**RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL**

**COMPETITIVE RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES FOR
THE LOCAL SELF-FINANCING DEGREE SECTOR 2025/26**

**INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (IDS)
COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH GRANT**

**Scheme Overview and Guidance Notes (IDS(C)2)
for Completing the Application Form (IDS(C)1)**

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**Preamble: How to use this document**

All applicants and their institutions should read this Scheme Overview and Guidance Notes (Guidance Notes) carefully before completing and submitting an application to the scheme. The Research Grants Council (RGC) may stop further processing your application if your application is found not in compliance with any of the requirements as set out in this Guidance Notes.

Applicants should also read the Call for Proposals for details of the Institutional Development Scheme (IDS) Collaborative Research Grant, and also make reference to the "Guidelines on Disbursement, Accounting and Monitoring Arrangement for the Competitive Research Funding Schemes for the Local Self-financing Degree Sector" (SF-DAMA) from the RGC website.

The Guidance Notes is in two parts: SECTION 1 summarises the key information about the scheme while SECTION 2 is structured to mirror the application form sections and provide section-by-section guidance on completion of the application documentation.

Enquiries about the contents of this Guidance Notes and other related matters about the IDS Collaborative Research Grant funding exercise including appeals and complaints should be directed to the Research Coordinators (RCs) or responsible personnel of the institutions.

The guidelines on handling the information and personal data contained in applications submitted to the RGC are contained in **Annex A**. Applicants requiring additional information about internal deadlines, application procedures or assistance in completing the Application Form may contact the RCs or responsible personnel of their own institutions.

## SECTION 1 – SCHEME OVERVIEW

**Scheme Purpose**

1.      The IDS Collaborative Research Grant aims to encourage and support collaborative research involving two or more self-financing institutions, and / or group research activities that operate across disciplines within an institution, with a view to enhancing the research output of self-financing institutions in terms of the level of attainment, quality, dimensions and / or speed.

**Eligibility**

2.        Applicants must be eligible academic staff engaged by one of the following fifteen local self-financing degree-awarding institutions:

| Code | Institution |
|---|---|
| 11 | Saint Francis University |
| 12 | Centennial College |
| 13 | Hong Kong Chu Hai College |
| 14 | The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong |
| 15 | Hong Kong Shue Yan University |
| 16 | Hong Kong Metropolitan University |
| 17 | Tung Wah College |
| 21 | HKCT Institute of Higher Education |
| 22 | Hong Kong Nang Yan College of Higher Education |
| 23 | School of Continuing Education, Hong Kong Baptist University |
| 24 | School of Professional Education and Executive Development, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University |
| 25 | Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong |
| 31 | Gratia Christian College |
| 41 | Yew Chung College of Early Childhood Education |
| 51 | UOW College Hong Kong |

3.        The Project Coordinator (PC) and Co-Principal Investigator(s) (Co-PI(s)) of the proposal (except Co-PI(s) from the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities[1]) must be full-time academic staff members employed by one of the eligible self-financing degree-awarding institutions and fulfil ALL of the following requirements:

(i)        spend at least 80% of time on locally-accredited local degree or higher degree work[2]; and

(ii)        have at least a one-year renewable contract with the institution at the time of funding award being made.

4.        Institutions are responsible for interpreting whether an applicant has fulfilled the eligibility requirements announced in the Call for Proposals.    The applicant should clarify his / her status with the institution concerned.    **Once the application is submitted, change of PC during the processing period**

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[1] Academics from UGC-funded universities may take up the role of Co-PI in Collaborative Research Grant project.    Since the research funding is ring-fenced for the self-financing sector, the project grant cannot be transferred to the UGC sector.

[2] A PC / Co-PI who is / will be seconded to conduct research in a university or a research institute / body / agency in the Mainland / overseas jurisdiction while retaining his / her full-time appointment and position with his / her parent institution and is still on the payroll of the parent institution is eligible to apply for the IDS Collaborative Research Grant.

**will not be allowed. The PC is responsible to report immediately via RC of the institution to the UGC Secretariat any changes in eligibility status of the PC and / or the Co-PI(s). For this purpose, the Co-PI(s) is / are also responsible to inform the PC of his / her change in eligibility status immediately.**

**Scheme Funding Thresholds**

5.      Funding for the IDS Collaborative Research Grant Scheme should be in the range of HK$2 million to HK$10 million, inclusive of 15% on-costs.

**Language and Format for Applications**

6.      For applications which have genuine special needs to be completed in a language other than English, the applicant(s) / institution(s) are required to provide an English version on the Abstract and Research Details (Project Objectives; Pathways to Impact Statement and Research Project Statement).

7.      In order to ensure consistency and fairness, applicants must complete the applications in the following **standard RGC format. Failure to comply with the following format may lead to disqualification of their applications**.

      Font: Times New Roman
      Font Size: 12 point
      Margin: 2.5cm all round
      Spacing: Single-line spacing
      PDF version: compatible with Adobe Acrobat Readers 5 and should be a text-searchable pdf

8.      **All sections should be completed.** Where information sought is not applicable or not provided under a particular section, insert "N/A".

**Generating a Project Reference Number for the Application**

9.      Before submission, a project reference number should be assigned by the institution for each of the proposals for identification purposes. The format of the reference number is: UGC / Scheme + Institution Code / Subject Panel + Serial No. / Year, e.g. UGC/IDS(C)11/B01/25. The codes for the five subject panels are:

      B – Business Studies             M – Biology and Medicine
      E – Engineering                  P – Physical Sciences
      H – Humanities and Social Sciences

10.     The project reference number should be used and quoted in all future correspondence.   While an application could be made to a particular panel, the RGC shall have the discretion to decide on the panel responsible for the final assessment of each application.

**Application Timetable**

11.     The **deadline for submission of application is 3 March 2025 (Monday) 5:00pm.   Two hard copies (including the original version) and one soft copy of each proposal are required** to be forwarded to the UGC Secretariat through the institution.   Institutions are required to submit the soft copy of all applications in one USB memory stick as far as possible in a format specified by the Secretariat.   The file size of each proposal is **up to 5MB**, with the file name identical to the project reference number.   The content of the soft and hard copies must be **identical**.   The application will not be processed if such discrepancies are spotted.

12.     In view of substantial amount of data involved, institutions are required to submit the applications together with a summary of critical information (in Excel table) on all the proposals for the funding scheme.   The critical information for each proposal in the Excel table should be identical to the hard copy.   The completed critical data file should be forwarded to the Secretariat by email on or before **7 March 2025 (Friday) 5:00pm**.

13.     To help reduce the cost of processing and save paper, applicants are urged to keep the length of proposals and attachments to the minimum and to use double-sided printing / photocopying when making copies.   It is important that applicants should comply with the page limits specified in various sections of the Application Form.   **Applications will be disqualified if the proposals are found to have exceeded the allowable page limits in various sections or have abused the purpose of the "Supporting Documents" in Part V(e) of the Application Form** (only letters of collaboration and supporting documents for the purpose of research ethics / safety approval are allowed to be attached).   Applicants should not make use of Part V(e) to supplement the contents of other sections.

**Assessment**

14.     A **Selection Interview** will be conducted with the project team of each shortlisted application under the IDS Collaborative Research Grant in **mid-August 2025**.

15.     If the application is shortlisted for the Selection Interview, three members of the project team, including the PC and **two** key project team members should attend the interview.

16.     Applicants are not allowed to mention anything not related to the research proposal per se in the Application Form (such as describing the funding rules) with a view to **communicating to the reviewers** that the latter should give a certain rating if they intend to support the projects. **Should such act be discovered, the applications concerned will be disqualified**.

