

Information gold mines

Information is power. That is true for your Independent Enquiry Study (IES) and other school projects. **Mediocre** research yields mediocre information and results. To excel, you need to gather superior information. Here we show you six secret sources where you can do just that

TO find information, most people will 'Google' or look on Wikipedia. These are, no doubt, convenient and effective research tools. But they only give you basic information. To get better results, you need to go further. For this purpose, there are many sources you may **consult**.

1 Libraries

YOUR presentations and articles must be well-researched and **grounded in** facts. Libraries can help you do that. Apart from print books and films, you can also find online books and professional journals in libraries.

A 'Multimedia Information' mobile app (多媒體資訊流動應用程式) was also launched recently to enable users to access digitised content, including e-books, images and audio-visual materials in libraries.



2 Public museums

HONG Kong has a number of public museums on different subjects where you can find relics and exhibits to enrich your research.

Apart from the Hong Kong Museum of History (香港歷史博物館), the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre (香港文物探知館) at Kowloon Park is also a good place to explore local history. The centre is housed in two 1910 buildings of the former Whitefield Barracks.



3 Private museums



GO off the beaten track. Visit a private museum and get information that few people know about.

There are a number of private museums on different subjects in Hong Kong. For example, the Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences (香港醫學博物館) at 2 Caine Lane, Mid-Levels, charts the development of medical science in Hong Kong.

4 University museums

MUSEUMS at universities are the most 'globalised', as they often receive exhibits from around the world.

The Jockey Club Museum of Climate Change (賽馬會氣候變化博物館) at the Chinese University offers an interactive multimedia exhibition.

The Stephen Hui Geological Museum (許士芬地質博物館) at the University of Hong Kong has large-scale educational rock fabrications **resembling** an outdoor environment.



5 Cultural research



THE Hong Kong Film Archive (香港電影資料館) at Lei King Road in Sai Wan Ho is dedicated to the collection, **preservation** and screening of Hong Kong films and other related materials.

Its resource centre houses film-related publications and audiovisual materials for on-site public reference. It is a good source of information for projects on cultural subjects.



6 Public Records Office

THE Public Records Office (PRO, 歷史檔案館) of Hong Kong was established in 1972 as the designated government archives. Its job is to appraise and acquire records and material of enduring value and make them available for public access. It is located at 13 Tsui Ling Road, Kwun Tong. There you can find exciting information, including formerly secret government documents.

Evidence of history

As its name suggests, the PRO stores and cares for archival records and library items. These items were transferred by government bureaus, departments, offices or agencies in varying formats including files, bound volumes, maps and plans, photographs, films, videotapes and disks.

Matters covered range across finance and commerce, education, transportation, land development, and legal and social issues. These materials are **meticulously** screened and preserved because they are valuable records of government policy development, decision-making and execution.

A senior officer of the PRO says, "These records provide important information about major events in the past. They help us understand the process of how the government conducted its business."

Apart from helping the public to gain a better understanding of the past, these records also provide valuable lessons for the current government. They help early detection of problems and **loopholes** in government procedures. They are also a useful reference for formulating solutions and enhancing good government.

Keep or destroy?

The volume of records generated by the process of public administration is huge. They cannot all be kept. Therefore, the PRO has set up standards and protocols on what records to discard and what to keep, and how the records are to be transferred to the PRO for safe-keeping.

These guidelines apply to the entire government. Therefore, government bureaus and departments are not supposed to destroy records arbitrarily.

But the PRO guidelines have no legal effect and are only enforced internally.

Last year, the office of the ombudsman found that during 2008 to 2012, seven policy bureaus and departments never transferred any records to the PRO; nine others did not do so within the prescribed time limit.

The revelation casts doubt on the effectiveness of the guidelines in preserving valuable government records.

To restore public confidence, maybe we need to enact a 'public records ordinance' to ensure **compliance**.

