

RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL (RGC)

RESEARCH FELLOW SCHEME (RFS) / SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW SCHEME (SRFS) 2025/26

Guidance Notes for completing the Nomination Form (RFS-SRFS-2)

Table of Contents

Preamble: How to Use this Document and Further Advice	2
SECTION 1 – SCHEME OVERVIEW	2
1. Purpose and Objectives	2
2. Eligible Types of Academic Research	3
3. Eligibility of Nomination	4
4. Funding Amounts and Fellowship Period	5
5. Scheme Timetable (for 2025/26 exercise)	6
6. Assessment Process	6
7. Submission Process of Nominations	9
SECTION 2: COMPLETING THE NOMINATION MATERIALS	11
PART I: PARTICULARS OF THE NOMINEE	11
1. Basic Information	141
2. Current Employment	14
3. Credentials	142
PART II: DETAILS OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL	14
1. Particulars of the Project	14
2. Research Details	14
PART III: PROJECT FUNDING AND RESOURCES	17
1. Cost and Justification	18
2. Existing Facilities and Major Equipment Available	22
3. Funds Secured or To Be Secured	22
PART IV: DECLARATION OF RELATED PROPOSALS, GRANT AND FELLOWSHIP RECORD	22
PART V: ETHICS AND OTHER APPROVALS	23
PART VI: ADDITIONAL ATTACHMENT	25
PART VII: SUPPORTING UNIVERSITY DECLARATIONS AND STATEMENT ON SUBMISSION	26
Annex A: List of Research Field Areas and Codes	27
Annex B: Guidelines on Handling the Information and Personal Data	36

Preamble: How to Use this Document and Further Advice

All nominees and supporting universities should read this Scheme Overview and Guidance Notes carefully before completing and submitting nominations to the RFS/ SRFS. The RGC may stop further processing your nomination if it is not in compliance with any of the requirements as set out in the Guidance Notes.

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

Enquiries concerning the contents of this Guidance Notes and other related matters about the nomination exercise, including internal deadlines, nomination procedures or assistance in completing the nomination form, should be directed to the Research Offices of your supporting university.

The guidelines on handling the information and personal data contained in nominations submitted to the RGC are contained in **Annex B**.

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 nominees to read and observe the “RGC Code of Conduct” and “Extracts from the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance” at https://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/rgc/guidelines/code/code_of_conduct.pdf.

SECTION 1 – SCHEME OVERVIEW

1. Purpose and Objectives

The RFS and SRFS aim at providing sustained research support integrated with relief from teaching and administrative duties for outstanding mid-career and senior academics respectively at University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded universities in Hong Kong. The fellowships aim to facilitate academics to dedicate their career to research and development (R&D) over a period of 60 months. One important focus of both fellowship schemes is to give the awardee the time and resources to nurture and train the next generation of postgraduate, doctoral and postdoctoral researchers for Hong Kong through the delivery of a programme of world-leading research.

An aim of the fellowships is to build up a pool of local research talent to sustain Hong Kong’s international competitiveness and drive the development of our higher education sector, the schemes are primarily directed at local researchers who can benefit from the RFS and SRFS. Whilst RFS candidates might be expected to demonstrate exceptional promise and potential to be international leaders, SRFS candidates should demonstrate metrics and characteristics consistent with being internationally leading researchers. The two schemes are competitive in nature, and a quota of at least half of the awardees for each scheme is reserved for the most

promising local candidates in each exercise, i.e. for candidates who are, at the time of nomination, Hong Kong permanent residents with the right of abode in Hong Kong as defined under the Immigration Ordinance¹.

