**Health and Medical Research Fund**
**Research Fellowship Scheme**

**Application Guidelines**

## 1. OBJECTIVES

1.1 The Health and Medical Research Fund (HMRF) Research Fellowship Scheme aims to support researchers or professionals in their early to mid-career, particularly healthcare professionals (including but not limited to medical doctors) to enhance their skills in public health and health services research[1]. It is hoped that the funding support under the Research Fellowship Scheme can help attract young healthcare professionals to join the research community as well as retain such talents at the early stage of their career, particularly in the area of public health policy and research.

1.2 Funding support will be provided for successful applicants to (a) attend overseas training programmes which can broaden their horizon and equip them with the knowledge and skills to become independent scientists/researchers; and (b) apply what they have learnt from the training programmes to conduct a small scale original research project with translational potential within short-to-medium timeframe. Pilot studies and proof of concept studies[2] will be considered.

## 2. FRAMEWORK

2.1 The Research Fellowship Scheme is operated on an annual basis and supports applications from researchers or professionals in their early to mid-career, who want to acquire training and conduct **research in public health (in particular public health policy) and health services** in order

[1] Health services research covers a broad area of clinical research on the prevalence, incidence, cause, prevention, treatment of human diseases, effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of healthcare services and policy. Clinical studies on the care and rehabilitation of patients are also included. Examples include clinical studies on major non-communicable diseases (NCD), modifiable lifestyle factors, primary care, chronic disease management and palliative care, elderly care and infectious diseases.

[2] Proof of Concept studies refer to the studies which aim to verify the practical potential of some concepts or theories. Examples of Proof of Concept studies include early testing of potential efficacy, safety or feasibility of a treatment.

to fill the gap among the fellowship schemes in Hong Kong. Basic science research[3] with low translational value or requiring long time for influencing health practice will not be considered.

2.2 To echo the Food and Health Bureau's strategic direction to stepping up prevention and control of cancer and tackling non-communicable diseases (NCD), higher priority will be given to applications which relate to cancer research or address the following modifiable risk factors for NCD -

(a) Smoking;
(b) Alcohol drinking;
(c) Unhealthy diet; and
(d) Physical inactivity

2.3 Each application has to cover two components -

(a) An overseas training programme (regular programmes for higher academic qualification, e.g. Master or PhD degree will not be considered); and
(b) A small scale research project relating to the proposed training programme.

2.4 The training programme aims to train the Fellowship Applicant (FA) as a better scientist/researcher. It should be an o**verseas attachment to a reputable institution for at least three months cumulatively** throughout the fellowship period. Clinical attachment that cannot improve the research capability of the FA will not be considered. The knowledge and/or skills acquired in the training programme should also be applied to the research project and be able to benefit public health and health services in Hong Kong.

[3] According to The Association of American Medical Colleges, "Basic research encompasses familiar scientific disciplines such as biochemistry, microbiology, physiology and pharmacology, and their interplay, and involves laboratory studies with cells cultures, animal studies or physiological experiments." "Typically, basic science research focuses on determining the causal mechanisms behind the functioning of the human body in health and illness, and utilizes hypothesis-driven experimental designs that can be specifically tested and revised."

2.5 A solid and detailed training plan is required. Details of the training programme including its purpose, duration, activities, relevance to the research project and deliverables should be clearly stated in the Application Form. The FA is expected to apply the skills and knowledge obtained from the overseas training programme to complete the research project covered by his/her application.

2.6 The research project should offer an opportunity for the FA to apply knowledge and skills acquired in the training programme. It can be a small scale study with no more than three research objectives. Pilot or proof of concept studies will also be considered.[4] A replication of previous overseas studies is not acceptable. Research projects aiming to develop methods/techniques /research platforms without evaluation of the tool in a clinical setting will not be considered. For example, an engineering project aiming to solely develop a medical device without evaluation of the accuracy, reliability and feasibility of the device on patients is considered ineligible.

2.7 The FA should state clearly how the fellowship application fits the objectives of the Research Fellowship Scheme; discuss the potential beneficiaries and impact of the proposed research to improve patient care, population health, influence clinical practice and/or health services management or inform health policy; and identify the barriers to achieve the said beneficiaries and impact.

## 3. ELIGIBILTY

3.1 FAs must be researchers or professionals in medical and health-related discipline (including doctors, nurses and allied-health professionals) in their early or mid-career.

3.2 FAs should have no more than ten years' post-doctoral or post-qualification (e.g., medical or nursing degree) experience at the closing date of the application, whichever is less.

[4] Justification for sample size should be provided in all applications including pilot/proof of concept studies. A contingency plan is also required to assist the review on feasibility of study design.

3.3 Each application should have one FA and not more than nine Co-applicants in the research project.

3.4 FAs must be full-time employees of the following administering institutions (AIs) at the time of application and based at the same AI throughout the fellowship period –

(a) Stream A: Tertiary institutions funded by the University Grants Committee; or
(b) Stream B: Designated teaching hospitals, i.e. Prince of Wales Hospital and Queen Mary Hospital.

3.5 Each FA must secure the support of a mentor, who is a full-time staff of the AI and undertakes to provide guidance to the FA to select the training programme and carry out the research project throughout the fellowship period. For Stream B, the mentor can be a full-time staff of the respective medical school of The Chinese University of Hong Kong and The University of Hong Kong.

3.6 The AI must provide all necessary support such as laboratory service and access to equipment/central facilities to facilitate the FA to undertake their research projects.

## 4. APPLICATION PROCESS

4.1 Each AI is allowed to nominate up to **eight** FAs in each application round.

4.2 Each FA is allowed to submit **one** application in each application round.

4.3 Resubmission of application declined in the previous application round is not accepted.

4.4 Successful FA cannot submit application until his/her current fellowship has been completed.

4.5 The application package should contain -

(a) The original signed Application Form together with all annexes and other additional materials such as **in press** key references;
(b) **Six** photocopies, two-sided, of the full set of the Application Form together with all annexes and other additional materials as required in 4.5(a) above;
(c) Nomination letter from President/Vice-Chancellor (for Steam A); Hospital Chief Executive (for Steam B) of the AI in a sealed envelope; and
(d) Soft copies for -
    - Application Form in **MS Word files** (i.e. its original format)
    - A full set of the Application Form together with all annexes and other additional materials in **a single PDF file**.

4.6 Application must be submitted via the AI to the Research Fund Secretariat on or before the deadline of the application -

Research Fund Secretariat
Research Office
Food and Health Bureau
9/F, Rumsey Street Multi-storey Carpark Building
2 Rumsey Street, Sheung Wan
Hong Kong

4.7 Application Form and the Explanatory Notes for completing the Application Form (Explanatory Notes) are at **Annexes A and B**.

## 5. FINANCIAL/FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 Each fellowship award is capped at HK$1,200,000 and lasts for a normal duration of two years (inclusive of both training and research components).

5.2 Up to HK$400,000 shall be used for the overseas training programme, i.e. HK$800,000 for the research project.

5.3 The fellowship is to be held at the AI and is **not transferable** throughout the course of the fellowship.

5.4 Expenditure of the fellowship must be at the benefits of the FA's professional development. Funding can be used to meet the costs of the following items -

(a) fees of the training course/attachment to acquire the specialised knowledge and enhance the skill set for conducting research;
(b) air passage (up to two round trips economy class), accommodation and subsistence allowance for overseas training according to the established procurement policy and standard of the relevant AI;
(c) procurement of equipment or consumables or recruitment of research staff for conducting the research project; and
(d) salary of the reliever at the rank of the FA or below to take over the **teaching duties** of the FA according to the salary rates set by the AI.

5.5 The fellowship does not support the salary of the FA, medical/insurance cover and fringe benefits of the reliever, and on-costs.

5.6 Funding cannot be solely used to support a particular item in paragraph 5.4. The AI has to absorb any expenses exceeding its standard rates in 5.4(b) and 5.4(d). Funding support of other allowable and unallowable items can be found in **Appendix A** of the Explanatory Notes.

5.7 Funding will be paid on a reimbursement basis upon submission of claim form. Reimbursement of expenses will be paid up to the amount actually incurred in the approved budget items. The details of financial arrangements can be found in **Appendix B** of the Explanatory Notes.

