



Application Guide to ‘Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme 2025’

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (the Department) is inviting applications for the ‘Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme’ (the Scheme) 2025, which aims to sponsor local artists and arts groups to bring performing arts into the community through outreach activities.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 The Scheme sets out to:
- (a) promote performing arts by inviting local artists to act as Community Cultural Ambassadors, so as to raise interest in performing arts among the general public or different communities, to inspire creativity, enrich people’s artistic experience and their ability to appreciate performing arts.
 - (b) encourage local artists to actively reach out to the community through performing arts programmes, which in turn widen their audience base and further develop their creative talents, planning and implementation skills.

3. Application

- 3.1 Applicants should meet the following requirements:
- (a) A local registered non-profit performing arts group which, in the past one year, has been actively promoting a specific art form in Hong Kong, and has solid experience in staging public performances of a high standard; or
 - (b) In the case that the applicant is an ensemble of multiple artists, the majority of its members must possess valid Hong Kong Identity Cards. Key members should have been active in the performing arts scene in the past one year, with extensive experience in delivering public performances of a good standard. Once selected, the ensemble is required to set up a non-profit organisation for signing contract.

3.2 Art Forms

The proposed project should cover one or more form(s) of the performing arts listed below:

- (a) Chinese opera/operatic singing
- (b) Dance
- (c) Music
- (d) Theatre arts (including drama, mime, magic, puppetry)
- (e) Multi-media

3.3 Types of Activities

Any performing arts projects that serve to enhance audience appreciation and experience. Each project can cover one or more type(s) of the following activities:

- (a) Touring performance (main activity)
- (b) Workshop
- (c) Excerpt from a full performance, demonstration or talk
- (d) Exhibition
- (e) Other formats

3.4 Nature of Activities and Venues

- (a) The proposed activities must be of performing arts or related to performing arts with a focus on arts education and community audience building. The target audience can be the general public or a specific community, such as residents in a particular district, members of a particular community, people served by non-profit organisations such as senior citizens, youngsters, children, women, people of different races, former mental illness patients or persons with disabilities. To encourage participation, interactive elements should be introduced as far as practicable. The activities may cater for the interest of the target group to enhance their sense of belonging, such as featuring cultural heritage of a certain neighbourhood. Moreover, in order to promote performing arts more effectively at the community level, high-quality and sustainable activities with room to evolve further are welcome.
- (b) The activities will mainly be held in venues other than the Department’s performance venues, such as shopping malls, community halls, elderly centres, parks, piazzas, pedestrianised open space/streets to

facilitate participation of the public, passers-by or other target groups. Some activities, if considered suitable, can be arranged to take place at the Department's performance venues to expand the spatial scope of the Scheme. Historical sites may also be considered. Activities which are suitable for students or families can be held at schools but they should be open to the public as far as possible and should not exceed 20% of the total number of activities under the proposed project.

- (c) The activities should be open to the public.

4. Content of the Project

- 4.1 Each applicant is required to describe the theme, objectives and concept of the project.

5. Selection Criteria and Mechanism

- 5.1 Applicants and proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- (a) Artistic standard and experience of the applicant (25%)
Artistic merits; the applicant's ability to lead and communicate with participants; and whether the applicant is an up-and-coming arts group/artist ensemble who has never been selected for the Scheme before
- (b) Administration experience of the applicant (20%)
The applicant's organisational skills and capabilities to work efficiently with collaborators; administrative experience, execution skills and track record
(Note: The applicant's past performance under the Scheme, if applicable, will also be taken into consideration)
- (c) Concept and quality of the proposed project (25%)
Artistic value, concept and originality of the proposal; whether the proposed project duly serves its theme; whether the activities are experimental and interactive; and whether the key personnel include up-and-coming artists
- (d) Potential in audience development of the proposed project (20%)
Whether the proposed project can achieve the objective of promoting community arts, such as the likelihood of attracting and reaching target participants, helping participants appreciate the arts, forging partnerships with district organisations; whether the proposal can deepen the applicant's previous community arts efforts; and whether it has room for growth
- (e) Other factors (10%)
Technical feasibility of the proposed project, financial viability and cost-effectiveness of the proposed budget

- 5.2 In order to support emerging talents, the Department encourages local arts groups/artist ensembles who have not previously participated in the Scheme to submit quality proposals.

