

New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme (NITTP)

Guidance Notes for Training Grant Applications *(Applicable to Companies)*

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New Industrialisation and Technology Training Programme (NITTP)

Guidance Notes for Training Grant Applications

This Guidance Notes provides companies with an overview of the application for training grants under the NITTP. This Guidance Notes shall prevail over all preceding guidelines and understandings, oral or written, regarding the operation of NITTP covered hereby.

Objective of the NITTP

2. The HKSAR Government launched the NITTP in August 2018 under the Innovation and Technology Fund. It aims at subsidising local companies on a 2:1 matching basis to train their staff in advanced technologies, especially those related to “New Industrialisation”.

Funding Scope

3. The NITTP supports local and non-local training¹ in advanced technologies, in particular those related to “New Industrialisation”. These technologies should be advanced in nature and not yet widely adopted in Hong Kong. The adoption of such technologies should also benefit the economy of Hong Kong.

4. There are two types of training courses supported under the NITTP:

- (a) Public course (local or non-local training) – a training course that is open to the public for enrolment; and
- (b) Tailor-made course (local or non-local training) – a training course that is designed for a particular company (or companies).

5. Applications for registering public courses are made by course providers, while applications for training grants are made by eligible companies separately. Applications for tailor-made courses are made by eligible companies. Course providers (for public courses) and companies (for tailor-made courses) may refer to the “Guidance Notes for Public Course and Tailor-made Course Applications” for details.

¹ Non-local training refers to those involving training conducted outside Hong Kong.

Eligibility

6. Companies applying for training grants under the NITTP should fulfil the following requirements–

- (a) registered in Hong Kong under the Business Registration Ordinance (Cap. 310);
- (b) must be a non-government and non-subvented organisation; and
- (c) the employee nominated is a Hong Kong permanent resident under full-time employment of the company with the necessary background/experience relevant to advanced technology².

7. The NITTP is overseen by the Innovation and Technology Training Board (ITTB) of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) and it reserves at all times the right to determine whether a company is eligible to apply for a training grant under the NITTP.

Funding Ceiling

8. Each company is subject to a funding ceiling of HK\$500,000 in each financial year at the course commencement date. Companies should contribute no less than one-third of the actual training cost. A maximum amount of training grant for each course will be set out in the application approval but the actual training grant to be reimbursed will be subject to the actual expenditure. The deduction will be made for early bird discounts or other discounts. The ITTB also reserves the right to approve a lower than the requested amount of training grant having regard to relevant factors (e.g. if the cost of passage to the non-local training venue deviates significantly from market price).

9. There is no limit on the number of eligible trainees from each company for each training course. Notwithstanding the above, trainees are not eligible to enroll in the same NITTP course more than once.

² The nominated trainee should hold a bachelor degree/higher diploma/diploma or above (Qualification Framework level 3 or above) with at least one year of work experience relevant to the advanced technology of the subject nominated course, or has at least two years of work experience relevant to advanced technology if the above academic qualification could not be met. If the nominated employee does not meet either of the requirement, the company should furnish additional information on the reason for nominating the employee concerned (e.g. specific work requirement).

Selection of Training Courses

10. There are many training courses relating to technology in the market, which are offered by a wide range of course providers. Different course providers and their courses seek to meet the needs of different companies and quality may vary. Companies should therefore select training courses carefully for their employees and consider their companies' own needs. Before signing up for a training course, companies should collect information about the course provider and training course from various channels, such as browsing the course provider's website and arranging a site observation, so that courses of similar content can be compared. For public courses, companies may also make use of the course information on the NITTP website to verify those provided by course providers. For courses lasting more than one month that charge over HK\$20,000 per person, companies are advised to pay the course provider in monthly instalments as far as practicable.

Application Procedures

11. The NITTP is open for application throughout the year subject to the availability of funds.

12. Companies should send their applications for training grants to the NITTP Secretariat **at least five weeks** before course commencement.

