

## **Healthy Longevity Catalyst Awards (Hong Kong) 2022**

### **Invitation for Applications**

This is to invite submission of applications for the Healthy Longevity Catalyst Awards (Hong Kong) 2022 (HLCA (HK) 2022) and to provide details of the procedures to be followed.

### **Background**

The [Healthy Longevity Global Competition](#) (the Competition) is organised by the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) of the United States. Launched by the NAM in 2019, the Competition is a series of inducement awards and prizes to catalyse breakthrough innovations to improve people's physical, mental, and social health and well-being as they age. It consists of three phases – the Catalyst Phase, the Accelerator Phase, and the Grand Prize Phase. The Research Grants Council (RGC) collaborates with the NAM and will give out awards for local researchers joining the Competition at its Catalyst Phase in 2022.

### **Funding**

RGC will offer ten Catalyst Awards, each with US\$50,000 at maximum (equivalent to around HK\$389,000). Travel subsidies of HK\$180,000 at maximum<sup>1</sup> will also be given to each winning team for members to attend the Innovator Summit to be organised by NAM in 2023 to discuss their work with fellow innovators, researchers, policymakers, and potential investors.

### **Topic Areas**

In line with the objectives of the Competition, HLCA (HK) 2022 will call for bold, new ideas **from any discipline** to improve the physical, mental, or social well-being for people as they age. In particular, the Competition seeks ideas that will extend the human health span through innovations in disease prevention, biomarkers, molecular pathways, mobility, functionality, social connectedness, and more. Ideas could focus on early-, mid-, or late-life, as long as it ultimately promotes health as people age. While applicants may submit proposals in the following topic areas, application on other topic areas under the objectives of the Competition are also welcome:

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<sup>1</sup> A travel subsidy of HK\$30,000 per person for a maximum of six persons of each winning team will be provided.

- (i) Biology of aging and molecular pathways;
- (ii) Built environment and urban planning;
- (iii) Disease prevention, including biomarkers and indicators of disease;
- (iv) Health care delivery;
- (v) Housing, such as smart-enabled homes, intergenerational housing models;
- (vi) Policy, such as economic, health and science policy;
- (vii) Social connectedness, engagement and well-being;
- (viii) Technology, such as artificial intelligence, robotics, medical-, assistive-, and information-technology;

The selection criteria to be adopted by RGC for evaluation of HLCA (HK) 2022 proposals are at **Annex**.

### **Application Procedures**

Application should be made in the prescribed form (HLCA1) for HLCA (HK) 2022 and must be submitted through the applicant's affiliated university. Relevant application form and guidelines can be downloaded from RGC website ([https://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/rgc/funding\\_opport/hlca/](https://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/rgc/funding_opport/hlca/)). The number of applications to be submitted by each university would be capped at **15**. All applications must be submitted to the UGC Secretariat by **5:00 pm on 4 March 2022**. Universities are required to provide two hard copies and one soft copy of each proposal. For the soft copy, please save all files in one CD / USB drive with file names and project reference number clearly marked on it.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to submit Supplementary Information for further consideration in May / June 2022.

### **Code of Conduct and Enquiries**

The RGC is fully committed to the principle of honesty, integrity and fair play in the conduct of its business. All applicants should comply with the RGC Code of Conduct, which is available on the RGC website ([https://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/rgc/guidelines/code/code\\_of\\_conduct.pdf](https://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/rgc/guidelines/code/code_of_conduct.pdf)). If your staff have any enquiries about the application procedures or other aspects of this circular, please call Mr John HO, Assistant Secretary-General

(Research) (Tel: 3959 0428 or email: johnho@ugc.edu.hk) or Ms Phoebe WAN,  
Research Administrator (Tel: 3959 0402 or email: pwan@ugc.edu.hk).

**Selection Criteria for**  
**Healthy Longevity Catalyst Awards (Hong Kong) 2022 Applications**

The review process includes the following steps:

**(1) Administrative Review**

The Secretariat will ensure that universities have endorsed eligibility of the applicants and completeness of the applications.

**(2) Innovation Review**

Five Innovation Reviewers will be assigned for each proposal and grade the proposals according to the assessment criteria. Proposals from the STEM disciplines will be reviewed by three STEM reviewers and two non-STEM reviewers. Proposals from the non-STEM disciplines will be reviewed by three non-STEM reviewers and two STEM reviewers

For **Innovation Review**, applications would be assessed on the basis of creativity and innovation, rather than on the basis of pre-existing data, demonstrated work, institutional capabilities, or feasibility alone. Following NAM guidelines, each proposal will be assessed with the following assessment criteria in order of descending importance:

- (i) **Innovation\***: The extent to which the proposed idea challenges existing paradigms and employs new methodologies or concepts;
- (ii) **Potential for Impact**: The extent to which the proposed idea may have a significant impact on the physical, mental, or social well-being of people as they age;
- (iii) **Quality**: The extent to which the proposed idea and the research methodology are clearly explained and the application includes a compelling or well-defined outcome metric;
- (iv) **Scope**: The extent to which the proposed idea represents a challenge impacting the entire field, and not solely the interests of the applicant.

*\*Note: Innovation (criterion (i)) is the overriding criterion in evaluating the applications.*

**(3) Subject Matter Expert (SME) Review**

During the SME Review, five reviewers will be assigned for each shortlisted proposal. SME reviewers will focus on academic, scientific merits of the proposals as well as the soundness of their design and methodology. However, it should be noted that creativity and innovation would remain as the top-priority evaluation criteria in rating the proposal as this is the most important and distinguishing feature of the Catalyst Award competition. In addition, the following aspects would be taken into consideration when evaluating the academic and scientific merits and feasibility of the proposal:

- (i) **Originality and Impact** in the subject field: How innovative and important is the proposed idea? What is the potential impact of the proposed idea in the area of study?
- (ii) **Research Questions, Aims and Hypotheses**: Are the objectives and initiatives viable and clearly expressed with logical reasoning?
- (iii) **Project Design and Implementation Plans**: Complexity and feasibility of the proposed approaches and methodology in addressing the key ideas and problems.
- (iv) **Outcomes and Effectiveness**: Are the outcomes clearly defined and aiming towards achieving proof-of-concept in the next stage of development?

**(4) Selection Committee Review**

A final selection panel will review the shortlisted applications, external reviewers' assessment at different stages and then identify ten proposals with innovative, novel, and potentially groundbreaking ideas to be recommended to receive the award.

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