17.     The RGC is fully committed to the principle of honesty, integrity and fair play in the conduct of its business. To uphold public trust and protect public interest, it is important for all applicants to note and observe the "RGC Code of Conduct" and "Extracts from the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance" available at the RGC website (*https://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/rgc/guidelines/code/code_of_conduct.pdf*). Applicants are prohibited to **communicate with the RGC Members and Assessment Panel Members on the applications** submitted with a view to influencing the latter in assessing their applications. **Should such act be discovered, the applications concerned will be disqualified**.

**Information Update**

18.     A brief update of the proposal, if any, should be submitted to the RGC on or before **20 June 2025**, indicating any essential changes, e.g. changes in the eligibility of the PC and Co-PI(s), addition / removal of Co-PI(s) and Co-Investigator(s) (Co-I(s)), alternative funding obtained, declaration of related proposals, investigator(s)'s CV, grant records, etc. It should be emphasised that such an update should be confined to the above said changes only. Applicants should not use the opportunity to revise their proposals substantially.

19.     If an update is provided for ethics / safety approval for an application, or for access to Government / official / private data and records, the PC or the institution should submit the relevant updated data to the RGC on or before **20 June 2025**. Evidence of approval for access to Government / official / private data and records should also be submitted at this stage. Submission of letters on ethics / safety approval is only required upon the RGC's request.

20.     If an update is provided on any related research work that is being / has been conducted in relation to the proposal, the PC, Co-PI(s) and / or Co-I(s) should submit the relevant updated data to the RGC on or before **20 June 2025**.

21.     Other than the specific situations set out, no information update / revision to an application is allowed after submission deadline.

## SECTION 2 – COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

It is the responsibility of the PCs to ensure that their applications contain sufficient and consistent information for evaluation. **Incomplete submissions** (such as those lacking substantial data / information for evaluation) **or inconsistent / inaccurate information would lead to the disqualification of an application.**

## PART I    SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

### 1.    Particulars of the PC

(a)    An application should be submitted by one applicant nominated as the PC, other joint applicants should be nominated as Co-PIs or Co-Is.

(b)    To ensure accuracy and to facilitate identification of the PC, Co-PI and Co-I, names on Hong Kong Identity Cards / passports (where applicable) should be used and entered in the standard RGC format:

|       | Surname (in capital letters) | Other Names[*] |
|-------|------------------------------|----------------|
| e.g.  | CHAN                         | Peter Tai-wai  |
| e.g.  | ZHONG                        | Yaping         |
| e.g.  | ROBINSON                     | Philip         |

[*] First / given name, then Chinese name in English syllables (hyphenated) / middle name, if any; initials should be avoided.

(c)    If the PC is working concurrently on two or more on-going research projects in any capacity, please elaborate on how the PC would be able to take up the additional research work in this proposal while maintaining the research quality. Individual or collaborative research projects funded from all sources (irrespective of whether from UGC / RGC) should be included. PCs holding the capacity of Principal Investigator (PI), Project holder, Team leader, PC, Co-PI, Co-I or collaborator in projects should declare.

### 2.    Particulars of the Project Team

(a)-(c)    The PC and the Co-PI(s) of the proposal (except Co-PI(s) from the UGC-funded universities) must be full-time academic staff employed by one of the eligible self-financing degree-awarding institutions specified in Paragraph 3 under Section 1 "Scheme Overview" above and fulfil ALL of the requirements.

Each PC is allowed to submit one application under IDS Collaborative Research Grant in each exercise. There is no limit in the number of applications submitted in the capacity of Co-PI. To encourage collaboration

among SF institution[3] and / or collaboration across disciplines[4] within an institution, a proposal without Co-PI will not be accepted. There is no eligibility requirements for the Co-Is / collaborators.

Each PC / Co-PI / Co-I should have a clear, distinct and material role. Excessive number of Co-PI(s) / Co-I(s) should be avoided. Save in very exceptional circumstances, the RGC will not entertain requests for the addition of Co-PI(s) / Co-I(s) to a project after the funding award.

Please provide and indicate, in particular:
- the Open Researcher and Contributor ID Identifier (ORCID iD) of the PC and each Co-PI / Co-I;
- the average number of hours per week to be spent by the PC and each Co-PI / Co-I on the proposed project; and
- whether the PC and / or any of the Co-PI(s) / Co-I(s) is / are RGC Committee / Panel Member(s) as at the deadline of the application.

The PC, Co-PI(s) and local Co-I(s) are required to provide an ORCID iD to facilitate identification of researchers. Overseas Co-I(s) are encouraged to provide one. ORCID iD can be registered for free at https://orcid.org.

(d)     Please summaries the qualifications of the PC, each Co-PI and Co-I who will be involved in the project. The CV(s) to be attached should each have a maximum of two A4 pages and include the following information:

*CV*
(i)      Name
(ii)     Academic qualifications (with dates in "date/month/year" format and name of awarding universities)
(iii)    Previous academic positions held (with dates in "date/month/year" format)
(iv)     Present academic position (with date(s) in "date/month/year" format)
(v)      Previous relevant research work
(vi)     Other relevant matters such as research-related prizes and awards, brief description of consultancy experience, service as a referee in evaluating other grant applications, patents, PhD theses supervised, etc.

*Publications List*
(vii)    Section A – Five most representative publications in the recent five years

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3   For cross-institutional research proposal, the project team should have at least one eligible Co-PI from a local self-financing degree-awarding institution other than that of the PC.
4   For cross-disciplinary research proposal, the research proposal should cover at least two research fields from different subject disciplines.

Section B – Five representative publications beyond the recent five years with the latest publication entered first

The author list of the publications in the CV should be presented in full and cited exactly as written in the original publication. In particular, the applicant should indicate clearly his / her position especially in the long author list, say author 13 out of 40 for facilitating the Panel's consideration. **Failure to comply with the above requirements may lead to disqualification of the concerned application.**

(e)     Plan(s) for Collaboration

The plan should make clear the roles and specific task(s) of each individual members of the project team, including the PC, Co-PI(s) and Co-I(s). If the project involves collaboration with other research team(s) or institution(s), letters of collaboration should be attached to Part V(e) of the Application Form.

PCs are required to confirm that the Co-PI(s) and Co-I(s) listed in the proposal has / have explicitly agreed to serve in the project team and a copy of the proposal has been provided to each of the Co-PI(s) and Co-Is. PCs are required to provide documentary proof on the collaboration upon the request of the RGC / UGC Secretariat.

**3.     Particulars of the Project**

(a)     The project title should be informative, but short and concise.

(b)     All applicants must indicate the nature of the application being submitted:

| Nature | Definition |
|---|---|
| New | The application on a research topic which the PC, Co-PI(s) and / or Co-I(s) applies / apply for RGC funds for the first time. |
| Re-submission | The application on a research topic which the PC, Co-PI(s) and / or Co-I(s) has / have previously applied for RGC funds but not supported. |
| Continuation | The application continuing the work previously funded by the RGC. |

The applicant is required to quote the previous UGC / RGC reference number if the application is a re-submission / continuation.

(c)(i)  For all proposals, the primary and secondary fields of research and codes should be stated clearly.  Please refer to **Annex B**.  The primary field area / code should be selected from among the list of field areas / codes as prescribed under the relevant subject area of the Assessment Panel to which the proposal is submitted.  For example, if a proposal's primary field area / code is "Nursing (1222)", it should come under the subject area of Medicine, Dentistry & Health (M2) under the Biology and Medicine (M) Panel.  A maximum of two fields are allowed.  To facilitate the appointment of the right experts to evaluate the proposals, a PC should select a specific primary field area as closely as possible.

Cross-disciplinary research proposals should have primary and secondary research fields from different subject disciplines.  Otherwise, the PC should explain in the space provided in the Application Form how the proposal involves two or more subject disciplines.  Cross-disciplinary proposals may be evaluated jointly by experts in different fields.  The RGC reserves the authority to decide whether an application is cross-disciplinary or not.  If the RGC considers that the proposal is neither cross-institutional nor cross-disciplinary, the application concerned may be disqualified.

