PROGRAMME TO ENHANCE TALENT TRAINING FOR THE INSURANCE SECTOR

FINANCIAL INCENTIVE SCHEME FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

- Guidance Notes for the 8th Round of Application -

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Financial Incentive Scheme for Professional Training ("**FIS**") is one of the major initiatives under the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("**the Government**")'s "Programme to Enhance Talent Training for the Insurance Sector" ("Programme").

1.2 Given the very positive response from insurance industry, the Government has extended the Programme for a further three years until 2028/29, focusing resources on subsidising targeted courses to assist the insurance industry in enhancing the professional capacities of its practitioners. During this extended period, the Government has engaged the Hong Kong Federation of Insurers ("HKFI") as the implementation agent of the Programme.

1.3 The Government has set up a Steering Committee for the Programme ("**Steering Committee**") to monitor the operation and progress, as well as to review the implementation of the Programme and make recommendations. A Vetting Committee on the FIS ("**Vetting Committee**") has been formed to approve and prioritise training course proposals, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the approved training courses and recommend improvement measures.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE FIS

2.1 To enhance the professional competency of the insurance sector, there is a demand for advanced and high-quality training in technical aspects of insurance business and topical areas arising from the latest developments in the insurance industry both locally and internationally. However, due to budgetary constraints, the industry is not able to organise such quality and in-depth training activities.

2.2 The FIS aims to subsidise eligible Applicants to provide **high-quality and in-depth training** at an affordable cost for existing insurance practitioners who wish to enhance their professional knowledge. Training activities subsidised under the FIS should focus on functional or topical areas in insurance to fill the skill gaps in specific areas of insurance business, in particular, general insurance, professional brokerage and functional areas of life insurance including underwriting, claims management, compliance and policy operation services. Examples of emerging topics include low altitude economy, AI in insurance, environmental, social and governance (ESG), space insurance and war risk. Applicants should not assume that a course proposal will be approved merely because it relates to these emerging topics.

2.3 Eligible Applicants under the FIS are as follows:

(a) Confederation of Insurance Brokers;
(b) the Professional Insurance Brokers Association;
(c) the Australian and New Zealand Institute of Insurance and Finance;
(d) the Chartered Insurance Institute;
(e) School of Professional Continuing Education of the University of Hong Kong;
(f) Lingnan University;
(g) Vocational Training Council;
(h) HKU Business School; and
(i) The Life Underwriters Association of Hong Kong.

3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

3.1 Application for the organisation of training activities may include but is not limited to seminars, conferences, courses and online learning platform which are of high professional merit in fulfilling the objectives and assessment criteria outlined in sections 2 and 5 herein respectively.

3.2 All training activities shall be non-profit making in nature, held and completed within the implementation period of the 8th FIS between **February 2027 and October 2027** unless otherwise specified by the Government, Steering Committee and/or Vetting Committee.

4. APPLICATION FOR FIS FUNDING SUPPORT

4.1 Each eligible applicant as specified in paragraph 2.3 above ("**Applicant**") may only submit one application for FIS funding support (**"Application"**), containing one or more course proposals ("**Course Proposals**" and each of them a "**Course Proposal**"). For the avoidance of doubt, unless otherwise specified, assessment, approval, rejection, withdrawal, invalidation, disbursement, reporting, suspension, termination and other requirements under the Guidance Notes shall also apply to each Course Proposal separately. Where an Application covers more than one Course Proposal, any decision, condition, non-compliance, withdrawal, suspension, termination or invalidation concerning one Course Proposal shall not automatically affect the other Course Proposal(s) under the same Application, unless otherwise determined by the Government, Steering Committee and/or Vetting Committee.

4.2 Applicants may partner with other training institute(s) to deliver any Course Proposals. Applicants should refer to SECTION C below for guidance notes for Applications with partnering training institute(s).

Submission of Application Form and Application Deadline

4.3 The application and all supporting documents shall be submitted via the application portal at https://fisapp.hkfi.org.hk/. Submission of applications by other means, such as email, will not be accepted. The application will be closed at **5:00 pm on 29 October 2026**. No application fee is charged for the Application.