13. For applying for a training grant, the company should apply via the online system (<https://nittp.vtc.edu.hk/>) and provide the following documents to the NITTP Secretariat:

- (a) a copy of the company's valid Business Registration Certificate (Certificate should be valid as at the application date);
- (b) a copy of the Hong Kong Identity Card (HKID) for each full-time employee³ nominated for the training;
- (c) a copy of 3 months of Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) records for each employee nominated for the training. A full-time employee shall not be employed by more than one employer during the covering period;
- (d) (i) documentary proof of academic qualification and proof of at least one year of full-time work experience relevant to the advanced technology of the subject nominated course for each nominated employee who possesses a bachelor's

³ As defined by the Census and Statistics Department, "full-time employees" refer to employees **other than those** with less than 5 usual days of work per week; or less than 6 usual hours of work per working day; or less than 30 usual hours of work per week. Persons who usually work 24 hours per shift are included.

- degree/ higher diploma/ diploma or above qualification (Qualification Framework level 3 or above), or
- (ii) documentary proof of academic qualification and proof of at least two years of full-time work experience relevant to advanced technology for employees who could not meet the above academic qualification as stated in paragraph 13(d)(i); and
- (e) any other information deemed necessary to process the application by the NITTP Secretariat.

14. Alternatively, the application form could be submitted to the NITTP Secretariat (in person, by post, by fax or by email) together with the documents listed in paragraph 13. Copies of the latest version of the application forms can be obtained from the NITTP Secretariat or downloaded from the website of the NITTP. The application form may be completed either in English or Chinese. Late applications may **not** be processed and may be returned to the applicant.

15. Acknowledgement receipt will be sent to the company within seven working days. Companies should provide supplementary information upon request by the NITTP Secretariat. Follow-up site visits may be carried out by the NITTP Secretariat to the company after the application.

Avoidance of Conflict of Interest

16. Companies should have a direct and full-time employment relationship with the employee(s) nominated for training and are required to make such declaration at the time of application. In addition, companies are required to make a declaration on their relationship with course providers. To avoid conflict of interest, in selecting a course provider, companies must not engage a course provider, the owners, shareholders, management of which are the owners, shareholders, management of the companies or their relatives. Companies or any person/ staff authorised by the companies to handle or in any way involved in the course selection should declare that they have no actual or potential conflict of interest; and should not participate in the selection/ engagement process if otherwise. Training at parent company or subsidiaries of the company is regarded as internal staff development and no training grant will normally be provided unless exceptionally justified. In addition, course providers shall not provide loans to companies for the training. Companies are required to report cases of conflict of interest, including actions taken, to the NITTP Secretariat in writing.

17. Upon application for training grants, companies are required to

declare that their applications did not and will not obtain subsidies from other local public funding schemes. Otherwise, the application will become invalid. Companies are also required to declare at the reimbursement stage the actual expenditure incurred, and that the company and the nominated trainee have not and will not receive remuneration in the form of cash or cash equivalent items (such as gift vouchers, coupons, etc.) from the course provider. If the information is found untrue, incomplete or inaccurate, the ITTB reserves the right to withdraw the approval of any application, request for refund of any reimbursement to the Government, and subject the case to legal proceedings.

Vetting Procedures and Criteria

Public Course/ Tailor-made Course Training Grant Applications

18. Upon receipt of all the necessary documents, applications will be vetted by the NITTP Secretariat.

19. Course vetting procedures and assessment criteria for public and tailor-made courses are stipulated in “Guidance Notes for Public Course and Tailor-made Course Applications” for details.

Notification of Application Result

20. Normally, the notification of application result to the company will be released not later than 25 working days upon satisfactory receipt of all required documents from the company. If the application is approved, the company will be notified of the approved maximum amount of training grants and the post-training administrative procedures. The actual amount of the training grant will be subject to the actual training expenditure. The deduction will be made for early bird discounts or other discounts.

21. Upon notification of the application result, the company should arrange for the nominated employee to start training on the commencement date as indicated in the application. The company shall understand that there is no guarantee of the approval of the application, and the company will bear its own risk of committing to course fees before the approval of the training grant application. The NITTP Secretariat will not bear any responsibility for any loss, liability or damage caused to the company whatsoever and howsoever caused.

Post-Approval Arrangements

Postponement of training

22. Companies are required to notify the NITTP Secretariat of any postponement of the approved training before the commencement date indicated in the application. The training must, however, commence within six months of the commencement date indicated. Otherwise, the approval for the training grant will automatically be withdrawn.