(ii)  Please give a maximum of five keywords to characterise the work of the proposal.

(d)  Please indicate the duration of the project, which should be **no more than three years**.  If there are any special circumstances and the PC can provide justifications, the project duration may exceed three years but should not exceed five years under any circumstances.  For proposals of equal quality, preference will be given to proposals with higher impact, larger scope and longer duration over those with incremental advances and shorter duration.

(e)  Please indicate the total amount of funding requested.  The amount should be consistent with the one quoted under Part III Section 1(a)(F) of the Application Form.

(f)  The PC should provide details where the proposal is a re-submission (submitted to the UGC / RGC before), largely similar to a proposal that has been submitted to the UGC / RGC or other funding bodies, or a continuation of funded project.  It is the responsibility of the PC to declare clearly and honestly whether his / her proposal is a re-submission.  The RGC reserves the right to discount the rating of an application for failure to acknowledge that it is a re-submission of a previous application.

(g)  A short abstract of a maximum of one A4 page comprehensible to a non-specialist should be provided.  This should be informative and indicative of the nature of the research to be conducted.  Please include the RGC Reference No. in the abstract.  If a proposal is funded, the "Abstract of

Research" (Abstract) will be posted on the RGC website for public's information.   The applicant will be approached for a Chinese version of the Abstract for public access shortly after the announcement of the funding results, or an English version if the original Abstract is presented in Chinese.

## PART II    DETAILS OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

This is the major portion of the proposal.   It should be presented clearly and concisely with sufficient details to indicate the significance and merits of the proposed research and to permit a meaningful evaluation of the worthiness of the project.

IDS Collaborative Research Grant project should not be a combination of individual research projects.   Genuine collaboration among project team members is required.

1. **Project Objectives**

    Please provide a maximum of <u>two</u> A4 pages outlining in bullet-point form for the Project Objectives.   These should include a summary of:

    • reasons for undertaking the project; and
    • the key issues and / or the elements of the problems being addressed – these should be described and those elements which are critical to the solution of the problems should be clearly identified.

    For proposals in the Creative Arts, applicants should ensure that proposals submitted to the RGC contain research elements which contribute to academic attainments.   Applicants should approach other funding authorities such as the Hong Kong Arts Development Council if their proposals have no research elements.

2. **Pathways to Impact Statement**

    Please provide a maximum of <u>two</u> A4 pages.

    The Pathways to Impact Statement shall demonstrate how the research team will realise the "impact" beyond the academia by the findings / outcome of the research proposal and by addressing any associated risks.   For the purpose of this section, impact is defined as the demonstrable contributions, beneficial effects, valuable changes or advantages that research qualitatively brings to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life; and that are beyond the academia.   The impacts may occur in any geographical location whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.

    The statement shall address the following:

    (a) Who are the potential beneficiaries of the proposed research in the short (one to three years), medium (four to ten years) and long term (over ten years)?

(b) How will the potential beneficiaries benefit?  What will be the objective demonstrable / measurable benefits beyond academia?

(c) What will be done during and / or after the project to increase the likelihood of achieving the identified benefit and reaching the identified beneficiaries?

(d) What are the potential risks that might adversely affect the achievement of the stated impact and how will such risks be mitigated?

The statement shall be comprehensible to a lay person.

Applicants may find the impact case studies available on the Research Assessment Exercise 2020 Impact Database (https://impact.ugc.edu.hk/) useful reference to understand more about research impact.  These case studies demonstrated the impact generated by the underpinning research undertaken from January 2000 to September 2019.  For the purpose of this Pathways to Impact Statement, the research team should describe how the research findings arising from this proposal would / could be used, and what the research team and universities would do, in bringing about and achieving future impact beyond academia.  It should be noted that research impact may or may not be arising from a single research.  Hence, the expected impact as described in the Pathways to Impact Statement may also include findings from other research, but the part to be contributed by this research proposal should be clearly defined.

3.      **Research Project Statement**

This is the core document of the proposal.  Please provide a maximum of <u>thirteen</u> A4 pages covering:

- *Research context* - This should set out details of the research proposal in relation to the research field(s) involved.  You should make clear the need for the research you are proposing and how it relates to existing research in the field.

- *Research questions* - This element should state clearly the key problems or questions you are seeking to address in the research project.  Why are these important issues to address?  How do they relate to the research context you have outlined?  What new knowledge and insight will be generated by your project in relation to these issues and why is that important?

- *Research Methods* - This element should make clear the approach you propose to take to the research: Outline the uniqueness and justification of the proposed approach including how will you

explore the research questions you have outlined and by what kinds of method and approach i.e. data gathering, experiment, observation, analysis and critique. The relevant research principles and techniques on which the problem solution depends should also be presented. You should make clear why these methods respond effectively to the questions you are seeking to explore.

Across these three elements, you should be clear on whether work has been / is being carried out by you and / or others on a related subject and outline previous and alternative approaches to the problem and their deficiencies, listing the key references to relevant research by you and others. For continuation of previous projects, the progress made and results achieved during the previous years should be clearly summarised. The summary should be sufficiently detailed to allow an evaluation of the worthiness of the project for continuation of support. For new projects, the reasons for investigation and the relevant findings should be clearly demonstrated.

- *Project timetable / Gantt chart* (one A4 page of the thirteen pages Research Project Statement) – A research timeline and a Gantt chart showing the research activities should be given. Where appropriate, experiments, tests and required facilities should be described. The relevant research principles and techniques on which the problem solution depends should also be presented. Outline uniqueness and justification of the proposed approach with its plan of investigation, giving citation from literature where appropriate. Elaboration should also be made on how the researchers from different self-financing institutions and / or how researchers from different subject disciplines are collaborated to create synergy in the proposed research.

- All Biology & Medicine proposals should include appropriate sample size and power estimates. For proposals applying funding for clinical trial, a protocol should be submitted in a separate pdf file as an addendum.

- Attached diagrams, photos, charts, and table, etc, if any (a maximum of two non-text A4 pages).

## 4. References

A maximum of three A4 pages is allowed. All references should be provided in full and include all authors. Generally accepted citation formats (e.g. American Psychological Association (APA) format) should be used.

**5.** **Re-submission of a Proposal Previously NOT Supported**

(a) If this application is the same as or similar to the proposal(s) submitted but not supported previously, the PC should re-visit the main concerns / suggestions previously expressed by reviewers if an earlier / similar version of the proposal has been assessed before.

(b) This section allows the applicant to respond to previous comments and explain whether and what changes have been incorporated in the latest proposal. Please ensure that sufficient revisions and improvement based on the comments provided by the Assessment Panel have been made. If a rebuttal is offered, it should be scholarly and measured. Re-submitted proposals will be treated as fresh applications for peer-review and handled in an identical manner to other new applications. Although the Assessment Panel will take into account the PC's responses to the reviewers' comments, the Panel is not obliged to invite the same group of external reviewers to assess the new application.

## PART III  PROJECT FUNDING

Unless otherwise specified, all funding levels stated in the Guidance Notes and the Application Form are in Hong Kong dollars.

1.      **Cost and Justification**

The RGC may not process the application if the proposed budget does not comply with the requirements as set out below.   The RGC also reserves the right to impose penalty on any institution which fails to screen out non-compliant applications.

While the RGC may fully / partially fund the approved projects, institutions are expected to provide necessary infrastructural and overhead supports such as normal academic equipment, consumables, postage, fax, stationery, reference books and overseas telephone charges to funded projects.

Funding of successful applications will be released to the coordinating institution (i.e. the affiliated institution of the PC) in two stages.   The coordinating institution should liaise with participating institutions on the financial / accounting arrangements.   Funding can only be transferred to those participating institutions that are on the list in Paragraph 2 under Section 1 "Scheme Overview" above.

