

2024/25 The Caring Company Scheme — FAQs

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A. FAQs about Caring Company Scheme Application

Q1 When will applications be accepted?

Applications for the 2024/25 cycle will be accepted from 20 March to 8 October 2025.

Q2 How to apply?

Please submit your application via the the online system for the Caring Company Scheme. The brand-new online system will officially launch on 20 March 2025.

Q3 Will application by paper form be accepted?

Starting this year, all applications must be submitted via the online system. Paper applications will not be accepted.

Q4 What kind of information is required for the application?

Each application consists of 6 parts, which include "Company / Organisation Information", "Contact Person Details", "Form A: Community Partnership", "Form B: Sustainability", "Caring Ambassador" and "Application Fee." Applicants must complete all the above by the application deadline for their submission to be considered successful. Please note that "Form B: Sustainability" and the payment function will be available in June 2025. For more details, please refer to the application schedule (Q5).

Q5 Could you provide the application schedule?

Application schedule for the 2024/25 cycle is as follows:

Date	Procedure
20 March 2025	Application for the 2024/25 cycle starts. Launch of new online system – Applicants* and nominators can access the system to learn about the new features and filling out the following sections in advance: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Company / Organisation Information● Contact Person Details● Form A: Community Partnership (can be filled out by the nominator or the applicant*)● Caring Ambassador (only for the applicants*)
Early April 2025	Online information session – Introduce operations of new system and overall application procedures
20 and 21 May 2025	Details of "Form B: Sustainability" will be announced at the S+ Summit cum Expo 2025.
May / June 2025	Online information session – Introduce the content of Form B in detail

June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "Form B: Sustainability" opens for completion ● Payment function opens
8 October 2025, 6pm	Application deadline for the 2024/25 cycle
December 2025	Result announcement

**"Applicant" refers to companies applying for the Caring Company Logo and organisations applying for the Caring Organisation Logo.*

- Q6 What is the validating scope for "Form A: Community Partnership"?
Applicants must meet 2 or more criteria from the 5 criteria in Form A to fulfill the requirements for that section. Please [click here](#) for the preview of Form A.
- Q7 What is the validating scope for "Form B: Sustainability"?
Form B records the applicant's overall sustainability efforts (including caring practices for employees, environment and etc.). The relevant form will be available in June 2025.
- Q8 What is the activity calculation period?
The activity calculation period is the entire year of 2024 (i.e., from 1 January to 31 December 2024).
- Q9 Does successful application submission guarantee receiving the Caring Company / Caring Organisation logo?
No. Upon validation by HKCSS, the official result will be announced in December 2025.

B. FAQs about Eligibility

- Q10 What kinds of companies / organisation are eligible to apply?
The Caring Company Logo and Caring Organisation Logo encourage and promote the sustainable dedication of business and organisations to corporate social responsibility and a caring culture. The eligibility criteria are as follows:
- Caring Company Logo: Companies applying for the Caring Company Logo must be registered with Business Registration and the business must be in operation in Hong Kong for at least 1 year. If a company operates as a group, the holding company and its subsidiaries must submit applications separately.
 - Caring Organisation Logo: Organisations applying for the Caring Organisation Logo must be established in Hong Kong for at least 1 year. Government departments, statutory bodies, chambers of commerce, professional bodies, international service clubs, alumni associations, and philanthropic foundations, hospitals, universities and tertiary educational institutions under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Department, are eligible for application. Organisations, societies and groups of any other nature will not be considered at this moment.
- Q11 What are the requirements to be a nominator?
Eligible nominators should be charitable organisations exempt from tax under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (according to the effective date of Inland Revenue Department, registered in Hong Kong for at least 1 year). They can be HKCSS Agency Members or other charitable organisations, which include social welfare, educational, medical, environmental, cultural, recreational and sports, and international and cross-

border organisations.