Normally it is expected that the scope of a proposal submitted under the RFS/ SRFS should be more ambitious than a similar proposal submitted under the General Research Fund (GRF), with an expectation of pursuing research at a new level and progressing/ developing the subject on a higher stage. Candidates are reminded that the research project must have sufficient depth and breadth to justify a full period of five years of fellowship. RFS candidates are expected to possess adequate tenure experience at the rank of Associate Professor and show sufficient depth of excellence. Re-submission of aspects of a proposal not supported by UGC/ RGC/ other research funding agency, as part of the fellowship programme, is allowed. The RFS and SRFS schemes are not only intended to solely develop a new research project, and a proposal that builds on an existing research initiative, that is already defined and developed, and takes it in distinctly new directions or markedly expands its scope, may also be considered, although the candidate should ensure that the novelty in integrating these activities is clearly defined.

In each round of the yearly exercise, sustained support will be provided to ten RFS awardees at Associate Professor rank/ level and ten SRFS awardees at full Professor rank/ level for a period of 60 months at UGC-funded universities. The fellowship grant may be used for relief from teaching and administrative duties, as well as for research funding support covering salary costs for relief teachers and support for the research project including resources for staff, equipment, travel, subsistence and dissemination costs. This will in turn enable dedicated time to deliver ambitious, field-advancing research projects/ initiatives, benefitting the individual researcher, the discipline and the research reputation of Hong Kong.

2. *Eligible Types of Academic Research*

In each annual exercise, RFS and SRFS will each provide up to ten awards encompassing all academic disciplines grouped into two broad academic streams as follows –

- Humanities, Social Sciences and Business Studies (H disciplines); and
- Sciences, Medicine, Engineering and Technology (S disciplines).

Equal emphasis will be given to both basic and applied research projects. The following notes indicate the types of research eligible for this scheme:

- Basic research - research that advances the frontiers of knowledge but may not have immediate practical benefit in application to humanity.
- Applied research - is directed at meeting certain functional/ practical requirements which involve the application of theories or methodologies to specific areas or for

¹ For definition of Hong Kong permanent residents under the Immigration Ordinance, please refer to <https://www.immd.gov.hk/eng/services/roa/eligible.html>.

- specific purpose, and/ or for enhancing local or global sustainable development goals.
- For research with a balanced mix of both basic and applied elements, it may be categorised as another type, i.e. Overlapping research.

3. *Eligibility of Nomination*

All eight UGC-funded universities are eligible to nominate up to six candidates (at Associate Professor rank) for RFS and six candidates (at full Professor rank) for SRFS. Each nomination should include the research proposal of the project to be undertaken by the nominated candidate during the fellowship period.

RFS/ SRFS candidates must meet the following criteria:

- (a) have a legal right to work and reside in Hong Kong during the fellowship period;
- (b) have a full-time² academic appointment at a UGC-funded university proper³ at the time of nomination and during the fellowship period;
- (c) have been serving the supporting UGC-funded university proper³ on a full-time² basis for not less than three years continuously at the time of nomination;
- (d) be primarily engaged in and spending at least 80%⁴ of time in degree or higher degree work at the supporting UGC-funded university proper³;
- (e) have his/ her salary wholly funded by the supporting UGC-funded university proper³; and
- (f)
 - *RFS nominees must* be appointed at the rank of Associate Professor on tenure/ substantiation terms at the supporting UGC-funded university at the time of nomination;
 - *SRFS nominees must* be appointed at the rank of full Professor on tenure/ substantiation terms at the supporting UGC funded university at the time of nomination.

By the end of the year of nomination, the candidate should either not have reached the age of 55, or they should have a minimum of 5-year tenure period remaining, prior to the supporting UGC-funded university's official retirement age⁵. Accordingly, the remaining years of

² not including visiting or honorary appointment

³ excluding schools/ arms of continuing education and professional training and other analogous outfits

⁴ The percentage concerned may be subject to review and revision as and when required.