Completing the Application Form

4.4 The Applicant shall **duly complete all sections** in the Application Form in English, and submit all supporting documents as specified in the Application Form, including but not limited to the following:

SECTION A: Particulars of Applicant

(i) Section A Item 4 (FIS Course Management) – Please specify how the Application would be managed, including the number of staff involved and their division of work, and timeline of implementation.

SECTION B: Details of each Course Proposal

(i) Section B Item 1 – Please set out the total number of Course Proposals to be submitted under the Application. If an applicant intends to re-run a course, only one Course Proposal should be completed, provided that all re-runs have the same course content, duration, delivery mode, target participants and other key arrangements. The number of re-runs should be specified in Question 2(a). If any of these details differ, the course will not be regarded as a re-run, and a separate Course Proposal must be submitted within the same application.

(ii) Section B Item 2(b) (Objectives) – Please set out a clear description of the teaching objectives of each Course Proposal and what the Applicant intends the participants to learn by the end of the course.

(iii) Section B Item 2(f) (Learning outcomes/Professional knowledge to be obtained/Deliverables) – Please set out a clear description of the takeaway, usually an assessable outcome, for the participants. This includes what participants must be able to do or comprehend by the end of the course.

(iv) Section B Item 2(h) (No. of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Hours Applied for the Course) – Please indicate the number of CPD hours applied for, and the approval status or supporting information.

All training activities targeting insurance practitioners to be subsidised under the FIS must be Qualified CPD Activities as defined in the Guideline on Continuing Professional Development for Licensed Insurance Intermediaries ("**GL24**") issued by the Insurance Authority ("**IA**"). In respect of a training activity which has not yet been approved by the CPD assessment authority appointed by the IA (i.e. the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications ("**HKCAAVQ**")) at the time of application, the Vetting Committee may approve the Application on the condition that the Applicant must submit evidence of approval from the HKCAAVQ at least 14 working days before the training activity commences. Similarly, for training activities organised by former SROs, which are subject to administrative vetting by the IA, the Vetting Committee may approve the Application on the condition that the Applicant must submit evidence of approval from the IA at least 7 working days prior to the commencement of the training activity. In the event that the Applicant fails to submit the said evidence in time, the Vetting Committee shall revoke the conditional approval granted. If the conditional approval in respect of an Applicant's application is revoked, for the particular training activity concerned, the Applicant will not receive the remaining portion of the approved FIS funding support ("Funds") and must return to HKFI all the Funds received. For details of CPD accreditation, please refer to GL24 (https://www.ia.org.hk/en/legislative_framework/files/GL24_2025_ENG.pdf) and the relevant website of HKCAAVQ (https://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/en/services/assessment/cpd-ia-programmes).

(v) Section B Item 2(m) (Attendance Requirement) – Please indicate whether attendance will be taken at the training activities, and whether participants are required to attain a minimum percentage of attendance.

(vi) Section B Item 2(o) (Performance Indicators for the Proposal) – Please set out the evaluation methods and performance indicators which should encompass qualitative and quantitative deliverables to be supported by rationalised and documentary evidence such as survey results, online responses and the like.

(vii) Section B Item 2(u) (Income), and 2(w) (Expenditure) –

(a) All monetary figures must be in Hong Kong dollar;

(b) Estimated income and expenditure items, including but not limited to any speaker fees and relevant daily expenses, venue hire, advertising cost, course materials cost, staff cost, etc., for implementing individual Course Proposal shall be specified. All assumptions used for preparing such financial particulars shall be based on the pledged minimum class size. Please refer to paragraph 7.7 for the treatment of reimbursement when the actual enrollment is higher than the pledged minimum class size.

(c) The amount of each expenditure item should be estimated with reasonable assumptions. In preparing the estimated expenditure, an Applicant should exercise prudential financial management and allow a reasonable buffer for unforeseen cost fluctuations.

(d) Where a fee is payable to a partnering training institute for services provided in implementing the Course Proposal, the Applicant shall enter the total amount under **Section B Item 2(w)** (Service Fee Payable to Partnering Institute). The amount will be automatically populated in **Section C Item 8**.

