

Project Information	
Project Title (in English)	Project Title (in Chinese)
Language Lab for Chinese and Non-Chinese Students	語言中心 (本地及少數族裔學生)

A. Project Summary

(please provide an executive summary of the project proposal in no more than 500 words).

The Hong Kong Institute of Technology (HKIT) offers and conducts locally accredited self-financed sub-degree, degree and top up degree programmes. At the same time, the Institute is also one of the local tertiary institutions giving special care and attention to non-Chinese students.

The POP Survey (Opinion Survey on the Public Ranking of Universities in Hong Kong 2008) conducted by the University of Hong Kong in July 2008, indicated that the general public and the employers had great concern on the language ability of the graduates, which is directly affecting the performance of the graduates at work. To enhance our students' overall language proficiency and attainment, HKIT is applying for the QESG to set up a Language Centre in the Institute.

To benchmark against local and international standards in language proficiency and attainment, HKIT students will be encouraged to participate in major Language Proficiency Tests such as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and the National Putonghua Proficiency Test (普通話水平測試). HKIT will set up a language fund to sponsor 10% of the test fee for students with financial difficulties.

It is therefore proposed that a **Common English Proficiency Assessment Scheme (CEPAS)** be introduced in the proposed Language Centre to enhance our students' English proficiency principally by offering and conducting specially designed intensive English enhancement courses to prepare students to sit for the IELTS and other related English achievement tests. At the same time, to raise our students' competency level in Putonghua, special Putonghua training workshops will be designed and run by the Language Centre.

In lines with current trends in language learning, HKIT will develop a computer-based multimedia language laboratory to provide self-pace, independent learning opportunities for Chinese students who are planning to upgrade their language proficiency in English and/or Putonghua and/or preparing for language tests. The laboratory will also serve our Non-Chinese students to learn Cantonese and/or Putonghua for future employment and career development.

An Advisory Group with English and Putonghua experts will be invited to recommend appropriate software systems as well as to provide advice on the actual set up of the laboratory as well as reviewing the operations and effectiveness of the lab twice in the first year of the project implementation, at each 6-month interval, to give direction for further improvement of the laboratory.

Feedback from students on using the laboratory will be collected and analysed for improvement. HKIT will collaborate with the Advisory Group to design self-accessed tests for the laboratory for students to self-evaluate their progress, making necessary adjustments in their learning approaches.

The laboratory will continue to operate after the first one and a half year with all recurrent expenses borne by the Institute.

B. Project Objectives

(please identify the needs of the target recipients and explain how the project aims to address the needs)

The projects aims to :

- Enhance language skills : both written and spoken
- Improve employment opportunity of graduands
- Obtain well recognised language certification
- Provide multimedia and computer based e-learning platform for learning language
- Implement a quality language training centre

C. Outcomes and Deliverables of Project

(please include the expected number of target beneficiaries and explain how they will benefit from the project).

The language lab will provide 8 courses every year. Depending on the demand and candidates enrolled these courses will take maximum 40 students per intake. The Language lab will be pilot run during the first one and a half year with QEGS grant and it will be sustained by HKIT for the coming years for its recurring costs. The pilot run is expected to provide an insight into the shortcoming for further development and advisory group will be setup specifically to monitor the progress of the project and its success in achieving the goals and objectives.

The language lab, will further enhance the employment potential and add value to the students qualifications that they may possess after completion of respective courses. It is estimated that during the pilot run, we can reach a maximum of 320 Chinese and non-Chinese students per year.

The major stages of outcome for the pilot programme are as listed below :

1. Laboratory and multimedia learning
2. Language Curriculum framework and workshops
3. Preparing for certification examination or applied skills

D. Implementation Details

It is clear that success in international English proficiency tests such as the IELTS will definitely boost up our students' confidence and motivation for achieving further mastery of the English language for their academic work and/or for their future career/employment. Besides, demands in good Putonghua skill have been increased sufficiently these years with the increase of influence of the China Market. It is also clear that students should not be misguided into learning for examination results, but using an international test like the IELTS and the National Putonghua Proficiency Test as a target and assessment tool of students' linguistic attainment and reflection of their competency level will definitely prove to be a strong motivation in students to engage more and more in active learning and acquisition of skills and strategies for effective communication in the English and/or Putonghua medium.

