **Funding**

32. The Government has earmarked a total of up to \$8 million to subsidise the setting up of the four centres. The anticipated one-off funding ceiling for setting up the centre providing the interpretation service together with other support services is \$3.5 million and that for each of the other three centres is \$1.5 million. The one-off funding may cover any capital expenditure for setting up the centres, such as refurbishment and fitting-out works, purchase of equipments and furniture, installation of telephones and tele-conferencing facilities.

33. In addition, the Government has earmarked a total of up to \$16 million per annum for the operation of the four centres. The anticipated funding ceiling for the operating expense of the centre providing the interpretation service and other support services is \$7 million per annum and that for each of the other three centres is \$3 million. The operating expenses may cover any recurrent expenditure, such as staff emoluments (including contribution to mandatory provident fund), office operation cost (including rent, insurance and audit fee), services implementation cost and publicity cost. The funding period

is for two years.

34. Only expenditure directly incurred for the project will be funded. Reshuffling of funding between the one-off setting up expenditures and the annual operating expenses is not permitted.

35. The funding for the operating expenses may be extended for one year at the sole discretion of the Government. The Government will review the future of the services in the light of the experience gained during the implementation of the project.

36. The Government will not accept any liabilities beyond the approved budget and no supplementary provisions will be considered. The operator shall indemnify and hold the Government indemnified against any and all losses, claims, damages, costs, charges, expenses, liabilities, demands, proceedings, and actions which the Government may sustain or incur or which may be brought or established against it by any person.

37. The NGOs selected shall not, without the prior written consent of the Government, accept funding or sponsorships from any other organizations to operate the centres. If any applicant NGO intends to run the centre under co-sponsorship, they should provide in their application the relevant justification for the consideration of the Government.

### **Payment Arrangements**

38. Payment of the funding for both the one-off setting up expenditures and the annual operating expenses will be made at intervals to be set out in the agreement and conditions of grant.

39. The Government reserves the right to withhold any further payment if the performance of the centre is considered not satisfactory or having

substantially deviated from the original plan or if a large amount of the funding remains unspent in the account of the project.

### **Project Income and Residual Funds**

40. All incomes generated from the project, irrespective of whether it has been declared in the application, should be used solely for operating or in support of the project.

41. Upon the completion or termination of the project, any unspent amount of the funding over the recognized total expenditure of the project will be returned to the Government.

### **Project Bank Account and Interest**

42. The NGO selected should keep a separate risk-free interest-bearing Hong Kong Dollar account with a bank licensed in Hong Kong, which will be used solely and exclusively for processing all receipts and payments of the project. Payments from that account should be made by the authorized representative(s) of the organization that receives the approved funding. Any unspent balance of the funding should be kept at all times in that account.

43. All interest income generated from the project bank account should be solely used for the project. Under no circumstances shall the interest earned be applied for other uses outside the approved scope of project.

### **Application Procedures**

44. Eligible NGOs interested in the project are invited to submit an

application, either in English or in Chinese. The application which should contain the detailed proposal, in eight hard copies and one soft copy, should be sealed in an envelope marked “**Application for Support Service Centres for Ethnic Minority**” and delivered either by hand or by registered mail to **Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, Room 325, 3/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, Lower Albert Road, Hong Kong** at or before **5:00 pm on 12 January 2009**. Postmark will be checked for submission sent by post. Late submission or amendment of proposal after the closing date will not be entertained.

45. In regard to applications for funding for establishing the centre with centralized interpretation service, the applicant should clearly state in the application whether it would be willing to be considered for operating a centre without centralized interpretation service if its original proposal were not successful. In this case, the applicant NGO should also include a separate proposal without centralized interpretation service in the same application. Otherwise, it would be presumed that the applicant NGO would have no interest to run a centre without centralized interpretation service and the application will not be further considered.

46. The proposal should contain all the information relevant to the application including the following: -

(I) Information on the Applicant NGOs

- Background of the organization and documentary proof of eligibility to apply -
  - Full official name of the organization in both Chinese and English
  - Details of registration of organization as stated in paragraph 4 above
  - Name of key management personnel (including chairperson / chief executive / director)

- Authorized contact person of the organization and means of contact
- Official address, telephone number, fax number, website address
- Existing services provided by the organization
- Existing staff structure and organization chart
- The latest audited financial statement
- Track record and experience of the organization in providing similar services to ethnic minorities (if any)

## (II) Location and Facilities of the Centre

- Intended region under application, i.e. Hong Kong, Kowloon or New Territories
- Intended location within the above region and justifications to support the choice of location (if an applicant proposes a number of alternative locations for establishing a centre, it should set out the priority of the locations)
- Intended size of the centre
- Photos and draft layout plans of the target premises (if any)
- Descriptions of the types and quantities of equipments, fittings and furniture required
- Details of sharing arrangements with other organization / unit on premises / facilities / equipment (if applicable)

## (III) Service Design and Operation Details

- Detailed description of service delivery proposals and implementation schedule, with separate description for interpretation service (for the centre which provides interpretation), language programmes and integration programmes respectively, including the information set out under respective headings in various paragraphs of this project brief
- Opening hours of interpretation service and arrangement for

providing interpretation service to meet emergency needs outside the hours (for the centre with centralized interpretation service)

