



香港旅遊業議會
TRAVEL INDUSTRY COUNCIL
OF HONG KONG
Incorporated with limited liability

**Guide to Application for
the Training Programme Subsidy Scheme
under the Travel Industry Training Fund
(for Tourist Guides)**

Background

- 1.1 In the Budget Speech for 2017-18, the Financial Secretary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (“**Government**”) introduced a number of measures to support the travel industry, one of which was to allocate HK\$5 million for the establishment of the Travel Industry Training Fund (“**Training Fund**”). Nearly 90% of the funding is used to set up the Training Programme Subsidy Scheme (“**Subsidy Scheme**”), which is managed by the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (“**TIC**”).

- 1.2 In the Budget Speech for 2019-20, the Financial Secretary announced that the Government would allocate additional funding to the TIC for, inter alia, providing training subsidies for practitioners to enhance the service quality of the trade. To assist tourist guides in countering the austere economic environment since mid-2019 whilst enhancing their service quality at the same time, the Government agrees that the ambit of the Subsidy Scheme be expanded to subsidise tourist guides in completing the Continuing Professional Development Scheme for Tourist Guides (“**CPD Scheme**”) for renewing their Tourist Guide Passes issued by the TIC. A total of HK\$2 million from the additional funding is injected into the funding of the Subsidy Scheme.

2. Objective

- 2.1 As a support measure for tourist guides, the ambit of the Subsidy Scheme is expanded, for a concession period from 28 October 2019 to 31 October 2022, to subsidise tourist guides in fulfilling the requirements of the CPD Scheme for future renewal of their Tourist Guide Passes/ Tourist Guide Licences.

3. Management and Operation

- 3.1 The Executive Office of the TIC, as the Secretariat of the Subsidy Scheme, is responsible for promoting the Subsidy Scheme, releasing application information, handling enquiries, and processing applications from tourist guides for a subsidy under the Subsidy Scheme.

4. Eligibility Criteria and Scope of Subsidy

- 4.1 From 1 September 2022 onwards, only those training activities, including but not limited to courses, talks, seminars, workshops and “Knowledge on Hong Kong” Quiz, completed at a fee by tourist guides for fulfilling the requirements of the CPD Scheme specified by the Travel Industry Authority (“TIA”) for future renewal of their Tourist Guide Licences are eligible for the tourist guides to apply for a subsidy under the Subsidy Scheme.
- 4.2 Each tourist guide, at the time of submitting an application under the Subsidy Scheme, is required to declare that he/she has not received any subsidy or sponsorship from any source other than the Subsidy Scheme for the amount of the fee of any training activity under application for a subsidy, and he/she will not apply for any subsidy or sponsorship from any other source when the application is being processed or after the application is approved.
- 4.3 Each tourist guide is subject to a subsidy ceiling of HK1,000. Each tourist guide will be subsidised, on a reimbursement basis, for the fee(s) of the training activity(ies) that he/she has completed for fulfilling the requirements of the CPD Scheme for future renewal of his/her Tourist Guide Licence.
- 4.4 The fee of a training activity refers to the actual fee paid by a tourist guide as evident in the receipt for the payment of the fee of the training activity. Any amount of the fee which has been or will be subsidised or sponsored by any source other than the Subsidy Scheme, and any deducted amount, irrespective of reasons including but not limited to a discount, early bird registration, etc., are **EXCLUDED** from the amount of the subsidy under application by the tourist guide. Other fees such as travel expenses and board and lodging fees are **NOT** reimbursable.

5. Application Procedures

- 5.1 Applications for a subsidy by tourist guides must be submitted to the Secretariat **within the concession period from 28 October 2019 to 31 October 2022:**

Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong
Training Programme Subsidy Scheme Secretariat
Rooms 1706-09, Fortress Tower
250 King’s Road, North Point, Hong Kong

The application form can be downloaded from the TIC's website.

([https://www.tichk.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/App%20Form e TG%20CPD %20subsidy%202022.10%20rv1.pdf](https://www.tichk.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/App%20Form%20e%20TG%20CPD%20subsidy%202022.10%20rv1.pdf))

If an application is made by post, please mark on the envelope "Application for the Training Programme Subsidy Scheme (for Tourist Guides)". Applications which are late or fail to include the required information or documents by **31 October 2022** will **NOT** be further processed. The stamp-chopped dates on the envelopes will be taken as the receipt dates of applications. Each applicant should ensure that a correct address is clearly printed or written on the envelope, and that sufficient postage is affixed before posting, to avoid unsuccessful delivery of his/her application. Any underpaid mail item will be returned or disposed of by the Hongkong Post, where appropriate.

5.2 Throughout the concession period, each tourist guide can only submit **ONE** application for a subsidy, which may include one or more than one training activity that he/she has completed for fulfilling the requirements of the CPD Scheme.

5.3 An applicant must complete and submit the application form, together with documentary proof¹ showing that:

- (a) the training activity(ies) under application meet(s) the requirements of the CPD Scheme;
- (b) the training activity(ies) has/have been completed (e.g. the attendance certificate issued by the training institute); and
- (c) payment has been made by the applicant for the training activity(ies) (e.g. the official receipt of payment for the training activity(ies)).

5.4 The applicant must provide a valid e-mail account and local mobile phone number for communication with the Secretariat.