It is therefore proposed to design and offer the following two types of courses:

1. **Specific purposes courses** that aim to train and perfect students' specific skills and strategies; e.g. listening and speaking courses; reading and writing courses; courses training students in information retrieval and processing; courses training students in processing numerical and graphical data and information for oral presentations; courses training students to present such information in well written prose and official documentation; etc.
2. **Integration courses** that aim to assist and facilitate students in integrating the four macro skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing for effective communication both orally and in writing; e.g. courses training students to acquire, consolidate and organize information and data relating to a given topic or theme into an oral document or written documentation for a specific purpose, be it to produce a tourist handbook or a company guide; etc.

It is our **pedagogical conviction** that ample and suitable exposure to the target language plus intensive and frequent **practice** is an indispensable basis for mastery of the language. On this basis our courses will use **authentic materials** for teaching and learning as far as possible and teachers and tutors will make it their point to provide a variety of subjects or themes and a variety of sources and formats for the teaching and learning processes. It is also proposed that part of these courses will comprise **workshop modes** or "**hands-on sessions**", so as to provide students with the opportunity to learn by doing and to learn by making mistakes and rectifying them as far as possible on their own, thereby achieving the "aha experience" for themselves.

The proposed **Common English Proficiency Assessment Scheme (CEPAS)**¹ and Putonghua workshops will be implemented in two phases to be spread over one and a half year (18 months), as follows:

1. The first phase covers the period **March 2009 to August 2009**, viz. half year (6 months). In this period major course designs, materials development and Multimedia-based preparatory work will be undertaken, carried out, tested, trialed and piloted for outcomes and feedback data for rectification and further improvement or "fine-tuning".
2. The second phase covers the next one calendar year (12 months), from **September 2009 – August 2010**. In one academic year within this second period (namely the **2009-2010 academic year**) the trialed and piloted courses and other related activities will be offered and run for all our students, to train them into proficient and effective language users and communicators for all practical and academic purposes in the English and/or Putonghua medium. At the same time, the Institute will prepare and assist students to sit for the IELTS tests and/or the National Putonghua Proficiency Test at regular intervals.

The pilot project is expected to last for 1.5 year, with support from QEGS, and thereon HKIT intends to continue running the project at its own expenses :

The implementation schedule is as below :

Time-line	Implementation Items
1st Phase	March 2009 – August 2009
March 2009	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre-scheme survey of students' English and Putonghua level and attainment in the four macro skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing by means of grading tests and questionnaires 2. Data recorded for comparison with post-scheme survey data 3. Set up of Advisory Group
April – June 2009	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laboratory Setup 2. Designing and trial-running intensive courses 3. Developing teaching and learning materials from authentic and semi-authentic sources (including newspapers, magazines, TV programmes, websites) 4. Developing Multimedia based learning materials and environment 5. Trialing workshop and other "hands-on" activities using authentic and semi-authentic materials and recording the outcome data

¹ It is planned to propagate and disseminate the outcomes, data and achievements in our CEPAS, possibly the first of its kind ever in the private higher education sector, to all local private tertiary institutions in our effort and endeavour to extend the population of beneficiaries of such a scheme as best as we can, both as a community service and at the same time as our good will partnership drive.

	6. Administering course evaluation feedback questionnaires and conducting sample interviews and analyzing data for improving and fine-tuning course design and materials development and production
July – August 2009	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Piloting trialed courses offered to a given group of students 2. Course evaluation – by sample interviews and feedback questionnaires and data analysed for revising and improving course designs for implementation in the second phase of the project 3. Evaluation and feedback for the on-line self-access learning package for improving and fine-tuning the package for implementation in the second phase
2nd Phase	September 2009 – August 2010
September – December 2009 (term 1 of the academic year)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Running 2 specific purposes courses and 2 integration courses in the first term of this academic year 2009 – 2010 with the assistance of multimedia technology in the Language Lab 2. Conducting course and teaching evaluation surveys and recording data 3. Preparing students to sit for the IELTS and the National Putonghua Proficiency Test at specific dates as indicated by testing authorities
January - February 2010	All 4 courses fine-tuned and improved on the basis of feedback and evaluation data from surveys for offer in next term
March – June 2010 (term 2 of the academic year)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Running the revised and improved 4 courses in the second term of the academic year with the assistance of multimedia technology in the Language Lab 2. Conducting course and teaching evaluation surveys and recording data 3. Preparing students to sit for the IELTS and the National Putonghua Proficiency Test at specific dates as indicated by testing authorities
July – August 2010	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Post-scheme survey 2. Data compared with pre-scheme survey 3. Recommendations for improvement