- 5.3 The Department also hopes that the proposals can bring in emerging talents and set the stage for them to shine in community arts. Higher priority will be accorded to emerging local arts groups/artist ensembles.

- 5.4 The Department encourages arts groups/artist ensembles to plan experimental, interactive and creative activities in order to enhance public appreciation of the arts and boost participation.

- 5.5 The Department welcomes the applicant forging partnerships with district organisations, district councils, other government departments, public organisations, social welfare agencies, educational institutions or the commercial sector in promoting community arts, and likely to secure additional resources or sponsorship for such purpose.

- 5.6 Applications from the nine major performing arts groups who receive regular grants from the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will not be considered.

- 5.7 Lower priority will be accorded to arts groups under 'Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme 2024', as well as grantees of other government departments or the Department for large-scale and/or long-term arts development projects, including the '18dART', 'Arts Capacity Development Funding Scheme' and 'Venue Partnership Scheme' to be implemented in 2025.

- 5.8 The proposed project will not be considered if the applicant has already received public funding from other sources.

- 5.9 Activities which are basically rehearsals in preparation for a production or performance by the applicant will not be considered.

- 5.10 Eligible applications will be assessed and selected by the Art Form Sub-committee (Community) of the Department in accordance with the selection criteria mentioned above. The engagement of Community Cultural Ambassadors 2025 and the ceiling sponsorship fee will be approved in accordance with the Department's existing mechanism for engagement of artists. All parties involved in the selection and budget approval process are required to declare in writing that there is no conflict of interest between them and the applicants.
- 5.11 To balance the variety, coverage and resource allocation of different projects, the Department may, upon mutual agreement with the applicant, adjust the content and proposed budget. Engagement of the successful applicant will only be confirmed upon a contract being duly signed by both parties.
- 5.12 A wait list will be drawn up for the Scheme. If a selected applicant decides to decline the offer, the vacancy will be offered to the wait lister.
- 5.13 Applicants should submit adequate information detailing the concepts and the gist of their proposed activities, as well as video footage of activities they organised in the past.
- 5.14 If the information provided is insufficient or the supporting documents are missing, and the Department's request for additional information or clarification is not addressed within the specified time frame, the Department reserves the right not to consider the proposal.
- 5.15 Applicants who intentionally submit false documents or information will have their proposals revoked and might be subject to criminal liability.
- 5.16 Applicants are deemed to have agreed that the assessment of applications is at the sole discretion of the Department and that the decision of the Department on the application results is final.

6. Financial Arrangements

- 6.1 The ceiling sponsorship fee for each project is HK\$700,000 to cover expenses for production, publicity, copyright royalties, programme and administration (inclusive of auditor's fee and insurance for the arts group's employees and a Public Liability Policy of Insurance to be kept in force during the course of the project, in the sum of not less than HK\$10,000,000 for any one accident and unlimited number of claims, to ensure protection for all project participants, including but not limited to workshop participants). The actual sponsorship fee for each project depends on the validity of the detailed breakdown of each item of expenditure for the proposed project, which should be completed within a period of 12 months. The maximum administrative expenditure should not exceed 30% of the approved sponsorship fee, and may cover project-related staff costs and administrative expenses – but not the procurement of capital equipment or recurrent overhead expenditure such as office rental or equipment maintenance.
- 6.2 The selected applicant shall keep complete and accurate books and records of all incomes, expenditure and liabilities in respect of the approved project in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The selected applicant is required to keep a proper and unique set of accounts within their accounting system specifically for processing all receipts/income and payments/expenditure of the project. The unique set of accounts should be maintained in such a manner as to enable the production of a Statement of Income and Expenditure and Balance Sheet in respect of the approved project. All income and expenditure relating to the project should be recorded in a proper and timely manner in such accounts.
- 6.3 To facilitate the implementation of the project, the sponsorship fee may be allocated by phases based on the selected applicant's needs as follows:
- 30% of the approved sponsorship fee to be paid three months prior to commencement of the project;
 - Another 30% of the approved sponsorship fee to be paid upon the successful completion of 30% of the project and the submission of the first progress report to the satisfaction of the Department;
 - Another 30% of the approved sponsorship fee to be paid upon the successful completion of 75% of the project and the submission of the second progress report to the satisfaction of the Department;
 - The remaining 10% of the approved sponsorship fee will be paid after the successful completion of the whole project and the submission of the final report together with an audited account report by the selected applicant to the satisfaction of the Department. The final report should be submitted within 6 months after the completion of the whole project.