*Permissible Items*

A detailed budget for the project throughout the project period should be given.   PCs, Co-PIs and Co-Is are not regarded as supporting staff and their salaries must not be paid from the RGC's project fund.   Academic staff remunerated by the UGC-funded universities in Hong Kong or academic staff of the self-financing degree-awarding institutions eligible for submission of applications under the RGC funding schemes for the local self-financing degree sector must not be paid with honorarium or other form of payments.

The grant provided by the RGC should only be used to cover project expenditure which would not otherwise be separately incurred.   Please refer to the funding policy stipulated in the SF-DAMA.

The estimated costs should not include any regular operational costs, such as the normal salaries of teaching staff who spend a portion of their time on research, cost of utilities, stationery, etc.   They should include only expenditure directly related to the proposed project.   Examples of these are: salaries of Research Assistants (RAs) specifically employed for this project; salary of relief teacher; purchase of equipment necessary for the

investigation but not available in the institution(s), dissemination of research result, etc.

In cases where a particular RA is employed for several projects, his / her salary should be apportioned.

**Detailed justification and / or quotations** should be provided where applicable.   Otherwise, the RGC will not consider the request.

**(a)**   **Estimated Cost and Resource Implications**

(A)   One-line Vote Items

(i)   Supporting Staff Costs

Please state the number, rank and cost of supporting staff involved.   The RGC normally supports research support staff at the RA level.   Strong justification is required if support staff above the RA level is requested.   The grant assumes an indicative rate which is currently at HK$361,000 per annum for RA and HK$579,000 per annum for Senior Research Assistant (SRA).   These indicative rates are only meant for reference.   The indicative rates will be reviewed before the RGC decides the supporting level for the applications.   In the case of applications for funding for Post-doctoral Fellows, the CV of the post-doc in one A4 page should be attached if available.

(ii)   Equipment Expenses

RGC funds must not be used to purchase personal electronic devices such as cell phones, tablet computers, iPod, iPad, MP3 players, personal digital assistants (PDAs) and digital cameras / video recorders except with sound justification as approved by the RGC.   In addition, the RGC **will not provide funding for the purchase or use of standard equipment** such as desktop PCs, servers, laptop computers, printers, scanners and standard software / software licence / dataset known to be available, or reasonably expected to be provided in the institutions concerned.   Institutions may be required by the RGC to confirm the availability of institutional resources prior to their acceptance of a funding award.   This is what the RGC means by "institutional commitment".

For justification for equipment purchase, the following points should be addressed:
- Is the equipment essential to the project?
- Has the department / institution already provided such equipment?

- Is there similar equipment elsewhere in other institutions and what is the possibility of sharing?

- Provide information in supporting the estimated cost of equipment (e.g. quotes from suppliers). **Items costing over HK$200,000 and without supporting quotations will NOT be considered. Up to <u>two</u> A4 pages can be attached, if necessary**.

For purchase of equipment at or **over HK$2.5 million**, the following supplementary information is required:

- Has the institution already been provided with similar equipment? If yes, please explain the need for the purchase.

- Is there similar equipment elsewhere in other institutions? If yes, please provide the following information regarding such equipment in other institutions as far as possible –

  ‣ brand / model details and the year of purchase of the equipment;

  ‣ the number of hours of its utilisation and percentage of utilisation (say per month / year as appropriate);

  ‣ the estimated number of hours (say per month / year as appropriate) available for use by other institutions per year;

  ‣ whether and how it can perform more / less functions and capabilities than the equipment under application;

  ‣ whether there is a practice of shared use of the equipment with other institutions currently and in the past two years; and

  ‣ any other reasons that preclude the shared use of the equipment with other institutions.

- Please provide a utilisation plan of the equipment including the following information:

  ‣ Level of use: Please advise the potential users of the equipment, and provide the estimated numbers of users, including staff members and / or students expected to use the equipment under application and the estimated number of hours per annum of utilisation.

  ‣ Plan for share use: Will the equipment be available for use by institutions other than the collaborating institutions under the application? If yes, please advise your plan to promote share use of equipment, (e.g. uploading the information of the equipment on the website) and state the extent of shared use by other institutions (e.g. the number of hours available for sharing per week).

  ‣ Provision of training: Whether training will be provided for the use and / or manning of the equipment.

‣ Potential use of the equipment after project completion: Please advise how the equipment can be fully utilised after project completion.

(iii)  Outsourcing Expenses of Research Work Outside Hong Kong

Research grants awarded by the RGC should primarily be used in undertaking research work in Hong Kong by the PCs and their teams.   It will be legitimate for the PCs to sub-contract out a small part of the research work (regardless of geographic locations) only if:

• the proposed activity is a necessary and justified part of the research and is outlined in the proposal for approval;

• the PCs should have identified and possessed a high level of research expertise in their teams when they submit research applications to the RGC.   The activity to be sub-contracted out, for instance, data collection work, should not be the main intellectual focus of the research project;

• the persons / organisations providing the sub-contracting services should be at arm's length with the PCs or their serving institutions (for instance, employees, friends, relatives, subsidiary companies etc. should be avoided) and the procurement should be done in accordance with the RGC's, Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC)'s and / or institutional procedures and guidelines, whichever is more stringent; and

• the PCs or their team members should be involved in monitoring the sub-contracting services or the supervision of the sub-contracting services.

For sub-contracting services or research work to be conducted outside Hong Kong, the PCs have to justify in their proposals to the Panels for approval. The corresponding RGC Panels will evaluate the merits and justification of the case according to the conditions specified above.   **For services / work costing over HK$200,000, price quotations must be provided, otherwise, the item concerned will NOT be considered.**

Applicants should provide detailed justification of sample sizes and costs for surveys conducted outside Hong Kong.

(iv)  General Expenses

The "General Expenses" item is a catch-all category for costs which cannot be included in any of the other items.   Outsourcing services other than those

specified in (iii) above should be included under such item.  **Items on services / purchase costing over HK$200,000 and without supporting quotations will NOT be considered.**

Applicants should provide detailed justification of sample sizes and costs for surveys conducted in Hong Kong.

(v)    <u>Conference Expenses</u>

The RGC encourages researchers to present their work internationally and to exchange information with others in their particular research areas.   A provision of up to HK$20,000 per year, irrespective of the number of investigators involved in the project, is normally allowed for each funded project.   The grant can support economy class roundtrip air passage by the most direct route, hotel accommodation, and subsistence allowance.   The RGC's, ICAC's and the institutional procurement procedures and guidelines, whichever is more stringent, should be followed.   The expenses / allowances should not exceed the limit set by the institution.   Should there be any expenses exceeded the set limit, the institutions are required to bear the differences.

(vi)    <u>Expenses for Dissemination of the Deliverables of Research</u>

The RGC encourages researchers to publish their work in different journals / publications.   For displaying / demonstrating the outputs by other means, please justify the values and appropriateness of the output.   Expenses related to knowledge transfer should not be included.

(B)    <u>Earmarked Items</u>

(vii)   <u>Costs for Employment of Relief Teacher</u>

PCs / Co-PIs may apply for funding support for the employment of relief teachers for each PC / Co-PI.   Please state the rank of the relief teacher, number of courses and costs involved for each PC / Co-PI.   The RGC agrees in principle to provide, in cases where there is genuine need, funding for relief teachers so as to enable the PC / Co-PIs to allocate sufficient time for research.   Relief teachers engaged for this purpose are meant to relieve the PCs / Co-PIs of their day-to-day teaching loads and administrative burden related to teaching work.   Nevertheless, the RGC is of the view that it is the primary responsibility of the institutions to put their resources in areas where they would be best used.   Hence, such funding will be provided only exceptionally and upon detailed and sound justification.

