

*Press Release
For Immediate Release*

**Recycling Fund approves \$5.7 million for latest batch of applications
A Series of Facilitation Measures to Provide Timely and Extensive Support to Recyclers**

The Advisory Committee on Recycling Fund has recently approved funding for 30 applications involving a total sum of \$5.7 million, a record number of approved projects since the launch of a series of facilitation measures earlier this year.

To date, the Committee has approved funding for 85 applications, among which 23 are under the Enterprise Support Programme, 55 are under the Enterprise Support Programme (Small-scale Standard Projects), and 7 come under the Industry Support Programme. The total amount of funding approved is about \$70 million.

Since the launch of the Fund, the Committee regularly reviews the operation of the Fund in response to market conditions and industry's comment, with an aim to promote the overall development of the recycling industry. Under the series of facilitation measures introduced in January 2017, the funding coverage of the Small-scale Standard Projects has been expanded. Recyclers can use the fund to purchase small equipment for enhancing operation efficiency and reducing nuisances to the neighbourhood; and to organize promotional and community building activities for improving the image of the industry. In addition, numerous measures were introduced to ease the financial burden of successful applicants, including streamlining the arrangement for recyclers to send their staff to receive occupational training; allowing approved Small-scale Standard Projects to apply for interim funding disbursement; and allowing rental expenses arising from new or expanded recycling business of approved projects to be funded.

The recycling industry in general is supportive to these facilitation measures. The proposals received involve the procurement of the abovementioned small equipment, website development, and enrolment in certification schemes, etc.

On the other hand, the Committee is considering different solicitation themes under the Recycling Fund to invite applications related to a specific theme within a designated period. To better address the needs and development trend of the recycling industry, the themes will be devised based on various factors, such as the funding objectives, government policies, funding scopes, vetting procedures, etc. For instance, phase 1 of the Organic Waste Treatment Facilities (OWTF) of the Environmental Protection Department will be in full operation upon completion of testing in the second half of this year. Depending on the needs and response from the recycling industry, the Committee may consider a solicitation theme on food waste recycling after the completion of testing of OWTF with an aim to enhance the operation efficiency of food waste recyclers.

The HKSAR Government introduced the \$1 billion Recycling Fund in October 2015 to provide appropriate funding support to enhance the overall capability, capacity, efficiency and skills of the local recycling industry, as well as to help develop the market for recycled products by providing more market information. The Fund also aims to raise the quantity and value of recyclables, thus reducing the amount of waste disposed of at landfills. It comprises two programmes, namely the Enterprise Support Programme and the Industry Support Programme, to provide funding support to eligible enterprises and non-profit distributing organizations respectively.

The Small-scale Standard Projects under the Enterprise Support Programme allow SMEs to submit applications, reports and apply for funding disbursement with simplified procedures. In

view of the difficulties encountered by SMEs in opening a designated project bank account, the Committee has approved the exemption of such requirement of the Small-scale Standard Projects.

The Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) is the implementation partner and secretariat of the Recycling Fund. To enhance industry's understanding of the Fund, HKPC has organized a variety of briefing sessions, study missions and technical seminars. In addition, a dedicated hotline, e-mail and website were set up provide timely information support to the industry.

Applications for the Fund are accepted all year round and the next cut-off time for applications will be 31 May. For more information, please visit the Recycling Fund website: www.recyclingfund.hk; or contact the secretariat at (852) 2788 5658 or email: enquiry@recyclingfund.hk.

For other media enquiries, please contact Chloe Chau of HKPC's Corporate Communication Division at tel.: (852) 2788 6158 or email: chloechau@hkpc.org.

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