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Replies to initial written questions raised by Legislative Council Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2025-26

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Session No. : 19

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB001

(Question Serial No. 3130)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Government will continue to implement the Global STEM Professorship Scheme (the Scheme) to strengthen support for local universities to attract world-renowned STEM scholars to work in Hong Kong. In this connection, please inform this Committee:

1. of the specific forms of support to be provided to local universities under the ongoing Scheme and the expenditure involved; and
2. whether the Government has a grasp of the number of cases where research outcomes have been successfully applied to local industries since the implementation of the Scheme and the Technology Talent Admission Scheme. If so, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows -

The Global STEM Professorship Scheme (the Scheme) supports local universities funded by the University Grants Committee in attracting research and development (R&D) talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. The target is to recruit internationally renowned innovation and technology (I&T) scholars to conduct teaching and research activities related to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) in Hong Kong.

The Scheme provides remuneration subsidy to a university employing a selected scholar, which is capped at 50% of the actual remuneration offered by the university and subject to an annual ceiling of \$1 million for each selected scholar, over a period of up to 5 years. In

addition, under the Scheme, a selected scholar can receive subsidy from the Research Talent Hub for recruiting up to 4 research team members to assist in his/her R&D work over a period of up to 3 years. If needed, a selected scholar may apply for subsidy from The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for setting up a laboratory. The Scheme was estimated to cost \$2 billion. As at end-February this year, about \$1.7 billion has been committed.

The Technology Talent Admission Scheme provides a fast-track arrangement for eligible companies to admit overseas and Mainland technology talents to undertake R&D work in Hong Kong, with a view to attracting high-quality talents in an effective and focused manner to support the R&D and application of Hong Kong's I&T, thereby generating impetus for the diversified development of industries.

We do not maintain relevant information on the successful application of research outcomes to local industries under both schemes above.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB002

(Question Serial No. 3139)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The revised estimate for 2024-25 under the programme is 16.1% lower than the approved estimate, whilst the provision for 2025-26 is 16.5% higher than the revised estimate for 2024-25. This is mainly due to the increased cash flow requirement for the TechConnect (block vote) to drive bureaux and departments to adopt innovative technology. Please provide:

1. the reasons for the decrease in the revised estimate as compared with the approved estimate;
2. a list of innovative technology to be adopted by the bureaux and departments in 2025-26 and the estimated expenditure.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

1. Under Programme (2) “Innovation, Technology and Industry”, the revised estimate for 2024-25 is lower than the approved estimate. This is mainly due to a reduction in the cash flow requirement for the TechConnect (block vote), departmental expenses as well as personal emoluments and personnel related expenses compared to the original estimate. A detailed breakdown is set out below:

Item	2024-25 (Original estimate) (\$ million)	2024-25 (Revised estimate) (\$ million)
TechConnect (block vote)	119.7	86.0
General departmental expenses	57.9	51.6
Personal emoluments and personnel related expenses	73.5	73.1
Total:	251.1	210.7 (-16.1%)

2. The estimate for the TechConnect (block vote) (TechConnect) for 2025-26 is \$94.14 million. We are processing the funding applications submitted by government departments/offices. As at early March 2025, the TechConnect has approved funding for the first 8 technology projects proposed by 6 government departments/offices (details at **Annex 1**). The remaining applications are being processed.

**TechConnect (block vote)
Technology Projects Funded in 2025-26
(as at early March 2025)**

Department	Project title	Technologies adopted	Estimated amount (\$ million)
Hong Kong Police Force	AI-Enhanced Virtual Asset Analytics System	Blockchain/artificial intelligence (AI)/machine learning/big data	7.5
Drainage Services Department	Virtual Construction Safety Assistant – based on Multimodal Large Language Model embedded with construction safety knowledge	Video analytics/image analytics/AI/machine learning	5.8
Highways Department	Implementation of Automated Creation of Existing Conditions Modelling in Road Construction and Maintenance Works	Image analytics/AI/machine learning/ Building Information Model	5.6
Correctional Services Department	Centralised Real-time Intelligent Surveillance and Facial Recognition System	Video analytics/robotic process automation	5.4
Electrical and Mechanical Services Department	Risk Prioritisation Analysis on Fixed Electrical Installations	AI/machine learning/big data	2.5
	Smart Hydrogen fuel safety data Analytics and Reporting Portal	AI/machine learning/big data	2.5
Drainage Services Department	Development and Application of Water-flow-propelled Inspection Robots for Sewage Tunnels	Video analytics/robotics/AI/machine learning	2.0
Antiquities and Monuments Office	Pilot study on three-dimensional (3D) modelling of heritage sites with integrated use of advanced laser scanning, photogrammetry technique and small unmanned aircraft for digital archive and restoration	Geographic Information System/unmanned drones/3D laser scanning	1.4

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB003

(Question Serial No. 0643)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Estimates that the Government will commence a study on the medium to long-term development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong to encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to upgrade and transform by making use of innovation and technology and strengthen the support for relevant professional services sectors. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

1. the specific areas covered in the study and its timetable;
2. the expenditure and staffing establishment involved in the study; and
3. in what ways will the Government liaise with traditional manufacturing sector and professional services sectors, and how will the study report be implemented to support the upgrading and transformation of the sectors?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

To further optimise the strategy and institutional set-up for the development of “new industrialisation” and implement the top-level design and development path of the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology (I&T) Development Blueprint, we will commence a study on the medium to long-term development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong to encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to upgrade and transform by making use of I&T and strengthen the support for relevant professional services, so as to expeditiously propel “new industrialisation” in a manner that manifests Hong Kong’s competitive edge.

We will engage an experienced consultant with the necessary qualifications to conduct the study. The Government will require the consultant to proactively communicate with industry stakeholders and take heed of their views in order to provide a full picture of the status of the development of Hong Kong's industries, while giving due consideration to the needs of various stakeholders and the challenges they are facing. The Government will announce the findings of the study in due course and formulate plans to help promote "new industrialisation" in Hong Kong.

We will commence the study on the medium to long-term development of "new industrialisation" in Hong Kong within this year, and will oversee the work of the consultant with the Bureau's manpower and resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB004

(Question Serial No. 2083)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to pool together talents and resources from various fields through the “Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance” (the Alliance) to establish a platform for the collaboration among the Government, industry, academia, research and development, and investment sectors. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the staff establishment and expenditure involved in promoting the establishment of the Alliance?
2. the collaborative projects taken forward by the Alliance in the past year? Please provide a breakdown of the details, staff establishment and expenditure involved by projects.
3. the collaborative projects expected to be taken forward through the Alliance in the coming year? Please provide a breakdown of the details, staff establishment and expenditure to be involved by projects.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

The Chief Executive proposed in the 2024 Policy Address that the Government would press ahead with the establishment of the “Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance” (the Alliance), pooling together talents and resources from various fields to drive new industrialisation and establish a platform for the collaboration among the Government, industry, academia, research and investment sectors. The Alliance was officially established on 18 March 2025 on the initiative of members from four sectors, namely industry, academia,

research and investment sectors. With the direction of “proactive promotion by the Government and joint action by stakeholders”, we expect that the Alliance will become an important platform for stakeholders of new industrialisation to exchange views and foster cooperation, thereby facilitating the establishment of a comprehensive innovation and technology industry ecosystem in Hong Kong and assisting in the promotion of new industrialisation development in Hong Kong including showcasing related achievements.

The Alliance is a non-governmental organisation formed by the industry, with no funding provided by the Government. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau has pressed ahead with the establishment of the Alliance with its existing manpower and resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB005

(Question Serial No. 0148)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Data Facility Cluster at Sandy Ridge in the Northern Metropolis (NM)

The Government commenced the procedures last year to re-zone a 10-hectare site at Sandy Ridge in the North District for use as data centres. The re-zoning procedures are expected to be completed in the middle of this year. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee on the following:

1. After the optimisation of the re-zoning procedures for the Sandy Ridge site, when is it expected to be available for government use or tender by the industry for their use?
2. Further to the above question, will the Government consider putting the Sha Ling/Nam Hang Nature Park adjacent to the Sandy Ridge site under the centralised management of an innovation and technology (I&T)-related department, so as to facilitate the overall development of the area?
3. To promote the overall development of the I&T industry in the NM, does the Government have any joint development plan with regard to the I&T projects or facilities of the Loop and Sandy Ridge? Will Sandy Ridge be able to support the distribution of key industries, such as artificial intelligence, mentioned in the Budget?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

Having consulted the Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB), our reply to each part of the question is as follows:

1. & 3. The Government commenced the relevant re-zoning procedures for a 10-hectare site at Sandy Ridge for use as data centres and related facilities in end-2024. Currently, we are actively making preparations for land disposal to fulfil the needs of the industry for digital infrastructure and to facilitate the development of various industries, including the Artificial Intelligence (AI) industry.

According to the Northern Metropolis Action Agenda promulgated by the Development Bureau in end-2023, the Northern Metropolis (NM) can be divided into 4 major zones. Among these, the San Tin Technopole comprising the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park) and the land around the San Tin area will be developed into the major innovation and technology (I&T) zone of the NM. The Hong Kong Park focuses on the development of frontier technological fields, such as life and health technology, AI and data science, as well as new technologies and advanced manufacturing. It mainly engages in research and development (R&D), pilot production and small-scale production. As for San Tin Technopole, it centres around the development of the I&T industry, engaging in activities including pilot production and mass production. The site at Sandy Ridge will be used for developing data centres and related industries, which may include development of AI supercomputing centre, fostering I&T development in the NM. The establishment of data centres will drive the growth of data-related industries and create more application scenarios, such as big data and AI industries which require substantial computing power or data, and data-related R&D projects, thereby further promoting the development of AI in Hong Kong. The Government has different plans and positioning for the space and layout of each new I&T site, and their collaborative development will contribute to the establishment of Hong Kong as an international I&T centre.

2. In addition, as the NM has rich and diverse habitats, ecological conservation forms one of its main development objectives. The planning of the NM includes both urban developments as well as ecological and environmental conservation projects. The integration of the two not only achieves “co-existence of development and conservation”, but also creates a unique urban and rural landscape for the NM. According to the information provided by the EEB, a consultant was commissioned by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) to conduct a Strategic Feasibility Study on the Development of Wetland Conservation Parks System, which recommended that the Sha Ling/Nam Hang Nature Park (an approximately four-hectare area where around 90% is currently managed by the AFCD as an ecological compensation area under the statutory Environmental Impact Assessment Report of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project) be incorporated into the adjacent Hoo Hok Wai Wetland Conservation Park to ensure the wetland conservation work and ecological connectivity of the entire area could be planned and managed in a more holistic manner, optimising management efficiency. The specific management mode for the proposed Hoo Hok Wai Wetland Conservation Park (including the Sha Ling/Nam Hang part) will be finalised during the next stage of detailed studies.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB006

(Question Serial No. 0740)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As regards “all-out efforts to nurture talents”, which involve encouraging technology enterprises to engage in interactions and exchanges in schools or organise site visits, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) How many primary and secondary schools are expected to be covered under the initiative? What is the number of activities for each school per year and the estimated expenditure for each activity?
- (2) What are the specific details of “providing resources for coding and AI learning in schools” under the initiative? What is the estimated proportion of resources allocated for the relevant teaching tools development and technical support?
- (3) How will the effectiveness of the initiative in enhancing students’ interests and capability in innovation and technology be assessed? What is the estimated expenditure for the relevant assessment mechanism?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yung (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

Having consulted the Financial Secretary’s Office, the Education Bureau and the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC), our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Accelerating the development of innovation and technology (I&T), as well as fast-tracking the upgrading and transformation of industries and enterprises through technology, require not only cutting-edge tech companies but also high-quality talent. In addition to attracting

outstanding professionals from both Mainland and overseas regions to settle in Hong Kong, it is equally important to nurture young people's interest in I&T. By better integrating education, technology and talent development, we can strengthen our talent base to support the needs of I&T development in Hong Kong more effectively.

In the 2025-26 Budget, the Government has proposed inviting the HKIC, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to coordinate efforts among partners and startups to showcase their products in schools or arrange site visits for students, sharing their experiences in cutting-edge technology exploration and entrepreneurship.

The Budget has also proposed inviting large-scale technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practical scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools. The purpose of these two initiatives is to bring together the most advanced talent, knowledge and experience from the technology sector to the education frontlines, thereby stimulating young people's curiosity for innovative exploration and encouraging them to become future leaders in I&T.

Earlier on, a large technology enterprise organised an event focused on nurturing talents in I&T and established a youth I&T academy to support coding training and AI learning in schools. The academy features a one-stop cloud development learning space equipped with engaging teaching tools that integrate AI coding and large language model applications. It would enable teachers and students to better grasp AI development skills through practical experience.

The Government and the relevant public organisations will continue to explore the implementation plan of the initiatives, and details will be announced in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB007

(Question Serial No. 0637)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Budget that the Government is preparing to set up a \$10 billion Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund, and is inviting relevant organisations to submit expressions of interest as well as planning to seek funding approval from the Legislative Council in the middle of this year. In this regard, please advise the Committee of:

1. the number of expressions of interest received after the submission deadline ended on 3 March 2025, in which the number of organisations and investors involved, and the respective proportion of each of the 5 thematic areas under the fund;
2. whether the Government is satisfied with the market response to the invitation of submission of expressions of interest; and the ways of the Government to follow up on the expressions of interest received;
3. the remaining work for setting up the fund and the implementation schedule; and the expected earliest time for launching the fund and accepting applications.

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Innovation and Technology Commission issued an open invitation to the market to submit expression of interest (EOI) and views regarding the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF) in mid-January this year. Over 60 EOI submissions have been received in total, covering all the 5 thematic areas. We will consider the views gathered and finalise the relevant details of the

ITIF, and strive to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the middle of this year, with a view to commencing the operation of ITIF in 2026-27.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB008

(Question Serial No. 0771)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government has invited the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC), the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and Cyberport to co-ordinate the efforts of more than 100 technology enterprises under their purview to engage in interactions and exchanges with students to share frontier exploration and start-up experience in technology through organising product display in schools, site visits, etc., in the coming year. In this connection:

1. Based on different domains, how many technology enterprises are involved in each field?
2. How many primary and secondary schools will these technology enterprises visit for product display in the coming year, and what are the types and numbers of products involved? Besides, how many primary and secondary schools will be arranged to visit the technology enterprises? How many primary and secondary school students are expected to have the opportunity to participate in these activities?
3. Will the Government consider implementing the relevant activities and arrangements in primary and secondary schools every year?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

Having consulted the Financial Secretary's Office, the Education Bureau and the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC), our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Accelerating the development of innovation and technology (I&T), as well as fast-tracking the upgrading and transformation of industries and enterprises through technology, require not only cutting-edge tech companies but also high-quality talent. In addition to attracting outstanding professionals from both Mainland and overseas regions to settle in Hong Kong, it is equally important to nurture young people's interest in I&T. By better integrating education, technology and talent development, we can strengthen our talent base to support the needs of I&T development in Hong Kong more effectively.

In the 2025-26 Budget, the Government has proposed inviting the HKIC, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to coordinate efforts among partners and startups to showcase their products in schools or arrange site visits for students, sharing their experiences in cutting-edge technology exploration and entrepreneurship.

The Budget has also proposed inviting large-scale technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practical scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools. The purpose of these two initiatives is to bring together the most advanced talent, knowledge and experience from the technology sector to the education frontlines, thereby stimulating young people's curiosity for innovative exploration and encouraging them to become future leaders in I&T.

Earlier on, a large technology enterprise organised an event focused on nurturing talents in I&T and established a youth I&T academy to support coding training and AI learning in schools. The academy features a one-stop cloud development learning space equipped with engaging teaching tools that integrate AI coding and large language model applications. It would enable teachers and students to better grasp AI development skills through practical experience.

The Government and the relevant public organisations will continue to explore the implementation plan of the initiatives, and details will be announced in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB009

(Question Serial No. 0773)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding encouraging technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practice scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools with a view to further enhancing young people's interest and capability in I&T application through integrating theoretical learning and practical application, please advise on the following:

1. What are the major measures taken by the Government to encourage the participation of local technology enterprises? What are the manpower and expenditure incurred by these measures?
2. For 2025-26, how many local technology enterprises, schools and students are expected to participate respectively? Among them, what are the respective proportions of small and medium technology enterprises as well as start-ups?
3. What measures have been taken by the government to provide more opportunities for local small and medium technology enterprises as well as start-ups to participate, and also offer more options to schools?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

Having consulted the Financial Secretary's Office, the Education Bureau and the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC), our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Accelerating the development of innovation and technology (I&T), as well as fast-tracking the upgrading and transformation of industries and enterprises through technology, require not only cutting-edge tech companies but also high-quality talent. In addition to attracting outstanding professionals from both Mainland and overseas regions to settle in Hong Kong, it is equally important to nurture young people's interest in I&T. By better integrating education, technology and talent development, we can strengthen our talent base to support the needs of I&T development in Hong Kong more effectively.

In the 2025-26 Budget, the Government has proposed inviting the HKIC, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to coordinate efforts among partners and startups to showcase their products in schools or arrange site visits for students, sharing their experiences in cutting-edge technology exploration and entrepreneurship.

The Budget has also proposed inviting large-scale technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practical scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools. The purpose of these two initiatives is to bring together the most advanced talent, knowledge and experience from the technology sector to the education frontlines, thereby stimulating young people's curiosity for innovative exploration and encouraging them to become future leaders in I&T.

Earlier on, a large technology enterprise organised an event focused on nurturing talents in I&T and established a youth I&T academy to support coding training and AI learning in schools. The academy features a one-stop cloud development learning space equipped with engaging teaching tools that integrate AI coding and large language model applications. It would enable teachers and students to better grasp AI development skills through practical experience.

The Government and the relevant public organisations will continue to explore the implementation plan of the initiatives, and details will be announced in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB010

(Question Serial No. 3162)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government launched the \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) in September last year to provide matching subsidies to enterprises to build smart production facilities in Hong Kong. The first application for the project has been approved, with a total investment of about \$600 million, of which government funding amounts to about \$200 million. The project will build smart production facilities in the field of life and health technology. Please advise on the following:

- (1) The respective numbers of enterprises currently engaging in industries of strategic importance (i.e. life and health technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technology) which have/have not set up production and manufacturing processes in Hong Kong, with a breakdown of the statistics by types. Among them, what is the estimated number of enterprises that meet the eligibility criteria for the NIAS, namely that the enterprises are of a considerable scale and have sufficient financial strength (i.e. the minimum total project cost for each project is \$300 million, and the enterprise concerned has to contribute no less than \$200 million)? Are most of these enterprises attracted to establish a presence in Hong Kong by the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises set up by the Government in recent years? If so, what is the specific number?
- (2) How many applications have been received in total by the Government since the launch of the NIAS? Among them, what are the respective numbers of applications relating to the 4 major strategic industries?
- (3) The Government anticipates that the NIAS will provide funding to no less than 50 enterprises, covering a total of 50 to 100 projects. While the NIAS has been launched for about 5 months, only 1 application has been approved. What are the main reasons?

- (4) Smart production facilities meeting the eligibility requirements of the NIAS shall involve high-end and advanced technology, i.e. the integrated and intelligent use of smart technologies such as Internet of Things, real-time data acquisition, application of data analytics and advanced human-machine interfaces, AI/machine learning/deep learning, automation and robotics, sustainable technology, sensors and actuators in the production process. In respect of the approved enterprise engaging in life and health technology, what are the technologies and features involved in its smart production facilities?
- (5) Apart from the above funding support on a matching basis, enterprises participating in the NIAS may receive subsidies to engage research talent under the Research Talent Hub. They may also, on a pilot basis, engage a small number of non-local technical personnel (up to 5 quotas per enterprise for a period of 2 years) under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme to expedite the set-up and operation of advanced manufacturing facilities in Hong Kong. Does the approved case involve any additional funding mentioned above? If so, what are the specific details? Has the enterprise concerned engaged any non-local talent for the establishment or operation of new production facilities? If so, what are the specific number and details?
- (6) The purpose of the NIAS is to encourage more enterprises from industries of strategic importance to establish new smart production facilities in Hong Kong, thereby promoting the local development of downstream industries. The Government aims to attract 50 to 100 enterprises to set up new production facilities in Hong Kong with a corresponding direct investment of no less than \$20 billion from these enterprises over a period of 5 to 8 years under the NIAS. When will the Government review the above effectiveness of the NIAS?
- (7) The Innovation and Technology Commission has established the Secretariat to handle the administrative work related to the NIAS. What are the expenditure and number of staff members of the Secretariat involved during the period?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

- (1) To promote the development of downstream innovation and technology (I&T) industries, the Government has endeavoured, through a series of policies and measures, to encourage local enterprises to upgrade and transform with the use of I&T to achieve smart production. We have enhanced the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) to subsidise local manufacturers in setting up more new smart production lines. As at end of February 2025, the New Industrialisation Vetting Committee (Vetting Committee) has agreed to support 63 applications, involving a total of over 100 production lines.

At the same time, we are actively attracting top-notch strategic enterprises from the Mainland and overseas to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. Over the past two years, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB), in collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, has liaised

with over 130 representative I&T enterprises and those with high potential to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong.

To further enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness in attracting strategic enterprises to set up production facilities in Hong Kong, the Government launched the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) in September 2024, which aims to provide funding support for enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance (such as life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, and advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies) to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong, and attract these enterprises to embark on relevant projects in Hong Kong by providing them with financial incentives and other support.

The Government will continue to encourage strategic enterprises to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong through policies such as the NIFS and the NIAS so as to promote the development of "new industrialisation" in a comprehensive manner.

(2) and (3) As at end of February 2025, the NIAS has received a total of 7 applications, of which 3 were from the life and health technology industry, and the remaining 4 were from the advanced manufacturing and new energy technology industry. The Vetting Committee has supported one of the applications, while the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) is assessing the remaining 6 applications, including requesting the applicant enterprises to submit supplementary documents and information to facilitate the approval process. Upon receipt of all required documents and information, the ITC will submit the applications to the Vetting Committee for consideration. The actual processing time for each application depends on various factors, such as the complexity of applications, as well as the comprehensiveness and clarity of the information provided by the applicant enterprises. The NIAS targets projects with a minimum total project cost of \$300 million (the enterprise has to contribute no less than \$200 million). Hence, it is expected that enterprises will need to consider carefully before making applications.

(4) The Vetting Committee has supported the NIAS application submitted by Jean-Marie Pharmacal Company Limited. The project is from the life and health technology industry, with a total investment amount of around \$600 million, of which government funding amounts to around \$200 million.

This project plans to set up smart production lines for sterile eye drops, oral solid dose and oral liquid dose. Its smart production facilities involve multiple high-end advanced technologies, including the use of integrated and smart technologies in the production process.

(5) The prerequisite for enterprises to apply for the "Research Talent Hub for companies subsidised under the NIAS" and the "Technology Talent Admission Scheme for companies subsidised under the NIAS" is that their projects has to be approved under the NIAS. As at end of February 2025, no enterprise has applied for the relevant schemes.

- (6) Upon completion of each project and before disbursement of the final instalment of funding, the enterprise concerned will be required to provide information to the Government on the benefits of the relevant production line, including the business turnover after the commissioning of the production line, the number and types of new jobs created, etc. We will evaluate the economic benefits brought by the NIAS based on the relevant information. In addition, the Government will closely monitor the implementation of the NIAS and review its effectiveness in due course.

- (7) The NIAS Secretariat comprises 5 staff members from the ITC, who are also responsible for handling other funding schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund. The expenditure involved constitutes part of the overall expenditure of the ITC, and cannot be quantified separately.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB011

(Question Serial No. 3930)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the Government's work on new industrialisation development in Hong Kong, please advise on the following:

What are the expenditures and manpower resources involved for the New Industrialisation Development Office in the year since its establishment in February last year?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

The New Industrialisation Development Office (NIDO) was set up in February last year with an establishment of the Commissioner for Industry (Innovation and Technology) (at the rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1), 1 Administrative Officer Staff Grade C, 1 Administrative Officer, 1 Senior Executive Officer, 1 Executive Officer II, 2 Personal Secretaries I and 1 Assistant Clerical Officer, while 1 Administrative Officer post will be created in 2025-26. The expenses incurred by the NIDO were subsumed under the total expenditure of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau, and could not be quantified separately.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB012

(Question Serial No. 1553)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the work to “continue to implement the ‘Global STEM Professorship Scheme’ (the Scheme) to strengthen support for local universities to attract world-renowned STEM scholars to work in Hong Kong”, will the Government advise this Committee:

1. on the numbers of world-renowned scholars in innovation and technology (I&T) who have so far been selected under the Scheme and have worked at the 8 funded universities, with a breakdown by university and discipline setting out for each scholar his/her name, research area, nationality, year of arrival in Hong Kong and the number of members in his/her research team;
2. on the total amounts that the Government has paid out so far in (i) remuneration of the scholars, (ii) subsidy for research teams and (iii) subsidy for setting up laboratories; and
3. whether the Government will consider injecting funds and launching a new round of the Scheme in a timely manner to continue to implement the target of building Hong Kong into a “hub for high-calibre talent” and developing an international I&T centre; if so, on the details, and if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Global STEM Professorship Scheme (the Scheme) supports local universities funded by the University Grants Committee in attracting research and development (R&D) talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. As at the end of February 2025, 66 selected scholars

have taken up their posts in Hong Kong. Details of these scholars are set out at **Annex**. Under the Scheme, the Research Talent Hub has subsidised nearly 220 research team members. We do not maintain other statistical information about the research team members.

The Scheme provides remuneration subsidy for a university employing a selected scholar, which is capped at 50% of the actual remuneration offered by the university and subject to an annual ceiling of \$1 million for each selected scholar, over a period of up to 5 years. The total amount of remuneration subsidy provided thus far by the Education Bureau for the selected scholars is about \$374 million. In addition, under the Scheme, a selected scholar can receive subsidy from the Research Talent Hub for recruiting up to 4 research team members to assist in his/her R&D work over a period of up to 3 years. The total amount of subsidy provided thus far under the Research Talent Hub is about \$270 million. If needed, a selected scholar may apply for subsidy from The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for setting up a laboratory. The total amount of such subsidy provided thus far is about \$500 million.

Quotas are available under the Scheme. The Government will maintain close liaison with the universities and review the implementation of the Scheme as and when appropriate.

Details of selected scholars who have come to Hong Kong

Table 1 – Number of selected scholars who have come to Hong Kong by university

	Number of selected scholars who have come to Hong Kong (by year of arrival)						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 (as at end-February)	Total
The University of Hong Kong	-	4	5	3	3	-	15
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	-	3	6	3	3	-	15
City University of Hong Kong	-	2	3	6	2	-	13
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	-	2	5	4	1	-	12
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	1	2	1	3	1	-	8
Hong Kong Baptist University	-	-	1	2	-	-	3
Total	1	13	21	21	10	-	66

Table 2 – Number of selected scholars who have come to Hong Kong by discipline

	Number of selected scholars who have come to Hong Kong (by year of arrival)						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 (as at end-February)	Total
Computer science and engineering	-	7	12	9	2	-	30
Medicine and life sciences	1	1	4	8	5	-	19
Natural science and others	-	5	5	4	3	-	17
Total	1	13	21	21	10	-	66

Table 3 – Number of selected scholars who have come to Hong Kong by region of former appointment

	Number of selected scholars who have come to Hong Kong (by year of arrival)						Total
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025 (as at end-February)	
United States	1	8	9	6	1	-	25
Singapore	-	-	5	7	3	-	15
Australia	-	2	4	4	1	-	11
United Kingdom	-	-	2	3	4	-	9
Others	-	3	1	1	1	-	6
Total	1	13	21	21	10	-	66

Table 4 – Details of selected scholars who have come to Hong Kong

	English name	Research area	Year of arrival
1	Prof XIE Ting	Medicine and life sciences	2020
2	Prof CHEN Qing-yan	Computer science and engineering	2021
3	Prof Takashi HIBIKI	Computer science and engineering	2021
4	Prof HO Tsung-yi	Computer science and engineering	2021
5	Dr JIANG Hai-bo	Natural science and others	2021
6	Prof Kazuhiro KOSUGE	Computer science and engineering	2021
7	Prof LI Lain-jong	Computer science and engineering	2021
8	Prof LUK Kam-biu	Natural science and others	2021
9	Prof REN Yang	Natural science and others	2021
10	Prof WENG Qi-hao	Natural science and others	2021
11	Prof YAN Ren-bin	Natural science and others	2021
12	Prof YIN Xiao-bo	Computer science and engineering	2021
13	Prof ZHANG Wei-xiong	Medicine and life sciences	2021
14	Prof ZHOU Xiao-fang	Computer science and engineering	2021
15	Prof Kyongtae BAE	Medicine and life sciences	2022
16	Dr CHAU Lap-pui	Computer science and engineering	2022

	English name	Research area	Year of arrival
17	Prof Stephen DALTON	Medicine and life sciences	2022
18	Prof FANG Xuanlai	Computer science and engineering	2022
19	Prof FANG Yuguang	Computer science and engineering	2022
20	Prof JIN Bang-ti	Natural science and others	2022
21	Prof LEE Tu-chung	Computer science and engineering	2022
22	Prof LIANG Shunlin	Natural science and others	2022
23	Prof LIU Ai-qun	Computer science and engineering	2022
24	Prof LOH Kian-ping	Computer science and engineering	2022
25	Prof LONG Yi	Computer science and engineering	2022
26	Prof MAO Chuan-bin	Medicine and life sciences	2022
27	Prof PAN Jialin	Computer science and engineering	2022
28	Prof David PARKER	Natural science and others	2022
29	Dr SU Hui	Computer science and engineering	2022
30	Prof WANG Xun-gai	Natural science and others	2022
31	Prof WU Tao	Natural science and others	2022
32	Prof XU Dong	Computer science and engineering	2022
33	Prof ZENG Xiaocheng	Computer science and engineering	2022
34	Prof ZHAO Xiao-lin	Computer science and engineering	2022
35	Prof ZHOU Qiang	Medicine and life sciences	2022
36	Prof BU Guojun	Medicine and life sciences	2023
37	Prof Patrick BUTAYE	Medicine and life sciences	2023
38	Prof DAI Hong-jie	Natural science and others	2023
39	Prof Ahmed ELGHAZOULI	Computer science and engineering	2023
40	Prof HE Mingguang	Medicine and life sciences	2023
41	Prof HU Shiyan	Computer science and engineering	2023
42	Prof Thomas KNOPFEL	Medicine and life sciences	2023

	English name	Research area	Year of arrival
43	Prof LI Jianming	Medicine and life sciences	2023
44	Prof LI Mo	Computer science and engineering	2023
45	Prof LIN Xiaojun	Computer science and engineering	2023
46	Prof LIU Bin	Computer science and engineering	2023
47	Prof LOU Xiong Wen	Natural science and others	2023
48	Prof MA Yi	Computer science and engineering	2023
49	Prof Andreas MOELLER	Medicine and life sciences	2023
50	Dr OUYANG Wanli	Computer science and engineering	2023
51	Dr QIU Anqi	Medicine and life sciences	2023
52	Prof SUNG Wing Kin	Computer science and engineering	2023
53	Prof WANG Xin	Natural science and others	2023
54	Prof XIE Yuan	Computer science and engineering	2023
55	Prof YUAN Zhiguo	Natural science and others	2023
56	Prof ZHANG Yong	Medicine and life sciences	2023
57	Prof Khuloud AL-JAMAL	Medicine and life sciences	2024
58	Prof Hao CHEN	Computer science and engineering	2024
59	Prof DONG Zhao Yang	Computer science and engineering	2024
60	Prof GUO Yongxin	Medicine and life sciences	2024
61	Prof Michael Andreas HÄUSSER	Medicine and life sciences	2024
62	Prof LI Dan	Natural science and others	2024
63	Prof TSANG Shik Chi Edman	Natural science and others	2024
64	Prof WEI Juncheng	Natural science and others	2024
65	Prof XING Bengang	Medicine and life sciences	2024
66	Prof Janelle YORKE	Medicine and life sciences	2024

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB013

(Question Serial No. 3366)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The 2024 Policy Address has proposed to draw up a medium to long-term development plan for new industrialisation in Hong Kong, and press ahead with the establishment of the Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance (the Alliance). It is also mentioned under the Programme that the Bureau will commence a study on the medium to long-term development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong to encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to upgrade and transform by making use of innovation and technology and strengthen the support for relevant professional services sectors; and continue to pool together talents and resources from various fields through the Alliance to establish a platform for the collaboration among the Government, industry, academia, research and development and investment sectors. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the current progress of the Government in drawing up the medium to long-term development plan for new industrialisation in Hong Kong? Is there any timetable for public announcement? Has the Government outsourced the relevant research(es) or trade consultation to think tanks or consultancies? If yes, what are the expenditures and manpower involved?
2. Are there any details of the Alliance for announcement? Among others, when will the Alliance be officially established, and what are the organisational structure, the number of founding members and the composition of key members? Will officials from relevant government departments serve as ex-officio members of the Alliance, and will funding be provided to support its operation? If yes, what are the expenditure and manpower involved? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 43)

Reply:

1. To further optimise the strategy and institutional set-up for the development of “new industrialisation” and implement the top-level design and development path of the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology (I&T) Development Blueprint, we will commence a study on the medium to long-term development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong to encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to upgrade and transform by making use of I&T and strengthen the support for relevant professional services, so as to expeditiously propel “new industrialisation” in a manner that manifests Hong Kong’s competitive edge.

We will engage an experienced consultant with the necessary qualifications, knowledge, skills and requirements to conduct the study. The Government will require the consultant to proactively communicate with industry stakeholders and take heed of their views in order to present a full picture of the status of development of Hong Kong’s industries, while giving due consideration to the needs of various stakeholders and the challenges they are facing. The Government will announce the findings of the study in due course, and formulate plans to help promote “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong.

We will commence the study on the medium to long-term development of “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong within this year, and will oversee the work of the consultant with the Bureau’s manpower and resources.

2. The Chief Executive proposed in the 2024 Policy Address that the Government would press ahead with the establishment of the “Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance” (the Alliance), pooling together talents and resources from various fields to drive new industrialisation and establish a platform for the collaboration among the Government, industry, academia, research and investment sectors. The Alliance was officially established on 18 March 2025, led by members from four sectors, namely the industry, academia, research and investment sectors. The eight founding members of the Alliance include (in no particular order): The Federation of Hong Kong Industries, the Chinese Manufacturers’ Association of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Productivity Council, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation, the Vocational Training Council, the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, the Bank of China Group Investment Limited and the Hong Kong New Industrialisation Alliance.

With the direction of “proactive promotion by the Government and joint action by stakeholders”, we expect that the Alliance will become an important platform for stakeholders of new industrialisation to exchange views and foster cooperation, thereby facilitating the establishment of a comprehensive I&T industry ecosystem in Hong Kong and assisting in the promotion of new industrialisation development in Hong Kong including showcasing related achievements.

Formed and funded by the industry, the Alliance is a non-governmental organisation. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau has pressed ahead with the establishment of the Alliance with its existing manpower and resources, and will provide support and assistance for its future development.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB014

(Question Serial No. 1909)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated under Programme (2) that a Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance (Alliance) will be established in response to the 2024 Policy Address. Please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Has the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau formulated any specific modes of operation and details of resource allocation, including the participation proportion of the Government, industry, academia, research and development sector, and investment sector?
2. Are there any plans to further increase resources or introduce new measures to enhance the Alliance's operational efficiency and impact? What are the estimated expenditures and progress of the relevant plans?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

The Chief Executive proposed in the 2024 Policy Address that the Government would press ahead with the establishment of the "Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance" (the Alliance), pooling together talents and resources from various fields to drive new industrialisation and establish a platform for the collaboration among the Government, industry, academia, research and investment sectors. The Alliance was officially established on 18 March 2025 on the initiative of members from four sectors, namely the industry, academia, research and investment sectors. With the direction of "proactive promotion by the Government and joint action by stakeholders", we expect that the Alliance will become an important platform for stakeholders of new industrialisation to exchange views and foster cooperation, thereby facilitating the establishment of a comprehensive innovation and

technology industry ecosystem in Hong Kong and assisting in the promotion of new industrialisation development in Hong Kong including showcasing related achievements.

The Alliance is a non-governmental organisation formed by the industry, with no funding provided by the Government. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau has pressed ahead with the establishment of the Alliance with its existing manpower and resources, and will provide support and assistance for its future development.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB015

(Question Serial No. 1132)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Technology Development Plans of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB)

It is mentioned in the Budget that the ITIB will take forward various plans to promote technology development, with a view to driving innovation and technology advancements as well as upgrading the industries of Hong Kong. What are the specific projects under these plans? How will the Government ensure their effective implementation and assess their impacts on Hong Kong's economic and social development in the long run?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

Innovation and technology (I&T) is a key engine driving our economy and society towards high-quality development. The 2025-26 Budget continues to align closely with the development directions set out in the Hong Kong I&T Development Blueprint (the Blueprint) by proposing a number of major initiatives to support I&T development and expedite the development of new quality productive forces in Hong Kong:

- On enhancing the I&T ecosystem, we will prioritise the development of artificial intelligence (AI) as a key sector and core industry. The Budget has set aside \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute to spearhead and empower Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and industry application of AI. In addition, the first-phase facility of Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC) had commenced operation at the end of last year. We have also launched the AI Subsidy Scheme, mainly to support local institutions, R&D centres, enterprises, etc. in leveraging the computing power of the AISC.

- To promote industry development, we enhanced the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) last year. The number of new smart production lines in Hong Kong supported by the NIFS has exceeded 100. We also launched the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme last year to provide funding support on a matching basis for enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. As at the end of February 2025, the New Industrialisation Vetting Committee supported the first application. Moreover, the Budget has earmarked \$100 million for launching the two-year Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme this year. Under the scheme, matching subsidies will be provided to local manufacturing enterprises, so as to encourage them to upgrade and transform their production lines with a funding of up to \$250,000 for each project.
- We are also preparing for setting up a \$10 billion I&T Industry-Oriented Fund to channel more market capital to invest in emerging and future industries of strategic importance, so as to build an I&T industry ecosystem systematically. Meanwhile, we are also preparing for the launch of the \$180 million Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme, which will provide matching subsidies to attract professional start-up service providers with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to set up accelerator bases in Hong Kong, with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-up ecosystem through their business network and experience.
- R&D is an integral part of I&T development. We have invited institutions to submit proposals for the third InnoHK research cluster (InnoHK), which will focus on advanced manufacturing, materials, energy and sustainable development. 2 pilot lines of the Hong Kong Microelectronics R&D Institute will be set up at the Microelectronics Centre in Yuen Long this year and start operating next year. Institutions have also been invited to submit proposals for the Subsidy Programme for the Setup of Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s). Moreover, in order for Hong Kong to actively participate in and contribute to the aerospace development of the country, we have established the Hong Kong Space Robotics and Energy Centre under InnoHK, which will play a part in the Chang'E-8 mission. We will also seek funding approval from the Legislative Council for implementing the Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme, providing funding to local funded universities on a matching basis for procuring facilities and conducting basic research projects spearheaded by international top-notch scholars, thereby strengthening Hong Kong's frontier research.
- As regards land for I&T development, the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park), together with the San Tin area in the San Tin Technopole, will provide about 300 hectares of new land to support I&T and industry development. In particular, with the first 3 buildings in Batch 1 of Phase 1 approaching completion, the Hong Kong Park will officially enter into its operational phase later this year. The construction of the other 5 buildings in Batch 1 of Phase 1 is in full swing and is expected to be completed progressively from 2027 onwards. As for the remaining sites of Phase 1, we will identify suitable land parcels for invitation of private development proposals this year, with a view to taking forward the development of the Park with enhanced speed and quantity through collaboration between the Government and the market. Upon completion of the whole Hong Kong Park, its annual contribution to Hong Kong's

economy is expected to reach \$52 billion, and about 52 000 job opportunities will be created.

- On the front of promoting the development of digital economy and smart city, we are committed to enhancing public service efficiency through leveraging technology, such as utilising the “iAM Smart” platform to realise “single portal for online government services”, providing a one-stop shop for citizens to obtain information, apply for services and settle bills. Meanwhile, we are developing the “Digital Corporate Identity” Platform to facilitate digital transformation of enterprises and enhance government departments’ efficiency in processing online applications. Cyberport is also implementing the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme to assist small and medium enterprises in relevant industries in applying ready-to-use basic digital solutions, thereby expediting their pace of digital transformation.
- With respect to proactively integrating into the overall development of the country and consolidating our role as a bridge connecting the Mainland and the world, it is announced in the Budget that Cyberport has been actively collaborating with the Qianhai Management Authority by recommending suitable start-up enterprises to land on each other’s parks. Regarding cross-boundary data flow, the facilitation measure on the “Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)” has been extended to all industries, promoting the safe and orderly cross-boundary flow of personal information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. Moreover, among the top 100 science and technology (S&T) clusters in the Global Innovation Index published by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Guangzhou cluster has ranked second for 5 consecutive years. It is also announced in the Budget that, with our country’s staunch support, the WIPO Global Innovation Index 2025 S&T Cluster Launch will be held in Hong Kong.

The Blueprint sets out the macro I&T development targets for Hong Kong in the next 5 to 10 years and put forth reference development indicators which cover 4 areas, namely R&D, start-ups, talent and industry development, to facilitate the review of the implementation of the various strategies set out in the Blueprint. In addition, in the Policy Addresses of 2022, 2023 and 2024, a series of indicators (including key performance indicators) for Hong Kong’s development into an international I&T centre were also set out to facilitate the tracking of the progress and effectiveness of policy initiatives for timely improvements.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB016

(Question Serial No. 1136)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to paragraph 65 of the 2025-26 Budget, the Financial Secretary mentioned that \$3.7 billion has been earmarked to expedite the provision of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 development of the Hong Kong Park in Hetao Co-operation Zone. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the details of infrastructure and public facilities involved in relation to the cost mentioned above;
2. the expected earliest time for completing the expedited development of the Hong Kong Park in Hetao Co-operation Zone (please set out the information in a timetable).

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the 2 parts of the question is as follows:

The Government is taking forward the development of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park) at full steam. The Hong Kong Park is developed in 2 phases from west to east, with Batch 1 of Phase 1 comprising 8 buildings. With the first 3 buildings approaching completion, the Park will officially enter into its operational phase later this year. The construction of the other 5 buildings is in full swing and is expected to be completed progressively from 2027 onwards.

As for the remaining sites of Phase 1, we will identify suitable land parcels for the invitation of private development proposals this year, with a view to taking forward the development of the Park with enhanced speed and quantity through collaboration between the Government and the market.

To accelerate the development of the Hong Kong Park, \$3.7 billion has been earmarked in the 2025-26 Budget to expedite the completion of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 of the Park, such as some of the roads, underground facilities and data storage supporting facilities, etc., to tie in with the development of the remaining sites in Phase 1 of the Park. The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park Limited is conducting a detailed technical feasibility study on the details and project estimates (including cash flow requirement) of the relevant public facilities. Subsequently, the Government will seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council.

The Government will press ahead with the development of the Hong Kong Park with the 2 five-year milestones, with a view to completing Phase 1 of the Park in an orderly manner by 2030 and forming a comprehensive development pattern of the Park by 2035.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB017

(Question Serial No. 1592)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government has commissioned an expert group in 2024 to undertake an in-depth study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong, the scope of which includes Hong Kong's role as a "super connector" in data trading as well as promoting the formulation of international data trading rules. The aim is to enable us to unleash the potential of data elements and facilitate its development into a new industry with an enormous growth momentum, hence empowering the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the progress of the expert group's study in the past year; and
2. the progress and timetable of the study on setting up a data exchange in Hong Kong to facilitate the establishment of a Hong Kong-Shenzhen cross-boundary data exchange, thus promoting the co-development of various smart cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and building Hong Kong as an "international digital port"?

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

Data is a new key production factor. A highly efficient data ecosystem is one of the considerations for many enterprises to establish a foothold in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is underpinned by its distinctive advantages under "One Country, Two Systems" and endowed with the characteristics of an international city. From supply and demand of data to application scenarios, we are equipped with a robust foundation and possess an abundance of favourable conditions for promoting data trading ecosystem. The Government has commissioned an expert group comprising fields such as information technology, commerce

and industry, finance and data sources to undertake a study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong. This includes Hong Kong's role as a "super connector" in data trading, the prerequisites, rules, and measures for promoting international data trading, as well as feasible implementation models. The expert group is conducting a consultancy study on these topics and is expected to complete and submit recommendations to the Government within the 2025-26 financial year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB018

(Question Serial No. 1646)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Budget that the Government has earmarked \$3.7 billion to expedite the provision of infrastructure and public utilities of Phase 1 development of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (Hetao Co-operation Zone). In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Which infrastructure and public utilities projects of Phase 1 development will the \$3.7 billion be allocated to? When are the expected completion dates?
2. Will the funding be provided in a one-off manner? Or will it be provided in phases at an interval of certain years?
3. Please provide an estimate of the total construction cost and a timetable for completion of the entire Hetao Co-operation Zone.

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to various parts of the question is set out below:

The Government is taking forward the development of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park) at full steam. The Hong Kong Park is developed in 2 phases from west to east, with Batch 1 of Phase 1 comprising 8 buildings. In 2021, the Legislative Council (LegCo) approved a funding of approximately \$17.2 billion for the construction works of this Batch, including, among others, the construction of 8 buildings and certain basic facilities of the Park

(including district cooling system, common utility enclosure, environmental mitigation measures, etc.). With the first 3 buildings approaching completion, the Park will officially enter into its operational phase later this year. The construction of the other 5 buildings is in full swing and is expected to be completed progressively from 2027 onwards.

To accelerate the development of the Hong Kong Park, \$3.7 billion has been earmarked in the 2025-26 Budget to expedite the completion of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 of the Park, such as some of the roads, underground facilities and data storage supporting facilities, etc., to tie in with the development of the remaining sites in Phase 1 of the Park. The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park Limited (HSITPL) is conducting a detailed technical feasibility study on the details and project estimates (including cash flow requirement) of the relevant public facilities. Subsequently, the Government will seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee. Meanwhile, we will identify suitable land parcels from the remaining sites of Phase 1 for invitation of private development proposals this year, with a view to taking forward the development of the Park with enhanced speed and quantity through collaboration between the Government and the market.

On the other hand, the HSITPL is undertaking detailed planning for Phase 2 development, which is expected to be completed in 2025. It will make reference to the planning and functions of Phase 1 of the Park to plan for the scale, distribution of industries, etc. of Phase 2 development, with a view to consolidating the overall planning of the entire Hong Kong Park. For the time being, the Government does not have an estimate of the total construction cost of the entire Park.

The Government will press ahead with the development of the Hong Kong Park with 2 five-year milestones, with a view to completing Phase 1 of the Park in an orderly manner by 2030, and forming a comprehensive development pattern of the Park by 2035.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB019

(Question Serial No. 1647)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the first 3 buildings of Phase 1 of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (“Hetao Co-operation Zone”) are about to complete. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The first 3 buildings include 2 wet laboratories and 1 talent accommodation building. Please set out the construction cost of each building and the total construction cost.
2. For the other 5 buildings, please set out the estimated construction cost of each building, as well as the total estimated construction cost.

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to parts 1 and 2 of the question is set out below:

In 2021, the Legislative Council approved a funding of approximately \$17.2 billion for the Batch 1 development in Phase 1 of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park), including the construction of 8 buildings and certain basic facilities of the Park. The estimated construction cost of the 8 buildings was about \$11 billion. The remaining funding would be used for the certain basic facilities in the Park and other related project works, including district cooling system, common utility enclosure, environmental mitigation measures, etc..

The first 3 buildings in Phase 1 of the Hong Kong Park, including 2 wet laboratory buildings and 1 talent accommodation building, are all about to complete, with a total construction cost

of about \$3.4 billion. The construction of the other 5 buildings is in full swing and is expected to be completed progressively from 2027 onwards, with a total estimated construction cost of about \$7.6 billion.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB020

(Question Serial No. 2944)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding nurturing start-ups, please advise this Committee of:

- 1) the respective numbers of start-ups and employees in the related enterprises in the past 5 years (2020-21 to 2024-25) with year-on-year comparison, broken down by field of business and set out in tabular form;
- 2) the respective numbers of start-ups and the investment amounts involved in the Corporate Venture Fund and the Co-acceleration Programme, broken down by field of business and set out in tabular form;
- 3) the number of expressions of interest currently received under the \$10 billion Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund set up by the Government;
- 4) the details and implementation timetable of the \$180 million I&T Accelerator Pilot Scheme which the Government is preparing to launch;
- 5) how the abovementioned funds and programmes will create synergy with the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+); and
- 6) the estimated expenditure on taking forward the RAISe+ in 2025-26; and how the Government can effectively allocate the funding of \$10 billion to potential projects, so as to accelerate the "1 to N" transformation of research and development outcomes?

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

Supporting start-ups is an essential element in enhancing the innovation and technology (I&T) industry chain. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint, promulgated in 2022, outlines 4 broad development directions and 8 major strategies for promoting the development of Hong Kong's I&T, including to diversify venture financing channels and support the development of start-ups and industries. In consultation with Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK), the reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

- 1) According to data provided by InvestHK, the numbers of local start-ups and their employees in the past 5 years, with year-on-year comparison, are set out in the following table:

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of local start-ups	3 360 (+6%)	3 755 (+12%)	3 985 (+6%)	4 257 (+7%)	4 694 (+10%)
Number of employees	10 688 (-14%)	13 804 (+29%)	14 932 (+8%)	16 453 (+10%)	17 651 (+7%)

InvestHK does not maintain a breakdown of the figures by business area.

- 2) Since its inception in 2015, the Corporate Venture Fund under the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) has invested about \$450 million in 35 start-ups. A breakdown of these start-ups according to their business area is as follows:

Business area	Number of investee companies	Investment amount (HK\$ million)
Artificial intelligence and data science	11	147.2
Biotechnology	11	110.2
Microelectronics	5	69.7
Advanced manufacturing	4	98.7
Financial technology	2	15.6
New energy/green technology	2	5.7

HKSTPC's Co-acceleration Programme is still at its preparatory stage.

- 3) The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) issued an open invitation for expression of interest (EOI) and views regarding the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF) in mid-January this year. Over 60 EOI submissions have been received in total.
- 4) The Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme aims to attract professional start-up service providers with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to establish accelerator bases in Hong Kong with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-ups ecosystem through their business network and experience. The Government

will provide up to \$30 million in funding, on a 1:2 matching basis, to the selected professional start-up service providers. We are preparing for launch of the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme, including to identify a suitable implementation agent and formulate the implementation details. We expect to consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and seek funding approval from the LegCo within this year.

- 5) & 6) To build a vibrant I&T ecosystem and fully leverage the benefits that I&T brings to the society, Hong Kong needs to develop a comprehensive I&T ecological chain encompassing the upstream, midstream, and downstream sectors. The transformation and commercialisation of upstream research and development (R&D) outcomes should take place in the midstream for promoting the development of downstream industries. The development of such industries will in turn generate demands for R&D and provide resources to support R&D in upstream sectors, thus creating a healthy cycle with various complementary sectors. For instance, the Corporate Venture Fund co-invests with angel investors or venture capital funds in start-ups, which are currently located in the Science Park or have participated in its incubation programmes, providing start-ups with more financing opportunities for start-ups. The Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme) provides funding, on a matching basis, to R&D teams from universities with good potential to become successful start-ups for promoting the transformation and commercialisation of excellent deep technology R&D outcomes. The Co-acceleration Programme pools the efforts of the I&T industry to provide value-added support services, including testing scenarios, business consulting, investment matching, talent recruitment, manufacturing and launching of products, to I&T startups with high potential, with a view to nurturing them as regional or global enterprises. The Government is also actively promoting the development of I&T industries and revamping the approach in I&T industries investment. In this connection, the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund has been established to channel more market capital to invest in specified emerging and future industries of strategic importance at different stages of development, with a view to building the I&T ecosystem in a systematic manner.

The ITC has set up a secretariat comprising 7 staff members to take forward the RAISE+ Scheme. The Secretariat is responsible for conducting basic administrative assessment on applications and other work related to the RAISE+ Scheme, such as preparing and updating the guide to application, forms, funding and administrative guidelines, and answering enquiries of the RAISE+ Scheme. The manpower and expenditure involved for the assessment under the RAISE+ Scheme have been subsumed under the overall manpower and expenditure of the Secretariat. The estimated total expenditure on salary and other expenses of the Secretariat each year is approximately \$7 million.

The RAISE+ Scheme provides funding support for outstanding and promising I&T projects, which are selected through a rigorous assessment mechanism, to promote the transformation and commercialisation of R&D outcomes. Applications are first assessed through a peer review on their technical aspect by experts from different technology areas and subject to a business viability

assessment by the consultant commissioned by the ITC. The above preliminary assessment results are then submitted to the Steering Committee of the RAISE+ Scheme for reference. Upon completion of the assessment, committee members will advise the Commissioner for I&T on the applications to be funded. Moreover, the ITC will devise overall performance indicators for the RAISE+ Scheme, such as the number of product outcomes transformed and realised, and whether the start-ups have further developed and grown, so as to monitor the benefits of R&D outcome transformation brought by it to Hong Kong.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB021

(Question Serial No. 2945)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the development of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (Hetao Co-operation Zone), please advise this Committee of the following:

- 1) What are the details, resources allocated and achievements in respect of the Government's work in taking forward the development of the Hetao Co-operation Zone over the past 5 years (2020-21 to 2024-25)?
- 2) What are the details (including the co-ordination work within the Government and with relevant Mainland authorities), estimated expenditure and staff establishment in respect of the Government's plan for taking forward the development of the Hetao Co-operation Zone in 2025-26?
- 3) What measures have been taken by the Government to further enhance the harmonisation of plans and mechanisms with the Shenzhen Park? Will the Government consider forming an advisory committee jointly with Shenzhen by appointing experts from the governments of both places as well as from the Mainland and overseas? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?
- 4) According to paragraph 61(a) of the Budget Speech, the Government will introduce new policies to facilitate cross-boundary flows of innovative elements. What are the policies?
- 5) According to paragraph 64 of the Budget Speech, the Hong Kong Park will enter into operational phase this year. The first three buildings of Phase 1 are about to complete and the first batch of tenants from life and health technology, artificial intelligence, data science and other pillar industries will begin to move in this year. Please provide the number and list of tenants who have confirmed to move in (with a breakdown by industry).

- 6) According to paragraph 65 of the Budget Speech, the Government has earmarked \$3.7 billion to expedite the provision of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 development of the Hong Kong Park, and will also identify suitable land parcels for invitation of private development proposals this year with a view to expediting the development by leveraging market forces. What form of private development proposals does the Government plan to adopt for developing the Hong Kong Park, and what is the reason for the choice?

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

- 1) & 6) The Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hetao Co-operation Zone) is one of the major co-operation platforms among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao Greater Bay Area. It is jointly established by the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park under the vision of “one river, two banks” and “one zone, two parks”.

To better take forward the development of the Hong Kong Park, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the HKSAR Government) has established the Steering Committee on the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Loop (the Committee), steered by the Chief Executive, to provide top-level and macro directions on the overall strategy, planning and layout for the development of the Hong Kong Park and steer and coordinate the work of relevant bureaux and departments in developing the Hong Kong Park. Under the leadership of the Committee, the HKSAR Government promulgated the Development Outline for the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Development Outline) in November 2024, setting out the key development directions, strategies and targets of the Hong Kong Park and driving its development through top-level design with 2 important five-year milestones.

The Hong Kong Park is developed in 2 phases from west to east. In order to expedite the development of the Hong Kong Park with enhanced speed and quantity as well as optimise its functions, the HKSAR Government has, upon conducting review, doubled the gross floor area of Phase 1 to 1 million square metres. It will be made up of different functional zones which mainly include Life and Health Technology zone, the Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Science zone and the New Technology and Advanced Manufacturing zone, as well as Talent Accommodation zone, commercial and ancillary facilities, etc.. This will help establish a diverse innovation and technology (I&T) ecosystem.

The HKSAR Government is taking forward the development of the Hong Kong Park at full steam. Batch 1 of Phase 1 of the Hong Kong Park comprises 8 buildings. In 2021, the Legislative Council (LegCo) approved a funding of approximately \$17.2 billion for the construction works of this Batch, including,

among others, the construction of 8 buildings and certain basic facilities of the Park (including district cooling system, common utility enclosure, environmental mitigation measures, etc.). The first 3 buildings, which include 2 wet laboratory buildings and 1 talent accommodation building, are all about to complete. The construction of the other 5 buildings, which includes 2 wet laboratory buildings and 3 dry laboratory/office buildings, is in full swing and is expected to be completed progressively from 2027 onwards.

To accelerate the development of the Hong Kong Park, \$3.7 billion has been earmarked in the 2025-26 Budget to expedite the completion of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 of the Park, such as some of the roads, underground facilities and data storage supporting facilities, etc., to tie in with the development of the remaining sites in Phase 1 of the Park. The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park Limited (HSITPL) is conducting a detailed technical feasibility study on the details and project estimates (including cash flow requirement) of the relevant public facilities. Subsequently, the Government will seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee. Meanwhile, we will identify suitable land parcels from the remaining sites of Phase 1 for invitation of private development proposals this year, with a view to taking forward the development of the Park with enhanced speed and quantity through collaboration between the Government and the market.

On the other hand, the HSITPL is undertaking detailed planning for Phase 2 development, which is expected to be completed in 2025. It will make reference to the planning and functions of Phase 1 of the Park to plan for the scale, distribution of industries, etc. of Phase 2 development, with a view to consolidating the overall planning of the entire Hong Kong Park.

The HKSAR Government will press ahead with the development of the Hong Kong Park with 2 five-year milestones, with a view to completing Phase 1 of the Park in an orderly manner by 2030, and forming a comprehensive development pattern of the Park by 2035.

- 2) The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to take forward the development of the Hong Kong Park with existing manpower and resources. Please refer to the Estimates of “Head 135 – Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau” for details.
- 3) & 4) The Development Outline also sets out the innovative policy directions that will facilitate the cross-boundary flow of personnel, materials, capital and data between the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park, thereby cultivating a testing ground for institutional and policy innovation.

In accordance with the directions of the Development Outline, the HKSAR Government is, on the basis of “One Country, Two Systems”, fostering the development of the Hong Kong Park as a “special region within and outside our country”, with a view to building the Hetao Co-operation Zone into a pilot zone and bridgehead for I&T collaboration between the Mainland and Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government is actively exploring with the relevant Mainland

authorities the trial implementation of the innovative policy measures to facilitate the flow of cross-boundary innovation elements between the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park under the vision of “one river, two banks” and “one zone, two parks”, thereby promoting the synergistic development and close alignment of the two Parks. For example, the use of technology to significantly shorten the travelling time between the two Parks, with a view to achieving contactless clearance; the adoption of innovative mechanisms such as “green lane” and “white list” to help streamline clearance and approval procedures for research materials (including clinical biological samples) and equipment to enter and leave the two Parks. The HKSAR Government is drawing up the relevant details and will further discuss concrete implementation proposals with the Mainland authorities concerned.

Meanwhile, Hong Kong and Shenzhen have been exchanging views on the development of the Hetao Co-operation Zone through the Joint Task Force on the Development of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Loop (the Joint Task Force) set up in 2017. The HKSAR Government will continue to work closely with the Shenzhen Municipal Government in taking forward the development of the Hetao Co-operation Zone, and will make good use of the Joint Task Force as an effective platform to have discussions regarding, among others, the future development, system alignment and innovative policy measures of the Co-operation Zone, with a view to building the Co-operation Zone into a pilot zone for Shenzhen-Hong Kong active I&T co-operation and establishing its international status as a world-class I&T hub.

- 5) As the first three buildings of the Hong Kong Park are about to complete, the Park will officially enter into its operational phase later this year. The HSITPL is pressing ahead with the work on attracting businesses / tenants. The first batch of tenants from life and health technology, AI and data science and other pillar industries of the Park is expected to move in starting from the second half of 2025. As at February 2025, the HSITPL has entered into a more intensive phase of negotiations with around 30 local, Mainland and overseas enterprises specialising in various areas covering different industries, including life and health science, diversified development of local universities, microelectronics, new energy, and AI and data science.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB022

(Question Serial No. 3837)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the innovation and technology ecosystem, please advise this Committee of:

- 1) the respective numbers of tenants and incubatees of the Science Park and Cyberport in the past 5 years (2020-21 to 2024-25) with year-on-year comparison, broken down by field of business and set out in tabular form;
- 2) the names of companies that have listed, broken down by field of business and set out in tabular form; and
- 3) the names of existing unicorns, broken down by field of business and set out in tabular form.

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 56)

Reply:

The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and Cyberport, as Hong Kong's innovation and technology (I&T) flagships, have been committed to providing I&T start-ups with infrastructure, incubation programmes and one-stop support. Our reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

- 1) The numbers of tenants and incubatees of the Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport in the past 5 financial years (as at February 2025) with year-on-year change, broken down by business area, are at **Annex 1** and **Annex 2** respectively.
- 2) to 3) Based on the information provided by relevant enterprises, as at February 2025, among the tenants and current/graduated incubatees of HKSTPC and Cyberport, 20 companies have been listed in Hong Kong in total. Moreover, according to the research on Hong Kong unicorns conducted by the Invest Hong Kong, HKSTPC and Cyberport have by now witnessed the birth of 13 Hong Kong unicorns (i.e. unlisted enterprises with a valuation of over US\$1 billion), among which 3 have been listed in Hong Kong. The companies concerned and their business areas are at **Annex 3** and **Annex 4**.

**Numbers of tenants and incubatees of the Hong Kong Science Park
from financial year 2020-21 to 2024-25**

Business area		Number of companies (year-on-year change ¹)				
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at February 2025)
Information and communications technology	Tenant	156	146 (-6.4%)	200 (+37%)	250 (+25%)	263
	Incubatee	155	120 (-23%)	127 (+6%)	187 (+47%)	197
Electronics	Tenant	137	147 (+7%)	162 (+10%)	185 (+14%)	177
	Incubatee	64	57 (-11%)	47 (-18%)	45 (-4%)	51
Biomedical technology	Tenant	126	135 (+7%)	153 (+13%)	198 (+29%)	236
	Incubatee	30	39 (+30%)	57 (+46%)	58 (+2%)	68
Material and precision engineering	Tenant	86	65 (-24%)	74 (+14%)	83 (+12%)	81
	Incubatee	46	52 (+13%)	54 (+4%)	61 (+13%)	66
Green technology	Tenant	65	87 (+35%)	85 (-3%)	79 (-7%)	81
	Incubatee	16	24 (+50%)	43 (+79%)	51 (+19%)	67
Others (including companies providing professional services)	Tenant	42	46 (+10%)	47 (+2%)	46 (-2%)	45
	Incubatee	-	-	-	-	-

¹ Year-on-year change for 2024-25 is not included, as full year figures for that year are being processed.

**Numbers of tenants and incubatees of Cyberport
from financial year 2020-21 to 2024-25**

Business area		Number of companies (year-on-year change ²)				
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at February 2025)
Smart living and Digital entertainment	Tenant	344	297 (-14%)	304 (+2%)	290 (-5%)	256
	Incubatee	116	133 (+15%)	128 (-4%)	131 (+2%)	164
Artificial intelligence/ Big data and Cybersecurity	Tenant	92	81 (-12%)	74 (-9%)	98 (+32%)	153
	Incubatee	46	28 (-39%)	15 (-46%)	12 (-20%)	9
Financial technology / Blockchain and others	Tenant	341	343 (+1%)	386 (+13%)	426 (+10%)	424
	Incubatee	84	111 (+32%)	110 (-1%)	114 (+4%)	75
Corporate services company	Tenant	0	48 (not applicable)	42 (-13%)	39 (-7%)	39
	Incubatee	-	-	-	-	-

² Year-on-year change for 2024-25 is not included, as full year figures for that year are being processed.

Listed companies and Hong Kong unicorns among the tenants and current / graduated incubatees of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation**Listed companies (in alphabetical order of company name)**

	Company name	Business area
1.	Aptorum	Biomedical technology
2.	China Resources Microelectronics	Electronics
3.	Cordlife	Biomedical technology
4.	Credo	Electronics
5.	HighTide Therapeutics	Biomedical technology
6.	Horizon Robotics	Electronics
7.	KingMed	Biomedical technology
8.	Medpace	Biomedical technology
9.	Novoheart	Biomedical technology
10.	OrbusNeich	Biomedical technology
11.	Purapharm	Biomedical technology
12.	SenseTime	Information and communications technology
13.	SinoMab	Biomedical technology
14.	Solomon Systech	Electronics
15.	UBTech Robotics	Material and precision engineering
16.	XiaoI Robotics	Electronics
17.	Zhaoke	Biomedical technology

Hong Kong unicorns (cumulative)(in alphabetical order of company name)

	Company name	Business area
1.	Cornerstone Robotics	Biomedical technology
2.	Lalamove	Information and communications technology
3.	SenseTime (Listed in 2021)	Information and communications technology
4.	SmartMore	Material and precision engineering

Hong Kong-listed companies and Hong Kong unicorns among the tenants, current incubatees and graduated incubatees of Cyberport³**Hong Kong-listed companies (in alphabetical order of company name)**

	Company name	Business area
1.	DMall	Smart living
2.	GOGOX	Smart living
3.	Xunfei Healthcare Technology	Smart living

Hong Kong unicorns (cumulative)(in alphabetical order of company name)

	Company name	Business area
1.	Animoca Brands	Digital entertainment
2.	CertiK	Financial technology
3.	Dmall (Listed in 2024)	Smart living
4.	GOGOX (Listed in 2022)	Smart living
5.	Hashkey	Financial technology
6.	Klook	Smart living
7.	TNG	Financial technology
8.	WeLab	Financial technology
9.	ZhongAn	Financial technology

³ The information was provided to Cyberport by relevant enterprises.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB023

(Question Serial No. 1252)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the newly launched HK\$10 billion “Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund” (the Fund), how will the Government accurately assess market demand and industry potential when channelling market capital into the five major emerging and future industries of strategic importance to avoid resource mismatch? After seeking funding approval from the Legislative Council, how specifically will the use of the Fund be monitored and managed to ensure efficient fund utilisation? Will specific fund utilisation efficiency indicators, such as an expected industry growth of HK\$5 billion for every HK\$1 billion invested, and an quarterly and annual assessment mechanism for fund utilisation be put in place?

Asked by: Hon KONG Yuk-foon, Doreen (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

According to the current plan, the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF) will cover 5 thematic areas, namely, life and health technology, AI and robotics, semi-conductors and smart devices, digitalisation, upgrading and transformation, and future and sustainable development. One or more sub-fund(s) will be set up under each area. The Government will participate as a Limited Partner (LP) of the sub-funds and make contributions to each sub-fund. Fund managers selected through an open application will become General Partners of the sub-funds and shall be responsible for setting up the sub-funds in the form of a limited partnership fund, raising market capital (including from strategic investors and other investors in the market) for the sub-funds, managing the daily operation of the sub-funds and investing in suitable projects in accordance with the investment framework. We hope that by establishing an investment framework and different thematic areas, coupled with the professional investment judgment of fund managers, the relevant capital can be properly invested to promote the development of the innovation and technology industries.

Based on market-oriented operations including areas such as monitoring of fund manager's performance, the sub-funds set up under the ITIF will all be limited partnership funds. According to the preliminary proposal, we will set up a Steering Committee for the ITIF, comprising representatives from the Government and the relevant sectors, to advise the Government on fund management, investment framework, selection of fund managers, monitoring and review matters, etc. The Government, alongside other LPs, will continuously monitor the performance of fund managers and request for regular reporting. Details will be finalised upon consideration of the views of different stakeholders.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB024

(Question Serial No. 0433)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In the past 3 years, did the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau engage external lawyers for consultancy services in accordance with the Stores and Procurement Regulations of the Government without first seeking assistance from the Department of Justice? If so, what were the nature of such services and the expenditures incurred?

Asked by: Hon LAM San-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau did not engage external lawyers for consultancy services in the past 3 years.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB025

(Question Serial No. 1857)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. What kinds of support or resources can technology enterprises in Hong Kong (such as the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation or incubatees of Cyberport) provide to schools? For example, regarding the provision of resources for coding and Artificial Intelligence learning, what is the specific distribution of expenditures involved? And how many schools or students are expected to benefit?
2. To further enhance young people's interest and capability in innovation and technology application, how can it be ensured that the commencement of programmes such as the IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools and coding education in primary schools will improve the practical application skills of primary and secondary school students? And whether there is a timetable for expanding the programmes to support the cultivation of more STEM talents?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chi-pang (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

1. Accelerating the development of innovation and technology (I&T), as well as fast-tracking the upgrading and transformation of industries and enterprises through technology, require not only cutting-edge tech companies but also high-quality talent. In addition to attracting outstanding professionals from both Mainland and overseas regions to settle in Hong Kong, it is equally important to nurture young people's interest in I&T. By better integrating education, technology and talent development, we can strengthen our talent base to support the needs of I&T development in Hong Kong more effectively.

In the 2025-26 Budget, the Government has proposed inviting the HKIC, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to coordinate efforts among partners and startups to showcase their products in schools or arrange site visits for students, sharing their experiences in cutting-edge technology exploration and entrepreneurship. The Budget has also proposed inviting large-scale technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practical scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools. The purpose of these two initiatives is to bring together the most advanced talent, knowledge and experience from the technology sector to the education frontlines, thereby stimulating young people's curiosity for innovative exploration and encouraging them to become future leaders in I&T.

Earlier on, a large technology enterprise organised an event focused on nurturing talents in I&T and established a youth I&T academy to support coding training and AI learning in schools. The academy features a one-stop cloud development learning space equipped with engaging teaching tools that integrate AI coding and large language model applications. It would enable teachers and students to better grasp AI development skills through practical experience.

The Government and the relevant public organisations will continue to explore the implementation plan of the initiatives, and details will be announced in due course.

2. The "IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" Programme was launched in the 2020/21 school year to provide funding support for all publicly-funded secondary schools in Hong Kong to organise information technology (IT)-related extra-curricular activities. As of March 2025, it attracted about 96% of the eligible secondary schools to participate, benefiting over 490 schools and 280 000 students. The "IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" Programme has achieved its intended purpose to enrich students' IT experience. The Government will continue to collaborate with professional organisations/institutions to organise diverse I&T learning activities for students, with a view to enhancing students' understanding of the latest development and application of I&T and IT, thereby cultivating I&T talent.

Besides, according to the information provided by the Education Bureau (EDB), the "Module on AI for Junior Secondary Level" and the "Enriched Module on Coding Education for Upper Primary Level" launched in 2023 have cultivated students' computational thinking more systematically and enhanced their understanding of the foundation and applications of AI. At present, almost all publicly-funded schools have implemented the enriched coding education and AI education at the upper primary and junior secondary levels respectively. The EDB will continue to promote I&T education to enhance students' capability in practical application.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB026

(Question Serial No. 2540)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As the Planning and Lands Branch mentioned that it will continue to coordinate and oversee the infrastructure works to support the development of Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Loop, will the Government inform this Committee:

- (1) whether the Government has a construction timetable, details of the funding and the specific planned uses for the remaining 5 buildings in the Hong Kong Park in 2025-26? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?
- (2) whether the Government has a timetable and details of the estimated funding for the construction works of the infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 development of the Hong Kong Park in 2025-26? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?
- (3) whether the Government has any plans to introduce new feeder bus routes or extend the existing bus routes to the Loop in 2025-26, so as to provide transport services to and from the buildings that are set to commence operations this year? If yes, what will be the route planning, frequencies and details of operations of these bus services? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

Our reply to various parts of the question is set out below:

- (1) and (2) The Government is taking forward the development of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park) at full steam. The Hong Kong Park is

developed in 2 phases from west to east, with Batch 1 of Phase 1 comprising 8 buildings. In 2021, the Legislative Council (LegCo) approved a funding of approximately \$17.2 billion for the construction works of this Batch, including, among others, the construction of 8 buildings (with an estimated construction cost of about \$11 billion) and certain basic facilities of the Park (including district cooling system, common utility enclosure, environmental mitigation measures, etc.).

The first 3 buildings in Phase 1 of the Hong Kong Park, which include 2 wet laboratory buildings and 1 talent accommodation building, are all about to complete. The construction of the other 5 buildings, which includes 2 wet laboratory buildings and 3 dry laboratory/office buildings, is in full swing and is expected to be completed progressively from 2027 onwards.

To accelerate the development of the Hong Kong Park, \$3.7 billion has been earmarked in the 2025-26 Budget to expedite the completion of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 of the Park, such as some of the roads, underground facilities and data storage supporting facilities, etc., to tie in with the development of the remaining sites in Phase 1 of the Park. The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park Limited (HSITPL) is conducting a detailed technical feasibility study on the details and project estimates (including cash flow requirement) of the relevant public facilities. Subsequently, the Government will seek funding approval from the LegCo Finance Committee. Meanwhile, we will identify suitable land parcels from the remaining sites of Phase 1 for invitation of private development proposals this year, with a view to taking forward the development of the Park with enhanced speed and quantity through collaboration between the Government and the market.

The Government will press ahead with the development of the Hong Kong Park with 2 five-year milestones, with a view to completing Phase 1 of the Park in an orderly manner by 2030, and forming a comprehensive development pattern of the Park by 2035.

- (3) Having co-ordinated information from the Transport and Logistics Bureau and the Transport Department (TD), our consolidated reply is set out below:

The MTR Lok Ma Chau Station, Sheung Shui Station, Yuen Long Station, and Kwu Tung Station which is expected to be completed in 2027, are about a 5 to 20 minutes' drive from the Hong Kong Park. The HSITPL will arrange shuttle bus service at appropriate locations (such as nearby MTR stations), plying to and from the Park. The TD will also regularly review the passenger demand for public transport services in the Park and introduce suitable public transport services in a timely manner to cater for the commuting needs of the personnel working in the Park.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB027

(Question Serial No. 3933)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Please inform this Committee of the estimated expenditure involved in the master planning study for the San Tin Technopole, which is expected to be completed in the third quarter of this year. How will the findings of the study be applied specifically to the subsequent land development planning?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The San Tin area in the San Tin Technopole of the Northern Metropolis will provide about 210 hectares of new innovation and technology (I&T) land, which will serve as the strategic key for the I&T industry planning and the base for developing new quality productive forces of Hong Kong in the future. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is conducting a consultancy study on the development plan of the I&T industries for the land thereat, including the basic planning in respect of industry clusters, activity-focused orientation and supporting facilities, which will form the basis for subsequent development. The result of the study are expected to be announced in 2025. The estimated expenditure for the whole consultancy study is about \$5 million.

The new I&T sites in the San Tin area will be available to the market by batches. The Government is targeting to deliver about 20 hectares of land in phases, beginning in 2026-27, for development and operation by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC). The HKSTPC has commissioned a consultant to conduct a master planning study on the I&T sites for proposing detailed development concepts and options by analysing the development opportunities and constraints. The expenditure involved in the master planning study is borne by the HKSTPC.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB028

(Question Serial No. 0843)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The first InnoCell providing accommodation facilities for innovation and technology (I&T) talents was commissioned in the Hong Kong Science Park in 2021. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the numbers of applications received and refused for the InnoCell, the reasons for rejection of the applications, and the overall letting rates in each of the past 3 years;
2. the operational expenses of the InnoCell in each of the past 3 years;
3. the progress and details of the Government's plan to construct the second InnoCell at the Hong Kong Science Park, and the estimated expenditure;
4. the progress of the works for the Government's plan to develop the InnoCell with about 100 residential units at the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Lok Ma Chau Loop; the expected time of commissioning; and whether the Government will consider providing more residential units at the HSITP for letting by I&T talents to tie in with the development of the HSITP;
5. the planning progress of the proposed provision of residential spaces for accommodating more I&T talents at the San Tin Technopole.

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

1. and 2. The numbers of applications received and rejected, the overall occupancy rate and the operational expenses of the InnoCell in the past 3 financial years are set out as follows:

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at end- February 2025)
Applications received	1 385	1 737	1 284
Applications rejected	246	163	66
Overall occupancy rate	82%	91%	93%
Operational expenses	Around \$27 million	Around \$28 million	Around \$20 million

The main reasons for rejection of applications included that the applicants did not meet the relevant eligibility criteria and the date of application for admission did not meet the relevant requirements (the date of application for admission should be within 6 months from the date of application).

3. The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation has substantially completed the relevant technical feasibility study related to the development of a new accommodation facility for I&T talents in the vicinity of the Science Park and is exploring possible financing options.
4. The talent accommodation building, among the first 3 buildings in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Lok Ma Chau Loop, has been completed, providing 100 residential units.
5. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is conducting a consultancy study on the development plan of the I&T industries for the new I&T land in the San Tin area in the San Tin Technopole, including the necessary ancillary facilities (e.g. accommodation facilities for I&T talents), and the result of the study is expected to be announced in 2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB029

(Question Serial No. 0700)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In a bid to accelerate the development of the Hong Kong Park of Hetao Co-operation Zone, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is making all-out effort to press ahead with its construction as well as the work of attracting enterprises and investment, whilst putting forward a number of proposals to secure policy support by the Central Government. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. whether the Government has started liaison with the relevant Central authorities regarding the entry of Mainland biological samples (including blood products) into the Hong Kong Park; if so, of the progress of liaison and its preliminary outcomes; if not, the reasons for that; and whether the Government will consider setting up a task force to take forward the relevant work, and formulate risk management and control measures in order to ensure biosafety and biosecurity;
2. of any concrete plans for 2025-26 to establish a high-end medical base within the Loop, so as to deepen the co-operation with the Mainland and ensure biosafety and biosecurity of biological samples, with the estimated expenditure and timetable of such plans; and
3. whether the Government has put forward proposals on expanding the scope of biotechnology application (such as human stem cells, genetic diagnosis, etc.) to cover the Hetao Co-operation Zone; if so, of the progress of liaison; if not, the reasons for that; and how the Government can ensure that the proposals will be implemented as soon as possible to facilitate the overall development of the Hong Kong Park?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-king, Starry (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

The consolidated reply concerning each part of the question, prepared by co-ordinating the information provided by the Health Bureau, is as follows:

The Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hetao Co-operation Zone) is one of the major co-operation platforms among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). It is jointly established by the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park under the vision of “one river, two banks” and “one zone, two parks”. Hong Kong and Shenzhen have been exchanging views on the development of the Hetao Co-operation Zone through the Joint Task Force on the Development of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Loop set up in 2017.

To better take forward the development of the Hong Kong Park, the HKSAR Government has established the Steering Committee on the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Loop (the Committee), steered by the Chief Executive, to provide top-level and macro directions on the overall strategy, planning and layout for the development of the Hong Kong Park, and steer and co-ordinate the work of relevant bureaux and departments in developing the Hong Kong Park. Under the leadership of the Committee, the HKSAR Government promulgated the Development Outline for the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Development Outline) in November 2024, setting out the key development directions, strategies and targets of the Hong Kong Park and driving its development through top-level design with 2 important five-year milestones. The Development Outline also sets out the innovative policy directions that will facilitate the cross-boundary flow of personnel, materials, capital and data between the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park, thereby cultivating a testing ground for institutional and policy innovation.

The HKSAR Government is pressing ahead with the development of the Hong Kong Park in accordance with the directions set out in the Development Outline. We will promote the development of the Park into a world-class industry-academia-research platform on various fronts, including supporting the establishment of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong Park. To build the Hetao Co-operation Zone into a pilot zone and bridgehead for innovation and technology (I&T) collaboration between the Mainland and Hong Kong, the HKSAR Government is, on the basis of “One Country, Two Systems”, fostering the development of the Hong Kong Park as “a special region within and outside our country”. The HKSAR Government is actively liaising with the relevant Mainland authorities the trial implementation of innovative policy measures to facilitate the flow of cross-boundary innovation elements between the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park. An example is the adoption of innovative mechanisms such as “green lane” and “white list” to help streamline clearance and approval procedures for research materials (including clinical biological samples) and equipment to enter and leave the two Parks. The HKSAR Government is drawing up the relevant details and will further discuss concrete implementation proposals with relevant the Mainland authorities concerned.

At the same time, the HKSAR Government is actively promoting the application of advanced biomedical technology in the Hetao Co-operation Zone. In 2025, the Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trial Institute (GBAICTI) will collaborate with the Shenzhen Municipal Government to establish the “Greater Bay Area Clinical Trial Collaboration

Platform”, working with the Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trials Center located in the Shenzhen Park to provide consultation, matching, and referral services for medical research organisations conducting clinical trials in Hong Kong and the GBA. This includes co-ordinating the launch of multicentre cross-boundary clinical trials that meet both national and international standards. In addition, the GBAICTI will roll out other projects in phases, including establishing an “International Clinical Research Academy”, and collaborating with the Department of Health and the Hospital Authority (HA) to shorten the approval time for application of drugs to align with global competitors. The GBAICTI will also establish strategic partnerships with healthcare and biomedical institutions, including the Hong Kong Genome Institute, to leverage its genome database primarily acquired from the Southern Chinese population, spur the opening up of the HA’s medical databases to support clinical trials, and attract enterprises of advanced biomedical technologies (such as gene therapy, cell therapy, radioligand therapy and new vaccine technology platforms) within and outside of Hong Kong to set up their operations in Hetao for research and development, and translation.

The HKSAR Government will continue to work closely with the Shenzhen Municipal Government and relevant Mainland authorities to take forward the development of the Hetao Co-operation Zone, and explore innovative policy measures for the future development and construction of the Co-operation Zone, with a view to building the Co-operation Zone into a pilot zone for Shenzhen-Hong Kong active co-operation in I&T, and establishing its international status as a world-class I&T hub.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB030

(Question Serial No. 0701)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

To further promote the high-level opening-up of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (Hetao Co-operation Zone), will the SAR Government inform this Committee:

1. of any plans to expedite the construction of cross-boundary facilitation facilities of the Hetao Co-operation Zone in 2025-26, such as modification of the Route 1, dedicated boundary control points and cross-boundary footbridges for Hetao; as well as the planning progress and timetable for these facilities;
2. whether it has co-ordinated with the corresponding Mainland authorities (such as the General Administration of Customs and the National Immigration Administration) to foster early implementation of the separate “first line” and “second line” management as well as the “white list” regime proposed in the Development Plan for Hetao; and of the progress in formulating the relevant policies and the implementation timetable;
3. in considering the interface issues of the legal systems of Shenzhen and Hong Kong in areas such as information, law enforcement and regulation, what specific measures are in place to facilitate the alignment of the legal norms of the two places, such as whether it will set up a task force or push for legislative amendments, and of the details; and
4. of any plans to promote cross-boundary funding of scientific research projects by scientific research capital in Shenzhen and Hong Kong and explore innovative arrangements for cross-boundary data flow (such as point-to-point transmission facilities and dedicated storage platforms); of the budget and risk management controls for such plans, as well as the way to ensure these arrangements can promote technological innovation and internationalisation of the Hetao Co-operation Zone.

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-king, Starry (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

Having consulted the Security Bureau, the Development Bureau, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Department of Justice, a consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hetao Co-operation Zone) is one of the major co-operation platforms among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao Greater Bay Area. It is jointly established by the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park under the vision of “one river, two banks” and “one zone, two parks”.

To better take forward the development of the Hong Kong Park, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the HKSAR Government) has established the Steering Committee on the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Loop (the Committee), steered by the Chief Executive, to provide top-level and macro directions on the overall strategy, planning and layout for the development of the Hong Kong Park and steer and coordinate the work of relevant bureaux and departments in developing the Hong Kong Park. Under the leadership of the Committee, the HKSAR Government promulgated the Development Outline for the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Development Outline) in November 2024, setting out the key development directions, strategies and targets of the Hong Kong Park, driving its development through top-level design. According to the Development Outline, the Hong Kong Park will develop in accordance with the basic principles of “being free and open, connecting the Mainland and the rest of the world, and facilitating movement”. The HKSAR Government will press ahead with the development of the Hong Kong Park with 2 five-year milestones, with a view to completing Phase 1 of the Park in an orderly manner by 2030, and forming a comprehensive development pattern of the Park by 2035.

The Development Outline also sets out the innovative policy directions that will facilitate the cross-boundary flow of personnel, materials, capital and data between the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park, thereby cultivating a testing ground for institutional and policy innovation. In accordance with the directions of the Development Outline, the HKSAR Government is, on the basis of “One Country, Two Systems”, fostering the development of the Hong Kong Park as a “special region within and outside our country”, with a view to building the Hetao Co-operation Zone into a pilot zone and bridgehead for innovation and technology (I&T) collaboration between the Mainland and Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government is actively exploring with the relevant Mainland authorities the trial implementation of the innovative policy measures to facilitate the flow of cross-boundary innovation elements between the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park, thereby promoting the synergistic development and close alignment of the two Parks.

Regarding the cross-boundary flow of personnel, travelling between the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park will be subject to boundary control. The governments of Hong Kong and Shenzhen plan to construct cross-boundary bridges at the eastern side and western side of the Hetao Co-operation Zone respectively to directly connect the two Parks, so as to facilitate daily cross-boundary travel of I&T personnel. Both governments will continue to explore the adoption of innovative and convenient clearance mode and facilities at the cross-boundary

bridges, such as implementing pre-registration arrangements and using technology, with a view to achieving contactless clearance to allow designated personnel of the two Parks to enjoy travel convenience. As for Route 1, the arrangement regarding the lane-changing is being co-ordinated by the Northern Metropolis Co-ordination Office under the Development Bureau.

Regarding the cross-boundary flow of materials, to facilitate the conduct of industry-academia-research activities, the HKSAR Government is actively exploring with the relevant Mainland authorities the adoption of innovative mechanisms such as “green lane” and “white list” to help streamline clearance and approval procedures for research materials and equipment to enter and leave the two Parks, providing convenience in transporting samples collected in the Mainland for research or trial purposes across the boundary for use in the Hong Kong Park under safe, controllable and supervised conditions.

Regarding the cross-boundary flow of research funding, since 2019, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the National Natural Science Foundation of China and various Mainland provinces and municipalities have approved about RMB 1.03 billion of cross-boundary research funding for universities and research institutions in Hong Kong to conduct about 750 research and development projects, and participate in the setting up of laboratories. The HKSAR Government will continue to actively explore with the relevant Mainland authorities facilitation measures on cross-boundary fund transfer for Mainland enterprises settling in the Hong Kong Park, make good use of the advantage of the Hong Kong Park as a “special region within and outside our country” and promote the development of the Hong Kong Park into an important foothold for Mainland I&T enterprises to set up international headquarters or global research centres, thereby supporting more Mainland I&T enterprises looking to go global to expand their business to the international market with Hong Kong as a stepping stone.

Regarding the cross-boundary data flow, on the premise of complying with the relevant national data security laws and regulations and where risks are under control, the HKSAR Government is exploring with the relevant Mainland authorities the expansion of the cross-boundary flow of research data from the Mainland to Hong Kong for use by enterprises and organisations in the Hong Kong Park, and the establishment of cross-boundary data flow management mechanism that will ensure the safe and convenient cross-boundary data flow.

Meanwhile, Hong Kong and Shenzhen have been exchanging views on the development of the Hetao Co-operation Zone through the Joint Task Force on the Development of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Loop (the Joint Task Force) set up in 2017. The HKSAR Government will continue to work closely with the Shenzhen Municipal Government in taking forward the development of the Hetao Co-operation Zone, and will make good use of the Joint Task Force as an effective platform to have discussions regarding, among others, the future development, system alignment and innovative policy measures of the Co-operation Zone, with a view to building the Co-operation Zone into a pilot zone for Shenzhen-Hong Kong active I&T co-operation, and establishing its international status as a world-class I&T hub.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB031

(Question Serial No. 1833)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 under Head 135, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to facilitate the full adoption of “iAM Smart” by all departments to provide one-stop electronic services, and continue to oversee the work of developing the “CorpID” Platform. In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

the current progress of the development of the “CorpID” Platform and whether there will be a specific timetable for its implementation;

whether, after the roll-out of the “CorpID” Platform, an assessment will be made on ways to promote data sharing between government departments and enterprises, including the Business Registration Office and the Inland Revenue Department, for corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification, thereby streamlining the procedures such as applying for licence renewal and opening of bank accounts by enterprises?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-wang, Robert (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

The “Digital Corporate Identity” (CorpID) Platform under development provides various functions, including corporate identity authentication, digital signing, pre-filling of forms and storage of digital licences and permits, etc., which facilitate corporations to undergo corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification in a secure, convenient and efficient manner when using e-government services or conducting online transactions.

Since the funding was approved by the Legislative Council in June 2024, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) has been pressing ahead to develop the CorpID Platform at full speed, invited tenders for the project in end-2024 as planned and strives to award the contract for design and

development of the Platform in mid-2025, with a view to rolling out the Platform progressively from end-2026 onwards. At the same time, we will launch a Sandbox Programme within this year for corporations and government departments interested in supporting CorpID to conduct proof-of-concept testing and develop their applications in order to design application scenarios and solutions that can better meet the market demands.

The CorpID Platform is an important digital government and digital economy infrastructure. All corporate-related e-government services are required to support the use of CorpID within 18 months after the CorpID Platform is launched. DPO has issued a circular to departments and is progressively inviting bureaux/departments (B/Ds) as well as public and private organisations with more business dealings with corporations to carry out related system design, upgrade and integration at the soonest, so that their e-services can support the use of the CorpID Platform.

At the initial stage when the Platform is launched, we anticipate that it can integrate with multiple “Government-to-Business” and “Business-to-Business” e-services provided by B/Ds as well as public and private organisations, covering areas such as taxation, government funding schemes, finance, etc. Specifically, taking the Companies Registry and the Inland Revenue Department as examples, the CorpID Platform will integrate with the relevant systems of these departments. Through automated data exchange, corporations will be able to undergo corporate identity authentication and corporate signature verification when using e-government services or conducting online business transactions, thereby obviating the trouble to go through the current complicated and paper-based procedures of submitting and verifying copies of related document and company seals. In addition, CorpID provides the function for corporations to authorise the Government to extract information from the systems of e-government services through data exchange for pre-filling of forms. This will eliminate the need for corporations to repeatedly provide corporate information when using different e-services, thereby expediting application and approval processes.

On the other hand, the Commercial Data Interchange of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority will, through supporting CorpID, further expand its scope to cover relevant authorisation processes, enabling banks to access data more easily with the consent from corporations. This will facilitate corporations (especially small and medium enterprises) to submit to banks the information required for service applications, while allowing banks to obtain the information required for approving corporate applications in a more cost-effective manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB032

(Question Serial No. 3037)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in paragraph 72 of the Budget Speech that Hong Kong must consolidate and strengthen industries with clear advantages whilst actively nurturing and developing new industries, injecting new impetus into Hong Kong's economy. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the new industries which the Government intends to gradually develop, and the estimated financial expenditure to be incurred;
2. whether the Government will consider promoting the development of new industries through bond issuance or other forms of financing; if so, the details; if not, the reasons; and
3. the expected contribution to the local economy if these new industries are successfully developed?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

1. The Government promulgated the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (Blueprint) in December 2022, formulating eight major strategies based on four broad development directions. Continuing to enhance the innovation and technology (I&T) ecosystem and promoting intersectional development of the upstream, midstream and downstream sectors so as to build up a comprehensive I&T ecological chain are included. To this end, the current-term Government has adopted a series of measures to implement the development directions put forward in the Blueprint, supporting the development of downstream industries for promoting the

development of “new industrialisation” in a comprehensive manner. Amongst them, we are currently focusing on industries of strategic importance including life and health technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies to create momentum to push forward “new industrialisation”, thus driving the diversified development of Hong Kong’s economy.

To promote the development of these industries of strategic importance, the Government enhanced the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) last year by relaxing relevant requirements so that each enterprise can carry out up to 3 projects concurrently to receive a total maximum funding of up to \$45 million, in a bid to strengthen support for local manufacturing enterprises to shift to smart manufacturing. As at the end of March 2025, 63 applications were supported, involving more than 100 production lines in total. Besides, the Government launched the \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme last year to support enterprises of industries of strategic importance to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. By the end of February 2025, the New Industrialisation Vetting Committee has supported the first application under the NIAS. In addition, to further promote smart manufacturing, we will launch the two-year Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) in 2025 as a pilot initiative to provide funding on a matching basis of 1 (Government) : 2 (Company) to local manufacturing sector, with a view to encouraging them to introduce technology solutions for smart production to upgrade and transform production lines.

Regarding the life and health technology industry, the Government established the *InnoHK* research clusters to promote global research collaboration, successfully attracting more than 30 world-renowned universities and research institutes to collaborate with their local counterparts. Among the 30 research and development (R&D) centres established under *InnoHK*, 16 are life and health-related with research areas covering drug discovery, personalised medicine, molecular diagnostics, bioengineering, chemical biology, bioinformatics, vaccine development, medical instrumentation, etc. In addition, the Government allocated \$6 billion out of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology to launch the Subsidy Programme for the Setup of Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s) to provide funding subsidies to support local universities to set up life and health technology research institutes, thereby fostering cross-university/institutional and multi-disciplinary collaboration. In late October 2024, the Innovation and Technology Commission invited eligible local universities to submit proposals for the Subsidy Programme on or before 30 April 2025. On the other hand, in order to take forward the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) of the Loop to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world, with a focus on life and health disciplines, to conduct research, the Government will allocate \$2 billion from the above-mentioned funding earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Loop. Relevant details will be announced in due course. The Government will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to start-ups engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration support, etc.

On AI, the Government has been implementing a series of initiatives to support the development of AI in recent years, thereby realising the AI development strategy.

Regarding infrastructure and computing power, the first-phase facility of the Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC), which was established and run under a market model by Cyberport, commenced operation in end-2024, providing computing power of approximately 1 300 petaflops (PFLOPS), to be ramped up to 3 000 PFLOPS progressively this year. The Government also launched a three-year Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme in October 2024, mainly to support local institutions, R&D centres and enterprises in leveraging the AISC's computing power.

In terms of R&D of I&T, the AIR@*InnoHK* Research Cluster, which focuses on AI and robotic technologies, has set up 16 R&D laboratories, including the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center set up in 2023 with the funding support of *InnoHK*.

To further promote the development of AI in Hong Kong, the 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute, which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative R&D and industrial application of AI, facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes, and expanding application scenarios.

2. The Government will increase investment and guide more market capital to invest in I&T industries in a revamped approach. To this end, we are currently preparing to set up a \$10 billion I&T Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF), aiming to channel more market capital to jointly invest in specified emerging and future industries of strategic importance, so as to systematically build an I&T industry ecosystem. According to the current plan, the ITIF will cover 5 thematic areas, namely life and health technology; AI and robotics; semi-conductors and smart devices; digitalisation, upgrading and transformation; and future and sustainable development, with one or more sub-fund(s) set up under each area. These thematic areas correspond to and elaborate on the I&T industries that the Blueprint has proposed for Hong Kong to focus on developing, such as life and health technology, AI and data science, and advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies, which will be conducive to further promoting the I&T development in Hong Kong, developing new quality productive forces and realising the vision of making Hong Kong an international I&T hub. In addition, as at January 2025, the Government's Innovation and Technology Venture Fund, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation's Corporate Venture Fund, and the Cyberport Macro Fund have invested a total of about \$1.059 billion in 105 start-ups and attracted about \$17.9 billion of private investment. We will continue to optimise the use of resources to promote the development of various strategic industries and bring about tangible contributions to the Hong Kong economy.
3. The Census and Statistics Department published the statistics on the Business Performance of Industrial Sector in 2023, in which the manufacturing sector's total receipts in Hong Kong amounted to \$243.3 billion, representing an increase of 12.1% over the previous year, and the value added of the manufacturing sector exceeded \$28.2 billion, representing a year-on-year increase of 6%. The above figures reflected the

contribution of the manufacturing sector to Hong Kong's economy. We believe that with the continued development of new industries and related sectors, their economic benefits will be further enhanced.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB033

(Question Serial No. 3983)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Qianhai Co-operation Zone has become an important exemplary zone for enhancing co-operation between Hong Kong and Shenzhen, attracting the participation of a large number of Hong Kong enterprises and residents since its development in 2010. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

Cyberport has been actively collaborating with the Qianhai Management Authority to facilitate the landing of start-up enterprises at respective parks. So far, some 10 Cyberport enterprises are exploring setting up their operations in Qianhai. Will the Government provide more resources and support to facilitate the establishment of start-ups in Qianhai, particularly in the artificial intelligence and digital fields?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

Qianhai is one of the major collaboration platforms in the Greater Bay Area. With the positioning of “relying on Hong Kong, serving the Mainland and opening up to the world”, Qianhai is established as a Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone to facilitate the development of modern service industries (including technological services) and to promote the growth of emerging industries. To strengthen the collaboration between Hong Kong and Qianhai, Cyberport and the Qianhai Management Authority signed the first Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in January 2021. Subsequently, the two parties announced a deeper collaboration and signed another MoU in August 2024 to enhance the cooperation between the two parks and to recommend start-up enterprises to land in each other's park. The management of Cyberport and Qianhai have put in place a regular meeting mechanism to discuss ways to take forward the latest work on nurturing start-ups and talents. Both sides also provide one-on-one consultation services for start-ups which are interested in

setting up operations in Qianhai/Cyberport. In 2024, two enterprises on artificial intelligence (AI) and digital entertainment from Qianhai joined the Cyberport community as a tenant and an incubatee respectively. In addition, some 10 Cyberport enterprises, covering different digital fields such as AI, e-commerce and health technology, are exploring setting up their operations in Qianhai.

Cyberport will continue to take forward the above work with its own resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB034

(Question Serial No. 2336)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Government will continue the preparation of setting up the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF). In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) Has the Government devised any specific timetable for setting up the ITIF? If yes, what are the details? What is the estimated expenditure on the preparatory work of the fund in 2025-26 (e.g. legal consultancy, market research and recruitment)?
- (b) The ITIF will be set up under the Innovation and Technology Fund, alongside the setting up of sub-funds to focus on 5 thematic areas. How will the Government set the proportions of investment for different areas (such as life and health technology, artificial intelligence, digitalisation, etc.) under the ITIF? Will there be a cap on the amount of investment in each area to avoid the skewing of resources?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

In mid-January this year, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) issued an open invitation to the market to submit expression of interest and views regarding the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF) by early March. We will, taking into account the views of different stakeholders, finalise the relevant details and strive to seek funding approval for the ITIF from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the middle of this year, with a view to commencing the operation of ITIF in 2026-27. At present, we are handling the initial work

with existing manpower and resources. The ITC will set up a secretariat to implement the relevant work of the ITIF.

According to the current plan, the ITIF will cover 5 thematic areas, namely, life and health technology, AI and robotics, semi-conductors and smart devices, digitalisation, upgrading and transformation, and future and sustainable development. One or more sub-fund(s) will be set up under each area. We incline to invest evenly across thematic areas but will also take into account market opinions, and consider an appropriate cap on the amount that the Government will commit to each sub-fund.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB035

(Question Serial No. 3515)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government is encouraging technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practice scenarios for technology education such as coding and artificial intelligence learning in schools, with a view to further enhancing young people's interest and capability in innovation and technology (I&T) application through integrating theoretical leaning and practical application. Please provide the following information:

(a) Will expenditure be incurred in involving I&T enterprises in the initiative? If so, how much expenditure will be incurred?