- HKCSS Agency Members (for the list of members, please visit <https://ngo.hkcss.org.hk/search>)
- Other charitable organisations (for the list of tax-exempt charitable organisations, please visit https://www.ird.gov.hk/eng/tax/ach_index.htm)

Remarks:

1. Nominators are not eligible to apply for the Caring Company or Caring Organisation logo in the same year under any circumstances
2. Nominations from political groups are not accepted
3. Nominations from religious organisations are accepted but only non-religious community service activities will be considered

Q12 Which form do the nominators need to complete?

"Form A: Community Partnership".

The applicant and the nominator must designate one party to fill out Form A (the Filling Party). Only the Filling Party can fill in or modify the content of Form A through the online system, while their partners can only review / provide feedback / confirm the form contents. Form A consists of 5 criteria. **When 2 or more criteria are mutually confirmed by the applicant and the nominator**, the application qualifies for this section.

If only 1 criterion can be met, please remind the applicant to look for an additional nominator for other criteria in "Form A: Community Partnership " in order to fulfill the requirements.

Q13 Which form(s) do the applicants need to complete?

Applicants must submit "Form A: Community Partnership" and "Form B: Sustainability". Form A can be filled out by either the applicant or nominator; Form B must be filled out by the applicant with relevant supporting documents uploaded.

- Validating scope for "Form A: Community Partnership":
 - Criteria 1: Volunteering
 - Criteria 2: Giving
 - Criteria 3: Mentoring
 - Criteria 4: Employing the vulnerable
 - Criteria 5: Procurement of products or services

When 2 or more criteria are mutually confirmed by the applicant and the nominator, the application qualifies for this section. If there are multiple nominators, the criteria from each Form A will be combined for calculation and must fulfill 2 or more criteria to qualify the applications.

- Form B: Sustainability: This part records the applicant's overall sustainability efforts (including caring practices for employees, environment and etc.). The relevant form will be available in June 2025.

Q14 Must be nominated by a charitable organisation?

An applicant must invite at least one community partner to be its nominator. Self-nominations will NOT be accepted (EXCEPT in the case of government departments).

Q15 Can nominators simultaneously apply for Caring Company / Caring Organisation logo?
Nominators are not eligible to apply for Caring Company / Organisation logo in the same time in the same year under any circumstances.

Q16 Can more than one "Form A: Community Partnership" be submitted?

Yes, there is no limit on the number of submissions for Form A. Applicants can invite all of their community partners they have collaborated with during the validity period to become their nominators or accept their nomination invitations. However, each Form A only records the collaboration project(s) between one applicant and one nominator. All criteria filled in Form A will be aggregated.

Q17 Why / Under what circumstances does an applicant need to submit more than one "Form A: Community Partnership"?

"Form A: Community Partnership" must meet two or more criteria to be eligible for application. If the applicant's partnership with a specific nominator only meets one of the criteria in Form A, the applicant must submit additional Form A with other nominator(s) to ensure that all Form A submissions, when combined, meet two or more criteria.

Examples of Qualified Applications

Example I: The applicant and nominator Y confirmed 2 criteria from Form A #1. (e.g. Criteria 1 and 5)

Example II: The applicant confirmed 2 criteria with nominator X (Criteria 1 from Form A #1) and Y (Criteria 5 from Form A #2) respectively.

Q18 What is Caring Ambassador?

The nomination for Caring Ambassador is to encourage employees who actively support and participate in community activities organised by their company or organisation. A maximum of 3 staff members can be nominated by each applicant. If the applicant successfully receives the Caring Company / Caring Organisation Logo in the 2024/25 cycle, the recommended staff member(s) will automatically become "Caring Ambassador" and receive a digital certificate.

At present, the Scheme does not set any standards for the role and duties of Caring Ambassadors, but still encourage them to actively promote and participate in community engagement within the company / organisation.

Q19 How do government departments apply?

Government departments can either invite charitable organisations to be nominators or apply via self-nomination for the Caring Organisation Logo.

- Nominated by a nominator: Follows the same submission requirements as other applicants (refer to Q13 for more details).
- Self-nomination: Please select "Self-nomination" in the "Form A: Community Partnership" section, then follow the guidelines to fill out Form A, and complete "Form B: Sustainability."