E. Implementation Schedule <i>(Please extend this table if necessary.)</i>		
Estimated start date of project:		<u>March 2009</u>
Action <i>(please indicate key milestones)</i>	Timeframe	Cashflow Requirement
1st Phase: Planning and Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up the Advisor Group - Complete the Course Planning and Curriculum Development - Set up the Lab - Purchase of Equipment 	March 2009 to August 2009	HK\$ 715,000
2nd Phase (Term 1) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct the language training workshops - Conduct preparatory courses for certification exams 2. Evaluation and Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the Evaluation - Complete the Review Report and List out the Recommendations 	September 2009 to February 2010	HK\$ 470,000
2nd Phase (Term 2) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct the language training workshops - Conduct preparatory courses for certification exams 2. Evaluation and Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the Evaluation - Complete the Review Report and List out the Recommendations 	March 2010 to August 2010	HK\$ 470,000

Estimated completion date of project: August 2010

Total :
 HK\$ 1,655,000

F. Project Budget				
Projected Expenditure (Please provide detailed breakdown under each item)	Amount in HK\$			
	1st Phase: Preparatory Period (6 months)	2nd Phase: Term 1 (6 months)	2nd Phase: Term 2 (6 months)	Total
a. Manpower				
- One Full-time Project Manager	90,000	90,000	90,000	270,000
- Two Part-time IT Officers	90,000	50,000	50,000	190,000
Total				460,000
b. Equipment / Facilities				
- Computer Lab	225,000			225,000
- Language Training Software	50,000			50,000
Total				275,000
c. Services				
- Course design and Programme development	160,000	40,000	40,000	240,000
- Lecturing Fee		160,000	160,000	320,000
- Advisor Fee	50,000	20,000	20,000	90,000
- Teaching Assessment		50,000	50,000	100,000
- Video Recording		30,000	30,000	60,000
- Teaching and learning materials development and production costs	50,000	30,000	30,000	110,000
Total				920,000
Total Expenditure :	715,000	470,000	470,000	1,655,000
Projected Income				
	Amount in HK\$			
	1st Phase: Preparatory Period (6 months)	2nd Phase: Term 1 (6 months)	2nd Phase: Term 2 (6 months)	Total
Tuition Fee		160,000	160,000	320,000
Total Income :				320,000
Sources of Funding HK\$1,335,000				
a.	Amount of grant sought under this application: <u>1,335,000</u>			
b.	Other sources of funding (this may include donations, contributions from the applicant/its parent organization, etc. Please give the name(s) of the sponsor(s), the amount of funding, and indicate whether the funding has been secured.): <u>Tuition Fee</u>			

G. Monitoring and Self-evaluation Mechanism

There will be two monitoring bodies:

- Three Council members will be invited to form a monitoring group to monitor the development as well as the progress of the Lab.
- The Advisory group will provide evaluation upon the progress, set up of the lab and feedbacks of the students.

Self-Evaluation

For students who are attending the External public English and Putonghua test, their result will serve as a good self-evaluation index.

H. Management Support and Key Personnel Involved

The Institution will provide support in set up and general maintenance of the laboratory. There will be two key personnel involved, one with good experience in Language and one in IT and multimedia.

I. Special Justifications if the Grant Sought Exceeds \$2 million

III Other information**1 Project Sustainability (If applicable, please describe how the recurrent expenditure involved will be met after completion of the proposed project)**

The project will continue with the other expenses being borne by the Institution on a recurring basis, in addition to the funding available as tuition fee.

2 Preparatory work done (If any)

A preliminary advisory group consists of experienced English, Putonghua and multimedia based learning experts has been formed for the preparation of this proposal. The group shares in itself enormous experience in the field of language education and multimedia based learning.

3 Past experience in organizing projects of similar or relevant nature and achievements (If any)

It is the first time that HKIT is planning to set up a language lab. But HKIT offers sub-degree and degree with major in multimedia, which is familiar with the approach of using multimedia to stimulate learning. Furthermore, HKIT has been offering Putonghua and English courses to its Associate Degree and Degree students for years. The same concept which has been successfully undertaken can be applied on the setup of the laboratory for language learning with specilaised adaptation for language education.