

Expression of Interest for vacant school premises and greenfield sites for international school development

Note to respondents

Basic requirements

- (1) Under the prevailing policy for international schools, international schools applying for government assistance in the form of vacant school premises and/or greenfield sites are required to fulfill, amongst others, the following conditions –
 - (a) At least 70% of the school places should be allocated to the target group(s) of students, viz. those who hold foreign passport (excluding the British National (Overseas) Passport) or student visas for entry into Hong Kong for studies;
 - (b) School operators shall operate a non-local curriculum suitable for international schools. Curriculum which leads to local examination or mainly prepares for articulation to local schools shall not be accepted;
 - (c) School operators shall use the vacant school premises or greenfield sites for operation of a primary, secondary or primary-cum-secondary international school. The Government does not provide premises or sites for the operation of pre-primary, child care centre, nursery or kindergarten. A restricted operation of pre-primary or kindergarten may be permitted provided that the applicants are able to demonstrate in that it is part and parcel of the primary curriculum, and justify that the space and facilities for the primary and/or secondary school use would not be jeopardized. Approval for such operation will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The proposed school should not provide boarding facilities nor be deployed as a decanting premises;
 - (d) Apart from the interest-free loan which may be provided by the Government to school operators allocated with greenfield sites, the Government will not provide any recurrent or capital financial assistance. School operators shall operate on a self-financing basis with proof of sufficient financial support for necessary capital works. The loan, which is capped at 100% of the cost for constructing a standard-design public sector school accommodating the same number of students, is subject to approval from Legislative Council Finance Committee and provided on an application basis;

- (e) School operators shall set aside a sum, which shall not be less than 10% of the total school fee income of the international schools, for providing scholarship and/or other financial assistance for deserving students;
 - (f) Both the school sponsoring body and the school operated at the vacant school premises and/or greenfield site are required to be exempted from tax under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Chapter 112 of the Laws of Hong Kong). The school sponsoring body should also be incorporated under the prevailing Companies Ordinance (Chapter 32 or Chapter 622 with effect from 3 March 2014, as appropriate) or incorporated under other ordinances; and
 - (g) School operators shall make available buildings and facilities of the premises when required to the Government and to the community for educational, community or other activities, provided that this would not compromise the day-to-day operation of the school and safety of students.
- (2) Requirements applicable to international schools shall be enforced by a 10-year Service Agreement between the Government and the school operator. School operators allocated with vacant premises shall be required to enter into a Tenancy Agreement with the Government which sets out the terms and conditions in relation to the use of the premises. Those allocated with greenfield sites shall submit application to the Lands Department for the grant of the greenfield sites by private treaty grant which similarly sets out the terms and conditions in relation to the use of the greenfield sites. The private treaty grant will be co-terminus with the Service Agreement.

Completing the reply form

- (3) Respondents should preferably be the school sponsoring bodies of the school to be operated in the vacant school premises and/or greenfield sites upon successful allocation.
- (4) Respondents should first consider whether they are interested in vacant school premises or greenfield sites or both and indicate priority among the premises and sites earmarked under Part A. Those interested in vacant school premises should complete Part B whereas those interested in greenfield sites should complete Part C. Respondents may use the same reply form if they are interested in both sites and premises. Part D should be completed regardless of the choice on premises and/or sites. Please respond to all items under the relevant Parts except for item (15), under which the provision of additional information is optional. Only duly completed reply forms will be processed and incomplete reply forms will not be accepted.

- (5) Response to each question should be indicated by a tick (✓) in one of the boxes. No more than one tick should be placed in the same question unless otherwise stated. Please delete as appropriate when an asterisk (*) appears.
- (6) Respondents should complete the reply form with due care and consideration. They should be prepared to explain any substantive differences between the preference on the reply form and the detailed proposal to be submitted at the stage of the School Allocation Exercise.
- (7) Respondents should make reference to the following notes when responding to questions indicated with a box Note *n* –

Note 1 Respondents may indicate interest in more than one premises and/or more than one greenfield site. Please indicate the order of priority with numbers (up to 5) with “1” being the premises or site most interested in.

Note 2 If more than one curriculum will be offered, please indicate under “others”. Please include the respective accreditation bodies of the curriculum indicated. Bonus will be given to respondents that have achieved full accreditation or have reached an advance stage of seeking full accreditation. Respondents should be prepared to provide, at the stage of the School Allocation Exercise, sufficient information on the curriculum strategy including relevant demographic evidence to establish that an unmet demand for relevant curriculum exists in Hong Kong, as well as documentary proof that they are able and recognized to run the curriculum they pledged.