## 6. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

6.1 Applications will be assessed by the Research Fellowship Assessment Panel (RFAP) which will shortlist FAs for interview.

6.2 The assessment criteria include -

FA's capability (30%)

(a) Applicant's research potential and capability including Applicant's qualifications, track record in research and training;

Training proposal (35%)

(b) Importance of the training to health care development;

(c) Relevance of the training to the conduct of the research project;

Research proposal (35%)

(d) Scientific merits of the research proposal; and

(e) Translational potential/value of research proposal to public health or health services in Hong Kong.

6.3 Shortlisted FAs will be notified of the outcomes two weeks before the date of interview.

6.4 The RFAP may at its absolute discretion invite international peer reviews of the applications.

6.5 Up to **twelve** awards for Stream A and **four** awards for Stream B will be granted in each application round. However, the RFAP reserves the absolute right to recommend fewer applications for funding in each round, depending on the quality of the applications.

6.6 Subject to the quality of applications, out of the total sixteen awards, at least four awards will be granted to applications which can address the four modifiable risk factors for NCD with higher priority in paragraph 2.2, with one award in each area.

6.7 Funding recommendations by the RFAP will be submitted to the Research Council (RC) for approval. The decision of RC is final.

## 7. ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS

7.1 The results of the applications will be announced within six months after the application deadline.

7.2 All FAs will be informed of the results made by the RC.

7.3 The award of a fellowship is conditional upon the enrolment of the proposed training.

7.4 Contractual agreement covering terms and conditions, payment, reporting, deliverable, etc., will be signed among the Government, the AI and the FA.

## 8. MONITORING OF PROGRESS AND DELIVERABLES

8.1 The FA and the AI shall report the progress of the training on a regular basis. A training report shall be submitted within one month after completion of the training. The timing and frequency of submission shall refer to the terms and conditions of the contractual agreement.

8.2 The FA and the AI shall submit interim/progress reports of the research project on a regular basis. A final report and a dissemination report shall be submitted within six months of completion of the fellowship. Such reports must conform to guidelines which are issued from time to time by the RC. The timing and frequency of submission shall refer to the terms and conditions of the contractual agreement.

8.3 Unless specified, the AI shall submit an annual certified financial statement **within 2 months** following the first anniversary of the commencement date of the fellowship, and shall submit the audited account **within 6 months** after the end date, or **within 60 days** after the expiry or termination of the fellowship, whichever is earlier.

8.4 The FA is expected to deliver a HMRF Research Fellowship presentation on his/her achievements and project deliverables and share his/her learning experience after completion of the fellowship.

8.5 If after due assessment, the FA is not considered to be making satisfactory progress, the RC reserves the right to discontinue the provision of financial support under the terms of the fellowship and may seek the return of any funds provided to date.

8.6 If any false, fictitious, under declaration, or fraudulent statements or claims are detected and subsequently substantiated after the fellowship is

approved, the FA and the AI shall refund all grants received, and are liable for damages and losses incurred.

## 9. RESEARCH ETHICS/ SAFETY APPROVAL/ CONSENT FOR ACCESSING THIRD-PARTY DATA

9.1 Written clearance from recognised ethics committee/Institutional Review Board (IRB) and safety approval from a designated Safety Officer, or equivalent, must be obtained prior to the commencement of the research project. The primary responsibility for seeking relevant approvals rests with the FA.

9.2 As stipulated under Regulation 36B of the Pharmacy and Poisons Regulations (Cap 138A), for the purpose of conducting a clinical trial on human beings or a medicinal test on animals, a Clinical Trial Certificate/Medicinal Test Certificate issued by the Department of Health must be obtained prior to the commencement of the research project.

9.3 The FA should ensure that the protocol/scope approved by the relevant regulatory body/IRB is the same as that in his/her application approved by the RFAP.

9.4 The FA should ensure that the consent for data access is obtained from the relevant authority before the commencement of the research project.

## 10. PRIVACY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

10.1 The FA and the AI are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of any data protection are fully observed. In particular, the FA shall ensure at all times that any personal data collected in the course of the project shall be securely held and handled and that the anonymity of persons to whom the data refer shall be preserved in any report or publication.

10.2 The FA and the AI shall adhere to the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap 486).

10.3 The personal data provided in the application will be used by the relevant parties for the purpose of assessing applications to the HMRF Research Fellowship Scheme. For successful applications, such data will also be used for project monitoring, research and statistical analysis, promotion, publicity and dissemination purposes as appropriate. Contents of the submitted application set out in PART G (except proposal details) and Sections 1 – 7 of PART H with the status of project will be made available for public access once funding approval is offered.

10.4 FAs have the right to access and correct the personal data provided in accordance with sections 18 and 22 and Principle 6 of Schedule 1 of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap 486). Their right of access includes the right to obtain a copy of their personal data provided in the Application Form.

10.5 Enquiries concerning the personal data collected by means of this Application Form, including access and corrections, should be addressed to -

Research Fund Secretariat
Research Office
Food and Health Bureau
9/F, Rumsey Street Multi-storey Carpark Building
2 Rumsey Street, Sheung Wan
Hong Kong
Email address: rfs@fhb.gov.hk
Website: https://rfs.fhb.gov.hk

## 11. OTHERS

11.1 The research project proposed in the application should comprise the FA's original work. **Plagiarism is NOT tolerated.** The previously published work of others must be identified clearly as such by citing appropriate references. The FA may be asked to provide clarifications where any overlap between the contents of the submitted research proposal and other materials is suspected. FAs should **declare any duplicate funding** in the Application Form.

11.2 Fellowship shall commence **within six months** after the announcement of the results.

11.3 After an award is made, all major changes to the training plan and the research plan require prior approval of the RFAP. (Note: Change of scope/objective of research/training plan is not allowed.)

- End -

# Annex A

# Health and Medical Research Fund

| Ref. No. (for official use) |
| --- |
| |

# RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP SCHEME APPLICATION FORM

*The personal data provided in the application will be used by the Research Council, the Research Fellowship Assessment Panel and the Research Fund Secretariat for the purpose of assessing applications to the Health and Medical Research Fund (HMRF) Research Fellowship Scheme. For successful applications, such data will also be used for project monitoring, research and statistical analysis, promotion, publicity and dissemination purposes as appropriate. Contents of the submitted application set out in PART G (except proposal details) and Sections 1 – 7 of PART H with the status of project will be made available for public access once funding approval is offered.*

**Fellowship Applicant should check the following boxes before completing the Application Form:**

☐ I have read and understood the *Application Guidelines for Research Fellowship Scheme (Application Guidelines)* and the *Explanatory Notes for completing Research Fellowship Application Form (Explanatory Notes)*.

☐ I understand that application which is incomplete, inconsistent with the submission requirements, or insufficiently detailed to be processed by the Research Fund Secretariat may result in administrative withdrawal.

**Please refer to *Explanatory Notes* for completing this Application Form.**

## PART A – PERSONAL INFORMATION

| | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | | |
| Last name | | |
| First name | | |
| Chinese Name | | |
| Nationality | | |
| Current post(s) | | |
| Full address | Department<br>Institution<br>Rm/Floor<br>Building<br>Street<br>Area / City<br>Country | <br><br><br><br><br><br>Hong Kong |
| Telephone No. (direct) | | |
| Fax No. | | |
| E-mail | | |

## PART B – QUALIFICATION

## 1. HIGHEST QUALIFICATION

| | |
|---|---|
| Study Period | From to (mmm/yyyy) |
| Institution | |
| Qualification Attained | |
| Issuing Authority | |
| Date of Issue | (mmm/yyyy) |

## 2. PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION (e.g. MEDICAL/NURSING DEGREE)

| | |
|---|---|
| Study Period | From to (mmm/yyyy) |
| Institution | |
| Qualification Attained | |
| Issuing Authority | |
| Date of Issue | (mmm/yyyy) |

*Note: Please add additional rows if necessary.*

## PART C – YEARS OF WORK EXPERIENCE *(at the closing date of application)*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Post-doctoral experience | Year(s)/Month(s)* |
| 2. Post-qualification (e.g., medical or nursing degree) experience | Year(s)/Month(s)* |

** Please delete where inappropriate.*

## PART D – EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

*(In chronological order, please start with the present or latest employment)*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Employment Period | From to (mmm/ yyyy) |
| | Position | |
| | Department | |
| | Institution | |
| 2 | Employment Period | From to (mmm/ yyyy) |
| | Position | |
| | Department | |
| | Institution | |

*Note: Please add additional rows as appropriate.*

## PART E – JUSTIFICATIONS OF THE FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION

Please explain how the research plan and training plan fit the objectives of the Research Fellowship Scheme.