⁵ The official retirement age should generally apply to all faculty members. In all cases where the nominee has been offered by the university, at the time of nomination, an extension of retirement/ appointment beyond the official retirement age, this latter retirement date should apply. If, at the time of nomination, such an extension of retirement/ appointment beyond the official retirement age is required and has been offered (in order to complete the full fellowship, if granted), then documentary evidence (which would preferably be a letter confirming a conditional offer of employment extension) should be issued at the Vice-President level or above, on behalf of the university, and should accompany the nomination. If the nominee is subsequently selected for the fellowship award, upon receiving the selection result, the supporting university must submit evidence, in the form of a secured appointment letter for the awardee, covering the extension of employment for the full fellowship award period, prior to any confirmation of acceptance of the award.

service at the supporting UGC-funded university should be sufficient for the awardee to complete the full course of the 60-month fellowship, prior to retirement.

Subject to exceptional consideration on a case-by-case basis, the requirements above may be relaxed for Hong Kong talent working overseas so that they are incentivised to return to Hong Kong and take up the fellowship. In this connection, an RFS/ SRFS overseas candidate nominated by a UGC-funded university would be eligible for consideration if he/ she:

- (a) is a Hong Kong permanent resident with the right of abode in Hong Kong as defined under the Immigration Ordinance¹;
- (b) is a researcher at a university/ institute outside Hong Kong at the time of nomination with academic/ research profile equivalent to Associate Professor (for RFS) or full Professor (for SRFS); and
- (c) has warranted support by a UGC-funded university proper³ at which he/ she will hold the fellowship, with a tenured/ substantiated full-time² appointment⁶ at the rank of Associate Professor (for RFS) or the rank of full Professor (for SRFS) commencing within the following year after the close of nomination.

An awardee can only benefit from either RFS or SRFS at any one time. Humanities and Social Sciences Prestigious Fellowship Scheme (HSSPFS) award holders may be nominated for RFS/ SRFS, provided that the awardee concerned will not be holding the two types of fellowship concurrently (i.e. HSSPFS holders can sequentially be awarded RFS/ SRFS).

Awardees accepting the RFS/ SRFS fellowship shall not compete again in future exercises. Universities may, however, make repeated nominations for non-selected candidates.

4. *Funding Amounts and Fellowship Period*

In this exercise (2025/26), for each RFS awardee, the supporting university will receive a fellowship grant of HK\$5,465,160 for a 60-month fellowship period. For each SRFS awardee, the supporting university will receive a fellowship grant of HK\$8,222,400 for a 60-month fellowship period. A uniform rate, with figure as at the close of the nomination period, is applied throughout the 60-month fellowship period and for both non-clinical and clinical academics.

⁶ The full-time appointment concerned shall be primarily engaged in and spending at least 80%⁴ of time in degree or higher degree work at the supporting UGC-funded university proper³, with salary wholly funded by the supporting UGC-funded university proper³.

5. *Scheme Timetable (for 2025/26 exercise)*

Timeline	Milestone
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call for nominations
October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formation of H and S Selection Panels
end-November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Close of nominations from universities
February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assignment of nominations to the first and second readers (who are members) by Panel Chair• The first reader to nominate external reviewers
March – April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preliminary assessment of nominations by at least three external reviewers
April – May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment of nominations by the first and second readers• The Panel Chair to shortlist nominees as finalists for interview and further consideration
late May – early June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In-person interviews of shortlisted finalists by the Selection Panels
June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final discussion of shortlisted nominations, if applicable, at Selection Panel meetings• Consideration and approval of selection results by the RGC
July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Announcement and notification of RFS and SRFS results
1 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RFS and SRFS awardees to start their research projects (and teaching relief/ research leave if applicable)

6. *Assessment Process*

Overview

Nominations of selected candidates should be made by supporting universities via their Research Office using the nomination form.

Nominations will be reviewed through a rigorous peer-review process involving external reviewers and a Selection Panel. The Secretariat will invite shortlisted finalists to attend interview accordingly in late May/ early June. In-person interviews will be arranged, and nominees should take note of the interview schedule as remote arrangements for interviews normally will not be considered.

