



For Immediate Release

UPDATED

**Project WeCan Reaching New Heights with a Total Funding of
HK\$500 Million to Help All Secondary Schools Lacking Resources
over the Next Five Years**

Hong Kong, October 24, 2013 — Spearheaded by The Wharf (Holdings) Limited, the 360° school improvement programme Project *WeCan* bears fruit since its launch in 2011. The Group today announces it will expand its flagship programme by offering a total funding of over HK\$500 million (existing funding of HK\$150 million plus an additional funding of over HK\$370 million) over the next five years to help about 150 Hong Kong secondary schools that are most resources-thirst. Approved funding can be dedicated for improvement of software and hardware of the schools.

“There has been much learning for us over the past two years. Our nearly 900 volunteers across the Group work closely with their partner schools and are most impressed by the passion and care for students demonstrated by the teaching teams across the board,” said Peter Woo, the Chairman, The Wharf (Holdings) Limited.

“We don’t want those deserving students to feel that nobody cares and that they have left behind. We have been working hard in hopes of having more schools to benefit from this meaningful programme and constantly adjusting and improving as we progress. In just the past September, three more schools joined the programme making the total number of Project *WeCan* ‘seeding’ schools to increase from 11 to 14. However, this is not good enough. We

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want more schools to benefit at a faster pace. As such we are launching ‘Project *WeCan 2*’ which will allow us to accelerate and extend our help to more schools in a shorter period of time.” Woo continued.

It has been the Group’s mission and priority to promote this open platform to the business sector and enlist them to join force to help more schools. Besides the business sector which offers huge exposure to students at an early stage, the Group also eyes on members of the public particularly the professionals and the ‘able’ retirees to make the programme a truly “Business-in-Community” programme. “Project *WeCan* is an open platform that welcomes companies and individuals of different sectors to offer their help to the needy schools and students.” Woo added.

Dr Chiu Chi-shing, Executive Director of Quality School Improvement Project, Hong Kong Institute of Educational Research, The Chinese University of Hong Kong said, “Since the launch of Project *WeCan* two years ago, we have witnessed substantial improvement of students as well as academic performance in most subjects of the 11 participating schools. QSIP provided support for hundreds of primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong over the past decade, to that end, the scope of schools benefit from the Project *WeCan* model has been quite impressive.”

Wharf has appointed Mr Henry Poon Chun-kau to oversee Project *WeCan 2*. Mr Poon is a veteran in education with over 40 years of experience in the field and has been the principal of various secondary schools in Hong Kong. Before retirement, he was Founding Principal of HKFYG (Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups) Lee Shau Kee College and Principal of St Paul’s Co-educational College. Mr Poon will work closely with Project *WeCan*’s supporting companies as well as Quality School Improvement Project, Hong Kong Institute of Educational Research, The Chinese University of Hong Kong to inject new energy into the Project for helping the most deserving schools in Hong Kong.

Eligible secondary schools can submit their proposals starting December this year. The proposals are required to fulfill four selection criteria including (1) improve learning conditions; (2) help develop inspiring and good teachers; (3) enhance students' common sense and communications skills; (4) foster innovation and creativity. (Please refer to fact sheet for details). Target beneficiaries of the proposal can be students, teachers or school management team while project nature can be in relation to the improvement of school's software or hardware. Successful applicants will not only receive financial support but they will also be invited to join Project *WeCan*'s joint school activities, wherever appropriate, in hopes of fostering best practice sharing among the secondary schools. Potential schools will also have the opportunity to be selected to join Project *WeCan*'s seed programme, receiving more well-rounded support.

On an annual basis, Wharf will dedicate as much as HK\$100 million to the entire Project *WeCan* including its current seed programme and Project *WeCan* 2.

About Project *WeCan*

Launched in 2011, Project *WeCan* is a pioneer 360° school improvement programme aiming at uplifting secondary school students' total performance covering a wide spectrum ranging from teaching capability, learning motivation, extra-curriculum development, conduct and behaviour, life-goal planning, learning environment, care and counseling, and parent engagement. To date, over 25,000 student counts have joined a wide variety of Project *WeCan* activities and programmes.



(From left to right) Douglas Woo, Managing Director of Wheelock and Company Limited; Dr Pong Yiu Yuen, Principal of Tin Ka Ping Secondary School; Dr Chi Sing Chiu, Executive Director of Quality School Improvement Project, Hong Kong Institute of Educational Research, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Peter Woo, Chairman of Wheelock and Company Limited and The Wharf (Holdings) Limited; Chun Pong Lin, Principal of Ng Yuk Secondary School; Kit Sim Lau, Principal of Cotton Spinners Association Secondary School and Dr Wing Hong Tsang, Principal of Chiu Chow Association Secondary School



Peter Woo, Chairman of Wheelock & Company Limited and The Wharf (Holdings) Limited

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