## PART F – PROPOSED BUDGET

### 1. PROPOSED RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PERIOD

**1a. Start Date:** | **1b. End Date:** | **1c. Fellowship Period:** | **months**

### 2. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT REQUESTED

| *(dd/mm/yy)* | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **Total (HK$)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Training Costs* | | | | |
| Staff Costs | | | | |
| Other Expenses | | | | |
| Equipment | | | | |
| **Sub-total** | | | | |
| **Grand Total** | | | | |

** Should not exceed HK$400,000.*

### 3. DETAILS OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT REQUESTED

**3a. TRAINING COSTS** *(To the Nearest HK$)*

| **Please specify (itemise in detail)** | **HK$** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Financial Year *(dd/mm/yy)*** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **Total** |
| Training/Course Fee | | | | |
| Air Passage for Overseas Training (up to two round trips economy class) | | | | |
| Accommodation Expense for Overseas Training | | | | |
| Subsistence Allowance for Overseas Training | | | | |
| | | | | |
| **Total (Training Costs)** | | | | |

**3b. STAFF DETAILS**

| Types of Staff | Details of Posts | | | Salary/ Month | Efforts* | No. of Months Required | Staff Costs for Entire Project |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rank | Pay Scale & Point | (A) No. | (B) HK$ | (C) % | (D) | AxBxCxD HK$ |
| Reliever(s) | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Research Staff | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Other Supporting Staff (e.g. secretarial, clerical, administrative) | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| **Total (Staff Costs)** | | | | | | | |

** For reliever, "efforts" refers to the teaching work of the fellowship applicant to be taken up by the reliever. For research and other supporting staff, "efforts" refers to the time spent on project.*

**3c. STAFF COSTS** *(To the Nearest HK$)*

| **Financial Year** ***(dd/mm/yy)*** | **HK$** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **Total** |
| Reliever(s) | | | | |
| | | | | |
| **Sub-Total** | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Research Staff | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| **Sub-Total** | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Other Supporting Staff | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| **Sub-Total** | | | | |
| **Total (Staff Costs)** | | | | |

**3d. OTHER EXPENSES** *(To the Nearest HK$)*

| **Please specify (itemise in detail)** | | | **HK$** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Financial Year *(dd/mm/yy)*** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **Total** |
| Conference Attendance (Up to $10,000) | | | | |
| Publication Costs (Up to $20,000) | | | | |
| Reference Materials (Up to $5,000) | | | | |
| Audit Fee (Up to $5,000 if requesting at or below $1,000,000 or $10,000 if requesting over $1,000,000) | | | | |
| Incentives for subjects | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| **Total Costs (Other Expenses)** | | | | |

**3e. EQUIPMENT** *(To the Nearest HK$)*

| **Please specify (itemise in detail)** | | | **HK$** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Financial Year *(dd/mm/yy)*** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **01/04/ - 31/03/** | **Unit Price** | **Total** |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| **Total Costs (Equipment)** | | | | | |

## PART G – OVERSEAS TRAINING PROPOSAL *(Not more than 1,000 words)*

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of the Programme | |
| Description of the Programme and overseas mentor (if any) | |
| Training Institution/Organisation | |
| Country (Training Place) | |
| Training Period | From to (dd/mm/yyyy) |
| Duration | Month(s)/Day(s)* |

Details:

***Format***

| | |
|---|---|
| Word limit: | Not more than 1,000 words. Please provide the word count. |
| Font: | At least **10-point**; preferably **Arial** |
| Character spacing: | **Normal** |
| Line spacing: | At least **Single** |

*Please provide the following information of the training/attachment according to the above format:*

1. State the purpose and importance of the training to the betterment of (a) the Fellowship Applicant as a better scientist/researcher and (b) the public health and health services in Hong Kong.

2. Describe the training plan including its activities/content. State the expected deliverables of the training upon completion in **point form**.

3. State the relevancy and how the specialised skills obtained from the training programme will be applied to the research project proposed in **PART H**.

4. Justify the funding requirements for the training plan (Please provide the supporting documents such as course information if appropriate).

[Word Count: words]

** Please delete where inappropriate.*

## PART H – RESEARCH PROPOSAL

**1. PROJECT TITLE** ( *Word limit: 25 words)*

| |
|---|
| |

**2. ABSTRACT OF PROJECT** *(Word limit: 250 words, in BMJ format)*

| |
|---|
| |

**3. Keywords:**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

4. **POTENTIAL APPLICATION:** Apart from academics, please explain how the research findings will benefit patients and/or the healthcare system. Describe in simple language the potential of the research findings to improve patient care, population health, influence clinical practice and/or health services management, or inform health policy in Hong Kong and elsewhere. What are the potential facilitators and barriers to this impact being achieved? *(Word limit: 500 words)*

| |
|---|
| |

5. **PROPOSED PROJECT START AND END DATES** *(dd/mm/yyyy)*

**5a. Start Date:** ☐ **5b. End Date:** ☐ **5c. Project Period:** ☐ **months**

6. **ETHICS APPROVAL / SAFETY APPROVAL / CONSENT FOR ACCESSING THIRD-PARTY DATA** (if applicable): Please complete this section if ethical approval has been received. Otherwise, state the current progress of seeking ethical approval in Section 9(k).

| | **Date Received** *(dd/mm/yyyy)* | **Reference No.** |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |

*(Note: Please add additional row(s) in above table as appropriate)*

## 7. APPLICANTS (PROJECT TEAM)

| Fellowship Applicant | |
|---|---|
| Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | |
| Last name | |
| First name | |
| Current post(s) | |
| Department | |
| No. of hrs/weeks on project | |
| Full address Department<br>Institution<br>Rm/Floor<br>Building<br>Street<br>Area / City<br>Country | <br><br><br><br><br><br>Hong Kong |
| Tel (direct/secretary) | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |
| **Co-Applicant 1** | |
| Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | |
| Last name | |
| First name | |
| Current post(s) | |
| Department | |
| No. of hrs/weeks on project | |
| Full address Department<br>Institution<br>Rm/Floor<br>Building<br>Street<br>Area / City<br>Country | |
| Tel (direct/secretary) | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |
| **Co-Applicant 2** | |
| Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | |
| Last name | |
| First name | |
| Current post(s) | |
| Department | |
| No. of hrs/weeks on project | |
| Full address Department<br>Institution<br>Rm/Floor<br>Building<br>Street<br>Area / City<br>Country | |
| Tel (direct/secretary) | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |

| Co-Applicant 3 | |
|---|---|
| Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | |
| Last name | |
| First name | |
| Current post(s) | |
| Department | |
| No. of hrs/weeks on project | |
| Full address Department<br>Institution<br>Rm/Floor<br>Building<br>Street<br>Area / City<br>Country | |
| Tel (direct/secretary) | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |
| **Co-Applicant 4** | |
| Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | |
| Last name | |
| First name | |
| Current post(s) | |
| Department | |
| No. of hrs/weeks on project | |
| Full address Department<br>Institution<br>Rm/Floor<br>Building<br>Street<br>Area / City<br>Country | |
| Tel (direct/secretary) | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |
| **Co-Applicant 5** | |
| Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | |
| Last name | |
| First name | |
| Current post(s) | |
| Department | |
| No. of hrs/weeks on project | |
| Full address Department<br>Institution<br>Rm/Floor<br>Building<br>Street<br>Area / City<br>Country | |
| Tel (direct/secretary) | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |

| Co-Applicant 6 | |
|---|---|
| Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | |
| Last name | |
| First name | |
| Current post(s) | |
| Department | |
| No. of hrs/weeks on project | |
| Full address Department<br>Institution<br>Rm/Floor<br>Building<br>Street<br>Area / City<br>Country | |
| Tel (direct/secretary) | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |
| **Co-Applicant 7** | |
| Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | |
| Last name | |
| First name | |
| Current post(s) | |
| Department | |
| No. of hrs/weeks on project | |
| Full address Department<br>Institution<br>Rm/Floor<br>Building<br>Street<br>Area / City<br>Country | |
| Tel (direct/secretary) | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |
| **Co-Applicant 8** | |
| Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | |
| Last name | |
| First name | |
| Current post(s) | |
| Department | |
| No. of hrs/weeks on project | |
| Full address Department<br>Institution<br>Rm/Floor<br>Building<br>Street<br>Area / City<br>Country | |
| Tel (direct/secretary) | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |

| Co-Applicant 9 | |
|---|---|
| Title (Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms) | |
| Last name | |
| First name | |
| Current post(s) | |
| Department | |
| No. of hrs/weeks on project | |
| Full address Department<br>Institution<br>Rm/Floor<br>Building<br>Street<br>Area / City<br>Country | |
| Tel (direct/secretary) | |
| Fax | |
| E-mail | |

