

**Quality Education Fund**  
**Application with Grant Sought Not Exceeding \$200,000**  
**Part B: Project Proposal**

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Project Number</b>
Testing a peer-delivered internet literacy intervention with Hong Kong secondary school students	2017/0441 (Revised)

**Basic Information**

**Name of School / Organisation / Individual**

**Beneficiaries**

- (a) Sector:  Kindergarten  Primary  Secondary  Special
- (b) Students:  
Total 200 students (170 Form 1-2 students; 30 Form 4 students) (class level/age)\*
- (c) Teachers: 4 (in number)
- (d) Parents: \_\_\_\_\_ (in number)
- (e) Participating Schools (excluding applicant school): **2 aided secondary schools**

**Proposal**

**(I) Project Needs**

- (a) Please state the aims of the project in clear and concise terms and elaborate on how the proposed project could impact on school development.

This project will evaluate the effectiveness of a peer-delivered internet literacy program for Hong Kong adolescents. It is posited that the intervention program will help student attain basic digital skills and empower them to pursue their dreams in this ever-changing world in a realistic manner. It is expected that this program will: a) encourage adolescents to become sensitive to the influences of the internet and b) help them to be able to critically appraise online advertising and online sexual messages.

- (i) What are the areas of the needs and priorities of the school?
- (b)
- Enhance learning and teaching to facilitate students' knowledge on subjects / learning areas / generic skills development
- Promote students' social and emotional development
- Enhance school management / leadership and teachers' professional development / wellness
- Others (please specify) **Internet literacy**

- (ii) Please give background information to justify the demonstrated needs as mentioned in (b)(i).

School development plan: \_\_\_\_\_

Survey findings: \_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ Literature review summary:

Media-literacy intervention programs have been successfully used with adolescents to promote healthier body self-perceptions (Field et al., 1999), increase awareness about television violence (Voojjs & van der Voort, 1993), and sexual objectification (Riechert et al., 2007). Recently, peer-delivered media literacy has been suggested as a potentially effective method for communication research. Peer serves as a powerful role model who can communicate in readily understandable ways (DiClemente, 1993). In particular, peer educators can re-channel peer pressure and direct younger peers to engage healthy and competently in the digital society (Layzer, Rosapep, & Barr, 2014). One strength of peer-delivered programs is that people perceive of peers as being less threatening and consider them as a more credible source of information (Caron et al., 2004).

The aim of this research is to implement a media literacy program that focuses on increasing student awareness of internet influences and developing critical thinking about advertising strategies and sexualized messages through a peer-delivery approach.

Assessments on students' performance: \_\_\_\_\_

- ✓ Relevant experiences:

The PI has recently conducted two longitudinal studies on the impact of media exposure on adolescent development. These findings have been published (Ma, 2017, 2018; Ma & Shek, 2013; Ma, Shek & Lai, 2016a, 2016b; Shek & Ma, 2012a, 2012b, 2016; Shek, Xie, & Ma, 2015). She has also been involved in evaluating two territory-wide positive youth development programs in Hong Kong (Ma & Shek 2014a, 2014b, 2017; Shek & Ma, 2012c, 2014; Shek, Ma, & Xie, 2017). She has supervised university students to provide service-learning projects in secondary schools (Ma, Shek, & Li, 2016, in press).

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

- (c) Please elaborate on the innovative ideas or new practices to enhance, adapt, complement and/or supplement the existing practices that will facilitate the development of the school to address the needs specific to its own context.

Most of the existing government-funded (Education Bureau) internet literacy programs are adult-taught (e.g., "Supporting Children on e-Learning", Hong Kong Education City Limited, 2018) and focused on promoting internet accessibility ("*i Learn at home: Internet Learning Support Program*", The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong, 2018). To date, only one peer-delivered internet literacy program has been implemented in Hong Kong ("*Health Use of Internet: A Better Internet Starts with You*", Hong Kong Family Welfare Society, 2018). However, its effectiveness is not clear.

The proposed study is the first study to evaluate the effectiveness of a peer-delivered internet literacy program in Hong Kong secondary school context. The program will be implemented as an after-school *Other Learning Experiences* (OLE) activity.

This proposed study asks two research questions:

**Research Question 1:**

Does a peer-delivered internet literacy program promote students' awareness of problematic internet use?

**Research Question 2:**

Does a peer-delivered internet literacy program promote students' critical appraisal of online advertising and sexual messages?