(e) Where any expense item is shared by more than one Course Proposal, the Applicant shall apportion the relevant expense equally among the Course Proposals to which the expense relates, unless another allocation basis is justified. The amount attributed to each Course Proposal and the allocation basis adopted shall be clearly set out in the financial particulars.

(f) An Applicant should only include in the financial particulars manpower expenses directly incurred in implementing the Course Proposal(s), viz. (1) salary of short-term or part-time staff employed by the Applicant solely for the purpose of implementing the Course Proposal(s); and (2) salary of permanent or full-time staff of the Applicant attributed to their man-hours spent solely for the purpose of preparing teaching or publicity materials or supporting on-site logistics of the training courses. The Applicant may be required to provide employment contracts / payroll records of short-term / part-time staff to substantiate the costs.

(g) If any income or expenditure is to be received or paid in any currency other than Hong Kong dollar, the Applicant shall specify the equivalent amount in Hong Kong dollar in the financial particulars. Any exchange rate variation, currency conversion fee, bank charge or other related cost arising from such income, expenditure or related currency transactions shall also be reflected in the financial particulars.

SECTION C: Partnering Training Institute(s) (where applicable)

(i) The Applicant shall complete Section C if any Course Proposal involves partnering training institute(s).

(ii) Section C Items 7 (Division of Work between the Applicant and the Partnering Training Institute(s)) and 8 (Service Fees Payable to the Partnering Training Institute(s)) – For the avoidance of doubt, this part shall only be completed if the partnering training institute(s) serves as **service agent** of the Applicant charging the latter a fee for the provision of services for the implementation of the Course Proposal(s) (e.g. a tertiary institution sending a teaching staff to deliver a seminar at a cost). The Applicant shall provide a breakdown of the services and related cost components in **Section C Item 8**; and

(iii) Section C Item 9 (Control and Monitoring Mechanism) – Please set out the mechanism to ensure budgetary control and that the partnering training institute(s) is / are to carry out the relevant training activities effectively and efficiently.

SECTION D: Budget of the Course Proposal(s)

(i) Cash Flow Statement – please provide a cash flow statement showing the expected timing of receipts and payments, with the relevant milestones / deliverables clearly identified.
(ii) Budget Assumptions and Justifications – please state the assumptions adopted, including but not limited to the pledged minimum class size, and provide justifications for adopting such assumptions.
(iii) Non-cash Resources Supporting the Course Proposal(s) – where applicable, please specify any non-cash resources to be used in support of the Course Proposal(s).

SECTION E: Particulars of the Project Coordinator

(i) The Applicant should nominate a project coordinator ("**Project Coordinator**") for the Application;

(ii) Project Coordinator refers to a staff of the Applicant; and

(iii) Project Coordinator should be responsible for –

- administering and operating the implementation of the Course Proposal(s);
- managing the partnering training institute(s) (if any) in the Course Proposal(s);
- monitoring the expenditure and ensuring the proper use of the Funds in accordance with the approved budget and the conditions set by the Vetting Committee (if any); and
- answering enquiries from and attending meetings with the Government, Steering Committee or Vetting Committee (if required).

SECTION F: Publicity

(i) Section F Item 1 (Brief account on the publicity of the Proposal(s)) - Please provide a description on the publicity/marketing campaigns to be placed in order to reach the insurance-related practitioners so as to ensure sufficient enrollment of the course(s). Please also estimate the potential no. of reach through the publicity/marketing campaigns.

SECTION G: Declaration

(i) The Applicant shall read and acknowledge this section which signifies the Applicant's knowledge of and agreement to be bound by, among other things, the terms and conditions in the Application Form and in the Guidance Notes.

4.5 The Application and its Course Proposal(s) shall comply with the laws of Hong Kong. The Applicant shall observe any relevant legal requirements and obtain the relevant permit, license, consent, approval or the like from the authorities concerned.

Withdrawal of Application

4.6 The Applicant may inform the Secretariat of the Vetting Committee in writing to withdraw its Application or any Course Proposal under its Application at any time before the written notification of the application result is issued.

5 VETTING PROCEDURE

5.1 Upon receipt of the Application, the Secretariat of the Vetting Committee will conduct a preliminary screening and may seek clarification or supplementary information from the Applicant. Failure to provide such information within specified time will result in the deemed withdrawal of the Application without further notice.