(b) Will the Education Bureau later issue specific guidelines on, inter alia, the resources, technical guidance and practice scenarios to be provided by I&T enterprises, the education requirements, as well as the corresponding actions to be taken by schools? If so, what is the timetable for issuing the guidelines? If not, please give the reasons in detail.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 43)

Reply:

Having consulted the Financial Secretary's Office, the Education Bureau and the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC), our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Accelerating the development of innovation and technology (I&T), as well as fast-tracking the upgrading and transformation of industries and enterprises through technology, require not only cutting-edge tech companies but also high-quality talent. In addition to attracting outstanding professionals from both Mainland and overseas regions to settle in Hong Kong, it is equally important to nurture young people's interest in I&T. By better integrating

education, technology and talent development, we can strengthen our talent base to support the needs of I&T development in Hong Kong more effectively.

In the 2025-26 Budget, the Government has proposed inviting the HKIC, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to coordinate efforts among partners and startups to showcase their products in schools or arrange site visits for students, sharing their experiences in cutting-edge technology exploration and entrepreneurship.

The Budget has also proposed inviting large-scale technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practical scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools. The purpose of these two initiatives is to bring together the most advanced talent, knowledge and experience from the technology sector to the education frontlines, thereby stimulating young people's curiosity for innovative exploration and encouraging them to become future leaders in I&T.

Earlier on, a large technology enterprise organised an event focused on nurturing talents in I&T and established a youth I&T academy to support coding training and AI learning in schools. The academy features a one-stop cloud development learning space equipped with engaging teaching tools that integrate AI coding and large language model applications. It would enable teachers and students to better grasp AI development skills through practical experience.

The Government and the relevant public organisations will continue to explore the implementation plan of the initiatives, and details will be announced in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB036

(Question Serial No. 4017)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 155 of the Budget Speech that the Government has invited the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to co-ordinate the efforts of more than 100 technology enterprises under their purview to engage in interactions and exchanges with students to share frontier exploration and start-up experience in technology through organising product display in schools, site visits, etc., in the coming year. What are the details of such plan, the number of primary schools expected to be benefitted and the expenditure to be involved?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Yuk-wai, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 51)

Reply:

Having consulted the Financial Secretary's Office, the Education Bureau and the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC), our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Accelerating the development of innovation and technology (I&T), as well as fast-tracking the upgrading and transformation of industries and enterprises through technology, require not only cutting-edge tech companies but also high-quality talent. In addition to attracting outstanding professionals from both Mainland and overseas regions to settle in Hong Kong, it is equally important to nurture young people's interest in I&T. By better integrating education, technology and talent development, we can strengthen our talent base to support the needs of I&T development in Hong Kong more effectively.

In the 2025-26 Budget, the Government has proposed inviting the HKIC, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to coordinate efforts among

partners and startups to showcase their products in schools or arrange site visits for students, sharing their experiences in cutting-edge technology exploration and entrepreneurship.

The Budget has also proposed inviting large-scale technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practical scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools. The purpose of these two initiatives is to bring together the most advanced talent, knowledge and experience from the technology sector to the education frontlines, thereby stimulating young people's curiosity for innovative exploration and encouraging them to become future leaders in I&T.

Earlier on, a large technology enterprise organised an event focused on nurturing talents in I&T and established a youth I&T academy to support coding training and AI learning in schools. The academy features a one-stop cloud development learning space equipped with engaging teaching tools that integrate AI coding and large language model applications. It would enable teachers and students to better grasp AI development skills through practical experience.

The Government and the relevant public organisations will continue to explore the implementation plan of the initiatives, and details will be announced in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB037

(Question Serial No. 4021)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government is encouraging technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practice scenarios for technology education such as coding and artificial intelligence (AI) learning in schools, thereby integrating theoretical learning and practical application. Will the Government inform this Committee of:

The details of the provision of resources, technical guidance and practice scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools, as well as the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Yuk-wai, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 53)

Reply:

Having consulted the Financial Secretary's Office, the Education Bureau and the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC), our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Accelerating the development of innovation and technology (I&T), as well as fast-tracking the upgrading and transformation of industries and enterprises through technology, require not only cutting-edge tech companies but also high-quality talent. In addition to attracting outstanding professionals from both Mainland and overseas regions to settle in Hong Kong, it is equally important to nurture young people's interest in I&T. By better integrating education, technology and talent development, we can strengthen our talent base to support the needs of I&T development in Hong Kong more effectively.

In the 2025-26 Budget, the Government has proposed inviting the HKIC, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to coordinate efforts among partners and startups to showcase their products in schools or arrange site visits for students, sharing their experiences in cutting-edge technology exploration and entrepreneurship.

The Budget has also proposed inviting large-scale technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practical scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools. The purpose of these two initiatives is to bring together the most advanced talent, knowledge and experience from the technology sector to the education frontlines, thereby stimulating young people's curiosity for innovative exploration and encouraging them to become future leaders in I&T.

Earlier on, a large technology enterprise organised an event focused on nurturing talents in I&T and established a youth I&T academy to support coding training and AI learning in schools. The academy features a one-stop cloud development learning space equipped with engaging teaching tools that integrate AI coding and large language model applications. It would enable teachers and students to better grasp AI development skills through practical experience.

The Government and the relevant public organisations will continue to explore the implementation plan of the initiatives, and details will be announced in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB038

(Question Serial No. 1016)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Northern Metropolis is a significant site for innovation and technology (I&T) development in Hong Kong. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) It is mentioned in paragraph 66 of the Budget Speech that the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation is carrying out a master planning study on the San Tin Technopole. What are the details of expenditure?
- (2) The Government published the Development Outline for the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone in November last year, under which one of the directions is to establish an internationally competitive research and development transformation and pilot production base for industries. Are there any plans in 2025-26 to foster the establishment of more pilot application bases for supply chains as well as fintech and other innovative industries?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

- (1) The San Tin area in the San Tin Technopole of the Northern Metropolis will provide about 210 hectares of new innovation and technology (I&T) land, which will serve as the strategic key for the I&T industry planning and the base for developing new productive forces of Hong Kong in the future. The Government is targeting to deliver about 20 hectares of land in phases, beginning in 2026-27, for development and operation by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (the HKSTPC). The HKSTPC has commissioned a consultant to conduct a master planning study on the I&T sites for proposing detailed development concepts and

options by analysing the development opportunities and constraints, which will form the basis for subsequent development. The expenditure involved in the master planning study is borne by the HKSTPC.

- (2) The Government promulgated the Development Outline for the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Development Outline) on 20 November 2024. The Government is pressing ahead with the development of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park) in accordance with the four major directions set out in the Development Outline.

One of the development directions of the Hong Kong Park is to establish an internationally competitive research and development transformation and pilot production base for industries. Among others, the Hong Kong Park will explore putting in place a sound mechanism to consolidate and control the core elements of technology industries. Under this mechanism, we will leverage the comprehensive industry chains and huge capacity in mass production of the Greater Bay Area to foster, with strategic planning and configuration, a deep connection between the production and supply chains of the Mainland and the industry chains of the countries along the Belt and Road route, with a view to becoming an essential component of the international technology industry chain, thereby contributing to taking forward the national development plan of creating a new and modernised I&T industrial system closely aligned with international standards.

In this connection, the Government has been proactively promoting the development of “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong, so as to assist the manufacturing sector in Hong Kong to upgrade and transform with the use of I&T, as well as attract I&T enterprises with potential and representativeness to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong, with a view to developing, consolidating and optimising the relevant I&T industry chains, thereby continuously injecting new impetus into Hong Kong’s economic development. We have strategically introduced a number of innovative policy measures over the past two years, including the launch of the \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme in September 2024 to provide funding support for enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. Additionally, we are preparing for the setting up of a \$10 billion I&T Industry-Oriented Fund to channel more market capital to invest in specified emerging and future industries of strategic importance, so as to systematically build the I&T industry ecosystem, as well as promote the development of relevant industries.

Apart from encouraging start-ups to make good use of the Hong Kong Park, we will continue to focus on life and health technology, artificial intelligence and robotics, advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies, as well as the high-end production service industry. We will strive to create favourable conditions in terms of infrastructure, talent, capital and technology, so as to promote efficient collaboration among the industry, academia and research sectors, facilitate relevant enterprises to establish presence in the Hong Kong Park for long-term development, shorten the time required from forming a concept to product launch, in order to promote with concerted efforts the development of “new industrialisation” and new quality productive forces.

Besides, start-ups also play a crucial part in the pilot production and transformation of industries. To nurture start-ups and assist them in growth and development in the Hong Kong Park, the Park will formulate a series of facilitation measures, such as providing assistance to the start-ups in the form of incubation and acceleration support, etc. In addition, the Government is preparing to launch the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme to provide funding to professional start-up service agencies, with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-ups ecosystem through their business network and experience.

Meanwhile, we will bring in suitable university research teams under the *InnoHK* Clusters and the “Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme” or the start-ups that they founded, to the Park, with an aim of fostering transformation and application in collaboration with the Mainland and overseas enterprises and platforms therein.

As for fintech development, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau stated that Hong Kong is one of the most active international financial centres and initial public offering markets in the world. On the basis of the series of institutional reforms in facilitating listing of technology enterprises, we will continue to utilise our financial capital advantages to channel funds for effective allocation through the market and fuel the development of technology enterprises. We will encourage banks and financial institutions to provide for the technology enterprises in the Hong Kong Park “technology finance” solutions, including dedicated and concessionary products such as IP loans, supply chain finance, and “innovation loan” based on the technological capabilities of enterprises in innovation, with a view to supporting the rapid growth of start-ups in the Park. Venture capital and private equity funds will be encouraged to offer early financing and “patient capital” to the start-ups in the Park to facilitate commercialisation and exploration on follow-on fundraising and listing in Hong Kong.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB039

(Question Serial No. 0072)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As mentioned in paragraph 50 of the Budget Speech, the Government will draw up a medium- to long-term development plan for new industrialisation in Hong Kong and set up a \$10 billion Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund to channel more market capital to invest in emerging and future industries of strategic importance. In this connection, please inform this Committee:

1. whether the Government has estimated when the medium- to long-term development plan for new industrialisation in Hong Kong will be launched at the earliest, and whether key performance indicators will be set for different stages of development to speed up new industrialisation in Hong Kong. If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
2. whether the Government has estimated the resources and manpower to be allocated initially for channelling market capital to invest in emerging and future industries of strategic importance as mentioned above, and whether plans will be formulated to step up promotion in the Mainland and overseas. If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

1. To further optimise the strategy and institutional set-up for the development of “new industrialisation” and implement the top-level design and development path of the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology (I&T) Development Blueprint, we will commence a study on the medium to long-term development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong to encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to upgrade and transform by making use of I&T and strengthen the support for relevant professional services, so as to expeditiously propel “new industrialisation” in a manner that manifests Hong Kong’s competitive edge.

We will engage an experienced consultant with the necessary qualifications. We will commence the study within this year and expedite the process of the study, and, based on its findings, formulate plans to help promote “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong.

2. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) are preparing for the setting up the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF) to channel more market capital to invest in emerging and future industries of strategic importance, with a view to systemically building an I&T industry ecosystem. At present, we are handling the initial work with existing manpower and resources. The ITC will set up a secretariat to implement the relevant work of the ITIF.

Since the Chief Executive’s announcement of the setting up of the ITIF in his Policy Address last year, we have been promoting the initiative through various channels, including an open invitation for expression of interest for the ITIF in mid-January this year and a briefing session held on 20 January to introduce the ITIF to the industry players and to listen to the views and suggestions. We will continue to meet and exchange views with different stakeholders (such as potential investors and fund management companies) to proactively promote market participation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB040

(Question Serial No. 0073)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 65 of the Budget Speech that the authority has earmarked \$3.7 billion to expedite the provision of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 development of the Hong Kong Park. In this regard, please advise this Committee on the following:

1. Has the authority formulated a concrete timetable and resource allocation plan to expedite the provision of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 development of the Hong Kong Park? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
2. To align with the implementation of the Development Outline for Hong Kong Park of Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone, has the authority considered further enhancing its leading role by introducing more preferential policies in areas such as land supply, dedicated funding schemes and tax deductions to attract more international capital and I&T giants into the Park? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

1. To better take forward the development of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park), the Government promulgated the Development Outline for the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Development Outline) in November 2024, setting out the key development directions, strategies and targets of the Hong Kong Park and driving its development through top-level design with 2 important five-year milestones.

The Government is taking forward the development of the Hong Kong Park at full steam. The Hong Kong Park is developed in 2 phases from west to east, with Batch 1 of Phase 1 involving the construction of 8 buildings and certain basic facilities of the Park (including district cooling system, common utility enclosure, environmental mitigation measures, etc.). With the first 3 buildings and the said basic facilities approaching completion, the Park will officially enter into its operational phase later this year. The construction of the other 5 buildings is in full swing and is expected to be completed progressively from 2027 onwards.

To accelerate the development of the Hong Kong Park, \$3.7 billion has been earmarked in the 2025-26 Budget to expedite the completion of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 of the Park, such as some of the roads, underground facilities and data storage supporting facilities, etc., to tie in with the development of the remaining sites in Phase 1 of the Park. The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park Limited (HSITPL) is conducting a detailed technical feasibility study on the details and project estimates (including cash flow requirement) of the relevant public facilities. Subsequently, the Government will seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council. Meanwhile, we will identify suitable land parcels from the remaining sites of Phase 1 for invitation of private development proposals this year, with a view to taking forward the development of the Park with enhanced speed and quantity through collaboration between the Government and the market.

The Government will press ahead with the development of the Hong Kong Park with 2 five-year milestones, with a view to completing Phase 1 of the Park in an orderly manner by 2030, and forming a comprehensive development pattern of the Park by 2035.

2. The Government is pressing ahead with the development of the Hong Kong Park in accordance with the directions set out in the Development Outline, with a view to developing the Park into a world-class innovation and technology (I&T) hub which connects the Mainland and the rest of the world, as well as act as a crucial source of new quality productive forces for our country. Apart from the above-mentioned measures to expedite the construction of hardware facilities and the land supply in the Park, the Government will also explore the introduction of more policy measures to attract more I&T enterprises and capital into the Park.

Having co-ordinated the information provided by the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, our reply is as follows:

Regarding tax incentives, to encourage more enterprises to conduct research and development (R&D) work in Hong Kong, the Government amended the Inland Revenue Ordinance in 2018 to provide enhanced tax deduction for qualifying R&D expenditure incurred by enterprises on or after 1 April 2018. The deduction is 300% for the first \$2 million of the aggregate amount of the relevant expenditure, and 200% for the remaining amount. There is no cap on the amount of the relevant tax deduction which applies to all enterprises, including those establishing presence in the Hong Kong Park in the future.

On the other hand, the Government already implemented the “patent box” tax incentive in July 2024 to significantly reduce the tax rate for profits derived from eligible intellectual properties (IPs) (including patents) from the normal 16.5% to 5%, with a view to encouraging enterprises to invest more resources in R&D and use patents and other IP protection to conduct commercial transactions.

Regarding tax measures, in accordance with the provisions of the “Arrangement between the Mainland of China and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income” (the Arrangement), which entered into force in December 2006, remuneration derived by a resident of the Mainland or Hong Kong in respect of an employment exercised in the other side may be exempt from tax therein, provided that the specified conditions are satisfied. Otherwise, that resident will be liable to taxation in both the Mainland and Hong Kong. However, the tax paid shall be allowed as a credit against the tax in the side of residence of that resident. Besides, the Mainland and Hong Kong signed a protocol to the Arrangement in 2019, introducing a new article which facilitates the flow of teaching and research talent. With the new article, a qualified teacher or researcher, who is employed in Hong Kong or the Mainland and engages in teaching and research activities on the other side, shall be exempted from taxation on that other side for a period of three years, provided that the relevant income has been subject to tax on the side where the person concerned is employed. The relevant exemption applies to income derived in the years of assessment beginning on or after 1 April 2020.

On funding/support for enterprises, to foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong Park to attract top-notch research teams and talent from around the world to establish presence and to conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines, the Government will allocate \$2 billion of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to establish presence in the Park. Relevant details will be announced in due course. The Government will also allocate \$200 million to provide assistance to the start-ups in the Park engaging in life and health technology in the form of incubation and acceleration support, etc. Regarding the work on attracting businesses / tenants for the first 3 buildings, as at February 2025, the HSITPL has entered into a more intensive phase of negotiations with around 30 local, Mainland and overseas enterprises specialising in various areas covering different industries, including life and health science, diversified development of local universities, microelectronics, new energy, and artificial intelligence (AI) and data science.

Insofar as the development of I&T industries is concerned, the Government has been actively promoting the development of “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong. On one hand, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB), in collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, has been reaching out to enterprises from the Mainland and overseas countries proactively, and attracting I&T enterprises with potential and representativeness to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong, with a view to developing, consolidating and optimising the relevant I&T industry chain, thereby continuously injecting new impetus into Hong Kong’s economic development. As at February 2025, we have liaised with more than 130 high-potential or representative I&T enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong, and they are

welcomed to set up businesses in the Hong Kong Park. These enterprises come from the Mainland as well as various overseas countries or economies, encompassing industries with strategic importance including life and health technology, AI and robotics, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies. Given that these enterprises are with high potential or representative, we believe that the presence of these enterprises in Hong Kong will attract upstream, midstream and downstream partners from their industry chains, thereby promoting the vibrant development of our I&T ecosystem. The ITIB will continue to reach out to I&T enterprises proactively to liaise with them and provide appropriate assistance, with a view to facilitating the setting up of businesses by Mainland and overseas enterprises in various locations including the Hong Kong Park.

On another front, the ITIB has strategically introduced a number of innovative policy measures over the past 2 years, including the launch of the \$10 billion New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme in September 2024 to provide funding support for enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. We are also preparing for setting up a \$10 billion I&T Industry-Oriented Fund to channel more market capital to invest in specified emerging and future industries of strategic importance, so as to systematically build an I&T industry ecosystem as well as promote the development of relevant industries.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB041

(Question Serial No. 2128)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport will co-ordinate the efforts of more than 100 technology enterprises under their purview to engage in interactions and exchanges with students through organising product display in schools, site visits, etc., in the coming year. Please provide the following information:

- (a) Will exchanges with students in schools by innovation and technology companies incur expenses? If so, how much Government expenditure will be allocated for such activities?
- (b) As regards the schools, can the Life-wide Learning Grant be used to cover expenses for activities such as site visits? How many such activities does the Government aim at holding within the year 2025?
- (c) Please set out the respective figures for the government schools, subsidised schools, Direct Subsidy Scheme schools and international schools involved and the proportion of each type of schools.

Asked by: Hon NG Chau-pei, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

Having consulted the Financial Secretary's Office, the Education Bureau and the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC), our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Accelerating the development of innovation and technology (I&T), as well as fast-tracking the upgrading and transformation of industries and enterprises through technology, require not only cutting-edge tech companies but also high-quality talent. In addition to attracting outstanding professionals from both Mainland and overseas regions to settle in Hong Kong, it is equally important to nurture young people's interest in I&T. By better integrating education, technology and talent development, we can strengthen our talent base to support the needs of I&T development in Hong Kong more effectively.

In the 2025-26 Budget, the Government has proposed inviting the HKIC, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to coordinate efforts among partners and startups to showcase their products in schools or arrange site visits for students, sharing their experiences in cutting-edge technology exploration and entrepreneurship.

The Budget has also proposed inviting large-scale technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practical scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools. The purpose of these two initiatives is to bring together the most advanced talent, knowledge and experience from the technology sector to the education frontlines, thereby stimulating young people's curiosity for innovative exploration and encouraging them to become future leaders in I&T.

Earlier on, a large technology enterprise organised an event focused on nurturing talents in I&T and established a youth I&T academy to support coding training and AI learning in schools. The academy features a one-stop cloud development learning space equipped with engaging teaching tools that integrate AI coding and large language model applications. It would enable teachers and students to better grasp AI development skills through practical experience.

The Government and the relevant public organisations will continue to explore the implementation plan of the initiatives, and details will be announced in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB042

(Question Serial No. 0911)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Financial Secretary has elaborated in paragraphs 36 to 52 of the Budget Speech on promoting the development of Hong Kong's artificial intelligence (AI) industry, including spearheading and supporting Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) as well as industrial application of AI by setting aside \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute, so as to facilitate upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. Please inform this Committee of the Government's expenditure used for the promotion of AI development in 2024-25. What was the work done? What were the outcomes? Please provide a breakdown of the relevant figures. What is the estimated expenditure for 2025-26? What are the specific work plan and timetable? For example, when will the \$1 billion Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute be established? What are the key performance indicators of the work?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a key industry in Hong Kong. It is at the core of developing new quality productive forces and serves as a strategic driver for the future. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (the Blueprint) published by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau at the end of 2022 has proposed to focus on the development of AI industry, setting out clear strategic directions and detailed action plan for promoting the development of AI in Hong Kong. On this basis, the Government has been implementing a series of initiatives to support the development of AI in recent years, thereby realising the AI development strategy. Key initiatives in the past year are as follows.

In terms of infrastructural facilities and computing power, Cyberport has set up an Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC) and operated it under a market model. Its first-phase facility, which commenced operation in end-2024, provides computing power of around 1 300 petaflops (PFLOPS) and will be gradually ramped up to 3 000 PFLOPS within this year. With a view to encouraging the industry to make good use of the AISC's computing resources, the Government launched an Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme in October 2024, mainly to support local institutions, research and development (R&D) centres and enterprises in leveraging the AISC's computing power, etc.

In terms of R&D of innovation and technology (I&T) as well as talents, the AIR@InnoHK Research Cluster, which focuses on AI and robotics technologies, has set up 16 R&D laboratories, including the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) established in 2023 with the support of Government funding. HKGAI specialises in the R&D of generative AI (GenAI) technology, with the goal of building Hong Kong's self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including a local large language model (LLM) and a GenAI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this LLM. The application is currently at the R&D stage, mainly for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation, and summarisation of documents. In February 2025, HKGAI updated its "HKGAI V1" LLM based on DeepSeek technology, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance its document processing capabilities.

On the other hand, through different funding schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund, the Government also subsidises and encourages universities, local public research institutes (such as R&D centres) and private enterprises to conduct R&D in different technology areas, including projects that involve AI. The Government is also dedicated to enlarging the talent pool for I&T. For examples, the Research Talent Hub, the Technology Talent Admission Scheme and the Talent List are all aimed at nurturing and attracting tech talents, including AI specialists from home and elsewhere.

In respect of exploring application scenarios, in order to help HKGAI further train up and optimise its LLM and the application, the Government started using HKPilot from mid-2024. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has invited all bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to arrange government personnel of different grades to participate in the pilot programme, and will continue to co-ordinate B/Ds' participation in the pilot programme and expand it to cover more government personnel.

In addition, over a hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives will be rolled out from 2024 to 2025, of which nearly half involve the application of big data analytics and AI technology, including the application of AI and chatbot technologies to improve government hotline services; and adoption of AI and machine learning technologies to set up a Hong Kong coastal sea-level monitoring and prediction system.

Meanwhile, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) and Cyberport collaborated last year to launch a new GenAI Sandbox to foster innovation in the banking industry and unleash the potential of AI. The HKMA announced the first cohort of the GenAI Sandbox in December 2024. Through the Sandbox, participating banks and technology partners will explore in depth the capabilities of GenAI in enhancing service areas such as risk management, anti-fraud measures and customer experience. The HKMA will also publish

a practice guide by making reference to global development trend and experience in the Sandbox.

In terms of industry development, Cyberport and the Science Park are home to over 800 AI and big data companies in setting up R&D centres or expanding business, including top-notch AI companies nurtured locally and a number of leading companies from the Mainland and other regions. The Government will also set up a \$10 billion I&T Industry-Oriented Fund to form a fund-of-funds to channel more market capital to invest in specified emerging and future industries of strategic importance, including the AI and robotics field. On the other hand, the Government has also launched the Innovation and Technology Venture Fund enhanced scheme at the end of 2024 and invited applications as fund managers. Under the enhanced scheme, the Government will select suitable fund managers and redeploy at most \$1.5 billion to set up funds jointly with the market, on a matching basis, to invest in start-ups of strategic industries such as AI and data sciences, etc..

In respect of governance and regulation, the Government and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data have published the updated version of the Ethical AI Framework, the Policy Statement on Responsible Application of AI in the Financial Market, and the AI: Model Personal Data Protection Framework respectively for reference by the industry. The thematic web page on data governance launched by the DPO in December 2024 covers the Principles of Data Governance and the relevant strategy, guidelines and technical standards, etc. The Government has also commissioned the HKGAI to study and propose appropriate rules and guidelines on the accuracy, responsibility and information security of GenAI technology and its application.

The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative R&D and industrial applications of AI, facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes, and expanding application scenarios. The AIRDI will be one of the key initiatives in building the local AI ecosystem, complementing the above measures. The DPO is drawing up a detailed plan for AIRDI's establishment, including formulation of its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, and performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options being explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the HKGAI. Subject to the progress of the above tasks, we aim to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the earliest following funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB043

(Question Serial No. 0917)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will pay special attention to, among other matters, “continuing to actively promote Hong Kong’s new opportunities to the Mainland and overseas, including collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises (OASES) to attract representative innovation and technology enterprises or those with potential to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong and top-notch innovation and technology talents to bring with them their business or R&D outcomes to Hong Kong”. Please inform this Committee of the expenditure incurred in attracting high-potential and representative innovation and technology enterprises from the Mainland and overseas by, among others, the OASES, the Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport in the past year (2024-25), the efforts made and the effectiveness of such efforts; the number of enterprises attracted to Hong Kong; and the industries and the innovation and technology categories they belong to. Please provide a breakdown in a table.

In the current year (2025-26), what specific work plans and performance indicators does the Government have in respect of attracting strategic enterprises to Hong Kong, and what is the estimated expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau, in collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, has been reaching out to enterprises from the Mainland and overseas countries proactively and, as at February 2025, has liaised with more than 130 high-potential or representative innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises to set up or expand their businesses at locations such as the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport. These enterprises come from the Mainland and various

overseas countries or economies, encompassing industries of strategic importance including life and health technology, artificial intelligence and robotics, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technology. Given that these enterprises are with high potential or representative, we believe that their presence in Hong Kong will attract upstream, midstream and downstream partners from their industry chains, thereby promoting the vibrant development of our I&T ecosystem.

We will continue to reach out to I&T enterprises proactively to liaise with them and provide appropriate assistance, with a view to facilitating the setting up of businesses by Mainland and overseas enterprises in Hong Kong. We have all along been deploying existing manpower and resources to implement the relevant work. A breakdown of the expenditure involved for individual work items is not available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB044

(Question Serial No. 0918)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme, in 2024-25, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau enhanced the external promotion and publicity of the development of innovation and technology (I&T) and “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong, and the explanation of relevant policy measures, so as to tell good stories of I&T in Hong Kong together with other government bureaux and departments. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following: What was the expenditure on the related work in the past year? What was the work done? What were the outcomes? For 2025-26, what are the specific promotion and publicity plans? What is the estimated expenditure? How will the Government promote the development of I&T and “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong under the latest international situation?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) has been continuously promoting the development of innovation and technology (I&T) and “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong through various channels and platforms to tell the city’s good stories of I&T. In 2024-25, through a number of duty visits and participation in major I&T events at home and abroad such as VivaTech 2024 in Paris of France and the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona of Spain, the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry promoted the latest I&T development and opportunities in Hong Kong, and introduced the city’s unique role as a “super-connector” and a “super value-adder” under “One Country, Two Systems”, thereby strengthening our ties and co-operation with different countries and regions in the area of I&T and so on.

The ITIB also, through departments under its purview and related organisations, such as the Digital Policy Office, the Hong Kong Productivity Council, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and the Cyberport, organised and participated in various local and overseas technology events — including InnoEX, the World Internet Conference Asia-Pacific Summit, the 44th Gulf Information Technology Exhibition, the Hong Kong Investment Promotion Conference and other major promotional events and platforms — to showcase Hong Kong’s latest achievements and strengths in the development of I&T and “new industrialisation”, and further expand the markets and room for technological co-operation at home and overseas. Meanwhile, the ITIB promoted the development and policies of Hong Kong’s I&T and “new industrialisation” continuously through various channels such as social media, media interviews, etc.

Looking ahead to 2025-26, the ITIB will continue to work closely with various departments and organisations in organising and participating in a series of promotion activities for the promotion of Hong Kong’s I&T and “new industrialisation”. Key events include InnoEX and the World Intellectual Property Organization Global Innovation Index 2025 Science and Technology Cluster Launch to be held in Hong Kong later this year, as well as the Hannover Messe in Germany. We will continue to tell the good stories of Hong Kong’s I&T to the international community through various platforms and channels, with a view to accelerating the development of Hong Kong into an international I&T centre.

The ITIB takes forward the above work with existing manpower and resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB045

(Question Serial No. 0259)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to Programme (2), the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to press ahead with the establishment of the “Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance” (“the Alliance”) this year, pooling together talents and resources from various fields to establish a platform for the collaboration among the Government, industry, academia, research and development and investment sectors. What is the latest progress in promoting the establishment of the Alliance? What are the manpower and expenditure involved in the above preparatory work for this year? Will the estimate be increased in the coming year to promote the above work? If yes, what are the details? Will the Government consult the Alliance when drawing up the medium to long-term development plan for new industrialisation in Hong Kong? If yes, what are the details? What is the latest progress in drawing up the above medium to long-term development plan? What are the manpower and expenditure involved in the formulation work for the coming year?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 214)

Reply:

The Chief Executive proposed in the 2024 Policy Address that the Government would press ahead with the establishment of the “Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance” (the Alliance), pooling together talents and resources from various fields to drive new industrialisation and establish a platform for the collaboration among the Government, industry, academia, research and investment sectors. The Alliance was officially established on 18 March 2025, led by members from four sectors, namely the industry, academia, research and investment sectors. With the direction of “proactive promotion by the Government and joint action by stakeholders”, we expect that the Alliance will become an important platform for stakeholders of “new industrialisation” to exchange views and foster cooperation, thereby facilitating the establishment of a comprehensive innovation and technology (I&T) industry

ecosystem in Hong Kong and assisting in the promotion of “new industrialisation” development in Hong Kong including showcasing related achievements. The Alliance is a non-governmental organisation formed by the industry, with no funding provided by the Government. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau has pressed ahead with the establishment of the Alliance with its existing manpower and resources, and will provide support and assistance for its future development.

In addition, to further optimise the strategy and institutional set-up for the development of “new industrialisation” and implement the top-level design and development path of the Hong Kong I&T Development Blueprint, we will commence a study on the medium to long-term development of “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong to encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to upgrade and transform by making use of I&T and strengthen the support for relevant professional services, so as to expeditiously propel “new industrialisation” in a manner that manifests Hong Kong’s competitive edge. We will engage an experienced consultant with the necessary qualifications, knowledge, skills and requirements to conduct the study. The Government will require the consultant to proactively communicate with industry stakeholders, including the Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance, and take heed of their views in order to present a full picture of the status of development of Hong Kong’s industries, while giving due consideration to the needs of various stakeholders and the challenges they are facing. The Government will announce the findings of the study in due course and formulate plans to help promote “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong. We will commence the study on the medium to long-term development of “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong within this year, and will oversee the work of the consultant with the Bureau’s manpower and resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB046

(Question Serial No. 0261)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to Programme (2), the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to implement the “Global STEM Professorship Scheme” in the coming year to strengthen support for local universities to attract world-renowned STEM scholars to work in Hong Kong. How many professorships have been awarded under the scheme? What is the expenditure involved? Will the “Global STEM Professorship Scheme” be extended? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons? The Scheme has launched a sub-scheme for visiting professors on a pilot basis to strengthen support for universities and attract world-renowned STEM scholars to work in Hong Kong. How many scholars have been successfully admitted to Hong Kong through the Scheme? Will the pilot scheme be regularised? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 215)

Reply:

The Global STEM Professorship Scheme (the Scheme) supports local universities funded by the University Grants Committee in attracting research and development (R&D) talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. As at the end of February 2025, 66 selected scholars have taken up their posts in Hong Kong.

The Scheme provides remuneration subsidy to a university employing a selected scholar, which is capped at 50% of the actual remuneration offered by the university and subject to an annual ceiling of \$1 million for each scholar, over a period of up to 5 years. In addition, under the Scheme, a selected scholar can receive subsidy from the Research Talent Hub for recruiting up to 4 research team members to assist in his/her R&D work over a period of up to 3 years. If needed, a selected scholar may apply for subsidy from The Hong Kong Jockey

Club Charities Trust for setting up a laboratory. The Scheme was estimated to cost \$2 billion. As at the end of February this year, about \$1.7 billion has been committed.

Meanwhile, taking into account the views of stakeholders, the Government launched the Sub-scheme for Visiting Professors on a pilot basis in 2024, providing universities with funding for attracting more eminent scholars in STEM disciplines to come to Hong Kong as Visiting Professors. As at the end of February 2025, 4 selected scholars have taken up their posts in Hong Kong. The Government will maintain close liaison with the universities and review the implementation as and when appropriate.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB047

(Question Serial No. 0263)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to Programme (2), the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to take forward the planning of the development of new sites earmarked for innovation and technology in the coming year. Will the Government consider enhancing the positioning of industry in the development plan for the Northern Metropolis by renaming the “Innovation and Technology Zone” as “Innovation, Technology and Industry Zone”, expanding its area, and consolidating and integrating sites earmarked for industrial purposes in other zones to build “a hub for industries where Hong Kong enjoys advantages”? Will the Bureau concurrently consider introducing new initiatives to attract local businesses and businessmen returning to Hong Kong, as well as Mainland and overseas leading enterprises to the zone for fostering the robust growth of the manufacturing sector in Hong Kong? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 220)

Reply:

Upon co-ordination of the information provided by the Development Bureau, the consolidated reply concerning each part of the question is as follows:

With a view to supporting the development of innovation and technology (I&T) and new industrialisation, the Government has been proactively identifying land to provide the industry with the necessary space for its development. The Northern Metropolis will provide a large amount of land for the development of I&T and other industries, thereby injecting new impetus into Hong Kong's economy. It will help Hong Kong develop into an international I&T centre under the new industry pattern of “South-North dual engine (finance - I&T)”.

Industry is an essential component of and an important support to a comprehensive I&T ecosystem. The Government has been adopting a proactive mindset to facilitate industry development and promote commercialisation of research and development (R&D) outcomes through market forces. At the same time, the Government fully leverages on Hong Kong's advantages as an international city to attract I&T enterprises from the Mainland and overseas, especially those with a competitive edge and strategic significance, to set up businesses in Hong Kong in order to accelerate the overall development of the local I&T industry.

According to the Northern Metropolis Action Agenda published by the Development Bureau in end-2023, the Northern Metropolis can be divided into four major zones, of which the San Tin Technopole including the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park) and the land around San Tin area fall within the I&T zone of the Northern Metropolis. With the supply of I&T land in the I&T zone of the Northern Metropolis, we hope to provide I&T enterprises with strategic significance, in particular those from the Mainland and overseas intending to set up businesses in Hong Kong, with an option of high-quality I&T site to establish R&D and design centres, pilot production bases and/or mass production facilities for related industries, thereby forming a vibrant I&T industry chain, providing solid support for accelerating the development of new quality productive forces and achieving new industrialisation in Hong Kong. In fact, the Government has been taking into account industry development when taking forward the development of the I&T zone in the development planning of the Northern Metropolis.

The Hong Kong Park

The Hong Kong Park, with about 87 hectares, is developed in 2 phases from west to east, with Batch 1 of Phase 1 comprising 8 buildings. With the first 3 buildings are about to complete, the Park will officially enter into its operational phase later this year. The construction of the other 5 buildings is in full swing and is expected to be completed progressively from 2027 onwards. As for the remaining sites of Phase 1, we will identify suitable land parcels for invitation of private development proposals this year, with a view to taking forward the development of the Park with enhanced speed and quantity through collaboration between the Government and the market.

To accelerate the development of Hong Kong Park, \$3.7 billion has been earmarked in the 2025-26 Budget to expedite the completion of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 of the Park.

San Tin area in the San Tin Technopole

In addition to the Hong Kong Park, around 210 hectares of new I&T land will be provided in San Tin area in the San Tin Technopole, which will serve as the strategic key for the I&T industry planning and the base for developing new quality productive forces of Hong Kong in the future. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) is conducting a consultancy study on the development plan of the I&T industries for the land thereat, including basic planning in respect of industry clusters, directions of focused activities and supporting facilities which will form the basis for subsequent development. The result of the study is expected to be announced in 2025. The new I&T sites in the San Tin area will be available to the market in batches. The Government is targeting to deliver about 20

hectares of land in phases, beginning in 2026-27, for development and operation by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC). The HKSTPC has commissioned a consultant to conduct a master planning study on the I & T sites for proposing detailed development concepts and options by analysing the development opportunities and constraints. The study is expected to be completed in the third quarter of this year.

On promoting industrial development, ITIB, in collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, has been reaching out to enterprises from the Mainland and overseas countries proactively. As at February 2025, we have liaised with more than 130 high-potential or representative I&T enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. These enterprises come from the Mainland as well as various overseas countries or economies, encompassing industries with strategic importance including life and health technology, artificial intelligence and robotics, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies. Given that these enterprises are with high potential or representative, we believe that the presence of these enterprises in Hong Kong will attract upstream, midstream and downstream partners from their industry chains, thereby promoting the vibrant development of our I&T ecosystem. ITIB will continue to reach out to I&T enterprises proactively to liaise with them and provide appropriate assistance, with a view to facilitating the setting up of businesses by Mainland and overseas enterprises in Hong Kong, including setting up operations in the Northern Metropolis.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB048

(Question Serial No. 0267)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to Programme 2, the Bureau will continue to take forward the development of the Hong Kong Park (the Park) of the Hetao Co-operation Zone. The Government plans to amend the Frontier Closed Area (Permission to Enter) Notice (Cap. 245H) to allow persons commuting daily to and from the Park for work to take shuttle buses arranged by the Park company, or public transport, for the journey at the MTR Lok Ma Chau Station without the need of holding a Closed Area Permit. However, due to regulatory constraints, local citizens are unable to directly access the Park from the MTR Lok Ma Chau Station. Will the Bureau consider lifting the restriction such that all local visitors can access the Park from the MTR Lok Ma Chau Station without holding a Closed Area Permit? If so, what are the details; when will the study be completed; what are the manpower and expenditure involved? If not, what is the reason?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 219)

Reply:

To tie in with the operation of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park), the Government has enhanced the surrounding road network. The Western Connection Road, connecting the Hong Kong Park to the Fanling/San Tin Highway, commenced operation in October 2024. Moreover, the Civil Engineering and Development Department is planning an Eastern Connection Road in the eastern part of the Hong Kong Park to connect with the road network of the Kwu Tung North New Development Area. As for rail transport, the Hong Kong Park is accessible from the MTR Sheung Shui Station, MTR Yuen Long Station, and the future MTR Kwu Tung Station.

As part of the transportation facilities, a connecting road linking up the MTR Lok Ma Chau Station with the Hong Kong Park is being constructed. The construction is expected to be completed later this year. Given that the MTR Lok Ma Chau Station and part of the connecting road are located within the Frontier Closed Area, to tie in with the initial operation of the Hong Kong Park, we have proposed legislative amendments to cater for the frequent commuting needs of personnel who have to travel to and from the Hong Kong Park for work on a daily basis. They will be allowed to travel to and from the Hong Kong Park via the MTR Lok Ma Chau Station after pre-registration with the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park Limited. The top priority at present is to ensure the orderly opening of the Hong Kong Park in the second half of this year. We will make arrangements to open to visitors in a progressive and orderly manner about six months after the commencement of operation of the Hong Kong Park and when everything runs smoothly.

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to take forward the development of the Hong Kong Park with existing manpower and resources. Please refer to the Estimates of “Head 135—Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau” for details.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB049

(Question Serial No. 0271)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to Programme (2), one of the main responsibilities of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is to promote “new industrialisation” through the development of smart production and industries of strategic importance. “Pilot test”, a segment in the middle of transformation of technological outcomes, is a shortcut for driving and enhancing high quality development by technology. Will the Government make reference to the successful experience of Shenzhen and Chengdu in setting up “Pilot Fund” to consider establishing a Hong Kong Special Fund for Pilot Innovation, so as to provide funding support for tertiary institutions, public research institutions, chambers of commerce, and industry organisations, etc., in setting up pilot innovation studios, pilot platforms for common technologies, and pilot production lines? If yes, what are the details (such as the planned scale of the fund, and its expected launch date)? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 223)

Reply:

To realise Hong Kong’s vision of becoming an international innovation and technology (I&T) centre, the Government promulgated the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint in 2022, setting out 4 major development directions, including (a) enhancing the I&T ecosystem and promoting “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong; (b) enlarging the I&T talent pool to create strong impetus for growth; (c) promoting digital economy development and developing Hong Kong into a smart city; and (d) proactively integrating into the overall development of the country and consolidating our role as a bridge connecting the Mainland and the world.

In respect of enhancing the I&T ecosystem and promoting “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong, we need to develop a comprehensive I&T ecological chain encompassing the upstream,

midstream and downstream sectors. Along the chain, transformation and commercialisation of upstream research and development (R&D) outcomes will take place in the midstream. R&D products will go through testing and validation at pilot lines before mass production, which will stimulate industry development in the downstream, and in turn generate demands and resources for R&D to support development in the upstream and midstream sectors. Thus, a healthy cycle will be created with various complementary sectors.

The Government is actively taking forward various initiatives to speed up commercialisation and industrialisation of R&D outcomes:

- (a) The Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI), established in September 2024, is committed to spearheading collaboration among universities, R&D centres and the industry on the R&D of third-generation semiconductor (Silicon Carbide and Gallium Nitride) core technology. It leverages the well-developed manufacturing industry chain and enormous market in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and promotes the “1 to N” transformation of R&D outcomes and industry development. The MRDI will set up 2 pilot lines to assist start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises in addressing their pain points and conducting trial runs with a view to industrialising their R&D outcomes. The 2 pilot lines will be set up at the Microelectronics Centre in Yuen Long this year and start operation in 2026;
- (b) The Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) provides funding, on a matching basis, to research teams in universities to transform and realise R&D outcomes and initiate the commercialisation process. Each approved project will receive funding support ranging from \$10 million to \$100 million. The funding scope includes the manpower, instruments and equipment and other related expenses (e.g. fees for using a pilot test centre, product testing fees, etc.) incurred by the research teams in universities for the R&D work to transform R&D outcomes/the production of prototypes/the manufacture of products;
- (c) The “New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme” provides funding, on a matching basis, for enterprises in industries of strategic importance (i.e. life and health technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies) to set up new smart production facilities (including pilot-related production facilities) in Hong Kong. Each enterprise may receive funding support of up to \$200 million in total;
- (d) The Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF), which is in preparation for establishment, will channel more market capital to invest in emerging and future industries of strategic importance. The ITIF will cover 5 thematic areas, namely life and health technology; AI and robotics; semi-conductors and smart devices; digitalisation, upgrading and transformation; as well as future and sustainable development. According to the current plan, 1 or more sub-fund(s) will be set up under each area, with fund managers responsible for matters such as fundraising, investment and daily operation. We propose stipulating investment requirements for each fund manager, one of which involves requiring a certain percentage of the fund size to be allocated for the establishment and operation of production and manufacturing bases in Hong Kong (covering pilot production lines) during the investment period;

- (e) The “Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities” provides funding to 6 designated universities to support their teams in starting technology businesses and commercialising their R&D results. The funding scope covers expenditure on R&D activities and pilot manufacturing. Meanwhile, additional annual funding is provided to the Technology Transfer Office of each designated university, with a view to enhancing their technology transfer capabilities;
- (f) The “Public Sector Trial Scheme” provides funding to R&D projects and technology companies funded under the Innovation and Technology Fund to produce prototypes/samples of their R&D outcomes for trials in the public sector (including government departments), with a view to realising and commercialising R&D outcomes;
- (g) The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) assists start-ups in establishing connection with the industry through leveraging its incubation experience and investment/business networks, with a view to promoting technology transfer and commercialisation of R&D outcomes. HKSTPC also actively connects with the industry to facilitate collaboration between park companies and the local trade and industry; and
- (h) Measures are put in place to attract potential and representative I&T enterprises from overseas and the Mainland to set up or expand businesses in Hong Kong, including encouraging those enterprises to invest in the setting up of R&D centres and pilot transformation bases.

Apart from the abovementioned initiatives, the Government will launch the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) this year to provide local manufacturing enterprises with funding on a 1 (Government) : 2 (Company) matching basis. The funding scope will cover the consultancy fees for the relevant enterprises to formulate smart production strategies, the costs arising from the procurement and the integration of smart technologies into existing production lines, as well as the relevant training and set-up expenses. If pilot line service is involved in the process of upgrade and transformation, the associated costs will also be covered.

We will keep the actual situation under review and formulate appropriate measures where necessary, with a view to accelerating commercialisation and industrialisation of R&D outcomes.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB050

(Question Serial No. 2487)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

This year's Budget has proposed many forward-looking measures on innovation and technology (I&T) development, including setting aside \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence (AI) Research and Development Institute and promoting the development of emerging industries such as AI, life sciences and green technology. However, many places in the world have already developed mature technologies for operating supercomputing centres, such as Deepseek, OpenAI and Google, while Hong Kong is falling behind on this front. Meanwhile, Hong Kong is facing bottlenecks in terms of talent, land and data application in I&T development. The Government must put more efforts on nurturing talent, consolidating data and data interchange. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. The land prices, construction costs and electricity charges in Hong Kong have always been high. In particular, the daily operation of the Supercomputing Centre will incur very high electricity charges as Hong Kong is situated at lower latitudes and the operation of the Supercomputing Centre is uneconomical in terms of power usage effectiveness. Will the Government consider adopting a public-private partnership approach or a "Build-Operate-Transfer" approach to operate the Supercomputing Centre after its establishment? Such practice will not only effectively alleviate the financial burden on the Government, but also encourage and support the active participation of commercial organisations and private enterprises in the establishment of a supercomputing centre with high computing power.
2. A local power company has indicated that the electricity demand of data centres accounts for 5.7% of Hong Kong's business electricity demand, reflecting the growing demand from data centres or supercomputing centres. Will the Government consider importing more clean energy through co-operation with the Mainland, so as to enable the Government to further reduce the high costs incurred in developing the Supercomputing Centre? In addition, will the Government include in its planning a

detailed study with the power company to ensure that while expanding the power grid in the Northern Metropolis in the future, consideration will be given to guaranteeing that the grid can meet the electricity demands from AI and supercomputing centres?

3. Many places in the Mainland have also started making great efforts to develop these technologies. However, even when we have established the Supercomputing Centre in Hong Kong, there are no corresponding policies on achieving cross-regional joint technology research, application innovation and resources complementarity with the Mainland. Will the Government consider studying the matter with relevant Mainland departments in the future to achieve cross-provincial data interflow through opening up cross-regional resources complementarity, with a view to revitalising the local economy through the enhancement of data infrastructure?
4. Since the Supercomputing Centre will run large-scale models that rely on massive database information, there may be two major hidden risks: leakage of personal data and commercial secrets as well as provision of false information. Will the Government review existing legislation to avoid the potential legal risks while engaging a consultancy to conduct a feasibility study on the development of the Supercomputing Centre?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

1. The first-phase facility of the Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC), which was established and run under a market model by Cyberport, commenced operation in end-2024, providing computing power of approximately 1 300 petaflops (PFLOPS), to be ramped up to 3 000 PFLOPS progressively this year. To encourage the industry to utilise the AISC's computing resources, the Government launched the Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme in October 2024, mainly to subsidise local institutions, research and development centres, enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing power of the AISC to foster the development of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) ecosystem. With the gradual commencement of various projects, the current utilisation rate of the AISC amounts to over 60% of the computing power in service.
2. According to the information provided by the Environment and Ecology Bureau, the Government has set "net-zero electricity generation" as one of the four major decarbonisation strategies in Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 promulgated in 2021. Under the overall target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, we will progressively increase the use of zero-carbon energy for electricity generation taking into account four important factors, i.e. safety, reliability, affordability and environmental performance. In this connection, the Government will continue to promote the development of renewable energy and, at the same time, explore ways to enhance regional co-operation and identify sources of zero-carbon energy in neighbouring regions, so as to rely less on fossil fuel in electricity generation, and thereby increasing the share of zero-carbon energy in the fuel mix for electricity generation to around 60-70%. Under the Scheme of Control Agreements entered into between the two power companies and the Government, the power companies are

obliged to contribute to the development of Hong Kong by providing, operating and maintaining sufficient electricity related-facilities and supplying electricity to meet demand. In its Development Plan covering the period from 2018 to 2023, the CLP Power Hong Kong Limited has made plans for meeting the electricity demand in the Northern Metropolis (NM) and, subject to the development situation of the NM, will take forward the projects approved under its 2024-2028 Development Plan, in order to cater for the additional demand for electricity in future.

In establishing the AISC, Cyberport endeavours to adopt appropriate energy-saving measures, with a view to reducing the burden on the environment and lowering the operating costs. These include opting for energy-efficient electronic equipment such as servers, storage and network equipment as far as possible, as well as installing a smart energy management system to real-time monitor energy consumption.

3. Data is the key driver for the development of innovation & technology (I&T) and digital economy in Hong Kong. Hong Kong possesses robust telecommunications infrastructure, reliable power supply, pro-business environment, effective protection of personal data and information security, as well as knowledgeable professionals. Under “One Country, Two Systems”, Hong Kong is endowed with the distinctive advantages of covering both Mainland and international data, making it an ideal location for enterprises for developing data centres. The AISC will strengthen Hong Kong’s digital infrastructure to facilitate data-driven I&T development and cross-boundary co-operation on digital innovation.

Moreover, to promote cross-boundary data flow, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) and the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) entered into the “Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitating Cross-boundary Data Flow Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area” in June 2023 that provides clear directions on fostering collaboration on facilitating cross-boundary data flow in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) under the national management framework on safeguarding the security of cross-boundary data. The co-operation efforts help facilitate the safe and orderly data flow from the Mainland to Hong Kong. Besides, the ITIB and the CAC jointly announced the facilitation measure on the “Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)” (the GBA Standard Contract) in December 2023 to facilitate and streamline the arrangements for the cross-boundary flow of personal information from the Mainland cities in the GBA to Hong Kong. With the regularisation of the implementation of the facilitation measure on the GBA Standard Contract in November 2024, all sectors in Hong Kong can now adopt the GBA Standard Contract on a voluntary basis for cross-boundary flow of personal information. The measure is conducive to promoting more cross-boundary services to benefit the public and businesses while facilitating data flow throughout the GBA.

At the same time, the ITIB has also been actively working with relevant ministries to explore measures to facilitate convenient cross-boundary flow of innovation elements in Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone, including exploring arrangements to expand cross-boundary research data flow from the Mainland to the Hong Kong Park in the Loop, on the premise of complying with national data security laws and regulations and maintaining risk controllability.

4. The operation and use of the AISC (including its users) shall comply with all applicable laws, including the requirements of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. Cyberport is committed to safeguarding the data and cyber security of the AISC. The AI Subsidy Scheme has reserved funding to strengthen cyber and data security of the AISC. Cyberport has made use of the funding to introduce multi-layered network security protection measures, and continues to conduct data protection and detection, as well as regular third-party independent security risk assessment and audit, etc. The relevant Information Security Management System is also in compliance with the international standards and requirements for risk management and cyber resilience.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB051

(Question Serial No. 2497)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Innovation and technology (I&T) are the new driving force for economic and social development. It is mentioned in the Budget the Government will continue its efforts to promote I&T development by setting up a \$10 billion I&T Industry-Oriented Fund to channel more market capital to invest in emerging and future industries of strategic importance, and earmarking \$3.7 billion to expedite the provision of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 development of the Hong Kong Park in the Loop, \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute, and \$100 million for launching the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) this year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Will the Government consider establishing a Hong Kong I&T Award as the I&T Oscar Award exclusive for Hong Kong to further propel the development of I&T industry in Hong Kong? It is proposed that a \$10 million cash award be given out to the first prize winner annually in recognition of the outstanding achievements of enterprises and talent in the area of I&T development, with focus on health technology, green technology and digital transformation. This initiative can provide incentives to encourage innovative ideas and experimental practices in Hong Kong, and also attract top-notch technology talent around the world to come to Hong Kong for development, thereby expanding Hong Kong's market share in the global I&T arena. Will the Government devise a similar scheme by making reference to the successful experience of the A*STAR Award Scheme of Singapore and the German Innovation Award?
2. Apart from establishing the abovementioned award, will the Government consider introducing more complementary measures, such as the provision of tax concessions, housing allowance and education support for children, so as to attract the world's top technology talent to settle and work in Hong Kong? Such measures will be conducive to building a more competitive I&T ecosystem in Hong Kong.

3. The Hong Kong Park in the Loop is considered as an important base for Hong Kong's I&T development. How will the Government ensure that the long-term planning for the Hong Kong Park would create a synergistic effect on I&T development across Hong Kong and other cities in the Greater Bay Area? Will the Government consider collaborating with neighbouring cities such as Shenzhen to establish a cross-regional I&T cooperation mechanism?
4. Given that the Government has set aside \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute to facilitate upstream research and development (R&D) as well as midstream and downstream transformation and application of R&D outcomes, what are the details of the allocation of the \$1 billion? What are the detailed functions of the institute? Is promoting the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to different sectors of the community one of its functions? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the plans of the Government for promoting the use of AI to different sectors of the community?
5. Further to the above, does the Government have any plan to attract capital from enterprises or non-private sources for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

- 1 and 2. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau promulgated the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (I&T Blueprint) in 2022, putting forward different measures to incentivise technology and innovation research, and support commercialisation of research and development (R&D) outcomes. For example, the *InnoHK* research clusters, the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme and the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme have been launched, with a view to developing Hong Kong into an international I&T centre on all fronts, promoting Hong Kong's high quality economic development and accelerating its new quality productive forces.

On the basis of the I&T Blueprint, we have been implementing various funding schemes and policy measures to attract I&T talents to Hong Kong in order to foster the vibrant development of Hong Kong's I&T ecosystem. The Technology Talent Admission Scheme provides a fast track arrangement for eligible companies to admit Mainland and overseas technology talents to undertake R&D work in Hong Kong. Besides, the Government has included in the Talent List a number of professions with local manpower shortage in the I&T segment to facilitate the industry in the admission of technology talents through relevant admission schemes. Furthermore, different I&T projects have facilitated the pooling of I&T talents in Hong Kong. For instance, the *InnoHK* research clusters have pooled together some 2 500 top-notch researchers from around the world to conduct world-class and impactful collaborative scientific researches.

We will continue to follow through the direction of “promoting technology with talent, leading industries with technology, and attracting talent with industries” in developing Hong Kong into an international I&T centre. We will provide more quality jobs and development opportunities for I&T talents in Hong Kong and for those coming to Hong Kong, thereby pooling I&T talents from around the globe. To increase the attractiveness for talents to stay in Hong Kong, we will also explore the possibility of increasing the planning flexibility of the I&T land of the San Tin Technopole (including the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Hetao area) to dovetail with the development of the area by providing more accommodation facilities for I&T talents.

In addition, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) has been organising various activities (such as InnoCarnival and Reception for I&T Awards in recognition of the outstanding R&D achievements of local I&T talents and teams) to strengthen the public’s I&T knowledge and enhance their interest in I&T, with a view to cultivating an I&T culture in the community. The ITC is also responsible for the nomination of the State Technological Invention Award and the State Scientific and Technological Progress Award in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, so that individuals and organisations with outstanding contribution to the development of science and technology can have the opportunity to be recognised by the Country. In the past year, representatives from Hong Kong have stood out in a number of renowned I&T competitions or exhibitions globally and in the Mainland, including the Edison Awards 2024, the 2023 R&D 100 Awards and the 49th International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva. The Government will continue to co-operate fully with all sectors in bolstering I&T development in Hong Kong, and support the I&T industry in working towards greater success in the future. The Government has no plan at this stage to establish other I&T-related awards.

3. Apart from indicating support for Hong Kong’s development into an international I&T centre, the 14th Five-Year Plan has explicitly included the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Loop as one of the four major platforms of co-operation in the Greater Bay Area. According to the Development Outline for the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (Development Outline) released on 20 November 2024, Phase 1 of the Hong Kong Park in the Loop will be completed by 2030 in an orderly manner, while a comprehensive development pattern of the Hong Kong Park in the Loop will be formed by 2035. The Development Outline also proposes innovative policies to facilitate the flow of personnel, materials, capital and data between the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park, with a view to developing the Co-operation Zone into a crucial source of new quality productive forces for our country.
- 4 and 5. The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong’s innovative R&D and industrial applications of artificial intelligence, facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes,

and expanding application scenarios. The Digital Policy Office is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB052

(Question Serial No. 2499)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Earlier on, home-developed submersible *Jiaolong* visited Hong Kong, which provided a good opportunity for us to understand the development of ocean science in our country. The scientific research on deep-sea exploration has become an important field in global technological development in recent years. In addition to its profound impact on resource development, environmental protection and national security, it is also an important symbol to embody the national technological strength and international competitiveness. In the 14th Five-Year Plan, our country clearly proposed to accelerate marine sci-tech innovation and promote the development of deep-sea exploration technology. As part of our country with a pool of outstanding research talent and the advantages as an international city, Hong Kong should play a greater role in this area. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Does the Government have any plans to engage in the scientific research work on deep-sea exploration, and build Hong Kong as the gateway for our country to stride towards international deep-sea research?
2. If there are such plans, how will the Government provide resources and support, such as specific measures in terms of investment, development of scientific research facilities and nurturing of talent? If there are no such plans, will the Government take forward such scientific research plans in future?
3. In the course of promoting deep-sea scientific research, how will the Government strengthen collaboration with the Mainland and international research institutes to enhance the influence and contribution of Hong Kong in this field?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Government has been implementing various initiatives to promote scientific research. For instance, the Innovation and Technology Commission has been subsidising applied research and development (R&D) projects on different technology areas, including R&D projects associated with marine technology, through the funding schemes on supporting R&D under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF).

In addition, there are 16 State Key Laboratories in Hong Kong, one of which is the State Key Laboratory of Marine Pollution (SKLMP). Team members of the SKLMP are dedicated to collaborating with research teams in the Mainland and other regions to conduct innovative research, particularly in areas including pollution monitoring and control, environmental risk assessment, ecosystem responses to stressors, and ecological restoration, contributing to the protection and management of the marine environment. Their research also generates positive societal impact. We will also continue to encourage various public R&D centres to engage in exchanges with cities both domestically and internationally with a view to promoting the development of different technology disciplines (including marine technology), and to participate in technological exchanges and cooperative projects with partners from the Mainland and overseas, and take part in or organise seminars and technology exhibitions with a view to enhancing Hong Kong's influence and contribution in different technological fields.

Besides, Artificial Intelligence (AI), as an important driver of the new revolutionary reform of industries, has the potential for application to the R&D work related to the conservation of the marine ecosystem, etc. The first-phase facility of Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC) has already commenced operation in end-2024, with computing power to be ramped up to 3 000 petaflops within this year. The Government has also launched the \$3 billion AI Subsidy Scheme mainly to subsidise local universities, R&D institutes and enterprises to leverage the AISC's computing power. Furthermore, to spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative R&D as well as industry application of AI, the 2025-26 Budget has announced that \$1 billion was earmarked for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute. The above-mentioned AI-related initiatives could lend support to the promotion of deep sea scientific research.

To strengthen local basic research on frontier technologies, we will seek funding approval from the Legislative Council this year to launch a \$3 billion Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme to subsidise local subsidised universities, on a matching basis, to procure relevant equipment and conduct frontier technology basic research projects led by international top-notch talents, including the seven frontier technology fields identified by the National 14th Five-Year Plan (e.g. scientific research areas on deep sea and the polar regions).

The Government has also been pooling together a talent pool of innovation and technology professionals with a multi-pronged approach through various initiatives, including subsidising qualified organisations and enterprises to engage university graduates in R&D work through the Research Talent Hub under the ITF.

End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB053

(Question Serial No. 2501)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government has committed substantial resources to promoting the development of innovation and technology (I&T), which is crucial for Hong Kong's economic restructuring and enhancement of competitiveness in the long run. However, I&T investments are characterised by high risk and high cost. How to ensure the effective use of public resources and avoid the wastage of fiscal resources is an issue that warrants our careful consideration. In this regard, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Will the Government consider making reference to the successful experience of places like Shanghai and Jiangsu in adopting a "support-cum-investment" model in funding I&T projects, i.e. the Government's participation in project investment in the form of shareholding? In this way, the Government can not only gain returns through dividends and capital appreciation when the enterprises become a going concern but also share the risks with enterprises, thus avoiding situations whereby the Government has to bear losses unilaterally. Can this model be piloted in Hong Kong's I&T funding schemes?
2. Under the model of Government shareholding, how can we ensure that enterprises and the Government will jointly share the risks and avoid enterprises' over-reliance on Government funding? Will the Government consider establishing a corresponding regulatory mechanism to oversee the business activities of enterprises' and ensure the transparency and accountability of their operations through exercising its rights and responsibilities as a shareholder, so as to better safeguard public interests?
3. Regarding the existing I&T funding schemes, how does the Government evaluate the effectiveness of the funded projects and ensure the proper use of resources? Will consideration be given to introducing more market-oriented mechanisms, such as requiring the funded enterprises to achieve specific milestones before obtaining subsequent funding, in order to enhance the effectiveness and accountability of the funding schemes?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

1. & 2. The Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) was established in 1999 to finance projects that contribute to the promotion of innovation and technology (I&T) upgrading in manufacturing and service industries, thereby enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of Hong Kong to support its long-term economic development. In response to the changes in Hong Kong's I&T ecology and social development, the ITF has established different schemes, each set up with its own objective, scope and modus operandi. Most of them are funding schemes. In general, funding will be disbursed only when the project applicant has met the requirements of the relevant funding scheme, and has fulfilled the undertakings or reached the milestones proposed at the time of application, and there is no recoupment of the grants disbursed. In addition, under the ITF, the Innovation and Technology Venture Fund (ITVF) of an investment nature has been set up, while preparation is underway for setting up the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF).

Innovation and Technology Venture Fund

The Government set up a \$2 billion ITVF in 2017 with a view to encouraging more venture capital (VC) funds to co-invest in local I&T start-ups. Under the co-investment model of the ITVF, the Government would invest with VC funds selected as co-investment partners (CPs) at a matching ratio of approximately 1 (Government): 2 (CPs) to ensure that the CPs would exercise fiscal prudence.

In general, the CPs would be responsible for identifying and conducting commercial and legal due diligence on the potential investee companies. The CPs, in addition to looking after the investment from a business perspective, should also play a role in assisting the investee companies to grow and expand their business. The CPs should provide timely updates on the investee companies to the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC).

The Government announced the launch of the ITVF enhanced scheme in end-2024 by redeploying at most \$1.5 billion to set up funds jointly with the market, on a matching basis, to invest in start-ups of strategic industries. Under the ITVF enhanced scheme, each of the selected fund managers shall act as General Partners (GPs) of the funds and are responsible for setting up limited partnership funds in Hong Kong, with a minimum fund size of \$600 million (including the Government's contribution), raising non-Government capital of not less than \$450 million for the fund, managing the day-to-day operations of the fund, investing in target start-ups in accordance with the investment mandate, providing support to the investee start-ups and producing regular reports.

We will review regularly the operation of the ITVF and the ITVF enhanced scheme to ensure that funding is properly disbursed and spent, and seek advice from the ITVF Advisory Committee where appropriate. Proper monitoring and review mechanisms would be put in place, for example, by setting out the responsibilities

and obligations of CPs and fund managers in agreements. These agreements would also include suitable terms and conditions to protect the interest of the Government. Also, the CPs and fund managers would also be required to submit regular reports.

Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund

The Government is preparing to set up the ITIF to channel more market capital to invest in emerging and future industries of strategic importance, with a view to building up the I&T industry ecosystem in a systematic manner. According to the current plan, the ITIF will cover five thematic areas, with one or more sub-fund(s) set up under each area. The Government will participate as a Limited Partner (LP) of the sub-funds. Fund managers selected through an open application will become GPs of the sub-funds. They shall be responsible for setting up the sub-funds in the form of a limited partnership fund, raising market capital (including from strategic investors and others) for the sub-funds, managing the daily operation of the sub-funds and investing in suitable projects in accordance with the investment framework.

The ITIF will be based on the market-oriented operation, including areas such as monitoring the performance of fund managers. According to the initial proposal, we will set up a Steering Committee for the ITIF, comprising representatives from the Government and industries, to advise the Government on fund management, investment framework, selection of fund managers, monitoring and review matters, etc. The Government, alongside other LPs, will continuously monitor the performance of fund managers and request for regular reporting. The Government is currently finalising the details of the ITIF in the light of the views collected, and strives to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the middle of this year, with a view to commencing the operation of the ITIF in 2026-27.

3. ITC has put in place a robust control mechanism for the various funding schemes under the ITF, and regularly reviews the operation of the various schemes to ensure that funding is properly disbursed and used. Enhancement measures are introduced in a timely manner to meet the development and needs of the society. ITC has also set fair and reasonable assessment criteria for the funding schemes and followed such criteria during assessment. In brief, all applications are vetted by professional panels (which generally include the industries and independent members) according to the assessment framework of the relevant funding scheme. Each scheme has its own guidelines on the setting of requirements, for instance, on the usage of ITF funding, procurement arrangements, reporting and auditing, disbursement of grants and return of residual funds, etc.

ITC conducts progress meetings/site visits with the project teams for some funding schemes to verify the project progress and usage of funds as set out in the project reports. Funds will be disbursed only if the project is able to meet pre-set milestones. In case of non-compliance with the funding guidelines or where project progress is unsatisfactory, ITC may withhold the disbursement of funds.

ITC will continue to enforce the control mechanism, review and make necessary enhancements as appropriate.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB054

(Question Serial No. 2504)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The development of innovation and technology (I&T) in Hong Kong requires the strong support of the Government. One of the keys is to ensure the realisation and commercialisation of local research and development (R&D) outcomes. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Will the Government consider adopting the suggestion on requiring all bureaux and their departments to procure at least 4 innovative R&D outcomes of Hong Kong annually, so as to support local I&T development through such a concrete action? Can this measure be included as part of a pilot scheme to increase the ratio of local R&D expenditure to the local Gross Domestic Product shortly?
2. How will the Government ensure that the R&D outcomes procured can be successfully delivered and form a commercial closed loop, thereby supporting enterprises to develop an independent "blood-making function"? Will the Government consider putting in place a dedicated support mechanism, such as a technology transformation platform or a subsidy for marketing activities, with a view to assisting enterprises in transforming R&D outcomes into market competitiveness?
3. In the implementation of this procurement scheme, how will the Government ensure transparency and fairness in the procurement process and prevent the problems of uneven distribution of resources or low executive efficiency? Will the Government consider introducing a third-party evaluation mechanism to ensure that the procured outcomes can meet practical needs and have market potential?
4. In the procurement of local R&D outcomes, how will the bureaux ensure inter-departmental collaboration and integration of resources? Will the Government consider setting up an inter-departmental working group to co-ordinate the relevant

procurement work and formulate clear key performance indicators (KPIs) for evaluating the effectiveness of the scheme?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

Having consulted the Financial Services and Treasury Bureau (FSTB) and Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), the consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

According to FSTB, Hong Kong is an international city and is one of the signatories to the Agreement on Government Procurement of the World Trade Organization. Therefore, in the course of procurement, the Government should ensure that local and non-local suppliers and contractors, regardless of their scale, can participate in bidding through open, fair and competitive procedures to obtain goods and services at the best value for money. Bureaux and departments have always welcomed local enterprises to participate in bidding.

Without compromising the aforementioned government procurement principles, the Government has been actively introducing and applying innovation and technology (I&T) products and services from local start-ups with a view to playing a leading role. The major measures in recent years include the followings:

- (a) The Public Sector Trial Scheme under the Innovation and Technology Fund provides eligible local companies/organisations with funding support for the production of prototypes or samples and conduct of trials of research and development outcomes in the public sector (including Government departments);
- (b) The Smart Government Innovation Lab under the Digital Policy Office promotes and invites industry players to assist government departments in their adoption of innovation and technology solutions, with a view to enhancing public services and city management, while creating more business opportunities for local start-ups as well as small and medium-sized enterprises; and
- (c) The E&M InnoPortal of EMSD lists the technological needs of government departments, the public sector and electrical and mechanical trades. Organisations such as start-ups and academic institutions can propose I&T solutions via the portal for matching.

The Government will strive to create conditions for application of products of local scientific researches as far as practicable and encourage the market to procure relevant products to demonstrate the industry's support.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB055

(Question Serial No. 1050)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As announced in paragraphs 36 to 52 of the Budget Speech, a series of measures will be rolled out to develop artificial intelligence (AI) as a core industry, with AI being at the core of developing new quality productive forces. The measures include establishing the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute, promoting the application of AI technology in different domains, and attracting international AI enterprises and talents to come to Hong Kong for development. At the same time, our country introduced the “AI+” initiative last year, focusing on the comprehensive adoption of AI in research and development (R&D) and the establishment of a globally competitive digital industry cluster. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- How will Hong Kong endeavour to develop the AI industry and position AI as a core industry in our economy? What are the specific measures and timelines for accelerating the industrial application of AI technology and enhancing the international competitiveness of local AI enterprises?
- Regarding a funding of \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute mentioned in paragraph 39, how will it be allocated among areas such as research, infrastructure, talent admission and technology application? Will the related expenditure cover a five-year plan, and will additional funding be sought from the Legislative Council?
- How will the Government promote interface with the “AI+” strategy of the Mainland? Has the Government commenced collaboration with the Mainland authorities such as the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and the Ministry of Science and Technology in facilitating integration of AI technology developed in Hong Kong into the Mainland market, and promoting synergistic development of the AI industry in the Greater Bay Area?

- On the policy front, how will the Government make use of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone, *InnoHK* Research Clusters and Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund to attract top-notch enterprises in the Mainland and around the world to establish presence in Hong Kong, and to encourage Hong Kong enterprises to engage in the AI industrial chain in the Mainland?
- Regarding the textile and garment industry, what are the specific plans to harness AI, as a core industry, for empowering traditional industries with competitive edges such as the textile industry to undergo upgrading and transformation? Is there any plans to promote the application of AI technology in the textile production process in order to enhance production efficiency and enhance management workflow of the industry? How to support the textile industry in nurturing talents for the application of AI technology?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a key industry in Hong Kong. It is at the core of developing new quality productive forces and serves as a strategic driver for the future. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (the Blueprint) published by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau at the end of 2022 has proposed to focus on the development of AI industry, setting out clear strategic directions and detailed action plan for promoting the development of AI in Hong Kong. On this basis, the Government has been implementing a series of initiatives to support the development of AI in recent years, thereby realising the AI development strategy.

In terms of promoting AI application and empowering the industries, the Government has set up 16 research centres under the *AIR@InnoHK* Research Cluster that focuses on the development of AI and robotics technologies. *AIR@InnoHK* brings together top talents from around the world and collaborates with universities, research institutions and enterprises at home and abroad, so as to promote innovative research, technology transfer and the application of AI and robotics technologies.

As far as the textiles and clothing industry is concerned, AI can enhance production efficiency and quality, and is a catalyst for upgrading the technological level of the textiles and clothing industry and accelerating its upgrading and transformation. The Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA), as one of the public research and development (R&D) centres focusing on supporting the industry in Hong Kong, has adopted AI in many of its R&D projects. For example, the Smart Garment Sorting System for Recycling, which adopts AI and image analysis technologies, can accurately sort large quantities of garments by type, material, textile structure and colour with an accuracy of 90%. This eliminates the need for the traditional practice of manual sorting, addressing hygiene concerns, and driving the industry towards automation. The first phase of the Garment-to-Garment (G2G) Recycle System sets up a system to recycle used garments to new ones in a retail shop. Its waterless, anti-vibration, noise- and dust-controlled design minimises nuisance to nearby businesses. In the second phase, an AI algorithm is developed to predict the processing parameters for garment recycling, enabling the identification and opening of fabric pieces. Together with

a 3-in-1 fibre processor in the system, the level of automation and system capacity are enhanced, doubling the production capability and reducing manpower requirements by 35%.

In addition, the Clothing Industry Training Authority (CITA) has been training AI talents for the textile industry on various fronts. Last year, the CITA organised the Fashion Summit (Hong Kong), a leading sustainable and innovative fashion event in Asia, in which AI system experts from different research institutes and institutions in the Mainland, Hong Kong and overseas exchanged views in a number of conferences on the application of AI in the fashion and textile industries. There were about 400 participants in each conference. Looking ahead, the CITA is planning to set up a Generative AI Centre in its Kowloon Bay Centre for organising training courses and seminars for practitioners to promote wider application of AI in the industry.

To channel more market capital to invest in emerging and future industries of strategic importance, the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF) will cover five thematic areas including AI, and one or more sub-fund(s) will be set up under each thematic area. On the premise of complying with relevant investment requirements under the ITIF, fund managers selected through an open application may invest in different enterprises. They may also attract Mainland and overseas innovation & technology (I&T) enterprises (including top-notch enterprises) in accordance with the actual situation and promote multi-faceted co-operation among enterprises at various nodes of the industry chain.

To further promote the development of AI in Hong Kong, the 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative R&D and industrial applications of AI, facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes, and expanding application scenarios. The Digital Policy Office is drawing up a detailed plan for AIRDI's establishment, including formulation of its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, and performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options being explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the Hong Kong Generative Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Center. Subject to the progress of the above tasks, we aim to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the earliest following funding approval by the Legislative Council.

In response to the national "AI Plus" strategy, the Government has been co-ordinating and promoting the development and application of information and communications technology including AI and implementing co-operation initiatives with Guangdong through the Hong Kong/ Guangdong Expert Group on Co-operation in Informatisation (EGCI), with a view to complementing the development of the Greater Bay Area (GBA) into an international technology innovation centre. The work of EGCI includes strengthening innovative development of new generation digital technologies such as 5G, big data, AI, cloud computing and blockchain in the region, as well as supporting the development of smart cities in the GBA. The EGCI will also strengthen the co-operation between Guangdong and Hong Kong in AI R&D, outcome transformation and application development in the future.

In addition, the Government signed the Co-operation Agreement on the Development of New Quality Productive Forces and the Promotion of New Industrialisation with the Ministry of

Industry and Information Technology in September last year. The agreement aims to support Hong Kong in developing new quality productive forces and promoting new industrialisation. Moreover, it strengthens exchanges between the two sides in the fields of industry and information technology, promoting co-operation and joint development in industries where both places have clear advantages. These include promoting the development of industries with clear advantages in the field of AI and laying the groundwork for future industries, thereby jointly promoting high-quality economic development.

The Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone is one of the major co-operation platforms in the GBA. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government promulgated the Development Outline for the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Development Outline) in November 2024, setting out the vision and mission, planning, development directions, strategies and targets of the Hong Kong Park. As set out in the Development Outline, the Hong Kong Park will focus on the development of core frontier technological fields including AI; strengthen the supporting infrastructure required for the development of AI technologies; and establish a cross-boundary data flow management mechanism, so as to attract Mainland and overseas enterprises engaging in AI to the Loop to set up and expand their businesses therein.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB056

(Question Serial No. 1061)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Programme (2) of Head 135, it is mentioned that one of the main responsibilities of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is to promote “new industrialisation” through the development of smart production and industries of strategic importance, as well as enhance the external promotion and publication of the development of innovation and technology and “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong, and the explanation of relevant policy measures, so as to tell good stories of innovation and technology in Hong Kong together with other government bureaux and departments. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. It is mentioned in paragraph 46 of the Budget that regarding the “New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme” launched in September last year, one application has been approved so far. How many applications have been received? How many cases are still pending approval? Is there any room for improvement in the approval process?
2. It is mentioned in paragraph 47 of the Budget that the “Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+)” will be launched this year. Will the Government elaborate on the specific details of this policy? Does the implementation of the Scheme require additional financial provision and staffing resources?
3. It is mentioned in paragraph 50 of the Budget that the Government will draw up a medium-to long-term development plan for new industrialisation in Hong Kong. What is the expected time to announce the specific details? How does this plan differ from the directions and strategies related to new industrialisation in the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint?
4. It is mentioned in the 2024 Policy Address that the Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance will be established to attract talents and resources from various sectors, and develop a collaboration platform among the Government and the industry,

academia, research and investment sectors. What is the progress of the preparatory work for the Alliance? What are the relevant estimated expenditures and staffing establishment? Are there any key performance indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of the Alliance?

5. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government signed the “Co-operation Agreement on the Development of New Quality Productive Forces and the Promotion of New Industrialisation” with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of our country in September 2024. Since then, what specific measures have the Government implemented to promote new industrialisation and foster Hong Kong’s better integration into the national system of industry and innovation?
6. What are the plans of the Government to enhance the external promotion and publication of the development of innovation and technology and new industrialisation in this year? Which international innovation and technology events will be included for planned participation? What is the detailed breakdown of the relevant estimate?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

1. As at end-February 2025, the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) received a total of seven applications. The New Industrialisation Vetting Committee (Vetting Committee) has supported one of the applications, while the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) is reviewing the remaining six applications, including requesting the applicant enterprises to make clarifications and submit supplementary documents and information to facilitate the approval process. Upon receipt of all required documents and information, the ITC will submit the applications to the Vetting Committee for consideration. The actual processing time for each application under the NIAS depends on various factors, such as the complexity of the application, as well as the comprehensiveness and clarity of the information provided by the applicant enterprises. Subject to the actual implementation of the NIAS, the ITC will review its various arrangements in due course.
2. The Government will launch the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) under the Innovation and Technology Fund this year to provide funding on a 1 (Government): 2 (Company) matching basis for local manufacturing enterprises, which aims at encouraging the adoption of smart production technological solutions as well as upgrading and transforming their existing production lines. We are currently formulating the details of the Manufacturing+, including the application requirements as well as approval and regulatory mechanisms. We will make reference to the modus operandi of other funding schemes in order to achieve optimal efficiency in the administrative arrangements, such as manpower and expenditure estimates.
3. To further optimise the development and institutional set-up for new industrialisation and implement the top-level design and development path of the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (I&T Blueprint), we will commence a study on

the medium to long-term development of “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong to encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to upgrade and transform by making use of I&T and strengthen the support for relevant professional services, so as to expeditiously propel “new industrialisation” in a manner that manifests Hong Kong’s competitive edge. We will engage an experienced consultant with the necessary qualifications to conduct the study within the framework established under the I&T Blueprint. The Government will require the consultant to proactively communicate with industry stakeholders and take heed of their views in order to present a full picture of the status of the development of Hong Kong’s industries, while giving due consideration to the needs of various stakeholders and the challenges they are facing. The Government will announce the findings of the study in due course, and formulate plans to help promote “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong. We will commence the study on the medium to long-term development of “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong within this year.

4. The Chief Executive proposed in the 2024 Policy Address that the Government would press ahead with the establishment of the “Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance” (the Alliance), pooling together talents and resources from various fields to drive new industrialisation and establish a platform for the collaboration among the Government, industry, academia, research and investment sectors. The Alliance was officially established on 18 March 2025, led by members from four sectors, namely the industry, academia, research and investment sectors. With the direction of “proactive promotion by the Government and joint action by stakeholders”, we expect that the Alliance will become an important platform for stakeholders of new industrialisation to exchange views and foster cooperation, thereby facilitating the establishment of a comprehensive I&T industry ecosystem in Hong Kong and assisting in the promotion of new industrialisation development in Hong Kong including showcasing related achievements. Formed by industry players, the Alliance is a non-governmental organisation which self-determines its management and operations, financial arrangements, staffing structure, etc. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) has pressed ahead with the establishment of the Alliance, and will provide support and assistance for its future development.
5. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government signed the Co-operation Agreement on the Development of New Quality Productive Forces and the Promotion of New Industrialisation with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology on 19 September 2024. The Agreement supports Hong Kong in developing new quality productive forces and promoting new industrialisation according to local conditions, strengthens collaboration between the two sides in the fields of industry and information technology, and promotes co-operation and joint development in industries where both places have clear advantages. In fact, to actively dovetail with national strategies and integrate Hong Kong into the national system of industry and innovation, the Government has been committed to proactively promoting the development of new industrialisation through various policies and measures.

To further promote the development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong, we launched the NIAS in September 2024 to support enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance in setting up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. Meanwhile, we encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to pursue upgrading and

transformation and switch to smart manufacturing with the use of I&T under the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme. In addition, we have pressed ahead the establishment of the Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance in March 2025, which provides a platform for the collaboration among the Government, industry, academia, research and investment sectors to foster synergy and co-operation between various enterprises and organisations.

Looking forward, we will launch the two-year Manufacturing+ this year to provide funding for local manufacturing industries on a 1 (Government): 2 (Company) matching basis, which aims at encouraging the adoption of smart production technology solutions relating to smart production as well as upgrade and transform their production lines. Also, having revamped our approach to investment in the I&T industries, we will set up the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund to channel more market capital to invest in specified emerging and future industries of strategic importance, with a view to building an I&T industry ecosystem in a systematic manner.

Through these policies and measures, the Government aims to foster the integrated development of technological innovation and industry innovation, as well as to optimise the development and institutional set-up for new industrialisation in Hong Kong, leading Hong Kong to better integrate into the national industry and innovation system.

6. The ITIB has been continuously promoting the development of innovation and technology (I&T) and “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong through various channels and platforms. In 2025-2026, through a number of duty visits and participation in major I&T events at home and abroad, the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry will continue to promote the latest I&T development and opportunities in Hong Kong, and introduce Hong Kong’s unique role as a “super-connector” and a “super value-adder” under “One Country, Two Systems”, thereby strengthening our ties and co-operation with different countries and regions in the area of I&T and so on.

The ITIB will also, through departments under its purview and related organisations, such as the Digital Policy Office, the Hong Kong Productivity Council, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and the Cyberport, organise and participate in various I&T events to be held in the Mainland and overseas to showcase Hong Kong’s latest achievements and strengths in the development of I&T and “new industrialisation”, and further expand the markets and room for technological co-operation at home and overseas. Key events include InnoEX and the World Intellectual Property Organization Global Innovation Index 2025 Science and Technology Cluster Launch to be held in Hong Kong later this year, as well as the Hannover Messe to be held in Germany.

Moreover, the ITIB has been promoting the development and policies of Hong Kong’s I&T and “new industrialisation” through various channels such as social media, media interviews, etc. We will continue to tell the good stories of Hong Kong’s I&T to the international community through various platforms and channels, with a view to accelerating the development of Hong Kong into an international I&T centre.

The ITIB takes forward the above work with existing manpower and resources, and there is no itemised breakdown of expenditure.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB057

(Question Serial No. 1120)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 61 of the Budget Speech that the Northern Metropolis is crucial to the social and economic development of Hong Kong, and it is stressed that priority will continue to be accorded to providing resources for this initiative. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. On innovation and technology industry, it is stated in the Budget that new policies will be introduced to facilitate cross-boundary flows of innovative elements. In this connection, will the Government provide the specific details of the new policies?
2. It is stated in the Budget that \$3.7 billion will be earmarked to expedite the provision of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 development of the Hong Kong Park in the Loop. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the planned infrastructure and public facilities for which the estimates will be used, whether a timetable will be drawn up for provision of relevant infrastructure and public facilities, and the detailed breakdown of the estimates.
3. The Hong Kong Park will enter into operational phase this year. The first 3 buildings of Phase 1 are about to complete and the first batch of tenants from life and health technology, artificial intelligence, data science and other pillar industries will begin to move in this year. Please advise this Committee on the roles and positioning of local scientific research institutions and research and development centres in the plan for the Northern Metropolis, and whether sites will be earmarked for relevant institutions to establish a foothold.
4. Low-altitude economy is a representative industry of new quality productive forces. I consider that a model of "low-altitude + various economic activities" should be adopted in different areas on a pilot basis. The Northern Metropolis, and the Hong Kong Park in particular, are areas with the potential for development. In this connection, how will

the Government promote the development of Hong Kong's low-altitude economy through the development of the Northern Metropolis?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

Having co-ordinated the information provided by the Development Bureau (DEVB) and the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB), our reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

1. The Northern Metropolis will provide a large amount of land for the development of innovation and technology (I&T) and other industries, thereby injecting new impetus into Hong Kong's economy. It will help Hong Kong develop into an international I&T centre under the new industry pattern of "South-North dual engine (finance - I&T)". According to the Northern Metropolis Action Agenda published by the DEVB in end-2023, the Northern Metropolis can be divided into four major zones, of which the San Tin Technopole including the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park) and the land around San Tin area fall within the I&T zone of the Northern Metropolis.

To better take forward the development of the Hong Kong Park, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has established the Steering Committee on the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Loop (the Committee), steered by the Chief Executive, to provide top-level and macro directions on the overall strategy, planning and layout for the development of the Hong Kong Park, and to steer and co-ordinate the work of relevant bureaux and departments (B/Ds) in developing the Park. Under the leadership of the Committee, the HKSAR Government promulgated the Development Outline for the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Development Outline) in November 2024, setting out the key development directions, strategies and targets of the Hong Kong Park and driving its development through top-level design with 2 important five-year milestones. The Development Outline also sets out the innovative policy directions for facilitating the cross-boundary flow of personnel, materials, capital and data between the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park, thereby cultivating a testing ground for institutional and policy innovation.

In accordance with the directions of the Development Outline, the HKSAR Government is, on the basis of "One Country, Two Systems", fostering the development of the Hong Kong Park as a "special region within and outside our country", with a view to building the Hetao Co-operation Zone into a pilot zone and bridgehead for I&T collaboration between the Mainland and Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government is actively exploring with relevant Mainland authorities the trial implementation of the innovative policy measures to facilitate the cross-boundary flow of innovation elements between the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park under the vision of "one river, two banks" and "one zone, two parks", thereby promoting the synergistic development and close alignment of the two Parks. For example, the use of technology to significantly shorten the travelling time between the two Parks, with a view to achieving contactless

clearance; the adoption of innovative mechanisms such as “green lane” and “white list” to help streamline clearance and approval procedures for research materials (including clinical biological samples) and equipment to enter and leave the two Parks. The HKSAR Government is drawing up the relevant details and will further discuss concrete implementation proposals with the Mainland authorities concerned.

2.&3. Industry is an essential component of and an important support to a comprehensive I&T ecosystem. The Government has been adopting a proactive mindset to facilitate industry development and promote commercialisation of research and development (R&D) outcomes through market forces. At the same time, the Government fully leverages on Hong Kong’s advantages as an international city to attract I&T enterprises from the Mainland and overseas, especially those with a competitive edge and strategic significance, to set up businesses in Hong Kong in order to accelerate the overall development of the local I&T industry. The I&T sites in the Northern Metropolis can provide enterprises, research institutes and R&D centres with a land option to establish R&D and design centres, pilot production bases and/or mass production facilities for related industries, thereby forming a vibrant I&T industry chain.

The Government will press ahead with the development of the Hong Kong Park with the 2 five-year milestones, with a view to completing Phase 1 of the Park by 2030 and forming a comprehensive development pattern of the Park will emerge by 2035. To accelerate the development of the Hong Kong Park, \$3.7 billion has been earmarked in the 2025-26 Budget to expedite the completion of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 of the Park, such as some of the roads and underground facilities and data storage supporting facilities, etc., to tie in with the development of the remaining sites in Phase 1 of the Park. The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park Limited is conducting a detailed technical feasibility study on the details and project estimates (including cash flow requirement) of the relevant public facilities. Subsequently, the Government will seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council.

4. The Chief Executive announced in the 2024 Policy Address to establish the Working Group on Developing Low-altitude Economy (the Working Group), with the TLB serving as the secretariat, in order to formulate development strategies and inter-departmental action plans for the development of low-altitude economy (LAE) in Hong Kong. The Working Group has implemented the Regulatory Sandbox (Sandbox) pilot projects progressively starting from early this year to foster innovation and facilitate the testing of potential application scenarios of low-altitude flying activities. The first batch of Sandbox pilot projects has opened for application in November last year, with the application period closed at the end of last year. The Working Group has received applications submitted by a total of 72 applicants which covered a wide range of livelihood issues and involved a number of Mainland and local organisations, university research institutes, public bodies and commercial organisations. The Working Group announced the application results of the first batch of pilot projects on 20 March this year and there are 38 pilot projects in the first batch. The pilot projects cover a number of areas and different application scenarios, such as emergency rescue, drone delivery service, maintenance inspection, detection work, low-altitude infrastructure, etc.. There are also pilot projects to be implemented in the Hong Kong Park. The

Government is taking forward the relevant work to implement the projects progressively.

As set out by the DEVB, new large-scale land development projects, like the New Development Areas of the Northern Metropolis, can provide a large amount of land and space, which should be able to cope with the land and space requirements of the infrastructure relevant to LAE. In terms of town planning, the infrastructures and uses related to LAE (such as vertiports and charging facilities) can generally be accommodated under the permitted uses of the relevant zoning or their ancillary uses. In other words, these new development regions should be able to cater for the need of land or infrastructure for promoting LAE. The Working Group will coordinate the work of various B/Ds to ensure that all policies complement one another, thereby supporting the long-term development of LAE.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB058

(Question Serial No. 1060)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will promote new industrialisation in Hong Kong by setting up a \$10 billion Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF). In this connection, will the Bureau advise this Committee of:

1. whether the ITIF will be operating with a regular cycle of funding allocation; its annual estimated investment amount and form of subsidy;
2. whether there are plans to attract joint investment of private capital; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons;
3. how the ITIF operates in synergy with the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology (I&T) Development Blueprint to promote I&T development in Hong Kong;
4. whether there are sectors or technological fields that are prioritised as investment targets; if yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons;
5. how to ensure optimised use of resources under the ITIF without duplication with other I&T-related resources?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Adopting an industry-oriented approach, the current-term Government has formulated and implemented a series of policies and measures to deepen collaboration among the Government, industry, academia, research and investment sectors, so as to promote the

development of innovation and technology (I&T) industries and new industrialisation, and build a new real economy. Nonetheless, the long-term development of I&T industries, particularly in relation to the transformation and industrialisation of research and development outcomes, requires substantial capital investment, a need that can hardly be met solely by Government contribution. It is thus necessary to leverage the support of market capital.

The Government will increase investment and guide more market capital to invest in I&T industries in a revamped approach. To this end, we are currently preparing to set up a \$10 billion I&T Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF), aiming to channel more market capital to jointly invest in specified emerging and future industries of strategic importance, so as to systematically build an I&T industry ecosystem. According to the current plan, the ITIF will cover 5 thematic areas, namely life and health technology; artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics; semi-conductors and smart devices; digitalisation, upgrading and transformation; and future and sustainable development, with one or more sub-fund(s) set up under each area. These thematic areas correspond to and elaborate on the I&T industries that the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint has proposed for Hong Kong to focus on developing, such as life and health technology, AI and data science, and advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies, which will be conducive to further promoting the I&T development in Hong Kong, developing new quality productive forces and realising the vision of making Hong Kong an international I&T hub.

The Government will participate as a Limited Partner of the sub-funds and make contributions to each, and the total amount of contribution will not exceed \$10 billion. We hope that the overall fund size of the sub-funds under the ITIF will reach at least \$40 billion. In other words, the capital committed by the market will be at least triple of that of the Government.

Fund managers selected through an open application will become General Partners of the sub-funds and shall be responsible for setting up the sub-funds in the form of a limited partnership fund. They shall also raise market capital (including from strategic investors and others) for the sub-funds, manage the daily operation of the sub-funds, as well as invest in suitable projects in accordance with the investment framework.

In mid-January this year, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Innovation and Technology Commission issued an open invitation to the market to submit expression of interest and views regarding the ITIF, and the invitation was closed in early March. We will, taking into account the views of different stakeholders, finalise the details of the ITIF and strive to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the middle of this year, with a view to commencing the operation of ITIF in 2026-27. Funds will be injected over a period of 5 to 6 years to support the growth of “patient capital”, to drive sustainable development of I&T industries in Hong Kong, as well as to shape new momentum for Hong Kong’s economic development.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**ITIB059****(Question Serial No. 2667)**

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The expenditure of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau on the area of innovation, technology and industry for 2025-26 increases by \$34.7 million, representing a rise of 16.5% against last year. What is the detailed breakdown of the increased expenditure?

Asked by: Hon WONG Chun-sek, Edmund (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

Under Programme (2) "Innovation, Technology and Industry", the estimated expenditure for 2025-26 is higher than the revised estimate for 2024-25. This is mainly due to a reduction in the revised estimate for the cash flow requirement for the TechConnect (block vote) in 2024-25 compared to the original estimate. In addition, there is an increase in the estimated expenditure for departmental expenses as well as personal emoluments and personnel related expenses for 2025-26. A detailed breakdown is set out below:

Item	2024-25 (Revised estimate) (\$ million)	2025-26 (Estimate) (\$ million)
TechConnect (block vote)	86.0	94.1
General departmental expenses	51.6	75.2*
Personal emoluments and personnel related expenses	73.1	76.1
Total:	210.7	245.4

*The additional expenditure includes expenses for organising international innovation and technology events and conducting consultancy studies.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB060

(Question Serial No. 0360)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 50 of the Budget Speech that the Government will draw up a medium- to long-term development plan for new industrialisation in Hong Kong, as well as set up a \$10 billion Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF) to channel more market capital to invest in emerging and future industries of strategic importance. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee whether it will consider earmarking part of the capital under the \$10 billion ITIF specifically for integrating with sub-funds in the Mainland, so as to bring talents and technologies to Hong Kong as well as to establish cross-border collaboration through these partnering sub-funds, thereby introducing an investment-driven mode for our innovation and technology industries?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

According to the current plan, the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF) will cover 5 thematic areas, namely life and health technology; artificial intelligence and robotics; semi-conductors and smart devices; digitalisation, upgrading and transformation; and future and sustainable development. One or more sub-fund(s) will be set up under each area. The Government will participate as a Limited Partner of the sub-funds and make contributions to each sub-fund, with the total amount of contribution not exceeding \$10 billion. It is hoped that the overall fund size of the sub-funds under the ITIF will reach at least \$40 billion. In other words, the capital committed by the market will be at least triple of that of the Government.

Fund managers selected through an open application will become General Partners of the sub-funds. They shall be responsible for setting up the sub-funds in the form of a limited partnership fund, raising market capital for the sub-funds (including from strategic investors

and others), managing the daily operation of the sub-funds and investing in suitable projects in accordance with the investment framework. Fund managers can, on the premise of meeting the investment requirements under the ITIF, invest in different enterprises through a diversified investment portfolio, and introduce innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises from the Mainland and abroad to Hong Kong based on the practical situation, thereby promoting multi-faceted co-operation among enterprises at various nodes of the I&T industry chain, and supporting the development of industry chains equipped with Hong Kong's competitive edge.

In mid-January this year, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Innovation and Technology Commission issued an open invitation to the market to submit expression of interest and views regarding the ITIF by early March. We will, taking into account views of different stakeholders, finalise the relevant details and seek funding approval for the ITIF from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the middle of this year, with a view to commencing the operation of ITIF in 2026-27.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB061

(Question Serial No. 0494)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

To stimulate primary and secondary school students' interest in innovation and technology, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has invited the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to co-ordinate the efforts of more than 100 technology enterprises under their purview to engage in interactions and exchanges with students to share frontier exploration and start-up experience in technology through organising product display in schools, site visits, etc., in the coming year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the amount of expenditure earmarked for the plan? What are the estimated numbers of schools and students that will benefit in the coming year?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

Having consulted the Financial Secretary's Office, the Education Bureau and the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC), our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Accelerating the development of innovation and technology (I&T), as well as fast-tracking the upgrading and transformation of industries and enterprises through technology, require not only cutting-edge tech companies but also high-quality talent. In addition to attracting outstanding professionals from both Mainland and overseas regions to settle in Hong Kong, it is equally important to nurture young people's interest in I&T. By better integrating education, technology and talent development, we can strengthen our talent base to support the needs of I&T development in Hong Kong more effectively.

In the 2025-26 Budget, the Government has proposed inviting the HKIC, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to coordinate efforts among partners and startups to showcase their products in schools or arrange site visits for students, sharing their experiences in cutting-edge technology exploration and entrepreneurship.

The Budget has also proposed inviting large-scale technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practical scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools. The purpose of these two initiatives is to bring together the most advanced talent, knowledge and experience from the technology sector to the education frontlines, thereby stimulating young people's curiosity for innovative exploration and encouraging them to become future leaders in I&T.

Earlier on, a large technology enterprise organised an event focused on nurturing talents in I&T and established a youth I&T academy to support coding training and AI learning in schools. The academy features a one-stop cloud development learning space equipped with engaging teaching tools that integrate AI coding and large language model applications. It would enable teachers and students to better grasp AI development skills through practical experience.

The Government and the relevant public organisations will continue to explore the implementation plan of the initiatives, and details will be announced in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB062

(Question Serial No. 0898)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The main responsibilities of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) include attracting strategic innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises or those with potential to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the total number of strategic I&T enterprises the ITIB has liaised with, and of which the number of enterprises having set up or expanded their businesses in Hong Kong over the past 3 years;
2. of the respective I&T fields and scales (such as numbers of employees, asset scales, etc.) of these enterprises as well as the numbers of staff currently in Hong Kong;
3. of the total amount of expenditure and manpower deployment involved in the work of attracting strategic I&T enterprises to come to Hong Kong over the past 3 years;
4. of the specific criteria and procedures in identifying strategic I&T enterprises, such as indicators for assessment; and
5. whether the Government has formulated a comprehensive plan with schedule as well as implementation strategy for attracting I&T enterprises in the coming year? If yes, please give a brief description of the major components and intended target(s) of the plan.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB), in collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, has been reaching out to enterprises from the Mainland and overseas proactively and, as at February 2025, has liaised with more than 130 high-potential or representative innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. These enterprises come from the Mainland and various overseas countries or economies, encompassing industries of strategic importance including life and health technology, artificial intelligence and robotics, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technology. Given that these enterprises are with high potential or representative, we believe that their presence in Hong Kong will attract upstream, midstream and downstream partners from their industry chains, thereby promoting the vibrant development of our I&T ecosystem.

The ITIB will continue to reach out to strategic enterprises proactively to liaise with them and provide appropriate assistance, with a view to facilitating the setting up of businesses by Mainland and overseas enterprises in Hong Kong. We have all along been deploying existing manpower and resources to take forward the relevant work with the OASES. A breakdown of the expenditure involved for individual work items is not available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB063

(Question Serial No. 0912)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In 2024-25, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau continued to implement the “Global STEM Professorship Scheme” (the Scheme) and launched a sub-scheme for visiting professors on a pilot basis to attract more world-renowned STEM scholars to Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the total expenditure and staff establishment involved since the implementation of the Scheme;
2. the number of innovation and technology scholars successfully recruited under the Scheme so far, as well as the number of visiting professors or scholars recruited following the launch of the sub-scheme; and
3. whether the Government has evaluated the implementation progress of the Scheme, and whether targets are set for the Scheme; if yes, whether such targets have been achieved; if not, how much additional time is expected to achieve them?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Global STEM Professorship Scheme (the Scheme) supports local universities funded by the University Grants Committee in attracting research and development talents and their teams to work in Hong Kong. The target is to recruit internationally renowned innovation and technology scholars to conduct teaching and research activities related to STEM (Science,

Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) in Hong Kong. As at the end of February 2025, 66 selected scholars have taken up their posts in Hong Kong.