**(II) Project Feasibility**

(a) Please describe the design of the project, including:

(i) Approach/Design/Activity (Applicants are advised to provide details on project activities as well as learning and teaching arrangements.)

**Design**

A two-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design will be tested.

**Peer-delivered internet literacy program**

**Peer educators**

Peer educators from Form 4 will be recruited from participating schools. Sample selection will be based on teacher nomination and availability to attend a series of training workshops and the program itself. The total time taken for the whole training for each peer educator will be 10 hours (1 hour per session).

Peer educators will be trained by the PI and school staff. To ensure the competence of the peer educators, on-going supervision will be given by the PI and school staff. Upon the completion of the training workshop, all peer educators will complete a measure with 16 items to evaluate their role as a peer leader (Story et al., 2002).

**Program Content**

There are five lessons or units (60 minutes each) that build cumulatively upon one another.

**Unit 1**

This begins with a self-reflection exercise. Students are asked to reflect on their internet usage or pattern of use (e.g., how often they use the internet per day). Students will be invited to complete the pre-test questionnaire.

**Unit 2**

This unit focuses on developing students' awareness of data protection and information security issues (e.g., security risks). Some of the topics in the Senior Secondary Information and Communication Technology (ICT) curriculum, such as the internet and its applications, will be addressed.

**Unit 3**

This unit focuses on how student engage in various online activities. Students are asked to explore underlying online advertising strategies (e.g., smoking, drinking) and to discuss the privacy and security of personal data on social media platforms.

**Unit 4**

This unit focuses on the students' exposure to online sexual materials (e.g., body images, non-pornographic images). Students are asked to rate these images in terms of how appealing they are, how much they like them, and whether they think their peers would like them. This unit is aimed at improving students' critical thinking skills, especially related to sex and the media.

**Unit 5**

Finally, students will be asked to demonstrate what they have learned by creating their own online messages. This involves posting photos or videos on social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram). They will also be invited to complete a post-test questionnaire.

**Control group**

The procedure will be exactly the same as used with the intervention group except the content of the lessons will be focused on communication skills and team building.

**Participants**

Using a power of 80% and significance level of 5%, the estimated sample size is  $N = 76$  for each of the two groups (i.e., 152 students in total for both the control and treatment groups). The PI and school staff will randomly assign participants to either control or treatment groups. Trained peer educators (Form 4 students) will teach the program to their peers (Form 1 and 2 students).

Two schools have agreed to participate the program. Their information is as below:

- **School A:** Total 85 students (Form 1 and 2: 70 students; Form 4: 15 students)
- **School B:** Total 115 students (Form 1 and 2: 100 students; Form 4: 15 students)

**Procedure**

Members of the research team (PI and school teachers) will join the intervention as observers. The role of the PI and school teachers is to provide a responsible and positive learning atmosphere and to ensure all units are being taught in accordance with the plan. Members of the research team (Research Assistant/Teaching Assistant) will be trained to measure the quality of program implementation by using the Process Evaluation Guide (Oakley et al., 2006). Prior consent of the parents and students for participation will be sought. Approval will be obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). All units will be video-recorded for dissemination and replication of the program.

A structured debriefing session will be conducted immediately at the end of each workshop. PI and school teachers will help peer educators and lower form students (Form 1/2) reflect on what they have learned from the activities.

Specifically, peer educators will be asked to evaluate their own performance and success in delivering the teaching materials. Lower form students (Form 1/2) will be asked to discuss how they would apply their internet literacy skills and knowledge in the future. Key messages will be conveyed to them.

(ii) Key Implementation Details

**Project period:** (January/2019) to (September/2019)

Month / Year	Content / Activity / Event	Target Beneficiary/Participants
January-March/2019	Training the peer educators	Secondary school students
April-June/2019	Program implementation	Secondary school students
July-September/2019	Evaluation	Secondary school students

(b) Please explain the extent of teachers' and/or principal's involvement and their roles in the project.

(i) Number of teachers involved and degree of input (time, types, etc.):

**2-3 teachers per school (panel/guidance teachers)**

(ii) Roles of teachers in the project:

Leader

Co-ordinator

Developer

Service recipient

Others (please specify) Co-researcher: The PI will work with the school teachers to design the program content and activities most appropriate for the student. Teacher involvement plan: Teachers will assist peer educators to implement the teaching materials and invite lower form students to complete the survey. Computer Science (Information and Technology) teachers will train and provide on-site support for peer educators.