## 8. HMRF, OTHER SUPPORT, SIMILAR OR RELATED PROPOSALS AND TRACK RECORD

THIS APPLICATION

**8a.** (i) Have any of the applicants listed in Section 7 of PART H submitted this or a similar research proposal to the HMRF or any of its preceding funding schemes, or other funding agencies (local or overseas) in the past three years? ☐**YES** ☐**NO**

**Attention: In this section should include all previously submitted similar proposals in the past three years, i.e. proposals rejected or not supported by HMRF or other funding agencies. Please attach a copy of the previous application, the reviewers' comments (if any), a point-by-point response to the reviewers' comments, and/or a description of the differences or changes made between the previous and the current proposal. Failure to provide sufficiently detailed information may adversely affect the assessment of your proposal.**

If yes, please provide the following details:-

**For proposal(s) pending a funding decision, please complete Section 8a. (ii).**

| No. | Project Title | Name of Applicant(s) | Project Ref No. | Funding Agency | Funding Decision / Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.<br>2.<br>3. | | | | | |

For each of the above similar proposal(s), please provide (as attachments): -
A copy of the application; and the review panel's feedback (if any).

Please use the following box to respond point-by-point to the review panel's feedback (if any), and /or highlight the major changes that have been incorporated into this application. Applications declined by the HMRF or other funding agencies will be accepted only if the reasons for the rejection have been described in detail and a point-by-point response is provided describing how the issues have been addressed.

**8a.** (ii) Do any of the applicants listed in Section 7 of PART H intend to submit this or a similar research proposal to the HMRF or any of its preceding funding schemes, or other funding agencies (local or overseas) in the next six months? ☐**YES** ☐**NO**

**Attention: At any time before the announcement of the funding decision of this application, applicants are required to notify the Research Fund Secretariat immediately about:**
**(a) any other similar or related application submitted to other funding agencies in addition to those listed below; and**
**(b) the funding decision once available.**

If yes, please provide the following details:-

| No. | Project Title | Name of Applicant(s) | Project Ref No. | Funding Agency | Expected Date of Decision *(dd/mm/yyyy)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.<br>2.<br>3. | | | | | |

Please give a summary of the similarities and differences between this application and the proposal to be submitted *(400 words max.)*.

HMRF, OTHER APPLICATIONS AND TRACK RECORD

**8b.** (i) Has the Fellowship Applicant (FA) listed in Section 7 of PART H been awarded research grant(s) from the HMRF or any of its preceding funding schemes, or other funding agencies (local or overseas) in the past three years? ☐**YES** ☐**NO**

Details of research grant(s) funded or undertaken by FA (in a Principal Applicant (PA) or Co-Applicant (Co-A) capacity)

| No | Project Title | PA or Co-A | Project Ref No. | Funding Agency | Funding Amount($) | Start Date (dd/mm/yyyy) | Completion Date (dd/mm/yyyy) | Time Spent by PA on the Project (hrs/ %) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.<br>2.<br>3. | | | | | | | | |

Please give a summary of the similarities and differences between this application and the awarded project *(400 words max.)*.

**8b.** (ii) Have any of the Co-Applicants (Co-As) listed in Section 7 of PART H been awarded research grant(s) from the HMRF or any of its preceding funding schemes, or other funding agencies (local or overseas) in the past three years? ☐**YES** ☐**NO**

Details of research grant(s) funded or undertaken by Co-A(s) (in a Principal Applicant capacity)

| No | Project Title | Name of Co-A(s) | Project Ref No. | Funding Agency | Funding Amount($) | Start Date (dd/mm/yyyy) | Completion Date (dd/mm/yyyy) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.<br>2.<br>3. | | | | | | | |

Please give a summary of the similarities and differences between this application and the awarded project (400 words max.).

| |
|---|
| |

## 9. PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECT TEMPLATE

***The Research Fellowship Scheme aims at supporting research in public health (in particular public health policy) and health services research. Pilot studies and proof of concept studies will be considered. Basic science research with low translational value or requiring long time for influencing health practice will not be considered.***

***Fellowship Applicants must strictly comply with the following formatting requirements listed. The Research Fund Secretariat will not process applications that do not comply with these formatting requirements. In particular, insufficiently detailed proposals may be withdrawn.***

***Format***

| | |
|---|---|
| Word limit: | Section 9 (a) – (d) of PART H inclusively. Not more than 4,000 words. Please provide the word count for Section 9 (a) – (d) of PART H. |
| Margin: | Left at least 2.5cm; others at least 1.5cm |
| Font: | At least 10-point; preferably Arial |
| Character spacing: | Normal |
| Line spacing: | At least Single |

The following should be covered in the research proposal:

[Word Count for (a) – (d): words]

(a) Title
(b) Introduction
(c) Aims and hypotheses to be tested
(d) Plan of investigation
  (i) Subjects
  (ii) Methods
  (iii) Study design
  (iv) Data processing and analysis
  (v) Potential pitfalls and contingency plans
(e) Existing facilities
(f) Justification of requirements
(g) Purpose and potential
(h) Key references
(i) List of additional materials (if any)
(j) Timetable of work
(k) Regulatory approvals/ consent rest with the Fellowship Applicant

***(For Section 9(j) and (k) of PART H, please complete the following tables.)***

**9(j) Timetable of work**

| Time (months after project commencement) | Key Milestones | Deliverables |
|---|---|---|
| Example: 6 months | Completion of patient recruitment | List of enrolled patients |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

**9(k) Research ethics / safety approval / consent for accessing third-party data**

***Note: The primary responsibility for seeking the relevant approval/consent rests with the Fellowship Applicant.***

Please tick '√' the appropriate boxes to confirm if approval for the respective ethics, safety issues and/or consent for accessing third-party data is required and has been obtained or is being sought. In particular, a Clinical Trial Certificate or Medicinal Test Certificate from the Department of Health is required for research grant applications that involve clinical trials on human beings or medicinal tests on animals.

Copies of written documentation of approval and/or consent issued by proper authorities, or of application for approval and/or consent, should be submitted within 12 weeks from the date of decision letter and preferably with the application.

Approval from the Central Panel on Administrative Assessment of External Data Requests of Hospital Authority (HA) is required for using HA data where applicable. Please visit http://www3.ha.org.hk/data/Provision/Index/ for details. Please submit your application to HA in advance.

| Research ethics / safety approval / third-party data | | Approval / consent not required | Approval / consent being sought | Approval / consent obtained |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Approval from a recognised ethics committee is required for (i) to (iii): | | | | |
| (i) | Human research ethics | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| (ii) | Animal research ethics | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| (iii) | Survey research ethics | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| For clinical trials on human beings or medicinal tests on animals | | | | |
| (iv) | Clinical Trial Certificate from Department of Health (Cap. 138A, Regulation 36B) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Approval from the administering institution's Safety Officer, or equivalent, is required for (v) to (viii): | | | | |
| (v) | Biological safety | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| (vi) | Ionising radiation safety | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| (vii) | Non-ionising radiation safety | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| (viii) | Chemical safety | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| (ix) | Any other approval (including consent from data provider(s) for accessing third-party data)<br>*Please specify:* | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