Meanwhile, taking into account the views of stakeholders, the Government launched the Sub-scheme for Visiting Professors on a pilot basis in 2024, providing universities with funding for attracting more eminent scholars in STEM disciplines to come to Hong Kong as Visiting Professors. As at the end of February 2025, 4 selected scholars have taken up their posts in Hong Kong.

The University Grants Committee Secretariat (UGC Secretariat) provides secretariat support for the Scheme. UGCS and the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau implement the work under the Scheme with the existing manpower. The Scheme was estimated to cost \$2 billion. As at the end of February this year, about \$1.7 billion has been committed. The Government will maintain close liaison with the universities and review the implementation of the Scheme as and when appropriate.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB064

(Question Serial No. 1065)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26, it is mentioned that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will continue to take forward the planning of the development of new sites earmarked for innovation and technology uses. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the progress and targets for projects under the development of new sites earmarked for innovation and technology uses, including the Loop, the San Tin Technopole and the digital new coast at Lau Fau Shan, in the coming year?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

With a view to supporting the development of Innovation and technology (I&T), the Government has been proactively identifying land to provide the industry with the necessary space for its development. For example, the I&T site in the Northern Metropolis mainly includes the San Tin Technopole, which provides about 300 hectares of I&T land (including the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park) providing 87 hectares of land); and Lau Fau Shan, which provides about 15 hectares of land for the development of a digital technology hub, digital infrastructures and supercomputing facilities.

The Hong Kong Park

The Hong Kong Park is developed in two phases from west to east. Batch 1 of Phase 1 of the Hong Kong Park comprises eight buildings. As the first three buildings will be completed soon, the Hong Kong Park will officially enter its operational phase later this year. The construction of the other five buildings is in full swing and is expected to be completed progressively from 2027 onwards. As for the remaining sites of Phase 1, we will identify

suitable land parcels for invitation of private development proposals this year, with a view to taking forward the development of the Park with enhanced speed and quantity through collaboration between the Government and the market.

To accelerate the development of the Hong Kong Park, \$3.7 billion has been earmarked in the 2025-26 Budget to expedite the completion of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 of the Park.

The Government will press ahead the development of the Hong Kong Park with the two five-year milestones, with a view to completing Phase 1 of the Park in an orderly manner by 2030, and forming a comprehensive development pattern of the Park by 2035.

San Tin area in the San Tin Technopole

In addition to the Hong Kong Park, around 210 hectares of new I&T land are to be provided in the San Tin area in the San Tin Technopole, which will serve as the strategic key for the I&T industry planning and the base for developing new quality productive forces of Hong Kong in the future. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau is conducting a consultancy study on the development plan of the I&T industries for the land thereat, including basic planning in respect of industry clusters, activity-focused orientation, supporting facilities, which will form the basis for subsequent development. The result of the study are expected to be announced in 2025. The new I&T sites in the San Tin area will be available to the market in batches. The Government is targeting to deliver about 20 hectares of land in phases, beginning in 2026-27, for development and operation by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC). The HKSTPC has commissioned a consultant to conduct a master planning study on the I & T sites for proposing detailed development concepts and options by analysing the development opportunities and constraints. The study is expected to be completed in the third quarter of this year.

Lau Fau Shan Digital Technology Hub

The Development Bureau has earlier proposed reserving 15 hectares of land in Lau Fau Shan for developing a digital technology hub. Cyberport is conducting a planning study to explore the feasibility of pursuing the proposed development at Lau Fau Shan. The consultant is expected to submit its detailed proposals and recommendations to Cyberport within 2025.

Sandy Ridge

The Government commenced the relevant re-zoning procedures for a 10-hectare site at Sandy Ridge for use as data centres and related facilities in end-2024. The relevant procedures are expected to be completed in the middle of the year. We are actively making preparations for land disposal.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB065

(Question Serial No. 2619)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 64 of the Budget Speech that the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Co-operation Zone will enter into operational phase this year. The first 3 buildings of Phase 1 are about to complete and the first batch of tenants from life and health technology, artificial intelligence, data science and other industries will move in this year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number of companies involved and their specialised areas and scales among the applications for settlement received so far;
2. the Government's assessment and selection mechanisms for companies settling in the Hetao Hong Kong Park.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to the two parts of the question is set out below:

As the first three buildings in the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park) are about to complete, the Park will officially enter into its operational phase later this year. The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park Limited (HSITPL) is pressing ahead with the work on attracting businesses / tenants. The first batch of tenants from life and health technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and data science, and other pillar industries of the Park is expected to move in starting from the second half of 2025. As at February 2025, the HSITPL has entered into a more intensive phase of negotiations with around 30 local, Mainland and overseas enterprises specialising in various areas covering different industries,

including life and health science, diversified development of local universities, microelectronics, new energy, and AI and data science.

Drawing on the experience of other innovation and technology (I&T) parks, the HSITPL has developed relevant policies to admit tenants from I&T-related industries. When submitting applications, enterprises should provide a business proposal specifying the I&T business which they propose to establish in the Park for the HSITPL's assessment. During the selection process, the HSITPL will consider different factors, including the alignment of the enterprises' proposed activities with the Park's development objectives and directions, their output, the technology adopted, business sustainability, investment potential, talent development, and environmental, social and governance contributions.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB066

(Question Serial No. 2861)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Budget mentions that the Government is encouraging technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practice scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools, with a view to further enhancing young people's interest and capability in I&T application through integrating theoretical learning and practical application. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the current number of participating technology enterprises in Hong Kong, number of events organised, and number of participating young people respectively? What measures does the Government have in place to increase the incentive for technology enterprises in Hong Kong to participate?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

Having consulted the Financial Secretary's Office, the Education Bureau and the Hong Kong Investment Corporation Limited (HKIC), our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Accelerating the development of innovation and technology (I&T), as well as fast-tracking the upgrading and transformation of industries and enterprises through technology, require not only cutting-edge tech companies but also high-quality talent. In addition to attracting outstanding professionals from both Mainland and overseas regions to settle in Hong Kong, it is equally important to nurture young people's interest in I&T. By better integrating education, technology and talent development, we can strengthen our talent base to support the needs of I&T development in Hong Kong more effectively.

In the 2025-26 Budget, the Government has proposed inviting the HKIC, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport to coordinate efforts among partners and startups to showcase their products in schools or arrange site visits for students, sharing their experiences in cutting-edge technology exploration and entrepreneurship.

The Budget has also proposed inviting large-scale technology enterprises in Hong Kong to provide resources, technical guidance and practical scenarios for technology education such as coding and AI learning in schools. The purpose of these two initiatives is to bring together the most advanced talent, knowledge and experience from the technology sector to the education frontlines, thereby stimulating young people's curiosity for innovative exploration and encouraging them to become future leaders in I&T.

Earlier on, a large technology enterprise organised an event focused on nurturing talents in I&T and established a youth I&T academy to support coding training and AI learning in schools. The academy features a one-stop cloud development learning space equipped with engaging teaching tools that integrate AI coding and large language model applications. It would enable teachers and students to better grasp AI development skills through practical experience.

The Government and the relevant public organisations will continue to explore the implementation plan of the initiatives, and details will be announced in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB067

(Question Serial No. 0095)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. Apart from the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), has the Government studied the allocation of space and venues in government facilities to promote the products of local technology companies in order to allow buyers and consumers to learn more about such products and to access and buy them more easily and conveniently, thereby opening up a wider sales market network for the products? If yes, what are the details?
2. What was the average expenditure incurred by the HKTDC in supporting the showcase of products of technology companies in its Design Gallery and exhibitions in the past 5 years? Has the Government considered strengthening HKTDC's promotional efforts in relevant overseas offices and on online platforms in order that buyers and consumers may search for the latest technology products and the ones they needed conveniently?

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

Having consulted the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB), the consolidated reply to various parts of the question is as follows -

As Hong Kong's innovation and technology (I&T) flagships, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport have been committed to providing I&T start-ups with infrastructure, incubation programmes and one-stop support services, including the provision of business consultation, investment matching, manufacturing and launching of products, etc. for I&T enterprises in collaboration with the business sector and other partners. The two I&T flagships have been actively expanding their network of collaborative partners in local and overseas markets for I&T start-ups, for example through leading start-ups to

participate in exhibitions and other activities, with a view to assisting I&T enterprises in seeking collaboration and business opportunities. They will also continue to liaise with their I&T park enterprises and the I&T sector, as well as actively participate in regional or international conferences and exhibitions, promote commercialisation of research and development outcomes and assist in the export of such products to both the Mainland and overseas market, with a view to aiding I&T enterprises in the expansion of business and investment opportunities.

In addition, the CEDB has pointed out that the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) has been leveraging its platforms, including the HKTDC Design Gallery, to display the I&T products of local enterprises and promote the designs and brands of Hong Kong. HKTDC has also been actively organising diversified international conventions and large-scale exhibitions, such as the annually held InnoEX and Hong Kong Electronics Fair (Spring Edition), to promote Hong Kong's capability in I&T to the global business community and drive Hong Kong's high-quality I&T, economic and social development. Relevant work has been included in HKTDC's overall estimated expenditure, and cannot be quantified separately.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB068

(Question Serial No. 0096)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

This year, the Government will commence a study on the medium- to long-term development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong to encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to upgrade and transform by making use of innovation and technology and strengthen the support for relevant professional services sectors. When will the study commence and which organisation will be engaged for conducting it? What is the estimated expenditure and how will it be followed up? What is the scope of the study? Will it cover a review of the relevant existing subsidy schemes and the function performed by the Hong Kong Productivity Council?

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

To further optimise the strategy and institutional set-up for the development of “new industrialisation” and implement the top-level design and development path of the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology (I&T) Development Blueprint, we will commence a study on the medium to long-term development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong to encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to upgrade and transform by making use of I&T and strengthen the support for relevant professional services, so as to expeditiously propel “new industrialisation” in a manner that manifests Hong Kong’s competitive edge.

We will engage an experienced consultant with the necessary qualifications to conduct the study. The Government will require the consultant to proactively communicate with industry stakeholders and take heed of their views in order to provide a full picture of the status of the development of Hong Kong’s industries, while giving due consideration to the needs of various stakeholders and the challenges they are facing. The Government will

announce the findings of the study in due course and formulate plans to help promote “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong.

We will commence the study on the medium to long-term development of “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong within this year, and will oversee the work of the consultant with the Bureau’s manpower and resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB069

(Question Serial No. 0098)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. To continue to collaborate with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises to attract representative innovation and technology enterprises or those with potential to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. What were the expenditures involved in the work on promoting Hong Kong's new opportunities to the Mainland and overseas, including those on manpower and publicity for last year? What are the relevant promotional schemes for this year and the estimated expenditures?
2. Please show in table form the latest details on strategic enterprises which have established their presence in Hong Kong, including their number, type, country of origin, scale, etc.

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB), in collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, has been reaching out to enterprises from the Mainland and overseas proactively and, as at February 2025, has liaised with more than 130 high-potential or representative innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises to set up or expand their businesses in Hong Kong. These enterprises come from the Mainland and various overseas countries or economies, encompassing industries of strategic importance including life and health technology, artificial intelligence and robotics, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technology. Given that these enterprises are with high potential or representative, we believe that their presence in Hong Kong will attract upstream, midstream and downstream partners from their industry chains, thereby promoting the vibrant development of our I&T ecosystem. The ITIB will continue to reach out to strategic enterprises proactively to liaise with them and provide appropriate assistance, with a view to

facilitating the setting up of businesses by Mainland and overseas enterprises in Hong Kong. The ITIB has all along been deploying existing manpower and resources to take forward the relevant work with the OASES. A breakdown of the expenditure involved for individual work items is not available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB070

(Question Serial No. 0482)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government will draw up a medium- to long-term development plan for new industrialisation in Hong Kong. Also, a \$10 billion Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund will be set up to channel more market capital to invest in emerging and future industries of strategic importance. The Government is inviting relevant organisations to submit expressions of interest and is planning to seek funding approval from the Legislative Council in the middle of this year.

There are views that given the huge fiscal deficit, it is indeed commendable for the Government to spend \$10 billion to promote the development of innovation and technology (I&T) industry. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following: to which specific industries will the Fund channel the market capital as key investment; how will the Fund steer the development of I&T ecosystem, including segments like research and development, transformation of outcomes, equipment upgrade and talent recruitment; what are the regulatory measures of the Government for larger amount of contribution by the Fund to ensure the proper use of public funds, for example, appointing project directors to take part in the important decision-making process and supervision of project operation in respect of major investment projects; and how will the Fund of \$10 billion be operated in a long-term and sustainable way?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

According to the current plan, the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF) will cover 5 thematic areas, namely life and health technology; artificial intelligence and robotics; semi-conductors and smart devices; digitalisation, upgrading and transformation; and future and sustainable development. One or more sub-fund(s) will be set up under each

area. The Government will participate as a Limited Partner (LP) of the sub-funds and make contributions to each sub-fund, with the total amount of contribution not exceeding \$10 billion. It is hoped that the overall fund size of the sub-funds under the ITIF will reach at least \$40 billion. In other words, the capital committed by the market will be at least triple of that of the Government.

Fund managers selected through an open application will become General Partners of the sub-funds. They shall be responsible for setting up the sub-funds in the form of a limited partnership fund, raising market capital for the sub-funds (including from strategic investors and others), managing the daily operation of the sub-funds and investing in suitable projects in accordance with the investment framework. Fund managers can, on the premise of meeting the investment requirements under the ITIF, support innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises at different stages of development through a diversified investment portfolio. They can also introduce enterprises from the Mainland and abroad to Hong Kong based on the practical situation, thereby promoting multi-faceted co-operation among enterprises at various nodes of the I&T industry chain, and supporting the development of industry chains and I&T industry ecosystem equipped with Hong Kong's competitive edge.

The sub-funds set up under the ITIF will all be limited partnership funds and operated in a market-oriented manner, covering areas such as monitoring of fund manager's performance. According to the preliminary proposal, we will set up a Steering Committee for the ITIF, comprising representatives from the Government and the relevant sectors, to advise the Government on fund management, investment framework, selection of fund managers, monitoring and review matters, etc. The Government, alongside other LPs, will continuously monitor the performance of the fund managers including whether their investment projects comply with the requirements. We will finalise the details taking into account the views of different stakeholders.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB071

(Question Serial No. 0493)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that more physical displays and sales environments for products will be provided for local technology companies, and that the Hong Kong Trade and Development Council (HKTDC) will add a thematic pop-up display area at the flagship retail platform Hong Kong Design Gallery and exhibition venues during major exhibitions to showcase high-quality innovative technology products to both local and overseas buyers or consumers.

In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the additional expenditure involved in setting up such thematic display areas by the HKTDC, and whether the Government will consider charging exhibitors a certain fee to offset the related expenditure incurred from the Treasury?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

Having consulted the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), our reply is as follows:

The HKTDC provides comprehensive support to Hong Kong businesses, including tech companies, to expand their business and create opportunities for them through organising a wide range of activities, such as international exhibitions, conferences, business missions, and business matching while leveraging its network of offices around the world.

The HKTDC Design Gallery provides an ideal retail channel for local designers and businesses to promote original design and branded products from Hong Kong, covering electronic products, home appliances, environmentally friendly products and more, thereby

enhancing buyers' understanding of Hong Kong products and brands and promoting the quality designs of Hong Kong. In 2025-26 fiscal year, the HKTDC will launch a thematic pop-up display area at its Hong Kong Design Gallery flagship store at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wan Chai as well as at exhibition venues during major exhibitions to provide local tech companies with additional display and sales outlets for their products, to showcase local high-quality innovative technology products to global buyers and consumers. The relevant implementation is under planning and preparation. The expenditure and details involved are subject to confirmation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB072

(Question Serial No. 0528)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that \$3.7 billion has been earmarked to expedite the provision of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 development of the Hong Kong Park of Hetao Co-operation Zone. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the expected completion time of the infrastructure and public facilities in Phase 1; whether a public-private partnership approach will be considered for the future construction works in Phases 2 and 3 to reduce the Government's capital investment; and whether a model based on cross-shareholdings, joint venture and coordinated development can be adopted for the construction and operation of the Shenzhen Park and Hong Kong Park in the future?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

The Government is taking forward the development of the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (the Hong Kong Park) at full steam. The Hong Kong Park is developed in 2 phases from west to east, with Batch 1 of Phase 1 comprising 8 buildings. With the first 3 buildings approaching completion, the Park will officially enter into its operational phase later this year. The construction of the other 5 buildings is in full swing and is expected to be completed progressively from 2027 onwards.

To accelerate the development of the Hong Kong Park, \$3.7 billion has been earmarked in the 2025-26 Budget to expedite the completion of infrastructure and public facilities of Phase 1 of the Park, such as some of the roads, underground utilities and data storage supporting facilities, etc., to tie in with the development of the remaining sites in Phase 1 of the Park. The Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park Limited (HSITPL) is conducting a detailed technical feasibility study on the details and project estimates (including cash flow

requirement) of the relevant public facilities. Subsequently, the Government will seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council. Meanwhile, we will identify suitable land parcels from the remaining sites of Phase 1 for invitation of private development proposals this year, with a view to taking forward the development of the Park with enhanced speed and quantity through collaboration between the Government and the market.

On the other hand, the HSITPL is undertaking detailed planning for Phase 2 development, which is expected to be completed in 2025. It will make reference to the planning and functions of Phase 1 of the Park to plan for the scale, distribution of industries, etc. of Phase 2 development, with a view to consolidating the overall planning of the entire Hong Kong Park.

The Government will press ahead with the development of the Hong Kong Park with the 2 five-year milestones, with a view to completing Phase 1 of the Park in an orderly manner by 2030 and forming a comprehensive development pattern of the Park by 2035.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB073

(Question Serial No. 3007)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Innovation, Technology and Industry

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (Eddie MAK)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will draw up a medium- to long-term development plan for new industrialisation in Hong Kong and set up a \$10 billion Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF) to channel more market capital to invest in emerging and future industries of strategic importance. In this connection, please inform this Committee:

1. whether the specific allocation mechanism of the ITIF will be based on market demand or government strategies, and of any specified priority areas;
2. whether and how the ITIF will collaborate with other existing innovation and technology funds in Hong Kong, and how overlapping and wasting of resources can be avoided;
3. of any interim goals for evaluating the progress of the ITIF;
4. how the Government will strike a balance with reaping short-term benefits and deliverables while taking forward the medium- to long-term development plan?

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

According to the current plan, the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund (ITIF) will cover 5 thematic areas, including life and health technology; artificial intelligence and robotics; semi-conductors and smart devices; digitalisation, upgrading and transformation; and future and sustainable development. One or more sub-fund(s) will be set up under each area. We incline to invest evenly across various thematic areas but will also take into account market opinions, and consider an appropriate cap on the amount that the Government will commit in each sub-fund.

The ITIF aims to guide more market capital to increase investment in the innovation and technology (I&T) industries. We hope that by establishing an investment framework and identifying various thematic areas, coupled with leveraging the professional investment judgment of fund managers, the relevant capitals can be properly invested to promote the development of the I&T industries. Despite the different investment goals and frameworks of various I&T investment funds put forth by the Government and the market, we believe that I&T enterprises at different development stages and in different fields will be effectively provided with the appropriate financial support under market-oriented operations.

Based on market-oriented operations including areas such as monitoring of fund manager's performance, the sub-funds set up under the ITIF will all be limited partnership funds. According to the preliminary proposal, we will set up a Steering Committee for the ITIF, comprising representatives from the Government and the relevant sectors, to advise the Government on fund management, investment framework, selection of fund managers, monitoring and review matters, etc. The Government, alongside other limited partners, will continuously monitor the performance of fund managers and request for regular reporting. The Government is currently finalising details of the ITIF taking into account the views collected, and will strive to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the middle of this year, with a view to commencing the operation of ITIF in 2026-27.

The setting up of the ITIF will support the sustainable development of Hong Kong's I&T and new industrialisation-related industries. In respect of short-term benefits, we expect to channel more market capital to invest in the relevant industries through the ITIF and to support the growth of Hong Kong's "patient capital", thereby attracting quality enterprises to set up their footholds in Hong Kong and nurturing local I&T enterprises, while promoting the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries in Hong Kong, and developing industry chains equipped with Hong Kong's competitive edges. Of course, we also hope that the investment projects will yield certain financial returns. In the long run, the robust I&T industry development will help consolidate Hong Kong's advantages in I&T, benefit tax revenue, increase employment opportunities, and promote the development of ancillary industries. Complementing the upcoming study on the medium- to long-term development plan for new industrialisation in Hong Kong, this will accelerate the promotion of "new industrialisation" with Hong Kong's competitive edges and shape a new momentum for Hong Kong's economic development.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB074

(Question Serial No. 0641)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The provision for 2025-26 is \$1,803.9 million (or 2 367.3%) higher than the revised estimate for 2024-25. This is mainly due to increased provision for salary and cash flow requirements for the setting up of life and health technology research institute(s) (LHTRI(s)) as well as a net increase of 1 post in 2025-26. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. by what criteria the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) assess the proposals submitted by institutions on the Subsidy Programme for the Setup of LHTRIs (Subsidy Programme), upon ITC's invitation at the end of February 2025;
2. the latest work progress of LHTRIs, including the specific timetable, performance indicators and cash flow allocation; and
3. the current staffing establishment and expenditure for the Subsidy Programme for LHTRIs; the title and main duties of the new post; and the expenditure involved in such addition.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Life and health technology industry is one of the key development directions of Hong Kong's innovation and technology (I&T). Out of the \$10 billion earmarked for the promotion of life and health technology, the Government sets aside \$6 billion to launch the Subsidy Programme for the Setup of Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s) (the Subsidy Programme), thereby supporting local universities to set up Life and Health Technology

Research Institute(s) (LHTRIs) to foster cross-university/institutional and multi-disciplinary collaboration.

The applicant institutions must be local universities funded by the University Grants Committee that have a medical school and/or are offering life and health disciplines. The LHTRIs should engage in basic research, translational research, and transformation of research and development (R&D) outcomes on themes related to life and health technology. The themes may include, but are not limited to, cell and gene therapy, bioinformatics and biology, biomedical engineering, advanced therapy, medical diagnostics, drug and vaccine development, and clinical trial. The applications will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- (i) standing and reputation of the scholars and scientists involved;
- (ii) relevance of the I&T components and research themes with government policies and how far they can benefit society;
- (iii) technical and management capability of the research teams and research collaboration;
- (iv) the financial sustainability of the proposal; and
- (v) commercial viability of the proposed research project outcomes, which enables the LHTRI to operate on a self-sustaining and financing basis in the long run.

At the end of October 2024, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) invited eligible local institutions to submit proposals on the Subsidy Programme by 30 April 2025. In submitting the applications, the institutions have to set out the relevant information of the proposed LHTRIs, including the collaborating institutions, objectives, expected deliverables, implementation plan, budget and key performance indicators (e.g. R&D outcomes, number of patents filed and granted, and nurturing of talents). We will assess the proposals received from the institutions. Where necessary, we will also invite the universities to submit proposals with more details. Successful applicant institutions are required to enter into agreements with the Government, and the relevant LHTRIs shall commence operation within 18 months from the signing of the agreements with the Government.

The initial estimation of the related cash flow under the Subsidy Programme is as follows:

Financial year	Estimated cash flow (\$ million)
2025-26	1,800
2026-27	1,800
2027-28	300
2028-29 and beyond	2,100
Total	6,000

ITC has set up the Secretariat to take forward the Subsidy Programme. Besides the deployment of existing resources, 5 new non-directorate posts are created for the Secretariat, including 1 Chief Executive Officer, 2 Executive Officers I, 1 Senior Scientific Officer and 1 Scientific Officer, to take up the relevant work. The approved additional salary expenditure is estimated at about \$5.97 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB075

(Question Serial No. 2078)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government has earmarked \$100 million for the launch of the two-year Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) this year. The Government will provide funding of up to \$250,000 each on a one-to-two matching basis to enterprises operating production lines in Hong Kong to support their formulation of smart production strategies and introduction of advanced technologies into existing production lines. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the objectives, positioning, eligibility, fund disbursement arrangement, scope of funding, implementation timetable, staffing establishment and expenditure of the Manufacturing+?
2. Is there any assessment of whether the funding amount of the Manufacturing+ is sufficient to encourage enterprises to formulate smart production strategies and to introduce advanced technology into existing production lines?
3. What are the expected benefits to the enterprises? Will any corresponding key performance indicators be set up? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

The Government will launch the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) under the Innovation and Technology Fund this year to provide local manufacturing enterprises with funding on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis, which aims at encouraging them to adopt smart production technology solutions, as well as to upgrade and transform the existing production lines. We are currently formulating

the details of Manufacturing+, including the application requirements as well as vetting and monitoring mechanisms. We will make reference to the modus operandi of other funding programmes in order to achieve optimal efficiency in the administrative arrangements such as staff deployment and expenditure estimation.

In determining the funding ceiling for the Manufacturing+, we have made references to the expenditure of projects previously funded under other funding programmes that had supported the manufacturing and production sector in enhancing productivity or upgrading and transforming production lines. The funding ratio for the Manufacturing+ is set at 1(Government) : 2(Company), such that a subsidy amount of up to \$250,000 can drive a total investment amount of \$750,000. We believe this amount is sufficient to incentivise most enterprises to consider carrying out projects which involve adoption of smart production technology solutions and upgrading of production lines.

Our objective is to support about 400 enterprises to transform and upgrade the production lines in 2 years after the launch of the Manufacturing+. We will review the effectiveness of the Manufacturing+ to consider the direction for development of the scheme after its launch.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB076

(Question Serial No. 2079)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government is preparing to launch the \$180 million Pilot Innovation and Technology (I&T) Accelerator Scheme. The Government will provide up to \$30 million in funding, on a one-to-two matching basis, to each professional start-up service agency. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the eligibility, fund disbursement arrangement, funding scope, implementation timetable, staffing establishment and expenditure of the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme?
2. What are the specific measures of the Government to liaise with professional start-up service agencies with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong for setting up accelerator bases in Hong Kong? What are the staffing establishment and expenditure involved?
3. Has the Government estimated which types of accelerators will be attracted to set up operations in Hong Kong? How will the Government evaluate the effectiveness of the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The \$180 million Pilot Innovation and Technology (I&T) Accelerator Scheme aims to attract professional start-up service providers with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to set up accelerator bases in Hong Kong, with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-ups ecosystem through their business network and experience. The Government will provide up to \$30 million in funding, on a 1:2 matching basis, to the selected professional start-up service providers.

We are preparing for the launch of the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme, including to identify a suitable implementation agent, formulate the implementation details (such as application criteria, vetting procedures, execution of the scheme, monitoring mechanism, performance indicators, timetable and promotion), etc. We expect to consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and seek funding approval from the LegCo within this year.

As the staff responsible for the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme also handle other duties, we do not maintain a breakdown of the manpower and expenditure for handling the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB077

(Question Serial No. 2080)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) will continue to oversee the implementation of the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) and the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS); meanwhile, it will also commence a study on the medium to long-term development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong to encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to upgrade and transform by making use of innovation and technology and strengthen the support for relevant professional services sectors. In this connection, would the Government advise this Committee on the following:

1. The number of applicant companies, the total project cost, the contributions from applicant companies, the funding amount and the effectiveness of the NIFS since its launch, with a breakdown by industry;
2. The number of applicant companies, the total project cost, the contributions from applicant companies, the funding amount and the effectiveness of the NIAS since its launch, with a breakdown by industry;
3. The specific work plan and timetable, as well as the staffing establishment and expenditure items for the study on the medium to long-term development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong; and
4. Further to the above, how will the relevant study create synergy with other funding schemes, such as the NIFS and the NIAS, in the promotion of new industrialisation?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

1. Since the launch of the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS), 63 applications were supported by the New Industrialisation Vetting Committee (Vetting Committee), involving more than 100 production lines with the total project cost of approximately \$1,314 million and the total funding amount of about \$384 million. The statistics with a breakdown by industrial sector are tabulated below:

Industrial sector	Number of applicant companies	Total project cost (approximate amount)	Matching fund from private companies (approximate amount)	Funding amount (approximate amount)
Food manufacturing and processing (including health food)	27	\$600 million	\$420 million	\$180 million
Biotechnology/ Pharmaceutical production (including Chinese medicine)	8	\$118 million	\$79 million	\$39 million
Printing	5	\$86 million	\$59 million	\$27 million
Textiles and clothing	4	\$117 million	\$79 million	\$38 million
Construction materials	4	\$46 million	\$31 million	\$15 million
Electronics	4	\$36 million	\$24 million	\$12 million
Equipment and parts	4	\$134 million	\$110 million	\$24 million
Nanofiber materials	3	\$79 million	\$54 million	\$25 million
Medical device/ medical and personal care	2	\$71 million	\$56 million	\$15 million
New energy/ green technology	2	\$27 million	\$18 million	\$8.9 million
Total	63	\$1,314 million	\$930 million	\$384 million

2. The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) launched the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) in September 2024. As at the end of February 2025, a total of 7 applications had been received under the NIAS. The Vetting Committee has supported one of the applications. The total investment amount for the project will be about \$600 million, of which the Government funding will amount to around \$200 million. Upon completion of projects and before the disbursement of the final instalment of funding, the funded enterprises shall provide

information to the Government on the benefits of the relevant production line, including the business turnover after the commissioning of the production line, as well as the number and types of new jobs created. We will assess the economic benefits brought by the NIAS based on the relevant information.

ITC is currently reviewing the remaining 6 applications, including seeking supplementary documents and information from the applicant companies to assist in the approval process. Upon receipt of the required documents and information, ITC will submit the applications to the Vetting Committee for consideration. The actual processing time for each application depends on various factors, such as the complexity of the cases as well as comprehensiveness and clarity of information submitted by the applicant company.

- 3.&4. To further optimise the strategy and institutional set-up for the development of “new industrialisation” and implement the top-level design and development path of the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology (I&T) Development Blueprint, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) will commence a study on the medium to long-term development of new industrialisation in Hong Kong to encourage the traditional manufacturing sector to upgrade and transform by making use of I&T and strengthen the support for relevant professional services, so as to expeditiously propel “new industrialisation” in a manner that manifests Hong Kong’s competitive edge.

ITIB will engage an experienced consultant with the necessary qualifications to conduct the study. The Government will require the consultant to proactively communicate with industry stakeholders and take heed of their views in order to provide a full picture of the status of the development of Hong Kong’s industries, while giving due consideration to the needs of various stakeholders, including the effectiveness of the existing funding schemes, and the challenges they are facing. The Government will announce the findings of the study in due course and formulate plans to help promote “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong.

ITIB will commence the study on the medium to long-term development of “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong within this year, and will oversee the work of the consultant with the Bureau’s manpower and resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB078

(Question Serial No. 2087)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Given that some research and development (R&D) centres under the *InnoHK* research clusters have similar working fields with the institutions proposed by the Government, such as the Hong Kong Generative Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Center under AIR@*InnoHK*, and the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute, which will be set up soon. In this regard, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. How will the Government ensure that the R&D projects under the *InnoHK* research clusters will not overlap with the work of other institutions?
2. Will the Government, when inviting R&D centres that have successfully passed the mid-term review to submit proposals for the second five-year plan, and when preparing to establish the third *InnoHK* research cluster, take a broad-based approach in considering how to align and co-ordinate other existing resources to achieve resource integration?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The *InnoHK* research clusters aim to capitalise on Hong Kong's advantage as a highly internationalised city to promote the development of Hong Kong into a global research collaboration hub, thereby consolidating the city's role as a bridge connecting the Mainland and the rest of the world. We have all along adopted the "no double subsidy" principle when vetting the funding of the research and development (R&D) centres, so as to ensure that the R&D projects under application would not receive other subsidies.

When inviting the R&D centres that have successfully passed the mid-term review to submit proposals for the second five-year period, and when inviting universities and research institutions to submit proposals for the third *InnoHK* research cluster, the Government encourages the R&D centres to actively look into the possibility of collaborating with other R&D centres so as to leverage the synergy effect and avoid duplication of resources, and will also take these factors into account when vetting the applications.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB079

(Question Serial No. 0555)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI) established last September:

1. What is the MRDI's latest progress on spearheading collaboration among universities, research and development (R&D) centres and the industry on the R&D of third-generation semiconductor core technology? How can the MRDI leverage the synergies and collaboration among Mainland cities, enterprises, universities, R&D institutions, etc. in the Greater Bay Area?
2. 2 pilot lines will be set up at the Microelectronics Centre in Yuen Long this year. What is the estimated earliest time next year for commencing their operation? In addition, was there any evaluation of the adequacy of 2 pilot lines? If they are insufficient for operation, will specific goals or timetables be drawn up for addition of pilot lines?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

1. The Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI) will establish effective multilateral collaborations with various stakeholders, including universities from the Mainland and overseas, research and development (R&D) institutions, the industry and relevant R&D Centres. Through these extensive and in-depth collaborations in nurturing talents, technological innovation and transformation of R&D outcomes, as well as leveraging the well-developed manufacturing industry chains in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), the MRDI will take forward the commercialisation of R&D outcomes and promote GBA to become a leader in world-class third-generation semiconductor industrial chains.

2. The MRDI is preparing the setup of 2 pilot lines at the Microelectronics Centre in Yuen Long this year, striving to put them into operation next year to support the product development and trial production. The MRDI will collaborate with the industry, including start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises, for pilot production, with a view to assisting them in addressing the pain points and achieving upgrading and transformation to promote technological innovation. The Government will continue to review and introduce appropriate measures to support the R&D and technological application of the semiconductor industry.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB080

(Question Serial No. 0629)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government has earmarked \$100 million for the launch of the two-year Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) this year. The Government will provide funding of up to \$250,000 on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis to enterprises operating production lines in Hong Kong. It is expected that some 400 enterprises will benefit from the Manufacturing+. In this regard, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the specific objectives, the application requirements and the approval and monitoring mechanisms of the Manufacturing+? When will it be launched and open for applications at the earliest?
2. What are the number of staff and estimated expenditure for vetting applications and overseeing the implementation of the scheme? Which entity will be responsible for vetting the applications? Will it be the Hong Kong Productivity Council?
3. On what basis was the funding ceiling of \$250,000 for each enterprise determined? Will the Government periodically review the implementation of the scheme and conduct a comprehensive review within the two-year period before the earmarked amount of \$100 million has been used up? In this connection, will the Government consider injecting additional fund, extending the period of implementation or making it a permanent scheme? If there will be such a review, what are the details? What criteria will be used in injecting additional fund, extending the period of implementation and making it a permanent scheme?
4. In assisting the enterprises with developing smart production strategies and introducing advanced technologies to the existing production lines, will the Government provide other kinds of support besides funding to the subsidised enterprises?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

- 1.&2. The Government will launch the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) this year to provide local manufacturing enterprises with funding on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis, which aims at encouraging them to adopt smart production technology solutions, as well as to upgrade and transform the existing production lines. We are currently formulating the details of the Manufacturing+, including the application requirements as well as the vetting and monitoring mechanisms. We will make reference to the modus operandi of other funding programmes in order to achieve optimal efficiency in the administrative arrangements such as staff deployment and expenditure estimation.
3. In determining the funding ceiling for the Manufacturing+, we have made references to the expenditure of projects previously funded under other funding programmes that had supported the manufacturing and production sector in enhancing productivity or upgrading and transforming production lines. The funding ratio for the Manufacturing+ is set at 1(Government) : 2(Company), such that a subsidy amount of up to \$250,000 can drive a total investment amount of \$750,000. We believe this amount is sufficient to incentivise most enterprises to consider carrying out projects which involve adoption of smart production technology solutions and upgrading of production lines. We will review the effectiveness of the Manufacturing+ to consider the direction for development of the scheme after its launch.
4. In addition to hardware, the funding scope of the Manufacturing+ will cover the consultancy fees for the relevant enterprises to formulate smart production strategies, the costs arising from the procurement and integration of smart technologies into existing production lines, as well as the relevant training and set-up expenses. Meanwhile, other relevant organisations, such as the Hong Kong Productivity Council, will continue to support enterprises in applying innovative technological solutions, including robotics, artificial intelligence, and big data analytics, etc. to facilitate the said enterprises in upgrading and transforming their production lines.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB081

(Question Serial No. 0783)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) will develop the InnoCentre in Kowloon Tong into a leading green technology hub – “GreenTech Hub”, bringing together more than 200 green technology companies. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the purpose of establishing the GreenTech Hub, and the major industries to which these green technology companies belong;
2. the estimated numbers of technology teams, talents and start-ups to be admitted;
3. whether the HKSTPC will proactively invite some advanced and leading technology enterprises or research teams for admission, and whether incentives will be offered to these enterprises;
4. the characteristics and strengths of the GreenTech Hub that may appeal to green technology companies of various industries to be admitted;
5. the expected numbers of financial and business institutions, universities, industry support organisations, etc. to accept the invitation as partners of the admitted enterprises, and the specific support to be provided by these partners for the admitted enterprises;
6. as regards the InnoCentre, of its annual occupancy rate, the numbers of admitted start-ups and enterprises as well as the industries to which they belong, the numbers of FinTech enterprises incubated, the numbers of unicorns nurtured, and the numbers of enterprises which have successfully obtained financing with its assistance as well as the amounts involved, in each of the past 3 years; and

7. as regards the start-ups and enterprises that are currently admitted to the InnoCentre, many of which are FinTech enterprises, of the future arrangement for them; whether there is a need for all to exit; and of the details and timetable for the arrangement?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

Green technology is one of the 5 innovation and technology (I&T) clusters of the Hong Kong Science Park. At present, the green technology ecosystem of the Science Park has brought together nearly 200 enterprises and over 2 000 green technology talents. To further promote the development of green technology, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) has added a new positioning of the InnoCentre as the green technology hub (GreenTech Hub) and, through setting up a green technology products showcase area, helps the industry partners identify suitable green solutions covering new energy, smart city, green building and green financial technology (FinTech), etc. In addition, HKSTPC, in collaboration with 16 strategic partners (including financial/business institutions, universities and industry support organisations, etc.), will build a green technology ecosystem to provide various supports to the green technology enterprises, including enhancing their understanding of green and sustainable finance, strengthening their connection with the industry to promote commercialisation, promoting industry-academia-research collaboration, and providing technical support, etc.

HKSTPC expects to attract around 30 green technology enterprises and about 150 green technology talents to the GreenTech Hub of the InnoCentre to create a clustering effect. In addition to HKSTPC's support services, enterprises at the InnoCentre can also enjoy relevant rent concessions in accordance with the established policy. HKSTPC will engage enterprises in other technology areas at the InnoCentre to discuss their operational arrangements, including providing assistance for their relocation to other HKSTPC's premises to continue operation upon expiration of tenancies.

The occupancy rate, the numbers of start-ups and enterprises admitted to the InnoCentre as well as the industries to which they belong in the past 3 financial years are tabulated as follows:

Business area	Number of enterprises		
	2022-23 (as at the end of March 2023)	2023-24 (as at the end of March 2024)	2024-25 (as at the end of February 2025)
Green technology	10	10	39
Financial technology	32	28	34
E-commerce	32	37	62

Business area	Number of enterprises		
	2022-23 (as at the end of March 2023)	2023-24 (as at the end of March 2024)	2024-25 (as at the end of February 2025)
Others (including design, electronics, and life and health technology)	13	11	7
Occupancy rate:	73%	68%	80%

According to the research on Hong Kong unicorns conducted by Invest Hong Kong, there is 1 Hong Kong unicorn with business operations at the InnoCentre at present. In respect of financing, a total of 12 enterprises at the InnoCentre, including 3 enterprises engaging in green technology, raised over HK\$900 million in the past 3 financial years.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB082

(Question Serial No. 1063)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Since the launch of the “super tax deduction” measure for research and development (R&D) expenditure, what are the amount of tax deduction, and the numbers of research institutions and enterprises involved so far? Is there any review on the effectiveness of this measure in incentivising private enterprises to invest in research; if yes, what are the results? For the next step, how will the Government encourage and incentivise more private enterprises to increase their research investments?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

The Government amended the Inland Revenue Ordinance in 2018 to provide enhanced tax deduction for qualifying research and development (R&D) expenditure incurred by enterprises on or after 1 April 2018. The deduction is 300% for the first \$2 million of the aggregate amount of the relevant expenditure, and 200% for the remaining amount. There is no cap on the amount of the relevant tax deduction. According to the information provided by the Inland Revenue Department (IRD), among the tax returns received as at 28 February 2025, there were 1 042 applications in total for claims for tax deduction on R&D expenditure over the past 5 years of assessment (from 2019/20 to 2023/24), involving an expenditure of about \$17.8 billion.

As to whether the applicants are research institutions or enterprises, the IRD does not keep a breakdown of the relevant figures.

The claims for tax deduction on R&D expenditure in the year of assessment 2023/24 amounted to about \$4.61 billion, which were more than double the amount of \$1.67 billion in the year of assessment 2017/18 (prior to the implementation of the measure). This indicated that the tax measure could attract and encourage enterprises to devote more resources in local

R&D activities. We will also review the implementation and effectiveness of the measure from time to time and make adjustments in a timely manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB083

(Question Serial No. 3184)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the Government's work on new industrialisation development in Hong Kong, please advise this Committee on the following:

- (1) Two rounds of application have been launched for the "Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme" (RAISe+ Scheme) since its launch in October 2023. The RAISe+ Scheme funds, on a matching basis, at least 100 research teams from the University Grants Committee-funded universities that have good potential to become successful start-ups in transforming and commercialising their research and development (R&D) outcomes. The funding amount for each approved project ranges from \$10 million to \$100 million. Please tabulate the applicant universities of projects, the amount of funding applied for, the stages of the projects (first stage: transformation and realisation of R&D outcomes; second stage: initiation of the commercialisation of R&D outcomes), the technology fields and details, as well as the estimated completion time of the projects.
- (2) As mentioned by the Government, the RAISe+ Scheme had attracted active participation of numerous enterprises in the Greater Bay Area (GBA), capitalising on the resources and strengths of Hong Kong and the GBA in the joint promotion of technology implementation and commercialisation. What are the specific details? Will the Government explain the details with examples and statistics?
- (3) How will the Government review the actual effectiveness of the RAISe+ Scheme in incentivising the industry-academia-research collaboration and promoting the transformation and commercialisation of R&D outcomes from universities?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme) aims to unleash the potential of local universities for transforming upstream research and development (R&D) outcomes and provide funding, on a matching basis, to research teams from universities which have good potential to become successful start-ups, so as to promote the commercialisation of excellent R&D outcomes of deep technology. A university team may, depending on the maturity of the transformation of its R&D outcomes, apply for participating in the RAISE+ Scheme from either the first stage (transformation and realisation of R&D outcomes) or the second stage (initiation of the commercialisation of R&D outcomes). Generally speaking, projects starting from the first stage will be completed in 5 years, and those starting from the second stage will be completed in 3 years. Two rounds of application have been launched for the RAISE+ Scheme so far. Among the 94 applications received in the first round, there were 87 and 7 applications submitted for the first and second stages respectively, of which 20 and 4 applications were approved respectively with a total funding amount of over \$1 billion and an average funding amount of over \$40 million for each project. The details of the first batch of 24 projects with support from the RAISE+ Scheme, including their titles and the applicant universities, are set out at Annex.

Among the 108 applications received in the second round, there were 98 and 10 applications submitted for the first and second stages respectively. As the Steering Committee of the RAISE+ Scheme is vetting the 108 applications received in the second round, the number of approved applications and relevant details are currently unavailable.

The RAISE+ Scheme welcomes the efforts of universities and research teams in attracting participation of various parties to unleash the potential of local universities in transformation and commercialisation of R&D outcomes, thereby enhancing the innovation and technology ecosystem of Hong Kong. The industry can support the projects by providing capital, sponsorship and in-kind contribution. In fact, some of the applications submitted by universities were able to attract participation of both local organisations and those outside Hong Kong (including organisations from the Greater Bay Area).

The Innovation and Technology Commission will devise overall performance indicators for the RAISE+ Scheme, such as the number of product outcomes transformed and realised, the external investments attracted, and whether the start-ups have further developed and grown, so as to closely monitor the implementation of the RAISE+ Scheme and evaluate the benefits it brings to Hong Kong.

First batch of projects with support from the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme)

	Project Title	University	Innovation and Technology Field
1	3D Vision-Driven Robots	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
2	Accessible Surgical Robotic System*	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
3	Advanced Point-of-care Molecular Systems for Clinical and Non-clinical Applications	Hong Kong Baptist University	Health and Medical Sciences
4	Agile Executive Terminal for Robots	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
5	Commercialisation of Electrochemical Technologies for Wastewater and Sludge Treatment	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Environmental, Agricultural and Marine Biotechnology
6	Commercialisation of Pulse Hollow Cone Hybrid Transmission Electron Microscope (TEM) / Scanning Electron Microscopes (SEM)	City University of Hong Kong	Advanced Manufacturing
7	Development of Genome-editing Strategy for Familial Alzheimer's Disease Therapy	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Health and Medical Sciences
8	Development of Personalised Advanced Therapeutic Products (ATPs) – Engineered Osteochondral Tissue (eOCT) for cartilage regeneration therapy	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Health and Medical Sciences
9	Energy-Efficient Liquid Cooling System for Data Centers	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Advanced Manufacturing

Note: Projects marked with an asterisk (*) are second-stage projects and others are first-stage projects.

	Project Title	University	Innovation and Technology Field
10	Innovative Molecular Emitters For Practical Organic Light-emitting Diodes (OLEDs) And Wearable Devices	The University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy
11	Intelligent Wearable Sensing Technologies for Eldercare and Prevention of Cardiovascular Diseases	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
12	Microfluidics-Based Detection Platform for Circulating Tumor Cells and Its Applications in Cancer Early Screening and Disease Monitoring	City University of Hong Kong	Health and Medical Sciences
13	Network Coding for Next Generation Networks	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
14	Next Generation High Performance Smart Digital Sensing Chip Solutions*	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Engineering
15	On-the-spot Cancer Imaging by CHAMP Microscopy	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
16	Pilot and Mass Production of Next-Generation Composite Current Collectors for Mobility and Energy Storage Batteries	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	New Materials and New Energy
17	Research and Development of Federated Learning Technology with Research Knowledge Graphs and Large Language Models for Digital Transformation of Science, Technology and Innovation Services*	City University of Hong Kong	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
18	Research and development of the lead Δ 42PD1 antibody drug as an immunotherapy against cancers and infections	The University of Hong Kong	Health and Medical Sciences

Note: Projects marked with an asterisk (*) are second-stage projects and others are first-stage projects.

	Project Title	University	Innovation and Technology Field
19	Revolutionising Climate Resilience: A Universal Solution via Next-Generation Radiative Cooling Technologies for a Greener Community	City University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy
20	Scalable Production of Next-Generation High-Performance Printable Solar Cells*	City University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy
21	SCD-2101: Research, Development and New Drug Application for functional constipation in the elderly	Hong Kong Baptist University	Chinese Medicine
22	Seeding the Future: Integrating Biotechnology, Space Technology and Artificial Intelligence of Things (AIoT) to Soybean Cultivation for Food Security and Environmental Solutions	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Environmental, Agricultural and Marine Biotechnology
23	Silicon Photonic Integrated Circuits for Sensing and Optical Interconnects	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
24	Transformative Proprietary Gold(III) Luminescent Materials for Innovative Applications	The University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy

Note: Projects marked with an asterisk (*) are second-stage projects and others are first- stage projects.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB084

(Question Serial No. 3186)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government is preparing to launch the \$180 million Pilot Innovation and Technology (I&T) Accelerator Scheme which will provide up to \$30 million in funding, on a one-to-two matching basis, to each professional start-up service agency, with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-ups ecosystem through their business network and experience.

- (1) The Chief Executive announced in the 2024 Policy Address that the Government would launch the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme, which aims to attract professional start-up service agencies with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to set up accelerator bases in Hong Kong, thereby fostering the robust growth of start-ups. According to online information, the 50 most active accelerators invested in about 7 800 global start-ups in 2022. Has the Government compiled statistics on the current number of public and private I&T accelerator organisations/enterprises in the Hong Kong market? What is the amount of investment involved?
- (2) What are the eligibility criteria for enterprises to benefit from the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme? What is the maximum target number of service agencies that can benefit from the Scheme?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Ho-ding, Holden (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

The \$180 million Pilot Innovation and Technology (I&T) Accelerator Scheme aims to attract professional start-up service providers with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to set up accelerator bases in Hong Kong, with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-ups ecosystem through their business network and experience. The Government will provide up to \$30 million in funding, on a 1:2 matching basis, to the selected professional start-up service providers. It is anticipated that the Scheme can attract at least 6 start-up service providers

to provide accelerator services. We do not maintain information on the number of start-up service providers in Hong Kong and their investment amounts.

We are preparing for the launch of the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme, including to identify a suitable implementation agent, formulate the implementation details (such as application criteria, vetting procedures, execution of the scheme, monitoring mechanism, performance indicators, timetable and promotion), etc. We expect to consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and seek funding approval from the LegCo within this year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB085

(Question Serial No. 3169)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It was announced in the Budget last year that the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) would double the maximum annual funding provided for the Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) of the 8 University Grants Committee-funded universities (8 universities) from \$8 million to \$16 million in order to promote the commercialisation of research and development (R&D) outcomes. In this regard, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the funding amounts received by the 8 universities since the provision of the relevant funding in 2013-14, with breakdowns by year and university;
2. the yearly numbers of patents filed by and granted to the TTOs of 8 universities with government funding, with a breakdown by university;
3. whether the Government has, after increasing the funding amount last year, evaluated the specific benefits brought to the promotion of commercialisation of R&D outcomes by the 8 universities; if so, the details; and
4. whether the Government will consider encouraging the universities to review and optimise the prevailing requirements on patent ownership, commercialisation income and engagement in outside work, etc. from the institutional perspective, so as to enhance the motivation, creativity and effectiveness of teaching and research staff in carrying out knowledge transfer work with better use of public funds; if so, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

1. to 3. Since 2013-14, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) has been providing extra funding through the Innovation and Technology Fund to the Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs) of the designated universities, with a view to enhancing their technology transfer capabilities, and supporting universities' scientific research talents to develop innovative ideas and research and development (R&D) outcomes into new products or services. The amounts of funding provided by ITC to the TTOs of the designated universities as well as the numbers of patents filed by and granted to these universities since the provision of the relevant funding in 2013-14 are set out at **Annex 1** and **Annex 2** respectively.

The funding is disbursed on an accountable and reimbursement basis after the close of each financial year. Since the funded universities will submit a certified reimbursement request and an annual report to ITC after the close of 2024-25, the relevant information following the increase of funding amount last year is currently unavailable.

4. According to the information provided by the funded universities, they have stipulated the policies and operational guidelines on handling the income generated from the commercialisation of R&D outcomes. The main beneficiaries of the income are inventors, their respective university faculties/departments and the central administrative/resource management departments of their respective universities. The relevant arrangements enable the universities to carry out patent and licensing activities more flexibly, thereby expediting technology transfer and promoting the commercialisation of R&D outcomes.

To promote the commercialisation of excellent R&D outcomes of deep technology, the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme launched by ITC in 2023 requires that the university teams/inventors should be entitled to no less than 70 per cent of the intellectual property (IP) benefits (for IPs generated by the teams/inventors during the project period), so as to provide greater incentive for university teams to commercialise R&D outcomes with transformation potential.

Funding Provided to the Technology Transfer Offices of the Designated Universities from 2013-14 to 2024-25

Designated universities	Funding amount (\$ million)											
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 ⁽¹⁾
City University of Hong Kong	2.15	3.98	4	4	4	4	8	8	8	8	8	16
Hong Kong Baptist University	4	3.98	4	4	4	4	8	7.97	8	8	8	16
Lingnan University ⁽²⁾	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	1.85	3.96	3.99	4	3.83	3.99	7.96	7.99	7.85	7.95	8	16
The Education University of Hong Kong ⁽³⁾	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.28	4.92	6.22	7.08	7.76	16
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	3.41	4	3.86	3.99	4	3.99	6.14	6.52	4.49	5.79	8	16
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	4	4	4	4	4	4	8	7.99	8	8	8	16
The University of Hong Kong	4	4	4	4	4	4	8	8	8	8	8	16
Total	19.41	23.91	23.85	23.99	23.82	23.98	49.38	51.38	50.56	52.82	55.76	128

Note⁽¹⁾: The estimated funding amounts in 2024-25 are the maximum amount of funding provided. Since the above funding is provided on an annual reimbursement basis, the universities will submit funding applications to ITC only after the end of each financial year. Therefore, the actual funding amounts are subject to confirmation upon ITC's approval of the applications concerned.

Note⁽²⁾: Starting from 2024-25, the relevant funding is provided to Lingnan University.

Note⁽³⁾: Starting from 2019-20, the relevant funding is provided to The Education University of Hong Kong.

Numbers of Patents Filed by and Granted to the Designated Universities

Designated universities	Numbers of patents filed ⁽¹⁾										
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
City University of Hong Kong	116	76	85	113	96	94	121	166	217	295	314
Hong Kong Baptist University	47	51	63	84	62	60	31	52	28	32	43
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	166	125	165	223	327	315	386	386	419	481	537
The Education University of Hong Kong ⁽²⁾	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	3	3	18	20
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	67	88	79	91	131	130	129	235	173	307	402
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	195	198	157	205	244	275	316	332	317	345	416
The University of Hong Kong	94	157	129	144	132	206	186	251	270	363	484
Total	685	695	678	860	992	1,080	1,173	1,425	1,427	1,841	2,216

Designated universities	Numbers of patents granted ⁽¹⁾										
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
City University of Hong Kong	22	32	44	57	70	45	78	77	132	103	111
Hong Kong Baptist University	6	13	41	31	40	45	35	51	24	32	18
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	136	58	83	132	185	202	257	226	264	260	349
The Education University of Hong Kong ⁽²⁾	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	0	9	8
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	46	73	54	43	52	55	79	81	98	130	155
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	80	93	162	134	143	112	122	205	218	288	385
The University of Hong Kong	24	50	60	64	67	66	67	110	80	90	121
Total	314	319	444	461	557	525	639	751	816	912	1,147

Note⁽¹⁾: Each university (including Lingnan University) will provide the numbers of patents granted in 2024-25 to ITC only after the end of the year. Therefore, the relevant figures for 2024-25 are currently unavailable.

Note⁽²⁾: Starting from 2019-20, the relevant funding is provided to The Education University of Hong Kong.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB086

(Question Serial No. 3282)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government will launch the two-year Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) this year. The Government will provide funding of up to \$250,000 each on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis to enterprises operating production lines in Hong Kong. The Government has earmarked \$100 million for the Manufacturing+, benefitting some 400 enterprises. In Programme, the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 also mentions that the Innovation and Technology Commission will launch the Manufacturing+. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. While the Manufacturing+ is in the pipeline, will the Government provide more relevant details, such as the timeline for accepting applications, the scope of funding to enterprises, and the definition of “introducing advanced technologies into existing production lines”?
2. The Government anticipates that the Manufacturing+ will benefit 400 enterprises in total in the next 2 years. What are the additional manpower and estimated expenditure for its vetting process in the next year?

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 41)

Reply:

The Government will launch the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) under the Innovation and Technology Fund this year to provide local manufacturing enterprises with funding on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis, which aims at encouraging them to adopt smart production technology solutions, as well as to upgrade and transform the existing production lines. In addition to hardware, the funding scope of the Manufacturing+ will cover the consultancy fees for the relevant

enterprises to formulate smart production strategies, the costs arising from the procurement and integration of smart technologies into existing production lines, as well as the relevant training and set-up expenses. We are currently formulating the details of the Manufacturing+, including the application requirements as well as the vetting and monitoring mechanisms. We will make reference to the modus operandi of other funding programmes in order to achieve optimal efficiency in the administrative arrangements such as staff deployment and expenditure estimation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB087

(Question Serial No. 3365)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In order to incentivise the industry-academia-research collaboration and further promote the “1 to N” transformation of research and development (R&D) outcomes and industry development, the Government launched the “Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme” (RAISe+ Scheme) in October 2023 to fund, on a matching basis, research teams from universities which have good potential to become successful start-ups. It is stated in the Programme that the Innovation and Technology Commission will continue to implement the RAISe+ Scheme in 2025-2026. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

Since the commencement of the application period for the RAISe+ Scheme, what were the total numbers of applications received and approved by the Government respectively? Please set out the titles of applying and approved projects joining from the first and second stages, names of the applicant organisations and amounts of funding approved.

Asked by: Hon CHOW Man-kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 42)

Reply:

The Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) aims to unleash the potential of local universities for transforming upstream research and development (R&D) outcomes and provide funding, on a matching basis, to research teams from universities which have good potential to become successful start-ups, so as to promote the commercialisation of excellent R&D outcomes of deep technology. A university team may, depending on the maturity of the transformation of its R&D outcomes, apply for participation in the RAISe+ Scheme from either the first stage (transformation and realisation of R&D outcomes) or the second stage (initiation of the commercialisation of R&D outcomes). Two rounds of application have been launched for the RAISe+ Scheme so far. Among the 94 applications received in the first round, there were 87 and 7 applications

submitted for the first and second stages respectively, of which 20 and 4 applications were approved respectively with a total funding amount of over \$1 billion and an average funding amount of over \$40 million for each project. The details of the 24 approved projects, including their titles and the applicant universities, are set out at **Annex**. As the Steering Committee of the RAISE+ Scheme is vetting the 108 applications received in the second round, the number of approved applications and relevant details are currently unavailable.

First batch of projects with support from the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme)

	Project Title	University	Innovation and Technology Field
1	3D Vision-Driven Robots	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
2	Accessible Surgical Robotic System*	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
3	Advanced Point-of-care Molecular Systems for Clinical and Non-clinical Applications	Hong Kong Baptist University	Health and Medical Sciences
4	Agile Executive Terminal for Robots	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
5	Commercialisation of Electrochemical Technologies for Wastewater and Sludge Treatment	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Environmental, Agricultural and Marine Biotechnology
6	Commercialisation of Pulse Hollow Cone Hybrid Transmission Electron Microscope (TEM) / Scanning Electron Microscopes (SEM)	City University of Hong Kong	Advanced Manufacturing
7	Development of Genome-editing Strategy for Familial Alzheimer's Disease Therapy	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Health and Medical Sciences
8	Development of Personalised Advanced Therapeutic Products (ATPs) – Engineered Osteochondral Tissue (eOCT) for cartilage regeneration therapy	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Health and Medical Sciences
9	Energy-Efficient Liquid Cooling System for Data Centers	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Advanced Manufacturing

Note: Projects marked with an asterisk (*) are second-stage projects and others are first-stage projects.

	Project Title	University	Innovation and Technology Field
10	Innovative Molecular Emitters For Practical Organic Light-emitting Diodes (OLEDs) And Wearable Devices	The University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy
11	Intelligent Wearable Sensing Technologies for Eldercare and Prevention of Cardiovascular Diseases	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
12	Microfluidics-Based Detection Platform for Circulating Tumor Cells and Its Applications in Cancer Early Screening and Disease Monitoring	City University of Hong Kong	Health and Medical Sciences
13	Network Coding for Next Generation Networks	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
14	Next Generation High Performance Smart Digital Sensing Chip Solutions*	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Engineering
15	On-the-spot Cancer Imaging by CHAMP Microscopy	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
16	Pilot and Mass Production of Next-Generation Composite Current Collectors for Mobility and Energy Storage Batteries	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	New Materials and New Energy
17	Research and Development of Federated Learning Technology with Research Knowledge Graphs and Large Language Models for Digital Transformation of Science, Technology and Innovation Services*	City University of Hong Kong	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
18	Research and development of the lead Δ 42PD1 antibody drug as an immunotherapy against cancers and infections	The University of Hong Kong	Health and Medical Sciences

Note: Projects marked with an asterisk (*) are second-stage projects and others are first-stage projects.

	Project Title	University	Innovation and Technology Field
19	Revolutionising Climate Resilience: A Universal Solution via Next-Generation Radiative Cooling Technologies for a Greener Community	City University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy
20	Scalable Production of Next-Generation High-Performance Printable Solar Cells*	City University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy
21	SCD-2101: Research, Development and New Drug Application for functional constipation in the elderly	Hong Kong Baptist University	Chinese Medicine
22	Seeding the Future: Integrating Biotechnology, Space Technology and Artificial Intelligence of Things (AIoT) to Soybean Cultivation for Food Security and Environmental Solutions	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Environmental, Agricultural and Marine Biotechnology
23	Silicon Photonic Integrated Circuits for Sensing and Optical Interconnects	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
24	Transformative Proprietary Gold(III) Luminescent Materials for Innovative Applications	The University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy

Note: Projects marked with an asterisk (*) are second-stage projects and others are first- stage projects.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB088

(Question Serial No. 1714)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the key performance indicators of the General Support Programme (GSP), it is noted that the number of applications received and processed in 2024 has increased by nearly 100 from that in 2023. To have a further understanding of the GSP's operation, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the average time required for completing the vetting process of the GSP, measured from the time of receiving the applications;
- (2) the average success rate of applications for the GSP; and
- (3) the content types of projects currently approved under the GSP and the average amount of funding?

Asked by: Hon CHU Kwok-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The General Support Programme (GSP) aims to support non-research and development (R&D) projects that contribute to the upgrading and development of industry in Hong Kong, the fostering of innovation and technology culture as well as the promotion of popular science. GSP-funded activities are diversified, covering conferences, exhibitions, seminars, workshops, promotional activities, popular science activities, activities that support upgrading and development of industry, etc.

GSP invites applications for funding all year round. There are a total of 3 cut-off periods each year with the deadlines normally falling in February, June, and October. The GSP

Secretariat will check the eligibility and completeness of the applications received and may seek clarification or supplementary information from the applicants if necessary. Taking the cut-off period in February as an example, the applications submitted in that cut-off period will normally be considered by the GSP Vetting Committee (Vetting Committee) between June and August of the same year in accordance with the established and open assessment framework. The details of both the assessment framework and the GSP-funded activities are available on the website of the Innovation and Technology Commission.

The GSP Secretariat received a total of 212 applications in 2024. Based on the above vetting procedures and periods, the Vetting Committee has completed 2 rounds of vetting and processed 138 applications in total, of which 44 were approved, with a success rate of about 32%. The average amount of funding was approximately \$2.2 million. The remaining applications will be processed in the vetting period from February to April 2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB089

(Question Serial No. 1888)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

To support local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to make good use of technology to improve their business processes, the Government launched the Technology Voucher Programme (TVP) in 2016, which officially ceased on 31 December 2024. Regarding the application figures set out in Programme (3), please inform this Committee of the following:

1. How many enterprises were supported by the TVP, and how many projects were involved? Since the increase in funding ceiling from \$200,000 to \$600,000 in 2020, how many successful enterprises were there every year, what were the average funding amount sought and approved per application, and how were the successful applicants distributed by industry? Are there any statistics on the number of projects involving bid-rigging and fraud with prosecution and enforcement measures being taken?
2. Has the Government reviewed the effectiveness of the TVP since its launch, including the manpower involved, the vetting procedures and processing time, and its actual benefits on the digital development for SMEs in Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

1. The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) launched the Technology Voucher Programme (TVP) in November 2016. As at end of February 2025, a total of 37 582 applications have been approved under the TVP (each application covers 1 project) with an average approved funding amount of about \$178,000. A total of 35 040 enterprises have benefitted from the TVP. Since 2020, the number of approved applications and the amount of funding approved in each year are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of applications approved ^{Note 1}	Amount of funding approved (\$ million)
2020	1 536	251.25
2021	3 787	589.07
2022	12 387	2,166.81
2023	10 906	2,078.21
2024	6 691	1,253.12
2025 (as at end of February)	523	97.95

Note 1: Some enterprises may have more than 1 application approved.

Note 2: The Government has ceased accepting TVP applications after 31 December 2024. The TVP Secretariat will continue to process applications received on or before 31 December 2024.

The major types of business of the above approved applications since 2020 are tabulated below:

Major types of business ^{Note 3}	Number of applications approved
Wholesale and retail	13 273
Restaurants and hotels	3 071
Engineering	2 466
Personal care services	2 233
Education services	1 648
Import and export trade	1 522
Transportation and logistics	1 255
Advertisement, sales and marketing	1 082
Professional services (including legal and accounting services)	1 008
Banking, insurance and other financial services	702

Note 3: Listed in the table are the 10 major types of business. More than 1 type of business can be selected for each application.

ITC carefully reviews the details of each application. If any suspicious cases were identified, they would be immediately referred to law enforcement agencies for follow-up. Cases involving illegal conduct and the details of prosecution and enforcement measures taken fall within the purview of law enforcement agencies. ITC does not maintain the relevant statistics.

2. ITC closely monitors the implementation of the TVP, conducts reviews and introduces enhancement measures from time to time, including streamlining the application assessment process to reduce work procedures, and appointing the Hong Kong Productivity Council as the implementation partner of the TVP, leveraging on its manpower and sound experience to enhance efficiency in processing applications.

To assess the effectiveness of the TVP on the funded enterprises/organisations, ITC requires enterprises/organisations to submit evaluation reports 6 months after project completion on whether the project could achieve the objectives of improving productivity, or upgrading or transforming their business processes. As at mid-2024, 7 443 funded enterprises/organisations had already completed their projects and submitted evaluation reports to ITC. 99% of them were of the view that the projects were conducive to enhancing their competitiveness, saving manpower, time and/or cost, or upgrading/transforming/streamlining their business processes.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB090

(Question Serial No. 1891)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

To tie in with the international trend of technological and industrial transformation and promote the development of diversified economy in Hong Kong, the Government launched the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) in September 2024 to attract more enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance to set up operations in Hong Kong and enlarge the research talent pool, with a view to bringing substantial economic benefits to Hong Kong in the long run. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. What are the details of financial expenditure for the NIAS since its launch, including the total amount of approved funding and the average amount of funding received by the enterprises? What are the proportions of funding allocated to the 3 major industries, namely life and health technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies?
2. Has the Government evaluated the economic benefits brought by the NIAS since its launch, including the amount of new investment in the funded enterprises, the number of employment opportunities created as well as the building progress and expected output value of the smart production facilities?
3. In view of the above outcomes, has the Government any plans to make some adjustments and put in place enhancement measures, including the revision of NIAS funding conditions and eligibility in the future?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) launched the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) in September 2024, providing funding for enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance (namely life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies) to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. The NIAS funding will be provided on a 1(Government) : 2(enterprise) matching basis. The minimum total project cost of a project is \$300 million (i.e. the enterprise has to contribute no less than \$200 million), while the total amount of government funding for each enterprise is up to \$200 million. We expect that the NIAS can encourage more enterprises from industries of strategic importance to establish smart production facilities in Hong Kong to promote the development of downstream industries in Hong Kong and create more quality employment opportunities.

Meanwhile, we hope to attract the enterprises concerned to set up large-scale research and development centres in Hong Kong through the Research Talent Hub for Companies Subsidised under the NIAS, so as to further promote multi-pronged collaboration among the industry, academic and research sectors as well as to enhance and elevate the innovation and technology ecosystem of Hong Kong, thereby creating more opportunities for research talents.

As at the end of February 2025, the New Industrialisation Vetting Committee had supported the first application, and the project falls under the life and health technology industry. The total investment amount for the project will be about \$600 million, of which the Government funding will amount to around \$200 million.

Through the NIAS, the Government aims to attract 50 to 100 enterprises to set up new production facilities in Hong Kong with a corresponding direct investment of no less than \$20 billion from these enterprises over a period of 5 to 8 years. Upon completion of projects and before the disbursement of the final instalment of funding, the funded enterprises shall provide information to the Government on the benefits of the relevant production line, including the business turnover after the commissioning of the production line and the number and types of new jobs created. We will assess the economic benefits brought by the NIAS based on the relevant information. Subject to the actual circumstances of implementing the NIAS, ITC will review the various arrangements in a timely manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB091

(Question Serial No. 1580)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development
(2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship
(3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. Regarding the 3 Schemes namely “Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme” (RAISE+ Scheme), “New Industrialisation Funding Scheme” (NIFS), and “New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme” (NIAS), what were the numbers of applications received and projects approved, project details (including project titles, funding details of the projects, information of the applicant enterprises/institutions, committed investment amounts by enterprises/institutions, amounts of funding granted under the Schemes) and their remaining provisions in the past 2 years?
2. What were the expenditure, manpower, revenues and transformation details of research and development (R&D) outcomes of the 5 R&D Centres (namely the Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute, Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel, Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre, and Nano and Advanced Materials Institute) under the Government in the past 3 years?
3. What are the existing manpower and estimated expenditure for the newly-established Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI)? What is the progress of establishment so far?

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

1. The consolidated reply regarding the “Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme” (RAISE+ Scheme), “New Industrialisation Funding Scheme” (NIFS), and “New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme” (NIAS) is as follows:

Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme)

Two rounds of application have been processed since the launch of the RAISE+ Scheme in October 2023. Among the 94 applications received in the first round, 24 of them were approved with a total funding amount of over \$1 billion and the average funding amount for each project over \$40 million. The details of the 24 approved projects, including their project titles, funding details and applicant universities, are set out at Annex 1. As the Steering Committee of the RAISE+ Scheme is vetting the 108 applications received in the second round, the number of approved applications and other details, including the remaining provision, are currently unavailable.

New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS)

The NIFS subsidises manufacturers, on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis, to set up new smart production lines in Hong Kong. The funding ceiling for each project is one-third of the total project cost or \$15 million, whichever is lower. Over 100 new smart production lines were supported by the NIFS, covering various industries such as biotechnology, nanofibre materials and new energy, etc. The NIFS is one of the funding schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF), and the general provision for the ITF can still cover the amount of funding for the NIFS. The numbers of applications and relevant figures for the NIFS in 2023-24 and 2024-25 are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of applications	Number of applications supported	Total project cost (approximate)	Matching fund from applicant companies (approximate)	Funding amount (approximate)
2023-24	17	13	\$133 million	\$89 million	\$44 million
2024-25	30	25	\$364 million	\$245 million	\$119 million
Total	47	38^{Note}	\$497 million	\$334 million	\$163 million

Note: As at February 2025, a total of 38 applications were supported by the Vetting Committee over the past 2 years, with 19 of them signed the funding agreements. The applicants, their industrial sectors and the details of their projects are Cat Dynamics (whiskey manufacturing), People Printing Press (printing), Nestle Hong Kong (packaging line for ice-cream cone), SML (Hong Kong) (Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Chip manufacturing), Han-Fang Chinese Medicine (Chinese medicine formula granules), Nin Jiom Medicine (package for Chinese herbal products), PDS Technology Electronic (printed circuit board assembly), Richwell Pharmaceutical (Chinese medicine manufacturing), Grant

Technology (Hong Kong) (culture media for microbiology manufacturing), TruCare Enterprise (wet wipes manufacturing), Jintech Semiconductor (semiconductor memory wafer/die testing), K Wah Concrete (ready mixed concrete manufacturing), Luxembourg Medicine (medicine packaging), G Bean HK Holding (soy milk manufacturing), Bless International Group (cold pressed fruit juice manufacturing), Unicorn Courage (central kitchen), Vitasoy International Holdings (drinks sterilisation), Promise Network Printing (printing) and J & S Printing Company (printing). For the other 19 applications which the Vetting Committee has agreed to support, the Secretariat is following up on the comments of the Vetting Committee on the applications with the applicant companies, so as to finalise the details of their plans and the contents of the funding agreements. After the applicant companies concerned signed the funding agreements, the information of the projects will be uploaded to the website of the ITF for public viewing.

New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS)

The Innovation and Technology Commission launched the NIAS in September 2024. As at the end of February 2025, a total of 7 applications had been received under the NIAS, and the New Industrialisation Vetting Committee had supported the application from Jean-Marie Pharmacal Company Limited covering the life and health technology sector. The project plans to set up smart production lines for sterilised eye drops, oral solid dose and oral liquid dose. The total investment amount of the project is about \$600 million, of which the Government funding will amount to around \$200 million.

2. In the past 3 financial years (i.e. from 2021-22 to 2023-24), the operating expenditure, research and development (R&D) expenditure, number of staff, industry and other income, and commercialisation and other income of the 5 R&D Centres (namely the Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute, Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel, Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre, and Nano and Advanced Materials Institute) are set out at **Annex 2**.
3. The Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI) was established in September 2024, and its Chief Executive Officer assumed office in January 2025 to take forward the establishment of the MRDI. As at the end of February 2025, the MRDI had a total of 23 employees, aiming to build a team with around 200 staff in an orderly manner. Apart from the management and administrative support personnel, the MRDI will set up 4 R&D divisions dedicated to the process and technology, design and application, packaging and modules, as well as quality control and reliability of the third-generation semiconductor wafers. The MRDI is preparing the setup of 2 pilot lines at the Microelectronics Centre in Yuen Long this year, striving to put them into operation next year to support the product development and trial production. In 2025-26, the Government has earmarked HK\$1.91 billion for the MRDI, with approximately HK\$1.73 billion allocated for procuring pilot lines equipment and around HK\$180 million for covering the MRDI's operating expenditure.

First batch of projects with support from the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme)

	Project Title	University	Innovation and Technology Field
1	3D Vision-Driven Robots	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
2	Accessible Surgical Robotic System*	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
3	Advanced Point-of-care Molecular Systems for Clinical and Non-clinical Applications	Hong Kong Baptist University	Health and Medical Sciences
4	Agile Executive Terminal for Robots	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
5	Commercialisation of Electrochemical Technologies for Wastewater and Sludge Treatment	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Environmental, Agricultural and Marine Biotechnology
6	Commercialisation of Pulse Hollow Cone Hybrid Transmission Electron Microscope (TEM) / Scanning Electron Microscopes (SEM)	City University of Hong Kong	Advanced Manufacturing
7	Development of Genome-editing Strategy for Familial Alzheimer's Disease Therapy	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Health and Medical Sciences
8	Development of Personalised Advanced Therapeutic Products (ATPs) – Engineered Osteochondral Tissue (eOCT) for cartilage regeneration therapy	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Health and Medical Sciences
9	Energy-Efficient Liquid Cooling System for Data Centers	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Advanced Manufacturing

Note: Projects marked with an asterisk (*) are second-stage projects and others are first-stage projects.

	Project Title	University	Innovation and Technology Field
10	Innovative Molecular Emitters For Practical Organic Light-emitting Diodes (OLEDs) And Wearable Devices	The University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy
11	Intelligent Wearable Sensing Technologies for Eldercare and Prevention of Cardiovascular Diseases	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
12	Microfluidics-Based Detection Platform for Circulating Tumor Cells and Its Applications in Cancer Early Screening and Disease Monitoring	City University of Hong Kong	Health and Medical Sciences
13	Network Coding for Next Generation Networks	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
14	Next Generation High Performance Smart Digital Sensing Chip Solutions*	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Engineering
15	On-the-spot Cancer Imaging by CHAMP Microscopy	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
16	Pilot and Mass Production of Next-Generation Composite Current Collectors for Mobility and Energy Storage Batteries	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	New Materials and New Energy
17	Research and Development of Federated Learning Technology with Research Knowledge Graphs and Large Language Models for Digital Transformation of Science, Technology and Innovation Services*	City University of Hong Kong	Artificial Intelligence and Robotics
18	Research and development of the lead $\Delta 42PD1$ antibody drug as an immunotherapy against cancers and infections	The University of Hong Kong	Health and Medical Sciences

Note: Projects marked with an asterisk (*) are second-stage projects and others are first-stage projects.

	Project Title	University	Innovation and Technology Field
19	Revolutionising Climate Resilience: A Universal Solution via Next-Generation Radiative Cooling Technologies for a Greener Community	City University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy
20	Scalable Production of Next-Generation High-Performance Printable Solar Cells*	City University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy
21	SCD-2101: Research, Development and New Drug Application for functional constipation in the elderly	Hong Kong Baptist University	Chinese Medicine
22	Seeding the Future: Integrating Biotechnology, Space Technology and Artificial Intelligence of Things (AIoT) to Soybean Cultivation for Food Security and Environmental Solutions	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Environmental, Agricultural and Marine Biotechnology
23	Silicon Photonic Integrated Circuits for Sensing and Optical Interconnects	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	Electrical and Electronic Engineering
24	Transformative Proprietary Gold(III) Luminescent Materials for Innovative Applications	The University of Hong Kong	New Materials and New Energy

Note: Projects marked with an asterisk (*) are second-stage projects and others are first- stage projects.

**The operating expenditure, research and development expenditure,
number of staff, industry and other income, and
commercialisation and other income of the 5 R&D Centres**

R&D Centres	Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre						
Operating expenditure (\$ million)		20.6	19.7	23.8	26.8	29.4
R&D expenditure (\$ million)		48.7	49.9	77.9	70.9	79.7
Number of staff		30	27	27	31	58
Industry and other income (\$ million)		12	28.5	26.6	28.3	26
Commercialisation and other income (\$ million)		2.6	2.2	3.4	12.5	13.5
Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute						
Operating expenditure (\$ million)		170.2	174	181.8	186.5	202.1
R&D expenditure (\$ million)		358.6	333.2	298.7	284.6	318.4
Number of staff		630	626	533	593	751
Industry and other income (\$ million)		117	65.5	121.9	112.6	154
Commercialisation and other income (\$ million)		25.9	10	43.3	48.3	95.1
Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel						
Operating expenditure (\$ million)		39.2	42.2	41.2	47.3	54.2
R&D expenditure (\$ million)		82.2	59.2	68.8	67.5	72.9
Number of staff		78	75	102	108	107
Industry and other income (\$ million)		42.4	23.6	26.5	63.4	26.6
Commercialisation and other income (\$ million)		29.3	5.6	13	39.4	11.4

R&D Centres	Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre						
Operating expenditure (\$ million)		42.5	45.6	66.6	82.7	70.8
R&D expenditure (\$ million)		96.7	86.7	112.4	145.4	171.5
Number of staff		135	164	160	174	218
Industry and other income (\$ million)		25.3	52.6	31.1	33.9	38.6
Commercialisation and other income (\$ million)		16	24.1	21.1	14.4	17.1
Nano and Advanced Materials Institute						
Operating expenditure (\$ million)		78.7	79.8	96	108.6	115.9
R&D expenditure (\$ million)		120	128.9	146.3	146.9	156.2
Number of staff		240	252	265	254	256
Industry and other income (\$ million)		57.4	55.4	65.6	55.3	58.7
Commercialisation and other income (\$ million)		12.3	17.8	14.1	14.6	21.8

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**ITIB092****(Question Serial No. 1595)**

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the implementation of the Technology Talent Admission Scheme, would the Government inform this Committee of the changes in application cases, the applicants' origins, and the industries the applicants are engaged in for each year before and after the enhancements being introduced in 2022?

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

Launched in December 2022, the enhancement measures for the Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) include lifting the local employment requirement, extending the quota validity period to two years, and expanding the coverage to more emerging technology areas to fit in with the innovation and technology development in Hong Kong. In the past five years (as at January 2025), the Innovation and Technology Commission has received a total of 1 153 applications for quotas under TechTAS, and 793 quotas were allotted. Relevant numbers are tabulated by years as follows:

Quotas	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24	2024-25 (as at January 2025)	Total
			April - December 2022	January - March 2023			
Number applied	298	94	103	91	403	164	1 153
Number allotted	220	66	71	81	213	142	793

The Immigration Department approved a total of 491 visa/entry permit applications in accordance with the relevant quotas. The technology areas involved and their respective regions are categorised as follows:

Technology area	Number of non-local persons approved for entry under TechTAS						
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24	2024-25 (as at January 2025)	Total
			April- December 2022	January- March 2023			
Artificial intelligence	26	17	10	1	36	38	128
Biotechnology	17	8	10	11	24	9	79
Cybersecurity	8	1	1	0	5	8	23
Data analytics	15	6	4	1	15	7	48
Financial technologies	14	3	9	9	8	9	52
Material science	13	5	12	2	5	5	42
Robotics	11	3	0	0	7	5	26
Advanced communication technologies^	11	4	0	0	1	5	21
Internet-of-Things	4	1	0	1	4	1	11
Digital entertainment	0	0	3	4	5	2	14
Integrated circuit design	2	3	0	1	3	6	15
Green technology	1	2	1	2	8	6	20
Microelectronics	0	0	0	0	4	8	12
Quantum technology	Not applicable^		0	0	0	0	0
Total	122	53	50	32	125	109	491

^ The Government expanded the coverage of TechTAS on 28 December 2022 to include 1 new technology area (i.e. quantum technology) and rename 5G communications as advanced communication technologies.

Region	Number of non-local persons approved for entry under TechTAS						
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24	2024-25 (as at January 2025)	Total
			April- December 2022	January- March 2023			
Mainland China	70	35	39	25	115	97	381
USA	1	7	2	0	2	2	14
Australia	2	1	1	0	0	2	6
Others	49	10	8	7	8	8	90
Total	122	53	50	32	125	109	491

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB093

(Question Serial No. 1636)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Innovation and Technology Commission is responsible for administering the Research Talent Hub (RTH). What were the expenditures involved for the RTH, the numbers of applications received and approved, the numbers of talents and the numbers of research talents receiving the provisions, with a breakdown by education level, in the past 3 financial years?

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 41)

Reply:

In the past 3 financial years (i.e. from 2022-23 to 2024-25 (as at 31 January 2025)), a total of 6 773 research talent applications were received and processed under the Research Talent Hub (RTH), of which 5 372 were granted funding support, involving a total amount of about \$3.7 billion. Among the research talents receiving funding support, 1 162 of them were bachelor's degree holders, 1 481 were master's degree holders, and 2 729 were doctoral degree holders.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB094

(Question Serial No. 1292)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the work of the 5 Research and Development (R&D) Centres (namely the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute (ASTRI), Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI), Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA), Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre (LSCM), and Nano and Advanced Materials Institute (NAMI)) under the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC), will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the breakdowns of the (i) funded R&D projects, (ii) R&D projects which have been successfully commercialised, and (iii) relevant expenditures of the 5 R&D Centres in the past 5 years;
- (2) the numbers of projects with their funding support suspended or terminated, and the reasons (e.g. expired sponsorship, difference between the actual progress and the scheduled progress, slim chance of project completion in accordance with the project plan, and non-conformity of the original project objectives to industry needs) with a breakdown by R&D Centre in the past 5 years;
- (3) whether the Government has set any key performance indicators (e.g. number of projects to be successfully commercialised every year) for the R&D work of the various R&D Centres; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons; and
- (4) whether the Government will review the funding criteria for the R&D projects of the 5 R&D Centres in a timely manner and formulate measures to ensure the proper use of funding; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon IP LAU Suk-ye, Regina (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

As the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI) was just established in September 2024 and is expected to commence new projects in 2025-26, the relevant statistics are currently unavailable. The number of new projects commenced by and relevant project costs of the remaining 4 Research and Development (R&D) Centres (namely the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute (ASTRI), Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA), Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre (LSCM), and Nano and Advanced Materials Institute (NAMI)) in the past 5 financial years (i.e. from 2019-20 to 2023-24) are as follows:

4 R&D Centres \ Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
ASTRI					
Number of new projects commenced	46	34	42	45	40
Relevant project cost (\$ million)	504.3	281.9	338.8	313.2	332.3
HKRITA					
Number of new projects commenced	12	22	20	21	20
Relevant project cost (\$ million)	61.9	87.5	77	86	71.3
LSCM					
Number of new projects commenced	25	25	25	26	27
Relevant project cost (\$ million)	159.6	145.4	147.6	149.1	153
NAMI					
Number of new projects commenced	43	42	52	42	44
Relevant project cost (\$ million)	158	172.1	201.5	192.9	200

The R&D Centres bear the public mission of conducting technology transfer to the industry. In addition, some of the new projects commenced by the 4 R&D Centres in the past 5 financial years are still ongoing, while some of the completed ones are upstream (exploratory in nature) and midstream seed or platform R&D projects by which the technical foundations of downstream projects were laid. These projects still have some miles to go before reaching the commercialisation stage. For the downstream projects just completed, it takes time for the R&D Centres to take forward the commercialisation work, such as carrying out promotional activities, discussing with industry partners the way to commercialisation and fine-tuning the technical details. Meanwhile, for projects which have successfully achieved

commercialisation and/or technology transfer, they could be a conglomeration of several R&D outcomes from different R&D projects conducted in different time periods. Therefore, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) does not keep the information on the numbers of new projects which have successfully achieved commercialisation and the expenditures involved in the past 5 financial years. However, in order to measure effectively the commercialisation work of the 4 R&D Centres by way of performance indicators, ITC has been collecting the statistics on commercialisation and other incomes of these R&D Centres in each financial year. The commercialisation and other incomes of the 4 R&D Centres in the past 5 financial years are tabulated as follows:

4 R&D Centres	Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	Commercialisation and other incomes (\$ million)					
ASTRI		25.9	10	43.3	48.3	95.1
HKRITA		29.3	5.6	13	39.4	11.4
LSCM		16	24.1	21.1	14.4	17.1
NAMI		12.3	17.8	14.1	14.6	21.8

Among the new projects commenced by the 4 R&D Centres in the past 5 financial years, the numbers of withdrawn or terminated projects are as follows:

4 R&D Centres	Number of withdrawn or terminated projects	
ASTRI	0	
HKRITA		
- <i>Industry partners were unable to provide sponsorship as scheduled</i>	3	4
- <i>Project coordinators resigned</i>	1	
LSCM - <i>Industry partners were unable to provide sponsorship as scheduled</i>	4	
NAMI	0	

In order to have a comprehensive assessment of the work progress and performance (including research work) of the R&D Centres in various aspects, the Government has adopted the following 6 indicators since 2017-18, including the level of industry income, number of on-going projects involving industry participation, number of companies participating in on-going projects, number of organisations benefitting from the Public Sector Trial Scheme, number of researchers engaged under the Research Talent Hub, and number of patents filed and granted.

Generally speaking, the R&D Centres are required to submit project proposals to the Technology Committee (TC) under their Board for discussion and review. Only proposals endorsed by the TC will be submitted to ITC for approval. ITC will review the applications in accordance with the established assessment framework, considering whether the

expenditure requirements in the relevant proposals are reasonable and meet the actual R&D need. ITC also requires the R&D Centres to submit progress/final reports and audited accounts for approved projects to report on whether the projects have achieved the project outcomes, as well as the project spending. Upon completion of the projects, the R&D Centres need to return all unspent funds to the Government. ITC will continuously review the assessment framework to ensure the proper use of public funds.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB095

(Question Serial No. 2941)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the merger of the Nano and Advanced Materials Institute (NAMI) and the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute (ASTRI), please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) What is the progress of the merger of the NAMI and ASTRI?
- 2) According to the public hearing conducted by the Public Accounts Committee, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the only salaried person among the members of the Board of Directors of the NAMI. Is this a common practice in other advanced economies? If so, what are the details? If not, will the Government take the opportunity of this merger to consider offering a certain level of remuneration to other non-official Board members (i.e. except the CEO), so as to encourage them to put in greater efforts in the research and development (R&D) work as well as the governance of the R&D Centres? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

- 1) The Innovation and Technology Commission has engaged an independent consultant to make suggestions on the transitional arrangements and implementation plans for the merger of the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute and the Nano and Advanced Materials Institute (NAMI). It is expected that the consultant will finish the report in the first half of 2025 and that the transitional arrangements for the merger will be initiated in 2025-26.
- 2) Currently, the Board of Directors of the NAMI comprises the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology and the representatives from various sectors, such as The

Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (the host institution), other academic institutions, the industry, chambers of commerce and research institutes, etc., with the exception of the Chief Executive Officer. According to the guidelines on Remuneration of Non-official Members of Boards and Committees promulgated by the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, the service of non-official members in Government Boards and Committees is voluntary and, as a general rule, un-remunerated. In view of the frequency of meetings and functions of the Board of Directors of the NAMI, we will maintain the current arrangement.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 1253)

Head: (135) Government Secretariat: Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the HK\$180 million Pilot Innovation and Technology (I&T) Accelerator Scheme, to ensure that the professional start-up service agencies fully utilise the funding and enrich Hong Kong's start-up ecosystem effectively, will further funding in addition to the 1 : 2 matching subsidies be allocated for training and guidance of these agencies to enhance their service capacity? If so, what will be the amount involved? For evaluating the service quality of these agencies and the actual effectiveness of their assistance given to start-ups, how much funding will be allocated under the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme to establish a third-party evaluation mechanism to ensure objectivity and fairness of evaluation? Will quantitative performance indicators based on the funding input and output be set, such as requiring start-ups to achieve specific revenue growth targets within a certain period for every HK\$1 million in funding? What is the expected overall input-output ratio for the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme?

Asked by: Hon KONG Yuk-foon, Doreen (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

The \$180 million Pilot Innovation and Technology (I&T) Accelerator Scheme aims to attract professional start-up service providers with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to set up accelerator bases in Hong Kong, with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-ups ecosystem through their business network and experience. The Government will provide up to \$30 million in funding, on a 1:2 matching basis, to the selected professional start-up service providers. We have no plan to allocate additional funding for providing training or guidance to these service providers.

We are preparing for the launch of the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme, including to identify a suitable implementation agent, formulate the implementation details (such as application criteria, vetting procedures, execution of the scheme, monitoring mechanism, performance

indicators, timetable and promotion), etc. We expect to consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and seek funding approval from the LegCo within this year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB097

(Question Serial No. 0612)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Since 2006, the Government has set up 5 Research and Development (R&D) Centres, including the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA), to drive and coordinate applied R&D in selected focus areas. It has also adopted 6 specific indicators in assessing the performance of HKRITA in various aspects. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the operating expenditure, R&D expenditure, number of new projects commenced, commercialisation and other incomes, and level of industry income of HKRITA in each of the past 3 years;
- (2) the details and progress of various projects commenced by HKRITA in the past 3 years;
- (3) the performance of HKRITA shown by the 6 indicators in the past 3 years; and
- (4) how HKRITA will spearhead the sustainable development of the textiles and clothing industry in the future?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

In the past 3 years (i.e. from 2021-22 to 2023-24), the operating expenditure, research and development (R&D) expenditure, number of new projects commenced, commercialisation and other incomes as well as the performance shown by the 6 indicators (i.e. level of industry income, number of on-going projects involving industry participation, number of companies participating in on-going projects, number of organisations benefitting from the Public Sector

Trial Scheme (PSTS), number of researchers engaged under the Research Talent Hub (RTH), and number of patents filed and granted) of the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA) are as follows:

Indicators \ Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Operating expenditure (\$ million)	41.2	47.3	54.2
R&D expenditure (\$ million)	68.8	67.5	72.9
Number of new projects commenced	20	21	20
Commercialisation and other incomes (\$ million)	13.0	39.4	11.4
Level of industry income	47%	103%	47%
Number of on-going projects involving industry participation	43	47	51
Number of companies participating in on-going projects (Note 1)	94	109	115
Number of organisations benefitting from the PSTS (Note 2)	20	25	21
Number of researchers engaged under the RTH	81	102	100
Number of patents filed	35	28	29
Number of patents granted	8	13	14

Note 1: R&D project is the basic unit in the calculation of the relevant performance indicator, which means that a company participating in various projects concurrently is counted in terms of the number of its projects.

Note 2: R&D project is the basic unit in the calculation of the relevant performance indicator, which means that an organisation benefitting from various projects concurrently is counted in terms of the number of projects from which it benefitted.

The details and progress of various projects commenced by HKRITA in the past 3 years (i.e. from 2021-22 to 2023-24) are set out at [Annex](#).

One of the important work directions of HKRITA is to promote the sustainable development of the textiles industry. Therefore, HKRITA is committed to collaborating with the industry in 2 research directions of materials recycling and the disposal of waste generated during the production processes, so as to achieve sustainable development and realise industrial growth for fostering long-term economic development and aligning with the major direction of new industrialisation development. In recent years, the key R&D tasks have encompassed the development of recycling technologies for different textile materials; a combinative adsorption and regeneration system for dye removal from denim textile wastewater; a “non-aqueous solvent medium” dyeing technology that reduces water consumption; the use of sweeping acoustic waves to separate and collect microplastics released during the production

or use of textiles; and the use of natural microbial consortium to degrade microplastics released from synthetic fibres commonly seen in textile factories such as polyester, acrylic and nylon.

In September 2024, HKRITA established “Open Lab” as a R&D space specifically dedicated to addressing climate change. It aims to demonstrate sustainable development solutions and provide a collaboration platform for the industry to gain a more concrete understanding of how to apply scientific research to actual production, so as to further enhance technology transfer. HKRITA has engaged in discussions with over 30 industrial organisations from different sectors, including brands, suppliers, as well as environmental and education groups, planning to conduct various R&D projects in Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas. Also, HKRITA has organised guided tours of “Open Lab” and the “Open Lab Global Challenge” for students to raise awareness among the next generation about the sustainable development of the textiles and clothing industry.

**The details and progress of projects commenced by
the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA)
from 2021-22 to 2023-24**

	Project title	Progress
1.	Development of Soft Robotic Clothing for Adaptive Thermal Management	Completed
2.	Development of Fabric Surface Modification Method for Natural Coloration Application based on Metal Organic Framework (MOF)	Completed
3.	Decentralized Intelligent Platform for Made-to-measure Mass Customization	Completed
4.	Development of 3D Crimped PLA Filaments and Knitted Products with Improved Bulkiness and Thermal Insulation	In progress
5.	High-Efficiency Eco-Friendly Antiviral/Antimicrobial Materials and Their Applications in Personal Protection Equipment and Hygiene Products	Completed
6.	Design-thinking Creation of a Swelling-controllable Composite Tubular Fabric for Regenerative Agriculture	In progress
7.	Hydroponic Farming of Extra Long Staple (ELS) Cotton Fibers – A Preliminary Study	Completed
8.	Sound Insulation by Soft Acoustic Metamaterial	In progress
9.	Smart Vest for Improving Behavioral Performance of School-aged Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	In progress
10.	Textile Cycling Creative Economy: Sustainable Design of an Innovative Nonwoven-Yarn Spinning System	In progress
11.	Trial: Sustainable Energy Shoes for Energy Harvesting Trials of Night Runners	Completed
12.	Trial: Development of Occupational Safety and Health Shoes for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)	In progress
13.	Trial: Development of Functional Uniform for FEHD	In progress
14.	Development of Regenerated Cellulose Fibers from Sustainable Source	Completed
15.	Microbial Consortium for Microplastic Degradation	In progress
16.	Separation and Recovery of Nylon from Textile Waste	In progress
17.	Automatic Garment Accessories and Trims Removal for Recycling with Hard Trims Sorting	In progress

	Project title	Progress
18.	Agile Omnichannel Business Platform for School Uniform Ordering and Manufacturing	In progress
19.	Trial: Antibacterial Chitosan Fiber Blended Textiles for Healthcare Applications	Completed
20.	Trial: Thermal Comfort, Light Weight and Recyclable Bedding Products Made from Air Splitting Technology	Completed
21.	Development of a Blended Textile Upcycling System	In progress
22.	High Value-added Warming Fibers with Mid-Infrared (MIR) Reflection & Low Conductivity	In progress
23.	Breathable Lightweight Hip Protectors for Elderly in Nursing Homes	In progress
24.	Bio-fabricated Leather-like Film of Bacteria Cellulose	In progress
25.	Trial: Manufacturing Metallic Silk and Polyester Textiles Using the Developed Roll-to-Roll (RtR) Sputtering System – Traditional Costumes for Performing Art	Completed
26.	Bio-based Synthetic Leather for the Automotive Industry	Terminated
27.	Development of Sustainable Circular Coloration Technology	In progress
28.	Study of Polypropylene Carbonate (PPC) for Textiles Application	In progress
29.	Development of Eco-spraying Method for Denim Textiles	In progress
30.	Solid State Decolorization and Durability Enhancement for Recycled Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET)	In progress
31.	Recycle of Fine Woven Cotton Fabric by Wet Spinning	In progress
32.	Development of Robust Electrostatic Gripper for Fabric Manipulation in Manufacturing	In progress
33.	Development of an Ultra-breathable and Light Textile Structure for Multidimensional Moisture Management	In progress
34.	Development of Scalable Process Technology for Particle-void Polyester (PET) Passive Cooling Fiber	In progress
35.	Intelligent Wearable System for Impact Safety Protection and Real-Time Monitoring	In progress
36.	Development of Graphene Oxide/Polymer Composite Nanofiber Fabrics with Antimicrobial Function for High-Performance Medical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Applications	Completed
37.	Trial: Thermal, Touch and Biomechanical Comfort of Bedding System	In progress
38.	Trial: Compression Socks for Exercises	In progress

	Project title	Progress
39.	Trial: Intelligent Compression Stockings for Promoting Active Health	Completed
40.	Trial: Innovation of Highly Efficient Far Infrared Functional Textiles	In progress
41.	Trial: Chitosan Handheld Cushion for Rehabilitation	In progress
42.	Development of Cellulose-based Radiative Cooling Textiles for Agriculture	In progress
43.	Development of Cellulose Membrane for Highly Safe Battery	In progress
44.	Multimode Anti-Heating Green Uniforms for Construction Workers in Hong Kong – A Complete ESG Development and Management Proposal	In progress
45.	Radiative Cooling Metafibre for Zero-energy and Zero-carbon Thermal Management	In progress
46.	Artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled Design of Permeable Protective Headgear for the Older Adults	In progress
47.	Durable Deodorizing Footwear and Clothing Based on Water-free Processing Technology	In progress
48.	Development of AI Evaluation System for Fabric Hand Feel with Vision and Physical Properties	In progress
49.	Development of Electronic Textiles for Thermal Regulation	In progress
50.	Wearable Organic Electrochemical Biosensors for Sweat Analysis	In progress
51.	An Acousto-Cyclonic Particles Separator In High Speed Flow Application	In progress
52.	Circulability of Post-Consumer Garment Identification By AI Computer Vision	In progress
53.	Recycling Polyester Textiles for Production of Fusing Deposition 3D Printing Filament	In progress
54.	Development of an Advanced Adhesive for Textile Application	In progress
55.	Development of Flame-Retarding, Non-Toxic Aerogel/Polyurethane Composite Foam	Withdrawn
56.	Development of a Supporting System for Upcycling of Bedding Sheet	Withdrawn
57.	Intelligent Combinational Cell Sorter Applied To Isolate Effective Cells For Bio-production of Value Chemicals	In progress
58.	AiFashion: Multi-modal and Multi-dimensional Large Model based on Self-Trained Customer Digital-Twin for Fashion Smart Social Manufacturing	In progress
59.	Trial: Bra Development for Mastectomy Patients	In progress

	Project title	Progress
60.	Trial: Intelligent Inspiration Image Generation Platform for Fashion Design	In progress
61.	Trial: Application of Graphene Electrothermal Technology for Thermal Clothing	In progress

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB098

(Question Serial No. 0621)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

With a funding allocation of \$10 billion, the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) was officially launched in 2023 to fund, on a matching basis, research teams from universities funded by the University Grants Committee which have good potential to become successful start-ups. The funding amount for each approved project ranges from \$10 million to \$100 million. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (1) the respective funding amounts for the first batch of 24 projects with confirmed participation in the RAISe+ Scheme;
- (2) the number of projects from the first-round application with a reduced funding amount upon the review by the Steering Committee of the RAISe+ Scheme; and
- (3) how will the Government address the problem of extended vetting time, as a result of the discrepancy between the information on the application forms and submitted documents of numerous projects from the first-round application, to ensure a smoother vetting process in the second round?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question on the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) is as follows:

The total funding of the first batch of 24 projects supported by the RAISe+ Scheme amounts to over \$1 billion, with the average funding amount for each project over \$40 million. The funding amounts for the approved projects were confirmed after the Steering Committee of

the RAISe+ Scheme had examined the information provided on the application forms of relevant projects, and taken into account factors such as the financial estimates of the projects as well as the reasonableness and necessity of the relevant expenditures. These final decisions were also made in adherence to the principle of ensuring the proper use of public funds. The amount of funding for the first batch of 24 projects supported by the RAISe+ Scheme had been adjusted upon the Steering Committee's review.