Selection Panel composition: For assessment of nominations and selection of awardees, two selection panels (H-Panel and S-Panel) are formed. The two Panels, each comprising a Panel Chair and Panel Members who are academic experts, will evaluate the merit of the candidates in the two broad academic streams (disciplines) separately. RFS and SRFS will be assessed concurrently in each selection panel. Non-local expert panel members will be invited to ensure impartiality and minimise conflicts of interest during the selection process.

Increasingly, challenge-led research crosses disciplines, bringing together different subjects (e.g. medicine and engineering or climate science and economics). Nominees who feel that their work crosses the expertise and remits of the S and H Panels may, prior to submission of nomination, consult the UGC Secretariat via the supporting university on which panel is most appropriate to identify with, on the administrative forms. For such interdisciplinary projects, experts from the other Panel might be involved, upon the Panel Chair's recommendation.

The RGC shall have the discretion to decide on the panel responsible for the final assessment of each nomination.

	H-Panel	S-Panel
Chair	Preferably a non-local RGC Member from the H disciplines	Preferably a non-local RGC Member from the S disciplines
Members – all non-local representatives from relevant RGC subject panels	Business Studies	Biology and Medicine
	Humanities and Social Sciences – comprising four Sub-Panels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychology and Linguistics • Social and Behavioural Sciences • Humanities and Arts • Education 	Engineering – comprising two Sub-Panels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computing Science/ Information Technology and Electrical/ Electronic Engineering • Civil Engineering/ Surveying/ Building & Construction and Mechanical/ Production/ Industrial Engineering
		Physical Sciences

The UGC Secretariat will undertake initial vetting of the nominations received and seek clarifications from universities as necessary. Vetted nominations will then be forwarded to the relevant Panel Chair who will, for each nomination/ proposal, assign the first reader and second reader among the panel members, taking into account their expertise. The first reader will subsequently be invited to nominate several external reviewers to conduct the preliminary assessment of nominations. For each nomination/ proposal, at least three external reviewers shall provide a preliminary assessment, independently of each other. Having received the

reviews from external reviewers, the first and second readers on the panel will be required to give independent assessments of the nominations/ proposals.

The UGC Secretariat will then consolidate all the assessments received from external reviewers and (the first and second) readers. The Panel Chair will shortlist nominees as finalists to be interviewed by the Selection Panel concerned for further consideration for awarding the RFS/ SRFS fellowship. The Secretariat will invite shortlisted finalists to attend interview accordingly in late May/ early June. In-person interviews will be arranged, and nominees should take note of the interview schedule as remote arrangements for interviews normally will not be considered. Panel discussion after the interview, if applicable, will be moderated by the Panel Chair at the Selection Panel meeting. During the assessment period (i.e. after nominations close and before announcement of results), any request for transferring a nomination from the supporting university to another UGC-funded university will not be considered.

Assessment criteria

Selection is based on:

- the candidate's qualifications and research capability;
- the candidate's proven research track record to date;
- the candidate's leadership quality and vision in the chosen area of research (including his/ her track record and future plans in supporting the training and progression of early career researchers);
- the merit of the research proposal, including methodology, scope, theoretical framework, etc.;
- the feasibility of the proposed research project including planning, management and resources;
- the contribution and potential impact of the proposed research project, including knowledge transfer and research impact; and
- the nature of any university support offered.

In assessing proposals, academic merit is the overriding criterion. And, in the course of assessing a candidate's leadership quality and vision, particular regard will be given to a candidate's mentoring success and past experience in developing Research Postgraduate (RPg) students and junior researchers (including Postdoctoral Fellows, if any), as well as the candidate's clear engagement plan to train/ nurture the next generation of research talent/ young researchers via the proposed research project under the fellowship. As senior academics should have more experience in nurturing and mentoring young researchers, the weighting accorded in the assessment metrics on leadership will be more for SRFS candidates than that for RFS candidates.

Making changes to the proposal following submission

If necessary, nominees can submit a brief update of the proposal to the UGC Secretariat on or before 15 April 2025. This should only indicate material changes to the bid, e.g. changes in the eligibility of the nominee, nominee's CV, research funding secured, grants records, etc. It should be emphasised that such update should be confined to the above-said changes, and nominees should not use the opportunity to revise their proposals substantially. Upon request, the information update in hard copy should be appended to the proposals when submitted to the UGC Secretariat.