5.2 Having conducted the preliminary screening in paragraph 5.1 above and if considered satisfactory, the Secretariat of the Vetting Committee will proceed to arrange the Vetting Committee to consider the Application.

5.3 The Government, Vetting Committee and/or HKFI may invite the Applicant and its team members to attend an interview to present the relevant Course Proposal(s) and to answer questions about the Application.

5.4 The respective chairmen and members of the Steering Committee and the Vetting Committee who are directly related to an Application or any Course Proposal will not take part in the assessment of the Application or Course Proposal(s). Such a situation arises where such a chairman or member is a member of the Applicant's team, or is the chairman, a deputy chairman or a member of the governing or executive body or a salaried employee (including a member of the teaching staff) of the Applicant or of the partnering training institute(s) (if any).

5.5 Applications and Course Proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Assessment Criteria

5.6 Each Course Proposal will generally be assessed according to how it could, in fulfilling the objectives of the FIS as set out in section 2 above, excel in the following criteria:

(a) relevance of the topics in relation to the objectives of the FIS;
(b) impact on the breadth and depth of job knowledge, and professional development of the insurance sector in Hong Kong;
(c) cost effectiveness, taking into account the number of practitioners who can benefit from the Course Proposal(s) and the cost incurred;
(d) availability of similar training in the Hong Kong market;
(e) quality of the Course Proposal(s), including the credential(s) of speaker(s) / instructor(s) (if any), standard of teaching materials (if any), technical feasibility, budgetary control and logistical arrangements;
(f) experience and execution capability of the Applicant and any partnering training institute(s) in carrying out the Course Proposal(s), e.g. course management and establishment of a control and monitoring mechanism;
(g) whether the Course Proposal is / will be accredited with CPD hours;
(h) level of registration fees and expenses of course delivery;
(i) applicant's experiences in FIS course delivery; and
(j) the potential number of reach of practitioners through the proposed publicity/marketing campaigns.

5.7 In addressing the above, the Vetting Committee may consider, among other things, the following:

(a) whether the Course Proposal has the potential to help enhance the professional knowledge of the insurance sector in fulfilling the objectives of the FIS as set out in section 2 above;
(b) whether the target participants may acquire the training through other means (e.g. similar training offered by other training providers currently available in the market or in-house training offered by employers);
(c) whether the Course Proposal(s) may be delivered by the Applicant as part of its normal business activities without FIS funding support;
(d) whether the overall planning, implementation schedule and duration of the Course Proposal(s) are practical and reasonable;
(e) whether the proposed budget is reasonable with realistic assumptions;
(f) whether the proposed speaker(s) / instructor(s) (if any) is / are suitable for delivering the training;
(g) whether the Course Proposal(s) have been financed or should be financed by other public funding sources in Hong Kong;
(h) whether the Course Proposal(s) are non-profit making in nature;
(i) whether the capability of the Applicant's team includes the partnering training institute(s) (if any), i.e. the team's project management and technical capabilities, expertise, experience, qualifications, track record and resources are available and forthcoming for implementing the Course Proposal(s); and
(j) whether any previously implemented Course Proposal(s) by the Applicant (including the one(s) implemented by any partnering training institute) was / were carried out effectively and efficiently in compliance with the relevant requirements.

5.8 The Vetting Committee may, where necessary and appropriate, invite experts, professionals, experienced practitioners and academics to give advice in respect of an Application or any Course Proposal under an Application. Any such persons will also be required to declare whether they are directly related to an Application or any Course Proposal under an Application as in the scenarios outlined in paragraph 5.4 above and, if so, will no longer be invited to assess the relevant Application or Course Proposal.

5.9 Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the Government remains the final authority whether or not to approve any Application or Course Proposal(s), the amount of Funds to be granted (if at all), any conditions to be attached to the approved Application or Course Proposal(s), and whether or not (and if so, to what extent) to accept any modification, amendment or addition to the terms and conditions specified in paragraph 5.11 below as may be proposed by the successful Applicant. The Government reserves the right to reject any Application or Course Proposal(s).

Notification of Results

5.10 After assessing the Application, the Vetting Committee may approve or reject the Application or any Course Proposal under the Application. The Secretariat of the Vetting Committee will inform the Applicant of the result within 7 working days of the decision of the Vetting Committee.