(c) Please provide the budget of the project and justify the major items involved.

**Grant Sought: HK\$ 198,300**

Budget Item	Expenditure Detail (Including the breakdown for the budget items)		Justifications
	Item	Amount (\$)	
Staff (\$184,275)	One full-time research assistant/associate	\$184,275	Originally, the Principal Investigator is looking to hire a research assistant who will perform the following duties: a) assist with the preparation of documents and teaching materials, b) participate in training the peer educators, and c) conduct evaluation according to the research design.

		<p>After discussing with the school staff, a research associate, who has experienced in conducting focus group interviews with adolescents (key informants) and collaborating with stakeholders to refine study protocols (e.g., designing and piloting teaching materials), would be more qualified for implementing the research project.</p> <p>The rationale for hiring a research associate is to ensure teaching materials that fit into the peer educators' and lower form students' digital lives. The research associate will conduct the semi-structured focus group interviews with the peer educators/lower form students. During the interviews, questions related to adolescents' digital lives will be asked (e.g., <i>Which website(s) do you usually visit every day? What is your favorite online game?</i>). After soliciting the views and thoughts from the target audiences (i.e., peer educators/lower form students), the research associate will analyze the data and assist the principal investigator and school staff to design an individualized internet literacy-related program.</p> <p>At least one face-to-face interview for each school will be conducted.</p> <p>In case of no candidate is eligible to meet the minimum job requirements of the post of research associate (see below for details), the principal investigator will hire a research assistant.</p> <p>All staff would be recruited based on an open, fair and competitive procedure.</p>
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		<p><b><u>Research Assistant</u></b></p> <p>\$19,500 X 9 months x 1.05 MPF = \$184,275</p> <p>A research assistant will be hired on a nine-month appointment.</p> <p>Duties: He/She will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Assist with the preparation of teaching materials</li> <li>b) Collect and analyze data</li> <li>c) Provide assistance in delivering teaching materials</li> <li>d) Prepare research reports/presentations</li> </ul> <p>Qualifications: He or she should demonstrate the following qualities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) possess a Bachelor's degree in education/social science/psychology/social work or related subjects;</li> <li>b) excellent communication skills with colleagues and participants;</li> <li>c) good command of both spoken and written Chinese and English</li> <li>d) prior experience in school setting is preferred</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Research Associate</u></b></p> <p>\$21,900 X 8 months x 1.05 MPF = \$183,960</p> <p>A research associate will be hired on an eight-month appointment.</p> <p>Duties: He/She will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Conduct literature reviews</li> <li>b) Design and develop research materials/training manuals</li> <li>c) Interview with students</li> <li>d) Collect and analyze data</li> </ul>
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			<p>e) Provide assistance in delivering teaching materials</p> <p>f) Prepare research reports/presentations</p> <p>He or she should demonstrate the following qualities: a) possess a Master's degree in education/social science/psychology/social work or related subjects with at least one year of work experience in childhood and adolescent research.; b) excellent communication skills with colleagues and participants; and c) good command of both spoken and written Chinese and English; and d) prior working experience in qualitative and quantitative research is preferred.</p>
General expenses (\$14,025)	Printing	\$5,020	<p>Questionnaires (\$3 each copy X 170 participants X 2 tests) = \$1020.</p> <p>Participants (<math>N = 170</math>) will be asked to complete questionnaires before and after the program (\$3 each copy).</p> <p>Teaching materials = \$4,000 (\$4 each copy X 200 participants and peer educators X 5 units).</p> <p>Participants (including peer educators, <math>N = 200</math>) will receive teaching materials for each unit (\$4 each copy).</p>
	Activity expenses	\$2,005	<p>The total cost = \$2,005.</p> <p>Activity expenses, such as colored pencils, colored papers, postage, prizes for lower form students, certificates for peer educators (approximately 40%, i.e., around \$802), purchase of stationary (approximately 20%, i.e., around \$401), expenses for teaching materials, such as leaflet, references resources, education kit (approximately 40%, i.e., around \$802).</p>

	Transportation allowance	\$2,000	The total cost = \$2,000 (\$50 each visit X 20 times X 2 staff).  Every school will be visited 20 times at an estimated average cost of \$50 for each visit. A total of two schools will participate in the proposed study. Two staff will conduct the study.
	Audit fee	\$5,000	Audit
<b>Total Grant Sought (\$):</b>		<b>\$198,300</b>	

Assets Usage Plan...N/A

**(III) Expected Project Outcomes**

(i) Please describe how to evaluate the effectiveness of the project.

Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

Focused group interviews: \_\_\_\_\_

✓ Pre-and post-activity surveys: Students will be asked to complete the same questionnaire (covering the below measures) before (Unit 1) and after (Unit 5) joining the program.

**Outcome measures**

**Awareness of the influences of the internet**

Using the work of Pinkleton et al. (2008), students will be assessed on how aware they are of the internet's influences on their perception of, and attitudes towards online advertising and sexual images. Three items will be tested on a 7-point scale ranging from 0 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*).

**Critical appraisal of online messages**

Based on Austin's work (Austin & Johnson, 1997a, 1997b; Austin & Kanus, 2000; Austin et al., 2005), students will be assessed on their critical appraisal of online advertising and sexual images with six items on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*).

**Internet addiction Scale**

The Revised Chen Internet Addiction Scale (CIAS-R, Chen, Weng, Su, Wu, & Yang, 2003) will be used to assess students' symptoms of internet addiction. Internet addiction with 26 items on a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 "Does not match my experience at all" to 4 "Definitely matches my experience".

Performance change of students in assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

Others (please specify) Changes in the expected learning outcomes (i.e., awareness of the influences of the internet, critical appraisal of online messages, and internet addiction symptoms) will be assessed through linear mixed effect model.

The effectiveness of the program will be assessed based on a survey from peer educators and lower form students (Form 1/2) if a) 70% of peer educators report that the program raises their awareness of internet literacy and b) 70% of lower form students (Form 1/2) report that the program raises their awareness of internet literacy.

- (ii) Please state the project deliverables or outcomes.
- Learning and teaching materials
  - Resource package
  - DVD
  - ✓ Others (please specify) Project report of prevalence of different online activities and awareness of the influences of the internet; Teaching materials (training peer educators and lower form students): PowerPoint slides, worksheets; questionnaires for assessing participants' awareness of internet literacy.

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### Report Submission Schedule

My school commit(s) to submit proper reports in strict accordance with the following schedule:

Project Management		Financial Management	
Type of Report and covering period	Report due date	Type of Report and covering period	Report due date
Final Report 1/1/2019 – 30/9/2019	31/12/2020	Final Financial Report 1/1/2019–30/9/2019	31/12/2020

# Unit 1-Introduction

## Unit Overview

Internet has become an essential part of our lives. The purpose of this unit is to help students understand how internet addiction affects their daily life through participation of different interactive and reflective learning activities.

## Objectives

1. To introduce the basic concepts of internet addiction.
2. To help students understand the consequences of internet addiction.
3. To enhance students' awareness of internet addiction.

## Details

Time: 60 minutes

Class size: 30 Students (S.1/S.2)

Peer educators: 4-5 (S. 3/S. 4)

Materials: Computer, projector, worksheet

## Procedure

Activity	Procedures	Materials
1. Warm-up activities (10 minutes)	<b>Brainstorm the following questions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How often they use the internet each day;</li> <li>• What types of online activities do they usually engage in</li> <li>• How they rely on the Internet?</li> <li>• How they have embedded the Internet in their daily lives</li> <li>• How the Internet penetrates in different aspects of our lives</li> </ul>	N.A.
2. Class Discussion (20 minutes)	<b>Overview of internet addiction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Prevalence (internet addiction/gaming/problematic use of social media)</b></li> <li>• <b>Consequences of prolonged screen time</b></li> </ul> <p>Purpose: Students learn the basic concept of internet addiction</p>	Lecture PPT

Activity	Procedures	Materials
<b>3. Class Activity</b> (20 minutes)	<p><b>“Are you addicted to the Internet?”</b></p> <p><i>Purpose: To help students understand the signs and symptoms of internet addiction.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Divide the class into three/four groups.</li> <li>(ii) Distribute Worksheet (Unit 1.1) to all students.</li> <li>(iii) Ask students to complete it (assessed their internet addiction symptoms).</li> <li>(iv) Invite students to share their results and their signs of internet addiction.</li> </ul>	Worksheet (Unit 1.1)
<b>4. Debriefing</b> (10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Debrief after the exercise and highlight the importance of self-understanding.</li> <li>(ii) Students will get a chance to consolidate their learning and understanding on internet literacy (i.e., internet addiction in this unit).</li> <li>(iii) Invite 3 - 4 students to share in class.</li> </ul>	N.A.