

Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care to open for application next month

The \$1 billion Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care (I&T Fund) will be open for application from December 3.

Officiating at the opening ceremony of the Gerontech and Innovation Expo cum Summit 2018 today (November 22), the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, announced that the I&T Fund will be launched on December 3. He said, "The I&T Fund will subsidise elderly and rehabilitation service units to procure, rent or try out technology products, so as to improve the quality of life of service users and reduce the pressure and burden on care staff and carers."

The I&T Fund, an initiative announced in the Chief Executive's 2017 Policy Address, is established and managed by the Social Welfare Department (SWD). The SWD, in consultation with various stakeholders, will draw up a reference list of Recognised Technology Application Products. Applicants may apply for procurement or rental of the items on the reference list, which include devices, equipment and tools that can help enhance the effectiveness and quality of care, as well as mobile applications, hardware and software systems that can effectively and accurately record the activities, health and medical conditions and more of elderly persons and persons with disabilities. Applicants may identify suitable technology research and development companies as working partners to try their newly developed technology products designed specifically for the nursing and rehabilitation needs of elderly persons or persons with disabilities. The cost of staff training on how to use the relevant technology products and the cost of warranty and maintenance of the products will also be covered by the I&T Fund.

The I&T Fund will be open for application (first tranche) from December 3 and the deadline for submission of applications is February 28, 2019. An Assessment Panel comprising professionals from academia, the information technology sector and other relevant sectors as well as representatives from related government bureaux/departments will be formed to vet funding applications.

All non-governmental organisations and private organisations currently receiving subsidies from the SWD and providing subsidised residential care services for the elderly or persons with disabilities, community care and support services for the elderly or day rehabilitation and community support services may make applications. It is estimated that over 1 260 service units could benefit. The SWD will issue letters to eligible service operators to invite their applications. Eligible service operators are also invited to a

briefing session to be held on November 28 to learn more about the application procedures and selection criteria of the I&T Fund.

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A dedicated webpage covering details of the I&T Fund will be set up soon.