5.11 If an Application, or any Course Proposal under it, is approved, the Applicant will be informed of the result together with any terms and conditions that may be imposed by the Government, Steering Committee and/or Vetting Committee, in addition to those specified in the Application Form and the Guidance Notes. In order to comply with any such terms and conditions, the Applicant shall revise the relevant Course Proposal(s) accordingly before signing the letter of acceptance (“**Letter of Acceptance**”, see paragraphs 5.14 to 5.16 below). The Vetting Committee’s approval of an Application or any Course Proposal does not entitle the Applicant to acquire any venue or support services from public or private providers. The Applicant shall be responsible for making arrangements for the implementation and execution of the approved Course Proposal(s).

5.12 If an Application, or any Course Proposal under it, is rejected, the Applicant will be informed of the result together with brief reasons explaining the decision of the Vetting Committee.

5.13 In case of doubt or controversy, the Government’s decision shall be final.

Letter of Acceptance

5.14 The successful Applicant shall sign to accept and comply with the terms and conditions applicable to the approved Application or Course Proposal(s), as specified in paragraph 5.11 above, which will be stipulated in the Letter of Acceptance.

5.15 Any modification, amendment or addition to the terms and conditions specified in the Letter of Acceptance proposed by the successful Applicant shall require the final approval of the Government.

5.16 The Government, Steering Committee and/or Vetting Committee may, from time to time, includ~~e~~ but without limitation to those in the Application Form, Guidance Notes and Letter of Acceptance, impose additional terms and conditions with which the Applicant shall comply.

6 PROGRESS AND POST-IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

6.1 The training activities in the Course Proposal(s) shall be completed within the period specified in the Course Proposal(s) as approved by the Vetting Committee and specified in the Letter of Acceptance. Depending on the nature and duration of the training activities in the Course Proposal(s), the Vetting Committee will require a successful Applicant to submit a progress report (“**Progress Report**”) within a timeframe to be specified in the Letter of Acceptance. The Progress Report must include details of the progress of the approved Course Proposal(s) and a financial statement of the latest financial position on a cash basis accounting approach.

6.2 The successful Applicant shall submit to the Vetting Committee, within 3 months upon completion of the implemented Course Proposal(s), a post-implementation report (“Post-Implementation Report”) together with a certified account (section 10 below refers) on the final financial position of the implemented Course Proposal(s) which shall demonstrate that the Funds were fully and properly applied to the Course Proposal(s) and that all Funds were paid, received and expended in accordance with the approved budget. The Post-Implementation Report to be submitted must include details of the results, performance, achievements and evaluation of the implemented Course Proposal(s), and shall contain a statement of the total income and expenditure of the implemented Course Proposal(s). For training activities delivered in e-learning mode, the successful Applicant should also submit a proper audit trail which keeps track of participants’ login time, idle time and activities undertaken.

7 FUNDING SUPPORT

7.1 In considering the amount of funds to be approved under the FIS (“**Funds**”) for an Applicant to implement the Course Proposal(s), the Vetting Committee will take into account, among other things, the net costs for implementing the Course Proposal(s), i.e., the expected total expenditure as reduced by the total expected income. The approved amount of Funds will be disbursed in accordance with section 9 below and relevant arrangements specified in the Letter of Acceptance, and as may be prescribed from time to time by the Government, Steering Committee and/or Vetting Committee.

7.2 Course Proposal(s), which is/are or will be in receipt of financial support from any public funding sources in Hong Kong, or form or will form part of a programme so subsidised (whether wholly or partly) by any public funding sources, will not be considered. Public funding sources refer to funding provided by Government bureaux / departments or public organisations receiving recurrent funding from the Government. However, non-cash support from public funding sources in Hong Kong (e.g. sponsorship of venue support and ticketing services by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department) may be accepted subject to approval by the Government on a case-by-case basis upon consulting the Vetting Committee. The Applicant shall inform participants that they should not seek reimbursement of course fee from any other public funding scheme in Hong Kong. If the successful Applicant has accepted other public funding for a Course Proposal, the application for FIS Funds in respect of that Course Proposal will become invalid and the successful Applicant will not receive the whole or the remaining portion of the approved Funds for that Course Proposal and must return to HKFI all the Funds received in respect of that Course Proposal.