## 10. REPORT ON PREVIOUS RESEARCH GRANTS FROM THE HMRF OR ANY OF ITS PRECEDING FUNDING SCHEMES.

For each of the above grants which you or any of your Co-Applicants have held as the Principal Applicant, including projects currently underway and completed research projects in the last three years, please give the following information requested.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Project Reference No.: | | |
| Project Title: | | |
| Started on: *(dd/mm/yyyy)* | Completed/To Complete on: *(dd/mm/yyyy)* | Final Report Submitted on: *(dd/mm/yyyy)* |
| Principal Applicant: | | |
| Current perception of significance: | | |
| Publications / Scientific papers directly resulting from this grant: | | |
| Reasons for delay in the submission of interim, final and/or dissemination reports, if applicable: | | |

## 11. CURRICULUM VITAE AND ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL APPLICANTS

| **Fellowship Applicant** | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Title: Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms | Last name: | First name: |
| Education/Training: | | |
| Position and Honours (in reverse chronological order with dates): | | |
| Five Most Recent Relevant Publications and Description of Relevant Experience: | | |
| Role and Responsibility on the Proposed Project: | | |

** Please delete where inappropriate.*

| **Co-Applicant** | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Title: Prof/Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms | Last name: | First name: |
| Education/Training: | | |
| Position and Honours (in reverse chronological order with dates): | | |
| Five Most Recent Relevant Publications and Description of Relevant Experience: | | |
| Role and Responsibility on the Proposed Project: | | |

** Please delete where inappropriate.*
*Note: Please copy the table as appropriate.*

## 12. SIGNATURE

I certify that the statements herein are true, and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I am aware that any false, fictitious, under declaration, fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. I agree to accept responsibility for the scientific conduct of the project, to abide by the conditions of research funded by HMRF and to provide the required interim, final and dissemination reports if a grant is awarded as a result of this application.

I authorise the Research Fund Secretariat to handle the personal data/information provided in this application in accordance with Section 10 of the *Application Guidelines*.

| | **Signature of Applicant(s)** | **Name (BLOCK LETTER)** | **Date** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |
| 5. | | | |
| 6. | | | |
| 7. | | | |
| 8. | | | |
| 9. | | | |
| 10. | | | |

## PART I – DECLARATION AND AUTHORISATION

### 1. Fellowship Applicant

Does the Administering Institution or any of the applicants listed in Section 7 under Part H, or any of the proposed personnel and sub-contractors / agencies to be engaged in the project, have any actual or perceived conflict of interest, such as receiving any funding or assistance directly or indirectly from industries (including but not limited to tobacco related businesses, infant formula companies, or organisations funded by such businesses), or using the grant monies (budgeted under Sections 2 & 3 under Part F) to purchase products or services from the Administering Institution or any of the applicants listed in Section 7 under Part H, or any of the proposed personnel and sub-contractors / agencies to be engaged in the project? ☐YES ☐NO

If yes, please provide -
a. The nature of relationship; and
b. Duration of the relationship

---

I certify that the statements herein are true, and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I am aware that any false, fictitious, under declaration, fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. I agree to accept responsibility for the scientific conduct of the project, to abide by the conditions of Research Fellowship Scheme.

**Signature of FELLOWSHIP APPLICANT** ----------

NAME (BLOCK LETTER) DATE ----------

**2. Mentor**

I confirm that, if the applicant is awarded the fellowship, I shall be his/her mentor and undertake to provide guidance to the Fellowship Applicant to select the training programme and carry out the research project throughout the fellowship period.

I have known the applicant for a period of _____ years and have been the applicant's

☐ research adviser

☐ dissertation / thesis adviser

☐ teacher

☐ others (please specify: _____)

I support this fellowship application on the basis of the following merits:

| |
|---|
| |

Throughout the fellowship period, I shall give the Fellowship Applicant all necessary guidance and shall be actively involved in overseeing the proposed research. My role and plan are as follows:

| |
|---|
| |

☐ I attach a copy of my Curriculum Vitae to this application.

**Signature of MENTOR** ----------

NAME (BLOCK LETTER) DATE ----------
INSTITUTION/DEPARTMENT
POSITION HELD
EMAIL ADDRESS

## 3. Administering Institution

This application should be endorsed and submitted ,**together** with a nomination letter*, by/ through (i) the Head of Department, (ii) the officer who will be responsible for administering the fellowship that may be awarded and (iii) the finance officer who will be responsible for overseeing/ administering the related finance matters. Each party should be asked to complete the following declaration.

I certify that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge, and accept the obligation to comply with the conditions of Research Fellowship Scheme if a grant is awarded as a result of this application.

**Signature of HEAD OF DEPARTMENT** _____

NAME (BLOCK LETTER) DATE _____
INSTITUTION/DEPARTMENT
EMAIL ADDRESS

**Authorised Signature on behalf of ADMINISTERING INSTITUTION** _____

POSITION HELD

NAME (BLOCK LETTER) DATE _____

**Signature on behalf of FINANCE OFFICER / TREASURER** _____

NAME (BLOCK LETTER) DATE _____
ADDRESS of FINANCE OFFICER /
TREASURER

TEL: FAX:

* *The nomination letter from the President/Vice-Chancellor (for Stream A) or Hospital Chief Executive (for Stream B) should be put in* ***a sealed envelope*** *and submitted together with this application.*

# Annex B

# Health and Medical Research Fund

## Explanatory Notes for completing Research Fellowship Scheme Application Form

**IMPORTANT!**

- **All Fellowship Applicants (FAs) MUST read these *Explanatory Notes* in conjunction with the *Application Guidelines for the Research Fellowship Scheme* before completing the Application Form. Incomplete applications, applications not adhering to these notes, or insufficiently detailed proposals will not be processed and may result in administrative withdrawal.**
- **For general queries about completing the application, please contact the Research Fund Secretariat (the Secretariat) (email: rfs@fhb.gov.hk or fax: 2102 2444).**

### GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Each FA is allowed to submit ***one application***. Resubmission of application declined in the previous application round(s) is not accepted.
2. Each application should have one FA and not more than nine Co-Applicants in the research project.
3. FAs must be full-time employees of the following administering institutions (AIs) at the time of application and ***based at the same AI throughout the fellowship period*** –
   (a) Stream A: Tertiary institutions funded by the University Grants Committee; or
   (b) Stream B: Designated teaching hospitals, i.e. Prince of Wales Hospital and Queen Mary Hospital.

   The fellowship is to be held at the AI and is not transferable throughout the course of the fellowship.
4. Applications without the required signatures will be treated as incomplete application and will not be considered.
5. The FA should make sure that all Co-Applicants endorse the research proposal as the track record for the whole project team might be adversely affected if misconduct/fraud is found. All project team members should be well aware of their participation and roles and responsibilities in the project. Please refer to the *Management of Track Records of Applicants* in **Appendix C** of the *Explanatory Notes*.
6. The personal data provided in the Application Form will be used by the Research Council, the Research Fellowship Assessment Panel and the Secretariat for the purpose of assessing applications to the Health and Medical Research Fund (HMRF) Research Fellowship Scheme. For successful applications, such data will also be used for project monitoring, research and statistical analysis, promotion, publicity and dissemination purposes as appropriate. Contents of the submitted application set out in PART G (except proposal details) and Sections 1 to 7 of PART H with and the status of research project will be made available for public access once funding approval is offered.

## *RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP SCHEME APPLICATION FORM*

**PART A to PART D** – Complete the personal particulars of the FA.

**PART E** – Please state clearly how the research plan and training plan fit the objectives of the Research Fellowship Scheme.

**PART F – PROPOSED BUDGET**

1. **Proposed research fellowship period**: The duration of fellowship support is two years covering two components: training and research. The expected start date is counted as the date on which the institution first incurs a cost for the fellowship award. The completion date should be entered based on the proposed duration of the fellowship. Start date of fellowship must be after the announcement of funding decisions. For example, applications submitted by the closing date of 19 November 2020 should not expect to start before 1 June 2021. The start date and end date of the training period should be within the fellowship period.

2. **Summary of financial support requested:** Costs should be rounded to the nearest HK dollar. The costs of disseminating results of the research should be included. FAs should refer to "Items Allowable and Unallowable for Reimbursement" and "Financial Arrangements" at **Appendices A and B** for details. The total cost should not exceed HK$1,200,000 inclusive of training costs up to HK$400,000.

3. **Details of financial support requested**: All items must be fully justified as stated in **Appendix A**. Costs of work incurred ***before*** the commencement date or the writing-up of such work are ***not allowed***. Application should be based on ***actual prices***. Standard rates, if available, should be specified. No allowance should be made for inflation.