To address the problems encountered in the first round of application, such as discrepancy between the information in the documents and application forms submitted by universities, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) has pointed out the discrepancies of information in detail in its replies to the universities and assigned dedicated personnel for answering the relevant enquiries. To shorten the overall vetting time, ITC also states clearly the required documents and points to note in submission of applications, reminding the universities to carefully check their application information and supplementary documents to ensure the accuracy of the submitted information.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB099

(Question Serial No. 1032)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In Programme (4): Infrastructural Support, it is mentioned that the Innovation and Technology Commission established a new *InnoHK* Research and Development (R&D) Centre to participate in the Chang'E-8 mission in 2024-25, contributing to the national aerospace development.

In this regard, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- a) the office location, total staff establishment, number of researchers (local, Mainland and overseas), expenditure for the first year of establishment and estimated recurrent expenditure for subsequent years of the new *InnoHK* R&D Centre; and
- b) whether the new *InnoHK* R&D Centre has a specific timetable for advancing the planned work for the coming year; and the expected outcomes?

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

- a) The Hong Kong Space Robotics and Energy Centre (HKSREC) was established under the *InnoHK* research clusters (*InnoHK*). By collaborating with institutions from the Mainland and overseas, including the Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology and South African National Space Agency, the HKSREC will capitalise on Hong Kong's distinct advantages of enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world under the "One Country, Two Systems", thereby strengthening the city's role as the bridge between the Mainland and the rest of the world, and enhancing the city's research and development (R&D) capabilities and international scientific reputation. Located at the Tseung Kwan O InnoPark of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation, the HKSREC is expected to

employ about 70 researchers. In general, most of the *InnoHK* R&D Centres would receive a government funding of around \$300 million to \$500 million in a 5-year period to be disbursed according to the progress of the *InnoHK* R&D Centres' work.

- b) The HKSREC's goal is to complete an international collaboration project appointed by the China National Space Administration's Lunar Exploration and Space Engineering Center, and develop a multi-functional lunar surface operation robot capable of dexterous operations with a mobile charging station. The research outcomes will be directly applied in the Chang'E-8 lunar exploration programme as one of the pioneering initiatives led by China to set up an international lunar research station, so as to pave the way for the establishment of a long-term unmanned facility in the lunar polar regions. Through deeply engaging in national space missions, and strengthening international scientific and technological cooperation, the HKSREC will facilitate the transformation and application of cutting-edge technologies related to aerospace, significantly enhancing Hong Kong's global competitiveness in the aerospace field. The project is divided into 4 phases, namely the design phase, prototype stage, flight model phase and mission operation phase. Chang'E-8 is currently scheduled to be launched around 2028, and the specific timetable and detailed arrangements will be carried out in accordance with the Chang'E-8 mission in a holistic manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB100

(Question Serial No. 1753)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Innovation and Technology Commission will launch the Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme (FTRSS) in 2025-26 to assist, on a matching basis, the 8 University Grants Committee-funded universities in procuring facilities and attracting international top-notch talents from outside Hong Kong to conduct research projects in Hong Kong. Would the Government tabulate the funded projects of each university and the related expenses?

Asked by: Hon LAM Lam, Nixie (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

It is proposed in the 2024-25 Budget that the Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme (FTRSS) will be launched, with the utilisation of the earmarked amount of \$3 billion, to assist on a matching basis the 8 University Grants Committee-funded local universities in procuring facilities and attracting international top-notch talents from outside Hong Kong to conduct frontier technology basic research projects in Hong Kong. We consulted the Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology of the Legislative Council (LegCo) about the funding proposal in February 2025 and received support from the Members for the implementation of FTRSS. We will submit a funding application to the LegCo in the second quarter of 2025 with a view to launching the FTRSS in 2025-26 at the earliest.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB101

(Question Serial No. 0517)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Innovation and Technology Commission will implement the Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities (TSSSU) and the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme) in 2025-26. Please advise this Committee of:

the titles, expenditures and commercialisation outcomes of the research and development work by university teams with support of the TSSSU and the RAISe+ Scheme in the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities (TSSSU)

In 2022-23 and 2023-24, a total of 198 start-ups were funded under the TSSSU, involving a funding amount of over \$130 million. According to the latest information provided by the universities to the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC), during the funding period of these start-ups, 140 (around 71%) had generated a total of over 630 intellectual property rights from their research and development (R&D) outcomes; 124 (around 63%) had successfully rolled out more than 250 products or services in total in the market; and 100 (around 51%) had generated income from their businesses. In addition, 157 (around 79%) had successfully attracted capital injections, involving a total investment amount of over \$870 million, of which over \$620 million (around 71%) was private investment. The universities will collect and verify the information in relation to the funded start-ups in 2024-25 after the end of the financial year and subsequently submit it to ITC. Information on the funded projects is uploaded to the following website of the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) for public viewing.

Website of the ITF:

<https://www.itf.gov.hk/en/funding-programmes/supporting-start-ups/tssu/tssu-directory/index.html>

Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme)

The first batch of university research teams supported by the RAISe+ Scheme has started their projects since early this year. In general, the projects will be completed in 3 to 5 years. Given this, details such as the R&D outcomes under the Scheme are currently unavailable.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB102

(Question Serial No. 1843)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

How is the funding for the establishment and operation of the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute allocated among universities, Research and Development Centres, and the industry? How are the ratio of capital contributions and revenue components for the respective parties calculated? For example, what are the sharing mechanism or model of profit distribution for intellectual property? With the 2 pilot lines scheduled to commence operation next year, is there a detailed timetable available?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chi-pang (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI), which is funded by the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) and run by a limited company wholly-owned by the Government, was established in September 2024. The Government has earmarked HK\$2.84 billion, among which about HK\$2.48 billion is for procuring pilot lines equipment, and about HK\$360 million is for the MRDI's operating expenditure in the first five years.

In line with the practice of other public Research and Development (R&D) Centres, the MRDI is required to follow the established mechanism to seek funding support for the R&D costs of individual R&D projects from the ITF Subhead 101 Innovation and Technology (block vote). Under the ITF, an established mechanism is in place to handle the funding arrangements for various stakeholders (such as R&D Centres, universities and industry) as well as the intellectual property (IP) ownership and commercialisation. For instance, the IP rights of collaborative project with industry contribution over 50% would normally be owned by the industry partner.

The MRDI is preparing the setup of 2 pilot lines at the Microelectronics Centre in Yuen Long this year, striving to put them into operation next year to support product development and trial production.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB103

(Question Serial No.1845)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Given the proposal of the Subsidy Programme for Life and Health Technology Research Institutes in the Budget announced 2 years ago, would the Government provide the details of the work progress and the various collaborating universities and organisations provided with subsidies? Regarding the cross-universities/institutions and multi-disciplinary collaboration, has the Government any plans to set up a co-ordination mechanism or a sharing platform to promote such collaboration?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chi-pang (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

Life and health technology industry is one of the key development directions of Hong Kong's innovation and technology. Out of the \$10 billion earmarked for the promotion of life and health technology, the Government sets aside \$6 billion to launch the Subsidy Programme for the Setup of Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s) (the Subsidy Programme), thereby supporting local universities to set up Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s) (LHTRIs) to foster cross-university/institutional and multi-disciplinary collaboration.

Under the Subsidy Programme, subsidies will be provided for local universities to set up research institutes in the field of life and health technology in Hong Kong to foster multi-disciplinary co-operation among universities and/or research institutions from Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas. The LHTRIs will focus on basic research, translational research, and transformation of research and development (R&D) outcomes related to life and health technology. The top-notch scholars and scientists worldwide attracted to Hong Kong will help build a research ecosystem in Hong Kong by leveraging the complementary strengths across different institutions and disciplines to bring benefits to society.

At the end of October 2024, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) invited eligible local institutions to submit proposals for the Subsidy Programme by 30 April 2025. We will assess the proposals received from the institutions. Where necessary, we will also invite the universities to submit proposals with more details. Successful applicant institutions are required to enter into agreements with the Government, and the relevant LHTRIs shall commence operation within 18 months from the signing of the agreements with the Government.

To meet the objectives of the Subsidy Programme, the applications must involve multi-disciplinary co-operation in R&D activities and long-term R&D collaboration among local universities/research institutions and top-notch universities/research institutions/research teams from the Mainland and overseas. As a key element of the Subsidy Programme is to attract top-notch scholars and scientists to Hong Kong, priority will be accorded to proposals to be led by world-class scholars and scientists in the related fields. In order to encourage the industry-academia-research collaboration, the Government will provide funding on a matching basis under the Subsidy Programme, with a matching ratio of up to 4 (Government) : 1 (university and/or industry).

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB104

(Question Serial No. 1824)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (6) Subvention: Hong Kong Productivity Council, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute Company Limited

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Head 155, the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute (ASTRI) is designated as the Research and Development (R&D) Centre for information and communications technologies, focusing its R&D on 6 core initiatives including financial technologies (FinTech). In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

What were the total number of FinTech projects by the ASTRI, their respective investment amounts and themes over the past 3 years?

How many FinTech research projects by the ASTRI involved collaboration with financial enterprises in the past 3 years? What outcomes of FinTech projects have been commercialised and applied in the financial industry or others?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-wang, Robert (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

Over the past 3 years, the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute (ASTRI) commenced a total of 27 projects under 6 different themes on financial technologies (FinTech). The investment amount for each project are set out as follows:

Project	Project Name	Investment Amount (HKD)	Remarks
Blockchain Technology			
1	Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) Sandbox	\$4,000,000	*
2	CBDC Privacy Enhancement	\$1,650,000	*
3	Smart Personal Assistant for Open Banking	\$13,350,000	*
4	Sandbox Environment for Smart Contract Assessment	\$2,799,100	
5	The Enhancement of the Blockchain-based Intellectual Property (IP) Trading Platform System	\$75,000	
Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data Analytics			
6	Model Validation Service for Enterprise's Credit Risk Model	\$200,000	*
7	Fraud Detection using AI for Image-based Documents	\$7,499,550	*
8	A Programmable Automated Tabular-Data Generation Method for Machine Learning	\$2,796,800	
AI ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) Report Analysis			
9	Prompt Learning for ESG report analysis	\$2,800,000	*
10	Universal Information Extraction for Financial Documents Analysis and ESG Intelligence	\$9,969,000	*
11	The Enhancement of Loan Document Review System	\$100,000	*
Federated Learning Platform			
12	Privacy Enhancing Platform for Alternative Credit Scoring	\$7,843,125	*
13	Advanced Federated Learning for Insurance Applications	\$7,085,035	*
14	Reference Validation System for Federated Learning	\$2,799,100	
15	Federated Learning Banking Application Platform	\$1,400,000	*
Integrated Document and Word Processing Technology			
16	Robust Form Recognition Platform	\$7,999,995	
17	Proof of Concept of a Fully Automated Mortgage Document Approval System	\$475,000	*
18	Development of a Fully Automated Mortgage Document Approval System	\$1,200,000	*

Project	Project Name	Investment Amount (HKD)	Remarks
Integrated Document and Word Processing Technology			
19	Fully Automated Mortgage Document Approval System Update	\$100,000	*
20	Automated System for Cheque Information Extraction	\$492,500	*
21	Automated System for Handwritten Cheque Information Extraction	\$392,500	*
22	Automated System for Document Recognition in Air Freight Logistics	\$1,900,000	
23	Dangerous Goods Declaration Document Review System	\$780,000	
24	Lift Security Certificate Information Extraction System	\$1,398,000	
25	Handwritten Document Recognition System	\$1,264,800	
Smart Speech Technology			
26	Customised Speech Recognition Technology for Insurance Application	\$80,000	*
27	Intelligent Quality Inspection System in Bank – Voice Compliance Quality Inspection for Financial Products	\$1,400,000	

A total of 17 items are marked with * in the above table, representing projects involving co-operation between the ASTRI and financial enterprises in FinTech research over the past 3 years.

Except for the seed projects (items 4, 8, 9, and 14 in the above table), the outcomes of other projects can be commercialised and applied in the financial industry or others.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB105

(Question Serial No. 1826)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (6) Subvention: Hong Kong Productivity Council, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute Company Limited

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 of Head 155, it is mentioned that integrated services are provided to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups through the SME ReachOut and SME One. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

What was the total number of projects processed under the SME ReachOut and SME One by the Government last year? What were the types of assistance sought?

How effective were the integrated services provided to boost the business performance of SMEs and start-ups, including training on technological knowledge, as well as "FutureSkills" such as TechEd STEAM education and management? What are the examples of these services supporting the enterprises to upgrade and transform?

How will the Government enhance the SME ReachOut and SME One to support SMEs? What is the estimated amount of money involved?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-wang, Robert (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

The SME ReachOut was established by the Government in January 2020 and operated by the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) under the support of the Trade and Industry Department (TID). In 2023, the Government allocated \$100 million for the SME ReachOut to gradually enhance the services in the ensuing 5 years starting from October 2023, thereby better positioning it to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in applying for government funding and addressing application-related enquiries. In addition, the SME

ReachOut provides capacity-building services for SMEs by means of one-on-one consultation sessions, large-scale events, and visits to various chambers of commerce and commercial/industrial buildings, with primary focus on environmental, social and governance (ESG), technology transformation, digitalisation, cyber security, etc. The SME ReachOut has also launched a virtual platform to facilitate SMEs' access to services. Upon consultation with the TID, our consolidated reply to the member's question is as follows:

The relevant information on the projects processed by the SME ReachOut, and the SME One under Innovation and Technology Commission, as well as the types of assistance sought in 2024, are tabulated as follows:

Services	Type of assistance	Instances of delivery
SME ReachOut	Government funding	7 537
	Technical support (technology and business knowledge consultation)	96
	Others: outreach event, SME services, advisory services, etc.	1 172
	Subtotal (January to December 2024)	8 805
SME One	Business development or collaboration	30
	Events and SME services	32
	Subtotal (January to December 2024)	62
Total		8 867

Last year, the SME ReachOut arranged 96 technology/business knowledge consultation meetings, covering the areas of e-commerce, ESG, digitalisation and intelligent manufacturing, etc. Also, the SME ReachOut organised or participated in over 60 promotional activities and about 10 seminars or webinars last year, providing SMEs with information on government funding schemes and capacity building of enterprises. In addition, the SME ReachOut hosted "SME ReachOut: FUND Fair plus Tech Sourcing 2024" from 29 to 30 October last year, providing SMEs with information on government funding schemes and assisting them in undertaking digital transformation. The Fair attracted over 3 500 visitors and handled as many as 6 000 enquiries.

Moreover, the HKPC Academy (the Academy) under the HKPC actively promotes innovation and technology education and talent nurturing, striving to connect the business and academic sectors in the provision of high-tech and high value-added training services. Such services aim to enhance the digital knowledge and soft skills of employees, students and teachers, thereby supporting digital transformation. The courses of the Academy feature "FutureSkills" and "TechEd" (Technology Education). Last year, the Academy organised nearly 1 000 courses and activities for over 52 000 trainees. There were 350 activities with free admission, attracting about 30 000 participants.

One example of how the Academy assists with the upgrading and transformation of enterprises is that it helped a property management enterprise provide a series of 7 artificial intelligence (AI) training sessions. The topics covered the fundamentals of generative AI, practical tools such as Microsoft 365 Copilot, chatbot, and the latest generative AI tools in the Mainland, so as to help the enterprise improve the work efficiency and effectiveness of its employees.

The Government will continue to provide assistance to SMEs through the SME ReachOut and SME One.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB106

(Question Serial No. 1731)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the provision from the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) to the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA), it is noted that HKRITA was set up with the provision from ITC of Hong Kong. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. What were the annual provisions allocated from ITC to HKRITA in the past 5 years?
2. What were the specific details of the provision (such as remuneration, rent, operating, and research and development (R&D) expenditures) in the past 5 years?
3. What was the remuneration expenditure for the Board of Directors, Committees and management in the past 5 years?
4. What were the total number of R&D projects and among them, the total numbers of projects in the form of technology licensing and projects taken up by the industry in the past 5 years?
5. Given that many R&D outcomes of HKRITA are transferred through technology licensing to the industry to develop products, whether the relevant revenue is shared with the Government; if yes, please list the total number of projects and the amount of revenue received by the Government in the past 5 years; if not, what are the reasons?
6. HKRITA's R&D Centre "Open Lab" commenced operation in 2024, and it is reported that "Open Lab" has received over HK\$82 million of provision from the Government, the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) and the H&M Foundation since 2020. What was the annual amount of provision allocated from the ITF to "Open Lab" since 2020?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The operating expenditures with the breakdowns, and research and development (R&D) expenditures of the Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel (HKRITA) in the past 5 financial years (i.e. from 2019-20 to 2023-24) are as follows:

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Operating expenditure (\$ million)	39.2	42.2	41.2	47.3	54.2
- Staff remuneration	25.3	28.7	27.9	29.9	33.1
- Rent	4.7	5.4	3.5	7.5	10.2
- Equipment	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.3
- Others	8.3	7.4	9	9.1	10.6
R&D expenditure (\$ million)	82.2	59.2	68.8	67.5	72.9

The remuneration expenditures for the management of HKRITA in the past 5 years are as follows:

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Remuneration expenditures for the management (\$ million)	7.1	8.0	7.9	8.9	9.0

Members of HKRITA's Board of Directors and its Committees are not remunerated.

HKRITA completed 64 collaborative, platform and seed R&D projects in the past 5 financial years, of which 31 (48%) were platform R&D projects completed in the past 2 financial years. In addition, there were 7 (11%) seed R&D projects, which were more exploratory and forward-looking in nature, often giving rise to downstream platform, collaborative and/or contract research projects, and could generate commercialisation income. Therefore, these R&D projects pave the way for further R&D collaborations with the industry. In this regard, one of the seed projects gave rise to a new platform project. As for the remaining 26 platform and collaborative projects, HKRITA not only transferred the technologies to the industry through 16 licensing agreements, but also secured 5 contract services and sold 1 prototype system. The commercialisation and other income of HKRITA in the past 5 financial years are set out below:

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Commercialisation and other income (\$ million)	29.3	5.6	13	39.4	11.4

In order to encourage R&D Centres to commercialise the R&D outcomes , the Innovation and Technology Commission, with the approval of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in July 2018, allowed R&D Centres to retain part of their commercialisation income to carry out strategic activities, such as technology development and market trends analyses, R&D infrastructure building, staff development or small experimental projects, thereby further incentivising commercialisation of R&D outcomes. The R&D Centres are required to submit a detailed proposal every year setting out the objectives and estimates of the strategic reserve fund. The proposal is subject to the endorsement by the Board of Directors and approval by the Commissioner for Innovation and Technology.

The various projects of “Open Lab” under HKRITA were allocated with a total funding of around \$16.77 million and \$11.34 million from the Partnership Research Programme and the General Support Programme respectively under the Innovation and Technology Fund. The relevant funding had been fully disbursed.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB107

(Question Serial No. 2329)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In 2025, the Partnership Research Programme (PRP) will be subsumed under the Innovation and Technology Support Programme (ITSP), while the Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme (TCFS) and the Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme (MHKJFS) will be merged as the Mainland-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme (MHKTCFS). In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) What are the considerations in and expected benefits of such consolidation? In estimation, how many administrative expenses and manpower can be saved each year?
- (b) Please provide a detailed analysis on the actual effects of such consolidation on different types of applicants (including universities, research institutes, start-ups and large-scale enterprises).
- (c) What are the improvements made in the new application and vetting procedures? What are the adjustments to the funding ceilings and assessment criteria upon consolidation compared with the original ones?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Both the Innovation and Technology Support Programme (ITSP) and the Partnership Research Programme (PRP) aim to fund applied research and development (R&D) projects conducted by local R&D Centres, universities and other designated public research institutes in collaboration with companies for transferring R&D outcomes to the local industry, so as to

assist the upgrading and transformation of the industry and enhance its competitiveness; and both the Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme (MHKJFS) and the Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme (TCFS) share the objectives of supporting and encouraging R&D collaboration among universities, research institutes and technology enterprises in Hong Kong and the Mainland. In order to facilitate research institutes and participating companies in submitting funding applications, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will subsume the PRP under the ITSP as well as merge the MHKJFS and the TCFS as the Mainland-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme (MHKTCFS) this year.

Upon consolidating the abovementioned funding programmes, the application parameters and assessment framework for different types of projects will remain unchanged, so the submission of applications from applicant organisations will not be affected. Since the same secretariat in ITC provides support for the above 4 funding programmes as well as other programmes under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF), it is anticipated that only limited expenses and manpower can be saved. ITC will flexibly deploy the expenses and manpower which may be saved, so as to cope with the increasing number of applications for the various funding programmes under the ITF. Also, ITC will continue to review the various programmes in a timely manner to further optimise the relevant arrangements.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB108

(Question Serial No. 2330)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

While the financial provision for promotion of technological entrepreneurship will increase by 30.2% to \$68.1 million in 2025-26 and the number of applications received and processed under the Enterprise Support Scheme is expected to increase to 97, the number of projects funded and being monitored is expected to decrease to 72. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the policy considerations and strategic adjustments for the substantial increase in provision despite the decrease in the number of funded projects; whether the funding criteria have been changed or the vetting and approval thresholds have been raised; the changes in the average funding amount for each approved project as compared with that in the previous year and the reasons for such changes; and
- (b) in respect of taking forward the Pilot Innovation and Technology Accelerator Scheme, and the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park Incubation Support Programme for Life and Health Technology Start-ups in 2025-26, the amount of financial provision for each of the two schemes and their respective proportion in the total estimate, as well as the specific objectives, implementation strategies and timetables of both schemes.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

For Programme (2): Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship under **Head 155 – Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission** (ITC), the provision for 2025-26 increased by 30.2% over the revised estimate for 2024-25 to \$68.1 million, mainly due to increased provision for the launch of the Pilot Innovation and Technology

(I&T) Accelerator Scheme, and the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme, as well as for the salary of staff responsible for implementing the relevant schemes.

- (a) The project cost approved under the Enterprise Support Scheme (ESS) is covered by **Head 111 – Innovation and Technology: Subhead 101 – Innovation and Technology (block vote)** instead of Programme (2) under **Head 155 – Government Secretariat: ITC**. ITC administers the ESS to provide funding support to local enterprises for conducting in-house research and development (R&D). The objectives, application eligibility and assessment criteria of the ESS remain unchanged. The number of applications and projects being monitored as well as the amount of ESS funding approved are subject to various factors, such as the economic environment, the private sector's sentiment in R&D investments and the applications meeting the assessment criteria.

In the past 3 financial years (as at the end of February 2025), the average amounts of funding for supported projects (excluding applications/projects withdrawn/terminated by the applicants after support was granted) were \$3.2 million, \$3.68 million and \$2.65 million respectively.

- (b) The \$180 million Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme aims to attract professional start-up service providers with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to set up accelerator bases in Hong Kong, with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-ups ecosystem through their business network and experience. The Government will provide up to \$30 million in funding, on a 1:2 matching basis, to the selected professional start-up service providers. We are preparing for the launch of the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme, including to identify a suitable implementation agent, formulate the implementation details, etc. We expect to consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and seek funding approval from the LegCo within this year.

In addition, the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park Limited (HSITPL) plans to launch the \$200 million HSITP Incubation Support Programme for Life and Health Technology Start-ups (Incubation Programme) to provide funding and comprehensive support services for potential start-up teams and enterprises engaging in life and health technology, so as to further promote the development of the life and health technology industry in Hong Kong, attract more enterprises and talents engaging in the R&D of this discipline to establish presence in the HSITP, and contribute to an internationally competitive life and health technology ecosystem in the HSITP. Depending on the needs of the life and health technology start-up teams and enterprises at different stages of development, the Incubation Programme will provide support for start-ups at the initiation, incubation and acceleration stages. We intend to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the LegCo later this year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB109

(Question Serial No. 2331)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) was launched in September 2024. However, as shown in the relevant documents, a number of applications have not been processed yet. It is also estimated that only 12 applications will be received and processed in 2025. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) What are the main industries and business scale of NIAS applicants since its launch? Why have the existing applications not yet been processed? What is the estimated average time for vetting the applications?
- (b) As for enhancing the appeal of NIAS, please explain in detail the short-term and long-term improvement measures to be adopted by the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC). Will the Government consider adjusting the funding amount and application requirements or expanding the scope of eligible applicants? What plans are in place to streamline the application procedures and shorten the vetting time?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

- (a) As at the end of February 2025, a total of 7 applications had been received under the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS). Among these applications, 3 fall under the life and health technology industry, while the remaining 4 belong to the advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies industries. The New Industrialisation Vetting Committee (Vetting Committee) has supported one of the applications, which falls under the life and health technology industry. The total investment amount for the project will be about \$600 million, of which the Government funding will amount to around \$200 million.

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) is currently reviewing the remaining 6 applications, including seeking supplementary documents and information from the applicant companies to assist in the approval process. Upon receipt of all required documents and information, ITC will submit the applications to the Vetting Committee for consideration. The actual processing time for each application is subject to various factors, such as the complexity of the cases as well as the comprehensiveness and clarity of the information submitted by the applicant company. Since the minimum total cost of new production facilities funded by the NIAS is \$300 million (with the enterprise required to contribute no less than \$200 million), it is expected that enterprises will need to exercise prudent consideration before making an application.

- (b) ITC will continue to closely collaborate with the New Industrialisation Development Office on the NIAS in carrying out promotional work targeted at the industry, including active promotion of the NIAS through meetings with the industry representatives and media channels. Through the NIAS, the Government aims to attract 50 to 100 enterprises to set up new production facilities in Hong Kong with a corresponding direct investment of no less than \$20 billion from these enterprises over a period of 5 to 8 years.

Subject to the actual circumstances of implementing the NIAS, we will review the various arrangements in a timely manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB110

(Question Serial No. 2332)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (603) Plant, vehicles and equipment
(661) Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote)

Programme: (5) Quality Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The provision under Subhead 661 Minor plant, vehicles and equipment (block vote) for 2025-26 is \$22.362 million, representing a significant increase of 369.1% as compared with the provision of \$4.767 million for 2024-25. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) The purposes and detailed breakdown of the significantly increased provisions; the nature, specification and estimated costs of various minor plant and equipment for replacement; the specific departments to be allocated with such equipment; and the urgency and priority of procuring such equipment.
- (b) In respect of the provision of \$20.1 million under Subhead 603 Plant, vehicles and equipment mainly for setting up a system for measurement of antenna parameters in the Antenna Laboratory of the Standards and Calibration Laboratory (SCL) at Tseung Kwan O Joint-user Government Office Building, please provide the details of manpower for constructing and operating the antenna system, and explain the expected economic and social benefits brought by the commissioning of such a system.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

- (a) The Standards and Calibration Laboratory (SCL) of the Innovation and Technology Commission provides comprehensive accredited calibration services to users of measurement standards and measuring instruments in various sectors and industries to ensure measurement accuracy and metrological traceability to the International System of Units. In 2025, the SCL will be relocated from the Immigration Tower in Wan Chai

and the Public Works Central Laboratory Building in Kowloon Bay to the Tseung Kwan O Government Offices. Also, a provision of \$22.362 million will be utilised to relocate, upgrade and establish various calibration and measurement systems, thereby maintaining the reference standards of physical measurement for Hong Kong, China, as well as ensuring the SCL's measurement standards are internationally recognised. The detailed breakdown is as follows:

Laboratory	Project details	Estimated expenditure (\$'000)
1. Advanced Communication Technology Laboratory	To relocate the existing Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) common-view measurement platform	600
2. Radio Frequency Laboratory	To upgrade the existing power measurement system	300
3. Temperature Laboratory	To upgrade the existing salt bath-based thermometry calibration system	560
4. Humidity Laboratory	To upgrade the existing humidity, dew point and frost point calibration system	1,200
5. Photometry and Radiometry Laboratory	To upgrade the existing photocurrent meter	300
6. Free-field Acoustics Laboratory	To set up a new free-field measurement system	9,500
7. Mass Laboratory	To set up a new high precision 1 kg automated weighing system	8,700
8. Standards and Calibration Laboratory	To set up a new dedicated ventilation system for temperature calibration baths	1,200

- (b) We have strictly followed the tender procedures of the Government in selecting the contractor for setting up the new system for measurement of antenna parameters, and the operation of the system will be undertaken by the existing manpower of the SCL. Currently, the local testing and certification (T&C) industry is required to transport biconical log-periodic antennas and double-ridged waveguide horn antennas used in electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) and electromagnetic interference (EMI) tests (Note) to laboratories outside Hong Kong for calibration. The process involves high costs, longer transportation times and potential risks of damage. A number of industry operators have put forward enquiries to the SCL, expressing their hope for antenna calibration services developed by the SCL, and promising to put the local calibration services as their first choice in the future. We predict that the new system will be able to provide around 15 to 20 calibrations per year (each calibration requires about 1 week) at the early stage of operation. With the development of new calibration services, as well as the promotion and reputation among the industry, we predict that the number of

calibrations provided can be gradually increased to around 50 per year, which is the maximum capacity of the system.

The commissioning of new facilities will not only satisfy the demand of local technology and research companies for the relevant services, but also significantly reduce the reliance of the local T&C industry on the services provided outside Hong Kong. Such facilities will support the development of Hong Kong into a world-class innovation and technology hub, thereby making solid contributions to Hong Kong's economy.

Note: All electronic and electrical products, including medical equipment, communication devices, smart wearable devices and domestic appliances, must comply with the EMC and EMI test requirements for import and export in different countries and regions. This ensures that such products operate stably in electromagnetic environments without causing interference to other equipment, thereby safeguarding both equipment performance and user safety.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB111

(Question Serial No. 2335)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The estimate for the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) in 2025-26 is about \$1.66 billion higher than that in the last year, representing a significant increase. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of:

- (a) whether the increased estimate of expenditure will cover new innovation and technology projects and funding schemes; if yes, the specific details of projects and schemes as well as the total estimate for them;
- (b) whether the increased estimate of expenditure will cover the expansion of the current schemes, such as continued fund injection for the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme and expansion of the *InnoHK* research clusters; if yes, the relevant proportion in the estimate; and
- (c) whether the increased estimate of expenditure will cover the expenditure for additional staff establishment; if yes, the details of the staff establishment and the expenditure involved (e.g. the number and duties of the new posts to be created, as well as the percentage share of emoluments involved)?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The estimate for the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) in 2025-26 is about \$1.705 billion higher than the revised estimate in the previous year (or about \$1.662 billion higher than the original estimate in the previous year). The major items involving an increase in expenditure and their details are as follows:

- (i) To take forward the setup of the life and health technology research institute(s), ITC has earmarked \$1.8 billion in the 2025-26 estimate for the general non-recurrent expenditure of the Subsidy Programme for the Setup of Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s) to promote the development of life and health technology in Hong Kong;
- (ii) The estimate for the capital account is about \$37.38 million higher than the revised estimate in the previous year, mainly due to the relocation of the Standards and Calibration Laboratory to the Tseung Kwan O Government Offices. The increased estimate will cover the setting up of a system for measurement of antenna parameters and the upgrading of the existing equipment, so as to ensure that measurement standards are well established and enhanced; and
- (iii) After offsetting the reduction in general departmental expenses, the total increase in personal emoluments and personnel-related expenses over the revised estimate in the previous year is about \$29.41 million, covering the additional salary payment for the net increase of 7 posts in 2025-26 (among which 2 are permanent posts). Such posts are created for implementing the Pilot Innovation and Technology Accelerator Scheme, the Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme, the *InnoHK* research clusters, and the Innovation and Technology Support Programme Special Call on Aerospace Technology, as well as enhancing the cyber security of ITC's information systems, etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB112

(Question Serial No. 1008)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Government will continue to work on the setting up of life and health technology research institute(s) (LHTRI(s)) in order to promote the development of life and health technology in Hong Kong. The Government supports the development of life and health industry through a number of programmes, including the allocation of \$200 million to provide assistance to start-ups engaging in life and health technology in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the form of incubation and acceleration programmes, etc. What are the strategies and directions to foster the development of LHTRIs and the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in tandem, so as to promote the co-development of the upstream, midstream and downstream of life and health technology in Hong Kong? What are the main functions of LHTRIs in the upstream, midstream and downstream of the industry chain?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

Life and health technology industry is one of the key development directions of Hong Kong's innovation and technology. Out of the \$10 billion earmarked for promoting the development of life and health technology, the Government sets aside \$6 billion to launch the Subsidy Programme for the Setup of Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s) (the Subsidy Programme), thereby supporting local universities to set up Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s) (LHTRIs) to foster cross-university/institutional and multi-disciplinary collaboration. At the end of October 2024, the Innovation and Technology Commission invited eligible local institutions to submit proposals for the Subsidy Programme by 30 April 2025. The LHTRIs will focus on basic research, translational research, and transformation of research and development outcomes related to life and health technology. The top-notch scholars and scientists worldwide attracted to Hong Kong will

help build a research ecosystem in Hong Kong by leveraging the complementary strengths across different institutions and disciplines to bring benefits to society.

To foster the development of the InnoLife Healthtech Hub in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) in the Loop, and attract top-notch research teams and talents from around the world to establish presence and conduct research with a focus on life and health disciplines, the Government will allocate \$2 billion out of the above provision earmarked for the promotion of development of life and health technology to support the *InnoHK* research clusters to set up operations in the Loop. Details of the plan will be announced in due course. The Government will also allocate \$200 million to support start-ups engaging in life and health technology in HSITP in the form of incubation, acceleration, etc. We intend to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council later this year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB113

(Question Serial No. 1011)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the new industrialisation, please inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) What are the number of applications received for the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme, the numbers of applications approved for each industry involved, the expenditure as well as the details of the private investment attracted in the past year?
- (2) It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme will be launched this year. What are the details of the manpower and expenditure involved?
- (3) The New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) focuses on industries of strategic importance. Since its launch in September last year, the first application for the project has been approved with the government funding amount up to about \$200 million. What plans have the Government put in place to promote the NIAS to attract enterprises from the Mainland and overseas to set up new smart production lines in Hong Kong? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

- (1) As at February 2025, 30 applications were received for the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) in 2024-25. Among those applications, 25 were supported by the New Industrialisation Vetting Committee. The statistics on the projects with a breakdown by industrial sector are set out below:

Industrial sector	Number of applicant companies	Total project cost (approximate)	Matching fund from applicant companies (approximate)	Funding amount (approximate)
Food manufacturing and processing (including health food)	11	\$156 million	\$105 million	\$51 million
Printing	3	\$57 million	\$39 million	\$17 million
Textiles and clothing	3	\$68 million	\$45 million	\$23 million
Biotechnology/ pharmaceutical production (including Chinese medicine)	2	\$18 million	\$12 million	\$6 million
Construction materials	2	\$19 million	\$13 million	\$6 million
New energy/ green technology	2	\$27 million	\$18 million	\$9 million
Equipment and parts	1	\$6 million	\$4 million	\$2 million
Nanofiber materials	1	\$14 million	\$9 million	\$5 million
Total	25	\$364 million*	\$245 million	\$119 million

* Since the breakdown figures are rounded, their sum is not equal to this total amount.

- (2) The Government will launch the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) under the Innovation and Technology Fund this year. We are currently formulating the details of the Manufacturing+, including the application requirements as well as the vetting and monitoring mechanisms. We will make reference to the modus operandi of other funding programmes in order to achieve optimal efficiency in the administrative arrangements such as manpower and expenditure estimation.
- (3) For the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS), the Innovation and Technology Commission will continue to carry out promotional work targeted at the industry, including active promotion of the NIAS through meetings with the industry representatives and media channels. Meanwhile, the New Industrialisation Development Office under the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau will also assist in the promotion of the NIAS to enterprises in the Mainland and overseas through various platforms, including the newly established Hong Kong New Industrialisation Development Alliance.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB114

(Question Serial No. 1992)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

While the financial provision for 2025-26 has increased significantly by 30.2% as compared with 2024-25, the number of projects funded and being monitored under the Enterprise Support Scheme (ESS) in 2024 dropped from 96 to 71. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- a) Why does the provision for 2025-26 increase substantially? What fields will benefit the most in the future?
- b) Why did the number of projects funded and being monitored decrease drastically by 26% in 2024? Had the Innovation and Technology Commission rejected the ESS applications from other enterprises? If yes, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

- a) The provision for Programme (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship under **Head 155 – Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission** in 2025-26 is 30.2% higher than the revised estimate for 2024-25. The increased provision is mainly used for implementing the Pilot Innovation and Technology (I&T) Accelerator Scheme, and the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISe+ Scheme), as well as for covering the salary of staff responsible for implementing the relevant schemes. The Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme aims to attract professional start-up service providers with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to set up accelerator bases in Hong Kong, with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-ups ecosystem through their business network and experience. The RAISe+ Scheme aims to unleash the potential of local universities in the transformation of upstream research and development (R&D) outcomes by providing funding support,

on a matching basis, to research teams from universities which have good potential to become successful start-ups for transforming and commercialising their R&D outcomes. No restriction has been set on the technology areas of projects under the RAISE+ Scheme. Generally speaking, outstanding projects with focus on deep technology, including those related to life and health technology, artificial intelligence and new energy technologies, will benefit from the RAISE+ Scheme.

- b) For projects funded under the Enterprise Support Scheme (ESS), it typically takes 2 years from the approval of projects to completion of R&D works. The actual duration of each project is subject to the company's specific requests at the time of application. Given this, the yearly number of projects funded and being monitored mainly reflects the applications over the past 1 to 2 years. We believe that the financial situation of private companies in 2023 might have been relatively constrained, which in turn reduced their incentive to invest in R&D projects. With the considerable drop in the number of applications received and processed under ESS that year, the number of projects funded and being monitored also declined correspondingly in 2024. We anticipate that the numbers of received applications and projects funded and being monitored in 2025 will remain stable.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB115

(Question Serial No. 0914)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As mentioned by the Financial Secretary in paragraph 47 of the Budget Speech, “(We) plan to launch the two-year Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) this year. The Government will provide funding of up to \$250,000 each on a one-to-two matching basis to enterprises operating production lines in Hong Kong to support their formulation of smart production strategies and introduction of advanced technologies into existing production lines”. The Government has also earmarked \$100 million for the Manufacturing+, benefitting some 400 enterprises. Please inform this Committee of the expenditure of the Government on the promotion of smart manufacturing in 2024-25. What were the work undertaken and outcomes? Please tabulate the figures. Regarding the provision of \$100 million, what are the specific work plans and timetable for the next 2 years? What are the key performance indicators for the work? What are the expected contributions or benefits delivered by the Manufacturing+ for the economic development of Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

The Government promulgated the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint in December 2022, setting out the major strategies under 4 broad development directions, one of which was to enhance the innovation and technology ecosystem and promote “new industrialisation” in Hong Kong. To promote “new industrialisation” and facilitate the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries, the initiatives implemented by the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) in 2024-25, with the relevant expenses and outcomes are set out as follows:

- (a) The New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) subsidises manufacturers, on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis, to set up new smart production lines in

Hong Kong. The funding ceiling for each project is one-third of the total project cost or \$15 million, whichever is lower. The Government enhanced the NIFS in January 2024, allowing each applicant company to carry out up to 3 projects under the NIFS concurrently with a total maximum funding of \$45 million. The measure has strengthened support for local manufacturing companies to shift to smart manufacturing. Over 100 new smart production lines were supported by the NIFS, covering industries such as biotechnology, nanofibre materials and new energy, etc. The total project cost is around \$1.31 billion, of which \$930 million is contributed by private investment.

- (b) ITC launched the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) in September 2024, providing funding, on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis, for enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance (i.e. life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, and advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies) and investing no less than \$200 million in the setting up of new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. The New Industrialisation Vetting Committee has endorsed the first application. The total investment amount for the project will be about \$600 million, of which the Government funding will amount to around \$200 million. The project plans to set up smart production facilities in the field of life and health technology.

In addition, the Government will launch the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) under the Innovation and Technology Fund this year to provide local manufacturing enterprises with funding on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis, which aims at encouraging them to adopt smart production technology solutions, as well as to upgrade and transform the existing production lines. We are currently formulating the details of the Manufacturing+, including the specific work plans as well as the vetting and monitoring mechanisms. Our objective is to support around 400 enterprises to transform and upgrade the production lines in 2 years after the launch of the Manufacturing+. We will review the effectiveness of the Manufacturing+ to consider the direction for development of the scheme after its launch.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB116

(Question Serial No. 0270)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Programme 2, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) will continue to oversee the implementation of the “Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme” (RAISE+ Scheme) in the coming year. Will the ITIB consider expanding the coverage of the RAISE+ Scheme from the 8 universities funded by the University Grants Committee to include all self-financing local institutions, and allowing community scientific research intermediaries to be “applicants” other than universities to submit applications through the specific “channel for the sector”? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons? What are the detailed results of the second round of applications for the RAISE+ Scheme? How many applications were received by the Government? How many of those applications are approved, in vetting or rejected? What is the average funding amount for each approved project? Which technology areas are involved for the approved projects?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 217)

Reply:

The Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme) aims to unleash the potential of local universities for transforming upstream research and development (R&D) outcomes and provide funding, on a matching basis, to research teams from universities which have good potential to become successful start-ups, so as to promote the commercialisation of excellent R&D outcomes of deep technology. Therefore, only applications from the 8 universities funded by the University Grants Committee are accepted at present. That said, we welcome active participation from the industry, such as collaborating with research teams from universities and investing in relevant projects.

The Steering Committee of the RAISE+ Scheme is vetting the 108 applications received in the second round. The numbers of approved and rejected applications and the relevant details are currently unavailable.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB117

(Question Serial No. 0273)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Programme (2), the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) will continue to monitor the implementation of the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) to facilitate the process of new industrialisation. How many applications did the Government receive last year and this year respectively? How many of the applications are successful, in vetting or rejected? What is the average time required for vetting each application? What are the manpower and expenditure for vetting the applications? In addition to the current funding support for new smart production lines, will the Government consider further extending the scope of the NIFS to provide manufacturing enterprises with funding for upgrading existing production facilities and equipment, expanding high value-added business, exploring innovative operating models, and optimising production processes and management practices, as well as other transformation and upgrading activities, so as to promote the enhancement of operational efficiency among traditional manufacturing industries? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 218)

Reply:

The New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) subsidises manufacturers, on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis, to set up new smart production lines in Hong Kong. The funding ceiling for each project is one-third of the total project cost or \$15 million, whichever is lower. Over 100 new smart production lines were supported by the NIFS, covering various industries such as biotechnology, nanofibre materials and new energy, etc. Upon the receipt of all required information from the applicants, including the necessary supporting documents and supplementary information, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will inform the applicants of the vetting result in not more than 35 working days on average. The NIFS Secretariat comprises 5 staff members from ITC. We do not keep a separate breakdown of the relevant staff expenditure as they are also

responsible for handling other funding schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF).

The statistics on the applications for the NIFS in 2023-24 and 2024-25 are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of applications	Number of supported applications	Number of applications in vetting	Number of rejected applications
2023-2024	17	13	0	4
2024-2025	30	25	3	2
Total	47	38	3	6

The Government will launch the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) under the ITF this year to provide local manufacturing enterprises with funding on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis, which aims at encouraging them to adopt smart production technology solutions, as well as to upgrade and transform the existing production lines. We are currently formulating the details of the Manufacturing+, including the application requirements as well as the vetting and monitoring mechanisms.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB118

(Question Serial No. 0276)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

How many applications for the Patent Application Grant (PAG) were received in each of the recent 3 years? Of these applications, what were the respective numbers of cases approved, in vetting and rejected? What are the manpower and expenditure for vetting the PAG applications this year? What is the average amount of funding for each successful application? Will the funding ceiling for the PAG be raised? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons? Will consideration be given to relaxing the eligibility to cover patents and inventions not registered for the first time? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 240)

Reply:

The Patent Application Grant (PAG) under the Innovation and Technology Fund aims to encourage local companies and individual inventors who are first-time patent seekers to protect and capitalise their intellectual work through patent registration.

The PAG is a scheme for applicants to submit funding applications for their inventions. Therefore, the number of applications each year varies, subject to certain objective factors like the number of inventions in the year concerned. Regarding the number of applications approved each year, it depends on the complexity of the applications and the readiness of individual applicants, such as the completeness of application documents and information, the progress of patent search-cum-technical assessment of the projects, and the face-to-face interviews with the inventor(s) concerned, etc.

In the last 3 financial years of 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24, there were 148, 166 and 152 applications received under the PAG respectively. During the above periods, 122, 111 and

102 applications were approved respectively, with the maximum funding amount of \$250,000 for each approved application.

The Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) is the implementation agent of PAG. HKPC will deploy manpower resources in a flexible manner to meet the operational needs of PAG. The manpower and expenditure for vetting the applications have been subsumed under the overall establishment and estimated expenditure of PAG, and cannot be quantified separately.

The Innovation and Technology Commission has gradually raised the funding ceiling for PAG from the original amount of \$100,000 to the current amount of \$250,000. In addition, PAG aims to encourage inventors to make good use of patents to protect their inventions and gain experience in patent application. PAG focuses on the support for first-time patent seekers without prior experience in patent application and registration, so as to ensure effective and timely utilisation of the funding. We will conduct review on the PAG at appropriate junctures to ensure that it meets the policy objectives.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB119

(Question Serial No. 3305)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Programme 2, one of the main responsibilities of the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) is to promote measures that support technology start-ups. The Government will launch the \$180 million Pilot Innovation and Technology (I&T) Accelerator Scheme, aiming to attract professional start-up service agencies with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to set up accelerator bases in Hong Kong for fostering the robust growth of start-ups. When is the launch of the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme scheduled? How will the new scheme be promoted to professional start-up service agencies in and beyond Hong Kong? Has any estimate been made on the number of professional start-up service agencies incentivised by the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme to commence business in Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 221)

Reply:

The \$180 million Pilot Innovation and Technology (I&T) Accelerator Scheme aims to attract professional start-up service providers with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to set up accelerator bases in Hong Kong, with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-ups ecosystem through their business network and experience. The Government will provide up to \$30 million in funding, on a 1:2 matching basis, to the selected professional start-up service providers. It is anticipated that the Scheme can attract at least 6 start-up service providers to provide accelerator services.

We are preparing for the launch of the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme, including to identify a suitable implementation agent, formulate the implementation details (such as application criteria, vetting procedures, execution of the scheme, monitoring mechanism, performance indicators, timetable and promotion), etc. We expect to consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and seek funding approval from the LegCo within this year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB120

(Question Serial No. 2763)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (6) Subvention: Hong Kong Productivity Council, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute Company Limited

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The funding for the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute Company Limited (ASTRI) will be provided under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) instead of the recurrent subvention in 2025-26. As noted in the estimates of expenditure, its previous performance indicators are no longer listed in the 2025 Estimates. Given the shift from the Government's previous practice of providing the ASTRI with an annual block subvention for its operating expenditure, please advise whether the fund provided under the ITF will cover the operating expenditure of the ASTRI in the future; if so, whether the current funding criteria or determinants under the ITF differ from those in the past in determining the funding amounts; and how will the Government monitor the ASTRI's operation in the coming year to ensure that it can meet the standards set by the performance indicators for previous years.

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

The operating expenditure of the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute Company Limited (ASTRI) has all along been met by the Government's annual recurrent subvention. To align the funding arrangements for the operating expenditure of various public Research and Development (R&D) Centres, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council (LegCo) approved creation of a new commitment of \$481.3 million under the Innovation and Technology Fund in July 2024 to support ASTRI's operating expenditure from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2028.

To align with the funding arrangements for the operating expenditure of various public R&D Centres, the aforementioned changes only involve modifications in the Government's

financial arrangements. We will continue to monitor the performance of ASTRI through the established mechanism, require ASTRI to meet the same performance indicators, and submit progress reports and highlights of outcomes of R&D Centres to the LegCo Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology on an annual basis. As in the past, ASTRI is required to submit its annual plan, operation reports and annual audited accounts for R&D projects for approval by the Board and the Innovation and Technology Commission every year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB121

(Question Serial No. 2764)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to the Estimates, it is projected that the number of applications for the Research Talent Hub will drop from 3 117 in 2024 to 2 883 in 2025. Accordingly, it is estimated that the number of funded research talent positions will drop from 4 777 in 2024 to 4 529 in 2025. What are the possible reasons for the said decreases in both cases?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

The Innovation and Technology Commission recruited additional temporary staff in 2024 to expedite the processing of backlogged applications for the Research Talent Hub. As a result, the number of received and processed applications and the number of funded research talent positions in 2024 were slightly higher than those in 2023. We anticipate that these numbers in 2025 will return to the similar levels in 2023.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB122

(Question Serial No. 2790)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As stated by the Government, the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) has all along been supporting local universities, Research and Development (R&D) Centres and enterprises to conduct R&D in electronics, data transfer and processing, etc. related to low-altitude economy (LAE), through its funding schemes. How many applications have been received for the above funding schemes under ITF so far? What were the respective numbers of project applications from universities, R&D Centres and enterprises? Please list the applicants, project categories and funding amounts of the approved projects in tabular form.

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

The Government has all along been supporting the research and development (R&D) work in different technology areas (including the low altitude economy (LAE)-related electronics, data transfer and processing) through the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF). In the past 2 years (i.e. 2023 and 2024), the ITF supported a total of 5 projects directly related to LAE, involving a total funding amount of about \$11 million. The details are as follows:

Funding scheme	Applicant organisation	Project title	Funding amount (\$ million)
Enterprise Support Scheme	ViShare Technology Limited	Semiconductor IP for Ultra-low Latency 8K UHD Video Streaming with H.265 Codec and RaptorQ Error Correction	3.21

Funding scheme	Applicant organisation	Project title	Funding amount (\$ million)
Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Development of Equipment for Hi-precision 3D Deformation Monitoring with Integration of Space-based and Ground-based Measurements	2.59
Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	High-Wind-Resistance Vertical Take-Off and Landing Industrial-Grade Intelligent UAV	0.9
Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme	City University of Hong Kong	Innovative Technology and Critical Materials for Developing Flexible Tandem Solar Cells with Ultra-high Specific Power	1.76
Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme	City University of Hong Kong	Key Technologies and Applications of Air-to-ground Mobile Crowdsensing for Smart Transportation	2.5

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB123

(Question Serial No. 2498)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The *InnoHK* research clusters, as an important plan of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to promote innovation and technology (I&T) development, aim to develop Hong Kong into a hub for international research collaboration and innovation. The platform is steered by the Innovation and Technology Commission of Hong Kong with the staunch support of the Government, aiming to attract global top-notch research institutions, universities and enterprises to set up research and development (R&D) centres in Hong Kong, thereby fostering cross-disciplinary research collaboration and technology transfer. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The 2 existing *InnoHK* research clusters (one focusing on healthcare technologies while another on artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics technologies) have pooled around 2 500 researchers from Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas. What is the distribution of researchers in the 2 clusters? What are their deliverables?
2. The Government announced that it had commenced the preparation work for establishing the third *InnoHK* research cluster, which will focus on advanced manufacturing, materials, energy and sustainable development, with plans to invite proposals from international top-notch universities and research institutions in the relevant fields in early 2025. Does the Government have any measures to ensure that the third research cluster will achieve greater outcomes than the previous 2 clusters?
3. Last year, the Government was optimistic that I&T would account for 1.3% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), or even more. Did the situation last year meet this indicator? What plans does the Government have in place to achieve the target of raising its share in GDP to 5% between 2025 and 2027 at the earliest?

Asked by: Hon SHANG Hailong (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

1. The Research and Development (R&D) centres under the *InnoHK* research clusters have successfully built collaboration with over 30 top-notch universities and research institutions from 12 different economies, including Harvard University, Stanford University, University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, ETH Zurich, Chinese Academy of Sciences and Peking University, pooling about 2 500 researchers from Hong Kong and around the world (with about 1 100 and 900 from Hong Kong and the Mainland respectively, and about 500 from overseas) to conduct world-class and impactful collaborative researches. Meanwhile, the R&D centres have published over 2 900 research papers in scientific journals/citations and filed over 900 patent applications, as well as having spun off nearly 100 start-ups.
2. Currently, the Government is taking forward the establishment of the third *InnoHK* research cluster to promote the continuous development of Hong Kong into a global research collaboration hub. The third *InnoHK* research cluster focuses on sustainable development, energy, advanced manufacturing and materials, and a number of Hong Kong's universities rank among the world's top 100 universities in engineering and technology, materials science and environmental science. The establishment of the third *InnoHK* research cluster would help capture and consolidate Hong Kong's R&D strengths and promote the development of advanced technologies and the relevant industries in Hong Kong.

The R&D centres to be admitted under the third *InnoHK* research cluster should collaborate with world-renowned non-local universities and research institutions to conduct innovative and internationally leading collaborative researches of global relevance which address real-world problems. Moreover, we expect that the R&D centres would closely collaborate with the industry in the relevant research fields to realise and commercialise R&D outcomes.

3. Promoting R&D is an indispensable part of innovation and technology (I&T) development. The Government has been proactively promoting the I&T development of Hong Kong. Various policies and initiatives, including measures for promoting R&D, have achieved good progress and made the overall I&T ecosystem in Hong Kong increasingly vibrant. In 2023, Hong Kong's gross domestic expenditure on R&D (GERD) increased to about \$33.006 billion, and the GERD as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) went up to 1.11%. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (Blueprint), promulgated at the end of 2022, has put forth reference development indicators of raising the ratio of GERD to GDP to 1.3% and 2% by 2027 and 2032 respectively. The 2025-26 Budget announced a number of measures to promote R&D and their work progress, including an earmarked provision of \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute to spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative R&D as well as industrial application of artificial intelligence (AI). As mentioned above, we are taking forward the establishment of the third *InnoHK* research cluster, and we have also established the Hong Kong Space Robotics and Energy Centre under the *InnoHK* research clusters with the aim of developing a robot for contributing to the Chang'E-8 mission. The equipment for the 2 pilot lines of the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute will be set up at the Microelectronics Centre in

Yuen Long within this year and will be put into operation next year. In addition, we are currently inviting institutions to submit proposals on the Subsidy Programme for the Setup of Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s). To strengthen frontier technology basic research in Hong Kong, we will also seek funding approval from the Legislative Council this year to launch the \$3 billion Frontier Technology Research Support Scheme, under which the University Grants Committee-funded local universities will be subsidised on a matching basis in procuring relevant equipment and conducting frontier technology basic research projects led by top-notch scholars around the world.

Another reference development indicator in the Blueprint is that the proportion of GDP that the manufacturing sector contributes could reach 5% by 2032. According to the Business Performance of Industrial Sector published by the Census and Statistics Department, the total receipts of the manufacturing sector amounted to \$243.3 billion in 2023, representing an increase of 12.1% compared with 2022. Industry value added of the manufacturing sector also increased by 4.8% to \$37 billion as compared with 2022. We are encouraged to see growth in both total receipts and value added of the manufacturing sector. To take forward the development of the manufacturing sector continually on the basis of I&T progress, the 2025-26 Budget announced a number of measures and work schedule for promoting the development of the industry, including the launch of the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme this year to provide funding of up to \$250,000 each on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis to enterprises operating production lines in Hong Kong. In addition, we enhanced the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme and launched the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme last year. We are also preparing for the setting up of the Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund and the launch of the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB124

(Question Serial No. 0863)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the Research and Development Cash Rebate Scheme (CRS), will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. (i) the numbers of applications and approval rates; (ii) the total funding amounts, the funded projects and the funding amounts of each project for the recent 5 years; and (iii) the trend of increase or decrease as compared with the previous 5 years (2015-19);
2. the funded projects which have been successfully commercialised and introduced to the market in the recent 5 years; the patent registrations, technology licensing or technology transfers of these projects; as well as their business revenue and impacts on the industries;
3. whether the Government has regularly reviewed the effectiveness of the CRS; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons; and
4. whether there were cases of misuse of funding or breaches of regulations in the recent 5 years; if yes, the details and the relevant follow-up actions; and what measures the Government has put in place to prevent such problems?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

1. Launched in April 2010, the Research and Development Cash Rebate Scheme (CRS) aims to encourage more research and development (R&D) investment in the private sector and encourage local enterprises to establish stronger partnership with designated local public research institutes. The CRS provides a cash rebate equivalent to 40% of

a local enterprise's eligible expenditure in the following two types of applied R&D projects:

- (a) R&D projects funded by the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) (ITF Projects); and
- (b) R&D projects funded entirely by local enterprises and conducted in partnership with designated local public research institutes (Note 1) (Partnership Projects).

The numbers of applications received and approved, and the amounts of funding approved under the CRS in each of the recent 5 years are tabulated below:

Year	Number of applications received (Note 2)	Number of applications approved	Amount of funding approved
2020	381	311	\$142 million
2021	363	368	\$136 million
2022	304	270	\$115 million
2023	317	320	\$141 million
2024	320	329	\$166 million
Total	1 685	1 598	\$700 million

Compared with the previous 5 years (2015-2019), the number of applications received under the CRS in the recent 5 years has increased by about 9.4%; the number of applications approved has increased by about 8.4%; and the amount of funding approved has increased by about 45.8%.

The substantial increase in the amount of funding approved is partly attributable to the increase in the level of cash rebate under the CRS from 30% to 40% in 2016; it also reflects the significant growth in the enterprises' investment in R&D projects in recent years.

Note 1: The designated local public research institutes for Partnership Projects include local universities, R&D Centres set up by the Government, Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC), Vocational Training Council, and Hong Kong Institute of Biotechnology.

Note 2: Some applications may be approved in the following year after submission, subject to the complexity of the R&D projects as well as the submission time.

- 2. For ITF Projects, the intellectual property (IP) rights and commercialisation arrangements for CRS-funded projects are subject to the funding conditions of the R&D project concerned. For example, the requirements of the Innovation and Technology Support Programme stipulate that the platform projects should be industry-oriented and

have potential for commercialisation, with the IP rights owned by the applicant organisation.

For Partnership Projects, the IP rights and commercialisation arrangements are negotiated between the local enterprises and the designated local public research institutes. Some successful cases of commercialisation include:

- (a) the HKPC developed an automated egg waffle production machine for a company specialising in production of egg waffles. The machine was commissioned in early 2021; and
- (b) the HKPC, in collaboration with a lighting company, developed a high mast lighting inspection and maintenance robot which can be applied in various infrastructures such as airports, bridges, stadiums, highways, and tunnels. The project earned an international award for robotics solution in 2024.

3. We review the implementation and effectiveness of the CRS and introduce enhancement measures from time to time to suitably respond to the industry demand. For example, the level of cash rebate was 10% in 2010 and was gradually increased to 40%. We have also extended the scope of the CRS to cover the newly launched R&D-related funding schemes under the ITF (Note 3) in due course to provide cash rebate to eligible companies.

Note 3: Including various ITF funding schemes under “Supporting Research and Development”, such as the Enterprise Support Scheme launched in 2015, as well as the Partnership Research Programme and the Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme launched in 2019.

4. No cases of misuse of funding or breaches of regulations were noted under the CRS in the recent 5 years.

Applications for the ITF Projects are vetted by professional panels (which are generally comprised of the industries and independent members) according to the assessment framework of the relevant funding schemes. Individual guideline has been devised for each scheme setting out requirements on the usage of ITF funding, procurement arrangements, reporting and auditing, disbursement of funds, return of residual funds, etc.

Partnership Projects are carried out by local public research institutes in strict accordance with their internal guidelines and procedures. Upon completion of the projects, the local public research institutes are required to submit project reports to the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) confirming that the projects have been completed and that the applicant enterprises have paid the project expenditure in full. ITC will also conduct regular spot-checks on the completed projects to ensure their compliance with the funding requirements.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB125

(Question Serial No. 0864)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In connection with the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme), will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. since the launch of the RAISE+ Scheme in 2023, (i) the number of applications and approval rate; and (ii) the total amount of provision, the funded projects and the amount of funding for individual projects in each of the past years;
2. the business revenue of the projects which have been successfully commercialised and introduced to the market and their impact on the industries since the launch of the RAISE+ Scheme; and
3. whether the long-term benefits of the RAISE+ Scheme have been tracked; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Since its launch in 2023, the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme) has processed 2 rounds of applications. Of the 94 applications received in the first round, 24 were supported by the Scheme, representing an approval rate of around 26%. The total funding amounts to over \$1 billion. As the Steering Committee of the RAISE+ Scheme is vetting the 108 applications received in the second round, the number of approved applications and relevant details are currently unavailable.

Given that the first batch of projects supported by the RAISE+ Scheme will generally be completed in 3 to 5 years, information such as business revenues and industrial impacts of the projects as well as the long-term benefits of the RAISE+ Scheme is currently unavailable. The Innovation and Technology Commission will devise overall performance indicators for the RAISE+ Scheme, such as the number of product outcomes transformed and realised, the external investments attracted, and whether the start-ups have further developed and grown, so as to closely monitor the implementation of the RAISE+ Scheme and evaluate the benefits it brings to Hong Kong.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB126

(Question Serial No. 0865)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In connection with the STEM Internship Scheme (the Scheme), would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. (i) the numbers of subsidised students and expenditures involved; (ii) the universities of the participating students and the subjects they studied; (iii) the ratio of local students and non-local students in each of the recent 5 years;
2. the number of participating enterprises and their fields;
3. whether the Government has compiled any statistics on the number of student interns under the Scheme who, after graduation, chose to pursue careers in the innovation and technology (I&T) industry; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons; and
4. whether the Government has any plan to integrate the Scheme with other I&T funding programmes to strengthen the nurturing of I&T talents in Hong Kong; if yes, the details; if not, the reasons?

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

- 1.&2. The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) launched the STEM Internship Scheme (the Scheme) in May 2020, providing over 16 000 internship opportunities for university students in total. The relevant statistics for the recent 5 years (as at the end of January 2025) are tabulated as follows:

Financial year	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at the end of January 2025)
Number of participating interns, of which	1 685	3 038	3 524	3 845	4 070
- <i>local students</i>	100.0%	88.2%	86.3%	76.9%	71.3%
- <i>non-local students</i> ⁽¹⁾	0.0%	11.8%	13.7%	23.1%	28.7%
Government's funding amount (including administrative overheads to participating institutions)	\$36.4 million	\$75.4 million	\$88.4 million	\$100.8 million	\$105.6 million
Number of participating companies or organisations ⁽²⁾	1 053	1 541	1 699	1 789	1 781

Note⁽¹⁾: Non-local students are allowed to enrol in internships in Hong Kong only, subject to the conditions of stay of their visa/entry permit issued by the Immigration Department.

Note⁽²⁾: The Scheme covers companies or organisations across various sectors, including information technology, biotechnology, electrical and electronic engineering, artificial intelligence, environmental and energy, research and development (R&D), professional services and financial technologies.

From 2020-21 to 2022-23, there were a total of 7 designated local universities participating in the Scheme, namely City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Education University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and The University of Hong Kong. With Lingnan University and Hong Kong Metropolitan University joining the Scheme in 2023-24 and 2024-25 respectively, the total number of designated local universities under the Scheme had increased to 9. Students of the designated local universities must be majoring in full-time eligible STEM-related programmes to participate in the Scheme.

From 2023-24 onwards, the scope of the Scheme had been expanded, covering the internship opportunities offered by the government-funded R&D Centres and the Hong Kong Productivity Council to undergraduates and postgraduates studying STEM programmes at local and non-local universities (including the campuses at the Greater Bay Area established by the designated local universities).

3. According to the surveys conducted by the participating universities after the end of the student internships, more than 95% of the students expressed upon completion of the internships that they would consider pursuing a career in innovation and technology (I&T) after graduation. It is difficult to track whether students who participated in the Scheme had pursued careers in the I&T field after graduation due to various reasons, for example, students participating in the Scheme in the same year may graduate in different years and students may have taken up more than 1 job after graduation. In fact, the universities had conducted relevant surveys, but the response rates were unsatisfactory. Given this, statistics with much reference value are unavailable

4. ITC also launched the Research Talent Hub to subsidise eligible organisations and enterprises in engaging university graduates in R&D work, and the New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme to subsidise local enterprises for their staff to receive training in advanced technologies. The target groups of the various I&T talents schemes are different, and we will maintain close liaison with various stakeholders to review the implementation of the schemes in a timely manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB127

(Question Serial No. 0866)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme:

- (1) Support for Research and Development
- (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship
- (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development
- (4) Infrastructural Support
- (5) Quality Support
- (6) Subvention: Hong Kong Productivity Council, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute Company Limited

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. The total estimate for the Innovation and Technology Commission in 2025-26 is \$2.5794 billion, representing an increase of 181.2% from the original estimate in 2024-25. How will the Government ensure effective use of the money?
2. Please list the respective amounts of funding allocated for each scheme in the recent 5 years.
3. Please list the approved research projects that have been successfully commercialised in the recent 5 years, along with the revenue they have generated for the Government.

Asked by: Hon TANG Fei (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

1. The total estimate for the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) in 2025-26 is higher than the original estimate in 2024-25, mainly due to the \$1.8 billion earmarked in that year for preparing the establishment of the life and health technology research institutes (LHTRIs). The Government has consulted the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Commerce, Industry, Innovation and Technology in February 2024 about the

subsidy programme for the setup of LHTRIs, and obtained approval from the Finance Committee of the LegCo in June 2024 for earmarking \$6 billion to provide universities with subsidies for setting up LHTRIs, in a bid to foster cross-university/institutional and multi-disciplinary co-operation. It will help build a research and development (R&D) ecosystem in Hong Kong, thereby bringing benefits to society. To ensure the effective use of money by the LHTRIs, the application submitted by an institution should contain the relevant information of the proposed LHTRI, including the collaborating institutions, objectives, expected deliverables, implementation plan, budget and key performance indicators (e.g. R&D outcomes, number of patents applied for and granted, nurturing of talents), etc. The applicant institution shall closely monitor the implementation progress of the LHTRI under its purview and report to ITC regularly. ITC will disburse funding having regard to the R&D progress and cash flow requirement of the LHTRI, as well as how far the contribution from the university and/or industry has been made.

- The expenditures for various funding schemes supporting the 6 innovation and technology (I&T) areas, namely supporting applied R&D, facilitating technology adoption, nurturing I&T talents, supporting technology start-ups, promoting new industrialisation and developing new quality productive force, and fostering an I&T culture, under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) in the past 5 years (i.e. from the financial years of 2020-21 to 2024-25) are tabulated as follows:

Amount of expenditure over the past 5 financial years	Amount (\$ million)				
	2020-21 Actual expenditure	2021-22 Actual expenditure	2022-23 Actual expenditure	2023-24 Actual expenditure	2024-25 Revised estimate
Subheads under the ITF					
Subhead 090 Midstream Research Programme for Universities (block vote) (subsumed into the Innovation and Technology Support Programme since June 2021)	38.8	15.2	-	-	-
Subhead 101 Innovation and Technology (block vote) (Note (1) and (2))					
Innovation and Technology Support Programme	733.0	704.1	697.2	628.1	629.0
Partnership Research Programme	62.7	101.4	123.0	85.7	91.2
Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme	18.4	22.8	30.8	36.1	47.6
Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme	-	26.5	31.5	40.4	51.4
Enterprise Support Scheme	92.1	88.1	51.2	57.6	39.2
Research and Development Cash Rebate Scheme	152.9	121.3	127.5	146.3	156.2

Amount of expenditure over the past 5 financial years Subheads under the ITF	Amount (\$ million)				
	2020-21 Actual expenditure	2021-22 Actual expenditure	2022-23 Actual expenditure	2023-24 Actual expenditure	2024-25 Revised estimate
Public Sector Trial Scheme	136.1	93.4	123.5	133.4	84.1
General Support Programme	59.2	97.6	105.9	128.7	140.6
Patent Application Grant	15.0	31.1	35.4	31.8	38.5
Research Talent Hub	346.8	341.4	426.5	345.1	531.9
New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme	11.2	62.4	49.6	540.4	114.3
STEM Internship Scheme	23.5	66.9	62.2	64.2	137.9
Technology Voucher Programme	95.4	319.4	913.1	665.9	1,712.8
Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities	46.3	47.8	48.9	71.8	89.4
New Industrialisation Funding Scheme	-	-	-	17.2	38.3
Innovation and Technology Fund for Better Living	-	13.1	14.1	16.5	20.0
Subhead 110 Innovation and Technology Venture Fund Corporation	33.2	27.6	16.4	16.0	192.0
Subhead 113 Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme	-	-	-	-	31.0
Subhead 115 New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1,864.6	2,180.1	2,856.8	3,025.2	4,145.4

Note (1): Subhead 101 Innovation and Technology (block vote) also includes the funding for the 8 Technology Transfer Offices of universities, 16 State Key Laboratories and 6 Hong Kong Branches of Chinese National Engineering Research Centres, as well as that for the R&D projects of the R&D centres/laboratories established under the *InnoHK* research clusters.

Note (2): Technology Voucher Programme and the Innovation and Technology Fund for Better Living have ceased accepting applications from 1 January 2025 onwards.

3. The consolidated reply regarding the ITF-funded research projects which have been successfully commercialised in the recent 5 years is as follows:

5 R&D Centres set up by the Government

The R&D Centres set up by the Government have been in liaison with various parties and played an important role in creating a vibrant I&T ecosystem, acting as a focal point for technology collaboration among the Government, industry, academic and research sectors. The R&D Centres not only carry out industry-driven applied R&D work that suits market needs but also transfer technologies to the industries through contract researches and licensing arrangements to commercialise their R&D outcomes. Over the past 5 financial years (i.e. from 2019-20 to 2023-24), the commercialisation and other incomes of the 5 R&D Centres (namely the Automotive Platforms and Application Systems R&D Centre, Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute, Hong Kong Research Institute of Textiles and Apparel, Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre, and Nano and Advanced Materials Institute (NAMI)) was about \$529 million in total, indicating the application of their R&D outcomes in the industry. For instance, NAMI combined its high-strength lightweight foamed concrete with the high-strength steel technology developed by The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and successfully developed an innovative hybrid modular integrated construction technology, which had been applied in Hong Kong Housing Society's project of Chung Yuet Lau in Jat Min Chuen, Shatin. Other examples of commercialisation by the R&D Centres are set out in the LC Paper No. CB(1)785/2024(03) of the LegCo on the following website:

<https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr2024/english/panels/ci/papers/ci20240618cb1-785-3-e.pdf>.

InnoHK research clusters

The Government has all along encouraged the R&D Centres under the *InnoHK* research clusters (*InnoHK*) to commercialise their R&D outcomes. Currently, close to 100 start-ups have been spun off from the work of *InnoHK*'s R&D Centres, and around 70 of which are enrolled in Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation's series of incubation programmes. Some selected significant R&D outcomes of *InnoHK* include a multi-cancer early detection technology, a blood test for the early detection of Alzheimer's disease with over 96% accuracy which has been adopted in selected medical centres in Hong Kong, and a microbiota transplantation technology which has already been deployed in hospitals under the Hospital Authority.

Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities

The Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities (TSSSU) of ITC provides funding to designated universities to support their teams in starting technology businesses and commercialising their R&D outcomes. From 2020-21 to 2023-24, a total of 279 start-ups had been funded. According to the latest information provided by the universities, during the funding period of these start-ups, 198 of them (around 71%) had generated some 1 150 intellectual property rights from their R&D outcomes;

177 (around 63%) had successfully rolled out over 420 products or services in total in the market; 144 (around 52%) had generated income from their businesses; 226 (around 81%) had successfully attracted capital injections, involving a total investment amount of over \$2.1 billion, of which over \$1.7 billion (around 81%) was private investment. In addition, the funded start-ups had created a total of over 2 100 posts/training opportunities, of which 65% were technical posts. These posts, related to applied R&D, had not only brought economic benefits to Hong Kong, but also facilitated the nurturing of I&T talents. The universities will collect and verify the information in relation to the funded start-ups in 2024-25 after the end of the financial year and subsequently submit it to ITC.

Enterprise Support Scheme

Among the Enterprise Support Scheme (ESS) projects approved in the past 5 financial years, there were 39 projects with R&D work completed for over 24 months as of the end of February 2025. We conducted a survey of the relevant companies about the results of their commercialisation of the project deliverables. 20 companies responded and indicated that they had successfully commercialised the project deliverables with income generated, resulting in the creation of at least 84 job opportunities in total. Among those projects, 5 had attracted new capital injection.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB128

(Question Serial No. 0046)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to Programme (2), the number of projects approved under the Enterprise Support Scheme has reduced from 96 in 2023-24 to 72 in the 2025-26 Estimates, yet the provision has increased by 30.2%. In this connection, will the Bureau inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the main reasons for the increased provision despite the reduction in the number of projects? Were there any evaluations of the efficiency of the approved enterprises over the past 3 years? If yes, what are the data? If no, what are the reasons?
2. How does the Bureau ensure that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) can have fair access to the resources? Are there any statistics on the success rate of applications submitted by the eligible SMEs? If yes, what are the data?
3. What is the total number of university research teams receiving matching funds under the Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme since its launch in October 2023? What is the annual amount of funding? What are the respective amounts of funding for each project?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 61)

Reply:

1.&2. Enterprise Support Scheme (ESS)

The project expenses approved under the ESS are covered by **Subhead 101 – Innovation and Technology (block vote)** under **Head 111 – Innovation and Technology**. As for the provision of Programme (2): Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship under **Head 155 –**

Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) for 2025-26, it is 30.2% higher than the revised estimate for 2024-25. This is mainly due to increased provision for the launch of the Pilot Innovation and Technology Accelerator Scheme and Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme), as well as for the salary of staff responsible for implementing the relevant schemes.

Under the ESS, the duration of projects is in general no more than 24 months. 2 years after completing the project, ITC will conduct a survey of the funded companies with questionnaire to inquire about the results of their commercialisation of the project deliverables. Since the launch of ESS in 2015, research and development work of 141 projects had been completed for over 24 months as of the end of February 2025. A total of 69 companies responded to the survey with 61 of them (74 projects in total) indicated that they had already commercialised the project deliverables, with incomes generated, resulting in the creation of at least 338 job opportunities in total. Among those projects, 20 of them had attracted new capital injection.

To handle applications from small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in a more effective and focused manner, the ESS has a “designated track” for handling applications from companies with less than 100 employees seeking funding support of no more than \$2.8 million per project. This arrangement aims to shorten the vetting time as much as practicable. Other applications are processed under the “non-designated track”. Applications submitted under both tracks are vetted by the ESS assessment panel using the same assessment criteria. The success rate of applications for the ESS has been approximately 33% in the past 3 financial years.

3. Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme)

All applications for the RAISE+ Scheme submitted by universities in the first round had been vetted. Among them, the applications of 24 university research teams had been given support, with the total funding amounting to over \$1 billion. Since the duration of all projects under the RAISE+ Scheme ranges from 3 to 5 years and the amount of funding for projects is calculated on an overall basis, we do not keep figures for their annual funding amounts.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB129

(Question Serial No. 0361)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that under the enhanced New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS), the number of new smart production lines set up in Hong Kong has exceeded 100 and the total investment cost is around \$1.3 billion, of which \$930 million came from private investment. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number of applications received and approved, the total amount of funding involved in the approved applications, and the longest, shortest and average processing time since the launch of the NIFS, with a breakdown by industry;
2. whether the Government has provided those production lines with non-monetary support, such as sites; if yes, the details of the support involved, including the location of the sites;
3. the number of positions involved in the new smart production lines; and
4. whether the production lines have collaborated with training bodies, such as the Vocational Training Council, to nurture suitable manpower for each production line while providing internship and job opportunities for young people?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

1. Since the launch of the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS), 63 applications were supported by the New Industrialisation Vetting Committee, involving more than 100 production lines with the total project cost of approximately \$1.314 billion and the total funding amount of about \$384 million. The statistics with a breakdown by industrial sector are tabulated below:

Industrial sector	Number of applicant companies	Total project cost (approximate amount)	Matching fund from private companies (approximate amount)	Funding amount (approximate amount)
Food manufacturing and processing (including health food)	27	\$600 million	\$420 million	\$180 million
Biotechnology/ pharmaceutical production (including Chinese medicine)	8	\$118 million	\$79 million	\$39 million
Printing	5	\$86 million	\$59 million	\$27 million
Textiles and clothing	4	\$117 million	\$79 million	\$38 million
Construction materials	4	\$46 million	\$31 million	\$15 million
Electronics	4	\$36 million	\$24 million	\$12 million
Equipment and parts	4	\$134 million	\$110 million	\$24 million
Nanofiber materials	3	\$79 million	\$54 million	\$25 million
Medical device/medical and personal care	2	\$71 million	\$56 million	\$15 million
New energy/ green technology	2	\$27 million	\$18 million	\$8.9 million
Total	63	\$1,314 million	\$930 million	\$384 million

Upon receipt of all required information from the applicants, including the necessary supporting documents and supplementary information, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) will inform the applicants of the vetting results in not more than 35 working days on average. The actual processing time for applications is subject to various factors, such as the number of applications received, the complexity of individual applications, as well as the comprehensiveness and clarity of the information provided.

2. According to the “Guide to Application for the NIFS”, the NIFS funding can only be used to cover expenses directly related to the establishment of the new production line in Hong Kong, including the costs of procurement, installation and commissioning of the machinery/equipment/apparatus, fees for engaging technical

consultant(s) for the design and setting up of the production line concerned, relevant testing and staff training, patent registration fee, external audit fee, as well as legal service fee related to the legal charge on the funded production line. Normal business operating expenses of the applicant company, such as rental of premises, general office and administration expenses, etc. are not covered by the NIFS funding.

3. and 4. It is anticipated that the above projects supported by the NIFS will provide more than 430 job opportunities in technical positions.

ITC has been providing young people with internship and job opportunities through various funding schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund. For instance, the STEM Internship Scheme subsidises undergraduates and post-graduates taking full-time STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)-related programmes to enrol in short-term internships, with a view to encouraging them to gain innovation and technology (I&T)-related work experience and fostering their interest early in pursuing a career in I&T after graduation, so as to enlarge the local I&T talent pool. All companies/organisations are welcomed to offer I&T-related internship places for eligible students, subject to the arrangements of individual universities. In addition, the New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme subsidises local enterprises, on a 2(Government) : 1(Company) matching basis, to train their staff in advanced technologies, including those related to “New Industrialisation”.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB130

(Question Serial No. 0363)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to the Programme, the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 put forward by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau include continuing to administer the Research Talent Hub (RTH), STEM Internship Scheme and Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS). In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

1. the number and list of enterprises approved under the RTH and the amount of subsidies received by such enterprises since its launch in July 2020;
2. the lists of enterprises participating in the STEM Internship Scheme, the numbers of participants, the average durations of internship per trainee and the expenditures involved in the past 3 years; and
3. the numbers of companies or organisations participating in TechTAS and the numbers of technology talents admitted from overseas and the Mainland in the past 3 years, with breakdowns by year, remuneration and technology area involved.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

Research Talent Hub (RTH)

From the launch of the RTH in July 2020 to the end of 2024, the number of funded organisations or enterprises, number of research talent applications approved, and the funding amount under the RTH are tabulated as follows:

	Total
Number of funded organisations or enterprises	1 737
Number of research talent applications approved	8 197
Funding amount	\$5.2289 billion

STEM Internship Scheme

In the past 3 financial years (as at end January 2025), the STEM Internship Scheme provided over 11 400 internship opportunities for university students in total. The relevant figures are tabulated as follows:

	Total
Average number of participating companies or organisations per year	1 756
Number of participating interns	11 439
Average duration of each internship position (days)	61.30
Government's funding amount (including administrative overheads to participating institutions)	\$294.8 million

Regarding the request to provide the lists of participating/approved enterprises under the RTH and the STEM Internship Scheme as stated in the question, the lists concerned are unavailable as there are over 5 000 enterprises involved and restrictions on the source of information.

Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS)

In the past 3 financial years (as at end January 2025), the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) has approved 507 quotas. The Immigration Department approved 316 visa/entry permit applications upon receipt of applications from 169 companies or organisations with allotted quotas under TechTAS. The statistics on the remuneration and technology area of relevant non-local persons approved for entry are tabulated as follows:

Monthly remuneration (HKD)	Number of non-local persons approved for entry under TechTAS [#]		
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at end January 2025)
\$29,999 or below	14	47	30
\$30,000 - \$49,999	38	52	52
\$50,000 - \$79,999	19	14	19
\$80,000 or above	11	12	8
Total	82	125	109

Technology area	Number of non-local persons approved for entry under TechTAS [#]		
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at end January 2025)
Artificial intelligence	11	36	38
Biotechnology	21	24	9
Cybersecurity	1	5	8
Data analytics	5	15	7
Financial technologies	18	8	9
Material science	14	5	5
Robotics	0	7	5
Advanced communication technologies [^]	0	1	5
Digital entertainment	7	5	2
Green technology	3	8	6
Integrated circuit design	1	3	6
Internet-of-Things	1	4	1
Microelectronics	0	4	8
Quantum technology [^]	Not applicable	0	0
Total	82	125	109

The number of applicants with visas/entry permits granted actually coming to Hong Kong will be affected by the economic situation, business development and recruitment plans of individual companies, etc.

[^] In December 2022, ITC added 1 technology area (i.e. quantum technology) and renamed 5G communications as advanced communication technologies.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB131

(Question Serial No. 0364)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Budget that the Government will continue to administer the Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities (TSSSU) to encourage university teams to set up start-ups to commercialise their research and development (R&D) outcomes. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of:

1. the breakdowns, by university, of the total numbers of start-ups applying for the TSSSU, the total numbers of funded start-ups, the total funding amounts and the numbers of patents in the past 3 years; and
2. the current number of projects under which the start-ups continue to operate or the products remain available in the market; and when the Government will review the TSSSU and monitor its effectiveness?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

1. The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) has launched the Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities (TSSSU) since 2014 to provide funding to 6 universities (viz. City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and The University of Hong Kong) for supporting university teams to start technology businesses and commercialise their research and development (R&D) outcomes. The breakdowns of the statistics on the TSSSU in the past 3 years (from 2022-23 to 2024-25) by university are provided as follows ⁽¹⁾:

University that submitted recommendations	Number of start-ups funded ⁽²⁾	Total funding amount (\$ million) ⁽²⁾	Number of patents ⁽³⁾
City University of Hong Kong	38	38.74	32
Hong Kong Baptist University	24	36.8	10
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	47	40	111
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	48	39.96	41
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	69	39.6	87
The University of Hong Kong	49	38.18	76
Total	275	233.28	357

Note⁽¹⁾: The universities only have to report the numbers of received applications to ITC without submitting the list of applications. As the same start-up may submit applications in different years, the total number of start-ups which have submitted applications cannot be confirmed.

Note⁽²⁾: The figures exclude the projects withdrawn by applicants after approval, for which no funding was claimed.

Note⁽³⁾: The universities will collect and verify the information on the funded start-ups in 2024-25 after the end of the financial year and subsequently submit it to ITC. Therefore, the statistics in this column only refer to the patents generated by the funded start-ups during the funding period for the 2 financial years of 2022-23 and 2023-24.

- As at the end of December 2024, a total of 539 start-ups have been funded under the TSSSU, of which a total of 480 (about 89%) start-ups are still in operation. According to the latest information provided by the universities, as at 2023-24, 311 start-ups have rolled out more than 600 products or services in total in the market during the funding period. ITC will continue to monitor the implementation of the TSSSU and conduct reviews in a timely manner.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB132

(Question Serial No. 0371)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government will continue to monitor the implementation of the "Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme" (RAISE+ Scheme) to incentivise the industry-academia-research collaboration and promote the transformation and commercialisation of research and development (R&D) outcomes from universities. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the numbers of submitted and approved applications, the average amounts of funding for the approved applications and the types of projects in the first and second stages;
2. the measures taken by the Government to support the funded research teams from universities, so as to ensure that they can complete the project plans in the 2 respective stages of transforming and realising R&D outcomes and initiating the commercialisation of R&D outcomes;
3. whether the Government will explore enhancing the investment mechanism for Mainland capital under the RAISE+ Scheme to help the participating universities attract cross-boundary investments more easily; and
4. the mechanism set up by the Government to monitor the implementation of the RAISE+ Scheme; and whether it will conduct reviews in a timely manner to evaluate the effectiveness of the RAISE+ Scheme?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme (RAISE+ Scheme) aims to unleash the potential of local universities for transforming upstream research and development (R&D) outcomes and provide funding, on a matching basis, to research teams from universities which have good potential to become successful start-ups, so as to promote the commercialisation of excellent R&D outcomes of deep technology. A university team may, depending on the maturity of the transformation of its R&D outcomes, apply for participating in the RAISE+ Scheme from either the first stage (transformation and realisation of R&D outcomes) or the second stage (initiation of the commercialisation of R&D outcomes). Two rounds of application have been launched for the RAISE+ Scheme so far. Among the 94 applications received in the first round, there were 87 and 7 applications submitted for the first and second stages respectively, of which 20 and 4 applications were approved respectively with a total funding amount of over \$1 billion. These 24 funded projects cover the following technology areas:

Technology area	The 24 funded projects in the first batch	
	Number of project(s) starting from the first stage	Number of project(s) starting from the second stage
Health and medical sciences	5	-
New materials and new energy	4	1
Artificial intelligence and robotics	2	2
Electrical and electronic engineering	4	-
Engineering	1	1
Advanced manufacturing	2	-
Chinese medicine	1	-
Environmental, agricultural and marine biotechnology	1	-
Total	20	4

Among the 108 applications received in the second round, there were 98 and 10 applications submitted for the first and second stages respectively. As the Steering Committee of the RAISE+ Scheme is vetting the applications, the numbers of approved and rejected applications or other details are currently unavailable.

The teams with funding support from the RAISE+ Scheme can make use of the project funding to strengthen the teams and relevant equipment conducive to the R&D, commercialisation of R&D outcomes and business operation of the relevant projects. External investors such as venture capital companies will also provide support and assistance in project development

and business networking, etc. Furthermore, funded teams are required to submit through their universities annual progress reports, annual audited accounts and other supporting documents required (e.g. proof showing receipt of funding) to the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC). The above measures can help the funded teams to complete both stages of the project smoothly.

The RAISE+ Scheme welcomes the efforts of universities and research teams in attracting investments from various parties to unleash the potential of local universities in transformation and commercialisation of R&D outcomes, thereby enhancing the innovation and technology ecosystem of Hong Kong. The industry can support the projects by providing capital, sponsorship and in-kind contribution. In fact, the applications submitted by universities can attract both local capital investments and those outside Hong Kong (including the Mainland).

ITC will also devise overall performance indicators for the RAISE+ Scheme, such as the number of product outcomes transformed and realised, external investment attracted, and whether the start-ups have further developed and grown, so as to closely monitor its implementation and evaluate the benefits it brings to Hong Kong.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB133

(Question Serial No. 0988)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau mentions that it will continue to monitor the implementation of various funding schemes and support programmes under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF). In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the details of expenditures for various funding schemes and support programmes under the ITF over the past 5 years;
2. the manpower deployment for various funding schemes and support programmes over the past 5 years; and
3. whether the Government will further review if the scopes of various funding schemes and support programmes overlap with each other and are subject to re-organisation and consolidation, so as to support the development of various fields and industry chains of innovation and technology more effectively?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

1. The expenditures for various funding schemes supporting the 6 innovation and technology (I&T) areas, namely supporting applied research and development (R&D), facilitating technology adoption, nurturing I&T talents, supporting technology start-ups, promoting new industrialisation and developing new quality productive force, and fostering an I&T culture, under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) in the past 5 years (i.e. from the financial years of 2020-21 to 2024-25) are tabulated as follows:

Amount of expenditure over the past 5 financial years Subheads under the ITF	Amount (\$ million)				
	2020-21 Actual expenditure	2021-22 Actual expenditure	2022-23 Actual expenditure	2023-24 Actual expenditure	2024-25 Revised estimate
Subhead 090 Midstream Research Programme for Universities (block vote) (subsumed into the Innovation and Technology Support Programme since June 2021)	38.8	15.2	-	-	-
Subhead 101 Innovation and Technology (block vote) (Note (1) and (2))					
Innovation and Technology Support Programme	733.0	704.1	697.2	628.1	629.0
Partnership Research Programme	62.7	101.4	123.0	85.7	91.2
Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme	18.4	22.8	30.8	36.1	47.6
Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme	-	26.5	31.5	40.4	51.4
Enterprise Support Scheme	92.1	88.1	51.2	57.6	39.2
Research and Development Cash Rebate Scheme	152.9	121.3	127.5	146.3	156.2
Public Sector Trial Scheme	136.1	93.4	123.5	133.4	84.1
General Support Programme	59.2	97.6	105.9	128.7	140.6
Patent Application Grant	15.0	31.1	35.4	31.8	38.5
Research Talent Hub	346.8	341.4	426.5	345.1	531.9
New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme	11.2	62.4	49.6	540.4	114.3
STEM Internship Scheme	23.5	66.9	62.2	64.2	137.9
Technology Voucher Programme	95.4	319.4	913.1	665.9	1,712.8
Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities	46.3	47.8	48.9	71.8	89.4
New Industrialisation Funding Scheme	-	-	-	17.2	38.3
Innovation and Technology Fund for Better Living	-	13.1	14.1	16.5	20.0
Subhead 110 Innovation and Technology Venture Fund Corporation	33.2	27.6	16.4	16.0	192.0

Amount of expenditure over the past 5 financial years Subheads under the ITF	Amount (\$ million)				
	2020-21 Actual expenditure	2021-22 Actual expenditure	2022-23 Actual expenditure	2023-24 Actual expenditure	2024-25 Revised estimate
Subhead 113 Research, Academic and Industry Sectors One-plus Scheme	-	-	-	-	31.0
Subhead 115 New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1,864.6	2,180.1	2,856.8	3,025.2	4,145.4

Note (1): Subhead 101 Innovation and Technology (block vote) also includes the funding for the 8 Technology Transfer Offices of universities, 16 State Key Laboratories and 6 Hong Kong Branches of Chinese National Engineering Research Centres, as well as that for the R&D projects of the R&D centres/laboratories established under the *InnoHK* research clusters.

Note (2): Technology Voucher Programme and the Innovation and Technology Fund for Better Living have ceased accepting applications from 1 January 2025 onwards.

2. Over the past 5 years (i.e. from the financial years of 2020-21 to 2024-25), the staff establishment of the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) that is related to the 3 programmes for various ITF schemes, namely Support for Research and Development, Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship, and Planning for Innovation and Technology Development, is as follows:

Programmes	Staff headcount under the Programmes				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Programme (1) Support for Research and Development	55	55	55	65	67
Programme (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship	15	15	15	24	24
Programme (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development	64	57	57	59	62

Since some personnel under the programmes are required to handle more than 1 funding scheme and other ITC's tasks, we do not keep a breakdown of staff headcount divided by individual funding schemes.

3. The ITF has always served as the Government's primary platform for promoting I&T, advancing new industrialisation, and developing new quality productive force. To optimise resources utilisation and enhance operation efficiency, so as to focus on the support for key technological areas and industries as well as supporting the

development of the I&T ecosystem, ITC has begun the process of streamlining and consolidating the ITF schemes from 19 in 2024 to 13 following its review on the policy objectives and target recipients of various ITF schemes. Such efforts include:

- (i) consolidating the Innovation and Technology Support Programme and the Partnership Research Programme;
- (ii) merging of the Innovation and Technology Fund for Better Living with existing funding schemes;
- (iii) re-defining the nature of the STEM Internship Scheme and the Technology Start-up Support Scheme for Universities;
- (iv) consolidating the Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme and the Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme; and
- (v) ceasing the application for the Technology Voucher Programme.

ITC will continue to review the ITF in a timely manner, with the view to exploring further consolidation measures.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB134

(Question Serial No. 1360)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In 2024-25, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) enhanced technology co-operation with the Mainland at the central, regional, provincial and municipal levels through various co-operation mechanisms, including the Mainland/Hong Kong Science and Technology Co-operation Committee, the Pan-Pearl River Delta Joint Conference on Regional Co-operation in Science and Technology, and the Guangdong/Hong Kong Expert Group on Co-operation in Technology and Innovation. In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

1. the expenditures and manpower for implementing this policy measure;
2. the specific details of co-operation achieved by ITC through various co-operation mechanisms in the past year; and
3. whether ITC has formulated clear co-operation plans in specific areas, such as smart cities and intellectual property, for the coming year.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) has maintained close ties with the Mainland government and relevant authorities, gaining remarkable achievements in the promotion of innovation and technology (I&T) co-operation between the two places.

At the Central Government level, over the past year, both sides continued to promote the opening up of national-level science and technology (S&T) programmes to Hong Kong. Currently, numerous key projects are open for applications from research and development (R&D) institutions in Hong Kong as leading party. A number of Hong Kong-led projects were also given funding support. The number of designated Hong Kong R&D institutions eligible for applications for the “National Key Research and Development Programme” as leading party has increased to 20 since 2025. Additionally, the National Natural Science Foundation of China has integrated the “Excellent Young Scientists Fund (Hong Kong and Macao)” with the “Excellent Young Scientists Fund”, and opened up the “National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars of China” to young scholars from Hong Kong and Macao since 2024. Furthermore, the HKSAR Government and the China Association for Science and Technology signed the Co-operation Framework Agreement on Supporting Hong Kong in Becoming an International Hub for High-calibre Talents and Jointly Serving High-level Self-reliance in Science and Technology in December 2024, with a view to strengthening the co-operation between the two places in various areas, such as strengthening exchanges between scientific research and academic organisations, nurturing scientific and technological talents, promoting popular science, and facilitating technological integration and development in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). Over the past year, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) and the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) actively took forward the re-structuring of State Key Laboratories (SKLs) in Hong Kong. MOST has approved the results of the re-structuring exercise, allowing the establishment of 15 SKLs.

At the provincial and municipal levels, the HKSAR Government has maintained close contact with the Guangdong Provincial Government and relevant authorities in strengthening technology co-operation between Guangdong and Hong Kong. Both sides continue to provide funding for joint research projects of the two places while research programmes at the provincial level continue to be open to Hong Kong. Moreover, the universities and research institutions in Guangdong and Hong Kong have engaged in in-depth technology co-operation, reinforcing people-to-people exchange, as well as co-building of vehicles and platforms for technological innovation. Besides the Guangdong Province, the HKSAR Government has also maintained close ties with various Mainland provinces and municipalities to promote I&T co-operation. In 2024, ITC signed memorandums of understanding with the Science and Technology Commission of Shanghai Municipality and the Shaanxi Provincial Department of Science and Technology respectively, further strengthening the I&T co-operation between Shanghai and Hong Kong, as well as Shaanxi and Hong Kong.

Looking ahead, we will continue to adopt a multi-pronged approach to deepen co-operation and exchanges with the Mainland in scientific research. We will continue to strengthen policy coordination with the central ministries and provincial/municipal governments, actively promote the efficient implementation of various co-operation agreements, promote the further opening up of national and provincial/municipal S&T programmes to Hong Kong, advance the development of technological innovation platforms, as well as deepen the exchanges of S&T professionals in the two places. Regarding the development of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone, the two sides will continue to explore new policies to facilitate the convenient cross-boundary flow of innovation elements, with a view to transforming the Co-operation Zone into an internationally competitive R&D transformation base for industries, a hub for pooling global

I&T resources, as well as a world-class industry-academia-research platform, thereby supporting the high-quality I&T development in the GBA.

As ITC deploys its existing manpower to promote I&T co-operation with the Mainland, the relevant breakdowns are unavailable.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB135

(Question Serial No. 1405)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Estimates that the Innovation and Technology Commission actively organised exhibitions and workshops as well as sponsored competitions to widely promote the innovation and technology (I&T) culture and popular science to different sectors of the community through the General Support Programme (GSP). In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the numbers of projects funded under the GSP in the past 3 years, with a breakdown by type of applicant organisations, such as trade or industry associations, public bodies, charitable organisations, local universities, and local companies;
2. the attendances in each event in the past 3 years; and
3. whether there were events held outside Hong Kong in the past 3 years; if so, please set out the numbers with a breakdown by location.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

In the past 3 financial years (as at the end of January 2025), a total of 164 projects were funded under the General Support Programme (GSP). The breakdowns of the statistics by type of applicant organisations are tabulated as follows:

Local companies	Public bodies	Charitable organisations	Local universities	Organisations established under the Societies Ordinance	Total
56	38	47	20	3	164

Note: A breakdown of statistics by trade or industry association for the GSP is not available.

The GSP-funded activities, including conferences, exhibitions, seminars, workshops, promotional activities, popular science activities, and activities that support upgrading and development of industry, are primarily held in Hong Kong to foster the innovation and technology (I&T) culture in Hong Kong as well as widely promote popular science. Some funded projects may cover a certain number of activities held outside Hong Kong, such as outbound I&T study tours, and arranging student winning teams to attend I&T-related competitions in the Mainland, Asia, or other overseas locations. In general, upon the completion of outbound activities, the relevant organisers will organise sharing sessions in Hong Kong to engage more local beneficiaries. Depending on the project nature and scale, the number of participants (including online and on-site) for each project may range from a few hundred to hundreds of thousands.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB136

(Question Serial No. 2603)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The STEM Internship Scheme (the Scheme) launched by the Innovation and Technology Commission aims to subsidise university students in STEM disciplines to gain innovation and technology (I&T)-related work experience through participation in short-term and full-time internships, so as to enlarge the local I&T talent pool. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the numbers of students benefitting from the Scheme, the expenditure involved and the manpower arrangements in the past 3 years;
2. whether students from the member institutions of the Alliance of Universities of Applied Sciences, which are not among the 8 major tertiary institutions, are eligible for the Scheme; if not, whether the Government will consider the coverage of them by the Scheme;
3. whether the Government has set up a feedback mechanism to solicit feedback on the Scheme from both employers and students; and
4. whether the Government will consider increasing the number of participating institutions under the Scheme?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

1. In the past 3 years (as at the end of January 2025), the STEM Internship Scheme (the Scheme) provided over 11 400 internship opportunities for university students in total. The relevant statistics are tabulated below:

Financial year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (as at the end of January 2025)
Number of participating interns	3 524	3 845	4 070

As the relevant staff are also responsible for handling various initiatives of the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC), we are unable to provide the breakdowns of expenditure involved and manpower arrangements.

- 2.&4. The number of participating institutions has been increasing in an orderly manner since the launch of the Scheme. There were 7 universities (namely City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Education University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and The University of Hong Kong) participating in the Scheme when it was launched in May 2020. Lingnan University and Hong Kong Metropolitan University joined the Scheme in 2023-24 and 2024-25 respectively, the latter being the first non-University Grants Committee-funded local tertiary institution participating in the Scheme.

Furthermore, the scope of the Scheme was expanded in June 2023 to cover the internship opportunities offered by 5 government-funded Research and Development Centres and the Hong Kong Productivity Council to students studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programmes at local and non-local universities (including the campuses at Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area established by the designated local universities). The Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute set up in 2024 will participate in the Scheme from 2025-26 onwards.

ITC will maintain close liaison with various stakeholders to review the coverage of institutions under the Scheme from time to time.