If an update is provided for ethics/ safety approval for the nomination, the respective Research Office should submit the relevant updated data to the RGC on or before 15 April 2025. Submission of letters on ethics/ safety approval is however not required at this stage, but such letters, if necessary, may need to be provided upon RGC's request.

If an update is provided for approval for access to Government/ official/ private data and records for a nomination, the respective Research Office should submit the relevant updated data to the RGC on or before 15 April 2025. Evidence of approval should also be submitted at this stage.

If an update is provided on any related research work that is being/ has been conducted in relation to the proposal, the nominee and supporting university should submit the relevant update to the RGC on or before 15 April 2025.

7. *Submission Process of Nominations*

The deadline for submission of nomination is **5:00 p.m. (Hong Kong time) on 29 November 2024 (Friday)**.

One soft copy in text-searchable PDF (with other PDF attachments if applicable) and one set of original hard copies of each nomination are required to reach the UGC Secretariat by the deadline. The content of the soft and hard copies must be identical. Please name the soft copy using the RGC reference number. The soft copy of the nomination should be saved in one USB memory stick/ DVD as far as possible. Late submission will not be entertained.

The RGC reference number should be used and quoted in all future correspondence with the following format:

For RFS nomination

“RFS2526” + dash “-” + one-digit university code + Selection Panel code (“H” or “S”) + two-digit ordinal number (e.g. RFS2526-3H01)

For SRFS nomination

“SRFS2526” + dash “-” + one-digit university code + Selection Panel code (“H” or “S”) + two-digit ordinal number (e.g. SRFS2526-3H01)

Details of the last three components of the RGC reference number are set out as follows:

(i) One-digit university code

Please refer to the list below:

1. City University of Hong Kong
2. Hong Kong Baptist University
3. Lingnan University
4. The Chinese University of Hong Kong
5. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
6. The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
7. The University of Hong Kong
8. The Education University of Hong Kong

(ii) Selection panel code

H – Humanities, Social Sciences and Business Studies Panel
S – Sciences, Medicine, Engineering and Technology Panel

(The RGC shall have the discretion to decide on the panel responsible for the final assessment of each nomination.)

(iii) Two-digit ordinal number

It indicates the order of nomination case(s) made by the supporting university for each Selection Panel in this exercise (e.g. H01 to H02, and S01 to S04 – instead of S03 to S06).

In view of the substantial amount of data involved, the supporting university is required to submit the nominations together with a summary of critical information (in Excel table format, template to be provided to the Research Office under separate cover by email) on all nominations made in this exercise. The completed critical data file (in Excel) should reach the UGC Secretariat via email by the deadline: **5:00 p.m. (Hong Kong time) on 29 November 2024 (Friday)**.

To help reduce the cost of processing and to save paper, nominees and supporting universities are urged to keep the length of research proposal and attachments to the minimum and use double-sided printing/ photocopying when making copies. It is important that nominees and supporting universities should comply with the page/ word limits specified in various parts of the nomination form. Nominations will be disqualified if the proposals are found to have

exceeded the allowable page/ word limits. Nominees must **not** include links to external websites in their nominations which contain extra information about the proposed project in the research proposal.

It is the obligation of nominees and supporting universities to ensure that their respective nominations 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 disqualification of a nomination.**

SECTION 2: COMPLETING THE NOMINATION MATERIALS

Format and font

In order to ensure consistency and fairness to all nominees, nominees must complete the nomination form and all **pdf documents** in the following standard RGC format:

- Font : Times New Roman
- Font Size : 12 point
- Margin : 2.5 cm all round
- Spacing : Single-line spacing
- PDF Version : compatible with Adobe Acrobat Reader 5 and text-searchable

Failure to comply with the format requirements may result in the removal of the nomination from processing. **Do not exceed the page or word limits for any section.**

All sections of the nomination form should be completed. Where information sought is not applicable or not provided under a particular section, insert “N/A”. Please ensure that you provide sufficient information for the RGC and its reviewers to undertake a full assessment of your proposal. Incomplete nominations or nominations with inconsistent/ inaccurate information may be rejected by the RGC as uncompetitive.