- 6.4 The progress and final reports must be in the format prescribed by the Department and include details of the results, performance, achievements and evaluation of the implemented project. The final report must be submitted together with an audited account report (duly dated and signed by an auditor approved by the Government) on an accrual basis on the final financial position of the implemented proposal audited by an auditor as arranged by the selected applicant to ensure that the sponsorship fee was fully and properly applied to the project for which all project monies were paid, received and expended in accordance with the approved budget. This financial statement shall contain an audited statement of the total expenditure and income of the implemented project.
- 6.5 If the approved sponsorship fee is more than the actual expenditure, applicant should return the unused amount to the Department.
- 6.6 The selected applicant must implement the project in accordance with the details and dates as planned and as set out in the contract. The selected applicant has the responsibility to take the initiative to submit by the set dates the progress/final reports and audited account report, failing which the Department reserves the rights to withhold or suspend payment for the next instalment. If the selected applicant submits application for the Scheme again in future, the Department will take into account if the applicant has any record of lack of discipline in administration and financial management, breach of the contract or any other irregularities in their consideration of the application.

7. Modification and Amendment

- 7.1 An approved project is required to be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved schedule appended to the contract. Any modification, amendment or addition to the proposal or the contract, including change of the commencement or completion dates, key project staff and/or artistic personnel, scope, methodology, budget and sponsorship requires prior written consent from the Department and it is the responsibility of the project coordinator to inform the Department in writing well in advance of any such proposed modification, amendment or addition.
- 7.2 Justification is required for any spending in excess of the budget items in the relevant progress report—and/or final report. Notwithstanding this, prior written approval must be sought from the Department if budgeted expenditure is to be transferred to any unbudgeted expenditure item (e.g. new/alternative equipment item, new staff, revised number/rank of the staff, new/alternative consumable item). The final decision on whether certain items of income and/or expenditure should/can be included in/charged to the project rests with the Department.

8. Procedures for Procurement and Hiring of Project Staff

- 8.1 The selected applicant must ensure that the lowest conforming bid be selected for procurement of goods and services and all procurements be carried out in an unbiased and fair manner. The selected applicant should submit to the Department for record a procurement plan for the approved project.
- 8.2 The Department reserves the right to inspect all quotations under the project. The selected applicant should keep all quotations for inspection.
- 8.3 The selected applicant is required to abide by the principle of openness and competitiveness in hiring staff for implementing the proposed project. The selected applicant should submit to the Department for record a staff recruitment plan for the approved project.
- 8.4 The selected applicant is required to observe all laws regulating the employment of persons in Hong Kong.

9. Intellectual Property Rights

- 9.1 All works in the proposed project shall not contain any materials infringing any third party intellectual property rights. Applicants shall indemnify and keep the Department fully and effectively indemnified against all expenses, claims, demands, costs and liabilities of whatsoever nature arising from or incurred by reason of any such infringement or alleged infringement.
- 9.2 The Department shall be entitled to disclose or make copies of any or all of the proposed projects for the purpose of considering and/or assessing the proposed projects and to keep such copies for record purposes.