Note 3 If the respondent is intended to operate a primary-cum-secondary school at the vacant school premises and/or greenfield site, please indicate the number of places at both primary and secondary levels. If the respondent is operating an existing international school at the same level (e.g. an existing international primary school interested in operating another international primary school at a premises or a site), please indicate the total number of additional school places to be provided. Otherwise, please indicate the total number of new school places. Respondent should specify in which school year the school is targeted to commence operation at the allocated premises and/or sites and the estimated number of new or additional places to be delivered on the first and third year of operation. Please provide an estimated number of places to be allocated to the target students (as defined in (1)(a) above). Favourable consideration may be given for proposals accepting a higher proportion of target students (say, 80% of the total student population or above).

Note 4 These measures are to be implemented in addition to the requirement of allocating no less than 70% of the school places to the target students (as defined in (1)(a) above). Respondents may consider implementing more than one measure.

Note 5 International schools are operated on a self-financing basis. Successful bidders are expected to fund all capital works, including carrying out necessary assessment at its own cost on environmental and traffic impact in connection with the use of the premises and/or greenfield sites. No recurrent subsidy shall be provided by the Government. The premises or sites should not be mortgaged to other parties. Successful applicants will normally enjoy nominal rent for premises and exemption of rates. Successful applicants will be required to provide documentary proof of their financial position at the stage of the School Allocation Exercise.

Note 6 Respondents should demonstrate proven experience in providing education services at primary and/or secondary levels particularly those offering of non-local curriculum in Hong Kong or overseas.

Note 7 Respondents will not be considered adversely if the requirement has not been met at this stage. When submitting detailed proposal at the stage of the School Allocation Exercise however, applicants should provide documentary proof showing that they have fulfilled the requirements or have applied with relevant government departments for acquiring the necessary status. The allocation of premises and/or greenfield sites is conditional upon, amongst others, the presentation of documentary proof of the tax exemption status. Successful bidder should confirm the status with this Bureau annually.

Note 8 Respondents will not be considered adversely if the requirement has not been met at this stage. When submission of detailed proposal is called for at the stage of the School Allocation Exercise, applicants will be required to show that their Memorandum and Articles of Association (or Articles of Association under the new Companies Ordinance) contain all standard clauses and articles required for the operation of an international school (in the case of incorporation under the prevailing Companies Ordinance) or their constitutions satisfying the Permanent Secretary for Education as being fit to be considered for the allocation of the premises. The standard clauses and articles are available at: <http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/sch-premises-info/allocation-of-sch/eligibility.html>. Applicants should provide documentary proof showing that they have fulfilled the requirements or have applied with relevant government departments for acquiring the necessary status when submitting detailed proposal at the stage of the School Allocation Exercise. The allocation of premises and/or greenfield sites is conditional upon, amongst others, the presentation of documentary proof of the necessary status.

Note 9 If respondents have in-principle support from both Consulate General(s) and Chamber(s) of Commerce, please state so in the reply form. Letters of recommendation from the Consulate General(s) and/or Chamber(s) of Commerce indicating support for the proposed school and their form of participation, if any, in the operation of the school will be required at the stage of the School Allocation Exercise. Letters of recommendation from organizations other than Consulate General(s) and Chamber(s) of Commerce shall not be considered as fulfilling this requirement.

Note 10 The contact person should be capable and available for responding to any follow-up enquiries or clarifications throughout the expression of interest exercise (i.e. up to 30 May 2014). If you wish to access or make correction to the personal data provided in this expression of interest exercise, please contact Miss Suki Lai, Executive Officer (Administration Support)³ at (852) 2892 6121.

- (8) The deadline for expression of interest is 30 May 2014. The completed reply form should be returned by fax ((852) 2119 9107) by 5:00pm (Hong Kong Time) on 30 May 2014 or by post (6/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong). For reply forms submitted by post, the date on the postmark should not be later than the deadline. Reply forms received after the deadline will not be accepted.

School Allocation Exercise

- (9) Subject to response to this exercise and other relevant factors, a School Allocation Exercise may be launched in due course. In such event, respondents whose reply forms showing that they meet with the basic requirements in this exercise will be invited to submit detailed proposal in respect of the premises and/or greenfield site under the School Allocation Exercise. Expression of interest through means other than the reply form will not be considered.
- (10) Detailed proposals will be considered by the School Allocation Committee which comprises government officials and non-officials. In assessing the proposals, quality of education is the prime consideration. Normally the following aspects will be considered and supporting documentary proof will be requested when submitting the detailed proposals. Details will be announced at the stage of the School Allocation Exercise.
- (a) Vision and mission;
 - (b) Management and organization;
 - (c) Learning and teaching;
 - (d) Student support;

- (e) Student mix and admission policy;
- (f) Financial plan and fee policy;
- (g) Quality assurance and accreditation; and
- (h) Meeting the needs of the community.

(11) Site visits to the premises and sites will be arranged at the stage of the School Allocation Exercise.

Enquiries

(12) Enquiries may be directed to Miss Winnie Wong at (852)3509 8391 or winniewyong@edb.gov.hk.

**Education Bureau
March 2014**