Cancellation of training

23. Companies should inform the NITTP Secretariat in writing in case of cancellation of approved training, with a brief explanation, as soon as possible before the commencement date indicated in the application.

Insurance

24. Companies are required to ensure proper insurance policies, for instance, public liability insurance, against all claims, demands and liability are in place for each of their employees to attend the training courses.

Reimbursement of Training Grant

25. The following information is required to be submitted by the company to the NITTP Secretariat **within two months after training completion** for processing of the application for reimbursement:

- (a) Training Grant Claim Form -
 - i. Local course (**Form 3A**); or
 - ii. Non-local course (**Form 3B**).
- (b) Confirmation of Training Completion and Payment (**Form 4**); and
- (c) Trainee's Survey.

26. For non-local courses, the company should also submit the following—

- (a) Training Report for each trainee (**Form 5**);
- (b) Confirmation of Receipt of Subsistence Allowance⁴ (**Form 6**),

⁴ The company will only be reimbursed the approved subsistence allowance, i.e. the rate provided by the company or the standard rate of VTC, whichever the lower.

- where applicable; and
- (c) Original of the return passage boarding pass(es)/ticket(s)⁵ and certified true copy of receipt(s), where applicable.

For details of the requirements, please refer to the table in the **Annex**.

27. Normally, the reimbursement claims will be processed not later than 60 working days upon satisfactory receipt of all required documents from both the course provider and the company.

Partial Advance Payment of Approved Training Grant

28. Starting from 30 March 2020, a company may apply for partial advance payment of 50% of the total approved training grant by indicating its preference in the training grant application form (i.e. Form 2). A company which applies for partial advance payment is required to submit to the NITTP Secretariat a copy of the receipt of the training course concerned. The receipt should show the total amount of course fees paid by the company to the course provider in respect of its employee(s). It is the responsibility of the company to submit a copy of the receipt to the NITTP Secretariat within 2 weeks after the date of issuance of the training grant approval letter from the NITTP Secretariat and before the subject training course ends. Application for partial advance payment of training grant with any late submission of the copy of the receipt will not be considered.

29. The NITTP Secretariat will vet the copy of the receipt submitted by the company. Subject to the approval of the NITTP Secretariat, 50% of the total approved training grant for the training course concerned will be disbursed to the company.

30. Upon the end of the training course, the course provider will submit a certified attendance list specifying the complete names of NITTP trainees with their signatures to the NITTP Secretariat. The NITTP Secretariat will vet the certified attendance list and determine the actual amount of training grant to which the company is entitled based on the actual attendance of trainees –

- (a) If all trainees have completed the training course, the NITTP Secretariat will inform the company to submit a reimbursement claim. The company should then submit the reimbursement claim form and provide the supporting

⁵ In general, the return passage should be by the most economical means between Hong Kong and the location of training.

documents as stated in paragraphs 25 and 26 above. Subject to the vetting of the reimbursement claim by the NITTP Secretariat, the remaining 50% of the total approved training grant will be disbursed to the company; or

- (b) If some of the trainees did not complete the training course and the total amount of training grant that can be received by the company is higher than the 50% advance payment already disbursed, the NITTP Secretariat will issue a letter to the company to confirm the remaining amount that can be disbursed and inform the company to submit a reimbursement claim. The company should then submit the reimbursement claim form and provide the supporting documents as stated in paragraphs 25 and 26 above. Subject to the vetting by the NITTP Secretariat, the remaining amount of the training grant will be disbursed to the company; or
- (c) If some of the trainees did not complete the training course and the total amount of training grant that can be received by the company is lower than the 50% advance payment already disbursed, the NITTP Secretariat will issue a letter to the company to request repayment of the difference between the amount of partial advance payment already disbursed and the actual training grant which the company can receive. The company is required to return the excess amount by issuing a cheque to the NITTP Secretariat within one month of the receipt of the letter.

31. The NITTP Secretariat reserves at all times the right to determine whether an application for partial advance payment is approved at its sole discretion.