7.3 The approved amount of Funds must be used to support solely the training activities covered by the relevant Course Proposal(s) in the approved Application.

7.4 The approved amount of Funds shall not be used for providing recurrent expenditure, expenditure that incurred in any cases of a normal business operation, such as general administration and overhead cost, and maintenance cost for any hardware and software owned by the Applicant, except for specific costs such as fees for insurance policy as may be approved by the Vetting Committee.

7.5 Part of the expenditure for implementing a Course Proposal shall be met by registration fee payable by the participants. Considering the FIS's objective of enhancing professional competency of insurance practitioners, the Applicant should charge all participating practitioners the same all-inclusive registration fee (for instance, there should not be different fee levels based on practitioners' status of membership at industry bodies). Priority should be given to industry practitioners in course enrolment and, where vacancies remain, any non-practitioner participants should pay full cost. The income derived from registration fee from insurance-related practitioners and non-practitioners, if any, will be treated as part of the cash contribution to the Course Proposal by the Applicant. The expected income calculated based on the pledged minimum class size and estimated registration fees shall be set out in each Course Proposal.

7.6 In case the actual income arising from the implementation of a Course Proposal approved by the Vetting Committee is less than that estimated in the approved budget, the Applicant shall cover any resulting shortfall required for implementing the Course Proposal. The Government will not provide any additional funding in this case.

7.7 In case the actual total expenditure incurred in the implementation of a Course Proposal approved by the Vetting Committee is larger than that estimated in the approved budget, the Applicant shall cover any resulting shortfall required for implementing the Course

Proposal. That notwithstanding, if the extra expenditure is due to actual enrollment being greater than the pledged minimum class size, any resulting shortfall required for implementing the Course Proposal may be reimbursable upon the approval of the Vetting Committee. The amount of Funds to be reimbursed to the Applicant in this case would be pro rata to the actual enrollment and capped at the pledged maximum class size.

7.8 In case the actual enrollment of the training activity(ies) is below the pledged minimum class size, the Applicant may not receive full reimbursement of the actual expenditure. The reimbursement rate will be available to successful Applicants at the commencement of course implementation.

7.9 The Government, Steering Committee and Vetting Committee do not guarantee that the full amount of Funds applied for by an Applicant will be approved. Even if a Course Proposal was approved in the past, the Applicant shall not assume that similar Course Proposal(s) will be approved in future applications.

8 SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF FUNDING SUPPORT

8.1 The Government reserves the right to suspend or terminate, after consultation with the Steering Committee and / or Vetting Committee, funding support for an approved Course Proposal if, for example, the progress of the Course Proposal is unsatisfactory, or the Course Proposal cannot achieve the minimum size of enrolment, or the chance of completion of the Course Proposal is slim, or there is a breach of the terms and conditions specified in paragraphs 5.11 and 5.16 above, or if the Government sees it fit to terminate the Course Proposal in the public interest because of changed circumstances. The Secretariat of the Vetting Committee shall also conduct on-site random checking regularly to the approved training activities to monitor the progress of the Course Proposals.

8.2 If a successful Applicant, due to unexpected circumstances, wishes to terminate the Course Proposal(s), it shall seek prior approval of the Government. The Applicant shall set out the reason(s) of termination and shall provide an exit plan, including without limitation how to deal with matters such as refund of registration fees and payment of outstanding expenses incurred for the Course Proposal(s) prior to termination, in an orderly manner.

8.3 In the event of suspension and / or termination in paragraphs 8.1 or 8.2 above, the Applicant shall, if so requested by the Government, Steering Committee and / or Vetting Committee, return all or part of the Funds within the time specified. The Government reserves the right to claim from the Applicant all or part of the Funds that have been granted and used by the Applicant.

