# Health and Medical Research Fund (HMRF) – Research Grant Applications

## FAQs

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# What are the objectives of this scheme?

▶ The HMRF aims to build research capacity and to encourage, facilitate and support health and medical research to inform health policies, improve population health, strengthen the health system, enhance healthcare practices, advance standard and quality of care, and promote clinical excellence, through the generation and application of evidence-based scientific knowledge in health and medicine. It also provides funding support to evidence-based health promotion projects that help people adopt healthier lifestyles by enhancing awareness, changing adverse health behaviours or creating a conducive environment that supports good health practices.

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

- Any discipline in the health or health-related field.

- Members of other disciplines may also apply if the proposed project is within the ambit of the HMRF.

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

- The principal applicant shall be based in a Hong Kong organisation throughout the project period and be employed by the administering institution.

# How to apply for this scheme?

▶ All applications must be submitted via the electronic Grant Management System (eGMS) by completing the electronic Application Form. (https://rfs.fhb.gov.hk/eGMS/)

# Can PI submit more than one application to the same application round?

▶ No, PI cannot submit more than one application to the same application round.

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

▶ Declaration Form for Research Grants

▶ While the various regulatory committees determine whether or not regulatory approval is required, the primary responsibility for seeking relevant approval rests with the principal applicant. Regulatory approvals and/or consent for accessing third-party data are a necessary component of the application. A copy of the regulatory approvals and/or consent should be included with the application if they are available. If they are not available by the closing date, the principal applicant should indicate in the application that the process of obtaining regulatory approval and/or consent is ongoing.

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

▶ Principal applicants 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 soon as possible (preferably during the submission of applications to the Health and Medical Research Fund) to avoid delay in project commencement.

# Is there an institutional quota for this scheme?

- There is no institutional quota for this scheme.

# Any eligibility requirement on Co-applicant(s)?

- Not more than 9 co-applicants.

# What is the range of funding support?

▶ The normal grant ceiling is $1.5 million per project (i.e. investigator-initiated research project or health promotion project) with a grant duration not exceeding three years.

# Is administrative overhead fees/indirect costs allowed?

- Administrative overhead is not allowed.

# What is the operational timeframe after internal deadline?

- 20 working days (including the time required by the Finance Office for checking budget).

# What is the estimated time for PIs' revision and re-submission?

▶ 5 working days.

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

- 7 working days (vetting of budget will be required).

# What are the assessment criteria?

► Applications will undergo peer review process and be assessed according to the following criteria –

► Health and medical research projects

o Originality;

o Relevance to the fund and thematic priorities;

o Significance of the research questions;

o Quality of scientific content;

o Credibility of design and methods;

o Applicability to local context; and

o Translational potential/value.

# What are the assessment criteria? (continued)

► Health promotion projects

o Potential impact in response to the health needs of the target local community;

o Scientific evidence of effectiveness of the proposed health promotion activities;

o Innovation;

o Relevance to thematic priorities;

o Feasibility of the proposal;

o Evaluation plan of programme effectiveness;

o Cross-sector collaboration, in particular collaboration between NGOs and tertiary institutions;

o Impact and sustainability of the programme; and

o Potential to build community capacity in health promotion.

► The Research Council may at its absolute discretion invite non-local experts to participate in the second-tier peer review.

# Will grantor shortlist projects and invite applicants to attend presentation/meeting/interview?

► No.

# When will grantor announce the funding result?

▶ Applicants will normally be informed within six months of the deadline of submission whether or not their application has been successful.

# What is the difference between projects under and above HK$100,000? Why is it specified in the Application Form?

▶ Project of HK$100,000 or below is expected to be small-scale project or pilot study. The finances of projects over HK$100,000 must be independently audited upon project completion and an audit fee should be included in the budget accordingly. Despite this difference, projects of any amount are all evaluated by the same assessment criteria.

# What are the thematic priority?

▶ The Research Council will determine the thematic priorities, currently under the following five broad themes: Infectious Diseases; Primary Healthcare and Non-communicable Disease; Mental Health; Cancer; and Implementation Science, which will be announced concurrently with the open call for applications and publicised on the Secretariat's website at https://rfs.fhb.gov.hk.

# What is the purpose of setting thematic priorities?

▶ The thematic priorities set out the areas that the Health and Medical Research Fund (HMRF) would prefer to support. Applications addressing the thematic priorities for the current HMRF Open Call will be given higher priority for funding.

# Special Remarks

▶ The principal applicant should indicate the most relevant thematic priority by entering the respective reference code into the application (Section 5b). If the application is outside the thematic priorities, please input "Outside thematic priorities" in the reference code. If Section 5b is not completed, the application will be treated as incomplete.

▶ Failure to declare double funding and potential conflict of interest shall be subject to penalty as determined by the Research Council.