3. A feedback mechanism has been set up for the Scheme. After completion of the internships, employers and students under the Scheme are required to submit an assessment questionnaire. According to the feedback received by the participating universities, the academia and industries are very supportive of the Scheme in general. More than 95% of the students expressed upon completion of the internships that they would consider pursuing an innovation and technology career after graduation. Almost all employers under the Scheme were satisfied with the performance of students and willing to continue to participate in the Scheme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB137

(Question Serial No. 0094)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government has earmarked \$100 million to launch the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) this year. What are the responsible organisations and target enterprises of support, as well as the relevant requirements such as the eligibility criteria for the scheme? Will it involve any expenses such as administrative fees for the responsible organisations? If so, what are the expenses involved; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

The Government will launch the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) under the Innovation and Technology Fund this year to provide local manufacturing enterprises with funding on a 1 (Government) : 2 (Company) matching basis, which aims at encouraging them to adopt smart production technology solutions and upgrade and transform the existing production lines. We are currently formulating the details of the Manufacturing+, including the application requirements as well as the vetting and monitoring mechanisms. We will make reference to the modus operandi of other funding programmes in order to achieve optimal efficiency in the administrative arrangements such as staff deployment and expenditure estimation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB138

(Question Serial No. 0441)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute was established last September to spearhead collaboration among universities, research and development (R&D) centres and the industry on the R&D of third-generation semiconductor core technology.

In this connection, please inform this Committee of: the amount of funds provided by the Government so far; and the estimated amount of funds to be provided by the Government in the coming year to foster the R&D.

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

We have obtained the approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in May 2024 for the creation of a new commitment of \$2.84 billion for the establishment and operation of the Hong Kong Microelectronics Research and Development Institute (MRDI). Among which, \$2.48 billion is for procuring pilot lines equipment, and around \$360 million is for the operating expenditure of the first five years. The MRDI was established in September 2024. As at the end of February 2025, the Government had disbursed around \$280 million to the MRDI, of which approximately \$250 million was used to procure the equipment for 2 pilot lines, and around \$30 million to cover the MRDI's operating expenditure in the first year. In 2025-26, the Government has earmarked \$1.91 billion for the MRDI, with approximately \$1.73 billion allocated for procuring pilot lines equipment, and around \$180 million for covering operating expenditure. As for the research and development (R&D) expenditure incurred by MRDI's R&D projects, MRDI shall apply for funding under the Innovation and Technology Fund in accordance with the established mechanism.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB139

(Question Serial No. 0477)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government enhanced the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme last year to strengthen support for local manufacturing enterprises to shift to smart manufacturing. The total investment cost is around \$1.3 billion, of which \$930 million came from private investment. In this connection, please inform this Committee of: the number of applications rejected and their percentage out of the applications received in the last year; among some 100 production lines for which funding had been approved, the respective numbers of them genuinely involving advanced industries and traditional industries such as food industry; and given the relatively lenient application criteria for the current funding scheme and the Government's relatively serious deficit with limited funding amounts, whether a review should be conducted for the current funding scheme, and whether more stringent and precise approving criteria should be formulated to dovetail with the strategic direction of developing new industrialisation?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

Since the launch of the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS), the New Industrialisation Vetting Committee had supported 63 applications, covering more than 100 production lines. In 2024-25, a total of 30 applications were received. Among the 27 vetted applications, 2 were rejected, accounting for around 7% of the total.

The projects supported by the NIFS involve the setting up of new smart production lines in Hong Kong. The applicants consist of companies from emerging industries and traditional manufacturing industries, covering medical devices, biotechnology, nanofiber materials, new energy, pharmaceutical production (including Chinese medicine), electronics, food manufacturing and processing (including health food), textiles and clothing, construction materials, printing, and equipment and parts, etc. Around 60 of these production lines are

related to traditional industries, such as food manufacturing and processing, textiles and clothing, and printing, etc.

The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint has suggested continuing to enhance the innovation and technology ecosystem, and promoting the interactive development of the upstream, midstream and downstream sectors, so as to consolidate the strengths of Hong Kong in upstream basic research, to accelerate the transformation and realisation of midstream research and development outcomes, as well as to support the development of downstream industries, thereby advancing the development of new industrialisation. To promote the downstream development of new industrialisation, the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) was launched in September last year to provide funding support on a 1(Government) : 2(enterprise) matching basis for enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance (namely life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies) to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. For each project under the NIAS, the minimum total project cost is \$300 million. The enterprise has to contribute no less than \$200 million, while the Government will cover a maximum of one-third of the total approved project cost or \$200 million, whichever is lower.

While promoting the development of the strategic industries, we deem it necessary to take into account the need for local traditional manufacturing industries to upgrade and transform their production lines. We consider the existing NIFS application eligibility and assessment criteria appropriate. On one hand, the NIFS can attract enterprises from traditional manufacturing industries to establish production lines in Hong Kong and devote more resources to supporting new industrialisation, thereby contributing to the diversified development of Hong Kong's economy. In addition, funding under NIFS will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis upon the investment of enterprises in setting up smart production lines, ensuring that the funded projects will bring substantive economic benefits to Hong Kong.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB140

(Question Serial No. 0479)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government plans to launch the two-year Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) this year. The Government will provide funding of up to \$250,000 each on a one-to-two matching basis to enterprises operating production lines in Hong Kong to support their formulation of smart production strategies and introduction of advanced technologies into existing production lines. A funding of \$100 million has been earmarked for the scheme, benefitting some 400 enterprises.

In this regard, please inform this Committee of: whether it is possible for the Government to increase the funding on top of the basic amount of \$100 million if the scheme is well-received with the number of applicant enterprises far exceeding 400; and how to prevent double applications in view of the similarity between the Manufacturing+ and the announced New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS).

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

The Government will launch the Pilot Manufacturing and Production Line Upgrade Support Scheme (Manufacturing+) under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) this year to provide local manufacturing enterprises with funding on a 1 (Government) : 2 (Company) matching basis, which aims at encouraging them to adopt smart production technology solutions, as well as to upgrade the existing production lines. Subject to the response from the industry, we will review the effectiveness of the Manufacturing+ to consider the direction for development of the scheme after its launch.

Although both the Manufacturing+ and the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS) are funding programmes set up with the aim of promoting Hong Kong's new industrialisation and developing new quality productive force, their target applicant enterprises are different.

Manufacturers applying for the NIFS must set up entirely new smart production lines in Hong Kong, whereas the Manufacturing+ targets manufacturers that have already set up production lines in Hong Kong, funding the upgrade and transformation of their existing production lines.

Consistent with the arrangement of other funding programmes under ITF, we will require applicants of the Manufacturing+ and NIFS to make declarations, as well as to conduct random inspections to ensure that expenditure items under approved projects are not subsidised by other Government funding programmes or those managed by public organisations.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB141

(Question Serial No. 0487)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Promotion of Technological Entrepreneurship

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government is preparing to launch the HK\$180 million Pilot Innovation and Technology Accelerator Scheme. The Government will provide up to \$30 million in funding, on a one-to-two matching basis, to each professional start-up service agency, with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-ups ecosystem through their business network and experience.

In this connection, please inform this Committee of: the current number of start-up service agencies in Hong Kong and their main methods of raising operating funds; the current number of start-up service agencies with government investment besides Science Park and Cyberport; whether the funding, if provided to start-up service agencies without government investment, is granted in phases; and what regulatory measures are in place to prevent the misuse of funding by such service agencies.

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

The Pilot Innovation and Technology (I&T) Accelerator Scheme aims to attract professional start-up service providers with proven track records in and beyond Hong Kong to set up accelerator bases in Hong Kong, with a view to enriching Hong Kong's start-ups ecosystem through their business network and experience. Apart from the Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport, the Government does not fund or invest in other start-up service providers at present. We do not maintain the number of start-up service providers in Hong Kong and information on how they raise funds for their operations.

We are preparing for the launch of the Pilot I&T Accelerator Scheme, including to identify a suitable implementation agent, formulate the implementation details (such as application criteria, vetting procedures, execution of the scheme, monitoring mechanism, performance

indicators, timetable and promotion), etc. We expect to consult the relevant panel of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and seek funding approval from the LegCo within this year.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB142

(Question Serial No. 0489)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Infrastructural Support

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will support local universities to set up life and health technology research institutes through the Subsidy Programme for the Setup of Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s), with a view to fostering cross-university/institutional and multi-disciplinary collaboration. The Innovation and Technology Commission is inviting institutions to submit proposals.

In this connection, please inform this Committee of: the total amount of subsidy under the Programme; whether there will be a ceiling on the amount of subsidy granted to individual institutions; and whether the Government intends to set up similar research and development subsidy programmes jointly with large enterprises to promote multi-partite collaboration among the Government, academia and business sector.

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

Life and health technology industry is one of the key development directions of Hong Kong's innovation and technology. Out of the \$10 billion earmarked for the promotion of life and health technology, the Government sets aside \$6 billion to launch the Subsidy Programme for the Setup of Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s) (the Subsidy Programme), thereby supporting local universities to set up Life and Health Technology Research Institute(s) (LHTRIs) to foster cross-university/institutional and multi-disciplinary collaboration.

The applicant institutions must be local universities funded by the University Grants Committee that have a medical school and/or are offering life and health disciplines. The proposed amount of subsidy granted to the LHTRIs supported for establishment is determined by the proposal of and matching subsidy for individual applications.

In order to encourage the industry-academia-research collaboration, the Government will provide funding on a matching basis under the Subsidy Programme, with a matching ratio of up to 4 (Government) : 1 (university and/or industry).

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB143

(Question Serial No. 1488)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Innovation and Technology Commission launched the New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme, the New Industrialisation Funding Scheme and the New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme in 2018, 2020 and 2024 respectively to further promote new industrialisation in Hong Kong and nurture local innovation and technology talents. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the yearly breakdowns of (i) the number of applications received, (ii) the number of applications approved, (iii) the amount of funding approved, (iv) the industries to which the applicants belonged, and (v) the expenditure and staffing establishment for vetting and approving the applications for the three schemes over the past 3 years;
2. whether the Government has set any key performance indicators to assess the effectiveness of the three funding schemes; if yes, of the details; if not, of the reasons; and
3. given some opinions on the similarity of the project objectives as well as the overlap of target groups of the three schemes, whether the Government will consider consolidating and rationalising their funding arrangements, so as to reduce repeated funding and prevent abuse of the schemes; if so, of the details; if not, of the reasons?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

Our consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme (NITTP)

The NITTP subsidises, on a 2(Government) :1(Company) matching basis, local enterprises to train their staff in advanced technologies, especially those related to new industrialisation. In the past 3 years, about 2 900 applications for course registration under the NITTP were approved. The number of training grant applications, number of approved applications and total funding amount under the NITTP in each year over the same period are tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of training grant applications	Number of approved training grant applications	Total funding amount (approximate amount)	The top 10 industries involved in the approved applications by total funding amount approved
2022	3 276	3 204	\$163 million	Retail Trade, Innovation and Technology, Management and Consultancy, Import/Export and Wholesale Trades, Media and Communications, Building, Civil Engineering and Built Environment, Beauty Care and Hairdressing, Banking and Finance, Hotel, Catering and Tourism, Transport and Logistics
2023	8 706	8 310	\$366 million	
2024	3 202	2 241	\$63 million	
Total	15 184	13 755	\$592 million	

Since the launch of the NITTP, the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) has commissioned the Vocational Training Council as the NITTP Secretariat to handle the daily operation of the programme. Meanwhile, there are 2 staff members from ITC who are responsible for the policies of NITTP and liaising with the Secretariat. We do not have a breakdown of the expenditure involved in the administration of NITTP by the relevant staff as they are also responsible for administering other funding schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) and handling other duties. The Secretariat has also conducted regular surveys to gauge the feedback of participating enterprises on the NITTP, and their responses are largely positive. The latest round of survey for 2023-24 showed that almost 90% of the surveyed enterprises that the courses under the NITTP had an excellent or good effect in enhancing their employees' knowledge and skills.

New Industrialisation Funding Scheme (NIFS)

The NIFS was launched to subsidise manufacturers, on a 1(Government): 2(Company) matching basis, to set up new smart production lines in Hong Kong. The funding ceiling for each project is one-third of the total project cost or \$15 million, whichever is lower. In the past 3 years, the number of applications for the NIFS was 15, 17 and 30 respectively, among which the relevant information of the 48 applications supported by the New Industrialisation Vetting Committee (Vetting Committee) is tabulated as follows:

Year	Number of applicant companies	Total project cost	Matching fund from applicant companies	Funding amount	Industries
2022-2023	10	\$350 million	\$247 million	\$103 million	Food manufacturing and processing (including health food), textiles and clothing, construction materials, medical device/medical and personal care, nanofiber materials, new energy/green technology, biotechnology / pharmaceutical production (including Chinese medicine), electronics, printing and equipment and parts
2023-2024	13	\$133 million	\$89 million	\$44 million	
2024-2025	25	\$364 million	\$245 million	\$119 million	
Total	48	\$847 million	\$581 million	\$266 million	

The NIFS Secretariat comprises 5 staff members from ITC. We do not keep a separate breakdown of the expenditure involved in the administration of NIFS by the relevant staff as they are also responsible for administering other funding schemes under the ITF. The NIFS aims to provide funding for a cumulative total of over 130 smart production lines in Hong Kong by 2027, with the corresponding cumulative technical positions increasing to over 1 050 and cumulative matching private investment rising to no less than \$1.3 billion during the same period.

New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS)

ITC launched the NIAS in September 2024, providing funding for enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance (namely life and health technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies) to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. The NIAS funding will be provided on a 1(Government) : 2(Company) matching basis. For each project, the minimum total project cost is \$300 million (i.e. the enterprise has to contribute no less than \$200 million), while the total amount of government funding for each enterprise is up to \$200 million. As

at the end of February 2025, a total of 7 applications had been received under the NIAS. The Vetting Committee has supported the first application, covering life and health technology sector. The total investment amount for the project will be about \$600 million, of which the Government funding will amount to around \$200 million. The NIAS Secretariat comprises 5 staff members from ITC. We do not keep a separate breakdown of the expenditure involved in the administration of NIAS by the relevant staff as they are also responsible for administering other funding schemes under the ITF. Through the NIAS, the Government aims to attract 50 to 100 enterprises to set up new production facilities in Hong Kong with a corresponding direct investment of no less than \$20 billion from these enterprises over a period of 5 to 8 years.

Policy objectives of these three schemes

The policy objective of NITTP is to subsidise local enterprises to train their staff in advanced technologies, especially those related to new industrialisation, with a view to assisting them in upgrading or transforming their businesses. Its policy objectives and funding scope do not overlap with those of the NIFS and the NIAS.

While the policy objective of both the NIFS and the NIAS is to attract manufacturers to set up new smart production lines in Hong Kong through the provision of funding, there are differences in target enterprises, the project scale and threshold for the two schemes. The NIAS targets at enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance (namely life and health technology, AI and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies), whereas the NIFS does not impose industry restrictions for applicant companies. As for the project scale and threshold, the NIAS aims to fund large-scale projects with the minimum total project cost of \$300 million, requiring the enterprises to contribute at least \$200 million, whereas the NIFS does not set a minimum cost for each project.

To prevent double funding, the expenditure items for approved projects under the NIAS and the NIFS shall not receive funding from both schemes, other government funding schemes or those administered by public organisations.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB144

(Question Serial No. 1496)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Support for Research and Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government launched the Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme (MHKJFS) in April 2019 to support and encourage universities, scientific research institutions, and technology enterprises in Hong Kong and the Mainland to strengthen collaboration in scientific research. In this regard, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What were (i) the numbers of received applications; (ii) the numbers of approved applications and details of the projects; (iii) the applicant institutions for each project; (iv) the funding period; and (v) the approved funding amounts for each project, with breakdowns by the 3 specific themes and types of projects of the MHKJFS (i.e. collaborative projects and platform projects), over the past 5 years?
2. Given some opinions that the MHKJFS overlaps with the Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme in terms of target groups and policy objectives, will the Government review the details of both schemes and coordinate the financial resources in an appropriate manner to ensure the proper use of public funds? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The consolidated reply to the various parts of the question is as follows:

The numbers of applications received and approved in the last 5 rounds of the Mainland-Hong Kong Joint Funding Scheme (MHKJFS), with breakdowns by specific theme and type of project, are set out as below:

Specific theme/ type of project	Number of applications received		Number of funded projects	
	Platform projects	Collaborative projects	Platform projects	Collaborative projects
2020				
Biotechnology: Research on Prevention and Treatment of Neurological Diseases; Research on Prevention and Treatment of Cancer; and Research on Modernisation of Chinese Medicine	44	3	12	2
Artificial Intelligence	26	1	9	1
Others (Note)	8	0	1	0
2021				
Biotechnology: Research on Prevention and Treatment of Cancer; Research on Modernisation of Chinese Medicine; and Prevention and Treatment of Respiratory Tract Infection	50	1	7	1
Artificial Intelligence	30	1	7	1
New Materials	31	0	8	0
Others (Note)	8	0	1	0
2022				
Biotechnology: Research and Development of Biopharmaceuticals such as Vaccines and Antibody-based Medicines; Research on Chinese medicine for Prevention and Treatment of Major Clinical Diseases; Research on Chinese Medicine-based New Medicines; and Applications of Synthetic Biology Technologies	28	0	5	0

Specific theme/ type of project	Number of applications received		Number of funded projects	
	Platform projects	Collaborative projects	Platform projects	Collaborative projects
2022				
Artificial Intelligence (AI): Research on the Security and Privacy of AI Systems; Smart Transportation; Intelligent Robots and Related Applied Technologies in Extreme Weather/Natural Disasters; Brain-inspired Intelligence; and Smart Healthcare (including Medical Robots)	65	6	8	0
New Materials: Optoelectronic Materials; Third-generation Semiconductor Technologies; Key Materials for Hydrogen Fuel Cells; Materials for Highly-safe Lithium-ion Batteries; and Biomedical Materials	52	0	10	0
Others (Note)	5	0	0	0
2023				
Biotechnology: Chinese Medicine-based New Medicines, Research on Medicines for Treating Rare Diseases, Regenerative Medicines for Treating Degenerative Diseases, Tissue Stem Cells Isolation and Functions Evaluation	45	0	6	0
Artificial Intelligence (AI): Research on the Security and Privacy of AI Systems, Brain-inspired Intelligence, Smart Transportation, Smart Healthcare (including Medical Robots)	100	8	8	0

Specific theme/ type of project	Number of applications received		Number of funded projects	
	Platform projects	Collaborative projects	Platform projects	Collaborative projects
2023				
New Materials: Optoelectronic Materials; Third-generation Semiconductor Technologies, Key Materials for highly-secured, High Energy Density Fuel Cells, Research on and Application of Biomedical Materials	85	1	10	0
Others (Note)	3	0	0	0
2024				
Biotechnology: Research and Development of Innovative Drugs to Treat Chronic Diseases	75	3	In the vetting process	
Artificial Intelligence (AI): Research on the Security and Privacy of AI Systems, Brain-inspired Intelligence, Smart Healthcare (including Medical Robots), Smart City	170	12		
Sustainability Engineering and Technology: Optoelectronic Materials, Third-generation Semiconductor Technologies, Advanced Green Manufacturing, Power Management Integrated Circuits and Modules	98	6		
Others (Note)	12	0		

Note: The figures include projects with more than 1 specific themes or without provision of themes.

Details of funded projects have been uploaded to the following website of the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) for public viewing:

Website of the ITF:

<https://www.itf.gov.hk/en/project-search/search-result/index.html?isAdvSearch=1&Page=1&Programmes=MHKJFS&SortBy=ref>

Both the MHKJFS and the Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme aim to support and encourage universities, scientific research institutions, and technology enterprises in Hong Kong and the Mainland to strengthen collaboration in scientific research. To facilitate the submission of funding applications from research institutions and participating companies, the Innovation and Technology Commission will merge the two schemes this year, naming the new scheme as the Mainland-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme, with the application eligibility unchanged.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB145

(Question Serial No. 3008)

Head: (155) Government Secretariat: Innovation and Technology Commission

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Planning for Innovation and Technology Development

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (Ivan KB LEE)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the launch of New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) by the Government in September 2024, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. The NIAS provides funding support on a 1(Government) : 2 (Company) matching basis. For each project, the minimum total project cost is \$300 million, while the enterprise is required to contribute no less than \$200 million. On what basis was such a funding ratio and amount set?
2. How long was the vetting period for the first application approved under the NIAS? Will the Government set a specific timeframe for the vetting process?
3. Regarding the approved applications, how can the Government ensure that the funding is used in a transparent way and meets the objectives? Will the Government disclose the specific details of the approved projects, such as the information on enterprises, projects and the expected outcomes?
4. What strategies and criteria determine the priority of the NIAS-funded industries? Are the enterprises outside the specified industries of strategic importance eligible for the NIAS if their projects fulfill the relevant criteria?

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

1. The New Industrialisation Acceleration Scheme (NIAS) aims to fund enterprises from industries of strategic importance (namely life and health technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies) to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. Under the

NIAS, the Government will provide funding support on a 1(Government) : 2(enterprise) matching basis for enterprises engaging in industries of strategic importance to set up new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. For each project, the minimum total project cost is \$300 million. The enterprise is required to contribute no less than \$200 million, while the Government will cover a maximum of one-third of the total approved project cost or \$200 million, whichever is lower. Each enterprise may have a maximum of 2 approved projects and receive up to \$200 million in total under the NIAS.

The enterprises from the relevant strategic industries reflected that the amount of investment required for setting up their new production facilities was generally higher than in other industries. The amount of funding under the existing New Industrialisation Funding Scheme was not able to attract these enterprises to establish new smart production facilities in Hong Kong. In view of this, the NIAS will provide each eligible enterprise with funding up to a total amount of \$200 million. Regarding the matching ratio of funding, we consider the existing funding ratio of 1(Government) : 2(enterprise) appropriate. Not only can it attract enterprises to establish smart production facilities in Hong Kong and devote more resources to the development of new industrialisation, but it can also ensure that enterprises will carefully consider the potential and cost-effectiveness of the projects, thereby contributing to the diversified development of Hong Kong's economy. After considering the above factors and consulting the relevant Panels as well as the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council, we have formulated the funding amount and ratio for the NIAS.

2. In February 2025, the New Industrialisation Vetting Committee (Vetting Committee) supported the first application under the NIAS. It took around 35 working days for Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC), from the receipt of all required information submitted by the applicant company, to inform the company of the vetting results made by the Vetting Committee. The actual processing time for each application is subject to various factors, such as the complexity of the cases as well as the comprehensiveness and clarity of the information submitted by the applicant companies. We will draw up a performance pledge for the NIAS after accumulating experience in vetting the applications.
3. The Government has formulated clear arrangements for fund disbursement as well as a control and review mechanism for the NIAS. Successful applicants are required to enter into funding agreements with the Government and carry out the approved projects in accordance with the agreements. The enterprises are required to submit progress reports and audited accounts. After the relevant documents have been accepted by the Vetting Committee and ITC, ITC will disburse the funding on a reimbursement basis, having regard to the progress and the actual recognisable expenditure of the projects. Meanwhile, the enterprises shall provide information to the Government on the benefits of the relevant production line, including the business turnover after the commissioning of the production line, and the number and types of new jobs created, etc. to ensure that the implementation of the project is in line with the objectives. After signing the funding agreements with the applicants and obtaining their consent, ITC will publish information on the approved projects (including the project name, enterprise name and funding amount) on the website of the Innovation and Technology Fund.

4. In 2022, the Government promulgated the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (the Blueprint) which sets out 4 broad development directions and 8 major strategies, including enhancing the innovation and technology ecosystem and promoting new industrialisation in Hong Kong. The Blueprint focuses on the development of strategic industries covering life and health technology, AI and data science, advanced manufacturing and new energy technology industries, etc. To enhance Hong Kong's competitiveness in attracting these enterprises to establish new smart production facilities in Hong Kong, the Government launched the NIAS to provide funding for enterprises engaging in the above industries so as to attract them to develop in Hong Kong.

We welcome enterprises engaging in the above 3 designated industries of strategic importance and intending to establish new smart production facilities in Hong Kong to submit applications under the NIAS. We consider that the 3 strategic industries (namely life and health technology, AI and data science, as well as advanced manufacturing and new energy technologies) already cover the vast majority of enterprises related to new industrialisation.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB146

(Question Serial No. 3399)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

At present, communication devices (mobile phones and tablet computers) are provided by the Government to some officials and staff for liaison and other work purposes. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please list, categorised by brand, the number of communication devices (mobile phones and tablet computers) procured by the Government in each of the past 5 years;
2. When procuring communication devices, what factors will departments take into account in choosing a brand? Is the cybersecurity of the communication devices an essential factor for consideration when departments procure such devices?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hak-kan (LegCo internal reference no.: 63)

Reply:

1. The numbers of mobile phones and tablet computers procured by all bureaux/departments (B/Ds) through the two types of centrally organised procurement contracts and arrangements by the Digital Policy Office (DPO) or the Government Logistics Department in the past 5 financial years (as at the end of January 2025) are listed at **Annex**. Besides, B/Ds can also procure mobile phones and tablet computers in accordance with prevailing procurement regulations and mechanisms based on their business needs. The DPO does not maintain information on procurement that is not centrally organised.
2. B/Ds shall strictly follow the Government's Stores and Procurement Regulations in the procurement process to ensure that it is fair, open and competitive, and shall safeguard national security and information security. In this connection, the Government has formulated a set of comprehensive Government IT Security Policy and Guidelines, and B/Ds shall comply with the requirements set out in the guidelines when procuring

information and communications technology products, including complying with technical specifications that meet relevant international and national IT security standards. B/Ds shall also adopt, where appropriate, information technology and communications equipment from diverse sources, the industry best practices and open source products, etc. in system implementation to avoid over-dependence on a single or a few platforms or products. This approach is to better manage the risk arising from possible export control or possible impact of global supply chain issues, and to facilitate selection of the most suitable products by B/Ds for protecting government information system and data security.

**The numbers of Mobile Phones and Tablet Computers
Procured by Government Bureaux and Departments
Through the Centrally Organised Procurement Contract and Arrangement
in the Past 5 Financial Years (2020-21 to 2024-25)
(As at the end of January 2025)**

1. Standing Offer Agreement for Mobile Workplace Services (Digital Policy Office)

Equipment Brand (Note 1)	2020-21 (Note 2)	2021-22 (Note 2)	2022-23 (Note 2)	2023-24	2024-25 (As at the end of January 2025)
Apple	1 111	1 023	877	1 225	836
Samsung				269	215

2. Listing Arrangement for Government Procurement of IT Products (Digital Policy Office) and Standing Offer Agreement for Microcomputer Equipment (Government Logistics Department) (Note 3)

Equipment Brand (Note 1)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 (Note 3)	2024-25 (As at the end of January 2025)
Apple	7 445	1 371	258	377	637
Huawei	-	-	-	51	38
Microsoft	35	192	48	49	52
Samsung	2	40	-	248	608
Other brands	-	-	-	60	5

Note 1: The list is arranged in alphabetical order by brand name.

Note 2: The information provided by the contractor before November 2022 only included the total number per month but not categorisation by equipment brand.

Note 3: The Standing Offer Agreement for Microcomputer Equipment coordinated by the Government Logistics Department has expired on 15 October 2023 and was replaced by the Listing Arrangement for Government Procurement of IT Products coordinated by the Digital Policy Office.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB147

(Question Serial No. 0452)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government, (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government proposed reducing the civil service establishment and recurrent departmental expenditure in the Budget. Regarding the enhancement of the 1823 system, please advise:

Whether there are plans to take forward the application of artificial intelligence by 1823 to handle complaints from members of the public, such as supporting Customer Service Officers in using document processing copilot application for handling complaints? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

1823 provides round-the-clock one-stop service to answer public enquiries of participating departments, as well as receiving service requests and complaints in respect of all government bureaux/departments (B/Ds). Over the years, demand for 1823 service has been continuously increasing. Currently, 1823 staff handle over 3 million calls and emails from citizens annually. To continuously enhance service quality and cope with the demand, 1823 actively applies artificial intelligence (AI) and other innovative technologies to handle general enquiries through a range of digital self-services, including an AI chatbot, an intelligent interactive voice response system (IVRS), and provision of information on frequently asked questions on our website, enabling existing staff to concentrate on more complicated cases such as complaints.

In 2024, we have completed various service enhancement projects, including:

- Fully expanded the AI chatbot to answer frequently asked questions of all scopes of service under 1823.

- Implemented an intelligent IVRS and strengthened its speech operation function with adoption of AI speech recognition technology through which members of the public can input the required options verbally without pressing any button. The technology can also identify callers' enquiry subjects and provide relevant information by voice messages or short message service (SMS).
- Implemented AI speech-to-text technology to enhance the efficiency of 1823 in handling citizens' voicemail messages.
- Leveraged AI technology to assist staff in drafting responses to written enquiries on specific topics, thereby enhancing processing efficiency.

1823 will continue to enhance service quality and cope with the rising demand through wider use of advanced technologies, including AI.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB148

(Question Serial No. 0068)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Government departments will launch mobile apps for public download from time to time.

1. Please list by government departments their respective development cost, annual maintenance fees, timetable of launching their apps and the total number of downloads.
2. Which apps have been decommissioned or consolidated in the past 3 years? What are the main reasons for this?
3. Under these Programmes, it is mentioned that the Digital Policy Office (DPO) will continue the implementation of the enhanced "iAM Smart" platform, and drive full adoption of "iAM Smart" by bureaux/departments (B/Ds) by the end of 2025 or earlier. Which government services have already been consolidated by the Government so far? What were the specific difficulties encountered in the process? What were the respective manpower and expenditures involved relating to such work?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

1. The mobile apps currently available for download by the public from various bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and their relevant information are listed in **Annex A**.
2. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) requested B/Ds to conduct regular reviews after the launch of mobile apps, including whether the apps have met users' needs and achieved the expected outcomes and cost-effectiveness. If the projects/initiatives relating to the mobile apps have been completed, if there are other more effective ways to provide the service, or if the needs of the target user groups have changed, the relevant B/Ds should consider decommissioning the apps. The mobile apps which were decommissioned or

consolidated by B/Ds in the past 3 years and their relevant information are set out in **Annex B**.

3. “iAM Smart” can now access more than 1 100 online services provided by the Government and public and private organisations as well as e-forms provided by various B/Ds. Commonly used services include SmartPLAY, eTAX, Online Application for Renewal of Vehicle Licence, Online Application for International Driving Permit, Contactless e-Channel, eHealth, etc.

The DPO obtained the funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in mid-2023 to commence a series of upgrades to the “iAM Smart” platform. The target is to drive full adoption of “iAM Smart” by all government online services by 2025 so as to realise “single portal for online government services”. The upgrade work of the “iAM Smart” platform is progressing at full speed, with the enhanced or new features as follows:

- i. In 2023, the design for the “iAM Smart” mobile app was updated, enabling citizens to browse various useful information. Additionally, the “iAM Smart” platform was linked up with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents to directly log in to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile app through “iAM Smart” for using various government services of the Guangdong Province.
- ii. In 2024, the registration process for “iAM Smart+” was simplified. A new “iAM Smart” interface was launched, and a new “iAM Smart Personal Code” was introduced for identity verification purpose.
- iii. Various departments will gradually roll out personalised content for displaying on the “Personal Assistant” page.
- iv. In early March 2025, the “Digital Document” feature was introduced, allowing users to present their digital documents issued by different government departments through the “iAM Smart” mobile app. It currently covers the Social Welfare Department’s Electronic Senior Citizen Card, the Civil Service Bureau’s Common Recruitment Examination results and the Basic Law and National Security Law Test results, as well as the Correctional Services Department’s Incarceration Proof.
- v. More new features will be progressively rolled out this year, including the “Step-up Authentication”, bill payment function and “Mini-program Platform”.

The estimated expenditures for the “iAM Smart” platform for 2024-25 and 2025-26 are about \$152 million and \$147 million respectively, which include the expenditure for operation, maintenance, and upgrade of the “iAM Smart” platform, of which the estimated expenditures specifically for upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform for these 2 financial years are \$50.73 million and \$45.8 million respectively. The above-mentioned tasks are supported by 20 government staff.

**B/Ds' mobile apps currently available for download
(As at 28 February 2025)**

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
1.	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Enjoy Hiking	38,000	49,500	Dec 2010	487 000
2.	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Reef Check Hong Kong	95,000	49,500	Dec 2011	14 000
3.	Buildings Department	MWCS - Quick Guide for Minor Works	290,000	109,000	Sep 2014	71 000
4.	Buildings Department	WIN SAFE	The total cost of the project is around \$2.61 million. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.	433,000 (Including the costs for maintenance of mobile app (around \$156,000), upgrade of operating systems in Government Cloud Infrastructure Services (GCIS) (around \$127,000) and adoption of streamlined workflow in iAM Smart (around \$150,000).)	May 2022	14 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
5.	Civil Aviation Department	eSUA	277,000	68,447	May 2022	48 000
6.	Civil Engineering and Development Department	HK Geology	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Mar 2013	39 000
7.	Civil Service Bureau	Government Vacancies	980,000	587,000 (Including the costs for mobile app maintenance, backend system maintenance and website maintenance. No separate cost breakdown is available.)	Sep 2015	1 107 000
8.	Correctional Services Department	Hong Kong Correctional Services Department Mobile App	308,000	85,000	Feb 2015	48 000
9.	Correctional Services Department	Captain Gor Union	500,000	50,000	Dec 2024	420 (Launched in Dec 2024)
10.	Department of Health	衛生署DH	640,000	64,000	Jan 2024	25 000
11.	Department of Health	IMPACT	296,000	48,000	Feb 2013	52 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
12.	Department of Health	Quit Smoking App	295,000	97,000	Aug 2011	97 000
13.	Development Bureau	My Kowloon East	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	88,000	Dec 2016	23 000
14.	Digital Policy Office	1823	2,500,000 (Including user experience design, infrastructure setup and development of mobile app and backend system.)	The maintenance of the app is bundled with other services. No separate cost breakdown is available.	Jul 2022	166 000
15.	Digital Policy Office	EventHK	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Apr 2013	121 000
16.	Digital Policy Office	GovHK Notifications	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Aug 2012	967 000
17.	Digital Policy Office	iAM Smart	The app is developed together with the “iAM Smart” platform. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	The app is developed together with the “iAM Smart” platform. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Dec 2020	7 507 000 (More than 3.2 million registered users)
18.	Digital Policy Office	Wi-Fi.HK	340,000	165,000	Aug 2014	432 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
19.	Education Bureau	e-Navigator	Developed with the related website. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	144,000	May 2012	260 000
20.	Education Bureau	Educational Multimedia	49,000	289,000	Dec 2012	208 000
21.	Education Bureau	KG Profile	Included in the cost of the whole project of the Profile of Kindergartens. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Oct 2015	296 000
22.	Education Bureau	History Trip Go Easy	Developed as a part of the e-book and e-portal project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	50,000	Nov 2017	58 000
23.	Electrical & Mechanical Services Department	E&M Connect	800,000	396,000	Dec 2019	31 000
24.	Electrical & Mechanical Services Department	E&M Trade	492,000	222,000	Dec 2019	76 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
25.	Environmental Protection Department	EV-Charging Easy	482,000 (Including 2 year System Maintenance and Support (SM&S) services.)	The system maintenance cost includes one back-end system hosted in GCIS, and broadband/mobile network in 78 government car parks. The SM&S of the mobile app cannot be separated.	Jun 2022	19 000
26.	Environmental Protection Department	GREEN\$ Mobile App	Around 1,300,000 (Including the costs for mobile app development, maintenance and enhancement.)	Around 1,300,000 (Including the costs for mobile app development, maintenance and enhancement.)	Jan 2022	1 011 000
27.	Environmental Protection Department	HoHoSkips	550,000	120,000	Feb 2021	43 000
28.	Environmental Protection Department	Hong Kong Air Quality Health Index (AQHI)	407,000	72,000	Dec 2013	190 000
29.	Environmental Protection Department	Waste Less	690,000	The cost is covered within the maintenance expense of the GREEN\$ Mobile App and is not separately itemised.	Mar 2014	116 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
30.	Fire Services Department	HKFSD	1,010,000	162,600	Mar 2023	91 000
31.	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Internet Memorial Service	300,000	The maintenance of the mobile app is included in the whole system maintenance contract of Internet Memorial Service.	Jun 2018	36 000
32.	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Nutrition Calculator	150,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Oct 2011	159 000
33.	Health Bureau	醫健通eHealth	The development of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	The maintenance of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. No separate cost breakdown is available.	Jan 2021	3 661 000
34.	Health Bureau	e+Life	The development of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	The maintenance of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. No separate cost breakdown is available.	Sep 2024	28 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
35.	Home Affairs Department	Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses	178,000	276,000	Feb 2015	20 000
36.	Home and Youth Affairs Bureau	HKYouth+	Around 2,680,000 (Including user experience and user interface design, content management system, infrastructure setup and development of mobile application and backend system.)	Not applicable (HKYouth+ was in its nursing period during 2024-25 and did not incur any maintenance costs.)	Mar 2024	44 000
37.	Hong Kong Observatory	MyObservatory	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Mar 2010	11 200 000
38.	Hong Kong Observatory	MyWorldWeather	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Oct 2011	460 000
39.	Hong Kong Police Force	Hong Kong Police Mobile App	750,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Jul 2012	339 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
40.	Hong Kong Police Force	Junior Police Call Mobile App	Around 1,370,000 (Developed with the related website and backend system. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.)	836,000 (Including the fees for 2 mobile app maintenance, backend system maintenance, website maintenance, system hosting services and system license. No separate cost breakdown is available.)	Apr 2021	68 800
41.	Hong Kong Police Force	Scameter+	This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the “Prevention and Detection of Crime”, and the Hong Kong Police Force has not kept a record of specific expenditure items.	This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the “Prevention and Detection of Crime”, and the Hong Kong Police Force does not keep a record of specific expenditure items.	Feb 2023	902 000
42.	Hong Kong Police Force	HKSOS	HKSOS is included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the “Smart Rescue Solution”, and the Hong Kong Police Force has not kept a record of specific expenditure items	Jan 2024	126 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
43.	Hong Kong Police Force	HKP e-Licence	HKP e-Licence is included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	HKP e-Licence is included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Jun 2024	16 300
44.	Hong Kong Police Force	HKPF Recruit	3,820,000 (The project includes Privacy Impact Assessment, System Analysis & Design, System Implementation & Integration, backend system and the mobile app, no separate cost breakdown is available.)	328,000	Sep 2024	18 400
45.	Hongkong Post	Hongkong Post	328,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Jun 2011	714 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
46.	Immigration Department	Contactless e-Channel	Not applicable. The app was developed under a contract with total value of \$1.39 million while the contract includes other relevant system enhancement service of contactless e-Channel	The contractor will provide system maintenance service as required in the contract.	Nov 2021	1 735 000
47.	Immigration Department	HK Immigration Department	130,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Dec 2013	1 658 000
48.	Information Services Department	news.gov.hk	270,000	50,000	Nov 2014	235 000
49.	Labour Department	Interactive Employment Service	125,000	76,000	Jan 2012	1 490 000
50.	Labour Department	OSH 2.0	75,000	The system maintenance cost is included in the development cost. No separate cost breakdown is available.	Mar 2012	35 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
51.	Labour Department	Youth Employment Start	149,000 (Including the maintenance cost for the first year.)	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Jun 2014	29 000
52.	Lands Department	MyMapHK	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Jun 2014	724 000
53.	Lands Department	VoiceMapHK	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Mar 2016	10 000 (Serves the visually impaired)
54.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	iM Guide	“iM Guide” is a part of the Museum Multimedia Guide System (MMGS) project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the routine maintenance cost of MMGS. No separate cost breakdown is available.	Dec 2017	71 800
55.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	My Library	The total cost of the project is around \$3.32 million. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.	223,000	Jul 2014	856 000
56.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	My SmartPLAY	The total cost of the project is \$290 million. No separate cost	The total maintenance cost of the project is \$23.5 million. No	Jul 2023	829 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
			breakdown is available for the mobile app.	separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.		
57.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Star Hoppers	700,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Sep 2014	419 000
58.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	URBTIX	Included in the service contract of URBIX. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the service contract of URBIX. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Dec 2022	1 040 000
59.	Marine Department	eSeaGo	600,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Jan 2019	116 000
60.	Office of the Communications Authority	OFCA Broadband Performance Test	Covered by OFCA Trading Fund.	Covered by OFCA Trading Fund.	Dec 2010	128 000 000 (no. of tests)
61.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK 中華五千年#	450,000	82,000	Nov 2012	211 000
62.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK Audio Description	The app is part of the Audio Description services project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	256,750	Apr 2021	6 000 (Serves the visually impaired)

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
63.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK Radio	409,000	155,000	Sep 2014	602 000
64.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK News	336,000	68,000	Aug 2015	731 000
65.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK on the Go	200,000	113,000	May 2010	2 575 000
66.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK TV	250,000	121,000	Jan 2014	748 000
67.	Security Bureau	Safeguard HK	610,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Mar 2016	294 000
68.	Social Welfare Department	Senior Citizen Card Scheme	147,000	41,000	Sep 2011	219 000
69.	Tourism Commission	A Symphony of Lights	537,000	78,633	Dec 2017	40 000
70.	Transport Department	HKeMeter	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Jan 2021	898 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
71.	Transport Department	HKeMobility	600,000	Included in the cost of the whole project. Apart from the function enhancements, it also provides services to other associated systems. Therefore no separate cost breakdown is available.	Jul 2018	2 799 000
72.	Transport Department	HKeToll	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Jan 2023	831 000
73.	Water Supplies Department	H2OPE Centre	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	May 2021	2 000 (Serves visitors of the H2OPE Centre)
74.	Water Supplies Department	WSD AMR System	220,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Nov 2020	29 000
75.	Water Supplies Department	WSD GA Product Directory	175,000	82,800	Jul 2017	19 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Launch Date	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
76.	Water Supplies Department	WSD Mobile App	1,573,000	The maintenance of WSD Mobile App is included in the system maintenance contract of Customer Care and Billing System.	Apr 2014	340 000

Note: B/Ds' names in alphabetical order.
Mobile app with Chinese name only.

Mobile apps decommissioned or consolidated by B/Ds in the past 3 years (as at 28 February 2025)

No.	B/D	Name
1.	Buildings Department	Quick Guide for MBIS/MWIS
2.	Companies Registry	CR eFiling
3.	Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau	Read the Basic Law with JOY!
4.	Customs and Excise Department	HK Car First Registration Tax
5.	Education Bureau	ApL
6.	Environmental Protection Department	Beach Water Quality Forecast
7.	Environmental Protection Department	Plastic-Free Rewards
8.	Hongkong Post	ShopThruPost 2.0
9.	Intellectual Property Department	“No Fakes Pledge” Shop Search
10.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Multimedia Information
11.	Digital Policy Office	GovHK Apps

No.	B/D	Name
12.	The then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer	LeaveHomeSafe
13.	The then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer	QR Code Verification Scanner
14.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK Memory

Note: B/Ds' names in alphabetical order.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB149

(Question Serial No. 1687)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Government will continue to promote the adoption of innovation and technology by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) through the Smart Government Innovation Lab and the “TechConnect (block vote)”. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Regarding the 2 initiatives mentioned above, please tabulate the manpower saved by B/Ds upon the adoption of innovation and technology;
2. Are there any indicators to assess the effectiveness of above initiatives? If yes, how effective are the initiatives?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 37)

Reply:

Through its thematic website, the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) under the Digital Policy Office (DPO) collects the business needs of government departments in public service delivery and invites the industry to submit technology solutions and product suggestions to meet relevant needs, facilitating departments to formulate implementation plans and procurement specifications more effectively. In the past 2 years, the Smart Lab has matched solutions with more than 60 business needs from over 20 government departments, including the Environmental Protection Department, the Buildings Department and the DPO. Proof-of-concept (PoC) testings for more than 30 potential technology solutions were conducted in collaboration with the departments concerned.

The Smart Lab organises regular thematic technology forums jointly with Cyberport, the Hong Kong Productivity Council and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation to strengthen government departments’ understanding on innovation and

technology (I&T) and stimulate their creativity, and invites I&T industry players to introduce their technology solutions to government departments. So far, 20 large-scale technology forums have been organised, covering topics such as cybersecurity risks, AI, natural language processing and “iAM Smart”, attracting over 8 000 participants from the Government and the I&T industry.

We do not maintain information on manpower saved by individual bureaux/departments through the adoption of I&T under the Smart Lab nor formulate relevant indicators in this regard.

The “TechConnect (block vote)” (TechConnect) supports government departments in planning and implementing technology projects (including pilot schemes and researches), with a view to enhancing operational efficiency, quality of public services, as well as capability to safeguard public safety, while individual projects may also achieve manpower savings at the same time. Since the launch of the TechConnect in 2017, it has been effective in enhancing the quality and efficiency of government operation, strengthening the capability to safeguard public safety and promoting the development and adoption of I&T applications. Details of the benefits achieved are set out as follows:

- promoting the adoption of I&T applications in government departments and enhancing the quality and efficiency of public services, examples include: Civil Engineering and Development Department has used advanced engineering technology, artificial intelligence and Quick Response Code to develop an automated system for concrete cube testing to minimise human errors; Customs and Excise Department has adopted augmented reality technology and Global Positioning System to enhance the efficiency of cargo clearance procedure; and Department of Health has used machine learning to develop a karyotype analysis software to enhance the efficiency of medical diagnosis.
- strengthening the capability to safeguard public safety, examples include: Fire Services Department has used new firefighting robots to enhance the efficiency and safety of firefighting and rescue operations; and Drainage Services Department has built a remotely-controlled smart robotic underwater vehicle to improve the occupational safety and efficiency of the inspection and desilting works in drainage and sewage facilities.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB150

(Question Serial No. 3262)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Last year, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) organised the first cybersecurity attack and defence drill to enhance the defence capabilities of government departments and public organisations. It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the DPO will continue to develop and organise the cybersecurity attack and defence drill for government departments and public organisations. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) What is the number of cybersecurity attack and defence drill organised so far since last year? Please tabulate the date, content and participating organisations of the drill(s). How much manpower and expenditure have been involved?
- 2) What is the number of cybersecurity attack and defence drill to be organised in this financial year? Please tabulate the date, content and participating organisations of the drill(s). What will be the manpower and expenditure involved?
- 3) Will any cybersecurity consultancy firm be invited to participate in the drill? If yes, what is the expenditure involved?
- 4) Will any Mainland government department be invited to participate in the drill? If yes, what is the manpower involved?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hok-fung (LegCo internal reference no.: 38)

Reply:

- 1) and 2) The annual real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill is spearheaded by the Digital Policy Office (DPO) from 2024 onwards. Government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and public organisations would be invited to participate in the drill, during which simulated cyberattacks in real-life scenarios

are launched to examine the cybersecurity incident response capabilities of participating IT systems. Through practical combat scenarios in the drill, the technical skills, experience and overall defensive capabilities of B/Ds and public organisations in identifying and responding to cyberattacks would be enhanced, thereby fortifying their defence line.

The first ever real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill was conducted from 15 to 17 November 2024. Participating parties included 15 defending teams from 9 B/Ds and 3 public organisations, as well as 5 attacking teams from cybersecurity industry experts and academics. The DPO has disseminated the findings and reports of the drill to the respective B/Ds and organisations, and requested them to follow up and enhance the defence capabilities of the respective systems as soon as possible.

In addition to the real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill, the DPO also conducts regular and continuous information security checks and penetration tests on public-facing IT systems of the Government. Moreover, 8 government information systems would be selected annually for conducting in-depth information security compliance audits in order to ensure that corresponding B/Ds have complied with the requirements in the “Government IT Security Policy and Guidelines”.

We plan to conduct the next real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill in the second half of 2025 on a larger scale in order to enhance the effectiveness of the drill. The expenditure of the drill in 2024-25 was about \$1.3 million, and the estimated expenditure for 2025-26 is about \$4 million.

- 3) The DPO invites cybersecurity consultancy firms to serve as technical advisors to provide professional advice to B/Ds and public organisations participating in the real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill for enhancing their technical skills and capabilities in identifying, responding to and defending against cyberattacks. The related expense is subsumed under the overall expenditure of the drill and cannot be itemised separately.
- 4) The DPO has been working closely with relevant Mainland departments and industry partners to co-organise regular activities for exchange on cybersecurity issues and to jointly enhance cybersecurity defence capabilities. In May 2024, representatives of the HKSAR Government and the industry visited Guangdong Province to exchange experience and share cases of cybersecurity attack and defence drills. Moreover, in September 2024, the DPO led Hong Kong representatives of the cybersecurity industry to take part in the activities of the “2024 China Cybersecurity Week” and the Cybersecurity Expo held in Guangzhou to exchange views on cybersecurity-related technologies in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. During the visit, the DPO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Cyberspace Administration of Guangdong Province (CAGP) and the Comissão para a Cibersegurança of the Macao SAR Government to promote cybersecurity technology exchange, information sharing and emergency response cooperation. In February 2025, the DPO also participated in the Greater Bay Area Cybersecurity Exchange Seminar

held in Guangzhou to have an in-depth exchange with the Mainland Government and industry experts on strengthening cybersecurity cooperation in the region. We will continue to deepen the liaison and collaboration with relevant Mainland departments and the industry in order to strengthen the overall level of cybersecurity.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB151

(Question Serial No. 0639)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 39 of the Budget Speech that to spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) as well as industrial application of artificial intelligence (AI), the Government has set aside \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute. The Digital Policy Office will formulate the establishment arrangements of the institute and its specific goals, focusing on facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the initial development directions, implementation timetable and staff establishment involved for the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute?
2. On the \$1 billion budget, what is the proportion of the expenditure involved, such as operating costs and investments in technologies, etc.?
3. What is the expected effectiveness of the plan? Will key performance indicators be set and progress reports be submitted regularly for reviewing the effectiveness? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and industrial applications of artificial intelligence (AI), facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios.

The Digital Policy Office is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center under the AIR@InnoHK. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB152

(Question Serial No. 0640)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will continue to promote the adoption of innovation and technology by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) through the Smart Government Innovation Lab and the "TechConnect (block vote)". In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

1. the departments that have adopted innovation and technology in the past 3 years;
2. the effectiveness of using innovation and technology in achieving savings on expenditure and staff establishment and in enhancing efficiency; and
3. the Government's measures in 2025-26 to support the adoption of innovation and technology by B/Ds and the specific timetable; will a feedback mechanism be established for departments to provide feedback and make adjustments to cater for their needs?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

The Government has been actively driving the adoption of innovation and technology (I&T) by bureaux/departments (B/Ds) through various programmes to enhance the quality and efficiency of public services.

Through its thematic website, the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) under the Digital Policy Office (DPO) collects business needs of government departments in public service delivery and invites the industry to submit technology solutions and product suggestions to meet relevant needs, facilitating departments to formulate implementation plans and procurement specifications more effectively. In the past 3 years, the Smart Lab has matched solutions with more than 70 business needs from over 20 B/Ds, including Environmental Protection Department, Buildings Department and DPO, covering technology

areas like Internet of Things, data analytics, video analytics, natural language processing and artificial intelligence (AI). Proof-of-concept (PoC) testings for more than 40 potential technology solutions were conducted in collaboration with the departments concerned, among which some projects were undergoing or being planned for pilot implementation. We do not maintain information on the savings on expenditure or manpower achieved by individual B/Ds through the adoption of I&T under the Smart Lab.

The Smart Lab also organises regular thematic technology forums jointly with Cyberport, the Hong Kong Productivity Council and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation to strengthen government departments' understanding on I&T and stimulate their creativity, and invites I&T industry players to introduce their technology solutions to government departments. So far, 20 large-scale technology forums have been organised, covering topics such as cybersecurity risks, AI, natural language processing and "iAM Smart", attracting over 8 000 participants from the Government and the I&T industry.

The Smart Lab will continue to arrange regular technology sharings and promotional activities taking into account the business needs of B/Ds and the latest developments of technologies to enhance understanding of I&T among government staff. The Smart Lab will also invite I&T industry players to match suitable solutions, assisting B/Ds in accelerating the adoption of I&T.

The "TechConnect (block vote)" (TechConnect) supports government departments in planning and implementing technology projects (including pilot schemes and researches), with a view to enhancing operational efficiency, quality of public services, as well as capability to safeguard public safety. In the past 3 financial years, the TechConnect has provided funding support to a total of 59 applied technology projects or studies proposed by 22 government departments/offices, which include the Agricultural, Fisheries and Conservation Department, Antiquities and Monuments Office, Architectural Services Department, Buildings Department, Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD), Correctional Services Department, Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau, Drainage Services Department, Efficiency Office (now merged into DPO), Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD), Environmental Protection Department, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, Fire Services Department, Housing Bureau, Hong Kong Observatory, Hong Kong Police Force, Highways Department, Lands Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the Office of the Government Economist, Transport Department and Water Supplies Department (WSD).

In terms of using technology to assist departments in speeding up work processes and enhancing operational efficiency and service quality, examples include:

- WSD has used AI (Artificial Intelligence) Enhanced Automatic Chemical Dosing System in Water Treatment Works to speed up the process of chemical dosing and strengthen the process control and monitoring to safeguard drinking water quality through sensors, AI and big data technology;
- Geotechnical Engineering Office of CEDD has adopted Digital Aerial Photograph Interpretation System to evaluate geo-spatial information and identify geotechnical and geological features to enhance the effectiveness of slope safety management and assist

in infrastructure planning through geographic information system and remote sensing technology;

- EMSD has used Smart Lifts and Escalators Design Approval Platform to improve the efficiency of approval process and facilitate trade deployment of approval information as well as checking of data by the public through robotic process automation, machine learning and Optical Character Recognition; and
- Efficiency Office has adopted AI, machine learning and the technology of natural language processing and speech synthesis to improve the services of 1823 and its operational efficiency.

Departments participating in the scheme pointed out that the TechConnect-funded projects have been effective in improving operational efficiency, enhancing public services and expediting the processing of cases, as well as enhancing the deployment of resources of the whole department. Further to the successful implementation of the projects, some departments have further extended the application of the technologies developed/adopted to other sites/service areas or refer to other departments for use as appropriate, proving that the TechConnect has been effective in encouraging adoption of I&T applications in government departments for optimising public services and fostering I&T culture. The TechConnect will continue to support various departments in the use of technology through this scheme to provide more efficient and effective public services.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB153

(Question Serial No. 0642)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Since its launch in October last year, the AI Subsidy Scheme has approved 5 projects led by local universities, research institutions, etc., to accelerate local research and development (R&D) work relating to large language models, new materials, large synthetic biology models, etc. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. How many applications have been received and the reasons for applications not being approved?
2. What are the amounts of subsidy granted and duration of projects approved for the respective local universities and research institutions?
3. Have key performance indicators been set to assess the effectiveness of the Scheme, including R&D outcomes, nurturing talents, promotion of transformation of technological outcomes, etc.? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

In the 2024-25 Budget, the Government allocated \$3 billion for a 3-year Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), mainly to subsidise local institutions, research and development (R&D) centres, enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing power of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC). Since its launch in October 2024, Cyberport has received over 10 applications covering a wide range of technology and application areas. As of end-February 2025, the Committee of the Subsidy Scheme (Committee) appointed by the Government has assessed and approved 9 projects led by local institutions, R&D centres, etc. with research areas such as accelerating local large language models, large models in new materials and synthetic biology, etc., which involve a total

computing power subsidy of over \$170 million. The computing power required by the approved projects ranges from 8 to 512 petaflops, with durations varying between 1.5 and 12 months. Since January 2025, the above approved projects have gradually started using the services of the AISC after completing the deployment, accounting for over 60% of the computing power in service.

The Committee is responsible for vetting and approval of applications, making decisions on the subsidy amount, duration and the conditions of use, etc., with secretariat support provided by Cyberport. The Committee will vet the applications in accordance with the established assessment criteria, including:

- (i) whether the project can meet the needs of innovation and technology and artificial intelligence development in Hong Kong;
- (ii) whether the computing power requirement of the project is reasonable with detailed justifications;
- (iii) the feasibility and expected outcome of the project, taking into account relevant factors such as track records and innovation potential of the applicant and the team; and
- (iv) the technical and financial capability, etc. of the applicant and the team.

An agreement has been signed between the Digital Policy Office (DPO) and Cyberport for the Subsidy Scheme. Cyberport is required to submit reports to DPO after the end of each financial year, covering the performance, security audit of the AISC, utilisation of the subsidy and financial position of the Subsidy Scheme. We have also set performance indicators for Cyberport's implementation of the Subsidy Scheme, covering the utilisation rate of the AISC's services, R&D achievements, talent cultivation, operations, and cybersecurity and promotion of ecosystem development, etc., for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB154

(Question Serial No. 0544)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Digital Policy Office spearheads the development of digital government to bring impact, convenience and benefits to the public and the business sector. Regarding Hong Kong's first AI model, named "HKGAI V1", launched recently, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. The details of the expenditure on the research and development (R&D) of the HKGAI AI model and the staff establishment for handling the related R&D work, including the post titles, ranks, duties, emoluments involved and other staff-related expenses;
2. Will the AI model be applied to the daily operation of government departments? If yes, what are the progress of preparatory work and specific plan, as well as the estimated government expenditure to be saved; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Pui-leung (LegCo internal reference no.: 6)

Reply:

In 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the AIR@InnoHK which focuses on artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong's self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation, and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the HKPilot in mid-2024. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has invited all bureaux/departments

(B/Ds) to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme.

HKGAI updated its locally developed “HKGAI V1” LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application’s capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is also provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff. In the longer term, the application will help reduce the manpower required for government staff in handling general document processing tasks, allowing manpower to be deployed to other areas of work in need.

The R&D and operating expenditure of HKGAI in the first 3 years amounted to around \$235 million. We do not maintain the breakdown figures for the related development of individual models or applications.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB155

(Question Serial No. 2077)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Budget mentions that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (Institute). The Digital Policy Office will formulate the establishment arrangements of the Institute and its specific goals, focusing on facilitating upstream research and development (R&D), midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The details on timetable, the estimated construction costs, operating expenses and the staffing establishment relating to establishing the Institute.
2. Will the Institute adopt a self-financing and self-sufficient mode of operation in the future?
3. Will the Government establish specific work plans and the corresponding key performance indicators or monitoring mechanisms for the Institute? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
4. How will the Institute work in co-ordination with other R&D and supporting initiatives, such as the Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (with an allocation of \$3 billion for 3 years) and *InnoHK*, to further promote frontier research and real-world application of artificial intelligence in Hong Kong?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and

industrial applications of artificial intelligence (AI), facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. The AIRDI will be one of the key initiatives in building the local AI ecosystem, complementing the current *AIR@InnoHK* R&D platform that focuses on AI and robotics technologies, the infrastructure of Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC), and the \$3 billion AI Subsidy Scheme mainly for subsidising the industry to leverage the computing power of the AISC, etc.

The Digital Policy Office is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center under the *AIR@InnoHK*. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB156

(Question Serial No. 2081)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Digital Policy Office will continue to enhance data governance and compile departmental data catalogues of bureaux and departments to promote the sharing and application of data among bureaux and departments. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Regarding the compilation of data catalogues, please set out the current progress, work content, implementation schedule and the staffing establishment and expenditure involved, broken down by bureau/department (B/D).
2. Regarding the compilation of data catalogues in the coming year, please set out the plan and content of work, implementation schedule and the staffing establishment and expenditure to be involved, broken down by B/D.
3. Will the Government clearly define the specific responsibilities and requirements of each B/D in respect of the collection, aggregation, sharing, development and utilisation of data? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

To enhance data governance and promote the opening up and sharing of data, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) will compile the departmental data catalogues to enable bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to gain a better understanding of the data available for sharing from other B/Ds, thereby facilitating the identification of suitable and usable data, and enhancing digital government services through data sharing within the Government. The DPO is co-ordinating the related compilation work, which includes establishing a framework for departmental data catalogues that will outline the categories, scopes, and attributes of data

that B/Ds should include when formulating their data catalogues. B/Ds are requested to complete the compilation of their departmental data catalogues by 2025. Furthermore, each B/D has designated a directorate officer as the departmental data officer to oversee related tasks within the B/D, such as co-ordinating and registering the B/D's data in the departmental data catalogue, monitoring the progress, and collaborating with the DPO and other B/Ds on data sharing initiatives.

The DPO and B/Ds will deploy existing manpower and resources to carry out the tasks related to the compilation of departmental data catalogues.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB157

(Question Serial No. 2082)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Digital Policy Office (DPO) will continue to promote and assist bureaux and departments (B/Ds) in sourcing innovative information technology (IT) solutions to meet their business needs and enhance public services through the Smart Government Innovation Lab. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the procedure for the DPO to assist B/Ds in sourcing innovative IT solutions through the Smart Government Innovation Lab? Do B/Ds initiate requests, or does the DPO take the initiative to do the matching?
2. In the past 2 years, what innovative IT solutions were matched for B/Ds with the assistance rendered by the Smart Government Innovation Lab? Please list by B/Ds the contents of these solutions, the types of public services involved, the expenditure incurred and their progress;
3. In the coming year, innovative IT solutions will be matched for B/Ds with the assistance rendered by the Smart Government Innovation Lab. Please list by B/Ds the contents of these solutions, the types of public services to be involved and the expenditure to be incurred.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

Through its thematic website, the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) under the Digital Policy Office (DPO) collects the business needs of government departments in public service delivery and invites the industry to submit technology solutions and product suggestions to meet relevant needs, facilitating departments to formulate implementation plans and procurement specifications more effectively. The Smart Lab also serves to match

technology solutions and arrange thematic workshops with respect to the business needs of individual departments, and collaborate with relevant departments to conduct proof-of-concept (PoC) testings for technology solutions with potential for adoption. Besides, the Smart Lab organises regular thematic technology forums jointly with Cyberport, the Hong Kong Productivity Council and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation to strengthen government departments' understanding on innovation and technology (I&T) and stimulate their creativity, and invites I&T industry players to introduce their technology solutions to government departments. So far, 20 large-scale technology forums have been organised, covering topics such as cybersecurity risks, artificial intelligence (AI), natural language processing and "iAM Smart", attracting over 8 000 participants from the Government and the I&T industry.

In the past 2 years, the Smart Lab has matched solutions with more than 60 business needs from over 20 government departments, including the Environmental Protection Department, Buildings Department and DPO, covering technology areas like Internet of Things (IoT), data analytics, video analytics, natural language processing and AI. PoC testings for more than 30 potential technology solutions were conducted in collaboration with the departments concerned. IT projects being planned or having been implemented by individual departments after undergoing PoC testings included:

- Leverage AI technology to develop robotic dog equipped with different sensors, with the capability of identifying the composition of unknown gases and autonomously tracking the direction of the gases, to assist officers in investigating air nuisance incidents. The AI robotic dogs have been gradually deployed by the department for pilot testing to collect data for continuous optimisation;
- Identify signboard structures and automatically calculate signboard dimensions using technologies such as AI, video analytics, remote measurement, etc. to facilitate the quick detection of signboards with potential risks; and
- Utilise AI image recognition, IoT and machine learning technologies to assist in real-time monitoring of the cleanliness condition of designated shoreline areas. The aim is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the shoreline cleanliness monitoring program by automating the collection and analysis of massive images and data on the coverage and types of refuse, and referring cases to relevant departments for follow-up as needed.

The Smart Lab will continue to actively promote the development and use of I&T like AI within the Government, invite technology service providers to match suitable solutions, arrange regular technology sharings and promotional activities, etc., to help accelerating government departments' adoption of technologies and enhancing the quality and efficiency of public services. In 2025-26, the estimated expenditure of Smart Lab is about \$4.6 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB158

(Question Serial No. 2084)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government, (2) Data Governance, (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The provisions for Programmes (1), (2) and (3) in 2025-26 are \$11.8 million (4.0%), \$161.3 million (16.7%) and \$221.0 million (12.0%) respectively higher than the revised estimates for 2024-25. Also, there will be a net decrease of 14 posts and a net increase of 6 posts for Programmes (1) and (2) respectively. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the reasons for and the details of the increase in the revised estimates for Programmes (1) to (3);
2. the duties, ranks and savings in expenditure involved in the decrease of 14 posts for Programme (1);
3. the duties, ranks and increase in expenditure involved in the increase of 6 posts for Programme (2)?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Siu-hung (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

1. In 2025-26, the estimated expenditure under Programme (1) "Digital Government" for the Digital Policy Office (DPO) is about \$11.8 million (4.0%) higher than the revised estimate for the previous year mainly due to the increase in expenditure for implementing the related programmes in supporting the adoption of digital technologies among the elderly.

Under Programme (2) "Data Governance", the estimated expenditure in 2025-26 is about \$161.3 million (16.7%) higher than the revised estimate for the previous year. This is mainly due to the preparation of establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial

Intelligence Research and Development Institute, enhancing the network security and performance of key systems including the “iAM Smart” platform and the government email system and supporting the operation of Government Data Centre Complex after more information technology (IT) systems moved therein.

Under Programme (3) “Digital Infrastructure”, the estimated expenditure in 2025-26 is about \$221 million (12.0%) higher than the revised estimate for the previous year mainly due to the increase in estimated cash flow requirements for implementing Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme, Enriched IT Programme in Schools and Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups.

2. Under Programme (1), details of the net decrease of 14 posts in 2025-26 are as follows:

Rank	Number of posts	Estimated savings in annual expenditure based on notional annual mid-point salary value (\$ million)
Personal Secretary II	3	3.7
Data Processor	8	
Office Assistant	1	
Workman II	2	
Total	14	

3. Under Programme (2), details of the net increase of 6 posts in 2025-26 for assisting in handling the 24-hour operation of the Government Data Centre Complex are as follows:

Rank	Number of posts	Estimated increase in annual expenditure based on notional annual mid-point salary value (\$ million)
Computer Operator I	3	2.3
Computer Operator II	3	
Total	6	

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB159

(Question Serial No. 3512)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Digital Policy Office (DPO) will continue to promote the adoption of digital technologies among the elderly and launch a territory-wide digital inclusion programme for the elders. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- (a) the specific amount and breakdown of the estimated expenditure dedicated to digital inclusion for the elders in 2025-26, including the proportion of expenditure on training courses, publicity and promotion; whether there is any change in the estimated expenditure as compared with that in 2024-25; if there is any increase or decrease, the main reasons for that; and
- (b) in what ways will the DPO assess the actual impact of the programme on advancing the digital competency of the elderly and improving their quality of life?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-yan, Joephy (LegCo internal reference no.: 41)

Reply:

To promote the adoption of digital technologies by the elders, we have launched the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Outreach Programme for the Elderly since 2014, collaborating with elderly services organisations to visit elders across the territory as well as organise various activities for them to experience digital life, encouraging greater use of digital technologies. We have also introduced the Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly in 2019, collaborating with district organisations and Elder Academies to provide free ICT advanced training courses for the elders with basic digital knowledge in the community regularly. At the same time, we launched the “Elderly IT Learning Portal”, a web-based learning portal designed and developed with digital technology learning materials suitable for the elders.

To further consolidate the current work on digital inclusion for elders, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) launched the “Smart Silver” Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders in December 2024, integrating with the above regular programmes. This programme provides funding for 12 non-governmental organisations to set up a total of 40 community-based help desks across 18 districts in the territory, providing regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support for elders aged 60 or above, particularly singleton or doubleton elders living in old districts and public housing.

The various digital inclusion programmes will work in tandem to achieve greater synergy and impact. For instance, elders who have completed the basic, regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies will be referred to participate in the Enriched ICT Training Programme if they are interested in learning more advanced digital knowledge. This will not only broaden elders’ digital knowledge and skills but also empower them to volunteer as instructors, teaching fellow elders how to navigate these skills, thereby allowing more elders to enjoy the benefits and conveniences brought by digital technologies.

The organisations responsible for providing services are required to submit operation, performance, and financial reports regularly, which enables monitoring by the DPO in ensuring transparency, accountability and prudent use of public funds, while also facilitating the evaluation of effectiveness of the programmes. We will continue to monitor the implementation of various programmes and adjust the implementation details in a timely manner based on actual circumstances to ensure that the programmes can effectively facilitate learning of digital technologies among elders.

In 2025-26, the DPO’s estimated expenditure for implementing and promoting the above-mentioned programmes is about \$30.41 million, an increase of about \$11.08 million compared to that of 2024-25. This is mainly due to the increase in cash flow required for the related programmes, including the new round of ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly to be launched in mid-2025.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB160

(Question Serial No. 0150)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Work progress of the “Smart Lampposts”. Regarding the captioned matter, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. In respect of the Government’s plan to install smart lampposts in all new development areas (such as the Northern Metropolis), what are the progress or relevant arrangements?
2. At present, the functions of smart lampposts do not include crime detection in co-operation with the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF). While the HKPF mentioned in their reply to a Legislative Council’s question that installing closed-circuit television cameras significantly enhances the efficiency in detecting crime and serves as a deterrent to criminal acts, will the Government work with the HKPF on the use of smart lampposts to expand their scope of functions?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuet-ming (LegCo internal reference no.: 25)

Reply:

The “Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint” promulgated in December 2022 has indicated that the Government would introduce in full smart lampposts in all new development areas for providing convenient information services and collecting various real-time city data for analysis through installing suitable smart devices and using the digital infrastructure for 5G services, thus enhancing city management and promoting more innovative applications. At present, the related new development projects include Kai Tak Development Area, Tung Chung New Town Extension, Kwu Tung North and Fanling North New Development Area, Fanling Bypass Eastern Section, Lok Ma Chau Loop, Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area and Yuen Long South New Development Area, etc. The detailed arrangement on the installation works of smart lampposts will depend on the progress of implementation of individual projects.

We welcome and support departments to install suitable smart devices on smart lampposts to meet their operational need. Since 2024, the Hong Kong Police Force has installed closed-circuit television system on smart lampposts in different districts to assist in crime prevention, crime detection and crowd management subject to the requirements stipulated in the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. The Digital Policy Office will continue to promote, facilitate and support departments on developing innovative applications with the use of smart lampposts to cope with their business need, improve their operational efficiency as well as enhance public services and city management.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB161

(Question Serial No. 0829)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Data Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is announced in the Budget that, since the launch of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme in October last year, it has approved 5 projects led by local universities, research institutions, etc., to accelerate local research and development (R&D) work relating to large language models, new materials, large synthetic biology models, etc. In this connection, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the expenses incurred so far for the AI Subsidy Scheme based on Budget allocations in supporting the R&D work of local universities and research institutions on large language models, new materials, large synthetic biology models, etc.? What are the other specific measures in implementing the AI Subsidy Scheme to support local universities and research institutions in related R&D work?
2. To promote technology transfer, what specific patent licensing and start-up incubation mechanisms have been established under the AI Subsidy Scheme to promote the application of research outcomes? What are the successful cases?
3. In 2025, what are the respective AI technical directions in the areas of large language models, new materials, large synthetic biology models, etc. where major breakthroughs are expected under the AI Subsidy Scheme? Regarding these AI technical directions expecting major breakthroughs in 2025, what are the corresponding talent nurturing programmes offered by the Government or related institutions to satisfy R&D needs?

Asked by: Hon CHEN Chung-nin, Rock (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a main accelerator for driving the innovation of technological research and industrial innovation. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (the Blueprint) promulgated at the end of 2022 proposed to focus on

the development of the AI industry. We have been paying heed to the development strategies of the Blueprint to build a comprehensive AI ecosystem through various dimensions such as policy, digital infrastructure, provision of computing power, technological research and development (R&D), talent, capital and application scenarios.

Regarding infrastructure, the first-phase facility of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC) commenced operation at the end of 2024, providing computing power of approximately 1 300 petaflops (PFLOPS), to be ramped up to 3 000 PFLOPS progressively this year.

To encourage the industry to utilise the AISC's computing resources, the Government launched the Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme) in October 2024, mainly to subsidise local institutions, R&D centres, enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing power of the AISC to foster the development of the AI ecosystem. Since its launch in October 2024, Cyberport has received over 10 applications covering a wide range of technology and application areas. As of end-February 2025, the Committee of the Subsidy Scheme (Committee) appointed by the Government has assessed and approved 9 projects led by local institutions, R&D centres, etc. with research areas such as accelerating local large language models, large models in new materials and synthetic biology, etc., which involve a total computing power subsidy of over \$170 million. Since January 2025, the above approved projects have gradually started using the services of the AISC after completing the deployment, accounting for over 60% of the computing power in service.

The Committee is responsible for vetting and approval of applications, making decisions on the subsidy amount, duration and the conditions of use, etc., with secretariat support provided by Cyberport. The Committee will vet the applications in accordance with the established assessment criteria, including whether the project can meet the needs of innovation and technology (I&T) and AI development in Hong Kong, and the feasibility and expected outcome of the project, taking into account relevant factors such as track records and innovation potential of the applicant and the team.

Being Hong Kong's digital technology flagship, Cyberport is fully committed to supporting the development of the local AI ecosystem. In addition to the infrastructure support provided by AISC, Cyberport has established the AI Lab to provide space for showcasing AI solutions and services/products, thereby fostering R&D and collaboration in AI-related fields. The Lab also offers graphics processing unit samples from various manufacturers for enterprises to test and use in their development and research. Furthermore, Cyberport has admitted more than 1 300 technology start-ups under its incubation programmes, including nearly 200 AI and big data related start-ups.

Cyberport will continue to leverage its AI ecosystem and business network to provide support to AI-related enterprises in technology transformation, application of research outcomes, and business matching, thereby supporting the realisation of research projects. Cyberport also actively conducts promotional and publicity work to encourage industry utilisation of the computing power of the AISC and the Subsidy Scheme. As of February 2025, Cyberport has organised 25 promotional events, including information seminars at institutions, attracting over 1 400 participants. Cyberport has also participated in numerous collaborative seminars and events in both Mainland and overseas, including in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Korea, to promote various measures supporting AI development, including the

implementation of the AISC. Cyberport will continue to conduct activities such as roadshows and seminars targeting specific industries or themes to promote the Subsidy Scheme and foster the development of the AI ecosystem.

In terms of talents, the Government has introduced a series of measures to step up efforts in nurturing local AI talents. Apart from encouraging the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities to offer programmes which cater for Hong Kong's development needs and expand the talent pool of important areas such as I&T, the Government also subsidises students to pursue designated self-financing undergraduate and sub-degree programmes through the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors, with a view to nurturing talent in support of specific industries with keen demand for human resources, including the Computer Science discipline which is related to AI. The UGC also launched the Fund for Innovative Technology-in-Education in 2023, with a funding allocation of \$100 million, to provide an impetus for the 8 UGC-funded universities to harness innovative and breakthrough technologies in transforming pedagogies and enriching student learning experiences, as well as fostering academia-industry collaboration, thereby nurturing their students to become a digitally competent and technologically responsible generation in the digital economy. In addition, in response to the manpower demand of the industries, the Vocational Training Council with the Government's support established the Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology (HKIIT) in November 2023, which specialises in the provision of information technology and other technology-related programmes covering a wide range of disciplines including AI. The HKIIT admitted its first cohort of students in the 2024/25 academic year. The New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme under the Innovation and Technology Fund also subsidises local enterprises for their staff to receive training in advanced technologies, which includes AI-related training.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB162

(Question Serial No. 0162)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Cross-boundary Public Services have been launched for the convenience of residents and enterprises in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) Regarding the current Cross-boundary Public Services thematic website, offline service counters and self-service kiosks, what are the staffing arrangement and expenditure involved?
- (2) What is the Bureau's plan on further implementing the Cross-boundary Public Services initiative in the coming year? What are the details and implementation timetable?
- (3) Will consideration be given to extend service coverage to areas other than Guangdong Province?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

- (1) The Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) thematic website was launched in November 2023. It currently provides a total of 77 online services and related information of cross-boundary public services from 12 bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and related organisations. Moreover, we have set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks and "iAM Smart" self-registration kiosks in Guangzhou, Qianhai and Futian in Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou and Dongguan progressively since February 2024, enabling residents and enterprises in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to access cross-boundary public services and register for "iAM Smart" to have one-stop access to online services of various government departments via the "iAM Smart" mobile application.

The total expenditure involved in developing the CBPS thematic website and the above-mentioned CBPS self-service kiosks was about \$1.56 million, including the service fees of engaging research and development organisation and contractors for the design and development of the website and the self-service kiosks, conducting security risk assessment and audit, as well as conducting on-site testing in Mainland cities in the GBA. The above work did not involve any additional manpower.

- (2) and (3) We will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to identify and introduce more suitable cross-boundary public services to bring greater convenience to the public. In addition, we will continue to discuss with Guangdong Province to set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks and “iAM Smart” self-registration kiosks in more Mainland cities of the GBA for the convenience of residents and enterprises in the GBA. In the light of the effectiveness and relevant experience of implementing CBPS, we will explore the feasibility of extending the relevant services to other Mainland cities.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB163

(Question Serial No. 0163)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government allocated \$100 million under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund in the last financial year to subsidise Non-government Organisations (NGOs) to promote digital inclusion and to enhance the elderly's capability in adopting digital technologies in 3 years. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of its approach of implementing the aforementioned 3-year subsidy scheme? What are the numbers of institutions/organisations that have been invited to submit project proposals? What is the number of project proposals received? What is the number of projects approved? What are these projects? What is the number of elderly benefit from these projects?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

To further promote digital inclusion for elders, it was announced in the 2024-25 Budget that the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) would allocate \$100 million by batches in the coming 3 years to implement the "Smart Silver" Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders. The programme aims to assist elders aged 60 or above in understanding and using digital technology products and services, ensuring that they can adopt digital technologies effectively and safely, and integrate into the digital society.

Following an open invitation for proposals and evaluation, the SIE Fund decided to provide funding for 12 non-governmental organisations to take forward the programme across 18 districts in the territory, setting up 40 community-based help desks in places frequently visited by elders or with higher flow of visitors, such as community centres, District Council Members' offices, Community Living Rooms and elderly centres. All the help desks have gradually commenced services in December 2024. The implementing organisations will adopt a straightforward approach to encourage elders to learn how to use practical mobile applications and digital services in their daily lives. This includes guidance on downloading

and registering as “iAM Smart” users, booking venues under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, checking appointment information for medical consultations, operating other commonly used government mobile applications and cyber security. Experienced staff or volunteers of the implementing organisations will station at the community-based help desks to provide personalised technical support to elders in need, enabling them to enjoy the benefits brought by digital services. We expect that the programme will benefit over 100 000 elders as a whole.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB164

(Question Serial No. 0553)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence (AI) Research and Development Institute (the Institute):

1. With respect to spearheading and supporting innovative research and development (R&D) as well as industrial application, how will the \$1 billion earmarked be allocated? Will the Government implement initiatives in various aspects in parallel or devote a larger portion of resources to certain areas?
2. In each of the three aspects of facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios, what will be the specific goals and key performance indicators of the Institute? What are the key measures and initiatives to be undertaken by the Institute and the manpower and expenditure involved?
3. What will be the mode of operation, staff establishment, and procedures and timetable for establishing the Institute?
4. In the future, what are the specific roles and division of work of the new Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute upon its establishment and the existing government-funded AI-related research institutes in Hong Kong? In this connection, will the Government conduct a comprehensive review of the operation of these institutes and consider reallocating resources when necessary, including restructuring, merging or decommissioning some of these institutes, with a view to enhancing the overall efficiency of the AI development in Hong Kong and making better use of the fiscal resources of the Government?
5. How will the Institute strengthen future exchange and collaboration with local universities, as well as Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area and relevant research institutes, enterprises, etc.? Will the Government formulate objectives and strategies in this regard?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and industrial applications of artificial intelligence (AI), facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. The AIRDI will be one of the key initiatives in building the local AI ecosystem, complementing the current AIR@InnoHK R&D platform that focuses on AI and robotics technologies, the infrastructure of Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC), and the \$3 billion AI Subsidy Scheme mainly for subsidising the industry to leverage the computing power of the AISC, etc.

The Digital Policy Office is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center under the AIR@InnoHK. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB165

(Question Serial No. 0801)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that since the launch of the “iAM Smart” mobile application, the number of registered users has exceeded 3.2 million. “iAM Smart” connects about 500 services of the Government as well as public and private organisations and provides nearly 600 electronic government forms. Regarding further connecting the services of private organisations, has the Government earmarked provision for 2025-26 for taking forward the work concerned? Besides, has the Government set any targets for connecting more services of private organisations through the “iAM Smart” platform in the coming year(s)? If yes, which kinds of services will be connected and what are the specific target(s) and timetable?

Asked by: Hon CHIU Duncan (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has been actively driving adoption of “iAM Smart” by public and private organisations. At present, over 100 online services provided by public and private organisations have adopted “iAM Smart”, covering different areas such as banking, finance, insurance, healthcare, retail, sports, property management, telecommunications, technology, etc. The application scenarios encompass remote account opening, online insurance enrolment, account login, activate account real-name registration, online digital signing of documents, etc.

In order to attract and encourage different sectors to adopt “iAM Smart” for developing more applications which are innovative and convenient to the public, the DPO has been co-organising seminars with Cyberport from time to time to introduce the latest development and application scenarios of “iAM Smart” to the relevant sectors. The DPO and Cyberport have also launched the “iAM Smart” Sandbox Programme since March 2020, which enables industries to conduct proof-of-concept testing on adopting “iAM Smart” for their online services. The Sandbox Programme is now open to sectors including finance, information

and communications technology, telecommunications, healthcare, education, culture, sports, tourism, accounting, legal, transport and logistics, charity, property management, real estate, and public utilities, etc.

The estimated operating expenditure for “iAM Smart” for 2025-26 is \$96.3 million, which includes expenditure for promoting “iAM Smart”. With more “iAM Smart” new features such as “iAM Smart Personal Code”, “Personal Assistant”, “Digital Document”, “Mini-program Platform” and “Step-up Authentication” being launched progressively within 2025, we will continue to actively promote “iAM Smart” to a wider range of business sectors and open the Sandbox Programme to more sectors for exploration of more innovative applications.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB166

(Question Serial No. 1876)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In the past year, amid the rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) and increasing demand for computing power, Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre commenced operation on 9 December 2024. The Budget this year mentioned that the Government will continue to monitor Cyberport's implementation of the AI Supercomputing Centre and expansion project. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the current utilisation rate of the computing power?
2. What is the latest progress of works, including details of the expenditure and manpower involved and the timetable?
3. Regarding the initiatives to support the information and communications technology industry and digital transformation of small and medium enterprises, what are the numbers of applications received and the approval status?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 1)

Reply:

1. The first-phase facility of the Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC), which was established and run under a market model by Cyberport, commenced operation in end-2024, providing computing power of approximately 1 300 petaflops (PFLOPS), to be ramped up to 3 000 PFLOPS progressively this year. To encourage the industry to utilise the AISC's computing resources, the Government launched the Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme in October 2024, mainly to subsidise local institutions, research and development centres, enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing power of the AISC to foster the development of the Artificial Intelligence ecosystem. With the gradual commencement of various projects, the current utilisation rate of the AISC amounts to over 60% of the computing power in service.

2. Apart from the AISC, Cyberport is actively developing digital infrastructure and putting in place new facilities to provide the innovation and technology industry with space for development and more comprehensive support. The Cyberport expansion project commenced in 2021 aims to provide an additional gross floor area of around 66 000 square meters with facilities including offices, co-working space, a data services platform, a multi-function hall and ancillary facilities, etc. The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the estimated expenditure of around \$4.8 billion for the expansion project.

Cyberport has set up a project team of 12 members dedicated to taking forward the expansion project and monitoring the work progress of its commissioned main contractor. The superstructure construction for the expansion project was completed in October 2024. Cyberport is taking forward the remaining works at full speed, striving to complete the works by the end of this year.

3. On promoting digital transformation for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million in July 2023 for Cyberport to launch the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme), which provides subsidies on a one-to-one matching basis to assist SMEs in the food and beverage and retail sectors in applying ready-to-use basic digital solutions under 3 categories, including digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems, so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. To benefit more SMEs, the scope of the Pilot Programme was expanded at the end of 2024 to cover tourism and personal service sectors. As of end-February 2025, Cyberport has received over 6 700 applications from SMEs under the Pilot Programme, with more than 2 500 applications approved. The total approved funding amount exceeds \$120 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB167

(Question Serial No. 1878)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Digital Policy Office (DPO) was officially established in July 2024. Regarding the Estimates of Expenditure, it is mentioned that the Government will continue to oversee the work of the DPO in formulating and implementing digital policies. Please inform this Committee of the following:

1. It is mentioned that the work of the DPO includes streamlining government services. Please list the relevant work items in the past 6 months.
2. What were the expenditure and manpower saved by the Government as a result of implementing the aforesaid work items on streamlining government services?
3. It is mentioned that the DPO will collaborate with the Guangdong Province to provide cross-boundary public services in the Greater Bay Area (GBA). What are the details of the plan? How many types of services are expected to be launched in 2025-26?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

1. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) is committed to driving bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in the adoption of innovation and technology (I&T) and streamlining administrative procedures to enhance operational efficiency and continuously improve public services. In 2024-25, through the "Streamlining of Government Services" programme, the DPO worked with 40 B/Ds in proposing some 110 streamlining measures for about 230 services, such as obviating the need for the public to submit information repeatedly for their government service applications by leveraging cross-departmental data exchange, shortening the time required for handling and approving applications by automating the verification processes, and developing or enhancing systems and

adopting “iAM Smart” to provide the public with more convenient and quick access to online services and a better user experience, etc.

2. B/Ds make use of I&T and streamline business processes to enhance public services mainly to provide more options that will bring convenience and facilitation to the public. Generally speaking, B/Ds will flexibly redeploy the expenditure and manpower savings achieved to improve their existing services or to cope with new service demand.
3. We are actively collaborating with Guangdong Province to promote the Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) initiative. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Government Services and Data Management Bureau (GSDMB) of Guangdong Province signed the “Co-operation Agreement between Guangdong and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region on Cross-boundary Public Services” in November 2023, and jointly launched the CBPS service area/thematic website to enable residents and enterprises in Hong Kong and Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to conveniently access public services of the two places online anytime without the need for cross-boundary travel in person.

The CBPS thematic website currently provides a total of 77 online services and related information of cross-boundary public services from 12 B/Ds and related organisations. We have set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks and “iAM Smart” self-registration kiosks in Guangzhou, Qianhai and Futian in Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou and Dongguan progressively since February 2024, enabling residents and enterprises in the GBA to access cross-boundary public services and register for “iAM Smart” to have one-stop access to online services of various government departments via the “iAM Smart” mobile application.

Moreover, to further facilitate Hong Kong residents to access cross-boundary public services, the DPO and the GSDMB of Guangdong Province have established the connection between “iAM Smart” and the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents who have registered for the Guangdong Provincial Administrative Service to directly login to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile application through “iAM Smart” to use various public services of Guangdong Province in a more convenient and efficient manner.

We will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to identify and introduce more suitable cross-boundary public services to bring greater convenience to the public.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB168

(Question Serial No. 1883)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government has repeatedly emphasised the need to promote the development of “Smart Government”, especially the “iAM Smart” platform. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. According to the reply by the Government last year, the recurrent service usage of “iAM Smart” was about 30 million in 2023. What were the usage rates in 2024?
2. What are the expected numbers of services that will adopt “iAM Smart” by end-2025?
3. The “iAM Smart” platform has undergone a significant revamp but it does not go beyond the “one-tap login” function. What is the timetable for realising the “single portal for online government services”?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. The usage of “iAM Smart” in 2024 was about 44 million, representing an increase of about 47% when compared to the usage in 2023.
2. It is anticipated that over 100 new services will adopt “iAM Smart” within 2025.
3. The Digital Policy Office obtained the funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in mid-2023 to commence a series of upgrades to the “iAM Smart” platform. The target is to drive full adoption of “iAM Smart” by all government online services by 2025 so as to realise “single portal for online government services”. The upgrade work of the “iAM Smart” platform is progressing at full speed, with the enhanced or new features as follows:

- i. In 2023, the design for the “iAM Smart” mobile app was updated, enabling citizens to browse various useful information. Additionally, the “iAM Smart” platform was linked up with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents to directly log in to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile app through “iAM Smart” for using various government services of the Guangdong Province.
- ii. In 2024, the registration process for “iAM Smart+” was simplified. A new “iAM Smart” interface was launched, and a new “iAM Smart Personal Code” was introduced for identity verification purpose.
- iii. Various departments will gradually roll out personalised content for displaying on the “Personal Assistant” page.
- iv. In early March 2025, the “Digital Document” feature was introduced, allowing users to present their digital documents issued by different government departments through the “iAM Smart” mobile app. It currently covers the Social Welfare Department’s Electronic Senior Citizen Card, the Civil Service Bureau’s Common Recruitment Examination results and the Basic Law and National Security Law Test results, as well as the Correctional Services Department’s Incarceration Proof.
- v. More new features will be progressively rolled out this year, including the “Step-up Authentication”, bill payment function and “Mini-program Platform”.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB169

(Question Serial No. 1134)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

To develop the Artificial Intelligence (AI) ecosystem in Hong Kong, the Government has allocated \$3 billion for the launch of a 3-year AI Subsidy Scheme (the Scheme) to support local universities, research institutes, government departments and AI-related enterprises in leveraging the computing power of Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC). It has strengthened the cyber security and data protection of the AISC, and launched promotional and educational activities, etc. to encourage Mainland and overseas AI experts, enterprises and research and development projects to come to Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number of applications received and application cases approved under the Scheme since August 2024;
2. the statistics on frequency of use of the AISC through the Scheme;
3. how the Government will promote the Scheme to Mainland and overseas stakeholders.

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

In the 2024-25 Budget, the Government allocated \$3 billion for a 3-year Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), mainly to subsidise local institutions, research and development (R&D) centres, enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing power of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC). Since its launch in October 2024, Cyberport has received over 10 applications covering a wide range of technology and application areas. As of end-February 2025, the Committee of the Subsidy Scheme appointed by the Government has assessed and approved 9 projects led by local institutions, R&D centres, etc. with research areas such as accelerating local large language models, large models in new materials and synthetic biology, etc., which involve a total computing power

subsidy of over \$170 million. The computing power required by the approved projects ranges from 8 to 512 petaflops, with durations varying between 1.5 and 12 months. Since January 2025, the above approved projects have gradually started using the services of the AISC after completing the deployment, accounting for over 60% of the computing power in service.

Cyberport actively conducts promotional and publicity work to encourage industry utilisation of the computing power of the AISC and the Subsidy Scheme. As of February 2025, Cyberport has organised 25 promotional events, including information seminars at institutions, attracting over 1 400 participants. Among the events, Cyberport co-operated with the World Digital Technology Academy and the International Academicians Science & Technology Innovation Centre to host the “AI Safety, Trust, and Responsibility Forum” in February 2025, featuring over 20 industry experts and attracting more than 500 professionals from over 350 organisations. This forum held in Hong Kong also served as the sub-forum of the 3rd Global AI Action Summit recently concluded in Paris. Cyberport has also participated in numerous collaborative seminars and events in both Mainland and overseas, including in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Korea, to promote various measures supporting Artificial Intelligence (AI) development, including the implementation of the AISC. Cyberport will continue to conduct activities such as roadshows and seminars targeting specific industries or themes to promote the Subsidy Scheme and foster the development of the AI ecosystem.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB170

(Question Serial No. 1155)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is learned that since the launch of the “iAM Smart” mobile application, the number of registered users has exceeded 3.2 million, and “iAM Smart” connects about 500 services of the Government as well as public and private organisations and provides nearly 600 electronic government forms. However, there are views that “iAM Smart”, more often than not, can only guide/redirect users to the websites of other government departments rather than providing a one-stop public services delivery directly.

In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of whether it has any plan or timetable of further enhancing the “iAM Smart” one-stop service platform, including consolidating the Apps developed by different government departments (such as the Apps of the Immigration Department, 1823, HA GO, Government Vacancies) as well as incorporating the web services of various bureaux into “iAM Smart” for operation?

Asked by: Hon HO Kwan-yiu, Junius (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

The Digital Policy Office obtained the funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in mid-2023 to commence a series of upgrades to the “iAM Smart” platform. The upgrade work of “iAM Smart” platform is progressing at full speed, with the enhanced or new features as follows:

- i. In 2023, the design for the “iAM Smart” mobile app was updated, enabling citizens to browse various useful information. Additionally, the “iAM Smart” platform was linked up with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents to directly log in to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile app through “iAM Smart” for using various government services of the Guangdong Province.

- ii. In 2024, the registration process for “iAM Smart+” was simplified. A new “iAM Smart” interface was launched, and a new “iAM Smart Personal Code” was introduced for identity verification purpose.
- iii. Various departments will gradually roll out personalised content for displaying on the “Personal Assistant” page.
- iv. In early March 2025, the “Digital Document” feature was introduced, allowing users to present their digital documents issued by different government departments through the “iAM Smart” mobile app. It currently covers the Social Welfare Department’s Electronic Senior Citizen Card, the Civil Service Bureau’s Common Recruitment Examination results and the Basic Law and National Security Law Test results, as well as the Correctional Services Department’s Incarceration Proof.
- v. More new features will be progressively rolled out this year, including the “Step-up Authentication”, bill payment function and “Mini-program Platform”.

Our goal is to have all government online services adopted the enhanced “iAM Smart” by 2025 so as to realise “single portal for online government services”.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB171

(Question Serial No. 1638)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. The 2023-24 Budget proposed to launch a Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the numbers of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) (broken down by Food and Beverage, Retail, Tourism and Personal Service sectors) submitting applications and those with applications approved under the Programme, the total amount of subsidies approved and the average amount of subsidy granted to each SME in the past 2 years;
2. What are the estimated expenditure and the number of SMEs (broken down by sector) expected to receive assistance under the Programme in the coming financial year?
3. Does the Government have any plan to further extend the Programme to cover SMEs in all sectors in the future?

Asked by: Hon HONG Wen, Wendy (LegCo internal reference no.: 43)

Reply:

The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the allocation of \$500 million in July 2023 for Cyberport to launch the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme), which provides subsidies on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage (F&B) and retail sectors in applying ready-to-use basic digital solutions under three categories, including digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems, so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. To benefit more SMEs, the scope of the Pilot Programme was expanded at the end of 2024 to cover tourism and personal service sectors.

As of end-February 2025, Cyberport has received over 6 700 applications from SMEs under the Pilot Programme, with more than 2 500 applications approved. The total approved

funding amount exceeds \$120 million, with an average funding of approximately \$48,000 per SME. Details are listed as follows:

Sector	Number of SME applications (Approximate)	Number of approved applications (Approximate)	Funding Amount (Approximate) (\$'000)
F&B	2 320	920	43,600
Retail	4 000	1 510	74,500
Tourism	10	3	100
Personal Service	440	110	5,600
Total	Over 6 700	Over 2 500	Over 120 million

It is estimated that at least 8 000 eligible enterprises will benefit from the Pilot Programme. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) had allocated a total of \$400 million to Cyberport over the past 2 financial years for taking forward various activities under the programme, including receiving and approving applications, publicity and promotion, SME training, disbursement of subsidies to approved SMEs, etc. The remaining balance of \$100 million will be allocated in 2025-26 based on Cyberport's estimated cash flow requirement to continue the implementation of relevant activities.

Cyberport will continue to maintain close communication with the Advisory Group of the Pilot Programme, SMEs, solution providers and industry organisations to gather feedback and understand market conditions, ensuring the smooth operation of the Pilot Programme. We will work with Cyberport to review the arrangements, progress, effectiveness, etc. of the Pilot Programme in a timely manner to facilitate consideration of the way forward of the programme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB172

(Question Serial No. 2942)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 243 of the Budget Speech that since the launch of the “iAM Smart” mobile application, the number of registered users has exceeded 3.2 million. “iAM Smart” connects about 500 services of the Government as well as public and private organisations and provides nearly 600 electronic government forms. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) The total number of services of the Government as well as public and private organisations;
- 2) The total number of electronic government forms;
- 3) List out the said 500 services of the Government as well as public and private organisations that have been connected (in tabular form by department/organisation);
- 4) List out the 600 electronic government forms (in tabular form by department/organisation);
- 5) Has priority been accorded to connecting to departments/organisations related to the “three centres”? If not, what are the reasons; and
- 6) Will the Government enhance the utilisation of public data resources to improve the economy and people’s livelihood? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

- 1) to 4) As of February 2025, over 1 100 online services provided by government and public and private organisations as well as government e-forms have adopted “iAM Smart”, including around 400 government online services, around 100 online services provided by public and private organisations, and around 600 government e-forms. The lists of government and related organisations’ services, commercial and other organisations’ services, and government e-forms which have adopted “iAM Smart” are available on the thematic website of “iAM Smart”:

Government and related organisations’ services:

<https://www.iamsmart.gov.hk/en/e-service.html>

Commercial and other organisations’ services:

https://www.iamsmart.gov.hk/en/e-service-non_gov.html

Government e-Forms:

<https://www.iamsmart.gov.hk/en/e-service-eform.html>

- 5) and 6) The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has been actively driving government departments and public and private organisations to adopt “iAM Smart”, which now covers services from various sectors related to livelihood and the economy, including banking, finance, trade, retail, transportation, employment, etc. The DPO and Cyberport also launched the “iAM Smart” Sandbox Programme in March 2020, enabling industries to conduct proof-of-concept testing for online services adopting “iAM Smart”. The Sandbox Programme is now open to finance, information and communication technology, telecommunications, healthcare, education, culture, sports, tourism, accounting, legal, transport and logistics, charity, property management, real estate sectors, etc.

Over the past 2 years, we have been continuously enhancing the “iAM Smart” platform, including updating the design of the “iAM Smart” mobile app in 2023, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical information closely related to daily life based on open data, such as real-time weather, traffic conditions, waiting time for accident and emergency services in hospitals, cross-harbour tunnel tolls, etc.

To provide citizens with greater convenience and promote data sharing among bureaux/departments (B/Ds), we fully launched the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway” (CDEG) in June 2024 for adoption by B/Ds. Upon obtaining the consent from citizens, government departments can share citizens’ personal information stored in departmental systems (such as a citizen’s registered address with the Water Supplies Department) for use by other digital government services by means of data interchange. Relevant personal information from different government services (e.g. water bill balances) can also be directly displayed on the “Personal Assistant” page of “iAM Smart”. As of February 2025, the CDEG has processed over 16 million data exchanges, assisting financial institutions in accessing company registration information and supporting the automatic address

input function through the “e-ME” profile of “iAM Smart”, thereby facilitating business operations and enhancing the efficiency of online government services.

We will continue to actively engage various departments and organisations to incorporate more practical information into the “iAM Smart” mobile app, making it more convenient for citizens and improving user experience. We will also continue to promote and explore applicable “iAM Smart” use scenarios with stakeholders from different sectors, assisting them in leveraging “iAM Smart” features to develop and launch more online services that benefit both citizens and businesses.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB173

(Question Serial No. 2943)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 39 of the Budget Speech that the Government has set aside \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (Institute). The Digital Policy Office will formulate the establishment arrangements of the Institute and its specific goals, focusing on facilitating upstream research and development (R&D), midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) Regarding the Institute, what are the conceptual governance framework, the implementation schedule, staffing establishment involved and the estimate of expenditure?
- 2) How does the positioning of the Institute differ from that of local universities, R&D institutes and enterprises, etc., and how will multi-party collaboration be facilitated to build up an AI ecosystem?
- 3) Please tabulate the outcomes of the Government's efforts in promoting the development of artificial intelligence (AI), as well as the expenditure and staffing establishment involved over the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25); and
- 4) Does the Government have any work plan for promoting the development of AI in the next 3 years (with information set out in tabular form)? Will the Government spearhead the formulation of a Blueprint for AI Development and set performance indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of the plans? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a key industry in Hong Kong. It is at the core of developing new quality productive forces and serves as a strategic driver for the future. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (the Blueprint) published by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau at the end of 2022 has proposed to focus on the development of AI industry, setting out clear strategic directions and detailed action plan for promoting the development of AI in Hong Kong. Following the development strategies outlined in the Blueprint, the Government has been implementing a series of initiatives to support the development of AI in recent years, thereby realising the AI development strategy.