The grant assumes an indicative rate which is currently at HK$46,000 per

course to be relieved. This indicative rate is only meant for reference. The indicative rate will be reviewed before the RGC decides the supporting level for the applications.

It is not necessary to find a relief teacher with equivalent salary, status and experience as the PC / Co-PIs concerned. The relief teacher is also not supposed to take up non-teaching related duties, such as purely administrative work, of the PC / Co-PIs. The PCs / Co-PIs and the institutions should decide on the salaries for the replacement with reference to the level and amount of workload expected and justify them on the Application Form. If the salary of the relief teacher exceeds the salary of the PC / Co-PI concerned, the exceeding part of salary should be borne by the institution of the PC / Co-PI.

Please also state the current average teaching load (total number of courses to be taught per academic year) of each PC / Co-PI. The institutions concerned are requested to verify the declared teaching load of each PC / Co-PI.

A PC / Co-PI can only use the grants for teaching relief, including those from on-going and new projects, to cover a maximum of 50% of his / her teaching load.

(viii)  High-performance Computing Services Expenses

A provision of up to HK$100,000 will be allowed for the subscription of high-performance computing services for each funded project. Price quotations should be provided. **Requests without quotations may not be considered.**

The PC should provide justification to support the request for earmarked funding of high-performance computing services, e.g. explanations on how the item(s) is / are related to the research activities and essential to deliver the research results, and description on how the budget is arithmetically determined, etc.

(ix)  Research-related Software Licence / Dataset

For requests for purchase / subscription of database(s), price quotations should be provided. **Requests without quotations may not be considered.** The institution should not use the RGC funds to purchase standard software licences / dataset.

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(E)    Auditing Expenses

According to the SF-DAMA, upon completion / termination of a funded project, the institution is required to submit an Auditors' Report and return the unspent balance, if any.   Auditing expense is an allowable item to be included in the budget.   The indicative reference rates for auditing expense are as follows:

| Size of Grants | Ceiling for Audit Fee |
|---|---|
| below $1M | $7,000 |
| $1M to less than $10M | $15,000 |
| $10M or above | $20,000 |

(G)    On-costs

The on-costs related to research projects funded by the RGC will be disbursed to the institutions for their disposal.   Applicants are required to include the project costs as well as the on-costs at a rate of 15% of the project costs on the Application Forms.

(b)-(e)   Please confirm whether or not the requested equipment / high-performance computing services / research-related software licence / dataset is available in the institution.   If yes, please explain why such equipment / high-performance computing services / software cannot be used by the applicant(s).

Please confirm whether any grant for employment of relief teacher from any on-going project(s) under UGC / RGC funding schemes is / are currently held by the PC / Co-PI(s).   If yes, please provide the project information accordingly.

**2.    Existing Facilities and Major Equipment Available for This Research Project**

Please elaborate the existing facilities and equipment available for this research project in maximum of one A4 page.

**3.    Funds Secured or To Be Secured**

Please provide other research funds already secured for this proposal.   Other sources of funds include private donations, awards or grants from other organisations, contract research funds from commercial enterprises, or special allocations made by the institution (including seed funding), etc.   It

should be noted that the amount secured from other sources should be stated in Part III Section 1(a)(C)(xi) of the Application Form, and it will be deducted from the total cost of the project.

The RGC has the sole discretion in deciding the final funding. Even if the proposal is fully funded as requested, **the RGC funds must not be spent on non-permissible items unless approval is obtained from the RGC in advance**.

## PART IV  GRANT RECORD AND RELATED RESEARCH WORK OF INVESTIGATORS

**Grant Record of Investigator(s)**

It is the responsibility of the PC, Co-PI(s) and Co-I(s) to ensure that no duplicate funding from all sources including the RGC will be sought / has been sought for the same / substantially similar research project.   The PC should ensure that the Co-PI(s) and Co-I(s) understand(s) the requirements and has / have declared all related research work. **If the PC, Co-PI(s) and / or Co-I(s) fail(s) to disclose any related research work that is being / has been conducted in relation to the proposal in this section, the PC, Co-PI(s) and / or Co-I(s) will be subject to disciplinary action even if the proposal is finally not supported.   The application may be disqualified and the PC, Co-PI(s) and / or Co-I(s) may be debarred from applying for future UGC / RGC grants.**

(a)  For the **PC**, please provide details on each of the research projects undertaken and proposals submitted by the PC (in the capacity as PI / PC / Co-PI / Co-I / Project holder^ / Team leader^) including:

  (i)  completed research projects funded from all sources (irrespective of whether from the UGC / RGC) <u>in the past five years</u>;

  (ii)  on-going research projects funded from all sources (irrespective of whether from the UGC / RGC); and

  (iii)  proposals pending funding approval from all sources (irrespective of whether from the UGC / RGC).

(b)  For **each Co-PI**, please provide details on each of the research projects undertaken and proposals submitted by the Co-PI (in the capacity as PI / PC / Co-PI / Co-I / Project holder^ / Team leader^) including:

  (i)  on-going research projects funded from all sources (irrespective of whether from the UGC / RGC); and

  (ii)  proposals pending funding approval from all sources (irrespective of whether from the UGC / RGC).

(c)  For **each Co-I**, please provide details on each of the research projects undertaken by the Co-I (in the capacity as PI / PC / Project holder^ / Team

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^  Project holder / Team leader is applicable to projects under the Institutional Development Scheme (IDS) from 2014/15 to 2018/19 exercises and the IDS Research Infrastructure Grant from 2019/20 exercise onwards.

leader^) including:

(i)    on-going research projects funded from all sources (irrespective of whether from the UGC / RGC).

(d)    **All PC, Co-PI(s) and Co-I(s)** are required to declare any related research work (irrespective of whether from the UGC / RGC and not limited to the past five years) that is being / has been conducted in relation to the proposal, including but not limited to data collection, preliminary research, working papers, publications (such as journal papers, conference papers and books, etc.), presentations, media interviews and other submitted proposals, etc. For the related research work, please provide:

(i)    the details (such as the title of the projects and / or papers / publications, or a brief description of the preliminary research work, etc.) on whether or not such work is / was part of a funded project; and

(ii)    details to distinguish the related research work from the work requested to be funded through this proposal.

It is the RGC to make the final decision on whether the current application and the research work being / already conducted are related. The judgement of the RGC is final. Therefore, it is always advisable for the PC, Co-PI(s) and the Co-I(s) to declare related proposals / projects / research work when there is uncertainty. The PC, Co-PI(s) and the Co-I(s) are advised to make the declaration and elaborate the differences in the proposals / projects / research work to avoid misunderstanding. Declaration of related proposals / projects / research work does not necessarily mean that the proposal concerned will be adversely affected. The RGC may still fund the proposal concerned if the PC, Co-PI(s) and Co-I(s) are able to justify the differences of the proposals / projects / research work for separate funding.

**Please note that the information listed on the CV will not be regarded as fulfilling the declaration requirements in this Section. PC, Co-PI(s) and Co-I(s) are responsible to report <u>immediately</u> via RCs of the institutions to the UGC Secretariat any updates on grants records, including declaration of related research work.**

## PART V    RESEARCH ETHICS AND OTHER APPROVALS

**(a)**  **Research Ethics / Safety Approval**

   Please complete the declaration related to ethics and safety approvals.   It is the responsibility of the institution and the PC to ensure that the research proposal is carefully reviewed for its compliance with applicable laws, health and safety guidelines and ethical standards.   Ethics clearance should be sought for research involving living animals and / or human subjects including social sciences research involving human subjects (e.g. potential physical / psychological harms, discomfort or stress to human participants that a research project might generate, subjects' privacy, etc.).   The primary responsibility of seeking the relevant approval and ethics clearance rests with the PC.   The PC's institution is required to complete and sign at Part VII of the Application Form to confirm whether the relevant ethics / safety approval is required and if required, the relevant approval has been given / is being sought.