   ***3a. OVERSEAS TRAINING COSTS***

   The training cost includes training/course fee. Air passage (up to two round trips economy class), accommodation expenses and subsistence allowance for overseas training will be covered. The total training costs should not exceed HK$400,000.

   ***3b. STAFF DETAILS***

   Staff costs should be justified in terms of the level of expertise and workload required by the research project. Reliever must be at the rank of the FA or below to take over the **teaching duties** of the FA. The FA ***should consult their Finance Office about the pay scale and the appropriate pay point proposed***. In general, salary scales that apply to equivalent workers employed by the AI are acceptable. Funding may be requested for full-time (which may be for periods shorter than the duration of the grant) and part-time posts. For part-time staff, the aggregated and averaged part-time effort must meet at least the 20% threshold. Monthly contributions to the MPF should also be included and absorbed in the monthly salary instead of stated alone item. Staff benefits such as gratuity, bonus, severance payment, untaken leave of staff employed and medical insurance costs will not be supported.

   Information on this page should reflect salary costs for the entire project based on the proposed salaries as at the date of the application and the estimated percentage on level of participation in the project. The ***actual*** costs for each financial year of the grant should be entered in "Staff Costs" table.

   ***3c. STAFF COSTS***

   Please provide an annual cost for each post identified in "Staff Details" above during the proposed fellowship period. ***Any insurance costs will not be supported***.

### *3d. OTHER EXPENSES*

Other expenses include consumable or equipment items costing less than HK$10,000, conference (i.e. travel and subsistence), publication costs, reference materials, printing and stationery, etc. Only direct costs can be charged to the project grant. Indirect costs of the project will not be considered.

***For incentives***

The purchase of gifts, coupons, etc., as incentives/tokens of appreciation for study participants is allowed if it is well justified with valid reason(s). A governance system shall be in place to adequately monitor the disbursement of incentives to ensure accountability and traceability.

***For purchase of services***

Purchase of services from non-local institutions, such as consultancy for research, experimental work, Biosafety Level 3 (BSL-3)/P3 laboratory facilities, etc., is allowed if it is well justified with valid reason(s), which should include full justifications for not acquiring the resources/facilities in Hong Kong.

### *3e. EQUIPMENT*

Only include items dedicated to the project and costing HK$10,000 and over. Unit price of items costing less than HK$10,000 should be included under "Other Expenses".

Purchase of particular types of equipment should be well justified by, but not limited to, the needs of the research and cost, performance and specifications. Tendering should be carried out according to the AI's procedures. The AI should pay attention to the transparency and fairness in the procurement process and follow its disposal procedures properly. Where the relevant guidelines are not in place, the institution should adopt the *Notes on Acquisition and Disposal of Equipment Items for Institutions without Established Guidelines* which can be obtained from the Secretariat.

***For computer equipment and software***

Advice should be sought from the Secretariat on the relevance and cost of computing equipment/facilities requested in proposed applications for funding. FAs should therefore list the make and model, quantity, price and annual maintenance costs of equipment along with any special features required, e.g. communications, graphics, etc. In cases where funding is sought for storage media or devices, an estimate in storage capacity (in megabytes) should also be provided.

The purpose of any special software to be developed, e.g. commissioned in house, or modifications of existing software should be detailed and the development time required given in hours or man-months.

If external resources are to be used, the estimated time required, a breakdown of the resources required, and the cost per unit of computing time/purchase of consultancy, should be given.

Any computing consumable to be purchased should be itemised under "Other Expenses" with a breakdown of both quantity and price.

Should computing advice be sought, details of the persons/organisations to be consulted should be given.

**PART G – OVERSEAS TRAINING PROPOSAL**: To ensure consistency and fairness, FAs must strictly comply with the formatting requirements listed below. The Secretariat will not process applications that do not comply with these formatting requirements. In particular, insufficiently detailed proposals may be withdrawn.

Complete the name/description of the programme, training institution/organisation, training place, training period and duration. The training period should be within the fellowship period.

The training proposal details should follow the format and cover the content described below:

***Format***

| | |
|---|---|
| Word limit: | **Not more than 1,000 words**. |
| | **Training proposal details exceeding the word limit will not be considered**. |
| | **Figures and tables must be appended separately and NOT embedded within the text**. |
| Font: | At least **10-point**. Preferably **Arial**. |
| Character spacing: | **Normal** |
| Line spacing: | At least **Single**. |

***Content***

*(Please provide the following information of the training/attachment according to* the *above format)*

**1.** The training programme should be an **overseas attachment to a reputable institution for at least three months cumulatively throughout the fellowship period**.

**2.** **State the purpose and importance of the training to the betterment of (a) the FA as a better scientist/researcher and (b) the public health and health services research[1] in Hong Kong:** Describe the purpose of the training programme, including the background information of the training institution and overseas mentor (if any), and state why this is important to train the FA as a better scientist/researcher and to benefit the public health and health service in Hong Kong.

**3.** **Describe the training plan including activities/content. State the expected deliverables of the training plan upon completion in point form**: Describe the activities/content and deliverables of the training programme.

**4.** **State the relevancy and how the specialised skills obtained from the training programme will be applied to the research project in PART H:** Describe how the training programme relates and applies to the research project proposed in the application.

**5.** **Justify the funding requirements for the training plan (Please provide the supporting documents such as course information if appropriate):** All requested items must be fully justified demonstrating value of money. For proposed budget in PART F, Section 3a, please provide the details for overseas training, e.g., itinerary of travel, standard rates for subsistence allowance/accommodation.

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[1] Health services research covers a broad area of clinical research on the prevalence, incidence, cause, prevention, treatment of human diseases, effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of healthcare services and policy. Clinical studies on the care and rehabilitation of patients are also included. Examples include clinical studies on major non-communicable diseases (NCD), modifiable lifestyle factors, primary care, chronic disease management and palliative care, elderly care and infectious diseases.

**PART H – RESEARCH PROPOSAL**: To ensure consistency and fairness, FAs must strictly comply with the formatting requirements listed below. The Secretariat will not process applications that do not comply with these formatting requirements. In particular, insufficiently detailed proposals may be withdrawn. **The Research Fellowship Scheme aims at supporting research in public health (in particular public health policy) and health services research. Pilot studies and proof of concept studies[2] will be considered. Basic science research with low translational value or requiring long time for influencing health practice will not be considered.**

***Content***

1. **Project Title:** The project title should be concise but informative and self-explanatory. ***Not more than 25 words***.

2. **Abstract of project**: Presented ***in BMJ house style*** of ***not more than 250 words*** with the following headings: objectives; hypothesis to be tested; design and subjects; study instruments; interventions; main outcome measures; data analysis and expected results. For details, please refer to **https://www.bmj.com/about-bmj/resources-authors/house-style.**

3. **Keyword:** Please enter up to 10 keywords for the project.

4. **Potential application**: Please explain the likely benefit of the research to the health or health care in Hong Kong. Elaborate in ***not more than 500 words***. Researchers should continuously review the research question whether the work has potential wider application, including but not limited to clinical practice, and/or health services management or inform health policy in Hong Kong, taking appropriate action in accordance with the AI's procedures for the protection and exploitation of research findings.

5. **Proposed project start and end dates**: The expected start date and completion date should be entered. The project period should be within the fellowship period.

6. **Ethics approval/safety approval/consent for accessing third-party data**: If the approval and/or consent for accessing third party data has been received from the proper authorities, complete this section. If not, and if applicable, state the current progress of seeking the approval/consent in Section 9(k).

7. **Applicants**: Research project should not have more than nine Co-Applicants. The employment relationship between the FA and the AI should be made clear. If an applicant holds more than one post, e.g., one in University and one in Hospital or another Service or Unit, details of the position at the AI should be stated. All applicants are expected to be personally and actively engaged in the project.