In terms of infrastructure and computing power, the first-phase facility of the Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC), which was established and run under a market model by Cyberport, commenced operation in end-2024, providing computing power of approximately 1 300 petaflops (PFLOPS), to be ramped up to 3 000 PFLOPS progressively this year. To encourage the industry to utilise the AISC's computing resources, the Government launched a three-year AI Subsidy Scheme in October 2024, mainly to subsidise local institutions, research and development (R&D) centres and enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing power of the AISC.

In terms of R&D and talent of innovation and technology (I&T), the AIR@InnoHK, which focuses on AI and robotics technologies, has established 16 R&D laboratories, including the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) established with funding support in 2023. HKGAI focuses on the R&D of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong's self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage, mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation, and summarisation of documents. HKGAI updated its locally developed "HKGAI V1" LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application's capabilities of document processing.

On the other hand, through different funding schemes under the Innovation and Technology Fund, the Government also subsidises and encourages universities, local public research institutes (such as R&D centres) and private enterprises to conduct R&D in different technology areas, including projects that involve AI. The Government is also dedicated to enlarging the talent pool for I&T. For examples, the Research Talent Hub, the Technology Talent Admission Scheme and the Talent List are all aimed at nurturing and attracting tech talents, including AI specialists from home and elsewhere.

In respect of exploring application scenarios, in order to help HKGAI further train up and optimise its LLM and the application, the Government started using HKPilot from mid-2024. HKPilot is provided for staff of bureaux and departments (B/Ds) for pilot use and user feedback. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has invited all B/Ds to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme, and will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff.

In addition, over a hundred digital government and smart city initiatives will be rolled out from 2024 to 2025, of which nearly half involve the application of big data analytics and AI technology including the application of AI and chatbot technologies to improve government hotline services; and adoption of AI and machine learning technologies to set up a Hong Kong coastal sea-level monitoring and prediction system.

Meanwhile, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) and Cyberport collaborated last year to launch a new GenAI Sandbox to foster innovation in the banking industry and unleash the potential of AI. The HKMA announced the first cohort of the GenAI Sandbox in December 2024. Through the Sandbox, participating banks and technology partners will explore in depth the capabilities of GenAI in enhancing service areas such as risk management, anti-fraud measures and customer experience. The HKMA will also publish a practice guide by making reference to global development trend and experience in the Sandbox.

In terms of industry development, Cyberport and the Science Park are home to over 800 AI and big data companies in setting up R&D centres or expanding business, including top-notch AI companies nurtured locally and a number of leading companies from the Mainland and other regions. The Government will also set up a \$10 billion I&T Industry-Oriented Fund to form a fund-of-funds to channel more market capital to invest in specified emerging and future industries of strategic importance, including the AI and robotics field. On the other hand, the Government has also launched the Innovation and Technology Venture Fund enhanced scheme at the end of 2024 and invited applications as fund managers. Under the enhanced scheme, the Government will select suitable fund managers and redeploy at most \$1.5 billion to set up funds jointly with the market, on a matching basis, to invest in start-ups of strategic industries such as AI and data sciences, etc.

In respect of governance and regulation, the Government and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data have published the updated version of the Ethical AI Framework, the Policy Statement on Responsible Application of AI in the Financial Market, and the AI: Model Personal Data Protection Framework respectively for reference by the industry. The thematic web page on data governance launched by the DPO in December 2024 covers the Principles of Data Governance and the relevant strategy, guidelines and technical standards, etc. The Government has also commissioned the HKGAI, through practical applications, to study and propose appropriate codes and guidelines on the accuracy, responsibility and information security in the generative AI technologies and practices.

To further promote the R&D and applications of AI in Hong Kong, the 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative R&D and industrial applications of AI, facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes, and expanding application scenarios. The AIRDI will be one of the key initiatives in building the local AI ecosystem, complementing the aforesaid initiatives. The DPO is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of HKGAI. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish

the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

The aforementioned tasks are being carried out by the relevant B/Ds using their existing manpower and resources. We do not maintain the related breakdown figures.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB174

(Question Serial No. 3836)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 244 of the Budget Speech that the Digital Policy Office is planning to progressively implement a “Digital Corporate Identity” (CorpID) Platform before the end of next year. This will enable Hong Kong enterprises to undergo corporate identity authentication and digital signature process in a secure and convenient manner when using electronic government services or conducting online business transactions. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) According to the information from the Government, all corporate-related e-government services are required to support the use of the CorpID within 18 months after the launch of the CorpID Platform. Will the Government consider giving priority to departments/organisations related to the “three centres and a hub”? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons? And
- 2) Upon the launch of the CorpID Platform, what measures will be taken by the Government to promote the use of the Platform by enterprises such as securities companies?

Asked by: Hon KAN Wai-mun, Carmen (LegCo internal reference no.: 55)

Reply:

- 1) The “Digital Corporate Identity” (CorpID) Platform is an important digital government and digital economy infrastructure. All corporate-related e-government services are required to support the use of CorpID within 18 months after the CorpID Platform is launched. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has issued a circular to departments and progressively invited bureaux/departments (B/Ds) as well as public and private organisations with more business dealings with corporations to carry out related system design, upgrade and integration at the soonest, so that their e-services can support the use of the CorpID Platform. When the CorpID Platform is launched in the first phase,

we anticipate that it can integrate with various “Government-to-Business” and “Business-to-Business” e-services provided by B/Ds as well as public and private organisations, covering areas on finance and taxation, etc.

- 2) To attract and encourage corporations (including the securities industry) to use CorpID, DPO will strengthen the publicity and promotion on the main functions of and the convenience brought about by CorpID through diversified channels including websites, social media platforms, promotional videos, industry events, etc. We also plan to organise promotional events and explore appropriate support measures jointly with relevant B/Ds and industry associations in order to promote the adoption of CorpID by corporations.

On the other hand, DPO will launch a Sandbox Programme within this year for corporations and government departments interested in supporting CorpID to conduct proof-of-concept testing and develop their applications in order to design application scenarios and solutions that can better meet the market demands. DPO will promote the CorpID Sandbox Programme to related organisations in the securities industry (e.g. Hong Kong Securities Association, the Institute of Securities Dealers, Chinese Securities Association of Hong Kong, etc.) with a view to inviting the industry to join.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB175

(Question Serial No. 1176)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is shown under the Programme that the financial provision for data governance is \$1,129.4 million in 2025-2026, which represents an increase of 16.7% compared with 2024-2025. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the following:

- 1). The total number of the enhanced “iAM Smart” platform users and the distribution of sex and age;
- 2). The cost and expenditure devoted in launching the enhanced “iAM Smart” platform;
- 3). The estimated expenditure on developing the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform;
- 4). The expenditure involved in improving the service of 1823 through the application of artificial intelligence and other innovative technologies, as well as the projected saving in manpower expenditure.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

- 1). As at the end of February 2025, “iAM Smart” platform has nearly 3.3 million registered users, with age group distribution as follows:

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
11 to 20	84 000	74 000	158 000
21 to 30	272 000	272 000	544 000
31 to 40	346 000	363 000	709 000
41 to 50	343 000	395 000	738 000
51 to 60	290 000	291 000	581 000
61 to 70	230 000	183 000	413 000
71 or above	82 000	63 000	145 000
Total	1 647 000	1 641 000	3 288 000

Remark: The figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

- 2). The Digital Policy Office (DPO) obtained the funding approval of \$193 million from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in May 2023 for upgrading “iAM Smart” platform so as to realise “single portal for online government services”. The project expenditure to date is approximately \$58 million, while the estimated expenditure for 2025-26 is approximately \$45.8 million.
- 3). The DPO obtained the funding approval of \$300 million from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in June 2024 for implementing the “Digital Corporate Identity” Platform. The project expenditure to date is approximately \$3.98 million, while the estimated expenditure for 2025-26 is approximately \$52.2 million.
- 4). Over the years, demand for 1823 service has been continuously increasing. Currently, 1823 staff handle over 3 million calls and emails from citizens annually. To continuously enhance service quality and cope with the demand, 1823 actively applies artificial intelligence (AI) and other innovative technologies to handle general enquiries through a range of digital self-services, including an AI chatbot, an intelligent interactive voice response system (IVRS), and online searching and answering of frequently asked questions (FAQs), enabling existing staff to concentrate on more complicated cases (such as complaints) and cope with the pressure of rising demand for manpower. The expenditure for the related innovative technology application projects implemented by 1823 in 2024-25 was approximately \$4.7 million, while the estimated expenditure for the related projects planned for 2025-26 is around \$4.4 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB176

(Question Serial No. 2913)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the mobile applications of government services, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) The following information on the mobile applications of various bureaux and departments (B/Ds) currently available for public download: (i) name of the B/D concerned, (ii) name of the application, (iii) launch date, (iv) target user group, (v) purpose for development, (vi) development expenditure, (vii) annual maintenance expenditure, (viii) expected number of downloads per year, (ix) actual number of downloads in each of the past 5 years, (x) expected number of active users per year, and (xi) actual number of active users in each of the past 5 years;
- (2) It has been learnt that if the project/measure related to a mobile application has been completed, or there are other more effective ways to provide such service, or the needs of the target user groups have changed, B/Ds should consider decommissioning the application. For those mobile applications designed for the general public, B/Ds have to decommission them if the number of downloads is below 10 000 one year after the launch. In this regard, please provide the following information on the decommissioned applications for the past 5 years: (i) name of the B/D concerned, (ii) name of the application, (iii) launch date, (iv) target user group, (v) purpose for development, (vi) development expenditure, (vii) annual maintenance expenditure, (viii) decommission date, and (ix) reasons for decommission; and
- (3) Will the Government step up efforts in supporting B/Ds to review the effectiveness of their existing applications, and provide assistance for them in integrating applications with similar functions, with a view to saving costs on maintenance and updating?

Asked by: Hon LAM Chun-sing (LegCo internal reference no.: 19)

Reply:

- (1) The mobile apps currently available for download by the public from various bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and their relevant information are listed in **Annex A**.
- (2) The Digital Policy Office (DPO) requested B/Ds to conduct regular reviews after the launch of mobile apps, including whether the apps have met users' needs and achieved the expected outcomes and cost-effectiveness. If the projects/initiatives relating to the mobile apps have been completed, if there are other more effective ways to provide the service, or if the needs of the target user groups have changed, the relevant B/Ds should consider decommissioning the apps. The mobile apps which were decommissioned by B/Ds in the past 5 years and their relevant information are set out in **Annex B**.
- (3) When developing mobile apps, B/Ds have been taking into account their operational needs, mode of service and various factors, including the objectives and usage of the apps, the needs of target user groups, the resources required for the development and maintenance of the mobile apps, and whether the functions to be incorporated will render the apps complicated and difficult to use, etc. These considerations help determine whether to develop new mobile apps or consolidate the existing ones. The DPO will continue to request B/Ds to make good use of the features provided by "iAM Smart", review existing mobile apps and according to the needs of individual services, integrate the services into "iAM Smart", with a view to providing a unified government service experience. "iAM Smart" will also launch the "Mini-program Platform" this year, enabling B/Ds to integrate their mobile app services into "iAM Smart" in a cost-effective manner so as to realise "single portal for online government services".

**B/Ds’ mobile apps currently available for download
(As at 28 February 2025)**

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 28 Feb 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2025
1.	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Enjoy Hiking	Dec 2010	Hong Kong citizens	The mobile app supports speedy mountain rescue operations. By activating the “Hiker Tracking Service” and Global Positioning System (GPS) of the mobile phone before a user’s trip, the system will record the user’s tracking location which could be retrieved to shorten the rescue time if the need arises. The mobile app also links to the “Enjoy Hiking” website, which adopts a responsive design for viewing on mobile phones. The website	38,000	49,500	420 000	430 000	450 000	470 000	487 000

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 28 Feb 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2025
					features different hiking trails, hiking routes and attractions across the country parks, enabling users to choose a suitable route based on personal interest, physical fitness and experience to enjoy the countryside in Hong Kong.							
2.	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Reef Check Hong Kong	Dec 2011	Volunteer divers participating in Hong Kong Reef Check	The mobile app aims to support the survey work of volunteer divers participating in Hong Kong Reef Check. Divers can use it at any time to access to information needed for conducting surveys, including the locations of the 33 survey sites, coral coverage rates, common indicator species and diving safety guidelines.	95,000	49,500	12 000	12 000	13 000	14 000	14 000

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 28 Feb 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2025
3.	Buildings Department	MWCS - Quick Guide for Minor Works	Sep 2014	Hong Kong citizens	<p>To provide the public with a handy way to access information about the procedures and requirements for carrying out minor works.</p> <p>To allow users to easily identify class/type/item of minor works, to search the registers of registered building professional/registered contractors for minor works; and to provide information on Validation Schemes for Household Minor Works and Unauthorised Signboards, and Designated Exempted Building Works.</p>	290,000	109,000	50 000	58 000	63 000	67 000	71 000

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 28 Feb 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2025
4.	Buildings Department	WIN SAFE	May 2022	Hong Kong citizens	To enable property owners to search for and appoint Qualified Persons (QPs) for early compliance of Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme (MWIS) notices issued by the BD so as to ensure building safety.	The total cost of the project is around \$2.61 million. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.	433,000 (Including the costs for maintenance of mobile app (around \$156,000), upgrade of operating systems in Government Cloud Infrastructure Services (GCIS) (around \$127,000) and adoption of streamlined workflow in iAM Smart (around \$150,000).)	N/A (Launched in May 2022)	N/A (Launched in May 2022)	2 500	6 000	14 000

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 28 Feb 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2025
5.	Civil Aviation Department	eSUA	May 2022	Hong Kong citizens	To register a Small Unmanned Aircraft (SUA) and as a remote control pilot, and to obtain safety information, relevant regulatory documents and guidelines, and the latest SUA restricted flight zone map.	277,000	68,447	N/A (Launched in May 2022)	N/A (Launched in May 2022)	21 000	33 000	48 000
6.	Civil Engineering and Development Department	HK Geology	Mar 2013	Hong Kong citizens	To give a simplified account of the geology of Hong Kong as a reference tool in field, which is useful for teachers, students, members of the public and geotechnical practitioners.	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	28 000	34 000	35 000	38 000	39 000

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7.	Civil Service Bureau	Government Vacancies	Sep 2015	Hong Kong citizens	To facilitate the public to browse or search for information of government vacancies by mobile communication devices.	980,000	587,000 (Including the costs for mobile app maintenance, backend system maintenance and website maintenance. No separate cost breakdown is available.)	770 000	840 000	930 000	1 000 000	1 107 000
8.	Correctional Services Department	Hong Kong Correctional Services Department Mobile App	Feb 2015	Hong Kong citizens	To enhance communication of the Department with all sectors of the community. It enables the public to receive the latest and important information and services of the Department (including the locations and visiting hours of correctional	308,000	85,000	26 000	31 000	37 000	43 000	48 000

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					facilities as well as travel routes), and learn more about the Department.							
9.	Correctional Services Department	Captain Gor Union	Dec 2024	One of the functions is event registration. The member of the “Captain Gor Union”, who need to register in the mobile application.	Captain Gor Union (CGU) will not only make youth development work more systematic and sustainable, but also help recruit young people with great potential to become Rehabilitation Pioneer Leaders, with a view to bringing in new blood to the department’s youth uniformed group.	500,000	50,000	N/A (Launched in Dec 2024)	N/A (Launched in Dec 2024)	N/A (Launched in Dec 2024)	N/A (Launched in Dec 2024)	420 (Launched in Dec 2024)

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 28 Feb 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2025
10.	Department of Health	衛生署DH	Jan 2024	Hong Kong citizens	@DH App is the designated digital front door of the Department of Health (DH). It serves as a quick channel for Healthcare Professionals, Institutions & Schools, Business & Workplace and General Public to access the Department's information, eServices and Resources such as appointment booking, licence scanning, electronic application forms, public health advices, publication, videos, infographics and upcoming events offered by DH. @DH has	640,000	64,000	N/A (Launched in Jan 2024)	N/A (Launched in Jan 2024)	N/A (Launched in Jan 2024)	690 (Launched in Jan 2024)	25 000

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					<p>exclusive collection of Lazy Lion Whatsapp stickers available for download to share with friends and family.</p> <p>@DH also has notification function to receive instant messages on public health, and any updates on events you are interested in.</p>							
11.	Department of Health	IMPACT	Feb 2013	Medical and health professionals	<p>IMPACT provides “Reducing bacterial resistance with IMPACT guidelines”.</p> <p>This app has search function. Users can use this app to browse the antibiograms uploaded by the Clusters of the Hospital Authority and to</p>	296,000	48,000	46 000	49 000	50 000	51 000	52 000

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					perform calculator functions using pre-set medical formulae. This app aims to enhance the awareness of medical staff on using antibiotics and is a very important reference.							
12.	Department of Health	Quit Smoking App	Aug 2011	Hong Kong citizens	Together, we can create a smoke-free Hong Kong. The Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office of the Department of Health is launching the Quit Smoking App to assist smokers in overcoming tobacco dependence. Smokers can assess their nicotine dependence level, set a quit plan, and record their	295,000	97,000	63 000	68 000	73 000	87 000	97 000

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					<p>quitting progress in the app. They can also read health information and tips related to quitting to help them stay tobacco-free. Non-smokers can recommend the app to family and friends and encourage them to quit smoking.</p>							
13.	Development Bureau	My Kowloon East	Dec 2016	Hong Kong citizens	<p>A comprehensive mobile app for Kowloon East. Using information and communications technology in conjunction with the information in Kowloon East to promote the Smart City initiative and the concept of “Walkable Kowloon East”.</p>	<p>Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.</p>	88,000	13 000	14 000	17 000	20 000	23 000

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14.	Digital Policy Office	1823	Jul 2022	Hong Kong citizens	1823 mobile app enables citizens to submit cases to 1823, receive replies from departments, follow up on the submitted cases and obtain instant information via chatbot and 1823 FAQ search engine.	2,500,000 (Including user experience design, infrastructure setup and development of mobile app and backend system.)	The maintenance of the app is bundled with other services. No separate cost breakdown is available.	N/A (Launched in Jul 2022)	N/A (Launched in Jul 2022)	50 000	110 000	166 000
15.	Digital Policy Office	EventHK	Apr 2013	Hong Kong citizens	A one-stop inter-departmental platform that provides users with a convenient way to look for public events organised by government departments or in government premises.	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	100 000	100 000	100 000	119 000	121 000

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16.	Digital Policy Office	GovHK Notifications	Aug 2012	Hong Kong citizens	An inter-departmental mobile app that provides a convenient way for members of the public to receive government information and alerts via smart phones.	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	870 000	890 000	940 000	950 000	967 000
17.	Digital Policy Office	iAM Smart	Dec 2020	All Hong Kong residents with Hong Kong Identity Card and aged 11 or over are eligible to register for "iAM Smart". For residents aged between 11 and 17, registration has to be performed with the consent of a parent or guardian	"iAM Smart" mobile app facilitates members of the public to log in and use online services with a single digital identity using their personal mobile phone through the one-stop personalised digital services platform of "iAM Smart".	The app is developed together with the "iAM Smart" platform. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	The app is developed together with the "iAM Smart" platform. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	179 000 (Around 88 000 registered users)	2 035 000 (More than 1 million registered users)	3 701 000 (More than 1.8 million registered users)	5 541 000 (More than 2.6 million registered users)	7 507 000 (More than 3.2 million registered users)

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18.	Digital Policy Office	Wi-Fi.HK	Aug 2014	Hong Kong citizens	To facilitate the public and visitors in searching for the locations of hotspots providing Wi-Fi service that is either completely free or free for a limited period of time under the Common Hong Kong Wi-Fi Brand “Wi-Fi.HK”.	340,000	165,000	330 000	340 000	360 000	400 000	432 000
19.	Education Bureau	e-Navigator	May 2012	All senior secondary students of Hong Kong	“e-Navigator” is a life planning tool that helps students search for course information across different local institutions and levels (e.g. degree and sub-degree programmes, Diploma of Applied Education and other programmes from the Qualifications Register), so as to assist them in planning for their	Developed with the related website. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	144,000	210 000	220 000	230 000	250 000	260 000

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					future studies according to their interests and abilities.							
20.	Education Bureau	Educational Multimedia	Dec 2012	Hong Kong citizens	It provides a convenient platform for students, teachers and parents to access over 1 200 Educational Multimedia (EMM) curriculum-based resources currently on the EDB EMM website anytime and anywhere.	49,000	289,000	150 000	160 000	200 000	204 000	208 000
21.	Education Bureau	KG Profile	Oct 2015	Hong Kong citizens	To provide relevant information of kindergartens across the territory and enhance the transparency of the kindergartens to help parents make informed school choices for their children.	Included in the cost of the whole project of the Profile of Kindergartens . As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	130 000	160 000	210 000	270 000	296 000

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22.	Education Bureau	History Trip Go Easy	Nov 2017	Mainly secondary school teachers and junior secondary students	The mobile app provides e-learning resources on Cheung Chau Jiao Festival field trip, including parts for preparation before field trip, routes for field trip, and extended learning. Meanwhile, the mobile app adopt augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) and other e-learning functions, creatively incorporates e-learning into field trips and enables History learning to take place outside the classroom. It can enhance students' learning interests and facilitate their self-directed learning, thereby developing historical literacy, and cultivating the	Developed as a part of the e-book and e-portal project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	50,000	43 000	47 000	52 000	54 000	58 000

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					positive values and attitudes. In addition, the mobile app will successively include new field visit routes, enriching students' learning experience in History.							
23.	Electrical & Mechanical Services Department	E&M Connect	Dec 2019	Hong Kong citizens	<p>EMSD Mobile Apps 《E&M Connect》provides updated EMSD news and e-services, including:</p> <p>1. Energy Saver: To use camera to capture the reference number of energy label by OCR to instantly show and compare the energy performance, projected annual electricity or fuel bills and recommendations</p>	800,000	396,000	12 000	16 000	21 000	27 000	31 000

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					<p>of more energy efficient models of 10 prescribed products under the Mandatory Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme (excluding compact fluorescent lamps) to facilitate the public in choosing energy efficient products.</p> <p>2. E&M Finder: Using the current location of smart phone or specified location to show the nearby Registered Vehicle Maintenance Workshops, Registered Electrical Contractors and LPG Cylinder Distributors (with icons of their corresponding</p>							

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					<p>gold, silver or bronze rating under the LPG Cylinder Distributor Safety Performance Recognition Scheme) on the map. It also supports the users to dial the telephone numbers of service providers conveniently to request for services.</p> <p>3. E&M Trade App: The subapp provides information about safety alerts, code of practice and other relevant documents updates, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) courses, etc. to Registered</p>							

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					<p>Electrical Workers, Registered Lifts/Escalators Engineers, Registered Lifts/Escalators Workers and Registered Gas Installers. Users can sign up a mobile app account and store the information of their certificate of registration so as to enroll for relevant courses directly on the app, record training hours, show their “Digital E&M Licences” to the public and receive push notification reminders on registration expiry. The mobile application also provides “Digital</p>							

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					<p>E&M Licences” service to the Gas related Competent Persons and the Approved Competent Persons for Locating Underground Electricity Cables.</p> <p>4. Scan Fast: Using mobile phone camera and Optical Character Recognition (OCR) function to capture the image of registration cards of the Registered Gas Installers (RGI) to show the related RGI information and registered classes.</p> <p>5. EMYA: Using the mobile application for browsing the latest activity</p>							

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					information, newsletter, and quiz games of the E&M Youth Ambassador programme, as well as logging in to the member domain via the activity information page to sign up for activities.							
24.	Electrical & Mechanical Services Department	E&M Trade	Dec 2019	Electrical & Mechanical Trade Practitioners	The target users of “E&M Trade App” are the Registered Electrical Workers, Registered Lifts/Escalators Engineers, Registered Lifts/Escalators Workers, Registered Gas Installers and Registered Vehicle Mechanics. The app provides information about	492,000	222,000	34 000	48 000	61 000	69 000	76 000

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					<p>safety alerts, code of practice and other relevant documents updates, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) courses, etc. to E&M practitioners. Users can sign up a mobile app account and store the information of their certificate of registration so as to enroll for relevant courses directly on the app, record training hours, show their “Digital E&M Licences” to the public and receive push notification reminders on registration expiry. The mobile application also</p>							

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					provides “Digital E&M Licences” service to the Registered Vehicle Mechanics, the Gas related Competent Persons and the Approved Competent Persons for Locating Underground Electricity Cables.							
25.	Environmental Protection Department	EV-Charging Easy	Jun 2022	Hong Kong citizens	To provide information on real-time EV Charger availability in Hong Kong by EPD.	482,000 (Including 2 year System Maintenance and Support (SM&S) services.)	The system maintenance cost includes one back-end system hosted in GCIS, and broadband/mobile network in 78 government car parks. The SM&S of the mobile app cannot be separated.	N/A (Launched in Jun 2022)	N/A (Launched in Jun 2022)	7 800 (Launched in Jun 2022)	18 000	19 000

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26.	Environmental Protection Department	GREEN\$ Mobile App	Jan 2022	Hong Kong citizens	<p>“GREEN\$ Mobile App” is a mobile app developed by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Its primary function is to facilitate the public to participate the GREEN\$ Electronic Participation Incentive Scheme (ePIS) using smartphone. Members of the GREEN\$ ePIS will earn GREEN\$ for redemption of gift items when submitting recyclables at Recycling Stations, Recycling Stores and Recycling Spots for clean recycling.</p>	Around 1,300,000 (Including the costs for mobile app development, maintenance and enhancement.)	Around 1,300,000 (Including the costs for mobile app development, maintenance and enhancement.)	N/A (Launched in Jan 2022)	N/A (Launched in Jan 2022)	130 000	423 000	1 011 000

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27.	Environmental Protection Department	HoHoSkips	Feb 2021	Hong Kong citizens	Mobile application “HoHoSkips” assists citizens and renovation workers in properly disposing of small quantity of construction waste. It provides construction waste collection booking services, real-time positions of waste collection vehicles, tools for communicating with staff of recyclers, etc.	550,000	120,000	N/A (Launched in Feb 2021)	5 200 (Launched in Feb 2021)	18 000	34 000	43 000
28.	Environmental Protection Department	Hong Kong Air Quality Health Index (AQHI)	Dec 2013	Hong Kong citizens	To provide real-time AQHI recorded at the 15 general and 3 roadside air quality monitoring stations of EPD.	407,000	72,000	130 000	140 000	180 000	190 000	190 000

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29.	Environmental Protection Department	Waste Less	Mar 2014	Hong Kong citizens	To provide information of over 7 000 recyclable collection points all over Hong Kong and the latest news and knowledge about waste treatment, reduction and recycling. To enable members of the public to obtain information on waste reduction and recycling more easily; and share the contents and messages of the “Waste Less” app with their friends.	690,000	The cost is covered within the maintenance expense of the GREEN\$ Mobile App and is not separately itemised.	71 000	80 000	96 000	110 000	116 000
30.	Fire Services Department	HKFSD	Mar 2023	Hong Kong citizens	The Hong Kong Fire Services Department (HKFSD) Mobile Application is designed to	1,010,000	162,600	N/A (Launched in Mar 2023)	N/A (Launched in Mar 2023)	N/A (Launched in Mar 2023)	74 000	91 000

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					provide information of fire safety and ambulance service, so that the public can have a better understanding of the work and services of the department. The Mobile Application will be updated and enhanced on an ongoing basis to meet the needs of the community.							
31.	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Internet Memorial Service	Jun 2018	Hong Kong citizens	A memorial website provided for the public, facilitating them to pay tribute and show condolence to their lost loved ones at anytime and anywhere.	300,000	The maintenance of the mobile app is included in the whole system maintenance contract of Internet Memorial Service.	12 000	17 000	23 000	30 000	36 000

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32.	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Nutrition Calculator	Oct 2011	Hong Kong citizens	Help the public make better food choices by using nutrition labels.	150,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	136 000@	136 000	142 000	150 000	159 000
33.	Health Bureau	醫健通 eHealth	Jan 2021	Hong Kong citizens	One-stop access of useful health information and health records.	The development of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	The maintenance of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. No separate cost breakdown is available.	55 000	2 000 000	2 900 000	3 200 000	3 661 000
34.	Health Bureau	e+Life	Sep 2024	Hong Kong citizens	A Health promoting app for citizens to encourage healthy life via playing games	The development of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	The maintenance of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. No separate cost breakdown is available.	N/A (Launched in Sep 2024)	N/A (Launched in Sep 2024)	N/A (Launched in Sep 2024)	N/A (Launched in Sep 2024)	28 000

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35.	Home Affairs Department	Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses	Feb 2015	Tourists and local residents	Users can search for the latest details of licensed hotels, guesthouses, holiday flats and holiday camps in Hong Kong. They can also report suspected unlicensed guesthouses through the “Report” function.	178,000	276,000	16 000	16 000	17 000	19 000	20 000
36.	Home and Youth Affairs Bureau	HKYouth+	Mar 2024	Hong Kong citizens	“HKYouth+” is a comprehensive platform specially designed for Hong Kong youths, disseminating information about youth development programmes. Young people can make use of “HKYouth+” to explore different opportunities and activities according to their	Around 2,680,000 (Including user experience and user interface design, content management system, infrastructure setup and development of mobile application and backend system.)	Not applicable (HKYouth+ was in its nursing period during the financial year 2024-25 and did not incur any maintenance costs.)	N/A (Launched in Mar 2024)	N/A (Launched in Mar 2024)	N/A (Launched in Mar 2024)	N/A (Launched in Mar 2024)	44 000

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					individual needs and interests.							
37.	Hong Kong Observatory	MyObservatory	Mar 2010	Hong Kong citizens	To provide weather information to mobile users.	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	8 400 000	9 100 000	9 700 000	11 000 000	11 200 000
38.	Hong Kong Observatory	MyWorld Weather	Oct 2011	Hong Kong citizens	To provide official city weather forecast worldwide to mobile users.	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	310 000	320 000	330 000	450 000	460 000
39.	Hong Kong Police Force	Hong Kong Police Mobile App	Jul 2012	Hong Kong citizens	To engage the community and strengthen the communication with different sectors of society, the Police launched the first “Hong Kong Police Mobile Application” on 18 July 2012. By using this mobile app on smartphones, users can access the latest police information	750,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	190 000	200 000	210 000	320 000	339 000

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					anytime and anywhere.							
40.	Hong Kong Police Force	Junior Police Call Mobile App	Apr 2021	The target audience for Junior Police Call Mobile App comprises teenagers aged between 6 and 25, and is not restricted to residents of Hong Kong.	The app serves as a digital platform which offers Junior Police Call (JPC) membership application, event enrolment, e-learning packages and loyalty reward programme for JPC members. It aims to strengthen interaction among JPC members and Police.	Around 1,370,000 (Developed with the related website and backend system. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.)	836,000 (Including the fees for 2 mobile app maintenance, backend system maintenance, website maintenance, system hosting services and system license. No separate cost breakdown is available.)	N/A (Launched in Apr 2021)	16 000	26 000	47 000	68 800
41.	Hong Kong Police Force	Scameter+	Feb 2023	Hong Kong citizens	To help the public identify frauds and online pitfalls and increase their crime prevention awareness.	This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the “Prevention and Detection of Crime”, and the Hong Kong Police Force has not	This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the “Prevention and Detection of Crime”, and the Hong Kong Police Force does not	N/A (Launched in Feb 2023)	N/A (Launched in Feb 2023)	N/A (Launched in Feb 2023)	230 000	902 000

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 28 Feb 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2025
						kept a record of specific expenditure items.	keep a record of specific expenditure items.					
42.	Hong Kong Police Force	HKSOS	Jan 2024	Hong Kong citizens	HKSOS is the most important outdoor safety app designed to save lives and speed up the response time of rescue services in life-critical missions. It is directly linked to the 999 Call Centre and becomes your lifeline in an emergency.	HKSOS is included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the “Smart Rescue Solution”, and the Hong Kong Police Force has not kept a record of specific expenditure items	N/A (Launched in Jan 2024)	N/A (Launched in Jan 2024)	N/A (Launched in Jan 2024)	43 000	126 000
43.	Hong Kong Police Force	HKP e-Licence	Jun 2024	Licence/Permit holder	The Police Licensing Office of the Hong Kong Police Force launched the “HKP e-Licence” mobile application to issue eight types of electronic licences and permits, including Arms Licence, Massage Establishments	HKP e-Licence is included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	HKP e-Licence is included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	N/A (Launched in Jun 2024)	N/A (Launched in Jun 2024)	N/A (Launched in Jun 2024)	N/A (Launched in Jun 2024)	16 300

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					<p>Licence, Playing Musical Instrument Permit in Public Street or Road, Pawnbrokers Licence, Temporary Liquor Licence, Dragon/Lion/Unicorn Dance Permit, Security Personnel Permit and Societies Registration.</p> <p>Licence/permit holders can access their approved licences and permits at any time through “HKPe-Licence”, and produce the licences/permits to enforcement officers for inspection. The application also features a notification function that will remind licence</p>							

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 28 Feb 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2025
					holders to renew their licences or permits.							
44.	Hong Kong Police Force	HKPF Recruit	Sep 2024	Hong Kong citizens	“HKPF Recruit” mobile application is an “All-in-one” platform provided one-stop recruitment services including job application, monitoring interview progress and enrollment in recruitment events. For enquiries, please send an email to recruit@police.gov.hk	3,820,000 (The project includes Privacy Impact Assessment, System Analysis & Design, System Implementation & Integration, backend system and the mobile app, no separate cost breakdown is available.)	328,000	N/A (Launched in Sep 2024)	N/A (Launched in Sep 2024)	N/A (Launched in Sep 2024)	N/A (Launched in Sep 2024)	18 400
45.	Hongkong Post	Hongkong Post	Jun 2011	Hong Kong citizens	The app aims to provide information on the services provided by Hongkong Post (HKP). Its functions include: checking and tracking of the	328,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	450 000	510 000	590 000	660 000	714 000

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					latest delivery status of mail items; calculating postages and comparing different postal services; searching postal facilities and providing relevant information; providing the latest notices or press releases of HKP; finding the correct presentation of Hong Kong local addresses; arranging pickup services of mail items of SpeedPost and Local CourierPost; providing information electronically for customs clearance; uploading e-Cheque to settle							

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					HKP bills; changing mail collection office; applying for mail redelivery service; and settling surcharge for underpaid mail.							
46.	Immigration Department	Contactless e-Channel	Nov 2021	Hong Kong citizens	To facilitates eligible Hong Kong residents to enrol for Contactless e-Channel Service. After enrolment, Hong Kong residents can use an encrypted e-Channel QR code generated from the Contactless e-Channel mobile application to enter the contactless e-Channels. During the process, there will be no need to touch shared equipment viz. the fingerprint	Not applicable. The app was developed under a contract with total value of \$1.39 million while the contract includes other relevant system enhancement service of contactless e-Channel	The contractor will provide system maintenance service as required in the contract.	N/A (Launched in Nov 2021)	21 000	170 000	1 100 000	1 735 000

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					scanner so as to provide faster, more convenient and hygienic immigration clearance service.							
47.	Immigration Department	HK Immigration Department	Dec 2013	Hong Kong citizens	To facilitate the Hong Kong residents and visitors to use the wide-ranging electronic services and obtain relevant information of the Immigration Department, such as appointment booking, application services, form filling, obtaining information on land boundary control points waiting time, enquiring tag status and application status, submissions of documents, calling the 1868	130,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	670 000	810 000	1 000 000	1 400 000	1 658 000

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					hotline via network data and accessing Immigration Department YouTube Channel, etc.							
48.	Information Services Department	news.gov.hk	Nov 2014	Hong Kong citizens	To facilitate the browsing of news.gov.hk with smartphones or mobile devices.	270,000	50,000	160 000	180 000	210 000	220 000	235 000
49.	Labour Department	Interactive Employment Service	Jan 2012	Hong Kong citizens	To facilitate job seekers to search for suitable vacancies in the job vacancy database of the Labour Department with mobile devices anytime and anywhere.	125,000	76,000	1 100 000	1 200 000	1 300 000	1 400 000	1 490 000
50.	Labour Department	OSH 2.0	Mar 2012	Hong Kong citizens	To provide stakeholders and members of the public with the latest occupational safety and health information	75,000	The system maintenance cost is included in the development cost.	26 000	26 000	26 000	28 000	35 000

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					through an enhanced user interface of mobile application.							
51.	Labour Department	Youth Employment Start	Jun 2014	Young people aged between 15 and 29 (Members of the public can download the mobile application from Apple App Store ,Google Play and Huawei AppGallery for iPhone ,Android and Huawei mobile phones free of charge.)	To provide the latest employment support information of Youth Employment Start to young people.	149,000 (Including the maintenance cost for the first year.)	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	24 000	26 000	26 000	28 000	29 000

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52.	Lands Department	MyMapHK	Jun 2014	Hong Kong citizens	“MyMapHK” is a pilot mobile map app which provides members of the public convenient and on-the-go access to up-to-date, detailed bilingual maps and integrated geospatial information of over 120 types of public facilities in Hong Kong from 26 bureaux/departments. The public can use “MyMapHK” anytime and anywhere to conveniently and quickly access reliable, detailed and up-to-date maps provided by the government, as well as the location and information of comprehensive public facilities. “MyMapHK” also provides different themes, namely “Map”, “Hiking”,	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	450 000	550 000	580 000	650 000	724 000

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					“Old Hong Kong”, “Election”, “SOS”, and “Offline Map” with specific functions to account for different users’ needs.							
53.	Lands Department	VoiceMap HK	Mar 2016	Visually Impaired	“VoiceMapHK” is a digital inclusion mobile map app. Making use of the “voice-over feature” of smartphones, “VoiceMapHK” facilitates users, especially the visually impaired, to locate their current positions and retrieve geographic information about surrounding areas. The location information provided by the App will be supplemented by orientation and	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	8 000	8 500	8 900	9 600	10 000 (Serves the visually impaired)

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					<p>distance information, which further helps the visually impaired users understand the surrounding environment.</p> <p>“VoiceMapHK” provides the following functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “My Location” function which allows users to locate their current position. - “Nearby Facilities” function which searches for the nearby buildings, facilities, MTR accesses, bus stops, etc. - “Voice Over” feature which facilitates the visually impaired users to retrieve location information 							

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					- Available in Chinese and English versions and operates on iOS 8.1 or higher operating systems.							
54.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	iM Guide	Dec 2017	Hong Kong citizens	“iM Guide” is a museum mobile multimedia guide platform. Visitors can have a deeper understanding of exhibits through text, audio, video and multimedia contents. It makes use of indoor positioning technique and outdoor GPS to provide location-based information and navigation services for exhibits and facilities.	“iM Guide” is a part of the Museum Multimedia Guide System (MMGS) project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the routine maintenance cost of MMGS. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	20 000	32 000	47 000	62 000	71 800
55.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	My Library	Jul 2014	Hong Kong citizens	“My Library” provides a safe and convenient channel to access the services of the	The total cost of the project is around \$3.32 million. No separate	223,000	580 000	650 000	720 000	780 000	856 000

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					<p>Hong Kong Public Libraries. Through the app, members of the public can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - log in their library accounts - search for, reserve and renew library materials - save and retrieve library materials in My List - check the addresses and opening hours of public libraries <p>The app also uses push notification technology to provide personalised alert services, including pick-up notice and due date reminder.</p>	<p>cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.</p>						

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56.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	My SmartPLAY	Jul 2023	Hong Kong citizens	<p>“My SmartPLAY” (app) developed and maintained by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region provides a safe and convenient way to enjoy LCSD services. Citizens can create a SmartPLAY user account and update user profile information through the app. Booking functionality for other leisure facilities and programmes will be available in</p>	<p>The total cost of the project is \$290 million. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.</p>	<p>The total maintenance cost of the project is \$23.5 million. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.</p>	<p>N/A (Launched in Jul 2023)</p>	<p>N/A (Launched in Jul 2023)</p>	<p>N/A (Launched in Jul 2023)</p>	<p>370 000</p>	<p>829 000</p>

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					future versions of the app.							
57.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Star Hoppers	Sep 2014	Hong Kong citizens	Equipped with Chinese and Western star charts which simulate the star field with bilingual audio recordings of information on celestial objects and asterisms. The latest information on astronomical events and activities of the Space Museum is also provided.	700,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	280 000	340 000	360 000	380 000	419 000
58.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	URBTIX	Dec 2022	Hong Kong citizens	URBTIX (Urban Ticketing System) provides convenient and reliable ticketing services for event presenters and members of the public. The brand new “URBTIX” mobile app has	Included in the service contract of URBTIX. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the service contract of URBTIX. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	N/A (New version launched in Dec 2022)	N/A (New version launched in Dec 2022)	120 000	580 000	1 040 000

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					<p>been launched since 1 December 2022 to facilitate ticket buyers to make purchases online using smart phones more conveniently. For ticket buyers who have registered as members, this app will further provide a wide range of personalised functions to enhance their buying experience including bookmark on favourite events, email reminder to attend purchased events, keeping and transfer of e-tickets, use of biometric authentication features such as fingerprint/face</p>							

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					ID for member log-in, etc.							
59.	Marine Department	eSeaGo	Jan 2019	Hong Kong citizens	“eSeaGo” offers simple and convenient solution for displaying the chart information of the Hong Kong waters free of charge. Through “eSeaGo”, users can download the chart information provided by the Hydrographic Office of the Marine Department and display it in offline mode. With mobile device’s positioning function, “eSeaGo” will assist sailing in Hong Kong waters. Meanwhile, the information provided on	600,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	73 000	94 000	96 000	100 000	116 000

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					<p>“eSeaGo” can also be read in an offline mode. “eSeaGo” provides content and information in raster images which should not be used as a substitute for paper nautical charts or electronic navigational charts. “eSeaGo” is not designed to be used for navigational purposes or as a substitute for any navigational equipment that is required under applicable regulations or laws.</p>							
60.	Office of the Communications Authority	OFCA Broadband Performance Test	Dec 2010	Hong Kong citizens	A platform that enables consumers to measure the performance of	Covered by OFCA Trading Fund.	Covered by OFCA Trading Fund.	89 000 000 (no. of tests)	110 000 000 (no. of tests)	117 000 000 (no. of tests)	123 000 000 (no. of tests)	128 000 000 (no. of tests)

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					their broadband connections. For details, please refer to the OFCA's website https://speedtest.ofca.gov.hk/index.html .							
61.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK 中華五千年#	Nov 2012	Hong Kong citizens	Flourishing ages including the Han and Tang Dynasties are selected in the long Chinese history. Heroes and stories in these two dynasties are featured in audio drama, cartoon and text for easy understanding of the Chinese history. World events at the same period will also be shown.	450,000	82,000	160 000	180 000	200 000	203 000	211 000
62.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK Audio Description	Apr 2021	Visually Impaired	RTHK Audio Description is a TV programme mobile app developed by the		256,750	N/A (Launched in Apr 2021)	1 800	2 700	5 200	6 000 (Serves the visually impaired)

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					Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK). Simply with a mobile device, you can enjoy the Audio Description (AD) service through listening to the AD sound tracks when the selected live programmes are broadcast on RTHK TV 31. In this way, visually impaired people cannot only enjoy RTHK's TV programmes with AD on their own, but they can also share the experience with their family members sitting together, who listen to the original sound track from TV sets simultaneously.	is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.						

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63.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK Radio	Sep 2014	Hong Kong citizens	It provides live webcasts of RTHK radio channels, radio archive, highlighted video clips, programme archive, traffic news and weather forecast. Users can also customise their favourite playlist by making use of personalised settings such as “Favourites” and “Play Later”, and share with friends popular programmes and video clips via social media.	409,000	155,000	450 000	480 000	510 000	540 000	602 000
64.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK News	Aug 2015	Hong Kong citizens	It provides instant news, news programmes, weather forecast and traffic news in both Chinese and English, which contain texts, photos and audio-	336,000	68,000	490 000	520 000	670 000	710 000	731 000

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					visual contents. Users can listen to live programmes of RTHK Radio 1 or Radio 3. The “Push Alert” function instantly brings the latest world and local news to users.							
65.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK on the Go	May 2010	Hong Kong citizens	Its functions include listening to live RTHK radio programmes, access to instant news, photo news and video news as well as weather forecast. Users can listen to/watch the 10 newest episodes of some 100 RTHK podcasts available at Podcast Station.	200,000	113,000	2 400 000	2 400 000	2 500 000	2 540 000	2 575 000
66.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK TV	Jan 2014	Hong Kong citizens	It provides live webcast of RTHK TV 31 and 32, video-on-demand and download to enable users to	250,000	121,000	580 000	600 000	640 000	660 000	748 000

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					access video programmes anytime and anywhere. Users can also customise their favourite playlist by making use of the programme subscription function.							
67.	Security Bureau	Safeguard HK	Mar 2016	Hong Kong citizens	Safeguard HK is a one-stop platform providing useful information on safeguarding life and property in daily life and while travelling.	610,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	240 000	250 000	262 000	280 000	294 000
68.	Social Welfare Department	Senior Citizen Card Scheme	Sep 2011	Elders and their family members	It facilitates both the elderly and their family members in searching for and selecting the concessions and services under the “Senior Citizen Card Scheme” of the Social Welfare Department.	147,000	41,000	120 000	140 000	160 000	190 000	219 000

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69.	Tourism Commission	A Symphony of Lights	Dec 2017	Hong Kong citizens	It lets visitors and the public to tune into the music of “A Symphony of Lights” and obtain information on this spectacular show.	537,000	78,633	26 000	28 000	29 000	34 000	40 000
70.	Transport Department	HKeMeter	Jan 2021	Hong Kong citizens	It provides real-time occupancy information of metered parking spaces so as to facilitate motorists in finding vacant on-street parking spaces. Motorists could also pay the parking fee remotely with multiple payment means through the app. The key features of “HKeMeter” include: 1. Real-time metered parking information	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	77 000	400 000	630 000	770 000	898 000

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					2. Remote payment for parking time with multiple electronic payment means 3. Notification to users before expiry of parking time							
71.	Transport Department	HKeMobility	Jul 2018	Hong Kong citizens	“HKeMobility” is an all-in-one traffic and transport mobile application with an enhanced user interface which facilitates fast and convenient search for routes of different transportation mode, journey times and fares, and disseminates real-time traffic and transport news to enable users to plan for the most appropriate travel arrangements.	600,000	Included in the cost of the whole project. Apart from the function enhancements, it also provides services to other associated systems. Therefore no separate cost breakdown is available.	2 300 000	2 600 000	2 610 000	2 700 000	2 799 000

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					<p>The key features of it include:</p> <p>(a) one-stop route search for public transport, driving and walking;</p> <p>(b) real-time traffic and transport information;</p> <p>(c) promoting walking by offering barrier-free walking route search information covering all districts of Hong Kong ; and</p> <p>(d) HKeMobility also provides an elderly mode to facilitate senior citizens in obtaining public transport information.</p>							

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72.	Transport Department	HKeToll	Jan 2023	Hong Kong citizens	<p>The Transport Department (TD) launched a new mobile application for “HKeToll”. It provides a one-stop platform for the public to easily manage the toll fee with efficiency. Motorists could pay tolls of government tolled tunnels and Tsing Sha Control Area with ease by remote means through the mobile application. It will bring convenience to motorists with a smooth road driving experience. Its key features include:</p> <p>(1) Apply Vehicle</p>	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	N/A (Launched in Jan 2023)	N/A (Launched in Jan 2023)	120 000	730 000	831 000

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 28 Feb 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2025
					Tag (2) Sign Up for HKeToll Account (3) Activate Class Tag (4) Payment Arrangement and Top Up HKeToll Account (5) Check tunnel usage records, payment status and view e-monthly statements (6) Customer Service Centre/Service Outlet Booking.							
73.	Water Supplies Department	H2OPE Centre	May 2021	Hong Kong citizens	“H2OPE Centre” mobile app for use of the “H2OPE Centre” can link a number of elements of the visit together including planning of visit, additional information related to the visit, recap on water	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	N/A (Launched in May 2021)	1 100	1 700	2 000	2 000 (Serves visitors of the H2OPE Centre)

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					conservation messages after visit, and additional activities and educational programme linking with water and the work of the WSD.							
74.	Water Supplies Department	WSD AMR System	Nov 2020	Customers premises which have been installed with smart water meters and related infrastructure	“WSD AMR System” provides customers with timely water consumption information, benchmarking of water usage, alerting of suspected water leakage and water saving tips. Users are required to log on using their registered user IDs and passwords for the Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) Services of the Water Supplies Department to	220,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	1 900	5 600	13 000	20 000	29 000

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 28 Feb 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Dec 2021	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2023	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2024	Total no. of downloads as at 31 Jan 2025
					access the functions.							
75.	Water Supplies Department	WSD GA Product Directory	Jul 2017	Hong Kong citizens	Users can make use of the “WSD GA Product Directory” to search for plumbing products with the WSD’s General Acceptance by entering category, brand or model number.	175,000	82,800	11 000	13 000	15 000	17 000	19 000
76.	Water Supplies Department	WSD Mobile App	Apr 2014	Hong Kong citizens	Members of the public can browse water bill summary, bill reminder, water suspension notices and important notifications of the WSD through their smart phones.	1,573,000	The maintenance of WSD Mobile App is included in the system maintenance contract of Customer Care and Billing System.	100 000	140 000	200 000	270 000	340 000

Note: B/Ds’ names in alphabetical order.

Mobile app with Chinese name only.

@ Round off the number to the nearest thousand.

**Mobile apps decommissioned by B/Ds in the past 5 years
(As at 28 February 2025)**

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Decommission Date
1.	Buildings Department	Quick Guide for MBIS/MWIS	Jun 2016	Hong Kong citizens	To provide the public with a convenient way to understand MBIS/MWIS via pictures, flowcharts, FAQ, etc.	299,000	61,750 (Including the costs for maintenance of mobile app.)	Sep 2024
2.	Companies Registry	CR eFiling	Feb 2017	For the users who have registered in e-Registry of CR for e-submission of commonly filed specified forms	“CR eFiling” is a free mobile app developed by the Companies Registry to facilitate registered users of our e-Registry to submit application for incorporation, Annual Return and commonly filed specified forms to the Registrar of Companies for registration using smartphones and mobile devices anytime and anywhere. A tool named “e-Form Filler” is included in this app for opening, editing, saving, signing and submitting an e-form.	Included in the enhancement work of the core system of the Companies Registry.	Included in the maintenance cost of the core system of Companies Registry. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Dec 2023

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Decommission Date
3.	Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau	Read the Basic Law with JOY!	Nov 2021	Hong Kong citizens	To enhance the general public's knowledge and understanding of the Constitution and the Basic Law through quiz game and to allow viewing of the two documents in the form of an e-book and related materials.	660,000	60,000	Jan 2024
4.	Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau	A Basic Law Quiz A Day	Jul 2015	Hong Kong citizens	To enhance the general public's knowledge and understanding of the Basic Law and to allow viewing of the Basic Law articles and related materials.	296,000	33,000	Sep 2020
5.	Customs and Excise Department	HK Car First Registration Tax	May 2014	Hong Kong citizens	To provide the public with information on the motor vehicle first registration tax.	230,000	50,000	Jul 2024
6.	Department of Health	CookSmart: EatSmart Recipes	Dec 2015	Hong Kong citizens	"CookSmart: EatSmart Recipes" mobile application allows users to view the CookSmart magazine as well as access to over 200 EatSmart recipes on users' mobile device.	258,000	2,500	Dec 2020
7.	Department of Health	EatSmart Restaurant Star+	Jun 2015	Hong Kong citizens	The "EatSmart Restaurant Star+" mobile app contains information of all EatSmart Restaurants in Hong Kong. Through its simple search engine and GPS navigation, users can find their favourite EatSmart Restaurants instantly.	76,000 + 28,000 (2021 Huawei AppGallery adoption)	5,000	Oct 2022

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Decommission Date
8.	Department of Health	Snack Check	Mar 2012	Hong Kong citizens	The “Snack Check” mobile app helps you choose healthier snacks. Simply enter the product information, “Snack Check” will classify the snacks based on its nutritional quality and provide advice on the amount of intake. It also includes the nutrition information of nearly 200 healthier snacks from the “Database of Prepackaged snack”, assisting you in practising healthy eating.	282,000	32,000	Jul 2021
9.	Department of Health	Info for Nursing Mum	Feb 2016	Hong Kong citizens	Content: Breastfeeding policy, infant and young child feeding, questions & answers on breastfeeding and community resources Purpose: To provide latest information on breastfeeding.	Developed and maintained internally. No additional costs were involved.	Developed and maintained by internal resources. No additional expenditure was involved.	Oct 2020
10.	Department of Health	1069 Test Finder	Apr 2012	Men who have sex with men	Promote Human Immunodeficiency Virus Antibody Test and safer sex.	150,000	70,000	Nov 2021
11.	Development Bureau	Construction Safety App	May 2015	All practitioners of construction industry	To provide a safety information platform for the construction industry.	883,000 (Including the maintenance cost for the first 2 years.)	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Jun 2021

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Decommission Date
12.	Education Bureau	ApL	Sep 2011	Students, parents, teachers and schools	<p>Purpose: Let students, parents, teachers and schools understand the curriculum of Applied Learning and help students choose suitable courses.</p> <p>Content: Information on courses of Applied Learning, Snapshots of students' sharing, Frequently Asked Questions and What's New, etc.</p>	217,000	32,000	Dec 2023
13.	Education Bureau	Reading Town 1	May 2015	P1 students requiring support for development of their literacy skills	The app provides short stories and phonics books with interactive features to develop P1 students' interest in reading and their literacy skills and to support the piloting of a primary literacy programme designed by the NET Section.	395,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Dec 2021
14.	Education Bureau	Reading Town 2	Oct 2015	P2 students requiring support for development of their literacy skills	The app provides short stories and phonics books with interactive features to develop P2 students' interest in reading and their literacy skills and to support the piloting of a primary literacy programme designed by the NET Section.	920,000 (For both Reading Town 2 and Reading Town 3.)	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Dec 2021

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Decommission Date
15.	Education Bureau	Reading Town 3	Oct 2015	P3 students requiring support for development of their literacy skills	The app provides short stories and phonics books with interactive features to develop P3 students' interest in reading and their literacy skills and to support the piloting of a primary literacy programme designed by the NET Section.	920,000 (For both Reading Town 2 and Reading Town 3.)	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Dec 2021
16.	The then Efficiency Office	Tell me@1823 mobile app	Apr 2011	Hong Kong citizens	A mobile app that enables citizens to submit enquiries, complaints, compliments or suggestions to 1823.	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Jul 2022
17.	Environmental Protection Department	Hong Kong T ▪ PARK	Jun 2016	Hong Kong citizens	The Hong Kong T ▪ PARK mobile app engages visitors to make the most of their visits with features including exploring T ▪ PARK's attractions, setting reminders, scanning QR codes to unlock extra content, taking pictures and learning more about the fun facts of the facility.	713,000	88,000	Dec 2022
18.	Environmental Protection Department	Beach Water Quality Forecast	Aug 2023	Hong Kong citizens	The "Beach Water Quality Forecast System" aims to provide daily water quality forecasts for all gazetted beaches in Hong Kong. Members of the public can handily acquire the latest daily beach water quality forecast information via the mobile application to facilitate early planning of water recreation activities.	1,250,000 (Including the development of Beach Water Quality (BWQ) forecast system with the mobile app as one of the deliverables [covering 3 months nursing & 1 year	17,000	Nov 2024

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Decommission Date
						maintenance service].)		
19.	Environmental Protection Department	Plastic-Free Rewards	Nov 2023	Hong Kong citizens	This app facilitates participation in the “Plastic-Free Takeaway, Use Reusable Tableware” Campaign of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) to encourage members of the public to go plastic-and-disposable-free when ordering takeaways so as to reduce the use of disposable plastic tableware at source. “Plastic-Free Rewards Mobile App” is a mobile app developed by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Its primary function is to facilitate the public to participate in the “Plastic-Free Takeaway, Use Reusable Tableware” Campaign using smartphone. Members of the campaign will earn electronic stamps when ordering takeaway without obtaining disposable tableware at the participating eateries. The stamps earned can be used for redemption of rewards.	1,400,000	The maintenance cost is included in the development cost of the mobile app.	Dec 2024

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Decommission Date
20.	Fire Services Department	Catch time, save life	Apr 2016	Hong Kong citizens	“Catch time, save life” is a series of games which enables players to perform the duties of a Console Operator, learn about the functions of the Mobilizing and Communications Group and know the tips when making emergency calls.	105,000	96,000 (The maintenance cost includes 4 mobile apps of FSD. No separate cost breakdown is available.)	Dec 2022
21.	Fire Services Department	Live safe, be watchful	May 2014	Hong Kong citizens	The objective of “Live safe, be watchful” is to build a safe building where players of the game have to eliminate the potential fire hazards in a building and assist an Ambulanceman in discharging his duties.	250,000	96,000 (The maintenance cost includes 4 mobile apps of FSD. No separate cost breakdown is available.)	Mar 2021
22.	Fire Services Department	Stay Calm & Collected	May 2014	Hong Kong citizens	“Stay Calm & Collected” is a series of games which enables members of the public to learn more about fire safety and ambulance aid through the games.	310,000	96,000 (The maintenance cost includes 4 mobile apps of FSD. No separate cost breakdown is available.)	Dec 2022
23.	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Food Safety	Apr 2014	Hong Kong citizens	Make it easy for the public to obtain and download food safety messages, alerts, news and publications. Share food safety information via email, Facebook and WeChat.	264,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Dec 2020

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Decommission Date
24.	Hongkong Post	ShopThruPost 2.0	Nov 2018	Hong Kong citizens	The app aims to provide an online platform to place advance order for or make purchases of the latest philatelic products and postal stationeries supported by Hongkong Post local and cross-border delivery services.	Included in the implementation cost of the Redevelopment of On-line Shopping Platform Project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	The maintenance cost of the mobile app is included in the total system maintenance cost of the whole On-line Shopping Platform. No cost breakdown is available.	Nov 2024
25.	Intellectual Property Department	“No Fakes Pledge” Shop Search	Feb 2013	Hong Kong citizens	To facilitate tourists and consumers in searching for shop information of all participating retail merchants of the “No Fakes Pledge” Scheme.	580,000	40,200	Apr 2024
26.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Multimedia Information	Sep 2014	Hong Kong citizens	The Multimedia Information app allows members of the public to access digitised resources in the Multimedia Information System (MMIS) portal (https://mmis.hkpl.gov.hk) of the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) via their mobile devices, letting them view or play digital content of eBooks, images, audio and video materials delivered from MMIS anytime and anywhere.	Included in the MMIS Major Upgrade Project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the maintenance cost of the MMIS Project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Sep 2023

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Decommission Date
27.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	My URB TIX	Aug 2014	Hong Kong citizens	My URB TIX app allows patrons to browse events on sale through URB TIX, pick their seats and pay online for ticket purchases conveniently. Registered members can also enjoy personalised services such as email reminders on scheduled dates to attend purchased events and email promotional information on their favourite event categories.	Included in the service contract of My URB TIX. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the service contract of My URB TIX. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Dec 2022
28.	Digital Policy Office	GovHK Apps	Aug 2012	Hong Kong citizens	A one-stop inter-departmental platform for members of the public to search for and download an array of government mobile apps.	600,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Jan 2025
29.	The then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer	LeaveHomeSafe	Nov 2020	Hong Kong citizens	The Government launched the “LeaveHomeSafe” mobile app in November 2020 to provide members of the public with a convenient digital tool that helps them form a habit of recording the time of their visits to different venues and taxi rides during the epidemic. The mobile app will notify a user if he or she is later identified to have visited the same venue that a confirmed patient has visited at about the same time or taken the same taxi that a confirmed patient has taken on the same day. In the unfortunate event of infection,	<u>FY2020/21</u> 3,000,000 (Including the mobile app and backend system.) <u>FY2021/2022</u> 10,872,000 (Including the mobile app and backend system.)	900,000	Jul 2023

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Decommission Date
					the user's visit records can also assist the Centre for Health Protection (“CHP”) in epidemiological investigations.			
30.	The then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer	QR Code Verification Scanner	May 2021	Hong Kong citizens	This mobile app is aimed to be used by the relevant responsible persons of concerned premises in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) for scanning and recording information within the QR Code on the COVID-19 Vaccine Pass QR Codes issued by the Government of the HKSAR to support implementation of the Vaccine Pass arrangement in the HKSAR. This mobile app can also be used for scanning and verifying the authenticity of the QR Code on the COVID-19 electronic testing record. This mobile app will use the camera function of the mobile phone or device to scan QR Code.	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Mar 2023
31.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK Memory	Jul 2014	Hong Kong citizens	Users can use their mobile devices to view a collection of RTHK’s classic programmes and photos over the years, which documented the historic changes and cityscapes of Hong Kong in different times.	280,000	157,500	Sep 2023

No.	B/D	Name	Launch Date	Target User Group	Development Objectives	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Decommission Date
32.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK Vox	Jun 2014	Hong Kong citizens	Users can use the app to shoot and upload their own videos to participate in specific RTHK programmes or campaigns.	380,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	Feb 2023
33.	Tourism Commission	HK Food Truck	Feb 2017	Hong Kong citizens	It helps users check out food trucks' locations, menus, schedules and the information of tourist attractions, etc.	130,000	75,000	Jun 2022

Note: B/Ds' names in alphabetical order.

Mobile app with Chinese name only.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB177

(Question Serial No. 1021)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the “iAM Smart” one-stop personalised digital services platform launched in late 2020, please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) Please tabulate as follows the figures relating to “iAM Smart” since its launch:

	Annual expenditure for basic maintenance of the platform	Annual expenditure for enhancement of and research on the platform	Annual number of user registrations
2020-2021			
2021-2022			
2022-2023			
2023-2024			
2024-2025			

- 2) What is the specific timetable for the goal of realising a “single portal for online government services” by adopting “iAM Smart”?
- 3) Will the Government step up publicity on “iAM Smart” in the future? If yes, what are the details and estimated expenditure; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

- 1) The figures relating to “iAM Smart” since its launch are tabulated below:

Year	Annual expenditure for basic maintenance of the platform (\$ million) (Note 1)	Expenditure for enhancement of the platform (\$ million)	Cumulative number of registered users (Note 2)
2020-21	15.25 (Actual)	-	156 000
2021-22	39.86 (Actual)	-	1 226 000
2022-23	48.76 (Actual)	-	1 869 000
2023-24	47.36 (Actual)	7.88 (Actual)	2 633 000
2024-25	60.51 (Revised Estimate)	50.73 (Revised Estimate)	3 288 000 (As of February)

Note 1: The annual expenditure for basic maintenance of the platform includes costs for operation and maintenance of the platform infrastructure, network services and customer service support.

Note 2: The number of registered users is rounded to the nearest thousand.

- 2) The Digital Policy Office obtained the funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in mid-2023 to commence a series of upgrades to the “iAM Smart” platform. The target is to drive full adoption of “iAM Smart” by all government online services by 2025 so as to realise “single portal for online government services”. The upgrade work of the “iAM Smart” platform is progressing at full speed, with the enhanced or new features as follows:

- i. In 2023, the design for the “iAM Smart” mobile app was updated, enabling citizens to browse various useful information. Additionally, the “iAM Smart” platform was linked up with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents to directly log in to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile app through “iAM Smart” for using various government services of the Guangdong Province.
- ii. In 2024, the registration process for “iAM Smart+” was simplified. A new “iAM Smart” interface was launched, and a new “iAM Smart Personal Code” was introduced for identity verification purpose.
- iii. Various departments will gradually roll out personalised content for displaying on the “Personal Assistant” page.
- iv. In early March 2025, the “Digital Document” feature was introduced, allowing users to present their digital documents issued by different government departments through the “iAM Smart” mobile app. It currently covers the Social Welfare Department’s Electronic Senior Citizen Card, the Civil Service Bureau’s Common Recruitment Examination results and the Basic Law and National Security Law Test results, as well as the Correctional Services Department’s Incarceration Proof.

- v. More new features will be progressively rolled out this year, including the “Step-up Authentication”, bill payment function and “Mini-program Platform”.
- 3) The estimated operating expenditure of “iAM Smart” for 2025-26 is \$96.3 million, which includes expenditure for promoting “iAM Smart”. We continue to introduce “iAM Smart” and related online services to citizens and various business sectors through multiple channels, including registration service counters at post offices, participation in industry and community events, and deployment of mobile registration teams to provide on-site registration services in different districts. We have also been strengthening the promotion of “iAM Smart” and related online services through various forms of advertisements on public transportation such as MTR, buses and at the stations/stops.

In addition, we have established the “Smart Silver” Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders, setting up community-based help desks in suitable locations across all districts to provide regular digital training and technical support for elderly people aged 60 or above, teaching them how to use the “iAM Smart” app and enabling them to access and use various online services more conveniently with their smartphones.

To align with the launch of new features and enhancements for “iAM Smart”, as well as related services provided by the government and public and private organisations, we have been promoting “iAM Smart” through multiple digital channels. These include various forms of advertisements on social media and popular websites, broadcasting promotional video clips on television and radio, as well as introducing the latest developments of “iAM Smart” to the public through media interviews, so as to enhance promotional effectiveness. Additionally, we have invited a number of key opinion leaders and micro influencers to post videos on platforms like “Xiaohongshu” and “Douyin” to introduce the convenience of using “iAM Smart”.

We will strengthen the collaboration with various departments to continue promoting “iAM Smart” and the related online services. We will also continue to further publicise the “iAM Smart” platform through different channels, such as community organisations, industry events and social media, to encourage more citizens to register and use “iAM Smart”. Furthermore, we will work with the Care Teams to assist citizens and elderly people in registering and using “iAM Smart”. We will also continue collaborating with the “Community Living Room” to organise training workshops for their staff, enabling them to provide assistance to citizens in need.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB178

(Question Serial No. 1750)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The administrative efficiency of the Government can be significantly enhanced by leveraging artificial intelligence (AI). Regarding the document editing copilot application for the civil service (Application), a generative AI application platform developed by the Government, what are the research and development expenditure, as well as annual recurrent operating expenditure? What is the progress of extending its deployment in all government departments as of present? Are there plans for ongoing upgrades and enhancements for the Application in the future, and what is the estimated expenditure for such upgrades and enhancements? Is there a mechanism in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the Application in enhancing internal efficiency of the civil service, and what are the evaluation results? Will there be up-to-date training for civil servants on the application of AI and digitalisation in public service delivery? If yes, what is the estimated expenditure on the quality training for staff involving digital transformation?

Asked by: Hon LAM Lam, Nixie (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

In 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the AIR@InnoHK which focuses on artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong's self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the HKPilot in mid-2024. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has invited all bureaux/departments

(B/Ds) to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme.

HKGAI updated its locally developed “HKGAI V1” LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application’s capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is also provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff. In the longer term, the application will help reduce the manpower required for government staff in handling general document processing tasks, allowing manpower to be deployed to other areas of work in need.

The R&D and operating expenditure of HKGAI in the first 3 years amounted to around \$235 million. We do not maintain the breakdown figures related to the development of individual models or applications.

The Civil Service College (CSC) has been continuously enhancing the content on application of technologies in leadership training of civil servants, which will equip departmental leaders to take up leadership responsibilities and guide their departments to leverage technologies, including allocating resources to develop information technology infrastructure and systems, promoting the implementation and application of relevant systems, utilising big data and AI to transform public services, and arranging appropriate training for departmental staff. Training offered by the CSC covers topics such as AI application and digitalisation, enabling departmental leaders to grasp the impact of technological development on the formulation and implementation of public policies. As one of the strategies to accelerate digital government development and lead innovation in public services, the DPO has reinforced the co-operation with the CSC since its establishment in 2024. Regular briefings, thematic seminars and training sessions are held to strengthen the core skills of senior management staff (especially senior directorates) of all B/Ds in the use of digital technologies, covering topics such as information technology, data management and cybersecurity, thereby promoting more effective use of digital technologies by B/Ds to drive digital transformation for enhancing daily operational efficiency. In addition, the CSC will enhance the content on trends and application of new technologies in a series of leadership development, public service and management programmes. As the above programmes cover not only topics relating to digitalisation, technology and AI application, it would be infeasible to provide a breakdown of the estimated expenditure for training on the relevant topics.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB179

(Question Serial No. 1751)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government has allocated \$3 billion for the launch of a 3-year Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme to promote the development of the local AI ecosystem. Please provide, in tabular form, a detailed list of all the local universities, research and development institutions and enterprises that have received funding under the Scheme with the name and description of each project as well as the amount and duration of use of the subsidy received. What outcomes have been achieved since the launch of the Scheme? Is there a mechanism to regularly review, enhance and adjust the general directions, administration and mode of operation of the Scheme to ensure the proper use of government funding?

Asked by: Hon LAM Lam, Nixie (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

In the 2024-25 Budget, the Government allocated \$3 billion for a three-year Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), mainly to subsidise local institutions, research and development (R&D) centres, enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing power of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC). Since its launch in October 2024, Cyberport has received over 10 applications covering a wide range of technology and application areas. As of end-February 2025, the Committee of the Subsidy Scheme appointed by the Government has assessed and approved 9 projects led by local institutions, R&D centres, etc. with research areas such as accelerating local large language models, large models in new materials and synthetic biology, etc., which involve a total computing power subsidy of over \$170 million. The computing power required by the approved projects ranges from 8 to 512 petaflops, with durations varying between 1.5 and 12 months. Among them, 4 projects have gradually started using the services of the AISC after completing the deployment, accounting for over 60% of the computing power in service. Details are as follows:

Applicant [Category]	Project Title	Research Area
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University [Local institutions]	Enhancing Edge-Based Foundation Models for Advanced Reasoning	Large language models
Hong Kong Institute of AI for Science, City University of Hong Kong [Local institutions]	Protein Foundation Model for Protein Design	Synthetic biology
Hong Kong Institute of AI for Science, City University of Hong Kong [Local institutions]	Moma, Modular Pretrained Foundation for Heterogeneous Material Learning	New materials
Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center Limited (HKGAI) [R&D centres]	Hong Kong Audio Foundation Model	Large language models

Regarding other projects, Cyberport and the relevant teams are discussing the details and finalising the subsidy arrangements to facilitate project commencement as soon as the planning is finalised.

An agreement has been signed between the Digital Policy Office (DPO) and Cyberport for the Subsidy Scheme. Cyberport is required to submit reports to DPO after the end of each financial year, covering the performance, security audit, utilisation of the subsidy and financial position of the Subsidy Scheme. We have also set performance indicators for Cyberport's implementation of the Subsidy Scheme, covering the utilisation of the AISC's services, R&D achievements, talent cultivation, operations, and cybersecurity and promotion of ecosystem development, etc., for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Subsidy Scheme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB180

(Question Serial No. 0286)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As stated in paragraph 39 of the Budget Speech, the Government has set aside \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. The business coverage, staffing level, output value, etc. of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute;
2. What is the allocation mechanism for the \$1 billion funding earmarked for the purpose?

Asked by: Hon LAM Shun-chiu, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and industrial applications of artificial intelligence (AI), facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios.

The Digital Policy Office is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center under the AIR@InnoHK. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB181

(Question Serial No. 0308)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As stated in paragraph 159 of the Budget Speech, the facilitation measure on the “Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)” helps promote the safe and orderly cross-boundary flow of authorised personal information. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the contents of work and the estimated expenditure for promoting cross-boundary medical co-operation (such as the development of cross-boundary sharing of health records) between the two places since the contract came into effect in November 2024?
2. How will the Government assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the measure (including whether key performance indicators have been formulated), and what tools will be employed to assess the outcomes?

Asked by: Hon LAM Shun-chiu, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Cyberspace Administration of China jointly announced the facilitation measure on the “Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)” (“the GBA Standard Contract”) in December 2023 to facilitate and streamline the arrangements on cross-boundary flow of personal information from the Mainland cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) to Hong Kong. The facilitation measure on the GBA Standard Contract, with the early and pilot implementation arrangement for the banking, credit referencing and healthcare sectors, has been running smoothly and well received by the industry.

The Digital Policy Office (DPO) is responsible for the coordination and implementation of the facilitation measure. On 1 November 2024, DPO announced the extension of the facilitation measure to all sectors and it becomes a standing arrangement. Currently, all industries in Hong Kong can take part in the facilitation measure and voluntarily adopt the GBA Standard Contract to conduct compliant cross-boundary flow of personal information. It promotes more cross-boundary services for the convenience and benefit of the public and the business sector, and accelerates the economic integration and development of the GBA. DPO has also streamlined relevant filing arrangement and optimised certain implementation details to further facilitate the compliant cross-boundary flow of personal information by businesses.

Since the announcement of the facilitation measure on the GBA Standard Contract in December 2023 to the end of February 2025, DPO has processed 63 filing applications, with about one-third of the applications from the healthcare sector. According to the filing guidelines for the GBA Standard Contract, upon receipt of all required documents, DPO shall complete the filing process within 10 working days. Since the announcement of the facilitation measure, DPO has fulfilled the performance pledge on the record filing process.

DPO estimates that the expenditure for the implementation of the facilitation measure will be about \$26 million in 2025-26.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB182

(Question Serial No. 0442)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government, (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government carried out the e-Government audit from 2022 to review the information technology systems and services of bureaux/departments (B/Ds). The e-Government audit was conducted in two phases, and the audit work for both phases involved a total of 73 B/Ds. It was pointed out that the relevant audit work was completed in 2024. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What were the respective expenditures incurred in conducting the two phases of audit work, including the expenditure on manpower, as well as the expenditure on implementing various digital government initiatives after the audit?
2. The Government has said that its target was to launch 100 digital government initiatives that would leverage advanced technology by end-2025. What are the initiatives that have been launched or will be launched soon? Have time limits for completion been set for the initiatives that have been launched or will be launched soon? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?
3. What are the key performance indicators expected to be adopted for the initiatives that have been launched or will be launched soon, including the cost that can be saved by the Government per year?
4. The Government has set up the required digital infrastructures and shared services such as the Government Cloud Infrastructure Services, Big Data Analytics Platform and Shared Blockchain Platform through the then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. As of now, have all B/Ds joined the platforms and shared their data? What kinds of data are being shared (please give a breakdown by B/Ds)? What are the reasons given for not joining the platforms or sharing data?

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

1. to 3. The e-Government audit was conducted in 2 phases starting from end-2022, involving a total of 73 bureaux/departments (B/Ds). The relevant audit work was completed in 2023-24. Based on the recommendations of the e-Government audit, B/Ds are implementing over a hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives progressively from 2024 to 2025. The breakdown of the initiatives by category is as follows –

Major application technologies	Number of digital government and smart city initiatives
Big data analytics / artificial intelligence (e.g. chatbot, adoption of video/image analysis, predictive analysis)	About 60
Blockchain (e.g. issuing and verifying electronic licences and certificates)	About 10
Geospatial analytics (e.g. analysing and displaying the distribution of specific data in different geospatial)	About 10
Adoption of “iAM Smart” to enhance service processes	About 10
Data dashboard (e.g. assisting B/Ds to enhance decision-making capabilities and operational efficiency with data-driven approach)	About 15
Others (e.g. collecting real-time data through Internet of Things to assist in monitoring and assessing the business situation and enhancing management efficiency)	About 10

As at end-March 2025, more than 30 of the hundred digital government and smart city initiatives have been rolled out, including the application of artificial intelligence (AI) and chatbot technologies to improve government hotline services; using blockchain technology for issuing and verifying electronic certificates or licences; adoption of video analytics to enhance security surveillance; and application of data analytics, geospatial analysis and visualisation dashboard technologies to improve service management. The remaining initiatives will be rolled out by end-2025 as planned.

The 2022-23 Budget has reserved \$600 million for e-Government audit work, including the expenditure for consultancy services and the implementation of over a hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives. The detailed breakdown is as follows –

Item	Budget (\$ Million)
Consultancy service fees	65
Expenditure for engaging additional contract staff to assist in coordinating the e-Government audit programme	27
Expenditure for B/Ds to implement the hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives	508
Total	600

4. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has been driving B/Ds to make the best use of innovative technologies, and has launched various common platforms, including the Government Cloud Infrastructure Services (GCIS), Big Data Analytics Platform (BDAP) and Shared Blockchain Platform (SBP) (including the e-Proof service), etc., to facilitate B/Ds to develop their digital government services more efficiently and cost-effectively to meet their business and operational needs. The latest situation of the adoption of the aforementioned digital infrastructure/common platforms is detailed in the **Annex**. With the development of digital government, B/Ds will progressively adopt the common platforms and related features provided by the DPO to implement digital government services such as the aforementioned hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives. The DPO is also actively driving B/Ds to integrate their digital government services with the “iAM Smart” platform to realise “single portal for online government services”.

Latest situation of adoption of digital infrastructure/common platforms of the DPO

Adoption of digital infrastructure/common platforms		Number of digital government initiatives	B/Ds involved
Government Cloud Infrastructure Services	Supporting B/Ds to provide online services to the public	Around 400	Involving over 50 B/Ds, including Education Bureau, Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, Inland Revenue Department, Transport Department, Department of Health, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Social Welfare Department, Digital Policy Office, etc.
	Supporting B/Ds to develop application systems to improve internal workflow and operational efficiency	Around 100	Involving over 20 B/Ds, including Civil Service Bureau, Development Bureau, Treasury, Transport Department, Department of Health, Labour Department, Government Records Service, Digital Policy Office, etc.
Big Data Analytics Platform	Supporting B/Ds to develop AI and big data analytics application systems	Around 20	Involving over 10 B/Ds, including Transport Department, Digital Policy Office, Lands Department, Architectural Services Department, Customs and Excise Department, Environmental Protection Department, etc.
Shared Blockchain Platform (including “e-Proof” service)	Supporting B/Ds to develop blockchain application systems and issue digital licences and permits that can be verified using blockchain technology	Around 20	Involving 7 B/Ds: Customs and Excise Department, Digital Policy Office, Education Bureau, Civil Service Bureau, Fire Services Department, Correctional Services Department, and Social Welfare Department.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB183

(Question Serial No. 0518)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In 2024-25, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) commenced the compilation of a set of departmental data catalogues from bureaux and departments to promote sharing and application of data. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Regarding consolidation and promotion of sharing and application of data among various departments, has the DPO assessed the potential of data commercialisation? If yes, what are the details? And
2. With the data currently available, has the DPO analysed the potential of and economic benefits brought about by promoting data trading in the future? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon LAM Siu-lo, Andrew (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

1. The Government is committed to providing the industry with free raw materials through open data for developing innovative applications and promoting the development of smart city. Currently, the Open Data Portal covers datasets of 19 categories (including transportation, climate and weather, housing, etc.) from over 110 bureaux/departments (B/Ds) as well as public and private organisations, opening up more than 5 500 datasets in machine-readable formats for both commercial and non-commercial uses by the public free of charge. The Common Spatial Data Infrastructure Portal of the Development Bureau also provides more than 1 000 spatial datasets from over 60 government departments and organisations covering different areas including planning, lands, buildings, works, population, transport, etc. Open data have been well received by the industry with over 60 billion downloads in 2024. At the same time, individual B/Ds have established digital channels to facilitate users to obtain chargeable data more conveniently. For example, banks can connect to the Consented Data

Exchange Gateway of the Digital Policy Office (DPO) through the Commercial Data Interchange of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority to acquire electronic search records from the Companies Registry via data interchange for a fee.

To enhance data governance and promote the opening up and sharing of data, the DPO will compile the departmental data catalogues to enable B/Ds to gain a better understanding of the data available for sharing from other B/Ds, thereby facilitating the identification of suitable and usable data, and enhancing digital government services through data sharing within the Government. The DPO is co-ordinating the related compilation work, which includes establishing a framework for departmental data catalogues that will outline the categories, scopes, and attributes of data that B/Ds should include when formulating their data catalogues. B/Ds are requested to complete the compilation of their departmental data catalogues by 2025.

2. Data is a new key production factor. A highly efficient data ecosystem is one of the considerations for many enterprises to establish a foothold in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is underpinned by its distinctive advantages under “One Country, Two Systems” and endowed with the characteristics of an international city. From supply and demand of data to application scenarios, we are equipped with a robust foundation and possess an abundance of favourable conditions for promoting the development of the data ecosystem. The Government has commissioned a group of experts from fields such as information technology, commerce and industry, finance and data sources to undertake a study on how to develop a robust data trading ecosystem in Hong Kong. This includes Hong Kong’s role as a “super connector” in data trading, the prerequisites, rules, and measures for promoting international data trading, as well as feasible implementation models. The expert group is conducting a consultancy study on these topics and is expected to complete and submit recommendations to the Government within 2025-26.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB184

(Question Serial No. 1844)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. How is the \$1 billion funding set aside to be specifically allocated among artificial intelligence (AI) upstream research and development (R&D), midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios? What criteria will the Government use to evaluate the results achieved by the Hong Kong AI R&D Institute (Institute)? If the results are remarkable, will there be any plan for further funding in addition to the original \$1 billion to support the long-term operation and expansion of the Institute?
2. How do the Hong Kong AI R&D Institute and the AI Subsidy Scheme operate in tandem? Is there a mechanism for resource integration or sharing to avoid duplication of investments? Is there a timetable or plan for the projected industrial application of R&D outcomes of relevant projects? Is a mechanism in place to facilitate the transformation of R&D outcomes into commercial products, such as a platform for local universities or institutions to interface with local enterprises?

Asked by: Hon LAU Chi-pang (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and industrial applications of artificial intelligence (AI), facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. The AIRDI will be one of the key initiatives in building the local AI ecosystem, complementing the current AIR@InnoHK R&D platform that focuses on AI and robotics technologies, the infrastructure of Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC), and the \$3 billion AI Subsidy Scheme mainly for subsidising the industry to leverage the computing power of the AISC, etc.

The Digital Policy Office is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center under the AIR@InnoHK. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB185

(Question Serial No. 1378)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance, (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Digital Policy Office will work closely with bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to drive digitalisation of government services, and continue to support the pilot use of the generative artificial intelligence (AI) document processing copilot application (application) within the Government. Further reduction in the establishment will be achieved through adopting technologies and streamlining government services to save manpower where appropriate. In mid-2024, the Government launched the pilot use exercise of the application developed by the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center under InnoHK, introducing it to various B/Ds to assist civil servants in handling document processing tasks such as drafting, translation, and summarisation of documents. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) Please provide information about the pilot use of the application, including the number of civil servants participated in the pilot use in each B/D, the grades involved, the duration of use, and the time and manpower saved;
- 2) When is the exercise expected to be completed and reviewed? Has the Government estimated the number of posts in the establishments that can be reduced with a mass rollout and the grades involved?
- 3) Apart from the application, are there any plans to introduce other AI, such as the large model of DeepSeek developed in the Mainland? If yes, what is the schedule for the introduction and the associated expenditure? If not, what specific measures does the Government have in place to utilise technology to further reduce the establishment?

Asked by: Hon LAU Ip-keung, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

In 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the AIR@InnoHK which focuses on artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong's self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the HKPilot in mid-2024. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has invited all bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme.

HKGAI updated its locally developed "HKGAI V1" LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application's capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is also provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff. On the other hand, HKGAI is taking into account feedback collected from the pilot programme to fully optimise the LLM and the application, and to formulate an overall strategy and timetable for releasing the LLM and the application for use by various sectors in the community.

Furthermore, the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) under the DPO endeavours to promote the development and use of innovation and technology (I&T) including AI within the Government, with a view to enhancing the efficiency of departmental operations and public services. The Smart Lab regularly arranges various activities taking into account the business needs of B/Ds and the latest I&T development to enhance the understanding of I&T among government staff. The Smart Lab also invites I&T service providers to match proposals with suitable solutions, assisting B/Ds in accelerating the adoption of I&T.

To optimise the use of manpower resources and to control public expenditure, the 2025-26 Budget announced that the Government will reduce the civil service establishment by 2% each in 2026-27 and 2027-28 basing on the establishment of the preceding financial year. By 1 April 2027, about 10 000 posts are expected to be deleted from the overall civil service establishment within this term of Government. B/Ds will, having regard to operational needs, enhance efficiency through reprioritisation, internal redeployment, streamlining of work processes and application of technology.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB186

(Question Serial No. 0821)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the public Wi-Fi service, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. Please provide a breakdown of the numbers of Wi-Fi hotspots and Wi-Fi high-speed access points respectively by District Council district;
2. What were the number of user-times of the Wi-Fi hotspots and Wi-Fi high-speed access points in each of the past 3 years?
3. How many additional Wi-Fi hotspots were provided by government premises and private organisations respectively in the previous year? What measures does the Government have in place to encourage private organisations to provide more Wi-Fi hotspots?
4. What were the expenditures incurred by the Government on providing public Wi-Fi services over the past 3 years, and what is the estimated expenditure for the current year?
5. How many village premises are currently provided with free public Wi-Fi service by the Government through the Smart Village Pilots? What is the estimated number of additional village premises that will be provided with free public Wi-Fi service this year and what is the expenditure to be involved?
6. Will the Government consider raising the internet connection speed of the Wi-Fi hotspots or upgrading more hotspots to high-speed access points? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

1. Under the Wi-Fi Connected City programme, the Government collaborates with the industry to promote the Wi-Fi services that are offered by the public and private sectors free of charge or time-limited free of charge through a common Wi-Fi brand “Wi-Fi.HK”. As of February 2025, the number of hotspots under the “Wi-Fi.HK” brand was about 42 000. Apart from approximately 3 600 mobile Wi-Fi hotspots installed in buses, taxis and the Airport Express, more than 38 000 Wi-Fi hotspots are provided in the 18 districts across the territory as listed below:

District	Number of hotspots
Hong Kong Island	
Central and Western District	3 799
Eastern District	1 840
Southern District	2 450
Wan Chai	2 270
Kowloon	
Kowloon City	5 087
Yau Tsim Mong	4 161
Sham Shui Po	1 238
Wong Tai Sin	921
Kwun Tong	1 767
New Territories	
Tai Po	616
Yuen Long	1 230
Tuen Mun	1 984
North District	763
Sai Kung	2 193
Sha Tin	4 090
Kwai Tsing	1 146
Tsuen Wan	977
Islands	2 023
Total	38 555

There is no high-speed Wi-Fi venue specifically designated under “Wi-Fi.HK” services.

2. The number of users for the Wi-Fi services provided at government venues under the programme in the past 3 years are as follows:

Year	Number of users (million)
2022-23	42.56
2023-24	43.28
2024-25 (As at February 2025)	38.70

We do not have the usage information on the Wi-Fi services provided by other service providers participating the “Wi-Fi.HK” brand under the public-private collaboration arrangement.

3. As of February 2025, the number of Wi-Fi hotspots at government venues under the “Wi-Fi.HK” brand was about 10 000, similar to that of the same period last year. The number of Wi-Fi hotspots at non-government venues provided by public and private organisations was over 32 000, a decrease of about 3 000 as compared with the same period last year. To encourage the industry to join the programme and extend the Wi-Fi services to more government and public venues under the public-private collaboration arrangement, we will continue to promote the “Wi-Fi.HK” brand and expand the coverage of “Wi-Fi.HK” brand hotspots.
4. The Government’s expenditure on the Wi-Fi Connected City programme in the past 3 years is as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23 (Actual)	About 45
2023-24 (Actual) ^{Remark}	About 81
2024-25 (Revised Estimate) ^{Remark}	About 72

Remark: As most of the contracts for Government Wi-Fi services gradually expired and equipment replacement was required, expenditures for 2023-24 and 2024-25 have increased.

5. We have now completed all installation works, providing free public Wi-Fi services at over 160 village premises. Subject to the demand for public Wi-Fi services and technical feasibility at individual village premises, we will consider the need for adjustments to these public Wi-Fi service locations.
6. The current average connection speed of “Wi-Fi.HK” hotspots is about 70 megabits per second (Mbps), which is sufficient for general Internet use (such as use of social media). We will continue to monitor the performance of Government Wi-Fi services and adjust the network speed at individual venues in a timely manner, taking into account factors such as Wi-Fi usage and technical feasibility, to ensure that the service quality meets the required standard and remains cost-effective.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB187

(Question Serial No. 0885)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the work related to information security within the Government, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What were the respective numbers of information and cyber security incidents involving data leakage, hacking, hacker blackmailing or cyber attack, etc., reported by government departments in the past 3 years?
2. What were the staff establishment and expenditure for the Government Computer Emergency Response Team Hong Kong (GovCERT.HK) in each of the past 3 years? After the occurrence of the aforesaid information and cyber security incidents, what measures were taken by the GovCERT.HK to support government departments in taking remedial actions and preventing recurrence of such incidents?
3. What was the government expenditure on upgrading equipment and systems to enhance information security in each of the past 3 years?
4. Has the Government conducted annual risk assessment on the information technology (IT) and network systems of various government departments and regularly updated the contingency measures? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?
5. Has the Government made use of new technologies (such as artificial intelligence) to identify vulnerabilities in the IT and network systems of various government departments, so as to strengthen the prevention of information and cyber security incidents? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?
6. What were the numbers of training courses and seminars on information security arranged and cyber security drills conducted within the Government by the Government in each of the past 3 years? Other than that, what measures has the Government put in place to enhance the awareness of information and cyber security among government staff?

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

1. As of February 2025, the information security incidents reported by government departments to the Digital Policy Office (DPO) in the past 3 years are listed in the table below:

information Security Incidents	2022	2023	2024
Leaking of classified data in electronic form	3	1	5
Compromise of information systems or data assets, ransomware, denial of service attack	6	7	6
Loss of mobile devices or removable media that contain classified data	4	3	3
Website defacement, abuse of information systems	1	1	-
Total	14	12	14

2. Since 2015, the DPO has established the Government Computer Emergency Response Team Hong Kong (GovCERT.HK) through redeployment of internal resources dedicated to coordinating the handling of information and cybersecurity incidents within the Government as well as providing advice on security measure, etc. Upon occurrence of information security incidents, GovCERT.HK will provide support and assist government bureaux and department (B/Ds) to handle the incident. In addition, GovCERT.HK will also issue timely security alerts and reminders to B/Ds to assist them in taking effective and prompt response measures with a view to preventing and reducing the risks and impacts of cyber attacks on their information systems.
3. One of the key areas of work of the “Digital Infrastructure” under Programme (3) of the DPO in 2024-25 and 2025-26 is to strengthen the overall cybersecurity defence capabilities of government departments and public organisations. This includes updating the “Government Information Technology Security Policy and Guidelines” (“Policy and Guidelines”) and monitoring their implementation within the Government; implementing enhancement measures to strengthen the governance and security of the information technology systems of B/Ds as well as public organisations under their purview; planning and organising cybersecurity attack and defence drill; and collaborating with the industry to promote information security awareness within the Government and to the public. The expenditure for each of the aforementioned works has been included in Programme (3) of the DPO and the estimates of B/Ds. The DPO does not maintain the relevant breakdown of figures.

In addition, B/Ds implement information security related projects also by deploying internal resources and seeking funding support from the “Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation” block allocations. The expenditure of

information security related projects implemented by B/Ds with funding obtained from the “Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation” in the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2022-23 (Actual)	422
2023-24 (Actual)	615
2024-25 (Revised Estimate)	636

4. to 6. According to the prevailing “Policy and Guidelines”, B/Ds shall conduct security risk assessments for all of their IT systems at least once every 2 years. The security risk assessment will prioritise the risk handling and update the contingency measures based on the risk sources (such as vulnerabilities and threats), incidents (such as accident scenarios), the impact and likelihood of risks, etc.

In response to increasingly sophisticated and evolving cybersecurity risks, continuous vulnerability scanning can assist B/Ds in responding to cyber threats. The DPO established the centralised cybersecurity health check platform to perform regular and continuous health checks and penetration testing on government public-facing IT systems. The platform aims to enhance the capability of B/Ds to identify and remediate potential security vulnerabilities, thereby strengthening their protection against information security and cybersecurity incidents. The Government will continue to monitor emerging technologies (including artificial intelligence) and developments in cybersecurity and consider adopting relevant technologies as necessary to further reinforce the security and resilience of government information systems.

With a view to enhancing the cyber security awareness and overall response capabilities of B/Ds against cyber attack, the DPO and the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB) of the Hong Kong Police Force have co-organised the “Inter-departmental Cyber Security Drill” annually since 2017. As of the end of February this year, the DPO has, in each of the preceding 3 years (namely, 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25), conducted an Inter-departmental Cyber Security Drill and is preparing to launch a new round of the drill.

In addition, starting from 2024, the DPO has been spearheading and co-organising the annual real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill. B/Ds and public organisations will be invited to participate in the drills, during which simulated cyberattacks in real-life scenarios are launched to examine the cybersecurity incident response capabilities of participating IT systems. Through practical combat scenarios in the drills, the technical skills, experience and overall defensive capabilities of B/Ds and public organisations in identifying and responding to cyberattacks will be enhanced, thereby fortifying their defence line. The first ever real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill was conducted from 15 to 17 November 2024. Participating parties included 15 defending teams formed by 9 government departments and 3 public organisations, as well as 5 attacking teams from cybersecurity industry experts and academics. The DPO

has disseminated the findings and reports of the drill to the respective B/Ds and organisations, and requested them to follow up and enhance the defence capabilities of the respective systems as soon as possible. We plan to conduct the next real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill in the second half of 2025 on a larger scale in order to enhance the effectiveness of the drill.

DPO has also launched a “Government-wide Phishing Drill Campaign” to send simulated phishing emails to all government staff members. Once the links in these emails are clicked, the relevant staff will receive instant feedback explaining the correct way to handle emails. As of the end of February this year, DPO has organised 2 rounds of “Government-wide Phishing Drill Campaign” in the past 3 years and is preparing to launch a new round of the drill campaign.

DPO is also committed to enhancing the cybersecurity awareness of government staff, and keeps on providing various cybersecurity training courses, seminars, solution sharing sessions, etc. to B/Ds’ Departmental IT Security Officer, Information Security Incident Response Team, information security management and professional staff, along with government staff in other grades. As of the end of February this year, DPO has organised 9, 11 and 14 Cybersecurity Seminars and Solution Sharing Sessions in the past 3 years respectively.

As one of the strategies for accelerating digital government development and leading public service innovation, DPO has, since its establishment in 2024, reinforced the co-operation with the Civil Service College in regularly organising briefings, thematic seminars and training to strengthen the core skills of senior management (especially senior directorates) of all B/Ds in using digital technology, with content covering related topics such as information technology (IT), data management, and cybersecurity, thereby promoting more effective use of digital technologies by B/Ds to drive digital transformation for enhancing daily operational efficiency. In 2024-25 (as of February 2025), DPO has organised 1 thematic seminar.

In addition, the DPO and the Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology of the Vocational Training Council, signed a Memorandum of Understanding in January 2025 to jointly promote IT professional training in government departments and public organisations, and collaborate to organise a “Cybersecurity Certificate for the Public Sector” training programme. The first training programme will offer 3 levels of courses, including foundation, intermediate and advanced courses. The target audience is primarily IT staff working in government B/Ds or public organisations. Trainees who pass the assessment of the related courses will be awarded a Level 3 or 4 certification under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework, enabling them to learn the latest cybersecurity techniques and protective measures.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB188

(Question Serial No. 0702)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

To further promote the establishment of offshore data centres in Hong Kong and facilitate the cross-boundary flow of data in a safe and orderly manner, will the HKSAR Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. Has the Government reflected to the Central Government the initiative to promote the establishment of offshore data centres in Hong Kong, including whether it will promote the setting up of dedicated international internet access to achieve the free flow of data while ensuring physical separation between the data and the Mainland internet? What are the relevant details?
2. What are the measures to be taken in 2025-26 to encourage Mainland enterprises to set up businesses in offshore data centres in Hong Kong? Will the Government work with Mainland authorities such as the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and the National Development and Reform Commission to launch publicity and promotional campaigns or adopt innovative regulatory approaches? What are the estimated expenditure and the details of the relevant measures?
3. What are the plans to improve the regulations on the cross-boundary flow of data in 2025-26? For instance, will the Government co-ordinate with the national cyberspace administration to promote the implementation of the Negative List in free trade zones? What are the progress of formulating relevant regulations and the implementation timetable?

Asked by: Hon LEE Wai-king, Starry (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

With its sophisticated and advance telecommunications infrastructure, reliable power supply, effective protection of data privacy and information security, as well as free flow of

information and pro-business environment, Hong Kong is well-positioned to be the data centre hub in the Asia Pacific region to support the development of digital economy and drive the safe and orderly cross-boundary data flow in compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

The Government is committed to promoting data centre development in Hong Kong by implementing various facilitation measures. The Digital Policy Office set up the Data Centre Facilitation Unit (DCFU) in 2011 to provide one-stop support services to enterprises interested in setting up data centres in Hong Kong, including assisting the industry in coordinating with relevant government departments and power companies on individual data centre development projects. The DCFU has so far handled over 1 100 enquiries on setting up data centres in Hong Kong. In addition, since 2012, the Government had introduced 2 concessionary land measures, namely the exemption of waiver fee for changing part(s) of industrial buildings as data centres (waiver application), and assessing the land premium for the data centre part on the basis of high-tier data centre use and the actual development intensity during lease modification of industrial lots (lease modification application). On the other hand, the Government has disposed of 2 sites with 3.77 hectares (ha) site area in total in 2013 and 2018 respectively in Tseung Kwan O to the industry for development of high tier data centres. We also commenced the rezoning procedures at end 2024 for a 10 ha site at Sandy Ridge for use as data centres and related facilities. Currently, we are actively making preparations for land disposal to fulfil the needs of the industry for digital infrastructure and to facilitate the development of various industries.

On the other hand, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) has been actively collaborating with the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) to promote cross-boundary data flow within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). ITIB and CAC signed the “Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitating Cross-boundary Data Flow Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area” (the Memorandum) in June 2023, and jointly announced the facilitation measure on the “Standard Contract for the Cross-boundary Flow of Personal Information Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Mainland, Hong Kong)” (the GBA Standard Contract) subsequently in December 2023. The “early and pilot implementation” arrangements of the GBA Standard Contract facilitation measure for the banking, credit referencing, and healthcare sectors were well received, and thus the facilitation measure was regularised and extended to industries of all sectors from 1 November 2024. The GBA Standard Contract facilitation measure is also applicable to the Guangdong pilot free trade zones, including Shenzhen, Guangzhou, and Zhuhai. We will continue to collaborate with the CAC under the framework of the Memorandum to promote the safe and orderly cross-boundary flow of personal information within the GBA.

In addition, to facilitate the flow of general data that does not contain important data and personal information, the CAC issued the “Regulations on Facilitating and Regulating the Cross-border Data Flow” (the Regulations) on 22 March 2024, introducing a number of specific scenarios which are exempted from conducting security assessment, entering into standard contracts for personal information cross-border transfer and obtaining personal information protection certification, as well as the “negative list” mechanism for pilot free trade zones. The Regulations apply to cross-boundary data flows between Mainland cities in the GBA and Hong Kong.

