

Research Grants Council (RGC) European Union - Hong Kong Research and Innovation Cooperation Co-funding Mechanism by the RGC

FAQs

What are the objectives of this scheme?

- ▶ The European Union (EU) - Hong Kong Research and Innovation Cooperation Co-funding Mechanism by the RGC aims to foster European-Hong Kong collaboration in academic research and to support the participation of researchers in universities funded by the University Grants Committee (UGC) in Hong Kong in joint research projects conducted under the framework of Horizon 2020.

Which discipline(s) is(are) covered in this scheme?

- ▶ Both basic and applied research projects of high academic merits will be considered. The Hong Kong PI can apply for the RGC grants for the following research proposals:
 - Research project proposals: in science disciplines (viz. biology and medicine, engineering and physical sciences)
 - Exchange (mobility) proposals: in all disciplines

Who is eligible to apply (as a PC/PI)?

- ▶ Hong Kong applicants should meet fully the requirements for applying for the RGC General Research Fund (GRF). For details, please refer to the Explanatory Notes for GRF Application Form “GRF2” which is uploaded on the RGC website (<https://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/rgc/form/GRF2.pdf>).
- ▶ Each application to the RGC should be submitted with only one applicant nominated as the Hong Kong Principal Investigator (PI) and no applicant should submit more than one application in this capacity.
- ▶ Hong Kong PI of an on-going project under this scheme is not allowed to submit a new application in the capacity of PI unless he / she has submitted the completion report of the last approved project to the RGC before the application deadline. Nevertheless, he / she could participate in a new funding proposal under this scheme in the capacity of Co-Investigator.

Any eligibility requirement on Co-PI/Co-I?

- ▶ There is no restriction on the Co-Investigators.

What are the stages of application?

- ▶ PIs submit full proposal
- ▶ Formal submission of full proposal (paper mode)
- ▶ Proposal update

What document(s) should be prepared before and/or during application stage?

► At Proposal Submission Stage:

- Completed application form (EU/RGC 1) in PDF format;
- Summary of the Horizon 2020 proposal submitted to the EU and research work undertaken by the Hong Kong team (EU/RGC 1b), signed by the Coordinator of the Horizon 2020 project in PDF format;
- EU's official notification of the proposal being funded;
- Signed Undertaking;
- Signed Statement of Endorsement [only applicable to applicants submitting the exchange (mobility) proposals]; and
- VeriGuide scanning result

► At Information Update Stage:

- Research Ethics / Safety / Data access Approval Letter(s) (if required)

Is there an institutional quota for this scheme?

- ▶ There is no institutional quota for this scheme.

What is the range of funding support?

- ▶ Project duration: The project duration should normally be not more than five years and should not be longer than that of the concerned Horizon 2020 project. The Hong Kong PI should not propose a project end date which is beyond the project duration of the concerned Horizon 2020 project.
- ▶ Ceiling of project cost to awarded by RGC (excluding on-costs):
 - Research project grants: HK\$3 million
 - Exchange (mobility) grants: HK\$0.5 million

What does the funding budget cover?

- ▶ One-line Vote Items:
 - Supporting Staff Costs
 - Equipment Expenses
 - Outsourcing Expenses of Research Work Outside Hong Kong
 - General Expenses (e.g. travel expenditure, etc.)
 - Conference Expenses

What does the funding budget cover? (continued)

- ▶ Earmarked Items:
 - Cost for Employment of Relief Teacher
 - High-performance Computing Services Expenses
 - Research-related Software Licence / Dataset
- ▶ The RGC will not provide insurance cover in connection with the project or allow the use of the grant for insurance cover. Applicants should make their own arrangements. The RGC will not accept any responsibility arising in any way from the visits and the activities undertaken by the researchers.

If PIs opt to submit without vetting by ORKTS, what will the minimum processing time be?

- ▶ Not applicable as Panel's endorsement of the PI's declaration of research ethics / safety / data access approvals is required.

What are the assessment criteria?

- ▶ The RGC will evaluate and select the proposals from Hong Kong applicants for funding in accordance with its rules and mechanism. The proposals should have well identified joint working relationship demonstrating clearly the added value of collaboration.
- ▶ The evaluation criteria include:
 - The extent to which the existing strengths of each side may complement each other in the proposal;
 - Opportunities for training young researchers;
 - Credentials of project teams; and
 - Impact to Hong Kong.

Is it possible to include/exclude specific potential reviewers? If yes, how can I file a request?

- ▶ If the applicants want to exclude any individuals from access to their research proposal, they should inform the RGC (via ORKTS) separately when submitting the research proposal.
- ▶ Applicants should submit the request in writing separately through ORKTS setting out the full circumstances and justification.
- ▶ Please note that the RGC does not accept research proposals that are classified “confidential” by the applicants.

When will grantor announce the funding result?

- ▶ Funding results of the first and second round of EU/RGC Scheme are normally announced around September and March respectively. That said, for the second call of the 2020/21 exercise, the funding cycle has been prolonged and hence the result announcement is scheduled to be announced in September 2021.

Currently, I am not involved in any Horizon 2020 projects but one of my collaborator recently received the support from Horizon 2020. Can I still apply for this co-funding scheme?

- ▶ According to the eligibility requirements of EU/RGC Co-funding Scheme, Hong Kong applicants must be partners in a successful proposal submitted in response to the 2018-2020 Horizon 2020 (H2020) call. “Partners” here refers to participants listed in the successful EU proposal concerned. Therefore, if you are currently not involved in a H2020 project, you are ineligible to apply for this Scheme.