10. Prevention of Bribery

- 10.1 The Applicant must observe the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Cap. 201) ('PBO') and shall advise their employees, sub-contractors, agents and other personnel who are in any way involved in the proposed project

that they are not allowed to offer to or solicit or accept from any person any money, gifts, advantage and excessive entertainment as defined in the PBO in the conduct of or in relation to the proposed project.

- 10.2 The offer of an advantage by any person to the Department or any members of the Art Form Sub-committee with a view to influencing the approval of an application is an offence under the PBO. Any such offer by the applicant or any person associated with the applicant, their employee(s) or agent(s) will render the application null and void. The Department may also withdraw any approval that may have been given to the application in question, if any, and hold the applicant concerned liable for any loss or damages, which the Department may sustain.

11. Terms and Modes of Co-operation

- 11.1 The Department has launched the Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme through the format of sponsorship with a fee. The Department will negotiate with each of the successful applicants the project's expected income and expenditure to determine a ceiling sponsorship fee, which is equivalent to the approved project cost after deduction of the expected income. The Community Cultural Ambassador is advised to levy a fee on participants/audience for activities as appropriate (workshops, for example). The Ambassadors are entitled to retain the surplus, if any, from the project when the approved project amount has been fully expensed.
- 11.2 Being the presenter of the projects, the Community Cultural Ambassador should be responsible for all matters related to the project and play a major role in the planning, administration, publicity, production and implementation of the proposed activities. Should overseas guest artists be invited, both the number of overseas artists and the proposed activities taken up by them should not be more than 50% of the total number of artists and activities for the whole project. Moreover, prior consent of all guest artists must be sought before they are included as participating members in the application to be submitted.
- 11.3 The Community Cultural Ambassador should arrange intensive publicity and promotion at the district level to attract target groups. The Department will arrange general publicity for the Scheme, such as promoting the Scheme through the media and publicity at the Department's performance venues.
- 11.4 The recruitment of activity participants must be open and fair.
- 11.5 The Department will monitor the Scheme's development and maintain close contact with the Community Cultural Ambassadors. Apart from scrutinising regular progress reports from the Ambassadors, the Department's staff and Art Form Sub-committee members will attend various activities to observe the project progress and participants' response. Observations will be addressed to the Ambassador for follow-up action.
- 11.6 Should the Community Cultural Ambassador wish to accept and acknowledge sponsorship for the project, prior consent should be sought from the Department. The Department's guidelines on the acceptance of sponsorship should be observed. As a general rule, tobacco-related sponsorship or sponsorship prone to affect the Department's image will not be accepted. For programmes targeting at young people under 18, sponsorship/donations from the alcohol industry should not be accepted.

12. Follow-up Arrangements for Project Participants

- 12.1 In continuation of the efforts made by the Community Cultural Ambassadors, project participants should be given the opportunity to channel their interests towards similar activities organised by the Department, such as being invited to receive the Department's programme updates or being introduced to the Department's cultural activities.

13. How to Apply

- 13.1 Applications can be submitted via online application, by post or by hand. Application forms can be downloaded from the website (www.abo.gov.hk) or obtained at Audience Building Office:

Address:

10/F, Queen Elizabeth Stadium,
18 Oi Kwan Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

- 13.2 For applications submitted by post or in person, the completed paper application form and an electronic copy (in Word format), together with the relevant supporting documents, should be submitted in triplicate to the above office in sealed envelope, no later than 12 noon, 6 May 2024. Please also enclose a CD Rom

or USB flash drive containing the electronic copy of the completed form, and specify 'Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme 2025' on the envelope. Applications sent by post will be checked against the postmark. Late applications will not be considered.

- 13.3 In case that Tropical Cyclone Warning No. 8 or above or the Black Rainstorm Signal is in force for any duration between 9am and 12 noon on the application closing date, the date will be extended to 12 noon on the next working day.

14. Notification of Application Results

- 14.1 Applicants will be informed of the results around December 2024 but the Department may adjust the date at its discretion subject to application response.

15. Enquiries

- 15.1 For enquiries, please contact:
Audience Building Office
Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Tel: 2591 1611 Fax: 2591 1160
Email: amab1@lcsd.gov.hk

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