We will continue to closely monitor market trends and industry feedback, and review the development needs and support measures of data centres from time to time.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB189

(Question Serial No. 3499)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to the IT Security Guidelines (G3) issued by the Government, the use of personal webmail, public cloud storage and web-version of instant messaging services introduces significant security risks to the Government. Therefore, access shall be granted only when justified by genuine needs and legitimate purposes with the approval from the Heads of bureaux and departments (B/Ds) or their explicitly delegated officer at directorate level for the use of personal webmail, public cloud storage and web-version of instant messaging services. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please list by B/Ds the numbers of civil servants and other government employees granted with approval from the Heads of B/Ds or their explicitly delegated officer at directorate level for the use of personal webmail, public cloud storage and web-version of instant messaging services in the past 3 years;
2. Further to the above question, is there any mechanism to regularly review the approval for use and access granted? If yes, what are the details and expenditure incurred; if not, what are the reasons?
3. Is there any round-the-clock network monitoring of the approval for use and access granted to ensure the cybersecurity of the use of personal webmail, public cloud storage and web-version of instant messaging services by civil servants and other government employees? If yes, what are the details and expenditure incurred; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 144)

Reply:

1. and 2. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has formulated the security guidelines for the use of desktop computers connected to the government internal network systems in the

“Government IT Security Policy and Guidelines” (“Policy and Guidelines”) updated in April 2024, including the requirement that staff of government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) have to obtain approval from their management before using personal webmail, public cloud storage and instant messaging services on desktop computers connected to the government internal network. Meanwhile, B/Ds shall critically review the necessity of the access to personal webmail, public cloud storage and instant messaging services by their staff regularly and revoke the relevant access right when no longer required. The relevant approval pertains to the information security operations of individual B/Ds and the specific work is also carried out through internal deployment of existing manpower and resources of B/Ds. The DPO does not maintain the relevant information.

3. Continuous detection and monitoring of information systems are essential elements in ensuring government cybersecurity, including the cybersecurity of the use of personal webmail, public cloud storage and web-version of instant messaging services by government staff. In accordance with the prevailing “Policy and Guidelines”, B/Ds shall establish a threat identification, detection and monitoring mechanism and review the mechanism regularly to ensure that it remains effective. In addition, the Government Central Internet Services and the Government Cloud Infrastructure are equipped with multiple layers of security measures, including intrusion detection and prevention systems and real-time monitoring tools, so as to provide a robust safeguard to protect government cybersecurity. The relevant information security work is implemented through internal deployment of existing manpower and resources of B/Ds.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB190

(Question Serial No. 3501)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to Head 47 - Government Secretariat: Digital Policy Office (DPO) in the Controlling Officer's Report of the 2025-26 Budget, in 2024-25, the DPO collaborated with the Guangdong Province and co-ordinated bureaux and departments' provision of cross-boundary public services through different service delivery modes, including the setup of self-service kiosks, to facilitate enterprises and the public in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) in accessing public services across the boundary. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number of users of self-service kiosks and the types of services required in the past 2 years, broken down by Mainland cities;
2. the cost of each self-service kiosk and the administrative expenses involved in setting up these kiosks;
3. the number of self-service kiosks providing cross-boundary public services in 2025-26?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 146)

Reply:

1. and 3. We have set up a total of 7 Hong Kong Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) self-service kiosks in the government service centers in Guangzhou, Qianhai and Futian in Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou and Dongguan progressively since February 2024, so as to cope with the demands of residents and enterprises in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) for Hong Kong public services. Currently, the self-service kiosk provides public services from 12 bureaux/departments and related organisations, encompassing 8 areas commonly used by enterprises and the public including taxation, company registration, property and vehicle enquiry and registration, application for personal identification documents and entry of talent,

welfare and education, healthcare, immigration clearance and urgent assistance, as well as culture and tourism.

The usage rate of self-service kiosks is affected by various factors, including the convenience and visitor traffic of deployment locations, periodic fluctuations in the demand for certain public services, and the public's receptiveness and usage habits regarding alternative service channels (such as counter services and online services) as compared to self-service kiosks. Since the set-up of the self-service kiosks, the total usage rate has exceeded 1 000. We will continue to identify and increase the number of public services to be provided through the self-service kiosks, and introduce various promotional and publicity measures to enhance public awareness of and receptiveness to the self-service kiosks.

In 2025-26, we will set up 3 additional Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks to fully cover the 9 Mainland cities of the GBA. Meanwhile, we have also set up "iAM Smart" self-registration kiosks alongside the Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks, enabling residents in the GBA to register for "iAM Smart" to have one-stop access to online services of various government departments via the "iAM Smart" mobile application.

2. A local research and development organisation was engaged to design and develop the CBPS self-service kiosk. The development cost of each kiosk was about \$80,000, and the annual maintenance expenditure is about \$16,000.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB191

(Question Serial No. 3017)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding deepfakes and the transparency of artificial intelligence (AI):

1. The government will commission a local research centre to examine the accuracy, transparency and information security of AI technology, and to recommend appropriate rules and guidelines. What is the estimated expenditure on the study?
2. Has the Government estimated the direction to be recommended by the study? If the study's findings recommend the adoption of new technological regulatory measures, has funding already been set aside to meet the expenditure for the potential implementation requirements? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

In 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the AIR@InnoHK which focuses on artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has commissioned the HKGAI, through practical applications, to study and suggest appropriate codes and guidelines on the accuracy, responsibility and information security in the generative AI technologies and practices. The aim is to encourage innovative applications of AI technology while mitigating risks, thereby promoting the development and application of generative AI in Hong Kong. The funding allocated for the establishment of HKGAI and its R&D work already includes the development of these codes and guidelines, and no additional commissioning fees are involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB192

(Question Serial No. 1737)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government mentioned that it will continue to work closely with bureaux and departments to drive digital transformation of licensing and public services delivery, and drive full adoption of the “iAM Smart” platform by all departments to provide one-stop electronic services. In this regard, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. In the past year, what specific enhancements did the Government perform to the “iAM Smart” platform, and what were the expenditure and manpower incurred for the “iAM Smart” platform?
2. Currently, how many public services have undergone digital transformation and can be readily used by the public on the “iAM Smart” platform? What specific service items are included?
3. What are the estimated expenditure and manpower allocated for the “iAM Smart” platform in 2025-26?
4. For persons less digitally skilled or not possessing any smart devices, will the Government implement other measures to support their use of “iAM Smart”?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

- 1.to 3. “iAM Smart” can now access more than 1 100 online services provided by the Government and public and private organisations as well as e-forms provided by various bureaux/departments (B/Ds). Commonly used services include SmartPLAY, eTAX, Online Application for Renewal of Vehicle Licence, Online Application for International Driving Permit, Contactless e-Channel, eHealth, etc.

The Digital Policy Office (DPO) obtained the funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in mid-2023 to commence a series of upgrades to the “iAM Smart” platform. The target is to drive full adoption of “iAM Smart” by all government online services by 2025 so as to realise “single portal for online government services”. The upgrade work of the “iAM Smart” platform is progressing at full speed, with the enhanced or new features as follows:

- i. In 2023, the design for the “iAM Smart” mobile app was updated, enabling citizens to browse various useful information. Additionally, the “iAM Smart” platform was linked up with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents to directly log in to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile app through “iAM Smart” for using various government services of the Guangdong Province.
- ii. In 2024, the registration process for “iAM Smart+” was simplified. A new “iAM Smart” interface was launched, and a new “iAM Smart Personal Code” was introduced for identity verification purpose.
- iii. Various departments will gradually roll out personalised content for displaying on the “Personal Assistant” page.
- iv. In early March 2025, the “Digital Document” feature was introduced, allowing users to present their digital documents issued by different government departments through the “iAM Smart” mobile app. It currently covers the Social Welfare Department’s Electronic Senior Citizen Card, the Civil Service Bureau’s Common Recruitment Examination results and the Basic Law and National Security Law Test results, as well as the Correctional Services Department’s Incarceration Proof.
- v. More new features will be progressively rolled out this year, including the “Step-up Authentication”, bill payment function and “Mini-program Platform”.

The estimated expenditures for the “iAM Smart” platform for 2024-25 and 2025-26 are about \$152 million and \$147 million respectively, which include the expenditure for operation, maintenance, and upgrade of the “iAM Smart” platform, of which the estimated expenditures specifically for upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform for these 2 financial years are \$50.73 million and \$45.8 million respectively. The above-mentioned tasks are supported by 20 government staff.

4. The DPO has been working closely with different organisations to promote “iAM Smart” through different channels, provide support to citizens in need and assist them to register for and use “iAM Smart”. Through the “Smart Silver” Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders, we set up community-based help desks in suitable locations across all districts to provide regular and fixed-point digital training and technical support for elderly people aged 60 or above, teaching them how to use the “iAM Smart” app and enabling them to access and use various online services closely related to daily life with their smartphones in a smart and convenient way. The programme covers smartphone operation, application of “iAM Smart” and other

commonly used government mobile apps (including “HA Go”, “18 CM Clinics”, “HKeMobility”, etc.), as well as cyber security and anti-scam knowledge, etc. In addition, we have collaborated with several “Community Living Rooms” to organise trainer seminars for their staff, enabling them to provide tailored assistance to citizens in need. We have also partnered with Care Teams to assist citizens and elderly people in need to register for “iAM Smart”.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB193

(Question Serial No. 1914)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (2) Data Governance, (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

On the provision for digitalisation of government services, my understanding is that the Government is stepping up efforts in promoting the establishment of local data centres and the application of artificial intelligence (AI). In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the current government expenditure on the rental of third-party servers to provide cloud services?
2. What was the government expenditure on facilitating the establishment of local data centres over the past 2 years?
3. What were the operating costs of government applications and online services over the past 2 years?
4. What is the expected coverage of integrating current AI technologies and applications into government online services? What is the estimated cost?
5. Regarding the provision for the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI), please provide specific details, e.g. expenses for salary, rent, operations, R&D of the HKGAI V1 large model.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 52)

Reply:

1. To cope with ever-increasing demands from bureaux/departments (B/Ds) on Government Cloud Infrastructure Services, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) has started the deployment of servers and other cloud facilities in the DPO's data centres by means of service contract since 2024-25, so as to expand the

Government private cloud service more rapidly and flexibly. The relevant expenditure in 2024-25 is around \$13 million.

Moreover, the DPO has drawn up a list of suppliers of Government Public Cloud Services (GPCS) for B/Ds' reference when procuring public cloud services based on their business needs. In 2024-25, the total contract value of public cloud services procured from GPCS providers (including use of third party servers) was around \$5 million. Apart from the above, the DPO does not maintain information on the expenditures of other B/Ds regarding their independent arrangements for cloud services provided by third party servers.

2. To facilitate the development of data centres in Hong Kong, the DPO set up the Data Centre Facilitation Unit (DCFU) in 2011 to provide one-stop support services to enterprises interested in setting up data centres in Hong Kong. The expenditure estimates for the DCFU for 2023-24 and 2024-25 are \$1.95 million and \$3.10 million respectively, mainly for hiring contract staff to provide support services, conducting relevant market and technical research, as well as maintaining and updating the thematic website, etc.
3. The mobile applications or online services of B/Ds involve different arrangements for procurement, development, maintenance, and operation (for example, for mobile applications or government online services that constitute only part of the information technology project implemented by the relevant B/Ds, independent cost calculation is impossible). The DPO does not maintain a comprehensive record for the operating costs of all government mobile applications and online services.
4. and 5. The DPO has been striving to drive the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) technology by B/Ds so as to innovate public services and improve efficiency. Using the commonly used 1823 hotline as an example, we have fully expanded 1823's AI chatbot service to answer common public enquiries within the service scope of 1823, and we utilise "AI speech recognition" technology to identify callers' enquiry subjects and provide relevant information via voicemails or Short Message Service (SMS). Over a hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives will be rolled out progressively by B/Ds, of which around half involve the application of big data and AI technologies, including the application of AI to set up a Hong Kong coastal sea-level monitoring and prediction system and the adoption of video analytics to enhance security surveillance at cargo working areas.

The DPO has also launched a number of central platforms and facilities to assist B/Ds in developing and providing more digital government services that bring convenience and benefit to the public and businesses, including:

- (i) Big Data Analytics Platform (BDAP): Launched in 2020, it enables B/Ds to adopt technologies such as AI and big data analytics to implement more e-government projects. The expenditure of implementing the BDAP is \$69 million, and the BDAP has currently supported the implementation of more than 20 big data projects in B/Ds.

- (ii) Chatbot-as-a-Service: Launched in June 2023, it enables B/Ds to make use of a shared chatbot infrastructure with ready-to-use building blocks to develop chatbots related to their businesses more promptly and more cost-effectively. The expenditure of developing Chatbot-as-a-Service is around \$7.79 million.
- (iii) AI Computer Vision Hub: Launched in March 2024, it provides B/Ds with a series of tools related to image analytics, including pre-trained models, data labelling tools, model development environment, etc., to help B/Ds develop image analytics models and identify objects or text in images and videos. The expenditure of developing AI Computer Vision Hub is around \$8.64 million.

In addition to the above, B/Ds will study to introduce and develop different technical solutions to enhance services according to their operational needs and requirements. Through its thematic website, the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) under the DPO collects the business needs of government departments in public service delivery and invites the industry to submit technology solutions and product suggestions to meet relevant needs, facilitating departments to formulate implementation plans and procurement specifications more effectively. In the past 5 years, the Smart Lab has matched solutions with more than 110 business needs from over 30 government departments, including the Environmental Protection Department, the Buildings Department and the DPO, covering technology areas like AI, Internet of Things (IoT), data analytics, video analytics and natural language processing. Proof-of-Concept (PoC) testing for more than 70 potential technology solutions was conducted in collaboration with the departments concerned. Information Technology projects being planned or having been implemented by individual departments after undergoing PoC testing included:

- Leverage AI technology to develop robotic dog equipped with different sensors, with the capability of identifying the composition of unknown gases and autonomously tracking the direction of the gases, to assist officers in investigating air nuisance incidents. The AI robotic dogs have been gradually deployed by the department for pilot testing to collect data for continuous optimisation;
- Identify signboard structures and automatically calculate signboard dimensions using technologies such as AI, video analytics, remote measurement, etc. to facilitate the quick detection of signboards with potential risks; and
- Utilise AI image recognition, IoT and machine learning technologies to assist in real-time monitoring of the cleanliness condition of designated shoreline areas. The aim is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the shoreline cleanliness monitoring programme by automating the collection and analysis of massive images and data on the coverage and types of refuse, and referring cases to relevant departments for follow-up as needed.

In addition, in 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the AIR@InnoHK which focuses on AI and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong's self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage, and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation, and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the HKPilot in mid-2024. The DPO has invited all B/Ds to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme.

HKGAI updated its locally developed "HKGAI V1" LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application's capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff. On the other hand, HKGAI is taking into account feedback collected from the pilot programme to fully optimise the LLM and the application, and to formulate an overall strategy and timetable for releasing the LLM and the application for use by various sectors in the community.

The R&D and operating expenditure of HKGAI in the first 3 years amounted to around \$235 million. We do not maintain the breakdown figures for the related development of individual models or applications.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB194

(Question Serial No. 2319)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Digital Policy Office will drive full adoption of “iAM Smart” by all bureaux and departments to provide the public with convenient and one-stop electronic services by the end of 2025. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please give the details of the adoption of “iAM Smart” by government departments as at the end of 2024, including the number of departments which have completed the consolidation and their percentage in all government departments; and please also provide a list of departments which have not yet adopted “iAM Smart” and the reasons for their failure to complete the consolidation as scheduled.
- (b) Please provide a breakdown of the estimated expenditure for enhancing the “iAM Smart” platform in 2025-26, including the related staff establishment plan and allocation of resources for technical support.
- (c) Please provide the details of the assessment currently adopted by the Government on the effectiveness of the “iAM Smart” platform in improving the efficiency of public services and the level of satisfaction of citizens, including the evaluation methodology and findings in the past year.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

- (a) As at the end of 2024, “iAM Smart” can access about 380 government online services, about 580 government e-forms, and about 90 online services provided by public and private organisations. Commonly used services include SmartPLAY from the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, eTAX from the Inland Revenue Department, Online Application for Renewal of Vehicle Licence

and Online Application for International Driving Permit from the Transport Department, Contactless e-Channel from the Immigration Department, and eHealth from the Health Bureau, etc. At present, “iAM Smart” can access more than 1 100 online services provided by the Government and public and private organisations and e-form provided by various bureaux/departments (B/Ds). To achieve the target of driving full adoption of “iAM Smart” by all government online services so as to realise “single portal for online government services” by 2025, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) is comprehensively upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform, enhancing user experience, and developing more services that are convenient and beneficial to the public and businesses. The remaining approximately 200 government online services and e-forms will also fully adopt “iAM Smart” within 2025.

- (b) and (c) The DPO obtained the funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in mid-2023 to commence a series of upgrades to the “iAM Smart” platform. These include updating the design of the home page of the “iAM Smart” mobile app, enabling citizens to browse various sorts of practical information (e.g. real-time traffic and weather information, latest government announcements) in 2023, simplifying the registration process for “iAM Smart+”, launching a new “iAM Smart” interface and introducing “iAM Smart Personal Code” for identity verification purpose in 2024. Feedback from the public on the simplified registration process and upgraded features of “iAM Smart” has been positive. As at March 2025, the “iAM Smart” platform has over 3.3 million registered users, and the number of users continues to rise with daily average usage exceeding 100 000. The annual usage of “iAM Smart” in 2024 is about 44 million, which has already exceeded the target set in 2022 (i.e. to gradually increase the annual usage of “iAM Smart” from 10 million in 2023 to 17.5 million in 2025).

We will continue to collaborate with different B/Ds, district bodies and industry associations to organise “iAM Smart” registration and promotional activities in industry events, government venues, schools, “Community Living Rooms” and housing estates, etc., based on the needs of different social groups, to assist citizens in registering for “iAM Smart” and collect user opinions proactively. In addition, we continuously collect public feedback through the “iAM Smart” hotline to enhance our services.

The estimated expenditure for upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform for 2025-26 is approximately \$45.8 million, which includes the expenditure for hardware, software, system implementation services and contract staff, etc. The DPO has also created 6 time-limited civil service posts to undertake the tasks of upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform and coordinating with B/Ds for the integration of online services, etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB195

(Question Serial No. 2320)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Digital Policy Office “organised the first cybersecurity attack and defence drill to enhance the defence capabilities of government departments and public organisations” in 2024-25 and has planned to organise the same in 2025-26. In this connection, will the Government please inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please specify the estimate for and the scale of the cybersecurity attack and defence drill in 2024-25 and the resource devoted. How will the estimate for and the scale of the drill be adjusted in 2025-26?
- (b) How does the Government assess and quantify the level of cybersecurity and defence of each participating department in the drill? What key indicators are included in the assessment criteria?
- (c) Please provide a detailed comparison of the estimate for the overall cybersecurity of the Government in 2025-26 and 2024-25, including the specific amounts and percentages of the estimated increases or decreases, as well as descriptions of the aspects of cybersecurity to which the increases or decreases in estimate are primarily attributed.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 15)

Reply:

- (a) and (b) Starting from 2024, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) spearheads and co-organises the annual real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill. Government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and public organisations will be invited to participate in the drills, during which simulated cyberattacks in real-life scenarios are launched to examine the cybersecurity incident response capabilities of participating IT systems. Through practical combat scenarios of the drills, the technical skills, experience and overall defensive capabilities of B/Ds and public

organisations in identifying and responding to cyberattacks will be enhanced, thereby fortifying their defence line.

The first ever real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill was conducted from 15 to 17 November 2024. Participating parties included 15 defending teams from 9 government departments and 3 public organisations, as well as 5 attacking teams from cybersecurity industry experts and academics. The DPO has disseminated the findings and reports of the drill to the respective B/Ds and organisations, and requested them to promptly follow up and enhance the defence capabilities of the respective systems as soon as possible.

In addition to the real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill, the DPO also conducts regular and continuous information security checks and penetration tests on public-facing IT systems of the Government. Moreover, 8 government information systems would be selected annually for conducting in-depth information security compliance audits in order to ensure that corresponding B/Ds have complied with the requirements in the “Government Information Technology Security Policy and Guidelines”.

We plan to conduct the next real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill in the second half of 2025 on a larger scale in order to enhance the effectiveness of the drill. The expenditure of the drill in 2024-25 was about \$1.3 million, and the estimated expenditure for 2025-26 is about \$4 million.

- (c) One of the key areas of work of the “Digital Infrastructure” under Programme (3) of the DPO in 2024-25 and 2025-26 is to strengthen the overall cybersecurity defence capabilities of government departments and public bodies under the purview of B/Ds. This includes updating the “Government Information Technology Security Policy and Guidelines” and monitoring their implementation within the Government; implementing enhancement measures to strengthen the governance and security of the information technology systems of B/Ds as well as public bodies under the purview of B/Ds; planning and organising cybersecurity attack and defence drill; and collaborating with the industry to promote information security awareness within the Government and in the community. The expenditure for each of the aforementioned ongoing works has been included in Programme (3) of the DPO and the estimates of B/Ds. The DPO does not maintain the relevant breakdown of figures.

In addition, government B/Ds also implement information security related projects by deploying internal resources and seeking funding support from the “Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation” block allocations. In 2024-25 and 2025-26, the expenditures of information security (including cybersecurity) related projects implemented by B/Ds with funding obtained from the “Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation” are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2024-25 (Revised Estimate)	636
2025-26 (Estimate)	773

The estimated expenditure in 2025-26 for implementing the aforementioned information security (including cybersecurity) related projects by B/Ds is 21.5% (\$137 million) higher than the revised estimate for 2024-25, which mainly pertains to the need for B/Ds to expedite action in implementing the new requirements in the “Government Information Technology Security Policy and Guidelines” updated in April 2024, such as the information security measures of deploying endpoint detection and response (EDR) solutions, implementing multi-factor authentication for information systems, etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB196

(Question Serial No. 2321)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As regards the “trainings and programmes on core digital skills for key IT staff of bureaux and departments and senior government personnel”, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) The distribution of numbers of target participants by bureau/department. Please provide the course outlines, including the specific areas of digital skills to be trained (e.g. data analytics, cybersecurity, application of artificial intelligence, etc.). What are the modes of teaching, durations and assessment methods of the courses? Are the course designs tailored to the participants based on their different ranks and professional backgrounds?
- (b) How will the Government evaluate the effectiveness of the training programmes? Please describe in detail the mechanisms for performance assessment before and after training, including the specific indicators and assessment methods. How will the participants be gauged on their level of competence in applying digital skills in their actual work?
- (c) What was the actual expenditure on this training for each of the past 3 years? Please provide a year-over-year comparison.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 16)

Reply:

As one of the strategies for accelerating the development of digital government and leading public service innovation, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) has, since its establishment in 2024, strengthened co-operation with the Civil Service College in regularly organising briefings, thematic seminars and training to sharpen the core skills of senior management (particularly senior directorates) of all bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in using digital

technology, covering related topics such as information technology (IT), data management and cybersecurity, thereby promoting B/Ds to use digital technology more effectively to drive digital transformation and enhance daily operational efficiency. The DPO also regularly provides diversified training for government IT officers at all levels, covering a wide range of technical areas such as big data analytics, artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, cloud computing, information security and cybersecurity, smart city, and data literacy.

In addition, the DPO and the Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology of the Vocational Training Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding in January 2025 to jointly promote IT professional training in government departments and public organisations, and collaborate to organise a “Cybersecurity Certificate for the Public Sector” training programme. The first training programme will offer courses at 3 levels, including foundation, intermediate and advanced courses. The target participants are primarily IT staff working in B/Ds and public organisations. Participants who pass the assessment of the related courses will be awarded a Level 3 or 4 certification under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework, enabling them to learn the latest cybersecurity techniques and protective measures.

We will regularly assess and review the effectiveness of the training programme. The assessment mechanism covers collecting participants’ opinions through questionnaires, discussion and analysis sessions in class, and tutors’ observation of participants’ performance. These assessment results will be used to enhance the content and format of training to ensure the effectiveness of the programme. The DPO Training Committee also holds regular meetings to review staff training needs and update the course topics as and when necessary.

In 2024-25 (as at February 2025), the DPO has arranged over 90 training courses related to core digital skills with more than 2 300 participants. It is expected that the numbers of training courses and participants in 2025-26 will remain at a broadly comparable level. The DPO has taken forward the above work with existing manpower and resources, and we do not maintain a breakdown of the expenditures involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB197

(Question Serial No. 2322)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance, (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Budget states that \$1 billion have been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (Institute). The Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry Professor Sun Dong said that alongside strengthening scientific research in artificial intelligence (AI), its application should be broadened to various areas, including government services, law, finance, healthcare, education, etc. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) What are the specific timetable for establishing the Institute, the allocation of the estimate and the projected recurrent expenditure for the first 5 years of establishment?
- (b) Please specify how the Institute will operate in co-ordination with Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre to avoid resource wastage.
- (c) Regarding the \$3 billion commitment to the Scheme for Supporting the Development of Artificial Intelligence Ecosystem in Hong Kong, please provide a breakdown of the allocation of estimate for 2025-26 and the Government's expectations on the Scheme.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Tsz-wing, Dennis (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

- (a) and (b) The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and industrial applications of artificial intelligence (AI), facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. The AIRDI will be one of the key initiatives in building the local AI ecosystem, complementing the current AIR@InnoHK R&D platform that

focuses on AI and robotics technologies, the infrastructure of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC), and the \$3 billion Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme mainly to subsidise the industry to leverage the computing power of the AISC, etc.

The Digital Policy Office (DPO) is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the Hong Kong Generative Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Center under the AIR@InnoHK. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- (c) In the 2024-25 Budget, the Government allocated \$3 billion for a 3-year Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), mainly to subsidise eligible users including local institutions, R&D centres and enterprises to leverage the AISC's computing power, enhancing cyber and data security of the AISC, and promoting the development of AI ecosystem. DPO will estimate the annual expenditure of the Subsidy Scheme according to the cash flow requirements estimated by Cyberport on an annual basis. The estimated expenditure in 2025-26 is about \$905 million with breakdown as below:

Scope of the Subsidy Scheme	Estimated Expenditure (\$ million)
Computing power subsidy	857
Enhancing cyber and data security	32
Promoting the development of AI ecosystem	16
Total	905

According to the agreement signed between DPO and Cyberport for the Subsidy Scheme, Cyberport is required to submit annual reports to DPO to report on the implementation progress, performance and utilisation of funds, etc. of the Subsidy Scheme over the past year, as well as the implementation plan and latest budget for the next year. DPO will confirm the specific allocation amount for the Subsidy Scheme for 2025-26 after receiving Cyberport's report for 2024-25 and conducting an assessment on it.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB198

(Question Serial No. 3244)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention under this Programme that in 2025-26, the Digital Policy Office will continue to implement the Knowing More About IT Programme and the IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools Programme. In this connection, will the Government please inform this Committee of the following:

1. How many applications were received by the aforesaid programmes from eligible primary and secondary schools in the past year (2024-25), and what items were involved?
2. How many primary and secondary school students benefited from the above two programmes?
3. In 2025-26, in what ways will the Government step up publicity efforts to encourage more schools to apply for the aforesaid programmes? Will consideration be given to strengthening co-operation with the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks, Cyberport and other educational bodies to keep schools informed of the latest activities related to information technology on the market?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Yuk-wai, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 58)

Reply:

The "IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" and "Knowing More About IT" programmes were launched in 2020/21 and 2021/22 school years respectively to provide funding support to all publicly-funded secondary and primary schools in Hong Kong for organising IT-related extra-curricular activities. As of February 2025, more than 1 000 primary and secondary schools have participated in the two programmes, accounting for about 96% of eligible primary and secondary schools.

In the 2024/25 school year, as of February 2025, a total of 340 primary and secondary schools have their applications approved under the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” and “Knowing More About IT” programmes, covering a wide variety of courses including introductory courses on artificial intelligence, robotics programming classes and Internet of Things workshops. These programmes are expected to benefit more than 70 000 participants from the primary and secondary schools, nurturing their interest and skills in information technology.

The Digital Policy Office will continue to collaborate with various organisations, including Cyberport, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks and various educational associations, to organise solution days and achievement sharing exhibitions to facilitate schools to understand the experience of other schools in implementing the programmes as well as the latest IT-related activities and developments in the market, with a view to enhancing their knowledge and application of innovation and technology.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB199

(Question Serial No. 1942)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. The Digital Policy Office provided support to government bureaux and departments in the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI). What was the total amount of funding invested in this AI system? What kind of work can this AI system handle? Is this AI system self-developed by the Government or provided by a service provider? If it is provided by a service provider, which country is the company from? Does the entire Government use the same AI system?
2. How much resources were allocated in each of the past 3 years to ensure the security and reliability of the data and personal information handled by this AI system? What specific protection measures were taken?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

1. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has been striving to drive the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) technology by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to provide more digital government services that bring convenience and benefit to the public and businesses. In addition to developing or procuring different AI solutions by B/Ds according to their business needs, the DPO has also launched a number of central platforms and facilities implemented by local or Mainland service providers to assist B/Ds in developing or applying AI technologies in appropriate scenarios in a more cost-effective manner, including:
 - (i) Big Data Analytics Platform (BDAP): Launched in 2020, it enables B/Ds to adopt technologies such as AI and big data analytics to implement more e-government projects. The expenditure of implementing the BDAP is \$69 million, and the BDAP has currently supported the implementation of more than 20 big data projects in B/Ds.

- (ii) Chatbot-as-a-Service: Launched in June 2023, it enables B/Ds to make use of a shared chatbot infrastructure with ready-to-use building blocks to develop chatbots related to their businesses more promptly and more cost-effectively. The expenditure of developing Chatbot-as-a-Service is around \$7.79 million.
- (iii) AI Computer Vision Hub: Launched in March 2024, it provides B/Ds with a series of tools related to image analytics, including pre-trained models, data labelling tools, model development environment, etc., to help B/Ds develop image analytics models and identify objects or text in images and videos. The expenditure of developing AI Computer Vision Hub is around \$8.64 million.

In addition, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) established with funding from the InnoHK is developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The DPO has invited all B/Ds to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme, mainly for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation, and summarisation of documents, and will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff to assist the HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application.

2. The DPO has formulated the Ethical AI Framework in 2021 to provide B/Ds with guidelines on implementing projects that involve the use of AI technology, including on identifying and managing potential risks and other issues (e.g. personal privacy, data security and management, etc.). The Ethical AI Framework has been updated in August 2023 to incorporate challenges and recommended practices related to generative AI, assisting B/Ds in planning, designing, and adopting generative AI technologies in their IT projects and services. The Government has also commissioned the HKGAI, through practical applications, to study and suggest appropriate codes and guidelines on the accuracy, responsibility and information security in the generative AI technologies and practices. The guidelines are expected to be released in 2025 for reference by the Government and the industry.

In addition, the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (PD(P)O) sets out the requirements for the collection, holding, processing and use of personal data. The Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD) has also published the Guidance on Ethical Development and Use of AI and the Artificial Intelligence: Model Personal Data Protection Framework to provide recommendations regarding the governance of AI and the protection of personal data privacy, assisting public and private organisations in complying with the relevant requirements under the PD(P)O when they develop, procure, implement and use AI systems.

When implementing projects that adopt AI technologies, B/Ds should consider and comply with the Ethical AI Framework and PD(P)O, and properly conduct project management, system development, testing, information security risk assessment and audit, system maintenance, etc., so as to safeguard the security of the processed data and personal data and to comply with the requirements of all relevant regulations and guidelines. The related data protection work constitutes part of the system design and

management of project. The DPO does not maintain itemised information for the relevant expenditures of individual projects and B/Ds.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB200

(Question Serial No. 1943)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. What resources has the Government provided each year since 2021 for taking forward the work on “managing the government data centres, data network, central platforms and services”? What are the performance indicators for the relevant work? How long will it take to achieve full digitisation of government services?
2. Has the Government provided any resources for establishing a central civic database to shorten the time and simplify the administrative procedures required for handling personal data by the Government and members of the public, while saving the need for cross-departmental verification when data discrepancies exist? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
3. What resources will the Government provide this year for realising “single portal for online government services”? What types of services will be included in the “iAM Smart” platform?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

1. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has been striving to provide comprehensive, secure and stable central information technology (IT) infrastructure services, as well as 24-hour monitoring and supporting services to support bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in implementing highly efficient and secure e-government services to meet the needs of digital government development. The central IT infrastructure services include DPO's data centres, data networks (including Government Backbone Network, intranet and Internet access), central platforms and services (including Government Cloud Infrastructure Services, Big Data Analytics Platform, Shared Blockchain Platform, web content hosting service, domain name hosting service, Central e-Form Services, “iAM

Smart” platform, Open Data Portal, Consented Data Exchange Gateway (CDEG) as well as government email systems, etc.).

A key objective of implementing central IT infrastructure services is to support B/Ds in driving full digitalisation of government services. Since mid-2024, all licences and government services involving application and approval (about 1 480 items in total) and forms (over 3 800) have been digitalised, i.e. enabling submission of application, payment and collection of documents by electronic means for relevant licences and services. Furthermore, all government payment items (over 600 items) have been fully provided with electronic payment option since the third quarter of 2024.

The annual expenditures of the DPO under Head 47 for the management of the above central IT infrastructure services from 2021-22 to 2024-25 are as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2021-22 (Actual)	Around 155
2022-23 (Actual)	Around 137
2023-24 (Actual)	Around 273
2024-25 (Revised Estimate)	Around 357

2. To expedite the development of digital government, the DPO will continue to promote the adoption of advanced technology and common digital infrastructure and services (such as the Government Cloud Infrastructure Services, Big Data Analytics Platform, Shared Blockchain Platform and CDEG) across B/Ds for facilitating the integration, application, opening up and sharing of data, thereby streamlining the processing procedures of public services.

To provide citizens with greater convenience and promote data sharing among B/Ds, we fully launched the CDEG in June 2024 for adoption by B/Ds. With consent given by the citizens, the CDEG enables citizens to use their personal data stored in participating B/Ds when applying for other government services, obviating the need for re-entering the information. This improves the user experience and streamlines the data verification procedures required by B/Ds when processing applications, achieving the benefit of cross-departmental data sharing while in compliance with the requirements of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance. As of February 2025, the CDEG has processed over 16 million data exchanges, assisting financial institutions in accessing company registration information and supporting the automatic address input function through the “e-ME” profile of “iAM Smart”.

Furthermore, the DPO will compile the departmental data catalogues by 2025. B/Ds have to register their data in the departmental data catalogues in accordance with the requirements of the DPO to facilitate other B/Ds in identifying suitable data, and providing digital government services which bring about convenience and benefits to the public and businesses through data sharing within the Government.

3. The DPO obtained the funding approval of \$193 million from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in mid-2023 to commence a series of upgrades to the “iAM Smart” platform. The target is to drive full adoption of “iAM Smart” by all

government online services by 2025 so as to realise “single portal for online government services”. The upgrade work of the “iAM Smart” platform is progressing at full speed, with the enhanced or new features as follows:

- i. In 2023, the design for the “iAM Smart” mobile app was updated, enabling citizens to browse various useful information. Additionally, the “iAM Smart” platform was linked up with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents to directly log in to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile app through “iAM Smart” for using various government services of the Guangdong Province.
- ii. In 2024, the registration process for “iAM Smart+” was simplified. A new “iAM Smart” interface was launched, and a new “iAM Smart Personal Code” was introduced for identity verification purpose.
- iii. Various departments will gradually roll out personalised content for displaying on the “Personal Assistant” page.
- iv. In early March 2025, the “Digital Document” feature was introduced, allowing users to present their digital documents issued by different government departments through the “iAM Smart” mobile app. It currently covers the Social Welfare Department’s Electronic Senior Citizen Card, the Civil Service Bureau’s Common Recruitment Examination results and the Basic Law and National Security Law Test results, as well as the Correctional Services Department’s Incarceration Proof.
- v. More new features will be progressively rolled out this year, including the “Step-up Authentication”, bill payment function and “Mini-program Platform”.

The estimated expenditure for upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform for 2025-26 is about \$45.8 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB201

(Question Serial No. 1944)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

1. Why does the Government plan to set up a data centre in caverns instead of choosing a normal site or building? What are the details and reasons? What will be the differences in the construction costs and daily maintenance expenses among various options?
2. The Government has commenced a consultancy study to explore the use of cavern to develop a new government data centre. What issues will be included in the study, and what is the cost involved?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The building up and development of digital government continue to increase the demand on storage, processing and maintenance of data, as well as setting up data centres for the Government. Caverns is one of the land supply options for data centre development. Strong cavern walls can provide an environment of relatively stable temperature and humidity throughout the year, and protect data centre facilities against impact arising from natural or man-made disasters, thereby enhancing the safety and energy efficiency of the operations of data centre facilities. To explore the feasibility of developing a government data centre in caverns in Hong Kong, the Digital Policy Office and the Civil Engineering and Development Department are jointly conducting a related technical study. The appointed consultant is carrying out a series of investigation and assessment work on the proposal, including the detailed technical and land use requirements for setting up a government data centre in caverns, preliminary layout design, cost estimation, related impact assessment on environment, traffic, drainage and sewerage, etc. The cost of the consultancy study is \$27.8 million. We will consider the way forward upon the completion of the study.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB202

(Question Serial No. 1004)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Paragraphs 36-40 of the 2025-26 Budget Speech list out a series of measures to vigorously promote the development of artificial intelligence (AI). In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) The Hong Kong Generative AI Research & Development Center under InnoHK has developed the HKGAI V1 large model, which is targeted to open to the public within this year. To avoid situations affecting the experience of public users, such as busy servers and lagging, what measures will the Government put in place to ensure the operation stability of the large model in terms of computing power, cybersecurity, cloud computing, etc.? What is the estimated expenditure involved?
- (2) The Government has set aside \$1 billion to establish the Hong Kong AI Research and Development (R&D) Institute. What are the estimated expenditures on the associated development, procurement of equipment and operation?
- (3) Are there any specific plans and measures to promote and publicise the AI R&D Institute in the Mainland and overseas, with a view to drawing in leading talents and teams specialised in scientific research and application from Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas? What is the estimated expenditure involved?
- (4) The Digital Policy Office will formulate the establishment arrangements of the AI R&D Institute and its specific goals. What are the details of the focus and priorities of the work plan for 2025-26?
- (5) How will the AI R&D Institute collaborate with research institutes and universities, other government R&D platforms and the private organisations to jointly promote AI+ and enable the transformation and upgrading of industries?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

- (1) The Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) under the AIR@InnoHK, which focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative artificial intelligence (AI), is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models for developing related technologies suitable for applications of text and image generation, medical diagnosis, legal affairs, etc. HKGAI's goal is to launch a chatbot developed based on its large language model (LLM) to the market for public use this year. It is understood that HKGAI will conduct testing on the cybersecurity and stability of related systems before official market launch, including inviting third-party experts to conduct audits.

In addition, the Government started piloting a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) in mid-2024 developed by HKGAI to assist government staff in handling document processing tasks such as drafting, translation and summarisation of documents. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has invited all bureaux/departments to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme. HKGAI is currently gathering government users' feedback (on the accuracy of related contents and terminologies, user experience, effectiveness, etc.) through the pilot programme for further training and optimising its LLM and the application to enhance their capabilities of document processing.

The R&D and operating expenditure of HKGAI in the first 3 years amounted to around \$235 million. We do not maintain the breakdown figures related to the development of individual models or applications.

- (2) to (5) The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative R&D and industrial applications of AI, facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. The AIRDI will be one of the key initiatives in building the local AI ecosystem, complementing the current AIR@InnoHK R&D platform that focuses on AI and robotics technologies, the infrastructure of Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC), and the \$3 billion AI Subsidy Scheme mainly for subsidising the industry to leverage the computing power of the AISC, etc.

The DPO is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of HKGAI. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB203

(Question Serial No. 0009)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 39 of the Budget Speech that for spearheading and supporting Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) as well as industrial application of AI, \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute (Institute). The Digital Policy Office (DPO) will formulate the establishment arrangements of the institute and its specific goals. In this connection,

1. does the Government have an expected earliest completion date of the Institute? What are the respective resources and manpower required for such establishment in the first two years? And,
2. will the Government first formulate an overall blueprint for the promotion of Hong Kong's innovative R&D and industrial application of AI, and base on this blueprint, set the work priorities and key performance indicators (KPIs) for the Institute in the future? If yes, what are the details? If not, what the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is at the core of developing new quality productive forces. It is a key industry that Hong Kong is committed to developing, and it also empowers the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (the Blueprint) published by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau at the end of 2022 has proposed to focus on the development of AI industry, setting out clear strategic directions and detailed action plan for promoting the development of AI in Hong Kong. Following the development strategies outlined in the Blueprint, the Government has been implementing a series of initiatives to support the development of AI in recent years, thereby realising the AI development strategy. Key initiatives include:

- (i) Continuously nurture local talent and gather top-notch researchers from all around the world, as well as foster global research collaboration, through the AIR@InnoHK research cluster and its research and development (R&D) laboratories focusing on AI and robotics technologies, including the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) set up in 2023 with the support of the AIR@InnoHK platform;
- (ii) Establish the Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC) by the Cyberport to enhance the local supply of high-performance computing power;
- (iii) Put in place the \$3 billion AI Subsidy Scheme to subsidise local institutions, research and development centres and enterprises, etc. in leveraging the computing power of the AISC to achieve scientific breakthrough; and
- (iv) Prepare to set up a \$10 billion Innovation and Technology Industry-Oriented Fund, and include AI and robotics as one of its thematic areas of emerging and future industries of strategic importance, with a view to channelling more market capital to promote the development of AI and robotics industries.

To further promote the R&D and application of AI in Hong Kong, the 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative R&D and industrial applications of AI, facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. The Digital Policy Office is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the HKGAI. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB204

(Question Serial No. 0010)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Digital Policy Office is responsible for working closely with bureaux and departments to drive digitalisation of government services to facilitate business and streamline government services. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. the major progress and achievements made in the past 2 years in accelerating the automation process of various departments to drive the implementation of digitalisation of the approval process for the engineering and construction sectors; and
2. whether the Government will strengthen collaboration with the Guangdong Province and co-ordinate bureaux and departments' provision of cross-boundary public services through different service delivery modes in the Greater Bay Area, so as to support Hong Kong's professional services, such as engineering and construction, in expediting their integration into the overall development of the country? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

1. The Government has been striving to drive the full digitalisation of government services. Since mid-2024, all licences and government services involving application and approval (about 1 480 items in total) and forms (over 3 800) have been digitalised, i.e. enabling submission of application, payment and collection of documents by electronic means for relevant licences and services. These include licences and services under various works departments, such as the application for a permit to erect hoardings, covered walkways or gantries.

For the implementation of digitalisation of the approval process for the construction and engineering sectors, according to the information provided by the Development Bureau

(DEVB), the Buildings Department received funding of about \$200 million from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in 2019 for the development of an electronic submission hub (ESH) to receive and process building plans and related applications submitted under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123). The ESH was launched in 3 stages, with the first 2 stages launched in June 2022 and March 2023 respectively. The final stage (i.e. Stage 3) was launched in June 2024. The ESH is able to accept all types of plan submissions and related applications under the BO. Since the launch of its first stage in June 2022 up to February 2025, the ESH has saved over 120 000 sheets of A1 sized paper drawings and over 9 million pages of paper documents.

In addition, to tie in with the implementation of digitalisation of government services, the DEVB, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Digital Policy Office collaborated to launch a pilot e-tendering system (e-TS) in June 2022, providing online processing of the tendering procedures for public works contracts that are to be approved by the Public Works Tender Board or the Central Tender Board, and facilitating submission of tenders by bidders through this system. The DEVB has also extended the service to the tendering procedures for architectural and engineering consultancy services, which was launched in the first quarter of 2024 on a pilot basis.

Having regard to the satisfactory system performance and favourable responses of bidders during the pilot, the DEVB has fully implemented the e-TS in the middle of last year requiring all eligible government public works contracts and architectural and engineering consultancy services to adopt the system to handle the procurement procedures electronically in order to further leverage the advantages of the e-TS in helping to reduce paper consumption, reduce the cost of processing traditional paper tenders and speed up the procurement process. So far, the e-TS has been used in the procurement process for over 70 public works contracts and 30 architectural and engineering consultancy services. The DEVB will continue to enhance the system and strengthen its functions with a view to expanding the application scope and further improving the efficiency of the procurement process.

On the other hand, the DEVB issued a new technical circular in January 2025 to adopt the Digital Project Delivery System in consultancies under the Capital Works Programme, which would digitalise the submission and approval workflow of technical documents. Works departments, relevant approval authorities and consultants can submit and approve technical documents through the system platform, thereby streamlining the circulation of documents, optimising the approval process and enhancing the management efficiency of consultancies.

2. We are actively collaborating with Guangdong Province to promote the Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) initiative. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau and the Government Services and Data Management Bureau of Guangdong Province signed the “Co-operation Agreement between Guangdong and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region on Cross-boundary Public Services” in November 2023, and jointly launched the CBPS service area/thematic website. Moreover, the connection between “iAM Smart” and the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province has been established, enabling Hong Kong residents who have registered for the Guangdong Provincial Administrative Service to directly login to the Guangdong

Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile application through “iAM Smart” to use various public services of Guangdong Province in a more convenient and efficient manner. We have set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks and “iAM Smart” self-registration kiosks in Guangzhou, Qianhai and Futian in Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou and Dongguan progressively since February 2024, enabling residents and enterprises in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to access cross-boundary public services and register for “iAM Smart” to have one-stop access to online services of various government departments via the “iAM Smart” mobile application.

The Hong Kong cross-boundary public services available have increased from 54 services provided by 9 bureaux/departments (B/Ds) at initial launch in end-2023 to currently 77 services provided by 12 B/Ds and related organisations. We will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to identify and introduce more suitable cross-boundary public services to bring greater convenience to the public.

Moreover, the DEVB has been collaborating with relevant Mainland authorities to promulgate a number of measures, including the implementation of a registration system in the 9 Mainland cities of the GBA in collaboration with Guangdong Province in 2021, which allows Hong Kong construction and engineering enterprises and professionals to acquire Mainland qualifications through a simple registration process and bid for government construction projects in the Mainland. Relevant enterprises and professionals can access the websites of the relevant government departments in the Mainland to submit applications through the “GBA Opportunities” online cross-boundary public services platform established on the DEVB’s webpage. Since 2023, the Qianhai Free Trade Zone has launched a number of construction and engineering projects for bidding by Hong Kong enterprises that have obtained Mainland qualifications through the registration system. Hong Kong enterprises can access the tendering websites of the relevant government departments in the Mainland through the aforementioned online platform.

Apart from the “GBA Opportunities” online platform, the DEVB’s webpage also links to other thematic online platforms, disseminating information about the Mainland’s construction industry, including the Mainland’s tendering procedures and requirements; business information in the Mainland, including commercial data of relevant Mainland enterprises; the liberalisation measures for the construction and engineering sectors in Hong Kong under the framework of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement; and records of activities promoting the exchange between the construction and engineering sectors of the two places. It also provides a hotline and an email address for one-stop enquiry services to facilitate our construction industry in grasping the latest information and answer their questions, with a commitment to supporting the construction and engineering sectors in Hong Kong to accelerate their integration into the overall development of the country.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB205

(Question Serial No. 0011)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Digital Policy Office facilitates the adoption of artificial intelligence, big data analytics and blockchain technologies in bureaux and departments for their digital government services. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. the major progress and achievements made in the past 2 years; and
2. regarding the generative artificial intelligence document processing copilot application currently in pilot use within the Government, whether the Government will formulate plans to enhance and promote the application expeditiously with a view to opening it for use by all sectors of society? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

1. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has been striving to drive the adoption of innovative technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics and blockchain technologies, by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to provide digital government services that bring convenience and benefits to the public and businesses.

Regarding the application of AI and big data analytics technologies, various B/Ds have launched a number of related projects in the past 2 years, including:

- The Transport Department (TD) and the DPO have jointly developed the “Traffic Data Analytics System” (TDAS) which utilises big data analytics to analyse various traffic, transport and weather data, assisting the TD in more accurately analysing and assessing traffic conditions, thereby enhancing traffic management and efficiency;

- The DPO has launched a shared chatbot infrastructure with ready-to-use building blocks that enables B/Ds to develop chatbots related to their businesses more promptly and more cost-effectively;
- The DPO has further applied AI in 1823 to enhance work efficiency, such as fully expanding 1823's AI chatbot service to answer common public enquiries within the service scope of 1823, utilising "AI speech recognition" technology to identify callers' enquiry subjects and provide relevant information via voicemails or Short Message Service (SMS), and internally piloting generative AI technology to assist staff in drafting responses to written enquiries;
- The Lands Department has launched a chatbot service based on map/Geographic Information System, integrating AI with geographic information technology to make spatial data searching easier and faster for the public.
- The Hong Kong Fire Services Department uses drones equipped with terrain-following technology to conduct flight systematically and capture photos within specific areas for creating two-dimensional and three-dimensional maps, and further utilises AI to detect human presence, enhancing both the safety of operations and the precision of search efforts;
- The Architectural Services Department employs AI, big data analytics and other technologies to optimise cost estimation for construction projects;
- The Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) has launched the "Smart Customs Interactive Response System" which applies natural language processing, machine learning and text-to-speech technologies, and a central knowledge base of the C&ED to provide instant and accurate responses to inquiries from the public and travellers;
- The Highways Department has developed a "Road Defect Detection System" tailored for Hong Kong's road conditions, using a camera system installed in the patrol inspection vehicle to automatically capture photos of the road surface during inspections. By leveraging AI models and advanced geospatial technology, the system analyses these photos to automatically identify road cracks and faded road surfaces, and then marks and records their locations, enabling the engineering teams to promptly arrange appropriate road maintenance works;
- The Environmental Protection Department has developed the AI robotic dog equipped with advanced computer vision, specialised directional air intakes and air measurement sensors. Combined with AI algorithms, the robotic dog can infer activities that cause the pollution and autonomously locate sources of air pollution and odor nuisance;
- The Hong Kong Police Force has launched an AI-based "Smart Traffic Management System" in Kwun Tong, using a combination of multiple cameras to monitor traffic flow, parking situations and traffic incidents in real time; and

- The Census and Statistics Department employs deep learning technology to detect anomalies in trade declarations, which can identify misreported information more effectively and reduce manual checks, thereby improving the accuracy of trade statistics and work efficiency.

Regarding the use of blockchain technology, the DPO launched the “Shared Blockchain Platform” (SBP) in June 2022, enabling B/Ds to develop blockchain application systems on the platform more conveniently and quickly, including the “Dealers in Precious Metals and Stones Registration System” launched by the Customs and Excise Department in 2023 and the “Consented Data Exchange Gateway” launched by the DPO in 2023 to promote departmental data sharing. To further support B/Ds in issuing licences, permits and certificates by electronic means, the DPO launched the “e-Proof” service on the SBP in May 2024 to make use of blockchain technology to issue and verify digital licences and permits. So far, 5 B/Ds (the Education Bureau, the Civil Service Bureau, the Fire Services Department, the Correctional Services Department and the Social Welfare Department) have adopted the “e-Proof” service to issue over 1.5 million of digital licences and permits, covering 18 types of licences and certificates.

2. In 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the AIR@InnoHK which focuses on AI and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong’s self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the HKPilot in mid-2024. The DPO has invited all B/Ds to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme.

HKGAI updated its locally developed “HKGAI V1” LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application’s capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is also provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff. On the other hand, HKGAI is taking into account feedback collected from the pilot programme to fully optimise the LLM and the application, and to formulate an overall strategy and timetable for releasing the LLM and the application for use by various sectors in the community.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB206

(Question Serial No. 0058)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

While the Digital Policy Office strives to promote the development of digital government and smart city, incidents of data thefts by hackers or ransomware breaches were found recently by individual government departments and relevant public bodies. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Whether the Government will devote more resources to strengthen the governance and security of information technology systems of various government departments and relevant public bodies? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons? And
2. Whether the Government will formulate a comprehensive contingency plan to effectively tackle extreme conditions that may arise in the electronic systems of various government departments and relevant public bodies, such as a large-scale system failure and cyberattacks, and conduct cybersecurity drills regularly? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LO Wai-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. As the development of digital government continues to advance, the expectations and demands of the public for e-government services are also increasing day by day. Meanwhile, the Government and relevant public organisations must continuously enhance cybersecurity to address the increasingly complex and changing cybersecurity risks. The Government has implemented multiple optimisation measures since August 2024, requiring bureaux and departments (B/Ds) and public bodies under their purview to strengthen the project governance and security of information technology (IT) systems. The key measures include strengthening the oversight responsibility of B/Ds and public bodies under their purview, conducting regular and continuous health checks

and penetration testing on the government's public-facing IT systems, and strengthening staff training, etc.

In addition, government B/Ds also implement information security related projects by deploying internal resources and seeking funding support from the “Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation” block allocations. The estimated expenditure for implementing information security (including cybersecurity) related projects by B/Ds in 2025-26 with funding obtained from the “Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation” is \$773 million, representing an increase of 21.5% (\$137 million) over the revised estimate of \$636 million in 2024-25. The increased estimate of B/Ds is mainly used for implementing the new information security requirements in the “Government Information Technology Security Policy and Guidelines” (“Policy and Guidelines”) updated in April 2024, such as the information security measures of deploying endpoint detection and response (EDR) solutions, implementing multi-factor authentication for information systems, etc.

2. The Government has put in place a comprehensive and effective information security incident handling mechanism, requiring B/Ds and relevant public organisations to conduct an incident impact assessment upon the occurrence of information security incidents, report the incidents to the respective bureaux and the Government Information Security Incident Response Office under the Digital Policy Office (DPO) in accordance with the established mechanism, and notify relevant regulatory authorities depending on the nature of the incidents. B/Ds are also required to follow the relevant requirements of the “Policy and Guidelines” to set up Information Security Incident Response Teams and formulate incident response plans, so as to ensure the response in the event of a security incident is appropriate and effective.

With a view to enhancing the cybersecurity awareness and overall incident response capabilities of B/Ds against cyberattacks, the DPO and the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau (CSTCB) of the Hong Kong Police Force have co-organised the “Inter-departmental Cyber Security Drill” annually since 2017. In addition, the annual real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill is spearheaded by the DPO from 2024 onwards. B/Ds and public organisations will be invited to participate in the drill, during which simulated cyberattacks in real-life scenarios are launched to examine the cybersecurity incident response capabilities of participating IT systems. Through practical combat scenarios in the drill, the technical skills, experience and overall defensive capabilities of B/Ds and public organisations in identifying and responding to cyberattacks will be enhanced, thereby fortifying their defence line. The first ever real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill was conducted from 15 to 17 November 2024. The DPO has disseminated the findings and reports of the drill to the respective B/Ds and organisations, and requested them to follow up and enhance the defence capabilities of the respective systems as soon as possible. We plan to conduct the next real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill in the second half of 2025 on a larger scale in order to enhance the effectiveness of the drill.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB207

(Question Serial No. 0919)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this Programme, the “Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26” of the Digital Policy Office include the following: “continue to promote adoption of digital technologies among the elderly through various programmes, and to oversee the operation of the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund, including the implementation of the “Smart Silver” Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders”. Please inform this Committee of the expenditure incurred by the Government to promote the adoption of digital technologies among the elderly in 2024-25. What work has been done and what specific outcomes have been achieved? In the new financial year 2025-26, what is the expenditure to be incurred for such work and what is the manpower to be involved? Also, what are the specific work plan and key performance indicators? How can the Government minimise the “digital gap” faced by the elderly so that they will not find themselves incapable of keeping pace with the digital advancement?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

To promote the adoption of digital technologies by the elders, we have launched the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Outreach Programme for the Elderly since 2014, collaborating with elderly services organisations to visit elders across the territory as well as organise various activities for them to experience digital life, encouraging greater use of digital technologies. We have also introduced the Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly in 2019, collaborating with district organisations and Elder Academies to provide free ICT advanced training courses for the elders with basic digital knowledge in the community regularly. At the same time, we launched the “Elderly IT Learning Portal”, a web-based learning portal designed and developed with digital technology learning materials suitable for the elders.

To further consolidate the current work on digital inclusion for elders, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) launched the “Smart Silver” Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders in December 2024, integrating with the above regular programmes. This programme provides funding for 12 non-governmental organisations to set up a total of 40 community-based help desks across 18 districts in the territory, providing regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support for elders aged 60 or above, particularly singleton or doubleton elders living in old districts and public housing.

In 2024-25 and 2025-26, the details of the work of the DPO under the “Smart Silver” programme are as follows:

Project	Date	Content	Total Expenditure of the Project¹ (\$ million)
ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly (2023-2025)	Commenced in April 2023 (for 2 years)	As at February 2025, over 46 000 elders living in residential care homes, the hidden elderly, as well as elders receiving day care centre and home care services have been served, while mobile outreach service stations have further served over 23 000 elders in the community.	About 16.1
ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly (2025-2026)	Expected to commence in mid-2025 (for 20 months)	A new round of Outreach Programme will commence in mid-2025, which is expected to have more than 36 000 elderly participants and over 300 sessions of mobile outreach service stations will be organised.	About 8.1
Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (2024-2026)	Commenced in February 2024 (for 2 years)	Offering free advanced digital training courses for the elders with basic knowledge of digital technology in the community. As at February 2025, around 3 300 elders have participated in the training. It is expected that over 6 000 elders will participate in the programme as a whole.	About 11.9

Project	Date	Content	Total Expenditure of the Project¹ (\$ million)
Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders (2024-2026)	Commenced in December 2024 (for 2 years)	Setting up 40 community-based help desks across 18 districts in the territory to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elders. As at January 2025, the programme has served over 7 000 elders in the community. It is expected that over 100 000 elders will participate in the programme as a whole.	About 45.0
“Smart Silver” Elderly IT Learning Portal	Launched in October 2019	Elders can learn digital technologies anywhere and anytime based on their personal needs and interests. A total of 39 learning modules have been rolled out so far. As at February 2025, the Portal recorded over 1.5 million visits and over 54 million hits.	About 8.4

¹ The cash flow of the projects may span across more than 1 financial year.

The various digital inclusion programmes will work in tandem to achieve greater synergy and impact. For instance, elders who have completed the basic, regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies will be referred to participate in the Enriched ICT Training Programme if they are interested in learning more advanced digital knowledge. This will not only broaden elders’ digital knowledge and skills but also empower them to volunteer as instructors, teaching fellow elders how to navigate these skills, thereby allowing more elders to enjoy the benefits and conveniences brought by digital technologies.

The DPO will continue to implement and coordinate the work of the above-mentioned programmes with existing manpower.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB208

(Question Serial No. 0920)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under this programme, the Digital Policy Office organised the first cybersecurity attack and defence drill to enhance the defence capabilities of government departments and public organisations; promulgated the enhancement measures to strengthen the governance and security of IT systems of bureaux and departments as well as public bodies under the purview of bureaux and departments; updated the government information security policies and guidelines and monitor their implementation within the Government in 2024-25. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the expenditures and effectiveness of these initiatives. In the new financial year of 2025-26, what will be the expenditures incurred by these initiatives and what will be the manpower involved? What will be the specific work plans and key performance indicators? How would the Government ensure the cybersecurity of government departments and public organisations and that information security incidents that involve information leakage will not happen again?

Asked by: Hon NG Kit-chong, Johnny (LegCo internal reference no.:18)

Reply:

One of the key areas of work under Programme (3) "Digital Infrastructure" of the Digital Policy Office (DPO) in 2024-25 and 2025-26 is to strengthen the overall cybersecurity defence capabilities of government departments and public bodies under the purview of bureaux and departments. This includes updating the "Government Information Technology Security Policy and Guidelines" ("Policy and Guidelines") and monitoring their implementation within the Government; implementing enhancement measures to strengthen the governance and security of the information technology (IT) systems of bureaux and departments (B/Ds) as well as public bodies under their purview; planning and organising cybersecurity attack and defence drill; and collaborating with the industry to promote information security awareness within the Government and in the community.

The DPO completed the latest review of the “Policy and Guidelines” in April 2024 and promulgated the revised “Policy and Guidelines” to all B/Ds to further strengthen the information security control measures in various areas. The DPO has also conducted a series of briefings, workshops and solution showcases to enhance promotion and raise awareness and understanding among government staff. The DPO has uploaded the revised “Policy and Guidelines” to its departmental website for reference by public and private organisations. The DPO will continue to update the “Policy and Guidelines” from time to time with reference to the latest technological development as well as national and international information security management standards, with a view to safeguarding the Government's information systems and data security more effectively.

The Government also implemented a series of enhancement measures in August 2024, requiring B/Ds and public bodies under their purview to strengthen governance and security for their information systems. The key measures include strengthening the supervisory accountability of B/Ds and public bodies under their purview, conducting regular and on-going health checks and penetration tests on the Government's public-facing IT systems, and strengthening staff training, etc. B/Ds and the public bodies under their purview are also required to be responsible for overseeing their IT governance work, exercising prudent planning and carrying out thorough testing before launching public-facing services, as well as enhancing contingency handling of IT security incidents, etc.

In addition, the annual real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill is spearheaded by the DPO from 2024 onwards. B/Ds and public organisations will be invited to participate in the drill, during which simulated cyberattacks in real-life scenarios are launched to examine the cybersecurity incident response capabilities of participating IT systems. Through practical combat scenarios in the drill, the technical skills, experience and overall defensive capabilities of B/Ds and public organisations in identifying and responding to cyberattacks will be enhanced, thereby fortifying their defence line. The first ever real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill was conducted from 15 to 17 November 2024. Participating parties included 15 defending teams from 9 B/Ds and 3 public organisations, as well as 5 attacking teams from cybersecurity industry experts and academics. The DPO has disseminated the findings and reports of the drill to the respective B/Ds and organisations, and requested them to follow up and enhance the defence capabilities of the respective systems as soon as possible. We plan to conduct the next real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill in the second half of 2025 on a larger scale in order to enhance the effectiveness of the drill.

The DPO also commenced a new round of the “Government-wide IT Security Compliance Audit” exercise in the second half of 2024, and will arrange “In-depth IT Security Compliance Audit” for 8 selected government IT systems in 2025, in order to ensure the IT security compliance of B/Ds with the revised “Policy and Guidelines”.

The DPO will continue to collaborate closely with all stakeholders, reminding and requiring B/Ds and the public bodies under their purview to enhance awareness of cybersecurity, strengthen monitoring mechanisms and protective measures, and comprehensively safeguard system and data security to address the latest trends in cyberattacks and security risks, further reinforcing the data security barrier.

The expenditures for the above work are included in Programme (3) of the DPO and the estimates of B/Ds, while the expenditures of spearheading the cybersecurity attack and

defence drill in 2024-25 and in 2025-26 are about \$1.3 million and \$4 million respectively. The DPO does not maintain the information on the breakdown of other work and the expenditure on the implementation of information security related projects by public bodies.

In addition, B/Ds also implement information security related projects by deploying internal resources and seeking funding support from the “Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation” block allocations. The expenditure for implementing information security (including cybersecurity) related projects by B/Ds with funding obtained from the “Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation” in 2024-25 and 2025-26 are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2024-25 (Revised Estimate)	636
2025-26 (Estimate)	773

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB209

(Question Serial No. 3062)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to Programme 2, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau monitored the implementation of the “Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme” (Programme) to promote digital transformation of small-and-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) this year. The Programme provides subsidies on a matching basis to assist SMEs in the food and beverage, retail, tourism and personal service sectors to apply ready-to-use basic digital solutions. Please provide a breakdown, by sector, of the number of enterprises that submitted an application in each year since the Programme was launched, as well as the numbers of applications approved, in the vetting process and declined respectively. What is the average processing time for each application? What is the average amount of subsidy granted to the approved applications? What are the manpower and expenditure involved in vetting the applications this year? Will the Government consider further expanding the scope of the Programme to allow SMEs from all sectors to apply? Will the Government regularise the Programme? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 222)

Reply:

The Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme) provides subsidies on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage (F&B) and retail sectors in applying ready-to-use basic digital solutions under three categories, including digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems, so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. To benefit more SMEs, the scope of the Pilot Programme was expanded at the end of 2024 to cover tourism and personal service sectors.

As of end-February 2025, Cyberport has received over 6 700 applications from SMEs under the Pilot Programme, with more than 2 500 applications approved and around 270 applications failed to meet the eligibility criteria or were withdrawn by the applicants.

Cyberport normally completes the approval process within two months after receiving all the required information. Currently, the total approved funding amount exceeds \$120 million, with an average funding of approximately \$48,000 per SME. Details are listed as follows:

Sector	Number of SME applications (Approximate)	Number of approved applications (Approximate)	Funding Amount (Approximate) (\$'000)
F&B	2 320	920	43,600
Retail	4 000	1 510	74,500
Tourism	10	3	100
Personal Service	440	110	5,600
Total	Over 6 700	Over 2 500	Over 120 million

Cyberport will continue to maintain close communication with the Advisory Group of the Pilot Programme, SMEs, solution providers and industry organisations to gather feedback and understand market conditions, ensuring the smooth operation of the Pilot Programme. We will work with Cyberport to review the arrangements, progress, effectiveness, etc. of the Pilot Programme in a timely manner to facilitate consideration of the way forward of the programme.

The Pilot Programme is implemented by Cyberport. The Digital Policy Office oversees the implementation of the programme with its existing manpower and no additional cost is involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB210

(Question Serial No. 0946)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to Head 47 - Government Secretariat: Digital Policy Office (DPO) in the Controlling Officer's Report of the 2025-26 Budget, in 2025-26, the DPO will continue to develop and organise the cybersecurity attack and defence drill for government departments and public organisations. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Does the DPO have any plan to conduct cybersecurity attack and defence drill for key inter-departmental common services systems, such as the Centrally Managed Messaging Platform? If yes, what are the relevant details, expenditure and key performance indicators (if any); if not, what are the reasons?
2. In the past 3 years, did the DPO (or the then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO)) conduct any drill for inter-departmental common services systems, such as conducting drills on the contingency measures to be taken when the common services systems fail to function normally? If yes, what were the details and results of such drills; if not, what were the reasons? And
3. In the past 3 years, did the DPO (or the then OGCIO) organise any national security education activities for civil servants, other government employees and T-contract staff, so as to prevent the occurrence of hacking within the Government which will directly threaten the cybersecurity of the Government? If yes, what were the details and relevant expenditure; if not, what were the reasons?

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

1. and 2. With a view to enhancing the cybersecurity awareness and overall incident response capabilities of government bureaux/departments (B/Ds), the Digital

Policy Office (DPO) and the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force have jointly hosted the Inter-departmental Cyber Security Drill annually since 2017. In addition, the annual real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill is spearheaded by the DPO from 2024 onwards. B/Ds and public organisations will be invited to participate in the drill, during which simulated cyberattacks in real-life scenarios are launched to examine the cybersecurity incident response capabilities of participating IT systems. Through practical combat scenarios in the drill, the technical skills, experience and overall defensive capabilities of B/Ds and public organisations in identifying and responding to cyberattacks will be enhanced, thereby fortifying their defence line. The first ever real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill was conducted from 15 to 17 November 2024. The DPO had disseminated the findings and reports of the drill to the respective B/Ds and organisations, and requested them to follow up and enhance the defence capabilities of the respective systems as soon as possible. We plan to conduct the next real-life cybersecurity attack and defence drill in the second half of 2025 on a larger scale in order to enhance the effectiveness of the drill.

The expenditure of the drill in 2024-25 was about \$1.3 million, and the estimated expenditure for 2025-26 is about \$4 million.

3. To ensure civil servants, other government employees and T-contract IT staff have a comprehensive understanding of national security, emphasising their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding national security, the DPO has been continually arranging various training and promotion activities, such as conducting national security training and briefing sessions, organising all serving civil servants to visit the National Security Exhibition Gallery, regularly circulating national security related information, etc., and arranging supervisors to elaborate to their subordinates the concept of national security and their responsibilities in safeguarding national security. Furthermore, the DPO is committed to enhancing the awareness of government staff in information security and cybersecurity. The DPO has been regularly arranging various training courses, seminars, solution sharing sessions, etc., to enhance the awareness and understanding of government staff in information security and cybersecurity. The related work was undertaken by the DPO through internal deployment of existing staff and resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB211

(Question Serial No. 0949)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to Head 47 - Government Secretariat: Digital Policy Office (DPO) in the Controlling Officer's Report of the 2025-26 Budget, in 2024-25, the DPO improved the service of 1823 through the application of artificial intelligence (AI) and other innovative technologies; and, in 2025-26, the DPO will continue to improve the service of 1823 through wider use of technologies. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. In 2024-25, what AI and innovative technologies were applied by the DPO to improve the service of 1823? What were the relevant expenditure and results?
2. In 2025-26, what technologies will the DPO apply to continue to improve the service of 1823? What are the estimated expenditure and expected results?
3. Is there any plan to outsource the service of the 1823 centre? If yes, what is the estimated expenditure that can be saved per year; if not, what are the reasons? And
4. It is learnt that at present, referrals from 1823 are not binding on government departments. Some government departments failed to actively handle referral cases from 1823 but they were not required to give any explanation to it. Please provide a breakdown of the cases remained unresolved for 6 months or more in the past 3 years by bureaux / departments.

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

1. 1823 provides round-the-clock one-stop service to answer public enquiries of participating departments, as well as receiving service requests and complaints in respect of all government bureaux/departments (B/Ds). Over the years, demand for 1823

service has been continuously increasing. Currently, 1823 staff handle over 3 million calls and emails from citizens annually.

To continuously enhance service quality and cope with the demand, 1823 actively applies artificial intelligence (AI) and other innovative technologies, to handle general enquiries through a range of digital self-services, including an AI chatbot, an intelligent interactive voice response system (IVRS), and provision of information on frequently asked questions on our website, enabling existing staff to concentrate on more complicated cases such as complaints.

In 2024-25, we have completed various service enhancement projects, including:

- Fully expanded the AI chatbot to answer frequently asked questions of all scopes of service under 1823.
- Implemented an intelligent IVRS and strengthened its speech operation function with adoption of AI speech recognition technology through which members of the public can input the required options verbally without pressing any button. The technology can also identify enquiry subjects and provide relevant information over the phone or by short message service (SMS).
- Implemented AI speech-to-text technology to enhance the efficiency of 1823 in handling citizens' voicemail messages.
- Leveraged AI technology to assist staff in drafting responses to written enquiries on specific topics, thereby enhancing processing efficiency.

In 2024, the usage of 1823 self-service has increased by 8% as compared with 2023. The above measures have enhanced the user experience for citizens and operational efficiency of 1823. The total expenditure for the service enhancement projects was around \$4.7 million.

2. In 2025-26, 1823 will continue to enhance service quality and cope with the rising demand through wider use of advanced technologies including AI. The 1823 service enhancement projects include:
 - To provide digital self-service for case status check to facilitate citizens to check the progress of their cases, thus reducing the need for human service.
 - To integrate 1823 services into iAM Smart to facilitate case enquiries and submissions.
 - To enable intelligent interoperability between the 1823 Chatbot Tammy and the GovHK Chatbot Bonny to strengthen the capability of 1823 Chatbot to handle enquiries related to electronic forms, thereby enhancing user experience.

We anticipate that these upgrades will further reduce public demand for telephone enquiry service, enhance user experience, and enable existing staff to concentrate on more complicated cases such as complaints, thereby relieving the pressure of manpower

growth. The estimated expenditure for the related service enhancement projects in 2025-26 is around \$4.4 million.

3. To explore the best mode of operation to meet service needs, we outsourced part of the 1823 service to 2 contractors in 2022 on a trial basis. Although the cost of outsourcing is similar to that of in-house provision by 1823, the efficiency and quality of the outsourced service were not satisfactory due to the varying quality and high turnover rate of contractor staff. In view of the result, we currently have no plan to outsource 1823 service again, and will continue to focus on the active application of technologies, including AI, to improve service efficiency and to respond to the increasing public demand for 1823 service.
4. Regardless of whether the cases are referred by 1823, B/Ds will handle public enquiries and service requests/complaints as soon as possible in accordance with their service pledge. For cases referred by 1823, B/Ds will notify 1823 after replying to the citizen directly, or provide information to 1823 for replying to the citizen. 1823 does not have record on B/Ds' actual completion date of cases (such as completion date of repair for cases on damaged facilities).

Based on past experience, a small number of service requests/complaints may take a longer processing time as delineation of responsibilities is necessary for cases requiring inter-departmental collaboration. The Steering Committee on District Governance led by the Chief Secretary for Administration has enhanced the complaint handling mechanism of 1823 in October 2024 to improve the delineation of responsibilities for complaints on district affairs involving various departments. The Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration will make a final decision on complaints that are difficult in identifying the lead department to facilitate speedy handling of complaints on district affairs. After the implementation of the enhanced mechanism, the number of cases that required delineation of responsibilities has been significantly reduced, thus effectively improved the efficiency of case processing.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB212

(Question Serial No. 0950)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

According to "Head 47 - Government Secretariat: Digital Policy Office" in the Controlling Officer's Report of the 2025-26 Budget, one of the key areas of work of the Digital Policy Office (DPO) is to promote the adoption of digital technologies among the elderly. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Have key performance indicators been formulated on promoting the adoption of digital technologies among the elderly? If yes, what are the details and outcomes; if not, what are the reasons?
2. Have the DPO and the former Office of the Government Chief Information Officer commenced any works in collaboration with the Community Care Teams under the Home Affairs Department to promote the adoption of digital technologies among the elderly in the past 2 years? If yes, please provide a breakdown of the details and outcomes of such works in each of the 18 districts by year, as well as the expenditures involved. And
3. As at the end of February 2025, what were the respective numbers of registered users of "iAM Smart" and "iAM Smart+" who were aged above 60 and above 65?

Asked by: Hon NGAN Man-yu (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. According to government statistics, the rate of persons aged 65 and above using the Internet increased significantly from around 56% in 2018 to around 84% in 2023, reflecting the widespread use of digital technologies among the elders, including the use of the Internet for information searches, social interactions, entertainment, shopping and mobile payment, etc. The Government continues to pursue various digital inclusion measures under the "Smart Silver" programme to promote the adoption of digital

technologies by the elders. It is expected that the rate of persons aged 65 and above using the Internet will reach the target of 87% by 2025.

2. To promote the adoption of digital technologies by the elders, we have launched the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Outreach Programme for the Elderly since 2014, collaborating with elderly service organisations to visit elders across the territory as well as organise various activities for them to experience digital life, encouraging greater use of digital technologies. We have also introduced the Enriched ICT Training Programme in 2019, collaborating with district organisations and Elder Academies to provide free ICT advanced training courses for the elders with basic digital knowledge in the community regularly. At the same time, we launched the “Elderly IT Learning Portal”, a web-based learning portal designed and developed with digital technology learning materials suitable for the elders.

Since the establishment of the Care Teams in 2023, we have been promoting digital technologies among the elders through the community network of the Care Teams and their close connections with residents, as well as opportunities to reach out to the elders in daily district work. To further consolidate the current work on digital inclusion for elders, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) launched the “Smart Silver” Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders in December 2024, integrating with the above regular programmes. This programme provides funding for 12 non-governmental organisations to set up a total of 40 community-based help desks across 18 districts in the territory, providing regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support for elders aged 60 or above, particularly singleton or doubleton elders living in old districts and public housing. The programme is expected to benefit more than 100 000 elders. To enhance promotion, the DPO, through the Home Affairs Department, has disseminated information about the programme, including its objectives, beneficiaries, implementation timeline, and the implementing organisations involved in various districts, etc., to the Care Teams. The aim is to leverage the community networks and home visit activities of the Care Teams to assist in promoting the “Smart Silver” Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders.

The above-mentioned community collaboration activities are integral to our efforts in promoting digital inclusion among the elders, and the related expenditures cannot be itemised separately.

3. As at the end of February 2025, the distribution of “iAM Smart” and “iAM Smart+” registered users aged 60 to 64, and aged 65 or above is as follows:

Age Group	“iAM Smart” Users	“iAM Smart+” Users	Total
60 to 64	100 000	154 000	254 000
65 or above	151 000	206 000	357 000
Total	251 000	360 000	611 000

Remarks: The figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB213

(Question Serial No. 2755)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Digital Policy Office will develop and organise the cybersecurity attack and defence drill to enhance the defence capabilities of government departments and public organisations. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the specific expenditure incurred to enhance the defence capabilities of government departments and public organisations in 2024-25 and the estimated expenditure in 2025-26?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

One of the key areas of work under Programme (3) “Digital Infrastructure” of the Digital Policy Office (DPO) in 2024-25 and 2025-26 is to strengthen the overall cybersecurity defence capabilities of government departments and public bodies under their purview. This includes updating the “Government Information Technology Security Policy and Guidelines” and monitoring their implementation within the Government; implementing enhancement measures to strengthen the governance and security of the information technology systems of bureaux and departments (B/Ds) as well as public bodies under their purview; planning and organising cybersecurity attack and defence drill; and collaborating with the industry to promote information security awareness within the Government and in the community. The expenditure for each of the aforementioned work has been included in Programme (3) of the DPO and the estimates of B/Ds. The DPO does not maintain the relevant breakdown of figures.

In addition, B/Ds also implement information security related projects by deploying internal resources and seeking funding support from the “Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation” block allocations. The expenditure for implementing information security (including cybersecurity) related projects by B/Ds with funding obtained from the

“Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation” in 2024-25 and 2025-26 are tabulated as follows:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2024-25 (Revised Estimate)	636
2025-26 (Estimate)	773

The DPO does not maintain the information on the expenditure of information security related projects implemented by public bodies.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB214

(Question Serial No. 2756)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Digital Policy Office will continue to promote adoption of digital technologies among the elderly through various programmes, and to oversee the operation of the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund, including the implementation of the “Smart Silver” Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- 1) the expenditure on and outcomes of the various programmes implemented by the Government to promote adoption of digital technologies among the elderly in the past 3 years;
- 2) the specific details of and estimated expenditure on the various programmes to promote adoption of digital technologies among the elderly in 2025-26; and
- 3) further to the above question, the publicity and promotion budget for promoting the various programmes?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The Government has been committed to promoting digital inclusion, encouraging those in need, including the elderly, to understand and use technology products and services, and to integrate into the digital society. From 2021-22 to 2025-26, the details of the work of the Digital Policy Office (DPO) under the “Smart Silver” programme are as follows:

Project	Date	Content	Total Expenditure of the Project¹ (\$ million)
ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly (2021-2023)	Commenced in March 2021 (for 2 years)	Over 44 700 elders living in residential care homes, the hidden elderly, as well as elders receiving day care centre and home care services have been served, while mobile outreach service stations have further served over 1 700 elders in the community.	About 10.4
ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly (2023-2025)	Commenced in April 2023 (for 2 years)	As at February 2025, over 46 000 elders living in residential care homes, the hidden elderly, as well as elders receiving day care centre and home care services have been served, while mobile outreach service stations have further served over 23 000 elders in the community.	About 16.1
ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly (2025-2026)	Expected to commence in mid-2025 (for 20 months)	Providing outreach services to hidden elderly and elders receiving day care centre services and organising over 300 sessions of mobile outreach service stations, which is expected to have more than 36 000 elderly participants.	About 8.1
Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (2021-2023)	Commenced in December 2021 (for 2 years)	Offering free advanced digital training courses for the elders with basic knowledge of digital technology in the community and over 6 800 elders have participated in the programme.	About 9.4

Project	Date	Content	Total Expenditure of the Project¹ (\$ million)
Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (2024-2026)	Commenced in February 2024 (for 2 years)	Offering free advanced digital training courses for the elders with basic knowledge of digital technology in the community. As at February 2025, around 3 300 elders have participated in the training.	About 11.9
Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders (2024-2026)	Commenced in December 2024 (for 2 years)	Setting up 40 community-based help desks across 18 districts in the territory to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elders. As at January 2025, the programme has served over 7 000 elders in the community. It is expected that over 100 000 elders will participate in the programme as a whole.	About 45.0
“Smart Silver” Elderly IT Learning Portal	Launched in October 2019	Elders can learn digital technologies anywhere and anytime based on their personal needs and interests. A total of 39 learning modules have been rolled out so far. As at February 2025, the Portal recorded over 1.5 million visits and over 54 million hits.	About 8.4

¹ The cash flow of the projects may span across more than 1 financial year.

In 2025-26, the DPO’s estimate for promoting and encouraging the adoption of digital technologies by the elders is about \$550,000.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB215

(Question Serial No. 2757)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Digital Policy Office will continue to promote web/mobile app accessibility in public and private organisations, and conduct compliance audit on accessibility of government websites and mobile apps. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

- 1) the respective numbers of the promotion of web/mobile app accessibility in public and private organisations and the compliance audit on accessibility of government websites and mobile apps carried out by the Government in the past 3 years;
- 2) the respective expenditures on the promotion of web/mobile app accessibility in public and private organisations and the compliance audit on accessibility of government websites and mobile apps in the past 3 years; and
- 3) the estimated expenditures on the promotion of web/mobile app accessibility in public and private organisations and the compliance audit on accessibility of government websites and mobile apps in 2025-26?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

To encourage more enterprises as well as public and private organisations to adopt accessible design in their websites and mobile applications, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) supports the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited (HKIRC) in hosting the Digital Accessibility Recognition Scheme (formerly known as the Web Accessibility Recognition Scheme). Over the past 3 years, HKIRC has organised 2 rounds of recognition schemes (each lasting approximately 18 months). During the implementation of the 2022-23 Recognition Scheme, HKIRC proactively reached out to around 65 public organisations, including the Consumer Council, the Occupational Safety and Health Council, and the Hong

Kong Palace Museum, etc., to promote accessible website/ mobile application design. During the said period, HKIRC also promoted the scheme to approximately 300 private organisations, including the MTR Corporation Limited, the Citybus Limited, and the Hang Seng Bank Limited, etc. Statistics show that around 60 public organisations and 180 private organisations have adopted or enhanced accessible website/mobile application design, participated in the recognition scheme and received awards. The 2024-25 Recognition Scheme introduced a new Elderly-friendly Award, receiving around 650 applications. The final evaluation is currently underway, with the award ceremony tentatively scheduled for May 2025.

Besides, the DPO regularly conducts compliance audits for government websites and mobile applications to ensure they meet relevant accessibility standards. Over the past 3 years, the DPO has conducted audits for around 300 government websites and mobile applications, assisting departments in ongoing optimisation efforts.

The Digital Accessibility Recognition Scheme is hosted by HKIRC, with the DPO supporting the scheme by deploying internal staff resources and no additional government expenditure is incurred. The compliance audits for government websites and mobile applications are coordinated by DPO staff. Over the past 3 years, the total expenditure for audit services amounted to approximately \$7.7 million and the estimated expenditure for 2025-26 is around \$2.1 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB216

(Question Serial No. 2758)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025/2026 that the Digital Policy Office will continue to collaborate with Guangdong Province and co-ordinate bureaux and departments' provision of cross-boundary public services in the Greater Bay Area through different service delivery modes. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) What specific cross-boundary public services are currently provided by the Government? What are the relevant expenditures?
- 2) What is the Government's plan to further implement cross-boundary public services in 2025/2026? What are the details of the plan and the estimated expenditure?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

- 1) The Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) thematic website was launched in November 2023. It currently provides a total of 77 online services and related information of cross-boundary public services from 12 bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and related organisations. Moreover, we have set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks and "iAM Smart" self-registration kiosks in Guangzhou, Qianhai and Futian in Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou and Dongguan progressively since February 2024, enabling residents and enterprises in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to access cross-boundary public services and register for "iAM Smart" to have one-stop access to online services of various government departments via the "iAM Smart" mobile application.

The total expenditure involved in developing the CBPS thematic website and the above-mentioned CBPS self-service kiosks was about \$1.56 million, including the

service fees of engaging research and development organisation and contractors for the design and development of the website and the self-service kiosks, conducting security risk assessment and audit, as well as conducting on-site testing in Mainland cities in the GBA.

- 2) We will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to identify and introduce more suitable cross-boundary public services to bring greater convenience to the public. In addition, we will continue to discuss with Guangdong Province to set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks and “iAM Smart” self-registration kiosks in more Mainland cities of the GBA for the convenience of residents and enterprises in the GBA. In 2025-26, we will set up 3 additional Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks, involving a total expenditure of about \$240,000. The estimated expenditure for maintaining the CBPS thematic website and self-service kiosks is about \$340,000.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB217

(Question Serial No. 2759)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-2026 that the Digital Policy Office will continue to support the pilot use of the generative artificial intelligence (AI) document processing copilot application within the Government. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) What is the current situation of the use of generative AI document processing copilot application by various government departments, as well as the expenditure on the operation and maintenance of the application? And
- 2) What are the Government's plan and the estimated expenditure to be incurred in 2025-2026 on the use of AI to assist in government operations and services?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

- 1) In 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the *AIR@InnoHK* which focuses on artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong's self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the HKPilot in mid-2024. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has invited all bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme. HKGAI

updated its locally developed “HKGAI V1” LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application’s capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is also provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff.

The R&D and operating expenditure of HKGAI in the first 3 years amounted to around \$235 million. We do not maintain the breakdown figures related to the development of individual models or applications.

- 2) The DPO has been striving to drive the adoption of innovative technologies, including AI, big data analytics and blockchain technologies, by B/Ds to provide digital government services that bring convenience and benefits to the public and businesses. Currently, B/Ds implement their information technology projects and related technology applications taking into consideration factors such as their policy objectives, operational needs, requirements of service users, existing manpower and available resources.

In terms of applying AI to enhance digital government services, in addition to the pilot use of HKPilot to assist government staff in document processing tasks such as drafting, translation and summarisation of documents, B/Ds have been progressively launching over a hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives from 2024 to 2025, with nearly half of which involving the application of big data analytics and AI technologies. Projects related to the application of AI technology in various B/Ds are mainly supported by Subhead A007GX (block allocation) of the Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation and other innovation and technology-related resources of the Government. In 2025-26, the estimated expenditure for the implementation of projects related to the application of AI and big data analytics technologies through the application for block allocation is around \$99 million. The actual expenditure will be adjusted according to the final approved projects and amounts.

In addition, individual B/Ds will implement their own AI projects according to their resource availability, and the DPO does not maintain such information.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB218

(Question Serial No. 2760)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that to spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) as well as industrial application of artificial intelligence (AI), the Government has set aside \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) What are the progress of the coordination work and implementation timetable for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI R&D Institute?
- 2) What are the estimated expenditure and staff establishment for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI R&D Institute?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and industrial applications of artificial intelligence (AI), facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios.

The Digital Policy Office is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center under the AIR@InnoHK. Depending on

the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB219

(Question Serial No. 2761)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Digital Policy Office will continue to implement the “Knowing More About IT” Programme and the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- 1) So far, how many secondary and primary schools have submitted applications under the two programmes respectively? What are the activities and amounts of funding involved? What are the numbers of secondary and primary students benefited?
- 2) As the “Knowing More About IT” Programme and the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme will end in the 2025/26 school year, will the Government consider implementing similar programmes to subsidise secondary and primary schools to organise IT-related extra-curricular activities?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

- 1) The progress of the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” and “Knowing More About IT” programmes (as at February 2025) is as follows:

“IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme:

School Year	Number of Schools with Approved Applications (Increase in Number of Schools)	Number of Funded Activities	Scope of Activities (Examples)	Approved Amount (\$ million)	Number of Students Benefited
2020/21	119 (119)	294	Artificial intelligence, coding, drones, robotics, augmented reality/virtual reality, Internet of Things, blockchain, big data and cloud computing, etc.	46	About 27 000
2021/22	309 (242)	1 012		152	About 79 000
2022/23	372 (115)	1 235		149	About 82 000
2023/24	227 (12)	802		98	About 55 000
2024/25	171 (4)	559		60	About 38 000
Total	492	3 902		505	About 281 000

“Knowing More About IT” Programme:

School Year	Number of Schools with Approved Applications (Increase in Number of Schools)	Number of Funded Activities	Scope of Activities (Examples)	Approved Amount (\$ million)	Number of Students Benefited
2021/22	195 (195)	545	Artificial intelligence, coding, drones, robotics, augmented reality/virtual reality, Internet of Things, etc.	46	About 44 000
2022/23	312 (234)	728		85	About 86 000
2023/24	342 (74)	924		58	About 69 000
2024/25	169 (10)	421		30	About 33 000
Total	513	2 618		219	About 232 000

- 2) As of March 2025, more than 96% of eligible schools have participated in the “Knowing More About IT” and “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” programmes, benefiting more than 1 000 schools and 500 000 students. The programmes have achieved the

expected objectives and provided a wealth of information technology learning experiences for primary and secondary students. The Government will continue to collaborate with professional organisations and institutions to organise diverse innovation and technology (I&T) learning activities for students, enhancing their understanding of the latest developments and applications in I&T with a view to nurturing I&T talents.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB220

(Question Serial No. 2765)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the promotion of artificial intelligence (AI) application, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Given that the Government advocates the development of a smart city and a smart government, does the Government have any plan to further promote the introduction of AI and its application in public services by government departments, so as to save manpower and improve efficiency? Is there any plan to enhance the application of AI technology among government departments or provide relevant training for the purpose?
2. It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that the Government will provide public services in a more cost-effective manner through leveraging technology. Will the Government consider drawing reference from the Mainland's experience to explore the introduction of "AI civil servants" for some services and work disciplines to go smart? If yes, what are the details and estimated expenditure; if not, what are the reasons? And
3. To achieve breakthrough development in the field of AI, Hong Kong needs the support of adequate talents, funding and strong computing power. Will the Government explore the establishment of more supercomputing centres or cloud computing platforms to meet Hong Kong's medium-to-long term demand for computing power?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

1. and 2. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has been striving to drive bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in applying artificial intelligence (AI) technology, innovating public services and improving efficiency in order to facilitate the development of smart city and digital government. Using the commonly used 1823 service as an

example, we have fully expanded the AI chatbot to answer frequently asked questions of all scopes of service under 1823, and we utilise “AI speech recognition” technology to identify callers’ enquiry subjects and provide relevant information by voice messages or short message service (SMS). Over a hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives will be rolled out progressively by B/Ds, of which around half involve the application of big data and AI technologies, including the application of AI to set up a Hong Kong coastal sea-level monitoring and prediction system and the adoption of video analytics to enhance security surveillance at cargo working areas.

The DPO has also launched a number of central platforms and facilities to assist B/Ds in developing and providing more digital government services that bring convenience and benefit to the public and businesses, including:

- (i) Big Data Analytics Platform (BDAP): Launched in 2020, it enables B/Ds to adopt technologies such as AI and big data analytics to implement more e-government projects. The expenditure of implementing the BDAP is \$69 million, and the BDAP has currently supported the implementation of more than 20 big data projects in B/Ds.
- (ii) Chatbot-as-a-Service: Launched in June 2023, it enables B/Ds to make use of a shared chatbot infrastructure with ready-to-use building blocks to develop chatbots related to their businesses more promptly and more cost-effectively. The expenditure of developing Chatbot-as-a-Service is around \$7.79 million.
- (iii) AI Computer Vision Hub: Launched in March 2024, it provides B/Ds with a series of tools related to image analytics, including pre-trained models, data labelling tools, model development environment, etc., to help B/Ds develop image analytics models and identify objects or text in images and videos. The expenditure of developing AI Computer Vision Hub is around \$8.64 million.

In addition to the above, B/Ds will study to introduce and develop different technical solutions to enhance services according to their operational needs and requirements. Through its thematic website, the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) under the DPO collects the business needs of government departments in public service delivery and invites the industry to submit technology solutions and product suggestions to meet relevant needs, facilitating departments to formulate implementation plans and procurement specifications more effectively.

In the past 5 years, the Smart Lab has matched solutions with more than 110 business needs from over 30 government departments, including the Environmental Protection Department, the Buildings Department and the DPO, covering technology areas like AI, Internet of Things (IoT), data analytics, video analytics and natural language processing. Proof-of-Concept (PoC) testing for more than 70 potential technology solutions was conducted in collaboration with the departments concerned. Information Technology (IT) projects being planned

or having been implemented by individual departments after undergoing PoC testing included:

- Leverage AI technology to develop robotic dog equipped with different sensors, with the capability of identifying the composition of unknown gases and autonomously tracking the direction of the gases, to assist officers in investigating air nuisance incidents. The AI robotic dogs have been gradually deployed by the department for pilot testing to collect data for continuous optimisation;
- Identify signboard structures and automatically calculate signboard dimensions using technologies such as AI, video analytics, remote measurement, etc. to facilitate the quick detection of signboards with potential risks; and
- Utilise AI image recognition, IoT and machine learning technologies to assist in real-time monitoring of the cleanliness condition of designated shoreline areas. The aim is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the shoreline cleanliness monitoring program by automating the collection and analysis of massive images and data on the coverage and types of refuse, and referring cases to relevant departments for follow-up as needed.

In addition, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established in 2023 with funding from the AIR@InnoHK which focuses on AI and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong's self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage, and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation, and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the HKPilot in mid-2024. The positioning of the application is similar to that of the Shenzhen Municipal Government's "Digital Intelligent Employees", as both target to assist government staff in handling their daily work. The DPO has invited all B/Ds to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme.

HKGAI updated its locally developed "HKGAI V1" LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application's capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff. In the longer term, the application will help reduce the manpower required for government staff in handling general document processing tasks, allowing manpower to be deployed to other areas of need.

As one of the strategies for accelerating the development of digital government and leading public service innovation, the DPO has, since its establishment in 2024, strengthened co-operation with the Civil Service College in regularly organising briefings, thematic seminars and training to sharpen the core skills of senior management (particularly senior directorates) of all B/Ds in using digital technology, covering related topics such as various information technology (including AI), data management and cybersecurity, thereby promoting B/Ds to use digital technology more effectively to drive digital transformation and enhance daily operational efficiency.

Besides, the DPO and the Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology (HKIIT) of the Vocational Training Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding in January 2025 to jointly promote IT professional training in government departments and public organisations. The DPO will work closely with the HKIIT in developing a wide range of IT-related training courses covering topics including cybersecurity, data literacy and digital transformation. Among them, the digital transformation courses will cover topics about how to effectively leverage AI to rapidly analyse, utilise, and interpret data in order to enhance IT management and application skills among colleagues in government departments and public organisations. These capabilities will be applied to policy formulation, public service optimisation, and advancing digital transformation.

3. In terms of infrastructure and computing power, the first-phase facility of the Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC), which was established and run under a market model by Cyberport, commenced operation in end-2024, providing computing power of approximately 1 300 petaflops (PFLOPS), to be ramped up to 3 000 PFLOPS progressively this year. This can meet Hong Kong's short-to-medium term demand for high-performance computing power as estimated by the consultant commissioned by the DPO earlier. In addition, various local institutions, enterprises, and R&D centres are also actively deploying their data centres and supercomputing facilities to meet the needs of different projects. To encourage the industry to utilise the AISC's computing resources, the Government launched the Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme in October 2024, mainly to subsidise local institutions, R&D centres and enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing power of the AISC.

Moreover, the Government also commenced the rezoning procedures at end 2024 for a 10 ha site at Sandy Ridge for use as data centres and related facilities. Currently, we are actively making preparations for land disposal to fulfil the needs of the industry for digital infrastructure and to facilitate the development of various industries, including AI industry.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB221

(Question Serial No. 1620)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Budget indicates that the Government will step up efforts in artificial intelligence (AI) development. Programme (2) mentions that the work of the Digital Policy Office includes a) continuing to provide technical advice and support to bureaux and departments in the adoption of AI, big data analytics and blockchain technologies for their digital government services; b) continuing to support the pilot use of the generative AI document processing copilot application within the Government; and c) improving the service of 1823 through the application of AI and other innovative technologies. Will the Government inform this Committee of the specific details of AI development and promotion of using AI within the Government? Will the Government study how AI can enhance its efficacy and achieve manpower savings, thereby setting a development direction that enhances governance?

Asked by: Hon SO Cheung-wing (LegCo internal reference no.: 21)

Reply:

The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has been striving to drive the adoption of innovation and technology (I&T) by bureaux/departments (B/Ds). For instance, the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) arranges various activities to foster government officers' understanding of I&T solutions for meeting B/Ds' business requirements and the latest I&T development. The Smart Lab also invites appropriate I&T service providers to propose solutions so as to assist B/Ds in accelerating the adoption of I&T, with a view to further enhancing the quality and efficiency in public service delivery.

Regarding the application of artificial intelligence (AI) and big data analytics technologies, various B/Ds have launched a number of related projects in the past 2 years, including:

- The Transport Department (TD) and the DPO have jointly developed the "Traffic Data Analytics System" (TDAS) which utilises big data analytics to analyse various traffic, transport and weather data, assisting the TD in more accurately

analysing and assessing traffic conditions, thereby enhancing traffic management and efficiency;

- The DPO has launched a shared chatbot infrastructure with ready-to-use building blocks that enables B/Ds to develop chatbots related to their businesses more promptly and more cost-effectively;
- The DPO has further applied AI in 1823 to enhance work efficiency, such as fully expanding 1823's AI chatbot service to answer common public enquiries within the service scope of 1823, utilising "AI speech recognition" technology to identify callers' enquiry subjects and provide relevant information via voicemails or Short Message Service (SMS), and internally piloting generative AI technology to assist staff in drafting responses to written enquiries;
- The Lands Department has launched a chatbot service based on map/Geographic Information System, integrating AI with geographic information technology to make spatial data searching easier and faster for the public;
- The Hong Kong Fire Services Department uses drones equipped with terrain-following technology to conduct flight systematically and capture photos within specific areas for creating two-dimensional and three-dimensional maps, and further utilises AI to detect human presence, enhancing both the safety of operations and the precision of search efforts;
- The Architectural Services Department employs AI, big data analytics and other technologies to optimise cost estimation for construction projects;
- The Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) has launched the "Smart Customs Interactive Response System" which applies natural language processing, machine learning and text-to-speech technologies, and a central knowledge base of the C&ED to provide instant and accurate responses to inquiries from the public and travellers;
- The Highways Department has developed a "Road Defect Detection System" tailored for Hong Kong's road conditions, using a camera system installed in the patrol inspection vehicle to automatically capture photos of the road surface during inspections. By leveraging AI models and advanced geospatial technology, the system analyses these photos to automatically identify road cracks and faded road surfaces, and then marks and records their locations, enabling the engineering teams to promptly arrange appropriate road maintenance works;
- The Environmental Protection Department has developed the AI robotic dog equipped with advanced computer vision, specialised directional air intakes and air measurement sensors. Combined with AI algorithms, the robotic dog can infer activities that cause the pollution and autonomously locate sources of air pollution and odor nuisance;

- The Hong Kong Police Force has launched an AI-based “Smart Traffic Management System” in Kwun Tong, using a combination of multiple cameras to monitor traffic flow, parking situations and traffic incidents in real time; and
- The Census and Statistics Department employs deep learning technology to detect anomalies in trade declarations, which can identify misreported information more effectively and reduce manual checks, thereby improving the accuracy of trade statistics and work efficiency.

Over a hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives to be rolled out progressively by B/Ds will effectively leverage information technologies and data to enhance the experiences of public service users and operational efficiency of B/Ds. These initiatives include the application of AI and chatbot technologies to improve government hotline services; application of data analytics, geospatial analysis and visualisation dashboard technologies to improve service management; and adoption of video analytics to enhance security surveillance at cargo working areas, etc.