- Opening hours for the centre for provision of language training and other support services (for centres which provide language training and other support services)
- Capability to network with other services agencies to facilitate their delivery of support services and to make appropriate referrals
- Measures to promulgate and publicize the services and enhance accessibility of services to ethnic minorities

(IV) Provision of Interpretation Service (for the centre with centralized interpretation service)

- The qualifications of the interpreters to be employed
- The number of full-time or part-time interpreters to be employed for each of the target languages
- The language test to be conducted in recruiting interpreters
- The training to be provided to the interpreters
- Specific means for language identification in order to handle telephone requests from those members of the ethnic minorities who may speak limited Chinese or English
- Any arrangement they plan to make with organizations which would use the interpretation service and the equipment to be installed to facilitate the provision of interpretation service by telephone

(V) Human Resources

- Detailed description of the staffing structures, establishment and job responsibilities of staff
- Qualification and relevant working experience requirements in recruiting staff
- Detailed description of staff orientation, training and development

programme

(VI) Performance Management

- Expected attainment levels of various services (including all output and outcome indicators listed in this project brief and any other assessment tools proposed by the applicant)
- Detailed description of internal evaluation and quality assurance mechanism (e.g. complaint handling procedures) of the support services

(VII) Financial Resource Management

- Budget of the project, including one-off setting up expenditure (with breakdowns of, for example, refurbishment and fitting-out works; purchase of equipments and furniture; and installation of facilitates) and annual operating expenses (with breakdowns of, for example, staff emoluments; office operation costs; services implementation costs such as those of language programmes and integration programmes; and promotion and publicity costs), and cash flow projection throughout the funding period
- Fee-charging proposal and fee waiving mechanism, if any (including the services concerned and the amount of the proposed fees as a percentage of the estimated cost of the services)

If the application is successful, the approved proposal from the successful applicant NGO will form part of the agreement with the Government and conditions of grant for the funding of the project.

### **Assessment of Applications**

47. A Vetting Committee comprising representatives of relevant Government Bureaux and/or Departments will be formed to assess the

applications. Applicant NGOs may be invited to present their proposals to the Vetting Committee if needed. Major considerations for assessing the applications will include: -

- (a) viability and merit of the proposals;
- (b) experience, past performance and capability of the applicant NGOs in providing support services to ethnic communities;
- (c) expertise and qualification of personnel involved in carrying out the programmes;
- (d) capability to network and cooperate with other organizations to deliver the supportive services and to make appropriate referrals;
- (e) attainment levels for the output and outcome indicators mentioned in this project brief (and other performance assessment tools, if any, proposed by the applicant NGOs);
- (f) the time by which the centre will come into operation; and
- (g) budget and cost-efficiency.

48. The Vetting Committee will first consider the applications for the centre with centralized interpretation service (“the interpretation-cum-support service centre”). After it has identified the successful application, it will consider applications for the other centres which only provide language training and other support services (“the other centres”). If the interpretation-cum-support service centre is to be set up on Hong Kong Island or in Kowloon, the applications for the other centres on Hong Kong Island or in Kowloon (as applicable) will not be considered. If the interpretation-cum-support service centre is to be set up in the New Territories,

the applications for the other centres in the New Territories will be considered since there will be two centres in the New Territories. However, applications involving locations outside the district in which the interpretation-cum-support-service centre is located will be considered more favourably.

### **Contractual Requirement**

49. Successful applicants will be invited to execute a written agreement for the grant with the Government. They shall comply with all the terms and conditions laid down in the agreement and all instructions and correspondence issued by the Government from time to time in respect of the project.

50. Where the centre operators demonstrate unsatisfactory performance and are unable to make acceptable progress to improve its performance, the Government may consider termination of the agreement (resulting in withdrawal of funding) at any time prior to the expiry of the two years' duration.

### **Announcement of Results**

51. All applicant NGOs will be informed of the outcome of their applications within the first quarter of 2009.

### **Briefing Session**

52. A briefing session will be held to introduce the project and to answer enquires. Details of the briefing session are as follows:

Date : 10 December 2008 (Wednesday)

Time : 10:30 am to 12:30 pm

Place : Lecture Theatre, Hong Kong Central Library, 66 Causeway Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong

53. To facilitate arrangement, interested NGOs which wish to send representatives to attend the briefing session should fill in the reply slip in **Annex** and return it by fax (no. 2840 0657) or by e-mail (cmabenq@cmab.gov.hk) before 12:00 noon on 8 December 2008.

**Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau**  
**December 2008**

To: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau  
(Attn: Mr. Kepler YUEN)  
Fax: 2840 0657  
Email: [cmabenq@cmab.gov.hk](mailto:cmabenq@cmab.gov.hk)

**Reply Slip**

**Briefing Session on  
Invitation to apply for government funding to establish and operate  
Support Service Centres for Ethnic Minorities**

Date : 10 December 2008 (Wednesday)  
Time : 10:30 am to 12:30 pm  
Place : Lecture Theatre, Hong Kong Central Library, 66 Causeway Road,  
Causeway Bay, Hong Kong

The following representative(s) of my agency will attend the briefing session:

Name	Post/Service Unit	Contact No.
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Post: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_