



Practical Example :

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION HONG KONG, CHINA

The ICAC Ambassadors Programme

As part of its broad moral education programme, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, Hong Kong, China (ICAC) has developed the ICAC Ambassador Programme to engage young people in supporting their work on integrity and anti-corruption. This annual programme is implemented in partnership with universities. An open recruitment process is conducted to select young people interested in promoting integrity, anti-corruption and rule of law. Selected ICAC Ambassadors join a year-long engagement programme, which includes leadership training, mentoring and project design and management. The young people work in groups to curate youth-oriented messages on integrity and law-abidingness and then share with their peers, both on-campus and through online media. This may involve organizing carnivals, workshops, quizzes, online campaigns, and other youth-led events that are popular among the young people.

In order to sustain the passion of the Ambassadors in the anti-corruption cause, an internship scheme entitled “ICAC Voluntary Summer Helper Scheme” is specially run for them at the end of the year-long programme. Through the scheme, selected Ambassadors with strong commitment can work alongside with ICAC staff members to gain first-hand experience in the planning and implementation of corruption prevention and education activities. All Ambassadors can also continue demonstrating their support to ICAC’s anti-corruption work through the network entitled i-League, which connects all former and serving Ambassadors.



Background

Over the years, the ICAC has been organising regular integrity promotion and education programmes to engage young people of different development stages in the cause of anti-corruption. Examples of these activities include:

- “iTeen Leadership Programme” which recruits senior secondary school students (aged around 15-17) to assist their teachers in organising school-based activities on anti-corruption themes for disseminating integrity messages to their fellow schoolmates;
- “Youth Chapter Programme of the ICAC Club” which encourages working youth (aged 35 or below) to volunteer in different ICAC activities and maintain a network for sustained commitment in the graft against corruption; and
- “ICAC Ambassador Programme” which engages tertiary students (aged around 18-21) to work together as a team and take ownership in promoting anti-corruption and probity messages to their peers through creative means (to be further elaborated below).

How the young people contribute

- Annually, ICAC recruits about 100 Ambassadors. Since 2007, it has trained over 1700 university students.
- This signature youth engagement programme is regularly supported by 90% of Hong Kong’s local Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs) (i.e. around 20 out of 22), representing a high coverage of integrity messages being driven across the tertiary sector.
- The transmission of anti-corruption ideas through various kinds of face-to-face and online initiatives may reach exponentially more people through the Ambassadors’ projects, and also exchanges with families and friends.
- The programme creates new cadres – a number of former Ambassadors are recruited as Voluntary Summer Helpers which are highly sought-after internship opportunities at ICAC. By attaching to various units of ICAC, the Helpers could gain practical experience in the planning and execution of integrity promotion activities. The once-in-a-lifetime experience also helps sowing the seed of integrity in these young people who would grow as staunch supporters of ICAC in the long-run. Meanwhile, their involvement brings new ideas and creativity, especially in the area of public communications.
- Certain dedicated Ambassadors with strong sense of mission to fight graft even pursue a career in ICAC after graduation.
- The i-League reinforces exchange among different cohorts of ICAC Ambassadors and sustains their continued partnership with the ICAC to promote anti-corruption messages in their career and private lives.

The ICAC Ambassadors and the meaningful youth engagement themes

Diversity and inclusion:

- ICAC's recruitment of Ambassadors is an "open process" through tertiary educational establishments. Students from all backgrounds who are passionate about promoting messages on integrity are welcome to enroll in the programme.

Enabling environment:

- ICAC has staffed and budgeted for the project. To provide a fruitful and meaningful learning experience for the Ambassadors, highly intensive coaching and mentoring for these young people are provided by ICAC. For each TEI, one designated ICAC officer is assigned to take up the role as mentor who constantly communicates with, and guides, the Ambassadors throughout the year, promotes synergy among them and impresses upon them the significance of fortifying the society's integrity culture, which is essential for the city to thrive and prosper continuously.

Intergenerational collaboration:

- One of the most inspirational aspects of the programme for the Ambassadors is the mentoring. This gives the young people a direct opportunity to learn about careers in fighting corruption. Thanks to the mentoring component, the young people receive individualized attention and support, which can help to build their confidence and skills and prepare them for their future career and professional lives. It is worth noting that the staff members derive an equal measure of satisfaction from the experience.

Quality youth participation:

- The Ambassadors create their own projects from the outset. They have to design the project, and work together to implement it. It leads to a high degree of work satisfaction, and new knowledge in anti-corruption, public communications, team work, project management and leadership.

Youth empowerment:

- The Ambassadors receive training and continuous coaching to equip them with knowledge on anti-corruption and to build their capacity for fighting corruption in their professional lives.

Lessons Learned

ICAC measures the success of the Ambassadors Programme through feedback from the participants and participating universities, the tangible outputs of the Ambassadors' projects, and the popularity of the programme and the internship based on numbers of applications from year-to-year. By building partnerships with educational establishments over time, a sustained impact on the target audience has been created. While the programme is undoubtedly quite labor-intensive, and it is sometimes challenging to keep the focus of all the students with their heavily charged timetable and competing priorities, it is clear that the organization has a long-term commitment to continue involving young people in anti-corruption cause. This is in part driven by the personal dedication and passion of ICAC staff members who are inspired and find it meaningful to continue engaging with young people in this way.



ICAC Ambassadors curating fun and creative programmes to widely publicise integrity message



Students participating in an anti-corruption game created by ICAC Ambassadors as a way of raising awareness



Voluntary Summer Helpers engaging in various types of online and offline integrity promotion activities in collaboration with the ICAC

For more information:

- ➔ Hong Kong ICAC - Youth:
<https://www.icac.org.hk/en/y/index.html>
- ➔ The moral education website:
https://me.icac.hk/moral-activity/activity/index_id_5.html
(Chinese version only)