

FBL FAQs

General

1. What is the Innovation and Technology Fund for Better Living ("FBL")?

The FBL is a scheme for funding innovation and technology ("I&T") projects which will make people's daily living more convenient, comfortable and safer, or address the needs of specific community groups.

2. What kind of projects will be funded by the FBL?

- Projects should be able to benefit the public at large or specific groups, and should be in line with government policies
- Projects should involve the innovative application of technologies
- Project themes include daily living, education, environment, health, safety, transport, etc. which can benefit the community
- Project deliverable can be in the form of mobile app, product, device, equipment, tool, service, software, or any other form with valid justifications
- Projects should not be profit-making during the funding period
- Projects should primarily be developed within Hong Kong

Application Submission

1. Who are eligible to apply for the FBL?

Eligible Applicants include:

- Non-governmental organisations receiving subvention from the Social Welfare Department
- Public bodies under Section 2 of the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Cap. 201), except Government Bureaux/Departments, the Executive Council and the Legislative Council
- Professional bodies
- Trade associations
- Social service organisations exempted from tax under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112)

2. Can I submit an application if I am an individual or a private company?

Applications from individuals and companies other than those in Q1 above are not eligible to apply for the FBL. They may, however, partner with an eligible Applicant to submit an application, with the eligible Applicant being the lead Applicant.

3. What is the funding amount?

An approved project shall receive a grant up to 90% of the total eligible costs of the project or HK\$5 million, whichever is the less.

4. Is there any restriction on the project duration?

Applicant has to complete the development and roll-out of the project within 12 months, and run the project for at least two consecutive years (except for project that is one-off in nature). The funding period of the project will be no more than three years.

5. Is there any application deadline?

Applications for the FBL are open all year round.

6. How do I submit the application?

All applications and relevant supporting documents must be submitted through the Administrative System of the Innovation and Technology Commission - Fund for Better Living ("ASITC - FBL").

7. Can my organisation submit more than one application?

Applicant can submit more than one project application at the same time. Each application form should contain one project only. In assessing each application, we will consider the capability of the Applicant to deploy adequate resources to complete the project, taking into account the number of projects the same Applicant is currently undertaking. Nevertheless, to avoid the concentration of funding in a single organisation, priority will be given to applications submitted by Applicants which are not undertaking any other FBL projects.

8. How will the application be processed?



Application Assessment

1. What are the assessment criteria and their weightings?

The assessment criteria and their respective weightings are as follows:-

- Benefits brought to the public or specific community group(s) (30%);
- Innovation and technology content (20%);
- Feasibility and sustainability (20%);
- Financial considerations (15%); and
- Technical and management capability of the Applicant (15%)

2. What kind of information would the Assessment Panel generally look for under each assessment criterion?

- Benefits brought to the public or specific community group(s) –
 - whether the project can make the daily living of the public more convenient, comfortable or safer
 - whether the project can cater for the specific needs of the target beneficiary group(s)
 - number of people to be benefitted and the degree of benefit
- Innovation and technology content –
 - whether the project involves the application of new innovations and technologies
 - the kind and degree of innovative application of technologies
 - the difference with similar projects in the market, if any
- Feasibility and sustainability –
 - the technical feasibility of the project
 - the viability of methodology/approach to deliver the intended outcome and deliverables
 - meaningful, quantifiable and realistic key performance indicators
 - the sustainability of the project
- Financial considerations –
 - whether the budget plan is reasonable and realistic
 - cost-effectiveness

- Technical and management capability of the Applicant –
 - track record in implementing community project(s)
 - the capability of the project team
 - capability in sourcing and managing I&T expertise
 - whether the Applicant understands the specific needs of the general public or the target beneficiary group(s)
 - capability in promoting and encouraging the use of the deliverable by the general public or target beneficiary group(s)

3. Who decide whether the application will get the FBL grant or not?

Eligible applications will be considered by the [Assessment Panel](#). Applicants may be required to attend assessment meeting to answer questions from the Assessment Panel.

4. When will I be notified of the FBL application result after I have submitted my application?

The FBL Secretariat will notify Applicants of the result in writing / by email. The actual processing time will be subject to the number of applications received, comprehensiveness and clarity of the information provided in the application, etc. Where necessary, Applicants may be required to revise the original project proposal to fulfil the conditions of the FBL.

Budgeting

1. Are there any restriction in using the project funds?

Project funds, including the FBL grant and funding from the Applicant's own means or other sources (such as funding from the Applicant or its parent organisation, sales proceeds, third party sponsorship, etc.), must be used exclusively for the project under application for the following purposes: (a) manpower; (b) equipment; (c) other direct costs; and (d) administrative overheads, if any, up to 15% of the total expenditure for manpower, equipment and other direct costs.

2. What are the eligible costs of the project?

Eligible costs of the project are the total expenses (Q.1 above is also referred to) approved by the Assessment Panel for development and running of the project deliverable(s). Please refer to the Application Guide for details.

3. If there are savings in some budgeted items, can the successful Applicant use them for the unbudgeted items?

Savings cannot be used for unbudgeted items unless prior written approval is obtained from the FBL Secretariat. The successful Applicant is required to bear all expenditures related to unbudgeted items if no prior approval has been sought.

Project Execution

1. What would happen next if the application has been supported by the Assessment Panel?

For application that has been supported by the Assessment Panel, the FBL Secretariat will follow up with the comments made by the Assessment Panel (if any) regarding the application, including but not limited to reworking on the budget/cashflow of the project, project milestones, etc.

The Applicant may then be required to address the Assessment Panel's comments and update the project proposal within the prescribed period. What are the assessment criteria?

2. Apart from updating the application proposal to address the Assessment Panel's comments, can I propose changes to the application?

If the proposed changes are substantive to the extent that the objective of the project has deviated from the original application that has been considered by the Assessment Panel, the Applicant may be requested to withdraw its application and submit a fresh application.

3. What is a FBL Fund Agreement?

For each project approved by the Assessment Panel, the successful Applicant has to sign an FBL Fund Agreement ("Agreement") with the Government. The Agreement is a contract entered into between the Government and a successful Applicant for the performance of the project funded by the FBL. The successful Applicant is required to carry out the approved project strictly in accordance with the terms and conditions laid down in the Agreement.

4. What is the legal entity required for in entering the Agreement with Government?

The successful Applicant shall either be (a) a company incorporated under the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 622) or the former Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32); or (b) a statutory corporation established under any Ordinance in Hong Kong.

For (b), the statutory corporations are reminded to ensure that they have the capacity under their incorporation ordinances to enter into a contract with the Government.

5. When will my organisation receive the FBL grant if the application has been approved?

The first instalment of 10% of the FBL grant will be released within 30 days upon signing the Agreement with the Government (or such other period as may be specified by the Government). The instalments thereafter will be released based on the approved milestones or cashflow of the project and subject to the successful Applicant's satisfactory project progress and fulfilment of respective project milestones.

6. Who owns the intellectual property rights arising from the project?

Any intellectual property rights created in or via the projects will be vested with the successful Applicant. Successful Applicant is encouraged to make available all the intellectual property rights created in or via the Projects in the public domain and allow the public to use for free.

Any income generated from the intellectual property rights created in or via the project during the funding period should be ploughed back into the project accounts.