C. FAQs about Application Fee

Q20 Is there an application fee?

Yes. The one-time application fee is HK\$600, to be paid by the companies / organisations applying for the logo. The calculation of the application fee will not be affected by the number of nominators. The fee is non-refundable, and cannot be claimed as a tax deduction.

Q21 Who pays the application fee?

Starting this year, the Scheme will only accept payment of application fees made by applicants; nominators are not required to pay any fees for the application.

Q22 What kind(s) of payment method will be provided?

Applicants can complete payment via the system using credit card. No other payment method will be accepted.

Q23 Will a receipt be issued after paying the fee?

After successful payment of the application fee, an electronic receipt will be sent to relevant contact person via email within 3 months.

Q24 When should the payment be made?

The payment function will be available from June 2025. Applicants must complete the payment process during June to 8 October 2025, 6pm (i.e., before the application deadline).

Q25 Can the application fee be tax-deductible?

The application fee cannot be claimed as a tax deduction.

D. FAQs about Online System

Q26 When can the new online system be used?

The new online system is expected to be launched in 20 March 2025 to handle applications for the 2024/25 cycle. An information session will be held to provide detailed instructions on the new system's operation and applications. The new system will be available for all participating companies, organisations and government departments to use.

Q27 Do companies / organisations that previously participated in the Scheme need to re-register their accounts?

No. Non-first-time applicants and nominators will receive an email on 20 March with a link to set up their account password for the new online application system. At that time, each contact person simply needs to follow the instructions to activate their online accounts.

Q28 How do first-time participants register for an account?

First-time applicants must register for an account through the online system. The HKCSS will send a notification of the review result to the applicant within 5 working days. If the

registration is approved, the applicant will receive an email to activate their account.

Q29 How to apply for the Caring Company Scheme via the online system?

Applicants and nominators must login to the system to begin the following application procedures:

Target	Procedure
Applicants & Nominators	1. Fill out and confirm Company / Organisation Information
Applicants & Nominators	2. Fill out and confirm Contact Person Details (up to 6 contacts) <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Each contact person must register their account with unique email address and password- All contact persons can login to the system to fill out, modify and submit application forms
Applicants & Nominators	3. Fill out, confirm and submit "Form A: Community Partnership" <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Form A can be filled out by either the applicant or nominator- Their partner confirms if the collaboration content is correct and submits this form
Applicants	4. Fill out and submit "Form B: Sustainability" (details to be announced at the S+ Summit cum Expo 2025 on 20 and 21 May 2025)
Applicants	5. Fill out and submit information for Caring Ambassadors
Applicants	6. Pay the application fee (payment function will be available in June 2025)

Please note that all the mentioned 6 parts can be completed in no particular. However, applicant must complete all the above by the application deadline for their submission to be considered successful.

Q30 Will there be a tutorial on using the online system?

An online introduction session for the new system will be held in April 2025, providing a more detailed overview and demonstration of the new system's operations. A user manual will also be available for applicants and nominators. Please stay tuned for our further updates.

E. FAQs about Result Announcement and Use of Logo

Q31 When will the application results be announced?

The application results are scheduled to be announced in December 2025. Applicants can login to the online application system to view the results at that time, and relevant contacts provided by the applicants will also receive notification emails regarding the results.

Q32 How can the applicants download the logo and digital certificate?

After the result announcement, applicants can download the logo and digital certificates for that year via the online system (including those for the applicants and Caring Ambassadors).

Q33 Will physical certificates be provided?

To reduce carbon emissions and paper usage, the Scheme has replaced the printed certificates with digital certificates. However, companies / Organisations can still login to the online system to purchase printed certificates if needed. The printing fee amount will be announced in August 2025.

Q34 What kind of logo will the applicant receive if the application is successful?

If the application is successful, the applicant will receive the corresponding logo based on the number of consecutive years for the Scheme:



The Caring Company Logo and Caring Organisation Logo encourage and promote the sustainable dedication of business and organisations to corporate social responsibility and a caring culture.