**(b)**  **Access to Government / official / private data and records**

   Please complete the declaration.   It is the responsibility of the institution and the PC to ensure that approval has been sought for access to Government / official / private data and records if the related data / records are critical to the research proposal.   The primary responsibility of seeking the relevant approval rests with the PC.   The PC's institution is required to complete and sign the Part VII of the Application Form to confirm whether the relevant approvals are required and if required, the relevant approvals have been given / are being sought.

For both (a) and (b) above, the institution and the PC should ensure that such approval will be obtained and provided to the RGC by <u>20 June 2025</u>.   The institution and the PC should also note that if such approval is not submitted by the deadline, the RGC will consider the IDS Collaborative Research Grant application as being withdrawn and will cease processing it.   **If the institution / PC declared that no approval was required but the RGC / Panel eventually considered otherwise, the application may be disqualified.**

**(c)**  **Release of Completion Report, Data Archive Possibilities, and Public Access of Publications Resulting from Research Funded by the RGC**

   <u>Release of Completion Report</u>

   PCs are required to release the completion reports (containing abstract in non-technical terms, objectives, research output including the list of conference papers / publications / journals and research findings and contact information of PC and / or researchers concerned) to the public through the

RGC website. PCs should assess data archive potential and opportunities for data sharing. Due additional weight will be given to an application where the applicants are willing to make research data available to others.

PCs are required to include in the project completion reports the URL links to the institutional repositories or the publishers' websites so that the public could have quick and easy access to the manuscripts or journal articles. PCs are also encouraged to include in their research completion reports the data repositories where research data of their projects could be accessed and shared, where appropriate.

Public Access to Publications Resulting from Research Funded by the RGC

(i)     Upon acceptance of a paper for publication, the PC should check whether the publisher already allows (a) full open access to the publisher's version, or (b) the author's depositing a copy of the paper (either the publisher's version or the final accepted manuscript after peer-review) in the institutional repository for open access;

(ii)    if both (i)(a) and (b) above are not allowed, the PC should request the publisher to allow him / her to place either version in his / her institutional repository for restricted access immediately upon publication or after an embargo period of up to twelve months if required by the publisher; and

(iii)   subject to the publisher's agreement on (i) or (ii) above, the PC should deposit a copy of the publication in his / her institutional repository as early as possible but no later than six months after publication or the embargo period, if any.

**(d)     Technology Transfer Plan (Optional)**

Applicants are invited to submit a Technology Transfer Plan separately. Any successfully funded projects with technology transfer plans submitted will be passed to the Innovation and Technology Commission, who will keep in view these projects for possible Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) support in the future. The Technology Transfer Plan will not be assessed by the RGC for the purpose of funding decisions. The Technology Transfer Plan should be a maximum of <u>one</u> page of A4 and cover:

(i)     Activities to be undertaken to:
- disseminate the R&D deliverables;

- realise the application of the R&D deliverables in the public sector, i.e. the R&D deliverables being used in government departments, public bodies, trade associations, charitable organisations, etc.; and / or

- market the R&D deliverables in the commercial world, e.g. target markets and customers.

(ii) Potential industry partners for technology transfer / manufacturing. If possible, please provide information in relation to the future positioning of the product / technology in the market.

(iii) Associated / complementary technology development projects which may synergise with the proposed project for technology transfer.  In this case, please give some brief information of such project(s).

(iv) Future plans to apply for ITF to support the applied research component of the proposed project.

**(e)** **Letters of Collaboration and Supporting Documents**

Only letters of collaboration and supporting documents (e.g. ethics / safety approval letters) are allowed.  Applicants should not make use of this section to supplement the contents of other sections.

## PART VI    UNDERTAKING OF THE PC

It is the responsibility of the PC to ensure that the research activity(ies) / expenditure(s) of the project if funded will be carefully monitored for its / their compliance with applicable laws, health and safety guidelines and ethical standards as well as the terms and conditions laid down by the RGC.

**PART VII   INSTITUTIONAL ENDORSEMENT AND DECLARATION OF RESEARCH ETHICS / SAFETY APPROVAL**
**[To be completed by the appropriate authority of the PC's institution]**

**INSTITUTIONAL ENDORSEMENT**

1.       **Eligibility Requirement for IDS Collaborative Research Grant**

      The institution should confirm that:

(a)     the application has been evaluated and endorsed by the institution for submission to the RGC;

(b)     the PC fully meets the eligibility requirement for the IDS Collaborative Research Grant as stated at Part I Section 2(b) of the Application Form and is not debarred from applying for any UGC / RGC grants;

(c)     the PC is / will be seconded to conduct research in a university or a research institute / body / agency in the Mainland / overseas jurisdiction with effect from the date as stated in the Application Form while retaining his / her full-time appointment and position with his / her parent institution and is still on the payroll of the parent institution;

(d)     the PC's declared teaching load stated in Part III Section 1(a)(B)(vii) of the Application Form has been verified correct (only for the case where the applicant is seeking funding support for relief teacher);

(e)     the salary for the relief teacher proposed by the PC does not exceed the salary of the PC (only for the case where the applicant is seeking funding support for relief teacher);

(f)     the applicant will have the average number of hours per week as declared in Part I Section 2(a) of the Application Form to supervise the proposed project without prejudice to his / her existing commitment in other research work, teaching and administrative duties;

(g)     the applicant will abide by the in-house guidelines of the institution, as well as the relevant guidelines as set out by the RGC and the ICAC, whichever is more stringent, regarding procurement of facilities / equipment / services and for recruitment of supporting staff;

(h)     the institution will inform the RGC as soon as the PC ceases to be eligible to apply, receive or hold an IDS Collaborative Research Grant, and will withdraw the application; or recommend to the RGC for approval of a suitable new PC, if applicable, to take over the funded project once it is

funded and commenced. As a matter of policy, change of PC will normally not be approved within the first six months of an approved project and during the process of the application. However, change of PC from the 7<sup>th</sup> month may be considered by the RGC under the circumstances as stipulated in the SF-DAMA. The institution understands that failure in identifying a suitable new PC or obtaining approval from the RGC for change of PC will result in termination of the funded project;

(i)    the institution understands that the IDS Collaborative Research Grant, if given, will be withdrawn if the project does not start within one year of the announcement of funding result. The institution should report to the RGC as soon as possible when a PC proceeds on no-pay leave / professional leave for a continuous or cumulative period exceeding 183 days within the project period;

(j)    the institution understands that if the project is approved, the institution may need to provide additional funding to ensure that this project can be successfully completed. The institution will also provide necessary infrastructural and overheads supports such as normal academic equipment, consumables, postage, fax, stationery, reference books, overseas telephone charges, etc. to the approved projects where appropriate; and

(k)    each of the Co-PI(s) (except those from UGC-funded university(ies)) and his / her institution have completed / will complete the declaration form at **Annex** to the Application Form and the completed declaration form is submitted together with the Application Form or to be submitted by <u>20 June 2025</u>. Please give reasons if the declaration of the Co-PI(s) could not be provided.

## INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS

2.    **Support to PC**

The institution of the PC is required to verify and confirm whether the research project under the IDS Collaborative Research Grant application is in line with the role of the institution, and that adequate supervision, research facilities and training provisions will be in place to meet the need of SRA(s) / RA(s) / Post-doctoral Fellow(s) / Research Postgraduate Student(s) so employed under the research grant if the application is supported by the RGC. Nevertheless, it should also be made clear that the primary duty of the PC of the RGC grant is to complete the project according to the plan.

For Part VII Section 2(c)-(h) in the Application Form, please refer to Part III paragraph 1(b)-(e) above.

