

## II Project Information

Project Title (in English)

Business Technology Center:  
*An Initiative to Enhance Education in  
 Business and Information Technology*

Project Title (in Chinese)

商務技術中心:  
*提高商業與資訊科技教育的新構思*

### A. Project Summary

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

A large volume of business data is available in the current information age, but people often have insufficient time to find and read all related material before making a decision in our dynamic and competitive business environment. Technology can support faster decision making in the modern business world; for example, performing customer relationship management by association rule mining, market segmentation by clustering, sales forecasting by regression analysis, and credit rating by classification using decision trees, among other applications.

However, traditional business education studies focus on core commercial areas such as accounting, marketing, management, finance, and the like. Most business programs do not pay attention to using information technology in business environments. Graduates from business programs do not know how business processes can be automated and enhanced using cutting edge technologies. Conversely, traditional information technology education focuses on training in computer applications and their underlying theories. As a result, graduates from information technology programs do not know how these applications can be utilized in the commercial environment.

This project aims to set up a Business Technology Center (BTC) in Caritas Francis Hsu College. A number of similar business technology centers have been set up in overseas higher educational institutes; for example, Virginia Tech, Georgetown University, and Florida State University, to name three. The BTC proposed in this project will be the first of its kind in Hong Kong. This center will provide an excellent information exchange platform and learning center for faculty members and students from the Department of Business Administration and Department of Computer Science.

A large collection of technology-based business case studies will be developed. The BTC will provide some project training to students from the two departments. For each project, a team with students from both departments will work together to solve some real business problems by using modern technologies. The success of cross-disciplinary project teams has been proven by the most prestigious consulting company, McKinsey & Co. Students will gain valuable experience and knowledge of business technology through project-based learning, which greatly enhances students' learning experience, and also prepares students to work in real project teams and develops their teamwork skills. As a consequence, student employability will be enhanced.

As an initiative to enhance education in business and information technology, the case studies and some sample solutions developed by the students will be published online. Institutes can promote education in this area by adopting these case studies in their educational programs. Upon completion of this project, we will share our experience with local institutes and help them set up similar business technology centers. Additionally, our BTC will hold regular information seminars to provide updated information on business technology to faculty members and students of local institutes. These information seminars will greatly enhance the quality of education in business technology and related areas in Hong Kong.

## B. Project Objectives

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

Training in business technology has become a critical field in education in business studies and information technology. Many business technology centers have been setup in overseas institutes, but there is no similar center in Hong Kong. This project aims to set up a Business Technology Center (BTC) in Caritas Francis Hsu College, which will enhance the quality of education in both business and information technology. The proposed project has the following objectives:

- Provide a cross-disciplinary learning platform for students from business and computer science programs;
- Provide up-to-date information about trends in business technology to faculty members and students of local institutes;
- Enhance information technology skills for students from business programs by providing technical training;
- Enhance business knowledge for students from computer sciences programs by analyzing business case studies; and
- Prepare students to work in teams in business environments through implicit learning in a team project environment;

In the short run, this project will improve the learning experience of students in both business and information technology-related programs. In the long run, this project will enhance students' teamwork skills to solve technology-based business problems. Hence, the employability of the students will be significantly improved.

## C. Outcomes and Deliverables of Project

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

The major deliverables of this project include the following:

- Set up of the BTC, which provides technology-based projects to students from the Department of Business Administration and Department of Computer Science;
- Provide a series of educational seminars and workshops in business technology education to faculty members and students from local higher educational institutes;
- Provide an online collection of real business case studies for business technology to the local higher education institutes;
- Provide an archive of useful computing tools, which can be utilized in business technology projects;

The projected number of students in the Department of Business Administration and Department of Computer Science of Caritas Francis Hsu College is 200 and 80, respectively. This group of students will be the first beneficiaries. They will receive training in the use of information technology in business, which will greatly improve their employability.

After a pilot run of this project at Caritas Francis Hsu College, the BTC will be open to students at Caritas Bianchi College of Careers. The number of beneficiaries will double at that time. Eventually, the number of beneficiaries is unbounded, because the case studies and projects will be published online and shared with other local higher educational institutes. The students at other institutes can benefit from using the case studies and projects developed in this project.

**D. Implementation Details**

The proposed project lasts for three years and consists of five phases, as follows:

**Phase I***Developing the Case Studies*

In Phase I, we will conduct surveys of similar business technology centers in overseas institutes. We will study their accumulated business case studies and the tools developed at their centers. Company visit will be conducted to collect real-life business problem cases. Additionally, IT professionals will be interviewed to understand the current trends in modern technologies, with a focus on how these technologies can be utilized to solve business problems. At the end of Phase I, we will develop a large collection of technology-based business case studies.

**Phase II***Setting-up the Business Technology Center (BTC)*

In Phase II, we will study the case studies and investigate possible solutions to these problems. We will develop a collection of computer applications that will provide useful tools for students to use to solve these problems. Finally, we will purchase the software and hardware required, and set up the BTC. Before launching the BTC, we will provide training in business technology and the case studies to the faculty members of the departments involved.

**Phase III***Running the Business Technology Center (BTC)*

In Phase III, the BTC will launch its services to the students of Caritas Francis Hsu College. We will provide project studies and related training to the students from the Department of Business Administration and Department of Computer Science. The center will also provide corresponding supervision of the student projects and help them to develop a technology-based solution to the case studies. A series of seminars and workshops will be conducted to introduce up-to-date business technology.

**Phase IV***Information Dissemination*

In Phase IV, we will conduct performance evaluation to measure the effectiveness of this project. The case studies and some sample solutions developed by the students will be published online and released to the public. Some information seminars and workshops will be held to promote education in business technology.

