

Quality Education Fund

Priority Themes

Guide to Applicants

This Guide sets out the details on how to apply for funding support under the Quality Education Fund (QEF). Apart from the information provided in the present Guide to Applicants, the QEF Secretariat may issue supplementary information and guidelines from time to time. Please check our website (<http://qef.org.hk>) to see if there is any update before submission.

For application details of **the Dedicated Funding Programme for Publicly-funded schools**, please refer to the Guide to Applicants posted also on our website.

1. Scope of the QEF

The QEF is established to fund worthwhile initiatives on a pilot basis and one-off projects that are non-profit-making, aiming to raise the quality of school education, and to promote quality school education at all levels, i.e. kindergarten, primary, secondary and special education. For detailed information about the QEF, please refer to the QEF website (<http://qef.org.hk>).

2. Vision of the QEF

The QEF encourages projects that support innovation and/or new development, enrichment of students' learning experiences, and school-based initiatives that would suit the specific needs of students, teachers and contexts of individual schools as well as the school sector in accordance with education policies. The funded QEF projects are expected to promote quality teaching and learning in the above context with a view to enabling students to attain all-round development and develop positive values and attitudes as well as enhancing the professional capacity of schools and teachers.

With the experiences in education in Hong Kong since the QEF's establishment, **innovation and/or new development would cover new ideas or practices (including enhancement and/or adaptation) which serve to supplement and/or complement the existing practices that would facilitate the development of schools to address the needs specific to their own contexts.** This also covers projects which could build on and further expand the new ideas or practices that have been generated from projects previously funded by the QEF.

3. Eligibility for Application

Schools, educational bodies and organisations registered under the laws of Hong Kong and individuals who are permanent residents in Hong Kong are eligible to apply.

4. Submission of Application

Applications can be submitted throughout the year. They should be submitted through the Electronic Project Management System (EPMS) via the QEF website (<http://qef.org.hk>). Other means of submission e.g. by post, by fax, by email or in person will not be accepted.

When completing the application form, applicants have to read the "Explanatory Notes for Completing the Quality Education Fund Application Form" at **Annex I** for applications with grant sought exceeding \$200,000 or at **Annex II** for applications with grant sought NOT

exceeding \$200,000, where applicable, in conjunction with this Guide.

5. *Topical Areas and Activities*

Areas or activities under a project that could be funded by QEF may include but NOT limited to the following:

- (i) trying out new pedagogy;
- (ii) developing school-based curriculum and/or assessment;
- (iii) integrating information technology with school-based learning activities, such as blended learning, flip-classroom;
- (iv) organising life-wide learning activities for students, including extra-curricular activities/educational visits;
- (v) providing support services to cater for diverse needs of students;
- (vi) offering school-based professional learning opportunities for teachers and principals; and/or
- (vii) undertaking educational researches of different scales, including basic research that would have bearings on practices, action research, applied research and evaluation to address specific issues in education (in partnership with schools).

6. *Project Themes*

For applications with grant sought exceeding \$200,000, the QEF will give **priority consideration** if they fall under any of the following themes:

- (1) STEM/STEAM Education
- (2) Information Technology in Education
- (3) Assessment Literacy
- (4) Life-wide Learning
- (5) Positive Values
- (6) Students' Balanced Development
- (7) Effective Leadership and School Management

Details on the priority themes are at **Annex III**.

Applicants can propose projects under any priority theme that best suits the needs of the target beneficiaries. The QEF also welcomes projects that cut across themes for better cross-disciplinary understanding and coherence. Apart from the above priority themes, applicants can apply to undertake innovative projects that meet the needs of schools and/or the education sector. Detailed elaboration on the specific needs of the schools and/or the education sector and how they would be benefited should be provided.

7. *Number of Applications*

(a) For grant sought exceeding \$200,000

All applicants can submit for each school year at most **TWO** applications under different themes provided that they are not the grantees of more than two on-going projects with grant sought exceeding \$200,000 as at the commencement date of the project under application. The proposed commencement date of each project should be within one year from the date of submission. There is no restriction on the number of projects which an applicant can collaborate / participate.

School applicants can submit for each school year at most **THREE** applications under different themes provided that the amount of grant sought of one of the applications does not exceed \$600,000¹. They should not be the grantees of more than three on-going projects with grant sought exceeding \$200,000 as at the commencement date of the project under application. With prior approval from the QEF, schools under the same sponsoring body with more than two schools may transfer the quota among themselves after taking into consideration the capacity and the needs of schools concerned.

For **tertiary institutions** funded by the University Grants Committee, each eligible applicant can submit for each school year at most **THREE** applications under different themes provided that it is not the grantee of more than three on-going projects with grant sought exceeding \$200,000 as at the commencement date of the project under application.

(b) For grant sought not exceeding \$200,000

In addition to the respective quota on applications in each school year, each eligible applicant can submit at most **TWO** applications with grant sought not exceeding \$200,000 under any theme in different contexts. At one time, a grantee should not have more than two on-going projects with grant sought not exceeding \$200,000 as at the commencement date of the project under application. The proposed commencement date of each project should be within one year from the date of submission.

(c) Resubmission

Applicants will be allowed to resubmit each unsuccessful application **once**. Resubmission has to be made within 12 months from the submission date of the unsuccessful application.

8. Responsibility of Applicant

Each application should be submitted under the name of one eligible applicant who will enter into an agreement with the QEF upon approval of the grant for the project. In case there are collaborating / participating schools and organisations, a party should be assigned to register as an applicant and be held responsible for the whole project.

For tertiary institutions, a person of at least the rank of the head of a department or a centre should be registered as the responsible person in submitting the application. Should a person head two or more departments/independent centres, he/she is allowed to submit separate applications for the departments/centres respectively.