3. **Declaration of Research Ethics / Safety Approval and Access to Government / Official / Private Data and Records**

(a) Research Ethics / Safety Approval

The institution should ensure that the approval of the appropriate authority(ies) will be obtained and provided to the RGC by 20 June 2025 in respect of projects involving safety hazards or the use of living animal / human subjects, including those in social sciences research (e.g. potential physical / psychological harm, discomfort / stress to human subjects in a research project, subjects' privacy, etc.).   It should be noted that all applications must be vetted by the institutions to ascertain if ethics and / or safety approval is required.   If affirmative, the institutions must grant approval or allow exemption according to their internal ethics / safety guidelines or obtain relevant ethics / safety approval from appropriate authority(ies).  **If such approval is not obtained by the deadline (20 June 2025), the RGC will regard the application as being withdrawn and will stop further processing it.**

(b) Access to Government / Official / Private Data and Records

The institution should ensure that the approval of the appropriate authority(ies) will be obtained and provided to the RGC by 20 June 2025 in respect of access to data / records that are critical to the proposed research.  **If such approval is not obtained by the deadline (20 June 2025), the RGC will regard the application as being withdrawn and will stop further processing it.**

For (a) and (b), **if the institution / PC declared that no approval was required but the RGC Committee / Panel eventually considered otherwise, the application concerned may be disqualified**.

Part VII of the Application Form should be completed, signed and submitted by the appropriate authority of the PC's institution.

UGC Secretariat
November 2024

**Annex A**

## Handling of Information and Personal Data
## Contained in RGC Research Funding Application

Purpose of Collection of Information and Personal Data

1.        Information and personal data contained in your research grant application are collected for the following purposes:

    (a)    determination of your eligibility to apply for a competitive grant from the Research Grants Council (RGC);

    (b)    assessment of the merits of the research proposal which you have submitted for funding support;

    (c)    assisting the RGC panel in identifying external reviewers to assess your research proposal;

    (d)    compilation of periodic reports and statistical returns for analysis and research by the RGC / University Grants Committee (UGC) in relation to the use of public funds;

    (e)    sharing of data with other government departments / research funding agencies for the avoidance of duplicate funding; and

    (f)    for successful projects, such data will be used for project monitoring, promotion, publicity and may also be published on the RGC website.

Handling of Your Information and Personal Data

2.        Your research proposal including your personal data (e.g. CVs) will be handled with care by the RGC.  Staff of the UGC Secretariat, members of the RGC and RGC panels, local and non-local reviewers, and other parties who may be involved in the processes described in Paragraph 1 above will be allowed access to the data on a need-to-know basis but they will be placed under a duty of confidentiality to the RGC. Information so collected by the RGC will not be used for any other purposes.  If you want to exclude any individuals from access to your research proposal, you should inform the RGC separately when you submit your research proposal.  The RGC does not accept research proposals that are classified "confidential" by the applicants.  It also reserves the right to stop processing or reject any applications if the applicants' requests render it impossible for the applications to be adequately peer-reviewed.

3.        When the RGC obtains external assessments on your research proposal, external reviewers will be made aware of the existence of a Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance in Hong Kong, and be forewarned that all written comments about the applicant and research proposal are liable to be released to the applicant concerned upon request.   External reviewers will also be advised of the RGC policy on providing feedback to grant applicants described in paragraph 4 below.

4.        Applicants should note the following:

(a)    all proposals will have undergone a very rigorous peer-review process which involves external assessments and the relevant RGC panels / committees which are made up of experts from the local and international academic / professional community;

(b)    grants are allocated on a competitive basis and each year is a different exercise (the success rate is based on the general quality of the proposals as assessed by the relevant RGC panels / committees, and the availability of funds, in that particular year);

(c)    the RGC is gradually raising the quality threshold, meaning that only the top and the best quality proposals will be "funded"; and

(d)    comments from all external reviewers on each proposal (except for conference grants / travel grants / fellowship applications) will be provided anonymously to the applicants concerned through their institutions.

Physical Retention of Applications

5.        Applications that are funded by the RGC will be retained at the UGC Secretariat for periodic review of progress and final assessment of the research investigation and outcome, with the assistance of external reviewers where appropriate.

Right of Access to Personal Data

6.        Notwithstanding the arrangement described above, nothing in this note will affect your legal right to request access to personal data held by the RGC about you or your research proposal and to update or correct such data.   Nevertheless, the RGC reserves the right to charge a reasonable fee for the processing of any such request(s) in accordance with the prevailing Government regulations.

Further Information

7.        All requests for access to your personal data or correction of your personal data or for information regarding policies and practices and kinds of personal data held by the RGC should be made in writing, by post or by fax, addressed as follows:

Assistant Secretary General (Research) 3
University Grants Committee Secretariat
7/F Shui On Centre
6-8 Harbour Road
Wanchai
Hong Kong

Fax: 2845 1183

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**List of Research Field Areas and Codes
for Biology & Medicine Research Proposals**

Biological Sciences
(Subject Area : M1)

| Field Area | Code |
| --- | --- |
| Behaviour and Psychology | 1101 |
| Biochemistry | 1102 |
| Cell Biology | 1103 |
| Developmental Biology | 1104 |
| Ecology | 1105 |
| Environmental Research | 1106 |
| Food Science | 1107 |
| Gene Regulation | 1108 |
| Genomic Biology | 1109 |
| Growth & Development | 1110 |
| Marine Biology | 1111 |
| Microbiology | 1112 |
| Molecular Biology | 1113 |
| Morphology and Anatomy | 1114 |
| Physiology | 1115 |
| Signal Transduction | 1116 |
| Structural Biology | 1117 |
| Traditional Chinese Medicine (basic) | 1119 |
| Ageing | 1120 |
| Biodiversity and Systematics | 1121 |
| Bioinformatics, Systems and Synthetic Biology | 1122 |
| Biological Imaging | 1123 |
| Brain Pain Learning and Memory | 1124 |
| Comparative Endocrinology | 1125 |
| Comparative Immunology | 1126 |
| Fish Biology | 1127 |
| Genetics | 1128 |

Biological Sciences (Cont'd)
(Subject Area : M1)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Neuroscience | 1129 |
| Plant Sciences / Plant Biology | 1130 |
| Stem Cell Biology | 1131 |
| Virology | 1132 |
| Others – relating to Biological Sciences (please specify :                            ) | 1199 |

Medicine, Dentistry & Health
(Subject Area : M2)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Allergy / Immunology | 1201 |
| Anaesthesia | 1202 |
| Blood / Hematology | 1203 |
| Cancer | 1204 |
| Cardiovascular Research | 1205 |
| Clinical Trials | 1206 |
| Connective Tissues | 1207 |
| Dentistry | 1208 |
| Diabetes / Metabolism | 1209 |
| Endocrinology | 1210 |
| Epidemiology | 1211 |
| Gastroenterology / Hepatobiliary | 1212 |
| Genetic Disease | 1213 |
| Geriatrics / Gerontology | 1214 |
| Health Services | 1215 |
| Hearing | 1216 |
| Imaging | 1217 |
| Infection / Parasitology | 1218 |
| Neonatology | 1219 |
| Nephrology / Urology | 1220 |
| Nursing | 1222 |
| Nutrition | 1223 |