9 FUNDING ARRANGEMENT

Disbursement

9.1 Subject to disbursement in compliance with funding criteria as may be prescribed from time to time by the Government, Steering Committee and / or Vetting Committee, Funds for the approved Course Proposal(s) may be disbursed as follows:

(a) <u>for approved Application with an amount of Funds equal to or not exceeding HK$100,000</u>

Funds will be disbursed in two instalments:

- The first instalment, covering 50% of the approved amount of Funds, will be effected within 30 days from the date of receipt of the Applicant's signed Letter of Acceptance specified in section 5 above;
- The second instalment, covering the remaining 50% of the approved amount of Funds, will be effected upon receipt of the Post-Implementation Report specified in section 6 above. The second instalment will be disbursed to the Applicant within 30 days from the date of acceptance of the Post-Implementation Report by the Vetting Committee; and

(b) <u>for approved Application with an amount of Funds exceeding HK$100,000</u>

Without prejudice to the adjustment which may be made as specified in this paragraph 9.1(b), Funds will be disbursed in three installments:

- The first instalment, covering 40% of the approved amount of Funds, will be effected within 30 days from the date of receipt of the Applicant's signed Letter of Acceptance specified in section 5 above;
- The second instalment, covering 30% of the approved amount of Funds, will be effected upon satisfactory implementation progress, accomplishment of approved milestones / deliverables, compliance with the approved cash flow projection and submission of the Progress Report as specified in section 6 above. The second instalment will be disbursed to the Applicant within 30 days from the date of acceptance of the Progress Report by the Vetting Committee;
- The final instalment, covering the remaining 30% of the approved amount of Funds, will be effected upon satisfactory completion of implementation,

accomplishment of approved milestones / deliverables, compliance with the approved cash flow projection and submission of the Post-Implementation Report as specified in section 6 above. The final instalment will be disbursed to the Applicant within 30 days from the date of acceptance of the Post-Implementation Report by the Vetting Committee; and

- The Government, Steering Committee and/or Vetting Committee have the discretion to adjust the timing and amount of any installment which may be less (but not more) than 50% of the approved amount.

9.2 All instalments will be made in Hong Kong dollar.

Separate Account

9.3 The successful Applicant shall maintain a separate account for the approved Course Proposal(s) within its established accounting system. All receipts, payments and income of the Course Proposal(s) shall only be used or incurred solely for the Course Proposal(s), and shall be shown accurately and clearly in the financial records of the successful Applicant. The successful Applicant shall keep separate records to differentiate the Funds and income from other sources, including sponsorships and donations collected or received specifically for the Course Proposal(s).

9.4 The Government reserves the right to claim against the Applicant for any loss, damages, costs, expenses and liabilities suffered or incurred by the Government in connection with or by reason of the Applicant's failure to comply with any terms and conditions specified in paragraph 5.11 or 5.16 above.

Surplus or Deficits

9.5 At the time of the submission of the certified account together with the Post-Implementation Report of the Course Proposal(s), the successful Applicant must return to the Government any residual Funds and operating surplus generated from the Course Proposal(s) (subject to a cap, being the amount of the Funds approved for the Course Proposal(s)) and any interest income within 30 calendar days upon receipt of the demand note issued by HKFI. No residual Funds, operating surplus and interest income may be used for any other purposes unless otherwise approved by the Government, Steering Committee and / or Vetting Committee.

9.6 Under no circumstances will the Government accept any liability for deficits arising from or in relation to an approved Course Proposal(s). The successful Applicant shall be solely responsible for any deficits arising from implementing and completing the approved Course Proposal(s).

10 CERTIFIED ACCOUNTS

10.1 The successful Applicant shall submit to the Vetting Committee financial statements of the implemented Course Proposal(s) within three months upon completion of the implemented Course Proposal(s) (together with the Post-Implementation Report as specified in section 6 above), which shall be duly certified by the chairperson or the chief executive of the successful Applicant that they are prepared and fairly presented in accordance with the relevant laws of Hong Kong and Hong Kong generally accepted accounting principles.

10.2 In the certified accounts submitted in accordance with paragraph 10.1 above, the chairperson or the chief executive of the successful Applicant shall assure that the said accounts contain the requisite financial information including the Funds from the Government and any income from other sources collected or received for the Course Proposal(s). The said accounts shall be subject to annual audit as part of the annual audit of the successful Applicant's overall accounts by its auditor. The successful Applicant shall notify the Government timely of any audit comments and recommendations relating to the Course Proposal(s) and its responses including actions taken or to be taken. The successful Applicant shall accord priority in taking rectification action in respect of any irregularities.