**Phase V***Post-project Phase*

Upon completion of the project, we will transfer the operation of the BTC to the Information Technology Services Center of Caritas Francis Hsu College. The BTC will also provide services to the students at Caritas Bianchi College of Careers. Concurrently, we will share our experience and products with other institutes and help them to set up similar BTCs.

<b>E. Implementation Schedule</b> <i>(Please extend this table if necessary.)</i>		
Estimated start date of project:		<u>1 January 2011</u>
<b>Action</b> <i>(please indicate key milestones)</i>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Cashflow Requirement</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recruit a research assistant</li> <li>● Collect information about business technology centres in different countries</li> </ul>	January – June 2011	242,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Visit companies to collect business problem cases</li> <li>● Interview IT professionals to survey IT trends</li> <li>● Develop the case studies</li> </ul>	July – December 2011	90,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recruit technical staff/programmer</li> <li>● Develop applications/tools for case studies</li> <li>● Implement trial technology-based solutions for the case studies</li> </ul>	January – June 2012	218,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Purchase equipment and software</li> <li>● Set up the Business Technology Center</li> <li>● Provide training to faculty members about business technology</li> </ul>	July – December 2012	538,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Begin operating the BTC</li> <li>● Provide workshop training to the students about business technology</li> <li>● Provide projects to two departments</li> <li>● Monitor the student projects</li> </ul>	January – June 2013	218,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Release project results</li> <li>● Release case studies</li> <li>● Evaluate the project</li> </ul>	July – December 2013	238,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Transfer operation of BTC to Information Technology Services Center of CFHC</li> <li>● Provide services to students at CBCC</li> <li>● Share experience and products with local institutes</li> </ul>	January 2014 Afterwards (post-project)	\$0

Estimated completion date of project: 31 December 2013

<b>F. Project Budget</b>				
<b>Projected Expenditure</b> <i>(Please provide detailed breakdown under each item)</i>	<b>Amount in HK\$</b>			
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
a. Manpower	300,000	756,000	756,000	1,812,000 <i>(Amount to be borne by two Colleges: 840,000)</i>
b. Equipment / Facilities	380,000	1,176,000	366,000	1,922,000 <i>(Amount to be borne by two Colleges: 1,450,000)</i>
c. Services	200,000			200,000 <i>(Amount to be borne by two Colleges: 200,000)</i>
d. General Expenses	20,000	20,000	60,000	100,000
e. Others (e.g. auditor's fee)	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000 <i>(Amount to be borne by two Colleges: 30,000)</i>
<b>Total Expenditure :</b>	910,000	1,962,000	1,192,000	<b>4,064,000</b> <i>(Amount to be borne by two Colleges: 2,520,000)</i>
<b>Projected Income</b>	<b>Amount in HK\$</b>			
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Total</b>
a. (e.g. fees received)				
b.				
c.				
<b>Total Income :</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Sources of Funding</b>				
a. Amount of grant sought under this application: <u>          \$1,544,000          </u>				
b. Other sources of funding <i>(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.):</i>				
(i) <u>Caritas Bianchi College of Careers will support \$798,000 whereas Caritas Francis Hsu College will support \$1,722,000 for the project.</u>				
(ii) _____				
(iii) _____				

### **G. Monitoring and Self-evaluation Mechanism**

The project will be monitored by a committee chaired by the Head of Department of Business Administration and Head of Department of Computer Science. The committee will also include academic staff and senior management staff from Caritas Francis Hsu College. In addition, we have the following measures for monitoring and self-evaluation:

- Questionnaire survey will be conducted with student participants.
- Interview survey will be conducted with faculty members.
- Progress report will be submitted semi-annually to internal Quality Assurance Committee.
- Final evaluation report will be submitted to the College for internal auditing.

### **H. Management Support and Key Personnel Involved**

The Business Technology Center will be supported by the management team as follows:

- Dr. Philips Wang (Head, Department of Business Administration and Head, Department of Computer Science), Project Leader
- Ms. Mandy Ho (Program Leader, Department of Business Administration)
- Dr. Anthony Wong (Program Leader, Department of Computer Science)
- Dr. Benjamin Fung (Senior Lecturer, Department of Business Administration)
- Dr. Steven Ng (Lecturer, Department of Business Administration)

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

N.A.

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

Caritas Francis Hsu College (CFHC) believes that it is essential to set up a business technology center to enhance education in related areas. CFHC and its sister college will cover more than half of the total cost for this project. The project will be highly sustainable. The operation of the Business Technology Center will be transferred to the Information Technology Services Centre of CFHC. The case studies developed in the project will be accessible through the website and library of CFHC.

**2 Preparatory work done** *(If any)*

Numerous meetings have been held between the Department of Business Administration and Department of Computer Science to discuss the potential collaboration between the two departments in this project. We have started to collect information about business technology centers in other countries. This information provides a useful reference for the development of a comparable Business Technology Center for Caritas Francis Hsu College.

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

Dr. Philips Wang has comprehensive experience in organizing similar projects. He led six projects while serving in City University of Hong Kong. For instance, his team developed a large scale e-learning platform. He also led a team to design pedagogy and curriculum for Outcomes Based Teaching and Learning. In addition, he received a most prestigious General Research Fund (GRF) from the Research Grants Council. Last but not least, he set up a physical Computer Programming Clinic and its virtual online extension to help university students study computer programming. His experience in supporting student learning has been presented in many top international conferences, and published as some book chapters. He was also invited to share his experience with secondary school teachers at the Teacher Update Course.