Nominees and supporting universities are not allowed to mention anything not related to the research proposal per se in the nomination form with a view to communicating to the RGC/ panel members/ reviewers to influence the latter in assessing their nominations or that the latter should give a certain rating if they intend to support the project under the fellowship concerned. Should such acts be discovered, the nominations concerned will be disqualified.

Documents as requested in the nomination form (e.g. CV, abstract of research, project objectives, etc.) should be attached in the respective part of the nomination form, except specified otherwise, within the page/ word limits as specified.

For nominations which have genuine special needs to be completed in a language other than English, nominees are required to provide an English version on the CV, Abstract of Research and Research Details in pdf file format.

PART I: PARTICULARS OF THE NOMINEE

1. Basic Information

To ensure record accuracy and to facilitate identification of the nominee, the nominee's name as shown on his/ her Hong Kong Identity Card/ Passport (where applicable) should be used and entered in standard RGC format:

	Surname	Other Name*
e.g.	Chan	Peter Tai-wai
e.g.	Zhong	Yaping
e.g.	Robinson	Philip Gary

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

With a view to establishing the researcher database in Hong Kong, the nominee is required to provide his/ her Open Researcher and Contributor ID Identifier (ORCID iD). ORCID iD can be registered for free at <https://orcid.org>.

Please indicate any involvement with current UGC/ RGC Committees or Panels at the close of nomination.

2. Current Employment

Use this section to provide details related to your current role and employment details.

Current Teaching Responsibilities, Current Administrative Responsibilities and Supervision of Research Postgraduate Students: Please provide summaries – no more than 200 words per section – of your current teaching and administrative responsibilities as well as supervision of research postgraduate students (which should be continued throughout the fellowship). Ensure you indicate an estimated number of hours per week for each area.

Estimated Number of Hours per Week to be Spent by You on the Research under this Fellowship: Please provide an indicative number of hours per week spent on the proposed research under the fellowship.

Declaration of Time Commitments of Your Research: Please provide the numbers of research projects you currently commit on, and if so required, justifications on how you would be able to take up the additional research project under the fellowship.

3. Credentials

In addition to their research interests, the nominee is also required to provide information on impact of past research, mentoring of young researchers (with details of your current research group including the size and composition, and a full list of former postdocs, PhDs, and other RPg students), professional service, etc. to facilitate the panel assessment of his/ her research capacity and leadership in the research field.

Curriculum Vitae (CV) attachment: You must include a CV with a maximum of two A4 pages, showing all academic qualifications with dates, and including any relevant postgraduate employment/ experience (e.g. industry attachments, etc.), in the following format.

CV

- (i) Name:
- (ii) Academic qualifications:
- (iii) Previous academic positions held (with dates):
- (iv) Present academic position:
- (v) Previous relevant research work:
- (vi) Other information including research-related prizes and awards, brief description of experience in consultancies, service as a referee in evaluating other grant applications, patents, PhD theses supervised, etc. should also be included.

Publications

Section A - Five most representative publications in last five years (i.e. 2020 – 2024)

Section B - Five representative publications beyond the recent five-year period (i.e. in or before 2019) with the latest publication entered first.

The author list of the publications should be presented in full and cited exactly as written in the original publication. In particular, the nominee should indicate clearly his/ her position especially in a long author list (e.g. state author 13 out of 40 for facilitating panel's consideration). Failure to comply with the above requirements may lead to disqualification of the nomination concerned.