The DPO has also launched the “Shared Blockchain Platform” (SBP) and the “e-Proof” service, facilitating B/Ds to make use of blockchain technology to enhance public services. So far, it has supported 5 B/Ds to issue over 1.5 million of digital licences and permits, simplifying the issuance and verification processes as well as improving efficiency.

In addition, in 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the AIR@InnoHK which focuses on AI and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong’s self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the HKPilot in mid-2024. The DPO has invited all B/Ds to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme.

HKGAI updated its locally developed “HKGAI V1” LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application’s capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is also provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB222

(Question Serial No. 1621)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Budget has set the direction for the development of artificial intelligence (AI). In fact, other than developing AI and related industries, Hong Kong should also promote wider use and learning of AI in the community. It is learnt that some big companies have started to engage specialists to train their staff on the basic knowledge and usage of AI in order to add value to their companies. It is mentioned under Programme (1) that one of the tasks of the Digital Policy Office is to build a digitally inclusive society in Hong Kong. Will the Government inform this Committee whether the Government has any plan to organise or encourage the private sector to organise courses for civil servants and members of the public to learn AI knowledge, as well as to put forward a plan to promote the use of AI among members of the public or trade and industrial organisations, with a view to developing Hong Kong into an AI city?

Asked by: Hon SO Cheung-wing (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a key industry of Hong Kong. It is at the core of developing new quality productive forces and serves as a strategic driver for the future. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (the Blueprint) published by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau at the end of 2022 has proposed to focus on the development of the AI industry, setting out clear strategic directions and detailed action plan for promoting the development of AI in Hong Kong. Following the development strategies as laid down in the Blueprint, the Government has been implementing a series of initiatives to support the development of AI in recent years, stepping up efforts in promoting AI application and nurturing local talents, thereby realising the AI development strategy.

In terms of the application of AI, over a hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives to be rolled out progressively by bureaux/departments (B/Ds) will effectively leverage information technologies (IT) and data to enhance the experiences of public service users and operational efficiency of B/Ds. These initiatives include the application of AI and

chatbot technologies to improve government hotline services; application of data analytics, geospatial analysis and visualisation dashboard technologies to improve service management; and adoption of video analytics to enhance security surveillance at cargo working areas, etc.

In 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the *AIR@InnoHK* which focuses on AI and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong's self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the HKPilot in mid-2024. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has invited all B/Ds to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme.

HKGAI updated its locally developed "HKGAI V1" LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application's capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is also provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff. On the other hand, HKGAI is taking into account feedback collected from the pilot programme to fully optimise the LLM and the application, and to formulate an overall strategy and timetable for releasing the LLM and the application for use by various sectors in the community.

As one of the strategies for accelerating the development of digital government and leading public service innovation, the DPO has, since its establishment in 2024, strengthened co-operation with the Civil Service College in regularly organising briefings, thematic seminars and training to sharpen the core skills of senior management (particularly senior directorates) of all B/Ds in using digital technology, covering related topics such as various IT (including AI), data management and cybersecurity, thereby promoting B/Ds to use digital technology more effectively to drive digital transformation and enhance daily operational efficiency.

Besides, the DPO and the Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology (HKIIT) of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in January 2025 to jointly promote IT professional training in government departments and public organisations. The DPO will work closely with the HKIIT in developing a wide range of IT-related training courses covering topics including cybersecurity, data literacy and digital transformation. Among them, the digital transformation courses will cover topics about how to effectively leverage AI to rapidly analyse, utilise, and interpret data in order to enhance IT management and application skills among staff in government departments and public organisations. These capabilities will be applied to policy formulation, public service optimisation, and advancing digital transformation.

In terms of training local talents, according to the information provided by the Education Bureau, apart from encouraging the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities

to offer programmes which cater for Hong Kong's development needs and expand the talent pool of important areas such as innovation & technology, the Government also subsidises students to pursue designated self-financing undergraduate and sub-degree programmes through the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors, with a view to nurturing talent in support of specific industries with keen demand for human resources, including the Computer Science discipline which is related to AI. The UGC also launched the Fund for Innovative Technology-in-Education in 2023, with a funding allocation of \$100 million, to provide an impetus for the eight UGC-funded universities to harness innovative and breakthrough technologies in transforming pedagogies and enriching student learning experiences, as well as fostering academia-industry collaboration, thereby nurturing their students to become a digitally competent and technologically responsible generation in the digital economy.

In addition, in response to the manpower demand of the industries, the VTC with the Government's support established the HKIIT in November 2023, which specialises in the provision of IT and other technology-related programmes covering a wide range of disciplines including AI. The HKIIT admitted its first cohort of students in the 2024/25 academic year. The New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme under the Innovation and Technology Fund also subsidises local enterprises for their staff to receive training in advanced technologies, which includes AI-related training. Meanwhile, Hong Kong residents aged 18 or above are eligible to enrol in more than 20 AI-related courses under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) and claim for CEF subsidy upon successful completion of the courses.

To facilitate digital inclusion, the DPO promotes various measures under the "Smart Silver" programme to help the elderly to understand and use digital technology products and services. These include outreach programme, mobile outreach service stations, regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support, enriched information and communications technology training and a web based learning portal, enabling the elderly to use digital technologies effectively and safely, and fully integrate into the digital society. In response to the needs of society and the elderly, more diversified courses were introduced to the enriched training programme in 2024, such as the applications of AI, basic operation of commonly used Mainland mobile applications and cybersecurity.

The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative R&D and industrial applications of AI, facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. The AIRDI will be one of the key initiatives in building the local AI ecosystem, complementing the initiatives above. The DPO is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of HKGAI. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, subject to the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB223

(Question Serial No. 1644)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned under Programme (1) that the Digital Policy Office fosters bureaux and departments to proactively devise digitalisation strategies and plans in enhancing public services, thereby resulting in improved efficiency and effectiveness. According to the data under this Programme, there were 67 bureaux and departments with information technology (IT) plans in place last year. Please provide the details of these plans. In addition, as shown by the data, only about 75% of the relevant IT projects were completed on schedule. Please list out the projects which have failed to complete on schedule and provide the reasons in detail. Have public services been affected?

Asked by: Hon SO Cheung-wing (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

The Digital Policy Office (DPO) encourages individual bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to formulate and update their information technology (IT) plans having regard to the latest developments. This is to ensure the continual and effective use of IT to enhance service quality and efficiency, in line with the policy objectives, business directions and visions of respective B/Ds. Last year, B/Ds proposed launching approximately 330 new IT projects in 2025-26. For details, please refer to Annex C of Legislative Council Paper No. CB(2)1576/2024(01).

<https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr2024/english/panels/itb/papers/itb20241209cb2-1576-1-e.pdf>

In the past 5 years, around 75% of IT projects were completed on schedule by B/Ds, and for the majority of those not completed on schedule, the delay was relatively short and resulted in minimal impact on the e-government services concerned or operations of B/Ds. The major causes of projects not completed on schedule are the tight supply of talents in the IT industry, quality of contractors' deliverables not fully meeting requirements and the impact of COVID-19 epidemic. The DPO will continue to monitor the progress of projects in accordance with the established mechanism, work closely with B/Ds to resolve issues

promptly during the project development stage, and roll out the projects by phases when necessary and practicable to minimise the impact of delay on the overall project progress and quality.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB224

(Question Serial No. 1645)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Programme (1) mentions that the Digital Policy Office will continue to collaborate with the Guangdong Province and co-ordinate bureaux and departments' provision of cross-boundary public services in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) through different service delivery modes. Currently, Hong Kong's Cross-boundary Public Services has already been provided in Guangdong Province to offer simple and convenient cross-boundary services to enterprises and the public in both regions, with a view to facilitating the provision of public services and investment in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA. Will the Government inform this Committee of the details of the use of the Cross-boundary Public Services in the past year, including the utilisation rates and user satisfaction rates of various services, and new items to be included in the future? Will the Cross-boundary Public Services be extended to other provinces and municipalities?

Asked by: Hon SO Cheung-wing (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

Since its launch in November 2023, the total number of page views of the Hong Kong Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) thematic website has exceeded 470 000, while the total usage rate of the Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks set up in 6 Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area (GBA) progressively since February 2024 has exceeded 1 000. The most commonly used public services include enrolment for "Contactless e-Channel", application for Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Passport and enquiry about Health Care Voucher balance. The Hong Kong cross-boundary public services available have increased from 54 services provided by 9 bureaux/departments (B/Ds) at initial launch in end-2023 to currently 77 services provided by 12 B/Ds and related organisations. We will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to identify and introduce more suitable cross-boundary public services to bring greater convenience to the public. In addition, we will continue to discuss with Guangdong Province to set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks and "iAM Smart" self-registration kiosks in more Mainland cities of the GBA for the convenience of residents

and enterprises in the GBA. In the light of the effectiveness and relevant experience of implementing CBPS, we will explore the feasibility of extending the relevant services to other Mainland cities.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB225

(Question Serial No. 1067)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: Not Specified

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Paragraph 229 of the Budget Speech proposes reinforcing the fiscal consolidation programme, in which the Financial Secretary has stated that he had instructed all bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to further review their resource allocation and work priorities, and provide public services in a more cost-effective manner through consolidating internal resources, streamlining procedures and leveraging technology. In this connection, will the Government please advise this Committee of the following:

1. It is mentioned under Head 47 that the estimate of the Digital Policy Office (DPO) for 2025-26 is \$3.49 billion, which represents an increase of 12.7% compared with the \$3.1 billion in 2024-25. Please state the reason(s) for the increased estimate. Is it related to the implementation of the fiscal consolidation programme mentioned in the Budget? What is the relevant staff establishment in 2025-26?
2. It is mentioned under Programme 2 of Head 47 that one of the tasks of the DPO is to provide advisory and consultancy services to bureaux and departments on design thinking, change management, business process re-engineering and data sharing. In this regard, what is the staff establishment for the above task? What are the work details and total count of relevant advisory and consultancy services that the DPO has provided to various B/Ds since its establishment? Have any B/Ds conducted business process re-engineering in response to the recommendation of the DPO with the aim of enhancing the operational efficiency and quality of work of the Government?
3. What is the role of and responsibility assigned to the DPO towards the implementation of the fiscal consolidation programme mentioned in the Budget, including consolidating and making good use of the Government's fiscal resources? In what way will the DPO collaborate and coordinate with the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau to take forward the relevant work?
4. The HKSAR Government needs to increase revenue and reduce expenditure in the face of fiscal deficits. How will the DPO streamline administrative processes of various

B/Ds and reduce administrative and business costs by integrating innovation and technology with the Smart Government vision as well as adopting digitisation and intelligentisation measures?

5. It was announced in last year's Budget that the "iAM Smart" business version was targeted to be rolled out progressively from end-2026 onwards. In this regard, what is the progress of the implementation of the business version of "iAM Smart"? Will it be launched next year as scheduled? Will the expenditure involved be higher or lower than the \$300 million as proposed in last year's Budget?
6. Furthermore, what is the number of government services or subsidy schemes for businesses planned to be included in the "iAM Smart" business version? When will enterprises be invited for pilot use? What strategies will be deployed to attract enterprises, especially small and medium enterprises, to use the services in the future so as to increase the utilisation rate of the business version of "iAM Smart"?

Asked by: Hon TAN Sunny (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. The estimate of \$3.49 billion for the Digital Policy Office (DPO) in 2025-26 is higher than the revised estimate of \$3.1 billion for the previous year by about \$390 million (12.7%). This is mainly due to the increase in estimated cash flow requirements for implementing Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme, Enriched IT Programme in Schools and Incubation Programme for Smart Living Start-ups, and the increase in expenditure required for the preparation of establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute, enhancing the network security and performance of key systems including the "iAM Smart" platform and the government email system, and supporting the operation of Government Data Centre Complex after more information technology (IT) systems moved therein.

The establishment ceiling of DPO in the 2025-26 Estimate is 880 posts (including 25 directorate posts and 855 non-directorate posts).

2. to 4. Since its establishment in July 2024, DPO has steered various bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in applying technology and leveraging data to roll out innovative public services, with a view to implementing data-driven, people-centric and outcome-based e-government services.

In 2024-25, through the "Be the Smart Regulator" and "Streamlining of Government Services" programmes, the DPO had driven 47 B/Ds in proposing some 180 business facilitation and streamlining measures for about 400 licences and services, such as obviating the need for the public and the trade to submit information repeatedly for their licence and government service applications by leveraging cross-departmental data exchange, and shortening the time required for handling and approving applications by automating the verification processes, etc.

In addition, DPO spares no effort to drive B/Ds to integrate digital government services into “iAM Smart” in order to realise “single portal for online government services”, enabling citizens to access information, apply for services, and pay bills through “iAM Smart” in a one-stop manner. DPO is also implementing the “Digital Corporate Identity” (CorpID) Platform to enhance the experience of corporations in Hong Kong when using e-government services and improve the efficiency of B/Ds in processing online applications from corporations.

On the other hand, B/Ds are launching over a hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives progressively, including the application of artificial intelligence (AI) and chatbot technologies to improve government hotline services; application of data analytics, geospatial analysis and visualisation dashboard technologies to improve service management; and use of blockchain technology for issuing and verifying electronic certificates or licences, etc.

To implement the Fiscal Consolidation Programme as put forward in 2025-26 Budget, DPO will assist and drive B/Ds to apply various digital and innovative solutions in the Government and integrate with innovative technologies to streamline work procedures and improve efficiency through digitalisation and intelligentisation measures, with a view to optimising the use of resources. In carrying out the aforementioned work, DPO will make suitable and flexible manpower deployment (including the formation of cross-division working groups) in the light of the actual needs, to provide advice and consultancy services to B/Ds in areas such as digital technology and innovative technology applications, data sharing, business process re-engineering, design thinking, and change management, etc., with a view to accelerating the development of digital government. The major work includes collaboration with B/Ds to implement data interchange through the Consented Data Exchange Gateway and application of design thinking in “iAM Smart” and CorpID to bring convenience and benefits of digital government services to the public and businesses; conduct of business process re-engineering studies for the Immigration Department, the Department of Health, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Hospital Authority to streamline relevant after-death public services; and assisting the Civil Service Bureau in promoting the adoption of management measures and digitalisation among B/Ds to reprioritise and re-organise their work, capitalise on technology solutions, and streamline work processes, with a view to optimising the use of the civil service manpower resources, etc.

5. and 6. Since the funding of \$300 million was approved by the Legislative Council in June 2024, DPO has been pressing ahead to develop the CorpID Platform at full speed, including the invitation of tenders in end-2024 as planned, and strives to award the contract for design and development of the Platform in mid-2025, with a view to rolling the Platform progressively from end-2026 onwards. At the same time, we will launch a Sandbox Programme within this year for corporations and government departments interested in supporting CorpID to conduct proof-of-concept testing and develop their applications in order to design application scenarios and solutions that can better meet the market demands.

The CorpID Platform is an important digital government and digital economy infrastructure. All corporate-related e-government services are required to support the use of CorpID within 18 months after the CorpID Platform is launched. DPO has issued a circular to departments and progressively invited B/Ds as well as public and private organisations with more business dealings with corporations to carry out related system design, upgrade and integration at the soonest, so that their e-services can support the use of the CorpID Platform. When the Platform is launched in the first phase, we anticipate that it can integrate with various “Government-to-Business” and “Business-to-Business” e-services provided by B/Ds as well as public and private organisations, covering areas on taxation, government funding schemes, finance, etc.

To attract and encourage corporations (including the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)) to use CorpID, DPO will strengthen the publicity and promotion on the main functions of and convenience brought about by CorpID through diversified channels including websites, social media platforms, promotional videos, industry events, etc. We also plan to organise promotional events and explore appropriate support measures jointly with relevant B/Ds and industry associations in order to promote the adoption of CorpID by corporations.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB226

(Question Serial No. 2030)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Digital Policy Office supports government bureaux and departments in promoting the application of innovation and technology to enhance public services. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- (a) Please list the development expenditures of all government applications;
- (b) Please list the maintenance expenditures of all government applications in the past year;
- (c) Please list the numbers of downloads of all government applications in the past year;
- (d) What was the progress of consolidation of the “iAM Smart” platform in the past year?

Asked by: Hon TIEN Puk-sun, Michael (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

- (a) to (c) The mobile apps currently available for download by the public from various bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and their relevant information are listed in **Annex**.
- (d) The Digital Policy Office (DPO) obtained the funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in mid-2023 to commence a series of upgrades to the “iAM Smart” platform. The target is to drive full adoption of “iAM Smart” by all government online services by 2025 so as to realise “single portal for online government services”. Since upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform, more than 1 100 online services have adopted “iAM Smart”, including SmartPLAY, eTAX, Online Application for Renewal of Vehicle Licence, Online Application for International Driving Permit, Contactless e-Channel, eHealth and e-forms from different B/Ds, etc.

In 2024, we simplified the registration process for “iAM Smart+”, introduced the “iAM Smart Personal Code”, as well as updated the interface of the “iAM Smart” mobile app, grouping practical daily-life information and services into several “Topics”, including “Travelling”, “New Parents”, “Kindergarten Admission” and “Info for Elderly”, facilitating users to select services that meet their needs. Various departments will also gradually roll out personalised content for displaying on the “Personal Assistant” page.

The DPO is currently upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform at full speed. More new features will be progressively rolled out this year, including the “Step-up Authentication”, bill payment function and “Mini-program Platform”.

**B/Ds' mobile apps currently available for download
(As at 28 February 2025)**

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
1.	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Enjoy Hiking	38,000	49,500	487 000
2.	Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department	Reef Check Hong Kong	95,000	49,500	14 000
3.	Buildings Department	MWCS - Quick Guide for Minor Works	290,000	109,000	71 000
4.	Buildings Department	WIN SAFE	The total cost of the project is around \$2.61 million. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.	433,000 (Including the costs for maintenance of mobile app (around \$156,000), upgrade of operating systems in Government Cloud Infrastructure Services (GCIS) (around \$127,000) and adoption of streamlined workflow in iAM Smart (around \$150,000).)	14 000
5.	Civil Aviation Department	eSUA	277,000	68,447	48 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
6.	Civil Engineering and Development Department	HK Geology	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	39 000
7.	Civil Service Bureau	Government Vacancies	980,000	587,000 (Including the costs for mobile app maintenance, backend system maintenance and website maintenance. No separate cost breakdown is available.)	1 107 000
8.	Correctional Services Department	Hong Kong Correctional Services Department Mobile App	308,000	85,000	48 000
9.	Correctional Services Department	Captain Gor Union	500,000	50,000	420 (Launched in Dec 2024)
10.	Department of Health	衛生署DH	640,000	64,000	25 000
11.	Department of Health	IMPACT	296,000	48,000	52 000
12.	Department of Health	Quit Smoking App	295,000	97,000	97 000
13.	Development Bureau	My Kowloon East	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	88,000	23 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
14.	Digital Policy Office	1823	2,500,000 (Including user experience design, infrastructure setup and development of mobile app and backend system.)	The maintenance of the app is bundled with other services. No separate cost breakdown is available.	166 000
15.	Digital Policy Office	EventHK	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	121 000
16.	Digital Policy Office	GovHK Notifications	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	967 000
17.	Digital Policy Office	iAM Smart	The app is developed together with the “iAM Smart” platform. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	The app is developed together with the “iAM Smart” platform. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	7 507 000 (More than 3.2 million registered users)
18.	Digital Policy Office	Wi-Fi.HK	340,000	165,000	432 000
19.	Education Bureau	e-Navigator	Developed with the related website. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	144,000	260 000
20.	Education Bureau	Educational Multimedia	49,000	289,000	208 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
21.	Education Bureau	KG Profile	Included in the cost of the whole project of the Profile of Kindergartens. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	296 000
22.	Education Bureau	History Trip Go Easy	Developed as a part of the e-book and e-portal project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	50,000	58 000
23.	Electrical & Mechanical Services Department	E&M Connect	800,000	396,000	31 000
24.	Electrical & Mechanical Services Department	E&M Trade	492,000	222,000	76 000
25.	Environmental Protection Department	EV-Charging Easy	482,000 (Including 2 year System Maintenance and Support (SM&S) services.)	The system maintenance cost includes one back-end system hosted in GCIS, and broadband/mobile network in 78 government car parks. The SM&S of the mobile app cannot be separated.	19 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
26.	Environmental Protection Department	GREEN\$ Mobile App	Around 1,300,000 (Including the costs for mobile app development, maintenance and enhancement.)	Around 1,300,000 (Including the costs for mobile app development, maintenance and enhancement.)	1 011 000
27.	Environmental Protection Department	HoHoSkips	550,000	120,000	43 000
28.	Environmental Protection Department	Hong Kong Air Quality Health Index (AQHI)	407,000	72,000	190 000
29.	Environmental Protection Department	Waste Less	690,000	The cost is covered within the maintenance expense of the GREEN\$ Mobile App and is not separately itemised.	116 000
30.	Fire Services Department	HKFSD	1,010,000	162,600	91 000
31.	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Internet Memorial Service	300,000	The maintenance of the mobile app is included in the whole system maintenance contract of Internet Memorial Service.	36 000
32.	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department	Nutrition Calculator	150,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	159 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
33.	Health Bureau	醫健通eHealth	The development of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	The maintenance of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. No separate cost breakdown is available.	3 661 000
34.	Health Bureau	e+Life	The development of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	The maintenance of the app is bundled with other services and infrastructure. No separate cost breakdown is available.	28 000
35.	Home Affairs Department	Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses	178,000	276,000	20 000
36.	Home and Youth Affairs Bureau	HKYouth+	Around 2,680,000 (Including user experience and user interface design, content management system, infrastructure setup and development of mobile application and backend system.)	Not applicable (HKYouth+ was in its nursing period during the financial year 2024-25 and did not incur any maintenance costs.)	44 000
37.	Hong Kong Observatory	MyObservatory	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	11 200 000
38.	Hong Kong Observatory	MyWorldWeather	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	460 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
39.	Hong Kong Police Force	Hong Kong Police Mobile App	750,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	339 000
40.	Hong Kong Police Force	Junior Police Call Mobile App	Around 1,370,000 (Developed with the related website and backend system. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.)	836,000 (Including the fees for 2 mobile app maintenance, backend system maintenance, website maintenance, system hosting services and system license. No separate cost breakdown is available.)	68 800
41.	Hong Kong Police Force	Scameter+	This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the “Prevention and Detection of Crime”, and the Hong Kong Police Force has not kept a record of specific expenditure items.	This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the “Prevention and Detection of Crime”, and the Hong Kong Police Force does not keep a record of specific expenditure items.	902 000
42.	Hong Kong Police Force	HKSOS	HKSOS is included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	This expenditure is part of the total expenditure for the “Smart Rescue Solution”, and the Hong Kong Police Force has not kept a record of specific expenditure items	126 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
43.	Hong Kong Police Force	HKP e-Licence	HKP e-Licence is included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	HKP e-Licence is included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	16 300
44.	Hong Kong Police Force	HKPF Recruit	3,820,000 (The project includes Privacy Impact Assessment, System Analysis & Design, System Implementation & Integration, backend system and the mobile app, no separate cost breakdown is available.)	328,000	18 400
45.	Hongkong Post	Hongkong Post	328,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	714 000
46.	Immigration Department	Contactless e-Channel	Not applicable. The app was developed under a contract with total value of \$1.39 million while the contract includes other relevant system enhancement service of contactless e-Channel	The contractor will provide system maintenance service as required in the contract.	1 735 000
47.	Immigration Department	HK Immigration Department	130,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	1 658 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
48.	Information Services Department	news.gov.hk	270,000	50,000	235 000
49.	Labour Department	Interactive Employment Service	125,000	76,000	1 490 000
50.	Labour Department	OSH 2.0	75,000	The system maintenance cost is included in the development cost. No separate cost breakdown is available.	35 000
51.	Labour Department	Youth Employment Start	149,000 (Including the maintenance cost for the first year.)	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	29 000
52.	Lands Department	MyMapHK	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	724 000
53.	Lands Department	VoiceMapHK	Developed internally. No additional cost is involved.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	10 000 (Serves the visually impaired)
54.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	iM Guide	“iM Guide” is a part of the Museum Multimedia Guide System (MMGS) project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the routine maintenance cost of MMGS. No separate cost breakdown is available.	71 800

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
55.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	My Library	The total cost of the project is around \$3.32 million. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.	223,000	856 000
56.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	My SmartPLAY	The total cost of the project is \$290 million. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.	The total maintenance cost of the project is \$23.5 million. No separate cost breakdown is available for the mobile app.	829 000
57.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	Star Hoppers	700,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	419 000
58.	Leisure and Cultural Services Department	URBTIX	Included in the service contract of URBTIX. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the service contract of URBTIX. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	1 040 000
59.	Marine Department	eSeaGo	600,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	116 000
60.	Office of the Communications Authority	OFCA Broadband Performance Test	Covered by OFCA Trading Fund.	Covered by OFCA Trading Fund.	128 000 000 (no. of tests)
61.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK 中華五千年#	450,000	82,000	211 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
62.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK Audio Description	The app is part of the Audio Description services project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	256,750	6 000 (Serves the visually impaired)
63.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK Radio	409,000	155,000	602 000
64.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK News	336,000	68,000	731 000
65.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK on the Go	200,000	113,000	2 575 000
66.	Radio Television Hong Kong	RTHK TV	250,000	121,000	748 000
67.	Security Bureau	Safeguard HK	610,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	294 000
68.	Social Welfare Department	Senior Citizen Card Scheme	147,000	41,000	219 000
69.	Tourism Commission	A Symphony of Lights	537,000	78,633	40 000
70.	Transport Department	HKeMeter	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand- alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand- alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	898 000

No.	B/D	Name	Development Cost (\$)	Annual Maintenance Cost (\$)	Total no. of downloads as at 31 January 2025
71.	Transport Department	HKeMobility	600,000	Included in the cost of the whole project. Apart from the function enhancements, it also provides services to other associated systems. Therefore no separate cost breakdown is available.	2 799 000
72.	Transport Department	HKeToll	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	831 000
73.	Water Supplies Department	H2OPE Centre	Included in the cost of the whole project. As it is not a stand-alone project, no separate cost breakdown is available.	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	2 000 (Serves visitors of the H2OPE Centre)
74.	Water Supplies Department	WSD AMR System	220,000	Maintained by internal resources. No additional cost is involved.	29 000
75.	Water Supplies Department	WSD GA Product Directory	175,000	82,800	19 000
76.	Water Supplies Department	WSD Mobile App	1,573,000	The maintenance of WSD Mobile App is included in the system maintenance contract of Customer Care and Billing System.	340 000

Note: B/Ds' names in alphabetical order.

Mobile app with Chinese name only.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**ITIB227****(Question Serial No. 3718)**Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy OfficeSubhead (No. & title): ()Programme: (3) Digital InfrastructureControlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and IndustryQuestion:

The Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subsidy Scheme has approved 5 projects since its launch. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the a) applicant/applying organisation, b) project theme; and c) subsidy amount of these 5 projects?

Asked by: Hon TIK Chi-yuen (LegCo internal reference no.: 246)Reply:

In the 2024-25 Budget, the Government allocated \$3 billion for a 3-year Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), mainly to subsidise local institutions, research and development (R&D) centres, enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing power of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC). Since its launch in October 2024, Cyberport has received over 10 applications covering a wide range of technology and application areas. As of end-February 2025, the Committee of the Subsidy Scheme appointed by the Government has assessed and approved 9 projects led by local institutions, R&D centres, etc. with research areas such as accelerating local large language models, large models in new materials and synthetic biology, etc., which involve a total computing power subsidy of over \$170 million. Among them, 4 projects have gradually started using the services of the AISC after completing deployment, accounting for over 60% of the computing power in service. Details are as follows:

Applicant [Category]	Project Title	Research Area
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University [Local institutions]	Enhancing Edge-Based Foundation Models for Advanced Reasoning	Large language models

Applicant [Category]	Project Title	Research Area
Hong Kong Institute of AI for Science, City University of Hong Kong [Local institutions]	Protein Foundation Model for Protein Design	Synthetic biology
Hong Kong Institute of AI for Science, City University of Hong Kong [Local institutions]	Moma, Modular Pretrained Foundation for Heterogeneous Material Learning	New materials
Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center Limited (HKGAI) [R&D centres]	Hong Kong Audio Foundation Model	Large language models

Regarding other projects, Cyberport and the relevant teams are discussing the details and finalising the subsidy arrangements to facilitate project commencement as soon as the planning is finalised.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB228

(Question Serial No. 3720)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government has recently introduced a document editing copilot application for the civil service (the Application) and the HKGAI V1. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the durations and costs of developing the Application and the HKGAI V1;
2. the pre-trained models and datasets involved in the development of the Application and the HKGAI V1;
3. whether the Government will consider releasing the technical reports, codes and datasets used for the Application and the HKGAI V1; and
4. whether the Government will consider opening the Application and the HKGAI V1 to the public for trial use?

Asked by: Hon TIK Chi-yuen (LegCo internal reference no.: 248)

Reply:

In 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the AIR@InnoHK which focuses on artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong's self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation, and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the

HKPilot in mid-2024. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has invited all bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme.

HKGAI updated its locally developed “HKGAI V1” LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application’s capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is also provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff. On the other hand, HKGAI is taking into account feedback collected from the pilot programme to fully optimise the LLM and the application, and to formulate an overall strategy and timetable for releasing the LLM and the application for use by various sectors in the community.

The R&D and operating expenditure of HKGAI in the first 3 years amounted to around \$235 million. We do not maintain the breakdown figures related to the development of individual models or applications.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB229

(Question Serial No. 3721)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget that the Government will double the computing power of the Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC) to support more research and development work. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The operating costs of the AISC since commencement with a detailed breakdown (infrastructure, procurement and maintenance of equipment related to computing power, technical personnel, etc.).
2. What are the (a) service pricing per node, (b) charging scheme and (c) mode of service provision of the AISC?
3. What is the current utilisation rate of the AISC, broken down by type of organisation (local institutions, research institutes, government departments, artificial intelligence start-ups and key enterprises)?
4. Will the Government consider making the computing power of the AISC available for public purchase? If yes, will it also be subsidised by the Government?

Asked by: Hon TIK Chi-yuen (LegCo internal reference no.: 249)

Reply:

1. and 2. The first-phase facility of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC) commenced operation in December 2024, providing computing power of approximately 1 300 petaflops (PFLOPS), to be ramped up to 3 000 PFLOPS progressively this year to meet the strong local demand of computing power.

Being its major digital infrastructure, Cyberport will implement and operate the projects of the AISC under a market model having regard to its resources. The standard service rate for the AISC is set at \$320,000 per server node per month. To support and promote more scientific research, the Government allocated \$3 billion for a 3-year Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), mainly to subsidise eligible organisations such as local institutions, research and development (R&D) centres, enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing resources of the AISC, with the subsidy amount ranges from 70% to 90% of the standard service rate. Apart from the above Subsidy Scheme, Cyberport will also introduce charging schemes for different types of services to meet the market's diverse needs for computing power.

3. and 4. The current utilisation rate of Cyberport's AISC amounts to over 60% of the computing power in service, mainly supporting various projects led by local institutions, R&D centres, etc. that have successfully applied for the Subsidy Scheme. Subsidised projects that have gradually started include research and training related to large language models (LLMs) (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center), research on synthetic biology (Hong Kong Institute of AI for Science, City University of Hong Kong), and projects related to the R&D of new materials (Hong Kong Institute of AI for Science, City University of Hong Kong).

The computing power of the AISC is primarily used for training LLMs and other R&D projects requiring high-performance computing power. Individual enterprises or researchers may consider collaborating with local institutions or R&D teams to advance cross-sectoral or even cross-regional R&D projects through the Subsidy Scheme. They can also explore with Cyberport other suitable arrangements for computing power service.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB230

(Question Serial No. 3809)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government has been actively promoting digital transformation in recent years. The investment in information technology (IT) by various departments is crucial for enhancing their service efficiency and the experience of members of the public. Will the Government advise this Committee on the following:

1. What were the total estimates for and actual expenditures on IT of all government departments and statutory bodies in the past 5 financial years? Please list the estimates for IT by department, their percentages of the respective total departmental estimates, and the year-on-year percentage changes.
2. What are the proportions of the estimate for IT of each department allocated to system maintenance, hardware updates, software development, staff training, and digital innovation projects respectively? Which departments have the highest proportion of resources invested in digital innovation projects?
3. How did the Digital Policy Office assess and monitor the effectiveness of the IT projects implemented by various B/Ds? How many IT projects exceeded their budgets or failed to complete on time in the past 5 years? What were the main reasons?
4. Under the strategy of promoting “smart government”, what priorities have been adopted in the allocation of IT resources among various departments? Which departments have received the most resources for digital transformation, and why? In comparison to other economically developed regions, has the Hong Kong Government invested an adequate proportion of its entire budget in IT?
5. What challenges do various departments face in recruiting and retaining IT talents? How does the Government address the competition for highly specialised IT talents between the public and private sectors? What are the current vacancy rates for IT staff in various departments? What are the estimates and plans of various departments for their IT manpower resources over the coming 3 years?

Asked by: Dr Hon TIK Chi-yuen (LegCo internal reference no.: 49)

Reply:

1. and 2. The actual expenditures of the Government on information and communications technology (ICT) over the past 5 financial years and the corresponding annual percentage changes are as follows:

Financial Year	Government Expenditure on ICT^{Note} (\$ million)	Annual Percentage Change
2020-21 (Actual)	12,448	-
2021-22 (Actual)	13,241	6.4%
2022-23 (Actual)	14,162	7.0%
2023-24 (Actual)	15,821	11.7%
2024-25 (Revised Estimate)	19,352	22.3%

Note: Government expenditures on ICT include recurrent expenditures (such as personal emoluments and departmental expenses) and non-recurrent expenditures (such as:

- Expenditures on Information Technology (IT) projects funded under Capital Works Reserve Fund (CWRP) Head 710 Computerisation, CWRP Head 708 Capital Subventions and Major Systems and Equipment, Departmental Subhead 603 Plant, Vehicles and Equipment, and Departmental Subhead 700 General Non-recurrent;
- Expenditures under the School Computerisation Programme;
- Expenditures on IT projects of the Housing Authority/Housing Department; and
- Expenditures on IT projects of the Hospital Authority).

The Digital Policy Office (DPO) does not maintain IT budget-related information for individual bureaux/departments (B/Ds).

3. B/Ds are required to evaluate project results by submitting Post Implementation Departmental Returns (PIDRs) to the DPO 6 months after completion of projects under CWRP Head 710 Computerisation, so as to ensure that the Government's investment in the projects can achieve the intended objectives. The overall results of PIDRs, in terms of the percentages of IT projects completed on schedule, within budget, meeting specifications and achieving intended benefits, are published in the Controlling Officer's Report of the DPO as the overall performance indicators for B/Ds' implementation of IT projects.

In the past 5 years, all IT projects were completed within budget while around 75% of them were completed on schedule, and for the majority of those not completed on schedule, the delay was relatively short and resulted in minimal impact on the e-government services concerned or operations of B/Ds. The major causes of projects not completed on schedule are the tight supply of talents in the IT industry, quality of contractors' deliverables not fully meeting requirements and the impact of COVID-19 epidemic. The DPO will continue to monitor the progress of projects in accordance with the established mechanism, work closely with B/Ds to resolve issues promptly during the project development stage, and roll out the projects by phases when necessary and practicable to minimise the impact of delay on the overall project progress and quality.

4. Factors taken into account in allocating IT resources to B/Ds include policy objectives, operational requirements, project nature/category, technical details, cost-effectiveness, implementation arrangement and schedule, etc. Moreover, priority will be given to projects that achieve synergies, leverage central platforms (such as “iAM Smart” to optimise resource utilisation), involve time-limitation and pressing needs (such as IT security enhancement or critical initiatives supporting the implementation of new policies), or bring benefits to the public and businesses. We will continue to actively promote digital transformation across B/Ds to enhance the quality of government services and improve operational efficiency.

5. The Government has been actively implementing IT projects in recent years to enhance internal operational efficiency, improve digital government services, and promote smart city development. To cope with the relevant work, B/Ds have been directly hiring IT grade civil servants, contract IT staff and IT service contractors. With reference to the nature, technical content and implementation timeline of projects, qualification and working experience requirements for IT staff, cost-effectiveness, etc., B/Ds will plan and continue to adopt effective means to hire and manage relevant IT staff and IT service contractors to meet their manpower needs according to actual circumstances. The DPO does not maintain the relevant information.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB231

(Question Serial No. 0061)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Data centres and supercomputing centres are the key infrastructure for the development of the artificial intelligence (AI) industry. Apart from the AI Supercomputing Centre operated by Cyberport, it is also crucial for the private market to provide sufficient data centres and supercomputing centres (with sufficient space and computing power) in a timely manner. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee:

1. of the current and projected market demand and supply for data centres and supercomputing centres;
2. of the measures in place to encourage the private market to provide more data centres and supercomputing centres; and
3. as some members from the innovation and technology sector as well as the property development sector reflected that they have considerable difficulties in providing (including constructing, converting or reconstructing) data centres and supercomputing centres, such as in the aspects of land use, land premium, building approval and power supply, whether the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau has actively assisted the industries in resolving the issues concerned, such as by coordinating inter-departmental efforts and approval work?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

Data centre and supercomputing centre are key infrastructure to drive the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint promulgated in 2022 puts forth accelerating the development of new digital infrastructure, and encompassing a comprehensive assessment on the planning and development of data centres in Hong Kong. According to our estimation, there is currently

about 1 million square metres (m²) of data centre floor area in Hong Kong and it is expected to further increase to 1.5 million m² by end 2026, which could largely meet the short-to-medium term demand. Regarding supercomputing centres, the first-phase facility of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC) commenced operation in December 2024, providing computing power of approximately 1 300 petaflops (PFLOPS), to be ramped up to 3 000 PFLOPS progressively this year. This can meet Hong Kong's short-to-medium term demand for high-performance computing power as estimated by the consultant commissioned by the Digital Policy Office (DPO) earlier. In addition, various institutions, enterprises, and research and development (R&D) centres are also actively deploying their data centres and supercomputing facilities to meet the needs of different projects.

The Government is committed to promoting data centre development in Hong Kong by implementing various facilitation measures. DPO set up the Data Centre Facilitation Unit (DCFU) in 2011 to provide one-stop support services to enterprises interested in setting up data centres in Hong Kong, including assisting the industry in coordinating with relevant government departments and power companies on individual data centre development projects. The DCFU has so far handled over 1 100 enquiries on setting up data centres in Hong Kong. In addition, since 2012, the Government had introduced 2 concessionary land measures, namely the exemption of waiver fee for changing part(s) of industrial buildings as data centres (waiver application), and assessing the land premium for the data centre part on the basis of high-tier data centre use and actual development intensity during lease modification of industrial lots (lease modification application).

On the other hand, the Government has disposed of 2 sites with 3.77 hectares (ha) site area in total in 2013 and 2018 respectively in Tseung Kwan O to the industry for development of high tier data centres. We also commenced the rezoning procedures at end 2024 for a 10 ha site at Sandy Ridge for use as data centres and related facilities. Currently, we are actively making preparations for land disposal to fulfil the needs of the industry for digital infrastructure and to facilitate the development of various industries, including AI industry.

We will continue to closely monitor market trends and industry feedback, and review the development needs and support measures of data centres from time to time.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB232

(Question Serial No. 1958)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Under Programme (2), it is mentioned that the estimate for 2025-26 represents a 16.7% increase compared with the previous financial year. Please inform this Committee of the following:

1. How much of the increased estimate will be used for the 1823 service?
2. What were the staff establishments and expenditures of 1823 over the past 3 financial years?
3. There were media reports earlier about criticisms from members of the public that calls to the 1823 hotline were constantly unanswered and their complaints were left unattended. How will the Digital Policy Office enhance the service of 1823? Will additional expenditure be incurred by the relevant enhancement measures?
4. Has the Government studied the feasibility of introducing artificial intelligence programmes to improve response efficiency and alleviate the burden on frontline staff?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

1. and 2. The staff strength and salary expenditure of 1823 in the past 3 financial years (i.e. from 2022-23 to 2024-25) are tabulated below:

Year	Strength of Civil Servants	Strength of Non-Civil Service Contract Staff		Salary Expenditure (\$ million)
		Full-time	Part-time	
2022-23	9	463	140	129
2023-24	9	444	134	142
2024-25	9	488	110	157

The Digital Policy Office reserves \$16.77 million from the increased estimate under Programme (2) for 2025-26 for the 1823 service, including salary expenditure, expenditure on maintenance and enhancement of information technology systems, as well as expenditure on introducing new technological solutions.

3. and 4. 1823 is committed to providing a round-the-clock one-stop service to the public, receiving their service requests and complaints in respect of all government bureaux/departments (B/Ds), and handling public enquiries, compliments and suggestions for participating departments. There are 3 performance indicators for 1823, namely “customer satisfaction”, “callers that have their enquiries addressed at the first time of calling” and “calls that can be answered within 12 seconds”. In 2024, 1823 has met or exceeded the prescribed target of all 3 performance indicators:

Performance Indicator	Target	2024
Customer satisfaction (out of a five-point scale)	4.0	4.6
Callers that have their enquiries addressed at the first time of calling	95%	99%
Calls that can be answered within 12 seconds	80%	80%

To continuously enhance service quality and cope with the demand, 1823 actively applies artificial intelligence (AI) and other innovative technologies to handle general enquiries through a range of digital self-services, including an AI chatbot, an intelligent interactive voice response system (IVRS), and provision of information on frequently asked questions on our website, enabling existing staff to concentrate on more complicated cases such as complaints.

In 2024-25, we have completed various service enhancement projects, including:

- Fully expanded the AI chatbot to answer frequently asked questions of all scopes of service under 1823.
- Implemented an intelligent IVRS and strengthened its speech operation function with adoption of AI speech recognition technology through which members of the public can input the required options verbally without pressing any button. The technology can also identify enquiry subjects and provide relevant information over the phone or by short message service (SMS).
- Implemented AI speech-to-text technology to enhance the efficiency of 1823 in handling citizens’ voicemail messages.

- Leveraged AI technology to assist staff in drafting responses to written enquiries on specific topics, thereby enhancing processing efficiency.

In 2025-26, 1823 will continue to enhance service quality and cope with the rising demand through wider use of advanced technologies including AI. The 1823 service enhancement projects include:

- To provide digital self-service for case status check to facilitate citizens to check the progress of their cases, thus reducing the need for human service.
- To integrate 1823 services into iAM Smart to facilitate case enquiries and submissions.
- To enable intelligent interoperability between the 1823 Chatbot Tammy and the GovHK Chatbot Bonny to strengthen the capability of 1823 Chatbot to handle enquiries related to electronic forms, thereby enhancing user experience.

The total expenditure for the service enhancement projects implemented in 2024-25 was around \$4.7 million, while the estimated expenditure for the service enhancement projects to be implemented in 2025-26 is around \$4.4 million.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB233

(Question Serial No. 2666)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government, (2) Data Governance, (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The provision for the Digital Policy Office (DPO) under the Programme of Data Governance in 2025-26 is \$161.3 million (16.7%) higher as compared to last year. There will also be an increase of 6 posts under this Programme. Please list the titles, job nature, ranks, remuneration and benefits of these 6 new posts. Are they permanent or supernumerary posts?

Has the DPO formulated any specific plan to promote the adoption of innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics and blockchain technologies by bureaux and departments of the HKSAR Government for enhancing administrative efficiency in the coming 3 years? If yes, what are the details of the plan; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon WONG Chun-sek, Edmund (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

In 2025-26, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) will create 6 permanent posts under Programme (2) Data Governance, including 3 Computer Operator I posts and 3 Computer Operator II posts on Master Pay Scale Point 16 to 20 (monthly salary from \$36,850 to \$44,765) and Point 6 to 15 (monthly salary from \$20,770 to \$35,080) respectively, for assisting in the 24-hour operation of the Government Data Centre Complex.

The DPO has been striving to drive the adoption of innovative technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics and blockchain technologies, by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to provide digital government services that bring convenience and benefits to the public and businesses. Currently, B/Ds implement their information technology projects and related applications of technologies taking into consideration factors such as their policy objectives, operational needs, requirements of service users, existing manpower and available resources.

In terms of the application of AI to enhance digital government services, over a hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives to be rolled out progressively by B/Ds will effectively leverage information technologies and data to enhance the experiences of public service users and operational efficiency of B/Ds. These initiatives include the application of AI and chatbot technologies to improve government hotline services; application of data analytics, geospatial analysis and visualisation dashboard technologies to improve service management; and adoption of video analytics to enhance security surveillance at cargo working areas, etc.

The DPO has also launched the “Shared Blockchain Platform” (SBP) and the “e-Proof” service, facilitating B/Ds in making use of blockchain technology to enhance public services. So far, it has supported 5 B/Ds to issue over 1.5 million of digital licences and permits, simplifying the issuance and verification processes as well as improving efficiency.

In 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the AIR@InnoHK which focuses on AI and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong’s self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the HKPilot in mid-2024. The DPO has invited all B/Ds to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme.

HKGAI updated its locally developed “HKGAI V1” LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application’s capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is also provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB234

(Question Serial No. 2688)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is stated in the Budget that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (Institute). The Digital Policy Office will formulate the establishment arrangements of the Institute and its specific goals, focusing on facilitating upstream research and development (R&D), midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. When is the earliest time for the Institute expected to come into operation? At present, the efforts made by the private business sector, especially mainland enterprises, in the R&D of artificial intelligence (AI) have resulted in considerable, and even world-leading, accomplishments. What is the purpose for establishing the Institute at this moment?
2. What is the preliminary estimate of the manpower provision for the Institute? For how many years can the \$1 billion sustain the operations of the Institute? What will be the financial commitments of the Institute in the long term?

Asked by: Hon WONG Chun-sek, Edmund (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is at the core of developing new quality productive forces. It is a key industry that Hong Kong is committed to developing, and it also empowers the upgrading and transformation of traditional industries. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint (the Blueprint) published by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau at the end of 2022 has proposed to focus on the development of AI industry. Following the development strategies outlined in the Blueprint, the Government has been implementing a series of initiatives to support and enhance the development of the AI ecosystem. To consolidate the effectiveness of these initiatives and further promote the

research and development (R&D) and application of AI in Hong Kong, the 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative R&D and industrial applications of AI, facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios.

The Digital Policy Office is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center under the AIR@InnoHK. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB235

(Question Serial No. 3928)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

What is the development progress of the “Digital Corporate Identity” platform? What is the planned timeframe for official launch of the platform? What will be the service fee for using the platform? At the initial stage of launching the platform, will the Government introduce any discounts or concessionary packaged charges to attract medium enterprises to use the platform? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon WONG Chun-sek, Edmund (LegCo internal reference no.: 11)

Reply:

After funding was approved by the Legislative Council in June 2024, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) has been pressing ahead to develop the “Digital Corporate Identity (CorpID)” Platform at full speed, including the invitation of tenders in end-2024 as planned, and strives to award the contract for design and development of the Platform in mid-2025, with a view to rolling out the Platform progressively from end-2026 onwards.

The CorpID Platform is an important digital government and digital economy infrastructure. All corporate-related e-government services are required to support the use of CorpID within 18 months after the CorpID Platform is launched. DPO has issued a circular to departments and progressively invited bureaux/departments (B/Ds) as well as public and private organisations with more business dealings with corporations to carry out related system design, upgrade and integration at the soonest, so that their e-services can support the use of the CorpID Platform. At the same time, we will launch a Sandbox Programme within this year for corporations and government departments interested in supporting CorpID to conduct proof-of-concept testing and develop their applications in order to design application scenarios and solutions that can better meet the market demands.

In accordance with the “user pays” principle, corporations will be required to pay for applying for CorpID. The details of the charging scheme will be determined after related contracts

for the implementation and operation of the relevant systems for the CorpID Platform is awarded. On the other hand, to attract and encourage corporations (including the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)) to use CorpID, DPO will strengthen the publicity and promotion on the main functions of and convenience brought about by CorpID through diversified channels including websites, social media platforms, promotional videos, industry events, etc. We also plan to organise promotional events and explore appropriate support measures jointly with relevant B/Ds and industry associations in order to promote the adoption of CorpID by corporations.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB236

(Question Serial No. 0189)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As regards the “Smart Silver” ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly and the “Smart Silver” Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly under the Digital Inclusion initiative taking forward by the Digital Policy Office (DPO), please inform this Committee of the progress these programmes achieved last year as follows;

1. What are the respective expenditures? What are the respective numbers of elderly benefit from these two programmes?
2. What is the distribution of districts where the programmes are launched? What are the subsidy amounts and manpower required for each of the programmes?

Moreover, the training courses under the current ICT Outreach Programme and the Enriched ICT Training Programme are provided by different organisations, and these courses are found to be uncoordinated, unsustainable and even overlapping. As such, will the Government allocate funding for conducting studies on the formulation of a digital technology curriculum for the elderly, and whether it will design some sustainable and progressive courses for systematically training up the elderly's digital capabilities?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

To promote the adoption of digital technologies by the elders, we have launched the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Outreach Programme for the Elderly since 2014, collaborating with elderly service organisations to visit elders across the territory as well as organise various activities for them to experience digital life, encouraging greater use of digital technologies. We have also introduced the Enriched ICT Training Programme in 2019, collaborating with district organisations and Elder Academies to provide free ICT advanced training courses for the elders with basic digital knowledge in the community regularly. At the same time, we launched the “Elderly IT Learning Portal”, a web-based

learning portal designed and developed with digital technology learning materials suitable for the elders.

The details of the ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly and the Enriched ICT Training Programme under the “Smart Silver” programme are as follows:

Project	Date	Content	Total Expenditure of the Project¹ (\$ million)
ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly (2023-2025)	Commenced in April 2023 (for 2 years)	As at February 2025, over 46 000 elders living in residential care homes, the hidden elderly, as well as elders receiving day care centre and home care services have been served, while mobile outreach service stations have further served over 23 000 elders in the community.	About 16.1
Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (2024-2026)	Commenced in February 2024 (for 2 years)	Offering free advanced digital training courses for the elders with basic knowledge of digital technology in the community. As at February 2025, around 3 300 elders have participated in the training.	About 11.9

¹ The cash flow of the projects may span across more than 1 financial year.

To further consolidate the current work on digital inclusion for elders, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) launched the “Smart Silver” Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders in December 2024, integrating with the above regular programmes. This programme provides funding for 12 non-governmental organisations to set up a total of 40 community-based help desks across 18 districts in the territory, providing regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support for elders aged 60 or above, particularly singleton or doubleton elders living in old districts and public housing. The various digital inclusion programmes will work in tandem to achieve greater synergy and impact. For instance, elders who have completed the basic, regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies will be referred to participate in the Enriched ICT Training Programme if they are interested in learning more advanced digital knowledge. This will not only broaden elders’ digital knowledge and skills but also empower them to volunteer as instructors, teaching fellow elders how to navigate these skills, thereby allowing more elders to enjoy the benefits and conveniences brought by digital technologies.

The DPO will continue to implement and coordinate the work of the afore-mentioned programmes with the existing manpower.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB237

(Question Serial No. 0190)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding “Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025–26”, the Digital Policy Office will continue to co-ordinate trainings and programmes on core digital skills for key IT staff of bureaux and departments and senior government personnel. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. How many government personnel will be covered by the programmes and which departments will be involved?
2. What are the staffing required and estimated expenditures for the programmes in the coming year?
3. What are the main contents and detailed objectives of the training programmes? As technological development is ever-changing, will the Government make arrangements for updating the content of the training programmes regularly?
4. Will the Bureau assess and review the effectiveness of the programmes regularly? If yes, please give details of the mechanism for assessment; if not, please give the reasons.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

As one of the strategies for accelerating the development of digital government and leading public service innovation, the Digital Policy Office (DPO) has, since its establishment in 2024, strengthened co-operation with the Civil Service College in regularly organising briefings, thematic seminars and training to sharpen the core skills of senior management (particularly senior directorates) of all bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in using digital technology, covering related topics such as information technology (IT), data management and cybersecurity, thereby promoting B/Ds to use digital technology more effectively to drive digital

transformation and enhance daily operational efficiency. The DPO also regularly provides diversified training for government IT officers at all levels, covering a wide range of technical areas such as big data analytics, artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, cloud computing, information security and cybersecurity, smart city, and data literacy.

In addition, the DPO and the Hong Kong Institute of Information Technology of the Vocational Training Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding in January 2025 to jointly promote IT professional training in government departments and public organisations, and collaborate to organise a “Cybersecurity Certificate for the Public Sector” training programme. The first training programme will offer courses at 3 levels, including foundation, intermediate and advanced courses. The target participants are primarily IT staff working in B/Ds and public organisations. Participants who pass the assessment of the related courses will be awarded a Level 3 or 4 certification under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework, enabling them to learn the latest cybersecurity techniques and protective measures.

We will regularly assess and review the effectiveness of the training programme. The assessment mechanism covers collecting participants’ opinions through questionnaires, discussion and analysis sessions in class, and tutors’ observation of participants’ performance. These assessment results will be used to enhance the content and format of training to ensure the effectiveness of the programme. The DPO Training Committee also holds regular meetings to review staff training needs and update the course topics as and when necessary.

In 2024-25 (as at February 2025), the DPO has arranged over 90 training courses related to core digital skills with more than 2 300 participants. It is expected that the numbers of training courses and participants in 2025-26 will remain at a broadly comparable level. The DPO has taken forward the above work with existing manpower and resources, and we do not maintain a breakdown of the expenditures involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB238

(Question Serial No. 0195)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational Expenses

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2025-26 that the Digital Policy Office (DPO) will continue its collaboration with the Guangdong Province in the provision of cross-boundary public services in the Greater Bay Area (GBA). In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Given that Hong Kong has already set up 7 Hong Kong Cross-boundary Public Services Self-service Kiosks (kiosks) in 6 GBA cities, what are the respective costs involved relating to these kiosks in respect of their setup, operation and maintenance?
2. What is the usage rate of each of these kiosks so far since its launch?
3. Which are the cities in the GBA that the Government plans to set up kiosks there next year? Please provide a detailed list of targeted cities and the corresponding implementation schedule.
4. Comparing with the previous year, what are the Government's expected numbers of participating bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in this setup in the coming year?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

1. and 2. We have set up Hong Kong Cross-boundary Public Services (CBPS) self-service kiosks in the government service centers in Guangzhou, Qianhai and Futian in Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou and Dongguan progressively since February 2024, so as to cope with the demands of residents and enterprises in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) for Hong Kong public services. The usage rate of self-service kiosks is affected by various factors, including the convenience and visitor traffic of deployment locations, periodic fluctuations in the demand for certain public

services, and the public's receptiveness and usage habits regarding alternative service channels (such as counter services and online services) as compared to self-service kiosks. Since the set-up of the self-service kiosks, the total usage rate has exceeded 1 000. We will continue to identify and increase the number of public services to be provided through the self-service kiosks, and introduce various promotional and publicity measures to enhance public awareness of and receptiveness to the self-service kiosks. A local research and development organisation was engaged to design and develop the CBPS self-service kiosk. The development cost of each kiosk was about \$80,000, and the annual maintenance expenditure is about \$16,000.

3. We will continue to discuss with Guangdong Province to set up Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks in more Mainland cities of the GBA, with the target of covering the 9 Mainland cities of the GBA within 2025. Meanwhile, we have also set up "iAM Smart" self-registration kiosks alongside the Hong Kong CBPS self-service kiosks, enabling residents in the GBA to register for "iAM Smart" to have one-stop access to online services of various government departments via the "iAM Smart" mobile application.
4. The Hong Kong cross-boundary public services available have increased from 54 services provided by 9 bureaux/departments (B/Ds) at initial launch in end-2023 to currently 77 services provided by 12 B/Ds and related organisations. We will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to identify and introduce more suitable cross-boundary public services to bring greater convenience to the public.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB239

(Question Serial No. 0211)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme, will the Government inform this Committee of:

1. the number of applications received so far;
2. the respective research area of the 5 approved projects;
3. the longest, shortest and average time taken from submission of application to approval of subsidy;
4. the respective amount of the 5 approved subsidies?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 12)

Reply:

In the 2024-25 Budget, the Government allocated \$3 billion for a 3-year Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), mainly to subsidise local institutions, research and development (R&D) centres, enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing power of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC). Since its launch in October 2024, Cyberport has received over 10 applications covering a wide range of technology and application areas. As of end-February 2025, the Committee of the Subsidy Scheme (Committee) appointed by the Government has assessed and approved 9 projects led by local institutions, R&D centres, etc. with research areas such as accelerating local large language models, large models in new materials and synthetic biology, etc., which involve a total computing power subsidy of over \$170 million. Since January 2025, the above approved projects have gradually started using the services of the AISC after completing the deployment, accounting for over 60% of the computing power in service.

In general, Cyberport, being the Secretariat, can complete the preliminary assessment and submit recommendations to the Committee for approval within approximately 2 months after receiving complete information from the applicant.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB240

(Question Serial No. 0359)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 39 of the Budget Speech that the Government has set aside \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute, with a view to facilitating upstream research and development (R&D), midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. How will the \$1 billion be allocated and used?
2. What are the specific details of the plan and the implementation timetable?
3. What is the division of work between the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute and the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center under InnoHK? Will the Government consider integrated development to avoid duplication of resources?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and industrial applications of artificial intelligence (AI), facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. The AIRDI will be one of the key initiatives in building the local AI ecosystem, complementing the current AIR@InnoHK R&D platform that focuses on AI and robotics technologies (including the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) established in 2023 with the support of the AIR@InnoHK platform), the infrastructure of Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC), and the \$3 billion AI

Subsidy Scheme mainly for subsidising the industry to leverage the computing power of the AISC, etc.

The Digital Policy Office is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the HKGAI. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB241

(Question Serial No. 1212)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in paragraph 37 of the Budget Speech that the first-phase facility of Cyberport's AI Supercomputing Centre (AISC) has just commenced operation, and the computing power will be ramped up gradually to 3 000 petaFLOPS this year. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What is the utilisation rate of the AISC since its formal launch?
2. According to the current construction progress, whether the second-phase facility of AISC can commence operation by the scheduled date in 2026?
3. Given that the new large language model (Deep Seek) has been launched and the demand for computing power has dropped, will the Government reassess Hong Kong's demand for supercomputing power and reposition the AISC?
4. Are there any local AI projects currently being implemented in cooperation with other supercomputing centres in the Greater Bay Area (GBA)? If yes, what are the details?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kam-fai, William (LegCo internal reference no.: 30)

Reply:

The first-phase facility of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence Supercomputing Centre (AISC) commenced operation in December 2024, providing computing power of approximately 1 300 petaflops (PFLOPS), to be ramped up to 3 000 PFLOPS progressively this year to meet the strong local demand of computing power. With the gradual commencement of various projects, the current utilisation rate of the AISC amounts to over 60% of the computing power in service. With the growing popularity of artificial intelligence (AI) related technologies and applications, coupled with the vibrant development of the data-driven digital economy and the innovative integration of traditional industries with technology, the demand for AI

technologies and computing power in Hong Kong is expected to remain strong. Cyberport will continue to closely monitor the market situation and adjust its operation strategies in a timely manner.

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is committed to strengthening innovation and technology linkage with the Mainland, in particular the cities in the Greater Bay Area, for pursuing mutually beneficial collaboration and contributing to the national technology development. Cyberport's AISC, as a platform, will attract AI talents and enterprises from the Mainland to come to Hong Kong for development and exchange, and also facilitate exploring collaboration opportunities with the Mainland in the development of AI and data industries.

To spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and industrial applications of AI, the 2025-26 Budget announced the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute. Through facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios, we will endeavour to develop AI as a core industry and empower traditional industries to upgrade and transform.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB242

(Question Serial No. 0093)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government has stated that artificial intelligence (AI) is at the core of developing new quality productive forces. As such, it has been proactively enhancing the strategy and planning on AI development.

However, with the huge and ever-increasing electricity demand from AI-related data centres, has the Government made an assessment on such demand in the future and provided sufficient related facilities to support the development?

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no.: 5)

Reply:

Data centre is an essential infrastructure for supporting the development of AI. The Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint promulgated in 2022 puts forth accelerating the development of new digital infrastructure, and encompassing a comprehensive assessment on the planning and development of data centres in Hong Kong. According to our estimation, there is currently about 1 million square metres (m²) of data centre floor area in Hong Kong, which is expected to further increase to 1.5 million m² by end 2026.

At the same time, we have noted the trend in power demand from AI-related data centres. According to the information provided by Environment and Ecology Bureau, the Government has signed the Scheme of Control Agreements with 2 power companies respectively. The power companies are obliged to contribute to the development of Hong Kong by providing, operating and maintaining sufficient electricity related-facilities and supplying electricity to meet the demand. The power companies have made plans for the power supply needs across the territory under their Development Plans, and will carry out projects approved in these Plans according to the development progress of individual areas to meet the requisite demand.

In addition to reserving sufficient utility infrastructure (e.g. power supply, water supply and telecommunications network, etc.) in new development areas, the Data Centre Facilitation Unit of Digital Policy Office will continue to provide one-stop support services to enterprises interested in developing data centres in Hong Kong, and assist the industry in coordinating with relevant government departments and power companies on individual data centre development projects, with a view to supporting the development of AI-related data centres.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB243

(Question Serial No. 0097)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government, (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

The Government will continue to promote the adoption of innovation and technology (I&T) by bureaux and departments through the Smart Government Innovation Lab and the “TechConnect (block vote)”.

According to the latest position, what have been the average annual expenditure on the adoption of I&T by the Government, the types of I&T mainly adopted as well as the relevant efforts and expenditures for manpower training over the past 5 years?

Asked by: Hon WONG Ying-ho, Kennedy (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

The Government has been actively driving the adoption of innovation and technology (I&T) by bureaux/departments (B/Ds) through various programmes to enhance the quality and efficiency of public services.

Through its thematic website, the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) under the Digital Policy Office (DPO) collects business needs of government departments in public service delivery and invites the industry to submit technology solutions and product suggestions to meet relevant needs, facilitating departments to formulate implementation plans and procurement specifications more effectively. In the past 5 years, the Smart Lab has matched solutions with more than 110 business needs from over 30 government departments, including the Environmental Protection Department, the Buildings Department and the DPO, covering technology areas like Internet of Things (IoT), data analytics, video analytics, natural language processing and artificial intelligence (AI). Proof-of-concept (PoC) testings for more than 70 potential technology solutions were conducted in collaboration with the departments concerned. We do not maintain information on individual B/Ds' expenditure in the adoption of I&T under the Smart Lab.

The Smart Lab also organises regular thematic technology forums jointly with Cyberport, the Hong Kong Productivity Council and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation to strengthen government departments' understanding on I&T and stimulate their creativity, and invites I&T industry players to introduce their technology solutions to government departments. So far, 20 large-scale technology forums have been organised, covering topics such as cybersecurity risks, AI, natural language processing and “iAM Smart”, attracting over 8 000 participants from the Government and the I&T industry.

As for the “TechConnect (block vote)” (TechConnect) launched in mid-2017 by the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau, it provides funding support to government departments to plan and implement technology projects (including pilot schemes and researches) with an aim to enhancing operational efficiency, quality of public services, as well as capability to safeguard public safety. In the past 5 financial years, the TechConnect has provided funding support to 110 applied technology projects or studies proposed by 33 departments/offices, with an average funding allocation of about \$83 million to new technology projects each year. The technologies involved included IoT, big data, AI, generative AI, machine learning, blockchain, robotics, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), radio-frequency identification, augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), 3D printing, Geographic Information System (GIS), video / image analytics, digital forensics, point cloud 3D model, natural language processing and speech synthesis, etc.

In addition to the Smart Lab and the TechConnect scheme, the DPO also drives B/Ds in the adoption of I&T through the “Be the Smart Regulator” and the “Streamlining of Government Services” programmes. In the past 5 years, 49 B/Ds have proposed over 900 business facilitation and streamlining measures under the programmes, covering more than 1 200 licences and services. 80% of the measures involved the adoption of I&T, with a view to providing more electronic services for the trade and the public. These include the provision of online application services through “iAM Smart”, the development of chatbots to facilitate the handling of enquiries, etc. The DPO does not maintain information on B/Ds' expenditure on the adoption of I&T under these programmes.

Regarding staff training, as one of the strategies for accelerating the development of digital government and leading public service innovation, the DPO has, since its establishment in 2024, strengthened co-operation with the Civil Service College in regularly organising briefings, thematic seminars and training to sharpen the core skills of senior management (particularly senior directorates) of all B/Ds in using digital technology, covering related topics such as information technology, data management and cybersecurity, thereby promoting B/Ds to use digital technology more effectively to drive digital transformation and enhance daily operational efficiency. The DPO has taken forward the related work with existing manpower and resources.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB244

(Question Serial No. 0443)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

It is mentioned in the Budget Speech that to spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) as well as industrial application of artificial intelligence (AI), the Government has set aside \$1 billion for the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute.

In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following: How will the \$1 billion set aside for the establishment of the AI R&D Institute be utilised by the Government? Will the Institute remain to be publicly-funded or adopt a business model in its operation in the future? If the goal is for the Institute to reach break-even point, how long will it take to achieve this?

Asked by: Hon YIM Kong (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and industrial applications of artificial intelligence (AI), facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios.

The Digital Policy Office is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center under the AIR@InnoHK. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB245

(Question Serial No. 1479)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Digital Government

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

As regards fostering a digital government, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The number of research and development (R&D) projects of government departments in partnership with or supported by the Digital Policy Office (DPO) (or the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO)/Efficiency Office (EffO) prior to merging) in each of the past 5 years, as well as the contents, times required for R&D, completion dates and expenditures involved of these projects.
2. The number of events organised by the DPO (or the OGCIO/EffO prior to merging) to promote web/mobile application accessibility in each of the past 5 years, as well as the contents, forms and expenditures involved of these events.
3. The number of events organised under the territory-wide digital inclusion programme for the elderly in each of the past 5 years, as well as the contents, forms and expenditures involved of these events.
4. Among the key performance measures in respect of Digital Government, the percentage of projects completed on schedule, as indicated by post-implementation departmental returns on information technology (IT) projects, has remained at about 75% for long. Why did the percentage fail to improve after IT projects were implemented?
5. The Budget Speech states that about 10 000 posts are expected to be deleted by 1 April 2027. The Government is also actively fostering a digital government to save manpower. However, the establishment of the DPO is expected to be 888 posts in 2025, an increase of 138 posts as compared with 750 posts in 2024. In this connection, will the Government tabulate the post titles, job descriptions, ranks, salary expenditure by rank and total salary expenditure for the 138 posts, and the number of existing posts with the same titles as these posts?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

1. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) has been striving to drive the adoption of different information technologies by bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to facilitate the development of smart city and digital government. In the past 5 years, the DPO has launched a number of central platforms, facilities and services to support B/Ds in developing and providing more digital government services that bring convenience and benefit to the public and businesses, including:
 - (i) Big Data Analytics Platform (BDAP): Launched in 2020, it enables B/Ds to adopt technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and big data analytics to implement more e-government projects. The expenditure of implementing the BDAP is \$69 million, and the BDAP has currently supported the implementation of more than 20 big data projects in B/Ds.
 - (ii) Traffic Data Analytics System (TDAS): Launched jointly with the Transport Department (TD) in November 2021, it utilises big data analytics to analyse various traffic, transport and weather data, assisting the TD in more accurately analysing and assessing traffic conditions, thereby enhancing traffic management and efficiency. The expenditure of developing TDAS is included in the expenditure of the BDAP.
 - (iii) Chatbot-as-a-Service: Launched in June 2023, it enables B/Ds to make use of a shared chatbot infrastructure with ready-to-use building blocks to develop chatbots related to their businesses more promptly and more cost-effectively, and the related development expenditure is around \$7.79 million. As at March 2025, various B/Ds have launched more than 15 chatbots using “Chatbot-as-a Service”.
 - (iv) AI Computer Vision Hub: Launched in March 2024, it provides B/Ds with a series of tools related to image analytics, including pre-trained models, data labelling tools, model development environment, etc., to help B/Ds develop image analytics models and identify objects or text in images and videos. The expenditure of developing AI Computer Vision Hub is around \$8.64 million.
 - (v) Shared Blockchain Platform (SBP): Launched in June 2022, it enables B/Ds to develop blockchain application systems more conveniently and quickly. To further support B/Ds in issuing licences, permits and certificates by electronic means, DPO also launched the “e-Proof” service on the SBP in May 2024 to make use of blockchain technology for verification of digital licences and permits. So far, 5 B/Ds have adopted “e-Proof” service to issue over 1.5 million of digital licences and permits, covering 18 types of licences and certificates. The expenditure for developing the SBP and “e-Proof” service is approximately \$16.59 million.

In addition to the above, B/Ds will explore the introduction and development of different technical solutions to enhance services based on their business operations and needs. Through its thematic website, the Smart Government Innovation Lab (Smart Lab) under the DPO collects the business needs of government departments in public service delivery and invites the industry to submit technology solutions and product suggestions

to meet relevant needs, facilitating departments to formulate implementation plans and procurement specifications more effectively. In the past 5 years, the Smart Lab has matched solutions with more than 110 business needs from over 30 government departments, including Environmental Protection Department, Buildings Department and DPO, covering technology areas like Internet of Things (IoT), data analytics, video analytics, natural language processing and AI. Proof-of-concept (PoC) testings for more than 70 potential technology solutions were conducted in collaboration with the departments concerned. IT projects being planned or having been implemented by individual departments after undergoing PoC testings included:

- Leverage AI technology to develop robotic dog equipped with different sensors, with the capability of identifying the composition of unknown gases and autonomously tracking the direction of the gases, to assist officers in investigating air nuisance incidents. The AI robotic dogs have been gradually deployed by the department for pilot testing to collect data for continuous optimisation;
- Identify signboard structures and automatically calculate signboard dimensions using technologies such as AI, video analytics, remote measurement, etc. to facilitate the quick detection of signboards with potential risks; and
- Utilise AI image recognition, IoT and machine learning technologies to assist in real-time monitoring of the cleanliness condition of designated shoreline areas. The aim is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the shoreline cleanliness monitoring program by automating the collection and analysis of massive images and data on the coverage and types of refuse, and referring cases to relevant departments for follow-up as needed.

2. The DPO actively promotes digital accessibility design through various activities such as seminars, briefings and workshops. These activities target different audiences, including government departments, groups of people with disabilities and tertiary students, aiming to enhance their awareness of digital accessibility and share relevant technical knowledge. Over the past 5 years, a total of approximately 50 activities have been conducted, all managed by DPO internal staff resources, with the expenditure covered by the existing resources. Workshops for government departments involved training service contracts, with a total expenditure of around \$0.6 million over the past 5 years.

For public and private organisations, the DPO supports the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation Limited (HKIRC) in hosting the Digital Accessibility Recognition Scheme (formerly known as the Web Accessibility Recognition Scheme). The Scheme provides free assessment and advisory services to all participating organisations, and organise briefing sessions for different sectors of the community to promote the concepts and technical requirements of digital accessibility design. Over the past 5 years, HKIRC has organised 2 rounds of recognition schemes (each lasting approximately 18 months) and the DPO provided support with internal staff resources without additional government expenses involved.

3. The Government has been committed to promoting digital inclusion, encouraging those in need, including the elderly, to understand and use technology products and services, and to integrate into the digital society. Details of the work of the DPO under the “Smart Silver” programme over the past 5 years are listed in **Annex I**.
4. In the past 5 years, around 75% of IT projects were completed on schedule by B/Ds, and for the majority of those not completed on schedule, the delay was relatively short. The major causes of projects not completed on schedule are the tight supply of talents in the IT industry, quality of contractors’ deliverables not fully meeting requirements and the impact of COVID-19 epidemic. DPO will continue to monitor the progress of projects in accordance with the established mechanism, work closely with B/Ds to resolve issues promptly during the project development stage, and roll out the projects by phases when necessary and practicable to minimise the impact of delay on the overall project progress and quality.
5. Established on 25 July 2024, the DPO is responsible for formulating policies on digital government, data governance and information technology. The establishment of the DPO involves the reorganisation and integration of resources between the then Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) and the then Efficiency Office (EffO) under the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau. Relevant proposals on the establishment and financial arrangement for the setting up of the DPO were approved by the Legislative Council in mid-2024.

As at 31 March 2024, the establishment ceiling of the then OGCIO was 750. With the creation/deletion of posts to meet operational needs in 2024-25 and the aforementioned reorganisation and integration of resources with the then EffO, there is an increase of 138 posts to 888 posts in the establishment as at 31 March 2025. Relevant changes in establishment and expenditure are detailed at **Annex II**.

**Details of the work of the DPO under the “Smart Silver” programme
from 2020-21 to 2024-25**

Project	Date	Content	Total Expenditure of the Project¹ (\$ million)
ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly (2018-2021)	Commenced in December 2018 ²	Over 30 200 elders living in residential care homes, the hidden elderly, as well as elders receiving day care centre and home care services have been served.	About 10.6
ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly (2021-2023)	Commenced in March 2021 (for 2 years)	Over 44 700 elders living in residential care homes, the hidden elderly, as well as elders receiving day care centre and home care services have been served, while mobile outreach service stations have further served over 1 700 elders in the community.	About 10.4
ICT Outreach Programme for the Elderly (2023-2025)	Commenced in April 2023 (for 2 years)	As at February 2025, over 46 000 elders living in residential care homes, the hidden elderly as well as the elders receiving day care centre and home care services have been served, while mobile outreach service stations have further served over 23 000 elders in the community.	About 16.1
Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (2019-2021)	Commenced in February 2019 ³	Offering free advanced digital training courses for the elders with basic knowledge of digital technology in the community and over 5 200 elders have participated in the programme.	About 9.6

Project	Date	Content	Total Expenditure of the Project¹ (\$ million)
Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (2021-2023)	Commenced in December 2021 (for 2 years)	Offering free advanced digital training courses for the elders with basic knowledge of digital technology in the community and over 6 800 elders have participated in the programme.	About 9.4
Enriched ICT Training Programme for the Elderly (2024-2026)	Commenced in February 2024 (for 2 years)	Offering free advanced digital training courses for the elders with basic knowledge of digital technology in the community. As at February 2025, around 3 300 elders have participated in the training.	About 11.9
Digital Inclusion Programme for Elders (2024-2026)	Commenced in December 2024 (for 2 years)	Setting up 40 community-based help desks across 18 districts in the territory to provide regular and fixed-point training on digital technologies and technical support to elders. As at January 2025, the programme has served over 7 000 elders in the community. It is expected that over 100 000 elders will participate in the programme as a whole.	About 45
“Smart Silver” Elderly IT Learning Portal	Launched in October 2019	Elders can learn digital technologies anywhere and anytime based on their personal needs and interests. A total of 39 learning modules have been rolled out so far. As at February 2025, the Portal recorded over 1.5 million visits and over 54 million hits.	About 8.4

¹ The cash flow of the projects may span across more than 1 financial year.

² The project was extended by 8 months from 2 years to July 2021 due to the epidemic.

³ The project was extended by 7 months from 2 years to August 2021 due to the epidemic.

**Details of changes in establishment and related expenditure of
the then OGCIO/DPO in 2024-25**

	Establishment change	Job descriptions	Rank/Post	No. of Posts	Estimated annual expenditure based on 2024-25 notional annual mid-point salary value (\$ million)
(I)	Establishment ceiling of the then OGCIO as at 31.3.2024			750	
(II)	Establishment change of the then OGCIO in 2024-25 (Note 1)	Facilitating the development of smart city and digital economy related industries in Hong Kong, and cross-boundary data flow in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) and related collaboration with the Mainland	Assistant Government Chief Information Officer	1	2.4
		Strengthening government data sharing and governance	Including Senior Systems Manager, Systems Manager, Analyst/Programmer I, Analyst/Programmer II	4	4.2

	Establishment change	Job descriptions	Rank/Post	No. of Posts	Estimated annual expenditure based on 2024-25 notional annual mid-point salary value (\$ million)
		Strengthening support for cross-boundary data flow in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA and related collaboration with the Mainland	Including Senior Systems Manager, Systems Manager, Analyst/Programmer I, Analyst/Programmer II, Executive Officer I	9	8.6
		Strengthening support for the 24-hour operation of the newly established Government Data Centre Complex	Including Assistant Computer Operation Manager, Senior Computer Operator, Computer Operator I, Computer Operator II	10	4.3
		Strengthening support for enhancing the performance and network security of the government system (Note 4)	Including Senior Systems Manager, Systems Manager, Analyst/Programmer I, Analyst/Programmer II	12	11.2
		Supporting the National Games Coordination Office to develop the IT systems required for co-hosting the 15th National Games, the 12th National Games for Persons with Disabilities and the 9th National Special Olympic Games in Hong Kong (Note 5)	Including Senior Systems Manager, Systems Manager, Analyst/Programmer I, Analyst/Programmer II	13	14.8

	Establishment change	Job descriptions	Rank/Post	No. of Posts	Estimated annual expenditure based on 2024-25 notional annual mid-point salary value (\$ million)
		Strengthening support for financial and accounting work	Accounting Officer II	1	0.5
		Posts deleted to offset creation of posts	Including Data Processor, Clerical Assistant	-2	-0.5
(III)	Transferred from the then EffO on 25.7.2024 upon the establishment of DPO (Note 2)			96	111.9
(IV)	Posts deleted in DPO in 2024-25 (Note 3)	Posts deleted in connection with the Government's initiatives in reducing expenditure and enhancing manpower utilisation	Including Data Processor, Clerical Assistant	-6	-1.5
(V)	Establishment of DPO as at 31.3.2025			888	

Note 1: Net increase of 48 posts

Note 2: Transfer of 96 posts

Note 3: Deletion of 6 posts

Note 4: Including 8 time-limited posts for a period of around 20 to 30 months

Note 5: All 13 posts are time-limited posts for a period of around 20 months

The total number of posts under Notes 1 to 3 is 138. The net increase in estimated annual expenditure based on the 2024-25 notional annual mid-point salary value was around \$155.9 million, of which \$111.9 million was for the 96 posts transferred from the then EffO to DPO. The relevant provision is offset by a corresponding reduction in salary provision and staff cost under the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau. Hence, no additional expenses are involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB246

(Question Serial No. 1481)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding promoting the further adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) within the Government to enhance efficiency, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the list of government departments that adopted a generative AI document processing copilot application developed by a Hong Kong-based large language model, the application they adopted, the number of documents that the application could process, the manpower and time saved after adopting the application, as well as the expenditure involved in each of the past 5 years;
2. the other application scenarios and number of AI adoption by government departments, the content concerned, the manpower and time saved after adopting the application, as well as the expenditure involved in the past 5 years.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 31)

Reply:

1. In 2023, the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) was established with funding from the AIR@InnoHK which focuses on artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics technology. HKGAI focuses on the research and development (R&D) of generative AI technology, with the goal of establishing Hong Kong's self-developed AI foundation models and ecosystem. HKGAI is currently conducting R&D on a series of open-source foundation models, including developing a local large language model (LLM) and a generative AI document processing copilot application (HKPilot) based on this model. The application is currently in the R&D stage and is mainly used for document processing tasks such as drafting, translation, and summarisation of documents. To assist HKGAI in further training and optimising its LLM and the application, the Government started using the HKPilot in mid-2024. The

Digital Policy Office (DPO) has invited all bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to arrange government staff from different grades to participate in the pilot programme. HKGAI updated its locally developed “HKGAI V1” LLM based on DeepSeek technology in February 2025, and is currently integrating the model into the HKPilot to further enhance the application’s capabilities of document processing. In the meantime, HKPilot is also provided for staff of B/Ds for pilot use and user feedback. The DPO will continue to co-ordinate with B/Ds to progressively extend the pilot programme to cover more government staff. In the longer term, the application will help reduce the manpower required for government staff in handling general document processing tasks, allowing manpower to be deployed to other areas of work in need.

The R&D and operating expenditure of HKGAI in the first 3 years amounted to around \$235 million. We do not maintain the breakdown figures related to the development of individual models or applications.

2. The DPO has been striving to drive the adoption of innovative technologies, including AI, big data analytics and blockchain technologies, by B/Ds to provide digital government services that bring convenience and benefit to the public and businesses. Currently, B/Ds implement their information technology projects and related technology applications taking into consideration factors such as their policy objectives, operational needs, requirements of service users, existing manpower and available resources.

In terms of applying AI to enhance digital government services, in addition to the pilot use of HKPilot to assist government staff in document processing tasks such as drafting, translation, and summarisation of documents, B/Ds have been progressively launching over a hundred of digital government and smart city initiatives from 2024 to 2025, with nearly half of which involving the application of big data analytics and AI technologies. Projects related to the application of AI technology in various B/Ds are mainly supported by Subhead A007GX (block allocation) of the Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation and other innovation and technology-related resources of the Government. In the past 5 years, around 58 projects related to the application of AI and big data analytics technologies have been implemented through application for block allocation, with the total related expenditure of around \$223 million. The annual expenditure is listed as follows:

Year	Actual Expenditure (\$ million)
2020-21	27.8
2021-22	27.9
2022-23	37.7
2023-24	56.0
2024-25 (As at February)	73.2

In addition, individual B/Ds will implement other projects according to their resource availability, and the DPO does not maintain such information.

Examples of projects launched by B/Ds with application of AI and big data analytics technologies in the past 5 years are as follows:

- The Transport Department (TD) and the DPO have jointly developed the “Traffic Data Analytics System” (TDAS) which utilises big data analytics to analyse various traffic, transport and weather data, assisting the TD in more accurately analysing and assessing traffic conditions, thereby enhancing traffic management and efficiency;
- The DPO has launched a shared chatbot infrastructure with ready-to-use building blocks that enables B/Ds to develop chatbots related to their businesses more promptly and more cost-effectively;
- The DPO has further applied AI in 1823 to enhance work efficiency, such as fully expanding 1823’s AI chatbot service to answer common public enquiries within the service scope of 1823, utilising “AI speech recognition” technology to identify callers’ enquiry subjects and provide relevant information via voicemails or Short Message Service (SMS), and internally piloting generative AI technology to assist staff in drafting responses to written enquiries;
- The Lands Department has launched a chatbot service based on map/Geographic Information System, integrating AI with geographic information technology to make spatial data searching easier and faster for the public;
- The Hong Kong Fire Services Department uses drones equipped with terrain-following technology to conduct flight systematically and capture photos within specific areas for creating two-dimensional and three-dimensional maps, and further utilises AI to detect human presence, enhancing both the safety of operations and the precision of search efforts;
- The Architectural Services Department employs AI, big data analytics and other technologies to optimise cost estimation for construction projects;
- The Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) has launched the “Smart Customs Interactive Response System”, which applies natural language processing, machine learning and text-to-speech technologies, and a central knowledge base of the C&ED to provide instant and accurate responses to inquiries from the public and travellers;
- The Highways Department has developed a “Road Defect Detection System” tailored for Hong Kong’s road conditions, using a camera system installed in the patrol inspection vehicle to automatically capture photos of the road surface during inspections. By leveraging AI models and advanced geospatial technology, the system analyses these photos to automatically identify road cracks and faded road surfaces, and then marks and records their locations, enabling the engineering teams to promptly arrange appropriate road maintenance works;
- The Environmental Protection Department has developed the AI robotic dog equipped with advanced computer vision, specialised directional air intakes and air measurement sensors. Combined with AI algorithms, the robotic dog can infer

activities that cause the pollution and autonomously locate sources of air pollution and odor nuisance;

- The Hong Kong Police Force has launched an AI-based “Smart Traffic Management System” in Kwun Tong, using a combination of multiple cameras to monitor traffic flow, parking situations and traffic incidents in real time; and
- The Census and Statistics Department employs deep learning technology to detect anomalies in trade declarations, which can identify misreported information more effectively and reduce manual checks, thereby improving the accuracy of trade statistics and work efficiency.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB247

(Question Serial No. 1482)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. Please tabulate by sector the number of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) applying for the subsidies, the description of digital transformation, the number of applications approved and the subsidy amount granted per year since the launch of the Programme;
2. Has the Government reviewed the effectiveness of the Programme, such as the impact of applying the subsidised solutions on the operation of the SMEs? If yes, what are the details; if not, what are the reasons?
3. Does the Government have any plan to expand the scope of the Programme, including the subsidy amount and the types of eligible sectors, so as to further strengthen the support for the digital transformation of SMEs? If yes, what are the details and the timetable; if not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

The Digital Transformation Support Pilot Programme (Pilot Programme) provides subsidies on a one-to-one matching basis to assist small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the food and beverage (F&B) and retail sectors in applying ready-to-use basic digital solutions under three categories, including digital payment and point of sale systems, online promotion, and customer management systems, so as to expedite the digital transformation of enterprises. To benefit more SMEs, the scope of the Pilot Programme was expanded at the end of 2024 to cover tourism and personal service sectors.

As of end-February 2025, Cyberport has received over 6 700 applications from SMEs under the Pilot Programme, with more than 2 500 applications approved. The total approved funding amount exceeds \$120 million. Details are listed as follows:

Sector	Number of SME applications (Approximate)	Number of approved applications (Approximate)	Funding Amount (Approximate) (\$'000)
F&B	2 320	920 (Digital payment and point of sale systems: around 590 Online promotion: around 230 Customer management systems: around 100)	43,600
Retail	4 000	1 510 (Digital payment and point of sale systems: around 900 Online promotion: around 380 Customer management systems: around 230)	74,500
Tourism	10	3 (Digital payment and point of sale systems: 1 Online promotion: 2)	100
Personal Service	440	110 (Digital payment and point of sale systems: around 60 Online promotion: around 30 Customer management systems: around 20)	5,600
Total	Over 6 700	Over 2 500	Over 120 million

Since the launch of the Pilot Programme, positive feedback has been received from many SMEs. Through adopting basic digital solutions, SMEs can enhance operational efficiency (such as introducing digital payment and point of sale systems), explore new clientele (such as setting up online shops), strengthen communication with customers and improve the overall consumer experience (such as integrating social media interactions and optimising customer enquiry channels), etc.

Cyberport will continue to maintain close communication with the Advisory Group of the Pilot Programme, SMEs, solution providers and industry organisations to gather feedback and understand market conditions, ensuring the smooth operation of the Pilot Programme. We will work with Cyberport to review the arrangements, progress, effectiveness, etc. of the Pilot

Programme in a timely manner to facilitate consideration of the way forward of the programme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB248

(Question Serial No. 1483)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the Knowing More About IT Programme and the IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools Programme, will the Government advise on the following:

1. Please tabulate the numbers of schools applying for the programmes, the descriptions of the funding items, the numbers of applications approved and related amounts of funding, as well as the amounts and proportions of the approved funds spent on information technology (IT) equipment, operating expenses of extra-curricular activities (ECAs) and administrative expenses in each of the past 5 years;
2. Please tabulate the numbers of activities held, the duration (in hours) of the activities, the numbers of participating students and their class levels, and the amounts of funding and expenditures involved, broken down by type of IT-related ECA (i.e. artificial intelligence courses, mobile application coding courses, robotic competitions, drone coding, etc.) funded under the programmes in each of the past 5 years;
3. What are the total numbers, establishment, ranks, salary expenditures by rank and total salary expenditures regarding the staff responsible for the 2 programmes?

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

1. and 2. The progress of "IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools" and "Knowing More About IT" programmes (as at February 2025) is as follows:

“IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” Programme:

School Year	Number of Schools with Approved Applications (Increase in Number of Schools)	Number of Funded Activities	Scope of Activities (Examples)	Approved Amount^{Note} (\$ million)	Number of Students Benefited
2020/21	119 (119)	294	Artificial intelligence, coding, drones, robotics, augmented reality/virtual reality, Internet of Things, blockchain, big data and cloud computing, etc.	46	About 27 000
2021/22	309 (242)	1 012		152	About 79 000
2022/23	372 (115)	1 235		149	About 82 000
2023/24	227 (12)	802		98	About 55 000
2024/25	171 (4)	559		60	About 38 000
Total	492	3 902		505	About 281 000

“Knowing More About IT” Programme:

School Year	Number of Schools with Approved Applications (Increase in Number of Schools)	Number of Funded Activities	Scope of Activities (Examples)	Approved Amount^{Note} (\$ million)	Number of Students Benefited
2021/22	195 (195)	545	Artificial intelligence, coding, drones, robotics, augmented reality/virtual reality, Internet of Things, etc.	46	About 44 000
2022/23	312 (234)	728		85	About 86 000
2023/24	342 (74)	924		58	About 69 000
2024/25	169 (10)	421		30	About 33 000
Total	513	2 618		219	About 232 000

Note: About half of the approved amount was allocated for the purchase of information technology equipment.

- The Digital Policy Office takes forward the “IT Innovation Lab in Secondary Schools” and “Knowing More About IT” programmes with existing manpower. A breakdown of the relevant figures is not available.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB249

(Question Serial No. 1497)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

In connection with the enhancement of “iAM Smart”, will the Government advise on the following:

1. The numbers of registered users of “iAM Smart” in each of the past 5 years, broken down by two age groups, namely aged 18 or above and aged 11 to 17;
2. The numbers of events held to promote and publicise “iAM Smart”, the numbers of the publicity materials produced, the contents and formats of such events, as well as the expenditure involved in each of the past 5 years;
3. A list of government departments or public services not currently included in “iAM Smart”;
4. Further to the above question, the reasons why those departments do not participate, as well as the details and timetable of the work to facilitate their participation;
5. The estimated expenditure in 2025-26 relevant to enhancing “iAM Smart”, as well as the details, including the contents and number of times of enhancements and the relevant expenditure, of the phased launching of “iAM Smart”.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 28)

Reply:

1. Over the past 5 years, the distribution of registered users in the two age groups, namely 11 to 17 years old and 18 years old or above, is as follows:

Year	Cumulative Number of Registered Users		Total
	Aged 11 to 17	Aged 18 or above	
2020-21	-	156 000	156 000
2021-22	21 000	1 205 000	1 226 000
2022-23	42 000	1 827 000	1 869 000
2023-24	66 000	2 567 000	2 633 000
2024-25 (as at February)	90 000	3 198 000	3 288 000

Remark: The figures are rounded to the nearest thousand.

2. The annual operating expenditures of “iAM Smart” since its launch are tabulated below:

Year	Expenditure (\$ million)
2020-21 (Actual)	20.72
2021-22 (Actual)	50.01
2022-23 (Actual)	57.52
2023-24 (Actual)	73.15
2024-25 (Revised Estimate)	93.48

The promotion and publicity of “iAM Smart” cover various channels, such as television and radio (including advertisement production), social media platforms, online media, public transportation, mobile registration stations, various major innovation and technology exhibitions, as well as events organised by different industries and district bodies, etc. The relevant expenses are included in the operating expenditures above.

3. to 5. The Digital Policy Office (DPO) obtained the funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in mid-2023 to commence a series of upgrades to the “iAM Smart” platform. The target is to drive full adoption of “iAM Smart” by all government online services by 2025 so as to realise “single portal for online government services”. As of February 2025, over 1 000 government online services and e-forms, as well as around 100 online services provided by public and private organisations have adopted “iAM Smart”. The remaining approximately 200 government online services and e-forms will also fully adopt “iAM Smart” within 2025.

The upgrade work of the “iAM Smart” platform is progressing at full speed, with the enhanced or new features as follows:

- i. In 2023, the design for the “iAM Smart” mobile app was updated, enabling citizens to browse various useful information. Additionally, the “iAM

Smart” platform was linked up with the Unified Identity Authentication Platform of Guangdong Province, enabling Hong Kong residents to directly log in to the Guangdong Government Service Network and the “Yue Sheng Shi” mobile app through “iAM Smart” for using various government services of the Guangdong Province.

- ii. In 2024, the registration process for “iAM Smart+” was simplified. A new “iAM Smart” interface was launched, and a new “iAM Smart Personal Code” was introduced for identity verification purpose.
- iii. Various departments will gradually roll out personalised content for displaying on the “Personal Assistant” page.
- iv. In early March 2025, the “Digital Document” feature was introduced, allowing users to present their digital documents issued by different government departments through the “iAM Smart” mobile app. It currently covers the Social Welfare Department’s Electronic Senior Citizen Card, the Civil Service Bureau’s Common Recruitment Examination results and the Basic Law and National Security Law Test results, as well as the Correctional Services Department’s Incarceration Proof.
- v. More new features will be progressively rolled out this year, including the “Step-up Authentication”, bill payment function and “Mini-program Platform”.

The estimated expenditure for upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform for 2025-26 is about \$45.8 million. Besides, the DPO has created 6 time-limited civil service posts to undertake the tasks of upgrading the “iAM Smart” platform and coordinating with bureaux/departments for the integration of online services, etc.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB250

(Question Serial No. 1507)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Digital Infrastructure

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

With regard to promoting the development of artificial intelligence (AI), will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. The number, establishment, salary expenditure by rank and total salary expenditure of the staff responsible for the AI Subsidy Scheme under the Digital Policy Office;
2. As mentioned in the Budget, the AI Subsidy Scheme has approved 5 projects led by local universities, research institutions, etc. In this connection, please tabulate the number of applications received since the start of the application period, the details of the above 5 projects and the amount of subsidies involved;
3. Please tabulate the relevant expenditure incurred by the Government on AI, big data analytics and blockchain technologies in each of the past 5 years;
4. The number of activities organised by the Government to attract AI enterprises to establish business in Hong Kong, the details and number of participants of these activities, as well as the relevant expenditure in each of the past 5 years;
5. The details and timetable relating to the establishment of the Hong Kong AI Research and Development Institute.

Asked by: Hon YUNG Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

1. and 2. In the 2024-25 Budget, the Government allocated \$3 billion for a 3-year Artificial Intelligence Subsidy Scheme (Subsidy Scheme), mainly to subsidise local institutions, research and development (R&D) centres, enterprises, etc. to leverage the computing power of Cyberport's Artificial Intelligence

Supercomputing Centre (AISC). Since its launch in October 2024, Cyberport has received over 10 applications covering a wide range of technology and application areas. As of end-February 2025, the Committee of the Subsidy Scheme appointed by the Government has assessed and approved 9 projects led by local institutions, R&D centres, etc. with research areas such as accelerating local large language models, large models in new materials and synthetic biology, etc., which involve a total computing power subsidy of over \$170 million. The computing power required by the approved projects ranges from 8 to 512 petaflops, with durations varying between 1.5 and 12 months. Among them, 4 projects have gradually started using the services of the AISC after completing the deployment, accounting for over 60% of the computing power in service. Details are as follows:

Applicant [Category]	Project Title	Research Area
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University [Local institutions]	Enhancing Edge-Based Foundation Models for Advanced Reasoning	Large language models
Hong Kong Institute of AI for Science, City University of Hong Kong [Local institutions]	Protein Foundation Model for Protein Design	Synthetic biology
Hong Kong Institute of AI for Science, City University of Hong Kong [Local institutions]	Moma, Modular Pretrained Foundation for Heterogeneous Material Learning	New materials
Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center Limited (HKGAI) [R&D centres]	Hong Kong Audio Foundation Model	Large language models

Regarding other projects, Cyberport and the relevant teams are discussing the details and these projects will be announced and commenced as soon as possible after finalising the subsidy arrangements.

The Digital Policy Office (DPO) will oversee the implementation of the Subsidy Scheme with its existing manpower and resources. A breakdown of the expenditure involved is not available.

3. The DPO has been striving to drive the adoption of innovative technologies, including AI, big data analytics and blockchain technologies, by bureaux and departments (B/Ds) to provide digital government services that bring convenience and benefit to the public and businesses. Currently, B/Ds implement their information and technology projects and related technology applications taking into consideration factors such as their policy objectives, operational needs, requirements of service users, existing manpower and available resources.

Projects related to the application of technologies such as AI in various B/Ds are mainly implemented by funding application from the Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation, including the central platforms and facilities such as “Big Data Analytics Platform”, “Chatbot-as-a-Service”, “AI Computer Vision Hub”, “Shared Blockchain Platform” (SBP) and “e-Proof” developed by the DPO, with the expenditures in the past 5 years tabulated as follows:

Year	Actual Expenditure for AI and Big Data Analytics (\$ million)	Actual Expenditure for Blockchain (\$ million)
2020-21	27.8	-
2021-22	27.9	2.0
2022-23	37.7	4.6
2023-24	56.0	5.5
2024-25 (As of February)	73.2	5.9

4. The Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau, in collaboration with the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises, has been reaching out to enterprises from the Mainland and overseas countries proactively and, as of February 2025, has liaised with more than 130 high-potential or representative innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises to set up or expand their businesses at locations such as the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport, including AI enterprises. We will continue to reach out to I&T enterprises proactively to liaise with them and provide appropriate assistance, with a view to facilitating the setting up of businesses by Mainland and overseas enterprises in Hong Kong. We have all along been deploying existing manpower and resources to implement the relevant work. A breakdown of the expenditure involved for individual work items is not available.

5. The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong’s innovative R&D and industrial applications of AI, facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios. The DPO is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the HKGAI under the AIR@InnoHK. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ITIB251

(Question Serial No. 3856)

Head: (47) Government Secretariat : Digital Policy Office

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Data Governance

Controlling Officer: Commissioner for Digital Policy (Tony WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry

Question:

Regarding the proposal in the 2025 Budget of setting aside \$1 billion for the establishment of the Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (Institute), and for Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) as well as industrial application of artificial intelligence (AI), please inform this Committee of the following:

1. Which specific domains of AI will the Institute focus on? How can it be ensured that the direction of R&D efforts in these domains aligns with the industrial needs of Hong Kong and global technological trends?
2. What is the specific allocation of the \$1 billion among upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes, and expansion of application scenarios? Have allocation proportions or priorities been clearly set?
3. Will there be a regular reporting mechanism for the Institute to report to the public and the Government on the relevant progress and outcomes?
4. How can it be ensured that the development of AI technologies conforms to social values and legal norms and principles?
5. Apart from the initial funding from the Government, has the Institute planned to secure subsequent funding through other channels?

Asked by: Hon ZHANG Xinyu, Gary (LegCo internal reference no.: 34)

Reply:

The 2025-26 Budget announced that \$1 billion has been set aside for the establishment of the Hong Kong Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Institute (AIRDI), which will spearhead and support Hong Kong's innovative research and development (R&D) and

industrial applications of artificial intelligence (AI), facilitating upstream R&D, midstream and downstream transformation of R&D outcomes and expanding application scenarios.

The Digital Policy Office (DPO) is formulating a detailed plan for the establishment of the AIRDI, including drawing up its public mission, implementation strategy, work objectives, governance structure and monitoring mechanism, manpower and financial arrangements, operating model, performance indicators, etc. To expedite the preparatory work, one of the options to be explored is to leverage the existing R&D foundation of the Hong Kong Generative AI Research and Development Center (HKGAI) under the AIR@InnoHK. Depending on the progress of the tasks above, our goal is to establish the AIRDI in 2026-27 at the soonest, following the funding approval by the Legislative Council.

The AIRDI is one of the components of our strategy to promote AI development. In terms of AI governance, the DPO has formulated the Ethical Artificial Intelligence Framework, while the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data has also published the Artificial Intelligence: Model Personal Data Protection Framework. These guidelines assist the Government and various sectors of the society in developing and utilising AI technology in a manner that complies with statutory requirements and ethical norm, thereby harnessing the usefulness of AI, while ensuring that the innovation, development, and application of AI technology are not overly regulated or hindered. The Government has also commissioned the HKGAI to study and suggest appropriate codes and guidelines on generative AI technologies and practices through practical applications.

- End -