6. Withdrawal

6.1 The applicant can write to the Secretariat to withdraw his/her application, upon which the application will no longer be processed.

¹ If the training activity(ies) is/are organised by the TIC, submission of documentary proof is **NOT** required.

7. Vetting Procedures

- 7.1 Upon receipt of an application, the Secretariat will assign its person(s)-in-charge (who must be of a managerial grade or the personnel assigned by a manager) to conduct a preliminary assessment on the eligibility of the applicant, including whether his/her application has been made before, attendance records and receipts have been submitted, etc., and, if necessary, seek clarification, supplementary information and/or supporting document(s) from the applicant. The Secretariat reserves the right to **NOT** further process the application if the applicant fails to provide the required clarification, supplementary information and/or supporting document(s).
- 7.2 The full implementation of the new regulatory regime for the travel industry comes into commencement on 1 September 2022. Any training activities completed or applications made during the period from 1 September 2022 to 31 October 2022 **must be vetted** by TIA to ascertain whether the training activity(ies) under application meet(s) the requirements of the CPD Scheme. Based on TIA's vetting result (including the amount of subsidy approved and any terms and conditions imposed (if applicable)), the Secretariat will disburse the approved subsidies to applicants whose applications fulfil all the requirements, and to reject applications which fail to fulfil all the requirements. The Secretariat will inform the applicant in writing of the result of his/her application within 28 working days, or a longer period as the Government may permit, after TIA completed its vetting. If an application is declined, reasons will be provided. The relevant result shall be regarded as the final decision.

8. Vetting Criteria

- 8.1 Applications under the Subsidy Scheme will be considered based on their individual merits. The main assessment criteria include:
- (a) the eligibility of the applicant²;
 - (b) whether the training activity(ies) under application meet(s) the requirements of the CPD Scheme; and

² The applicant must possess a Tourist Guide Licence issued by TIA or a pre-existing tourist guide pass (issued by the TIC) taken as a Tourist Guide Licence.

(c) any other factors that the Secretariat (as the case may be) considers relevant.

9. Avoidance of Conflict of Interest

9.1 To avoid conflict of interest, members of the Secretariat who are directly or indirectly related to an application will be required to declare their interests.

10. Handling of Information

10.1 With the full implementation of the new regulatory regime for the travel industry comes into effect on 1 September 2022, the Secretariat, when processing the applications, will transfer the data (including the applicant's personal data) and information and/or supporting documents of the relevant training activities submitted by applicants to TIA for vetting.

10.2 The Secretariat and the Government are committed to ensuring that all personal data in the applications is handled in accordance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486). In this regard, the personal data provided in relation to applications made under the Subsidy Scheme will be used by the Secretariat, the Government or their authorised persons for activities relating to:

- (a) the processing and verification of applications for subsidy, disbursement of subsidy and any refund thereof under the Subsidy Scheme; and
- (b) statistics and research.

10.3 The personal data of the applicant provided in his application will be kept in strict confidence but such obligations and restrictions must not apply to any disclosure which is necessary for the purposes mentioned in the paragraph above, or any disclosure which is authorised or required by law, or any disclosure which is consented by the applicant/data subjects. If necessary and with the consent of the data subject concerned, the Secretariat will contact Government departments and relevant parties to verify the personal data provided in the application with those held by them for the purposes mentioned in the paragraph above. The applicant/data subjects whose personal data is collected by the Secretariat may request access to it under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. A charge will be made to cover the cost of photocopying the data supplied. In addition, if the data subject considers that the data supplied to the Secretariat is

inaccurate, a request for correction of the personal data may be made in writing after a data access request has been made. Requests for access to personal data provided in the applications under the Subsidy Scheme can be made in writing by completing the Data Access Request Form (OPS003) issued by the Privacy Commissioner and emailing it to the Secretariat.

11. Prevention of Bribery

11.1 When applying for and receiving subsidy under the Subsidy Scheme, the applicant must observe the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Cap. 201) and must not offer to or solicit or accept from any person any money, gifts or advantages (as defined in the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance) in relation to the application.

12. Disbursement of Subsidy

12.1 The tourist guide whose application for a subsidy under the Subsidy Scheme is successful (“**Grantee (Tourist Guide)**”) will be provided by the Secretariat with the approved amount of subsidy.

12.2 The Government and the Secretariat reserve the right to take any action deemed appropriate, including but not limited to instituting legal action against the applicant for providing any false, invalid or inaccurate information or document in support of his/her application under the Subsidy Scheme.

The Grantee (Tourist Guide) must repay in full to the TIC all the disbursed subsidy under the Subsidy Scheme, with interest (if any), within the time specified in the notification given by the Government or the Secretariat in the event that any information or document provided in relation to his/her application under the Subsidy Scheme is found to be false, invalid or inaccurate.

13. Enquiries

13.1 Enquiries regarding the Subsidy Scheme (for Tourist Guides) can be addressed to:

Address: Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong
Training Programme Subsidy Scheme Secretariat
Rooms 1706-09, Fortress Tower, 250 King's Road, North Point, Hong Kong

Tel: 2969 8146 or 2969 8126

Fax: 2510 9907

Email: training@tichk.org

Website: <https://www.tichk.org/en>