Medicine, Dentistry & Health (Cont'd)
(Subject Area : M2)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Orthopaedics / Traumatology | 1224 |
| Paediatrics | 1225 |
| Pathology | 1226 |
| Pharmacology / Toxicology | 1227 |
| Population Health | 1228 |
| Psychosocial & Behavioural Research | 1229 |
| Reproduction | 1231 |
| Respiration | 1232 |
| Rheumatology | 1233 |
| Surgical Research | 1234 |
| Transplantation | 1235 |
| Vision | 1236 |
| Chinese Medicine (clinical) | 1237 |
| Proteomics | 1238 |
| Regenerative Medicine | 1239 |
| Molecular Diagnostics | 1240 |
| Biomedical Engineering | 1241 |
| Biomaterials | 1242 |
| Clinical Microbiology | 1243 |
| Clinical Virology | 1244 |
| Disease Model Development | 1245 |
| Drug Discovery and Delivery | 1246 |
| Drug Pharmacokinetics and Pharmacodynamics | 1247 |
| Genomic Medicine | 1248 |
| Genomics | 1249 |
| Human Genetics / Clinical Genetics | 1250 |
| Neurobiology and Neuromedicine | 1251 |
| Personalized Medicine | 1252 |
| Rehabilitative and Physical Medicine | 1254 |
| Stem Cell Therapy | 1256 |
| Others – relating to Medicine, Dentistry & Health (please specify :                    ) | 1299 |

**List of Research Field Areas and Codes
for Engineering Research Proposals**

Civil Engineering, Surveying, Building & Construction
(Subject Area : E1)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Building & Construction | 2101 |
| Environmental | 2102 |
| Geotechnical | 2103 |
| Structure | 2104 |
| Surveying | 2105 |
| Water | 2106 |
| Transportation | 2107 |
| Urban Development | 2108 |
| Others – relating to Civil Engineering, Surveying, Building & Construction (please specify :                            ) | 2199 |

Computing Science & Information Technology
(Subject Area : E2)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Computer Science Fundamentals | 2202 |
| Computing Hardware | 2203 |
| Network | 2205 |
| Software | 2206 |
| Speech & Language | 2207 |
| Vision | 2208 |
| Bioinformatics | 2209 |
| Visualization & Graphics | 2210 |
| Information Analytics | 2211 |
| Data Mining | 2212 |
| Artificial Intelligence and Machine learning | 2213 |
| Database and data science | 2214 |
| Others – relating to Computing Science & Information Technology (please specify :                       ) | 2299 |

Electrical & Electronic Engineering
(Subject Area : E3)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Communication | 2301 |
| Electronics | 2302 |
| Photonics | 2303 |
| Signal & Image Processing | 2305 |
| Bioelectronics | 2306 |
| Power Electronics | 2307 |
| Power System | 2308 |
| Microwave and Terahertz Engineering | 2309 |
| Others – relating to Electrical & Electronic Engineering (please specify :                    ) | 2399 |

Mechanical, Production & Industrial Engineering
(Subject Area : E4)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Design | 2401 |
| Engineering Management | 2402 |
| Fluid | 2403 |
| Marine Engineering | 2404 |
| Materials | 2405 |
| Mechanics & Dynamics | 2406 |
| Operations Research | 2407 |
| Production & Manufacturing | 2408 |
| Robotics & Automation | 2409 |
| Textile | 2410 |
| Thermal | 2411 |
| Biomechanics | 2412 |
| Fuel Engineering | 2413 |
| Others – relating to Mechanical, Production & Industrial Engineering (please specify :                    ) | 2499 |

**List of Research Field Areas and Codes**
**for Physical Sciences Research Proposals**

Chemical Engineering
(Subject Area : P1)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Chemical Engineering | 3101 |
| Biophysics | 3102 |
| Energy | 3103 |
| Environmental Sciences | 3104 |
| Biochemical Engineering | 3105 |
| Food Science and Technology | 3106 |
| Others – relating to Chemical Engineering<br>(please specify :                          ) | 3199 |

Physical Sciences
(Subject Area : P2)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Chemical Sciences | 3201 |
| Earth Sciences | 3202 |
| Materials Sciences | 3204 |
| Physics | 3205 |
| Planetary Sciences | 3206 |
| Physical Geography | 3207 |
| Scattering Methods | 3208 |
| Nanomaterials | 3209 |
| Nanocomposites | 3210 |
| Mass Spectrometry | 3211 |
| Environmental Studies and Science | 3212 |
| Others – relating to Physical Sciences<br>(please specify :                          ) | 3299 |

Mathematics
(Subject Area : P3)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Applied Mathematics | 3301 |
| Pure Mathematics | 3302 |
| Probability & Statistics | 3303 |
| Mathematical Finance and Insurance | 3304 |
| Others – relating to Mathematics (please specify :                    ) | 3399 |

**List of Research Field Areas and Codes**
**for Humanities and Social Sciences Research Proposals**

Psychology and Linguistics
(Subject Area : H1)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Psychology | 4104 |
| Linguistics and Languages | 4108 |
| Psycholinguistics | 4109 |
| Cognitive Neuroscience of Language | 4110 |
| Language Development, Second Language Acquisition, Audiology | 4123 |
| Sociolinguistics and Discourse Analysis | 4124 |
| Criminology | 4125 |
| Others – relating to Psychology and Linguistics (please specify :                    ) | 4196 |

Social and Behavioural Sciences
(Subject Area : H2)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Anthropology | 4101 |
| Public Administration & Political Science | 4105 |
| Sociology | 4106 |
| Architecture | 4401 |
| Law | 4402 |
| Nursing | 4408 |
| Public Health | 4409 |
| Social Work | 4410 |
| Social Services / Management | 4411 |
| Urban Studies and Planning | 4412 |
| Visual Design (including advertising, graphic, visual communication, digital media) | 4414 |
| Product Design (including fashion, industrial, product) | 4415 |
| Environmental Design (including interior design , space design) | 4416 |
| Archaeology | 4417 |

Social and Behavioural Sciences (Cont'd)
(Subject Area : H2)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Human Geography | 4418 |
| Social Policy | 4419 |
| Others – relating to Social and Behavioural Sciences (please specify :               ) | 4195 |

Humanities and Arts
(Subject Area : H3)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Media and Communication | 4151 |
| Literature | 4204 |
| Creative Arts: Dance | 4207 |
| Creative Arts: Dramatic Arts | 4208 |
| Creative Arts: Music | 4209 |
| Creative Arts: Visual Arts (including Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Film and Photography) | 4210 |
| Creative Arts: Writing | 4211 |
| History | 4213 |
| History of Arts | 4214 |
| Musciology / Music History | 4215 |
| Translation Studies | 4216 |
| Philosophy | 4218 |
| Religious Studies | 4219 |
| Sexuality and Gender Studies | 4220 |
| Journalism and Media | 4407 |
| Contemporary Art | 4420 |
| Film, Visual and Media Studies | 4221 |
| Cultural Studies / Cultural Policy | 4222 |
| Area Studies (including Japanese Studies, China Studies, European Studies) | 4421 |
| Chinese History (including Socio-economic, Military, Legal Social and Cultural History) | 4422 |
| Classical Chinese, Chinese Thought and Paleography | 4423 |

Humanities and Arts (Cont'd)
(Subject Area : H3)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Hong Kong Studies | 4424 |
| Others – relating to Humanities and Arts<br>(please specify :                    ) | 4299 |

Education
(Subject Area : H4)

| Field Area | Code |
|---|---|
| Education: Policy & Administration | 4301 |
| Education: Research on Teaching & Learning | 4302 |
| Education: Language and Literature | 4303 |
| Education: Theory and Applications | 4304 |
| Others – relating to Education<br>(please specify :                    ) | 4399 |

**List of Research Field Areas and Codes
for Business Studies Research Proposals**

Business Studies
(Subject Area : B)

| Field Area | Code |
| --- | --- |
| Accounting | 5101 |
| Economics | 5102 |
| Finance | 5103 |
| Information System Management | 5104 |
| Management | 5105 |
| Marketing | 5106 |
| Operational Research | 5107 |
| Operations Management | 5108 |
| International Business | 5109 |
| Tourism and Hotel Management | 5110 |
| Econometrics and Business Statistical Methods | 5111 |
| Risk and insurance management | 5112 |
| Others – relating to Business Studies | 5199 |
| (please specify :                                      ) | |