

Important Note for Applicants

Professional Services Development Assistance Scheme (PSDAS)

Applicants are requested to take note of the following points before completing the Application Form –

Preparing the Application Form

- The Application Form should contain substantial details in order to facilitate assessment by the Vetting Committee. For instance, when applying for organisation of a training programme, the Applicant should set out, amongst others, justification for organising the training (e.g. recommendations of a members' survey), detailed course contents, number of expected participants, information about the training institute and whether the training institute has given any agreement-in-principle for delivering the programme.

Eligibility of Applicants

- The PSDAS is open to non-profit-distributing organisations only. In assessing whether the applicant is a non-profit-distributing organisation, the Vetting Committee will take into account the mission and business nature of the applicant. For details, please refer to paragraph 1.4 of the *Guide to Application*.

Eligible Projects

- Many applications received in the previous rounds involve organisation of training programmes. In assessing these applications, the Vetting Committee will consider whether the proposed training courses can enhance the standard of professional services through introduction of specific professional skills or knowledge (e.g. training for engineers on latest building and construction technology) or to enhance the external competitiveness of the professional service sectors through introduction of useful general skills (e.g. profession-specific language and career development courses). Basic skills training (e.g. general language courses or software application courses such as word processing) is considered not able to meet this criterion.
- In addition, in consideration of funding support, the Vetting Committee will take into account whether the proposed project will duplicate the efforts of other institutions / organisations. Applications must be able to demonstrate their added value against other programmes currently available in the market.

Implementation Agent

- In some applications received in the past three rounds, the Applicant has already identified a third party, sometimes a private company, as the implementation agent. In line with the procurement procedure set out in paragraph 4.8 of the *Guide to Application*, where the implementation agent is a profit-making company, the Vetting Committee considers that the Applicant should go through a quotation or tendering exercise as the case may be, instead of awarding the project to the implementation agent direct.
- If the proposed project involves consultancy services, the Applicant should provide justifications on the budget, responsibilities and time to be engaged by the external consultants.

Dissemination of Project Results

- In order to benefit those professionals who may not be able to participate in the project, the Vetting Committee considers that Applicants should make available and disseminate to the professional service community relevant parts of the Project Report relating to results and achievements of the project. Such dissemination expenses (e.g. printing and postage costs) may be charged to the project budget. For details, please refer to paragraphs 4.1(iii) and 5.1(B) of the *Guide to Application*.

Project Budget

- A number of applications in the previous rounds have included unallowable expenditure items in their budget. Applicants are reminded to make realistic estimates for the costs of budgeted items (including manpower expenditure) and should not include in the budget unallowable expenditure items and general administrative expenses, such as meals, souvenirs or accommodation for participants, and general office equipment (e.g. desk-top computers, projectors and fax machines) not specifically related to the project. For details, please refer to paragraph 4.1 of the *Guide to Application*.
- Applicants are also encouraged wherever possible to make use of their existing equipment and resources, rather than to acquire / develop new items. For instance, Applicants should make use of their existing website for publicising the project instead of creating a separate website specific for the project. Such development costs are normally not funded.