32. For a company which does not apply for partial advance payment, the training grant of not more than two-thirds of the approved cost of the training or the actual cost, whichever is lower, will be provided to the company on a reimbursement basis upon the end of the training course and subject to the same requirement as stated in paragraphs 25 and 26 above.

33. By “completion of training course”, it refers to an attendance of no less than 70% of the training hours (or such higher attendance requirement as prescribed for the course). In addition, no training hours in a training session shall be counted if the total time of lateness and early leave in that training session reaches the limit specified in **Annex II – Lateness and Early Leave Limit**.

34. Companies that have obtained subsidies from any other local public funding schemes for the NITTP course are not allowed to claim the reimbursement. The NITTP Secretariat reserves the right to conduct detailed checks on the submitted documents and seek clarifications from the company regarding the training.

35. Late submission of the documents required for the reimbursement application may lead to withholding, reduction or cessation of the provision of the training grant. In case of difficulties, companies may contact the NITTP Secretariat for assistance in submitting the required documents.

Monitoring of Training Courses

36. Companies are required to maintain proper documentation for seven years for the NITTP Secretariat's checking upon request and ensure that tailor-made courses are conducted in compliance with the proposals approved. The NITTP Secretariat may selectively sit in the training courses as an observer or request documentary proof for non-local courses for inspection. Companies should request their employees enrolled in NITTP schemes to cooperate with the attendance and identity checking procedures. The NITTP Secretariat may take corresponding follow-up actions on irregularities found during observations, including but not limited to the issuance of warning letters and/or rejecting future applications submitted by the company.

37. Follow-up visits may be carried out by the NITTP Secretariat to the company after course completion.

Withdrawal of Approval

38. The Government and/or the Course Vetting Panel reserves the right to withdraw training grant approval in case of non-compliance with this "Guidance Notes for Training Grant Applications", and/or the training grant application form(s), to protect the public interest. In the event of any dispute regarding the application, the decision of the ITTB should be final.

Appeals

39. An appeal should be sent in writing to the Convenor of the Course Vetting Panel (c/o NITTP Secretariat) within 14 working days of receipt of notice of the decision.

40. Each appeal will be considered by the Course Vetting Panel and its decision will be conveyed to the company in writing.

41. Companies dissatisfied with the decision of the Course Vetting Panel may appeal in writing to the ITTB. The ITTB will consider the appeal and make its decision, which will be final, and will be confirmed in writing to the company.

Handling of Information

42. Subject to the provisions below, information provided by the company during the application will be kept by the NITTP Secretariat in confidence and all personal data will be handled in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486). In this regard, the NITTP Secretariat shall have the right to disclose, without further reference to the company, whenever it considers appropriate, Discloseable Information⁶ to other Government bureau/departments, statutory bodies or third parties for the purposes of processing the application, conducting research and survey, compiling statistics, meeting requirements of the law and/or performing their functions, and if the application is approved, monitoring the delivery of the training, reimbursing the training grant, and checking duplicate applications under other local public funding schemes to cover the expenses of the approved training. In submitting the application form, the company irrevocably and unconditionally authorises the NITTP Secretariat to make and consent to the NITTP Secretariat making any of the aforesaid disclosure.

Important Notes

43. It is the responsibility of the company to complete the application form timely and truthfully, and to provide all necessary documents for the application and for the reimbursement of the training grant approved. Inaccurate and incomplete information will affect the processing of applications or reimbursement of training grants. Any omission or misrepresentation of information may lead to rejection of applications, withdrawal of training grants approved, and part or full recoupment of grants awarded. The company should refund the NITTP Secretariat any overpayment of the training grant (including any overpayment of partial advance payment). It is an offence in law to obtain property/pecuniary advantage by deception or

⁶ “Discloseable Information” means any information provided by the applicant company during the application under the NITTP.

assisting persons to obtain property/pecuniary advantage under the NITTP. Any person who does so may be liable to legal proceedings.

44. Companies shall indemnify and keep indemnified the Government and/or other third parties (including VTC and the NITTP) from and against:

- (a) any and all claims, actions, investigations, demands, proceedings, brought or instituted against the Government and/or other third parties (including VTC and the NITTP); and
- (b) any and all liabilities (including liability to pay compensation and damages), damage, losses, costs, charges and expenses which the Government and/or other third parties (including VTC and the NITTP) may sustain or incur (including all legal and other expenses, on a full indemnity basis, which may be incurred about any claim action or proceeding instituted by/against the Government and/or other third parties (including VTC and the NITTP)).