11 OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Conduct of Business

11.1 The successful Applicant shall organise itself and develop such plans as are necessary to achieve the objectives of the FIS as set out in section 2 above effectively, efficiently and with due regard to economy, and shall ensure good corporate governance in implementing the Course Proposal(s).

Procurement and Hiring of Staff

11.2 The successful Applicant shall abide by the principles of openness, fairness and competitiveness set out in the Strengthening Integrity and Accountability - Government Funding Schemes Grantee's Guidebook issued by Independent Commission Against Corruption in hiring staff and in procuring goods and services for implementing the approved Course Proposal(s), and shall observe all laws regulating the employment of persons in Hong Kong.

Books and Records

11.3 The successful Applicant must keep all financial statements, books and records of the approved Course Proposal(s) for at least seven years after either the completion date of the implemented Course Proposal(s) or, if earlier, the termination date referred to in paragraphs 8.1 or 8.2 above, or such other date as may be specified by the Government, Steering Committee and / or Vetting Committee, and shall make them available for inspection by the Government, Steering Committee and / or Vetting Committee upon request.

11.4 The Director of Audit may conduct an examination into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the successful Applicant has used the Funds. The Director of Audit shall have a right of access at all reasonable times to all such documents or information in the custody and control of the successful Applicant as he may reasonably require for conducting an examination and shall be entitled to require, from any person holding or being accountable for any such document or information, such information and explanation as he considers reasonably necessary for that purpose.

Insurance

11.5 The successful Applicant shall take out appropriate insurance policies, including but not limited to, employee compensation, public liability including coverage of occupier's liability and to meet any claim which may arise as a result of the approved Course Proposal(s).

11.6 The actual expenditure for insurance fees may be included in the budget in the Application, provided that it relates solely to the planning and implementation of the Course Proposal(s).

Intellectual Property Rights

11.7 Intellectual property rights ("**IPRs**") means all IPRs arising from the Course Proposal(s) including patents, trademarks, service marks, trade names, design rights, copyright, domain names, database rights, rights in know-how, new inventions, designs or processes, and other intellectual property rights, in each case whether now known or created in future, regardless of whatever nature and wherever arising, and whether registered or unregistered, and including applications for the grant of any such rights. In submitting the Application and implementing the Course Proposal(s), the Applicant shall ensure that no IPRs of any third parties have been or will be infringed.

Prevention of Bribery

11.8 The Applicant shall observe the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance (Cap. 201) ("**PBO**") and shall advise its employees, subcontractors, agents, partnering training institute(s) (if any) and other personnel who are in any way involved in the Course Proposal(s) that they are not allowed to offer to or solicit or accept from any person any money, gifts or advantage as defined in the PBO in the conduct of or in relation to the Course Proposal(s).

11.9 The offer of an advantage to any Government officers or members of the Steering Committee or Vetting Committee with a view to influencing the vetting and / or approval of the Application is an offence under the PBO. Any such offer will render the Application null and void. The Government may also cancel the Application approved, terminate the Course Proposal(s) pursuant to section 8 above and / or hold the Applicant liable for any loss or damage which the Government may sustain.

Applicant Indemnity

11.10 Under no circumstances will the Government be liable or accountable for any claims, loss or damages arising from or in relation to any Course Proposal. The Applicant shall indemnify the Government against all loss, claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses and liabilities suffered or incurred by the Government or which may be brought or established against the Government arising out of the breach of any of the terms and conditions by the Applicant. An Applicant, whether successful in this Application or otherwise, or any employees, subcontractors, agents, partnering training institute(s) and other personnel who are in any way involved in the Course Proposal(s) shall not seek or claim any compensation, reimbursement, damages, indemnity or waiver from the Government in relation to the preparation and submission of this Application.

11.11 Nothing in the terms and conditions specified in paragraphs 5.11 and 5.16 above confers or purports to confer on any third party any benefit or any right to enforce any term of the terms and conditions pursuant to the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Ordinance (Cap. 623).

The Hong Kong Federation of Insurers
August 2026