

Public Sector Trial Scheme invites projects for combating COVID-19

To combat the COVID-19 epidemic, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) today (March 9) launched a special call under the Public Sector Trial Scheme for projects to support product development and application of technologies for the prevention and control of the disease. Applications will be accepted from today until April 10.

This special round aims to fund trials of research and development (R&D) outcomes in the local public sector relating to detection, diagnosis or surveillance of the COVID-19 virus, or reduction of the risks of infection and its spread. The R&D outcomes should be immediately ready for trials by government departments or the relevant public organisations to bring about benefits for the community in fighting the epidemic in the near future.

The target funding recipients are local R&D centres, universities and other designated public research institutes, as well as all technology companies conducting R&D activities in Hong Kong. The funding ceiling for each project is \$2 million in general and a higher ceiling for individual projects may be considered if necessary and justified. The maximum duration of a project is 12 months. Priority will be given to projects which can be completed within a shorter time frame. The ITC will accord priority when handling the applications.

An ITC spokesman said, "The aim of the call is not only to promote the realisation and commercialisation of local R&D outcomes, but also to encourage the public sector to use technologies for tackling the COVID-19 epidemic in Hong Kong, thereby bearing dual significance."

Further information is available on the website of the Innovation and Technology Fund (www.itf.gov.hk/l-eng/WhatsNew.asp). For enquiries, please contact the Secretariat of the Fund (Tel: 3655 5678; email: specialpsts@itc.gov.hk).