

Application Guidelines



The Innovative Entrepreneur Association (IEA) (the Organizer) will launch the 8th *Design Licensing And Business* (DLAB) Support Scheme (DLAB), under the sponsorship of Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency (CCIDA) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, to help young character designers and owners of other young intellectual properties (IPs) promote their IPs and grow their businesses with training, business matching, sales pitching and exhibition promotion in the Hong Kong International Licensing Show 2027.

DLAB is the acronym of “Design Licensing and Business”. We hope designers can fully utilize the Support Scheme to learn more about licensing their design IPs with a view to growing their businesses successfully. *DLAB* can also be read as “*D*esign “*Lab*”, a pun with association of meaning that when *Design* meets *Business*, collaboration will be fostered and positive chemistry will be inspired with unlimited potentials. In this “Lab”, designers can share their bright ideas freely and let their creative synergies collide here.

BENEFITS OF JOINING THE SUPPORT SCHEME

- Local character designers/ designers and companies with licensable design IPs are eligible.
- The 30 selected companies for the 8th DLAB (participants) could receive sponsorship to set up a 6 square meter booth in the Hong Kong International Licensing Show 2027 at a rental of HK\$4,000 for new participants or HK\$6,000 for past participants (original rental is HK\$31,521)¹
- **Free** participation in comprehensive training, and workshops on marketing, business operations and brand building, etc.²
- **Free** consultation by programme advisors who are industry experts.
- **Free** business matching and sales pitching sessions
- **Free** promotion of the participants’ designs in the channels under the DLAB (such as advertisements/ advertorials in newspapers, internet, social platforms and websites, etc.)
- Join the study mission to Greater Bay Area **at special price**.

¹ The booth will be allocated by drawing lots by the Organizer. Participants will be notified by separate emails on the arrangement of the ballot.

² Each participant has to pay a reservation fee of HK\$2,500 for the training. The reservation fee will be refunded to the participants if their attendance rate at these events reaches 75% and they have full participation in the assigned booth of the DLAB HK pavilion, or else the fee will be forfeited and used as project operational income.

ELIGIBILITY

	Tier 1	Tier 2
Eligibility	- Companies with a history of not more than <u>6 years</u>, as at the application deadline (i.e. established within period from 20 Nov 2020 – 20 Nov 2026) and with design or licensing as the major business - Registered in Hong Kong with a valid Hong Kong Business Registration Certificate - The submitted intellectual property (IP) should be launched in not more than 6 years, as at the application deadline - Have full ownership of the IP right of the creative content, such as original character designs, pattern designs, illustrations, etc.	- Companies with a history of <u>6 years to not more than 12 years</u>, as at the application deadline (i.e. established with period from 20 Nov 2014 – 19 Nov 2020) and with design or licensing as the major business - Registered in Hong Kong with a valid Hong Kong Business Registration Certificate - The submitted intellectual property (IP) should be launched in not more than 6 years, as at the application deadline - Have full ownership of the IP right of the creative content, such as original character designs, pattern designs, illustrations, etc.

APPLICATION METHOD AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- Application deadline is **5:30pm on 20 Nov 2026 (Friday)**.
- The application form must be typed. The completed and signed application forms must be submitted online in word / pdf format via the DLAB's official website (www.dlabhk.com).
- Applicants must upload the completed application forms onto the online submission system of the DLAB's official website (www.dlabhk.com).
- All attachments (i.e.: Presentation Powerpoint (.ppt), a copy of valid Business Registration Certificate, other related information) must be uploaded onto a secure cloud storage platform (such as Google drive, Dropbox, 騰訊微雲, 百度雲, etc...) with a URL inserted into the application form for the secretariat to download the files.
- The personal data in the application form and all attachments submitted via the online submission system will only be accessed by the Organizer (Innovative Entrepreneur Association, IEA) and the secretariat to process the application. If applicants wish to amend the stated personal data, please contact the Organizer or the secretariat at dlab.ieacms@gmail.com.
- Submitting the application means that the applicant allows the organizer to upload the information on the applying company and its designer onto the DLAB's official website.

