

Application Guideline to HKQAA Business and Community Supporting Fund

1. Introduction

Objective

The Business and Community Supporting Fund (BCS Fund) is set up by an allocation of HK\$10 million from Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency (HKQAA) to provide support in terms of money for projects which improve the competitiveness of Hong Kong's enterprises in general or aim to contribute to the common good. The Fund is overseen by the BCS Fund Trustee appointed by the HKQAA Governing Council and managed by the BCS Fund Working Committee hereafter ("The fund manager").

Research and development studies, award or certification schemes, conferences and seminars, benchmarking, community services are potential candidates to be funded. The fund manager may ask project applications for requested topics on particular themes from time to time.

Eligibility for application

Charitable organizations, non-profit-making organizations and non-profit-distributing organizations are eligible to apply the fund, they can be operated as trade and industrial organizations, professional bodies or research institutes, which shall either to be statutory organizations or organizations registered under the laws of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Amount of grant

In general, the maximum of the approved project fund is HK\$500,000 or 80% of the total Project Cost (whichever is the less), i.e. The Applicant has to contribute the remaining amount.

The limit of the Grant may be waived under special conditions subject to the approval by the HKQAA Governing Council, such as when the applicant is a registered charity organization in Hong Kong and to carry out a particularly meaningful project to the general public.

Terms and conditions for funding support

Successful applicant is necessary to enter into agreement with the fund manager and to conform all terms and conditions laid down in the agreement.

Each Project will require a project-in-charge who will be responsible for supervising the project generally, tracking the proper use of funds, liaising with the fund manager and reporting progress to the fund management; To facilitate monitoring and evaluation of funded projects. It is necessary for successful applicant to submit progress/final reports and financial reports to the fund manager.

The fund manager has the right to request for the access to any information related to the projects. Project deliverables of each approved project shall be made available at cost or free of charge to the public as agreed by the fund manager.

2. Application handling

2.1 Application procedure

- (a) Applications for BCS Fund are open all year round. Each Applicant will only be allowed to submit not more than 2 applications in each fiscal year (April till March) in order to guarantee that applicants have enough resources to control and manage the projects.
- (b) Applicant has to complete “Application Form for BCS Fund”.
- (c) Copies of the application form can be obtained at the fund manager or download from the website at www.hkqaa.org
- (d) No application fee is charged.
- (e) The application form can be completed either in Chinese or in English.
- (f) Applicant can submit the application form with the following supporting documents to the fund manager (19/F, K. Wah Centre, 191 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong) by post, in person or by electronic means.

2.2 Document submission

- (1) HKQAA BCS Fund Application Form
- (2) A photocopy of the applicant’s business registration document. For example, Business Registration Certificate, Certificate of Incorporation,
- (3) A photocopy of proof of non-profit distributing status of the applicant;
- (4) A photocopy of proof of charity status of the applicant (if applicable);

Applicant has to submit a softcopy (preferably in Microsoft Word format) and **2** hardcopies of the application to the fund manager by email (bcsfund@hkqaa.org) and by post or in person respectively.

Withdrawals

Before the Agreement is signed between the fund manager and the applicant, the applicant may write to the fund manager to withdraw an application at any time.

Resubmission

There are conditions that a declined application may be re-submitted:

- It has been revised substantially or;
- New evidence can be produced to address the comments made by the fund manager in its earlier review.

A resubmitted application will be treated as a new application and subject to the same review process.

3. Project Administration

3.1 Contractual requirements

The agreement signed between the fund manager and applicant shall be considered as the legal binding document supplemented by the guidance, instructions and correspondences issued by the fund manager from time to time in respect of the fund and the project concerned.

The Agreement consists of the extra obligations and responsibilities of a successful applicant, the payment of the grant, treatment of intellectual property rights, governing law, indemnity, conflict of interest and confidentiality. The fund manager would not be required to indemnify an applicant in any situation.

The fund manager reserves all legal rights to make disposition of the fund in case there is any issues not covered in the contractual documents mentioned above.

3.2 Approval of changes

An approved project has to be carried out in accordance with the agreement. Changes to project objectives, key project members, supporting organization, deliverables, milestones and budget shall be made with prior written approval by the fund manager.

3.3 Suspension or termination process

The funding support of BCS Fund may be suspended or terminated, at the discretion of the fund management, due to breaching of contractual requirements by successful applicant. The suspension or termination process shall be initiated by the fund manager if, for example, the progress is not satisfied, project deliverables are not produced, project objectives are not achieved, or any form of deviation to the agreement without a reasonable explanation. The applicant may have to return all or part of the grant.

3.4 Appeal process

Applicants are given rights to appeal for decision made by the fund manager. All appeals shall be submitted to the fund manager in written form with the signature of project-in-charge. The fund manager shall initiate appeal process by convening an ad hoc meeting attended by at least 3 representatives from the fund manager. A decision shall be made by the fund manager during the meeting and the decision, whatever it may be, will be the final one. The fund manager shall be responsible for any loss or damage, if any, introduced by the decision.

4. Acknowledgement and disclaimer

Acknowledgement of the BCS Fund as approved in writing by the fund manager has to appear on all equipment, facilities, publicity or media events related to all funded projects or in publications arising from the Project.

The following disclaimer should also be included in any publications and media events related to a funded project:

“Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material/event (or by members of the Project team) do not reflect the views of the Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency.”

5. Handling of Information

The fund manager are committed to ensuring that all personal data proposed under various applications are handled basing on the relevant provisions of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. Personal data provided in relation to applications shall only be used for activities related to:

- (a) the processing and proof of applications for grant, if any, payment of grants under BCS Fund and any refund thereof; and
- (b) Statistics and research.

The personal data that the Applicants provided in their applications will be kept in confidence.

6. Enquiry

Enquiries regarding the BCS Fund can be addressed to the BCS Fund Secretariat at:

Address : 19/F, K. Wah Centre
191 Java Road, North Point
Hong Kong

Telephone: 2202 9111
Email : bcsfund@hkqaa.org