

Government to extend Convention and Exhibition Industry Subsidy Scheme and to provide immediate relief to convention and exhibition industry

The Government announced today (October 7) the further extension of the Convention and Exhibition Industry Subsidy Scheme for six months to December 31, 2022, in response to demand from the convention and exhibition (C&E) industry. Part of the Scheme's funding will also be allocated to provide a one-off immediate relief measure to private organisers of exhibitions with a clear track record of being held in Hong Kong to help them cope with the impact of the prolonged postponement or cancellation of exhibitions under the pandemic.

In the past nearly two years, the pandemic has brought challenges to the C&E industry around the world. International exhibitions are still being affected by related travel restrictions. The further extension of the Scheme and provision of immediate relief to the trade will help enhance the confidence of organisers in staging C&E activities in Hong Kong, provide impetus to the C&E industry, as well as consolidate and enhance Hong Kong's status as an international C&E hub.

Private organisers of exhibitions which were held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) or AsiaWorld-Expo (AWE) in at least any five calendar years from 2015 to 2021 may apply for the one-off immediate relief measure from the Government via the venue operators on or before November 30, 2021. The amount of the immediate relief will be equivalent to 20 per cent of the average annual rental of the relevant exhibitions, subject to a cap of \$1 million per event. Application guidelines and forms have been uploaded onto the website of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (www.cedb.gov.hk/en/industries/convention-and-exhibition.html). Eligible organisers may direct enquiries to the two venue operators.

The Government launched the Convention and Exhibition Industry Subsidy Scheme with a total commitment of \$1.07 billion to render much-needed support to the industry. The Scheme has been well received by the industry since its launch. As at September 30, 2021, it has subsidised 63 exhibitions, involving a total subsidy of about \$140.45 million. The Government will keep in view the utilisation of available funds in supporting eligible events, and if necessary consider the need to adjust the subsidy level for C&E events which are held during the extended period (i.e. July 1 to December 31, 2022). Details will be announced in due course.

The Scheme consists of two parts: one to subsidise organisers 100 per cent of the venue rental of exhibitions and international conventions held at the HKCEC and AWE starting from October 3, 2020, while the other is to

subsidise exhibitors and major conference participants 50 per cent of the participation fee at events organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council starting from November 30, 2020. The entire Scheme was originally set to last for one year and has been extended twice to June 30, 2022.