PART II: DETAILS OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1. Particulars of the Project

- (a) The project title should be informative, clear, and concise.
- (b) Identify the Primary Field and Code and, if relevant, Secondary Field and Code: the fields and codes listings are provided at **Annex A**. To facilitate the appointment of the right experts to evaluate the proposals, a nominee should select a specific primary field area as far as possible. If a nominee selects a non-specific primary field area, i.e. Others, he/ she must select a specific secondary field area close to the field area of the proposal. To indicate the inter-disciplinary nature of a proposal, you may select a secondary field area/ code from a subject area which is different from that of the primary field area/ code.

Please also provide a maximum of five keywords related to the research proposal. You have a maximum of 30 characters per keyword.

- (c) Please also indicate the nature of your research: Basic, Applied or Overlapping Research.
- (d) Provide a short Project Abstract in a maximum of one A4 page in standard RGC format. This should be comprehensible to a non-specialist audience. It should summarise the key research challenges and your approach, including what the research will deliver in terms of new knowledge and/ or impact. If a proposal is funded, the Project Abstract will be mounted on the RGC website for public's information. The successful nominee may be approached for a Chinese version of the Project Abstract for public access shortly after the announcement of the funding results, or an English version if the original Project Abstract is presented in Chinese.

2. Research Details

- (a) Please provide in a maximum of one A4 page as an attachment outlining in bullet-point form the Project Objectives.
These should include a summary of:
 - reasons for undertaking the project
 - the key issues and/ or problems being addressed – these should be described and the project's engagement with solutions to the problems explained
 - possible outcomes of the research project in terms of new knowledge and/ or practical application
- (b) Research Project Statement: This is to be a maximum of ten A4 pages and should include five elements:
 - (i) 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/ justification for the research you are proposing and how it relates to existing research in the field.

- (ii) 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?
- (iii) 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.

- (iv) Project timetable/ Gantt chart (indicative: one page of the 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. All Biology & Medicine proposals should include appropriate sample size and power estimates. For proposals to involve clinical trial, a protocol should be submitted in a separate pdf file as an addendum. The GANTT chart should show the key milestones and deliverables (including those associated with research, training, engagement and impact).
 - (v) Attached diagrams, photos, charts, tables, etc, if any (indicative: two A4 non-text pages of the Research Project Statement).
- (c) Pathways to Impact: Please provide a maximum of two A4 pages as an attachment.

- (i) The Pathways to Impact Statement shall demonstrate how the candidate and his/ her project team will realise the “impact” beyond 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 academia**. The impacts may occur in any geographical location whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.
- (ii) The statement shall address the following:
- 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)?
 - How will the potential beneficiaries benefit? What will be the objective demonstrable / measurable benefits beyond academia?
 - What will be done during and / or after the project to increase the likelihood of achieving the identified benefit and reaching the identified beneficiaries?
 - What are the potential risks that might adversely affect the achievement of the stated impact and how will such risks be mitigated?
- (iii) The statement should be comprehensible to a lay person.
- (iv) Nominees 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 candidate should describe how the research findings arising from this proposal **would / could be used**, and what the candidate 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 identified.
- (d) References: Please provide up to three A4 pages maximum as an attachment. 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.
- (e) Engagement of Young Researchers in the Proposal: The nominee should elaborate,

in one A4 page maximum, the engagement and mentoring plan to train/ nurture the next generation of research talent, including Post-doctoral Fellows (PdF) and PhD students, via the proposed research project under the Fellowship, to facilitate the panel assessment of his/ her leadership in the research field.

- (f) **Project Team and Plan of Collaboration:** Please provide two A4 pages maximum, indicate in this attachment the role and the specific task(s) for which you, your project team and each collaborator, if any, are responsible. You are not required to provide CV(s) of collaborator(s), letter(s) of collaboration and related supporting documents of this proposed research at this stage. The awardees of fellowship will be required to provide documentary proof on the collaboration, if any, upon the request of the RGC/ Secretariat.
- (g) **Output Dissemination Plan:** Please complete the table in the nomination form to provide information on your output dissemination plan.
- (h) **Nature of Proposal:** If this is a Continuation or Re-submission proposal, provide details of the previous project/ work.