VETTING CRITERIA

The Vetting Panel members will evaluate the applications in accordance with the criteria below:

- Originality and creativity of the submitted IP
- Business potential of the submitted IP
- Business track record and business development plan of the submitted IP
- Commitment of the applying company's professional team to developing the submitted IP
- Creativity to IP development in the past one year *(only applicable to participants of the previous DLAB which also applies for the 8th DLAB with the same IP submitted to the past DLAB)*

PROJECT PROCESS

Vetting Procedure

- Upon receipt, the Secretariat will check all applications for completeness.
- All eligible applications will be submitted to the Vetting Panel for consideration. All applicants must attend a **10-minute interview on 8 Dec 2026** to present their submission and answer questions from the Panel. Applicants should reserve this date.
- Interview schedules and additional details will be announced by the Organizer in late November 2026. The Vetting Panel is composed of representatives from the Organizer, industry professionals, renowned designers, licensing experts, and educational institutions.
- All applicants will receive an email regarding their result on or before 11 December 2026 (tentative), regardless of whether they are selected.

Vetting Mechanism

- Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements.
- The Vetting Committee will establish a passing score subject to their discussion and agreement. Applicants who achieve or exceed this threshold demonstrate that their IPs/designs possess market potential and are licensable, allowing them to advance to the next stage of the selection process.
- Priority is given to applicants who have participated less frequently in past DLAB editions. Conversely, applicants with higher past participation will receive lower selection priority.
- Each company is permitted to participate in DLAB a maximum of 3 times.

Internal Project Briefing and Kick-off Ceremony: All selected companies must attend.

Online Training: All selected companies must attend 6 online training designed to enhance their knowledge of social media, marketing techniques, licensing-related information, and other relevant topics.

Hong Kong International Licensing Show 2027: All selected companies must fully participate in the "DLAB Hong Kong Pavilion" at the Hong Kong International Licensing Show held from 27 – 29 Apr 2027. Participants are required to set up a booth and arrange for at least one company representative to be present at the booth each day to pitch licensable projects to buyers.

Greater Bay Area Study Mission: The organizer will host a 2-day, 1-night Greater Bay Area exchange tour in late January 2027 to visit licensing-related enterprises. The tour aims to help local IP owners and character designers understand the emerging market potential in the region, while building connections between Hong Kong IP owners/character designers and potential partners and buyers in the Greater Bay Area.

COPYRIGHT AND LIABILITIES

- **Provision of Promotional Materials:** Selected companies are obligated to provide relevant information and materials as requested by the organizer for promoting the support program, including but not limited to company logos, company profiles, designer profiles, overviews of licensable projects, and promotional posters.
- **Mandatory Event Attendance:** Selected companies are responsible for attending all events held by the organizer, including but not limited to the Kick-off ceremony, online training, and exhibiting at the "DLAB Hong Kong Pavilion" during the "Hong Kong International Licensing Show 2027".
- **Promotional Cooperation:** Selected companies are responsible for cooperating with the organizer's promotional activities related to the support program, including but not limited to participating in video shoots and interviews to assist with publicity efforts.
- **Copyright Infringement & Liability:** Selected companies must not engage in copyright infringement or any illegal activities. If the submitted licensable project or any of its related elements involves infringement or unlawful acts, all legal liabilities shall be borne entirely by the respective selected companies. The organizer, sponsors, and supporting organizations of the support program assume no responsibility whatsoever.
- **Use of Project Data:** The organizer and the Cultural and Creative Industries Development Agency (CCIDA) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region reserve the right to use the licensable projects and background information submitted in the applications for promotional purposes related to this program or future related publicity.

All usage will be strictly non-commercial and limited to the records and promotion of this support program. Selected enterprises with any copyright concerns regarding submitted items must raise them in advance.

- Personal Data Protection:** Personal data collected on the application form will be used by the Innovative Entrepreneur Association (IEA) for application processing purposes. To request access to or correction of personal data, or for any enquiries, please contact Ms. Law at the Support Program Secretariat (Tel: 2363 6012 or Email: dlab.ieacms@gmail.com).

Key Dates

NOTE : The dates below are subject to change. Please refer to the website for the latest information.

Event	Date
Call for Applications	21 Sep 2026
Online Project Briefing	29 Oct & 12 Nov 2026
Deadline of Applications	20 Nov 2026
Announcement of Interview Details	25 - 27 Nov 2026
Interviews to Select Participants	8 Dec 2026
Announcement of Vetting Results	18 Dec 2026
Briefing to 30 Selected Participants	23 Dec 2026
Kick-Off Ceremony	Early Jan 2027
GBA study mission (2 days)	Mid-Jan 2027
Online Trainings	Feb – Mar 2027
Program Advisor Network Service to Participants	Feb – Apr 2027
Drawing of Ballots for Allocation of Booths at Hong Kong International Licensing Show 2027	Late Mar 2027

ENQUIRY

Secretariat of Design Licensing And Business (DLAB) Support Scheme

Contact: Ms. Yannie Law

Tel: 2363 6012

Email: dlab.ieacms@gmail.com