

**Public Education Programme of the  
“Policy Framework for the  
Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)”**

**Funding Application by  
Office of Service-Learning, Lingnan University:  
“Waste Management Project for Promoting Green Leaders  
in Tuen Mun District 2010-2011”**

**Purpose**

At its meeting on 5 June 2009, the Subcommittee considered a funding application by Office of Service-Learning, Lingnan University (“Lingnan”) for a waste management project in Tuen Mun. Having taken into account the comments of the Subcommittee, Lingnan has submitted a revised application. Members are invited to advise whether this revised application should be recommended for further consideration by the Environment and Conservation Fund (“ECF”) Committee.

**Background**

2. Lingnan submitted a funding application entitled “Waste Management Project: A Young-Old Partnership for a Better Future” which was considered by the Subcommittee at its meeting on 5 June 2009. The application, requiring funding of about \$3 million, targets at university students and the elderly. Activities included two overseas visits (to Singapore and Taiwan respectively) and organization of waste reduction programmes in 4 selected public housing estates by the trained students and the elderly. Having received Lingnan’s presentation, Members offered the following comments and invited Lingnan to review its application –

- (a) the project should focus more on the community, and particularly community leaders should be involved in the early stage of the programmes;
- (b) clear budget breakdown should be provided;

- (c) the number and destination for overseas visit should be duly considered with justifications; and
- (d) visit to the proposed food composting plant may not be a good idea as the composting method used might cause nuisance to the neighbourhood.

3. Having taken into account the comments above, Lingnan has submitted a revised application (Annex) with a new project title as “Waste Management Project for Promoting Green Leaders in Tuen Mun District 2010-2011” for further consideration by the Subcommittee.

## **Preliminary Observations**

### The Subcommittee’s Previous Comments

4. To address Members’ comments, Lingnan has made the following major revisions:

- (a) community leaders have been involved in the project at the early stage. They would need to act as mentors and help provide guidance to the students and elderly joining this project. Such role would trigger them to be more environmentally conscious and to develop a more comprehensive perspective on waste management;
- (b) the scope and duration of the project have been trimmed, resulting in a lower budget. Moreover, clear breakdown of each item has been provided. In addition, participants joining the overseas visit have to bear part of the trip costs (\$1,000 each);
- (c) the number of overseas visits has been reduced from two to one. Taiwan is proposed for visit as it has been successful in promoting waste management and its successful experience would be a good reference to Hong Kong; and
- (d) food composting has been taken out from the revised application.

5. In general, we consider that the Subcommittee’s comments as outlined in paragraph 2 have been duly reflected in the revised proposal. As this application proposal provides a channel for a local tertiary institute to promote

better solid waste management from a community perspective, the Administration believes that the proposed project will bring positive impacts in the longer run. Therefore, there are merits from an environmental point of view that the application could be supported.

#### Guide to Application

6. Members may wish to note the following concerning the revised application –

- (a) the application amounts to \$901,390, which exceeds the normal funding limit of \$500,000; and
- (b) an overseas study tour (to Taiwan) has been proposed but is not normally supported by the Environmental and Conservation Fund.

7. There are precedents of this Subcommittee endorsing applications with funding request exceeding the \$500,000 cap. For example, this Subcommittee endorsed an application named “Plastic Shopping Bags Levy, You should know” submitted by Greeners Action with a project sum of \$996,351. The consideration is whether the project proponent could justify the case. In the current application, Lingnan has trimmed down the scope and duration of the project. But its scale remains significant and there is a genuine need of more resources to support its proposed activity to achieve its intended public education purpose. In this respect, we consider that Members may favourably consider its proposed budget given the scale of the project. The overseas visit, if supported, is also relevant because no other PEP projects bear the same component and the necessary resources comprise about 16% of the total budget.

8. As regards the proposed overseas visit, Lingnan justifies that this is an integral part of its proposal for reason that it would help broaden the exposure and horizon of the participants on the prevailing mode of waste management in international dimensions. Moreover, it would give a good opportunity for the participants to discuss with overseas authority and relevant units on waste management. Such knowledge and exposure would be very useful in shaping them to be waste management leaders and would provide them with the inspiration for spreading the waste management messages to the local community. In this case, given the importance of promoting public support and public engagement for the proposal to take forward an integrated waste management facility in the district, we consider that this is also in line with views expressed by Members (at the 23rd Subcommittee Meeting on 3 September 2009) where Members held that public support was important in pursuing initiatives under the Policy Framework and should be carefully

cultivated through publicity before key policy initiatives were taken forward. To facilitate this, the Public Education Programme should support not only campaign-based activities but also projects promoting public engagement.

9. The revised application from Lingnan does promote public engagement because local residents and students are recruited for promulgation of better solid waste management in their community. We also appreciate that the proposed overseas visit, which could equip the participants with better knowledge for sharing back in Hong Kong at peer and community levels, is an essential component of Lingnan's public engagement strategy. Given that the importance that this Subcommittee attaches to public engagement under the Public Education Programme, there is a case for more flexibility in applying the Guide to Application. This flexible approach would not only facilitate meritorious projects to obtain funding but also allow us to accumulate experience on how the Guide could in future be suitably adjusted to promote public engagement. On the basis of these considerations, we consider that the overseas visit in the revised application could be supported.

### **Advice sought**

10. Members are invited to advise whether the funding application should be recommended for further consideration by the ECF Committee. In further submitting the revised application, we would inform the ECF Committee of Members' deliberations about public engagement so that the Committee could consider giving favourable considerations despite the constraints under the present Guide to Application.

**Environmental Protection Department**  
**November 2009**