45. Applicant companies and trainees shall conform in all respects with all applicable laws and regulations (including without limitation the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region) (“National Security Law”).

46. The applicant companies shall:

- (a) report immediately to the relevant law enforcement agency/agencies if any act or activity relating to the operation of any NITTP course, or any information, material or otherwise of the NITTP course, is suspected to have contravened any National Security Law or to be contrary to the interest of national security;
- (b) notify the NITTP Secretariat whenever a report to any law enforcement agency/agencies is made; and
- (c) notify the NITTP Secretariat if the applicant company or any of the employees who is nominated for attending any NITTP course has been or is under Police investigation for, charged with or convicted of any offence endangering national security or other criminal offences in Hong Kong or elsewhere.

47. The NITTP Secretariat may at any time revoke an approved application with immediate effect and require the applicant company to immediately refund all or any of the training grant already awarded on the occurrence of any of the following events:

- (a) the applicant company has engaged or is engaging in acts or activities that are likely to constitute or cause the occurrence of

- offences endangering national security or which would otherwise be contrary to the interest of national security;
- (b) the continuance of engagement of the applicant company or the continued participation of the course concerned by the applicant company is contrary to the interest of national security; or
- (c) the Government reasonably believes that any of the events mentioned in paragraph 47 (a) to (b) above is about to occur.

Prevention of Bribery

48. Companies shall observe the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Cap. 201) (“PBO”) and shall procure that their staff who are in any way involved in a training course shall not offer to or solicit or accept from any person any advantages, including money, gifts, loan, etc. (as defined in the PBO) in the selection of or about the training course. If the company, and its staff who are in any way involved in the training course commit an offence under the PBO about the training course, the VTC shall be entitled to, withdraw the training grant approved, recoup the grant awarded, and shall hold the company liable for any loss or damages the Government and VTC may thereby sustain.

Post Training Evaluation

49. Companies are required to complete a survey after their employees complete the training course to assess the effectiveness of the training in achieving the objectives of the NITTP.

NITTP Training Grant Claim Requirements

Note: all claims for training grants should be submitted to the NITTP Secretariat by the applicant company.

	Local			Non-local		
	Items	Form Ref.	To be filled in by	Items	Form Ref.	To be filled in by
Public	• Training Grant Claim Form (Local Course)	Form 3A	Company	• Training Grant Claim Form (Non-local Course)	Form 3B	Company
	• Confirmation of Training Completion and Payment	Form 4	Course Provider	• Confirmation of Training Completion and Payment	Form 4	Course Provider
	• Trainee's Survey		Each Trainee	• Training Report	Form 5	Each Trainee
				• Confirmation of Receipt of Subsistence Allowance *	Form 6	Each Trainee
				• Original of the return passage boarding pass(es)/ticket(s) and certified true copy of the receipt(s)*	N/A	N/A

	Local			Non-local		
	Items	Form Ref.	To be filled in by	Items	Form Ref.	To be filled in by
Tailor-made	• Training Grant Claim Form (Local Course)	Form 3A	Company	• Training Grant Claim Form (Non-local Course)	Form 3B	Company
	• Confirmation of Training Completion and Payment	Form 4	Course Provider	• Confirmation of Training Completion and Payment	Form 4	Course Provider
	• Trainee's Survey		Each Trainee	• Training Report	Form 5	Each Trainee
				• Confirmation of Receipt of Subsistence Allowance	Form 6	Each Trainee
				• Original of the return passage boarding pass(es)/ticket(s) and certified true copy of the receipt(s)	N/A	N/A

* Only if the travelling fees and subsistence allowances are not included in the training fees collected by the course provider.

Lateness and Early Leave Limit

Amount of time in a training session	Limit of total time of lateness and early leave
Less than or equal to 2 hours	30 minutes
More than 2 hours but less than or equal to 4 hours	1 hour
More than 4 hours	1 hour 30 minutes