8. **HMRF, other support, similar or related proposals and track record**: All applicants listed in the Application Form Section 7 of PART H ***must declare*** whether any similar grant applications have been submitted in the past three years, are currently submitted or will be submitted in the next six months to the HMRF or any of its preceding funding schemes, or any other funding agencies (local or overseas). Submission of research proposals previously declined by the HMRF or other research funding agencies may be considered. FAs should provide (i) all comments raised by the funding agencies; (ii) the principal applicants' responses

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[2] Proof of Concept studies refer to the studies which aim to verify the practical potential of some concepts or theories. Examples of Proof of Concept studies include early testing of potential efficacy, safety or feasibility of a treatment.

to address these comments; (iii) the revised proposals with highlights of changes made; and (iv) detailed explanation and justifications if no change is made in the research proposal. Copies of the relevant documents should be attached. All applicants should advise the track record in respect of funding awarded, if any, by the HMRF (including investigator-initiated research projects, Health Care Promotion Scheme), or any of its preceding funding schemes, or other funding agencies (local or overseas) in the past three years. If the application has been approved, indicate the status of research: on-going, completed, withdrawn, terminated, not yet started, etc.

At any time before the announcement of the funding decision of the HMRF application, applicants are required to notify the Secretariat immediately about: (a) any other similar or related application submitted to other funding agencies in addition to those listed in the Application Form; and (b) the funding decision of any similar or related application once available

**9. Proposed Research Project Template:**

***Format***

| | |
|---|---|
| **Word limit:** | Section 9(a) – (d) of PART H inclusively. Not more than 4,000 words. Please provide the word count for Section 9(a) – (d) of PART H. |
| **Margin:** | Left at least **2.5cm**. Others at least **1.5cm**. |
| **Font:** | At least **10-point**. Preferably **Arial**. |
| **Character spacing:** | **Normal** |
| **Line spacing:** | At least **Single**. |

***Content***

a. **Title:** Same as the project title in PART H Section 1 above.

b. **Introduction:** Explain the relevance of the proposal to the scope of the fund and summarise previous work in the field (including any by the applicants) drawing attention to gaps in present knowledge and citing key references.

c. **Aims and Hypotheses to be Tested**: State the aims and hypotheses, wherever possible, as a list of questions to which answers will be sought.

d. **Plan of Investigation**: Give practical details of how answers will be obtained to the questions posed. This should include information on:

(i) Subjects to be included in the study. Justification for sample size and power analysis to support the chosen sample size must be provided for all studies including pilot or proof of concept study.

(ii) Methods to be employed, giving references where these are non-standard. Where new methods are being developed, arrangements for establishing validity and reliability should be described. Examples of non-standard questionnaires, tests etc. should accompany the application or their content be clearly indicated.

(iii) Study design described in sufficient detail to allow assessment of workload and timetable and including experiments, observations to be made, randomisation method where relevant, and the use of controls.

(iv) Data processing and analysis including outcome measures, means of validating records, and the type of statistical analysis to be carried out.

(v) Potential pitfalls and contingency plans describing potential problem(s) that may be encountered during implementation of the study and providing a proactive strategy to continue the project if such problems are encountered.

e. **Existing Facilities**: Describe resources and facilities available for supervision, equipment, space, staffing, relevant departmental interests, and collaboration. Supplementary sponsorship must be fully justified. Applicants shall state clearly whether any supplementary support has been/will be received from other sources, including but not limited to monetary, investigational new drugs/devices, reagents, and consumables and rental of equipment.

f. **Justification of Requirements**: The case for staff should be justified in terms of expertise and workload required by the research. Reasons should be given for selecting particular types of equipment. ***Please refer to the allowable and unallowable items at Appendix A***.

g. **Purpose and Potential**: Describe the underlying purpose of the project, and its possible implications for health and health care in Hong Kong. Where appropriate, describe plans for possible applications arising from the research. Describe the ways in which the research results will be disseminated.

h. **Key References**: Include a maximum of 25 references in Vancouver style. Follow the "Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals" at www.icmje.org/index.html for referencing. If it is considered essential to cite work by the applicants that are ***in press*** for publication, please provide a copy in "Section 9(i). Additional Materials".

i. **Additional Materials**: Include figures/tables, study instruments, questionnaires, consent forms, study protocol, investigation guidelines, diagrams of equipment, etc. Figures and tables should be of sufficient size and use colour where applicable for easy reading. ***Not more than five figures and/or tables are allowed***. List the items that have been attached.

j. **Timetable of Work**: In the table provided, describe clearly the key milestones of the project, the date (i.e. months after project commencement) by which these key milestones are expected to be reached, and the resulting deliverable. An example is included for reference, which may be overwritten/deleted in the final submission. Include 3-5 key milestones. These milestones will be used to determine the frequency of reporting progress to the Secretariat.

k. **Research Ethics/Safety Approval/Consent for accessing third-party data:** Select (☑) the appropriate boxes to confirm if approvals for the respective ethics, safety and consent for accessing third-party data has been obtained or is being sought from the proper authorities. Provision of the ethical approvals and/or consent during the submission of applications is not required. FAs shall submit such approvals and/or consent ***within 12 weeks*** (or as specified by the Secretariat) after the announcement of funding decisions. Failure to do so will result in withdrawal of grant. Letters of exemption for non-applicable regulatory committees are not required. For details regarding Independent Ethics Committee/Institutional Review Board (IEC/IRB), please refer to Section 3 of the following document published by the International Council for Harmonisation –

**https://www.ich.org/page/efficacy-guidelines.**

**Clinical Trials**: Under regulation 36B of the Pharmacy and Poisons Regulations (Cap.138A), for the purpose of conducting a clinical trial on human beings or medicinal tests on animals, a Clinical Trial Certificate/Medicinal Test Certificate issued by the

Department of Health must be obtained prior to the commencement of the research project. FAs conducting clinical trials, in particular those involving the use of Chinese medicine, are strongly advised to confirm the need of a Clinical Trial Certificate/Medicinal Test Certificate from the Department of Health as early as practical (preferably before/during the submission of applications to the HMRF) to avoid delay in project commencement. If a Clinical Trial Certificate is required, failure to present a valid clinical trial certificate by a specified deadline will result in withdrawal of the grant.

**Hospital Authority (HA)'s Data Access**: Approval from the Central Panel on Administrative Assessment of External Data Requests of HA is required for using HA data where applicable. Please visit http://www3.ha.org.hk/data/Provision/Index/ for details.

**10.** **Report on previous research grants**: Report all previous research grants supported by the HMRF or any of its preceding funding schemes held by all applicants (if applicable), including projects currently underway and completed research projects ***in the last three years***.

If progress, interim, final or dissemination reports for other projects supported by the HMRF are overdue, specify the reasons and indicate when these reports will be submitted. Failure to submit the required reports on time will affect this and future grant applications.

Briefly summarise current perception of the significance of the work done (e.g. apart from knowledge, conceptual or methodological advances, contribution, if any, to health care, medical practice, training, applicability/spin-off) and of the project's significance for your own, your assistants', and your colleagues' scientific development.

Please list full papers published or "in press" in refereed journals with titles, page numbers and co-authorships.

**11.** **Curriculum vitae (CV) and roles & responsibilities of all applicants:** Each applicant listed in Section 7 of PART H must provide his/her personal particulars and their specific role and responsibilities on this project. The FA must provide the date(s) of award of PhD and/or other degree(s) (date on degree certificate) and five most recent publications (including those submitted or in press). Other applicant(s) are required to list relevant publication(s) ***over the previous three years or five most recent publications***, whichever is the smaller.

**12.** **Signature**: The research proposal ***must*** be endorsed by all applicants. The FA should make sure that all Co-Applicants endorse on the application as the track record for the whole project team might be adversely affected if misconduct/fraud is found. All project team members should be well aware of their participation and roles and responsibility in the project. The Management of Track Records of Applicants is available at **Appendix C**.

**PART I – DECLARATION AND AUTHORISATION**

To the best of FA's knowledge, the AI or any of the applicants listed in Section 7 under Part H, or any of the proposed personnel and sub-contractors/agencies to be engaged in the project, shall declare any actual or perceived conflict of interest, such as receiving any funding or assistance directly or indirectly from industries (including but not limited to tobacco related businesses, infant formula companies, or organisations funded by such businesses), or using the grant monies (budgeted under Sections 2 & 3 under Part F) to purchase products or services from the AI or any of the applicants listed in Section 7 under Part H, or any of the proposed personnel and sub-contractors / agencies to be engaged in the project. The Application Form ***must*** be endorsed by the FA, the mentor, the Head of Department, and authorised persons on behalf of the AI and Finance Office.