9. Assessment Criteria

A QEF project should be mainly undertaken in Hong Kong. The funding required should be one-off without entailing recurrent expenditure on the part of the QEF. It should not duplicate any project that the Government is undertaking or about to undertake; nor should it duplicate funding for similar projects from other Government sources². Projects that could have been funded by the applicant's approved recurrent expenditure or other sources will not normally be considered except for cases well justified. For applications with grant sought exceeding \$200,000, priority consideration will be given to projects that carry or further the themes set out in paragraph 6 of this Guide, and those which can produce a sustainable impact on the

¹ The amount would be revised to \$1,000,000 with effect from 1 December 2023. The prevailing arrangement of application quota should remain the same (e.g. if a school applicant submitted two applications with grant sought exceeding \$600,000 before December 2023, the third application to be submitted in the 2023/24 school year should be with grant sought not exceeding \$1,000,000).

² "Duplicate" means sheer copying or replication without adaptation or new elements.

target beneficiaries and the education sector in general. Projects with matching contributions from other non-government sources will be more favourably considered.

Project proposals will be assessed in accordance with, but not limited to, the criteria under three areas, viz (a) Project Needs; (b) Project Feasibility; and (c) Expected Project Outcomes. The project proposals must demonstrate an innovative element and strive to meet the criteria in all the three areas. Project proposals will be assessed based on the written proposals submitted by the applicants. The QEF reserves the right to ask applicant to further explain the proposal and seek additional information where necessary. Unless on request of the QEF Secretariat, supplementary information provided after submission of application will NOT be accepted and will NOT form part of the application.

Specific assessment criteria under the three areas are listed at Annex I(a) for applications with grant sought exceeding \$200,000 and Annex II(a) for applications with grant sought not exceeding \$200,000 respectively.

10. Agreement

Successful applicants are required to sign an agreement with the QEF. Such agreement will set out in detail the conditions of the grant. Applicants could make reference to the terms and conditions set out in the Agreement currently in force on the QEF website (<http://qef.org.hk>). The respective General Guidelines on (i) Management and Monitoring of Projects, (ii) Staff Administration and Procurement Matter and (iii) Handling of Assets, which form part of the Agreement conditions, are available from the QEF website.

11. Monitoring

All approved projects will be subject to monitoring by the QEF. The grantees are required to play an active role in project monitoring and self-evaluation. Upon obtaining approval of grant for a project, a grantee will be required to submit reports for project monitoring purpose on a regular basis. Upon completion of the project, submission of a final report and an end-of-project financial statement will be required. Applicants could make reference to the 'General Guidelines on Management and Monitoring of Projects' on the QEF website (<http://qef.org.hk>).

12. Promotion and Dissemination

Grantees/project leaders are required to participate actively in the promotion, publicity and dissemination activities organised or facilitated by the QEF.

13. Intellectual Property Rights

The contents, the deliverables and the products developed from all projects sponsored by the QEF, including but not limited to all texts, graphics, drawings, diagrams, photographs, audio and video recordings and compilation of data or other materials (collectively, the "Products") are protected by intellectual property rights. Unless otherwise indicated, the Permanent Secretary for Education Incorporated is the owner of the copyright and other intellectual property rights in the Products. Applicants are encouraged to read the 'QEF Intellectual Property Rights Policy' on the QEF website (<http://qef.org.hk>).

Quality Education Fund Application Personal Information Collection Statement

Purpose of Collection

1. The personal data provided by you in the application will be used by the EDB for one or more of the following purposes:

- (a) Activities relating to the processing, authentication and counter-checking of the application;
- (b) Activities relating to matching of the personal data with the database of other relevant Government bureaux / departments in connection with the processing, authentication and counter-checking of the application mentioned in (a) above;
- (c) Activities relating to matching of the personal data within the database of the EDB for purposes of verifying / updating records of the EDB;
- (d) Activities relating to training and development including invitation of participation in programmes / activities, applications for reimbursement of course fees, assessment of nominations, awards and scholarship, and monitoring of attainment progress;
- (e) Activities relating to the processing and vetting of applications for, and disbursement of, funding / grants / subsidies, and conducting of audits;
- (f) Activities relating to compilation of statistics, research and Government publications; and
- (g) Activities relating to the administration and enforcement of rules and regulations including the Education Ordinance (Cap. 279), its subsidiary legislation (such as the Education Regulations and the Grant / Subsidized Schools Provident Fund Rules) and the Codes of Aid.

2. The provision of personal data required by the application and during the processing of the application is obligatory. In the event that you do not provide those personal data, we may not be able to handle or further process the application.

Classes of Transferees

3. The personal data you provide will be made available to persons working in the EDB. Apart from this, they may be transferred or disclosed to the parties

or in the circumstances listed below:-

- (a) other Government bureaux and departments for the purposes mentioned in paragraph 1 above;
- (b) the school / organisation in which the application relates for the purposes mentioned in paragraph 1 above (if applicable);
- (c) personnel, agent, service provider or organisations, including the Quality Education Fund Steering Committee, the Assessment and Monitoring Sub-committee, the Dissemination and Promotion Sub-committee, and the Task Force on e-Learning Ancillary Facilities Programme, engaged by the EDB to provide services or advice for purposes mentioned in paragraph 1 above;
- (d) where you have given your prescribed consent to such disclosure; and
- (e) where such disclosure is authorised or required under the law or court order applicable to Hong Kong.

Access to Personal Data

4. You have the right to request access to and correction of your personal data held by the EDB. Request for access or correction of personal data should be made in writing to Executive Officer (Quality Education Fund)1 at Room 403, 4/F, 14 Taikoo Wan Road, Taikoo Shing, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong or email to exoqef1@edb.gov.hk.