Caring Company or Caring Organisation received logo for 5 consecutive years or above



Caring Company or Caring Organisation received logo for 10 consecutive years or above



Caring Company or Caring Organisation received logo for 15 consecutive years or above



Caring Company or Caring Organisation received logo for 20 consecutive years or above

Q35 How is the number of consecutive years calculated?

It is calculated based on the year(s) that a company / an organisation has successfully applied for the Scheme (i.e., received the Caring Company or Caring Organisation Logo). If the application is unsuccessful or if the applicant does not participate in the Scheme in any given year, the count of consecutive years will restart.

Q36 How long is the validity period for the Logo?

All logos are valid for one year, and the validity period for the 2024/25 logo will be announced together with the application result.

Q37 Will the logo be automatically renewed after it expires?

No. There is no auto-renewals or exemption arrangements. Companies / Organisations must submit applications each year.

Q38 As the application period for 2024/25 cycle is postponed, can the existing logo and certificates continue to be used?

The validity period of the existing logo and certificates (2023/24) was originally set from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025. Due to the postponement of 2024/25 application, the validity period for the existing logos and certificates has been automatically extended

until the announcement date of the next round of application results in December 2025. No separate application is required to extend the validity period.

Q39 Is the Caring Company / Caring Organisation Logo status transferable among subsidiaries under the same holding company?

The Caring Company Logo status and its subparts, including the company name, consecutive years and the Logo, are not transferable. If a company operates as a group, the holding company and its subsidiaries must submit applications separately.

Q40 If the company name is changed, what should I do?

Please submit the copy of the Certificate of Change of Name issued by Company Registry via the new online system when it opens. We will further verify and consider whether the applicant can keep their record of consecutive years.

Q41 How should the logo be used?

Please refer to the logo guidelines: <https://bit.ly/3D9UkzE>

Q42 Do I need approval before using the Logo?

Samples of advertisements of products and services bearing the Logo must be sent to the HKCSS via email caringcompany@hkcss.org.hk for prior approval and record purpose. Please allow a minimum of 5 working days for the approval process. Advertising and promotion materials bearing the Logo may only be publicly displayed after the approval of HKCSS.

F. FAQs about Considerations on Conferring Awards, Lodging Complaints and Delisting

Q43 Any eligible companies / organisations can apply for the Logo?

HKCSS shall not associate with companies / organisations whose businesses or practices are considered contradictory to the values and missions of the Council. Admission to the Caring Company Scheme is at the Council's sole discretion.

Companies and organisations that have received the Caring Company / Caring Organisation Logo must agree to the value, mission and vision of the Caring Company Scheme and comply with the validation criteria.

Q44 How to ensure the ethics and integrity of the applicants?

Companies and organisations have made self-declarations on business ethics in their applications. In the event of suspicion of infringing business ethics, HKCSS reserves the right to suspend the company / organisation from using the Logo until the Caring Company Scheme is satisfied that clarification from the concerned company / organisation aligns with the declaration.

Q45 Under what circumstances will a company / organisation be delisted?

HKCSS reserves the right to withhold the applications or delist the Caring Company / Caring Organisation logo status of companies / organisations in the interest of the integrity of the Caring Company Scheme.

Q46 If companies / organisations who received the Logo are involved in legal proceedings, how will the HKCSS handle it?

In the event of any conviction involving a criminal offence within or outside Hong Kong

jurisdiction, any verdict of ethical conviction brought by a statutory body, or any judgment of infringement of business ethics and / or lack of credibility by the Caring Company Scheme, HKCSS reserves the right of issuing warnings to the concerned company or organisation and revoke its right to use the Logo.

Q47 Is it possible to lodge a complaint against a specific company / organisation with the Scheme?
HKCSS will not address complaints regarding contracts or commercial disputes. However, if a complaint is related to business ethics, integrity, or violations of any adjudication criteria of the Caring Company Scheme, the concerned company / organisation will be asked to provide further information.