**Mentor:** Mentor must be a full-time staff of the AI. For Stream B, the mentor can be a full-time staff of the respective medical school of The Chinese University of Hong Kong and The University of Hong Kong He/She is required to state his/her support and role to the FA throughout the fellowship period. A copy of the CV of the mentor should be attached to the application.

**AI:** A nomination letter from the President/Vice-Chancell (for Stream A)/Hospital Chief Executive (for Stream B) should be forwarded to the Secretariat in a sealed envelope together with the completed Application Form.

**APPENDIX A**

## ITEMS ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

### 1. Items Allowable

1.1 Training Costs

Funds can be requested to support the registration/tuition fees for the training/attachment. Up to two economy class roundtrips air passage by most direct route, accommodation expenses and subsistence allowance can be supported. The travel expenses and allowance should follow the AI's established procurement procedures and standard rates.

1.2 Staff Costs

Funds may be requested for the salaries of the reliever of the FA, research staff and other supporting staff. Reliever must be at the rank of the FA or below to take over the teaching duties of the FA. Staff cost (full or part-time) includes salary and mandatory provident fund of staff employed. For part-time staff, the aggregated and averaged part-time effort must meet at least the 20% threshold.

For instance, the Research Council is prepared to reimburse 20% of staff salary for a research or support staff provided that it is used for 20% of time on the project. When applying for reimbursement, the FA should specify the particular staff to which the costs relate and the percentage of time the staff spent on the project.

1.3 Facilities

1.3.1 Computer equipment, software and computing consumables

The FA should provide valid justifications for purchase of software and computing equipment/facilities. Local departmental computing charges which can be assigned to the research project will be considered as an allowable cost, including stationery supplies and software licences. Expenses for computing equipment specific for the project, such as notebook computers, software, etc., will be covered. Central computing facilities remain the responsibility of the AI.

1.3.2 Equipment

Maintenance costs, service contracts and spare parts for equipment not purchased specifically for the project but used for a significant portion of the project will be paid on a pro rata basis.

For example, a piece of equipment that is used 50% of the time for an approved project and 50% of the time for other purposes will be covered for half of the maintenance costs. When applying for maintenance costs, the FA should specify the piece of equipment to which the costs relate and the percentage of time the equipment will be in use on the project.

Equipment costing less than HK$10,000 should be applied for and charged under the heading "Other Expenses".

1.4 Administrative services

1.4.1 Cost of Audited Account

HK$5,000 per project for grant amount between HK$100,001 and HK$1,000,000.

HK$10,000 per project for grant amount over HK$1,000,000.

1.4.2 Administrative expenses

Costs such as printing, telephone, fax, postage, etc. are allowed where they are separately metered and can be attributed to a specific research project.

1.5 Others

1.5.1 Travel and subsistence

All reasonable costs associated with conference attendance relating to the research project are supported up to a maximum of HK$10,000 (e.g. registration, travel, accommodation, subsistence and preparation of materials).

The cost of local travel for research staff to attend clinics, training sites, patients' homes, etc., for purposes directly related to the research project are allowed.

1.5.2 Publication costs

The cost of publishing the results of research grant up to a maximum of HK$20,000 is allowed.

1.5.3 Reference materials

Purchase of essential reference materials, e.g. textbooks, downloads of articles, cost up to a maximum of HK$5,000 is allowed.

1.5.4 Incentives

The purchase of gifts, coupons, etc., as incentives/tokens of appreciation for study participants is allowed if it is well justified with valid reason(s). A governance system shall be in place to adequately monitor the disbursement of incentives to ensure accountability and traceability.

**2. Items Unallowable**

2.1 Employment of all applicants listed in Section 7 of PART H of the Application Form.

2.2 Employment of established academic and service staff (e.g. Assistant Professor and Post-doctoral Fellow) supported by other funds (e.g. University Grants Committee/ Research Grants Council).

2.3 General premises costs including -

- construction and maintenance of buildings
- land purchase/lease
- refurbishment/renovation/adaptation
- basic services and utilities (including heating, lighting and communications)
- lease/rent/rates
- insurance
- cleaning/pottering/security/safety

2.4 Cost of unspecified research work.

2.5 Cost of work incurred before the commencement of the project date, or the writing-up of such work.

2.6 Cost of literature surveys.

2.7 Remuneration of undergraduates (other than payment for vacation work under the existing award if such earnings are allowed by the AI).

2.8 Any costs associated with a research student supported by other funds (e.g. University Grants Committee/Research Grants Council).

2.9 Cost of the facilities of the AI to which the applicants and hired staff normally have free access.

2.10 Staff benefits such as gratuity, bonus, severance payment and untaken leave of staff employed.

2.11 All kinds of insurance costs, such as medical insurance, labour insurance, clinical trial insurance.

2.12 Costs for clearance/approvals/certificates from relevant ethics committees/IRBs and regulatory bodies.

2.13 Entertainment and overseas visits not directly related to the research project.

2.14 Advertising costs for recruitment of staff.

**APPENDIX B**

**FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

## 1. Approval of Fellowship

1.1 Approved fellowships are funded on actual basis with a pre-approved cash ceiling.

## 2. Payment of Fellowship Support

2.1 An annual certified financial statement must be submitted covering the 12-month period from the project commencement date. The AI shall submit an annual certified financial statement ***within 2 months*** following the first anniversary of the commencement date, and shall submit the audited account ***within 6 months*** after the end date or ***within 60 days*** after termination of the project, whichever is earlier.

2.2 Final claim for reimbursement of expenditures

Claims for reimbursement of expenditures may only cover **the period between the commencement date and end date** of the fellowship. A final reimbursement claim form shall be submitted together with the audited account and the final report.

**APPENDIX C**

**Management of Track Records of Applicants[3]**

**(Effective from 1 November 2018)**

| Improprieties | Description | Gravity | Actions[4,5] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Scientific Misconduct[6] | Plagiarism, fraudulence, etc. | Serious | i. Disqualification in the related funding exercise; and<br>ii. Debar[7] for 5 years |
| Double dipping not declared | Receiving grant from HMRF or any of its preceding funding schemes, or other funding agencies (local or overseas) | Heavy | i. Disqualification in the related funding exercise; and<br>ii. Debar for 1 year |
| | Submission of grant applications or similar proposals to HMRF or any of its preceding funding schemes, or other funding agencies (local or overseas) | Light | Warning letter |
| Conflict of Interest not declared | The nominated reviewer(s) as a direct relative or a close personal contact with Principal Applicant (PA) or Co-applicant (Co-A) | Medium | Disqualification in the related funding exercise |
| | The PA has the following relationship(s) with the nominated reviewer in the past 3 years at the time of grant application –<br>- research collaborator<br>- mentor/student<br>- work colleagues in the same department<br>- employer/ employee/ business partner | Medium | Disqualification in the related funding exercise |

[3] *Unless otherwise determined, the principal applicant shall be held primarily responsible for the conduct of the project and any penalties imposed as a consequence of any misconduct or non-compliance.*

*4 The track record of the principal applicant who has committed any of the improprieties mentioned in this Annex shall be marked for and taken into account when considering of future grant applications for up to 5 years.*

*5 If the misconduct is reported after commencement of the study, assessment will be made to determine whether any of the approved amount should be returned to the Government.*

*4 Scientific misconduct means fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the scientific community for proposing, conducting, or reporting research. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgements of data.*

*7 Debarment covers applying and receiving grants from the Health and Medical Research Fund in the capacity of principal applicant.*

| Improprieties | Description | Gravity | Actions[4,5] |
|---|---|---|---|
| Conflict of Interest not declared | The Co-A has the following relationship(s) with the nominated reviewer in the past 3 years at the time of grant application –<br>- research collaborator<br>- mentor/student<br>- work colleagues in the same department<br>- employer/ employee/ business partner | Light | Warning letter |
| Non-compliance | No submission of final report by deadline without valid justification | Heavy | i. Withhold funding of the project or recovery of the grant<br>ii. Debar for 2 years and until the final report is submitted, whichever is later |
| | Any of the following without valid justification –<br>- Early termination<br>- Incomplete project<br>- Research work done before project commencement not declared | Heavy | i. Partial payment or recovery of grant<br>ii. Debar for 2 years |
| | Final report graded "Unredeemable" or "Unacceptable" | Medium | i. Withhold 10% or 20% of the grant subject to the terms and conditions in the agreement |