Re-submission response: In the case of a Re-submission, please complete a statement (maximum of 500 words) explaining how any previous review/ assessment recommendations have been addressed in the current submission. This should be a constructive response to previous reviewers' comments. It should be scholarly in tone. You should focus on key issues that have been most significantly changed or improved as a result of previous feedback. Re-submitted proposals will be treated as fresh ones in peer-review and handled in an identical manner to other new proposals. The Selection Panel will take into account the nominee's responses to the reviewers' comments but the panel is not required to invite the same group of External Reviewers for assessment.

PART III: PROJECT FUNDING AND RESOURCES

The RGC may not process your nomination if the proposed budget does not comply with the requirements as set out below. The RGC also reserves the right to use sanctions on any university which fails to screen out non-compliant nominations. While RGC may fully or partially fund the approved projects, universities 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.

General Advice

A detailed budget for the project duration must be given. The nominee and collaborator(s) are not regarded as project staff and their salaries must not be paid from RGC's project fund.

Academic staff remunerated by any UGC-funded universities in Hong Kong must not be paid with honorarium or other form of payments.

The estimated costs should not include any ‘hidden’ costs covered by recurrent block grant expenditure, 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 which would not otherwise be separately incurred. Examples of these are: salaries of Research Assistants specifically employed for this project; purchase of equipment necessary for the investigation but not available in the university(ies). In cases where a particular Research Assistant is employed for several projects, his/ her salary should be apportioned accordingly.

A “General Expenses” item is provided as a category for costs which cannot be included in any of the other items.

Detailed justification should be provided for each item or the RGC will not consider the request. Fellowship grants awarded under RFS/ SRFS should be used in undertaking research work in Hong Kong by the awardees (and their teams) in order to train and develop research talent in Hong Kong. For subcontracting services and/ or research work to be conducted outside Hong Kong, the nominees are required to provide adequate justifications in the proposal or required to submit a request to the RGC for approval (if it is not included in the approved proposal).

Unless otherwise stated, all costs are to be provided in Hong Kong dollars.

1. Cost and Justification

By accepting the fellowship, the fellowship grant will be allocated to the supporting university concerned via a designated bank account by two instalments, with issuance of the first instalment within the year of award and the second instalment subject to satisfactory assessment of the second annual progress report submitted by the awardee. The supporting university concerned shall also continue the awardee’s substantive academic appointment with salary, fringe benefits and other terms and conditions throughout the 60-month fellowship period. The awardee and the supporting university concerned will sign grant undertakings and agree to abide by all relevant UGC/ RGC guidelines.

(A) One-line Vote Items

- (i) Supporting Staff Costs: Please state the number, rank, cost and duties of supporting staff involved and the justification. The RGC normally supports research support staff at the Research Assistant (RA) level. Additional justification is required if staff above the RA level are requested, and if no PdF or PhD student positions are included in the proposed budget. In the case of a project proposal involving funding for PdF and/ or PhD student, the CV of the PdF/ PhD student in one A4 page should be attached if available. Otherwise, a

recruitment plan outline should be provided.

- (ii) Equipment Expenses: RGC funds must not be used to purchase personal electronic devices such as cell phones, iPod, iPad, MP3 Players, digital cameras and PDAs 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 and scanners known to be available, or reasonably expected to be provided in the universities concerned. Universities may be required by the RGC to confirm the availability of university's resources prior to their acceptance of an award. This is what the RGC means by "university's commitment".

For equipment, the following points should be addressed:

- Is the equipment essential to the project?
- Has the department/ university already provided such equipment?
- Is there similar equipment elsewhere in other universities and what is the possibility of sharing?
- Provide information in supporting the estimated cost of equipment e.g. quotes from suppliers. Items costing over \$200,000 and without supporting quotations will NOT be considered. Up to two A4 pages can be attached, if necessary.

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

- Has the university already been provided with similar equipment? If yes, please explain the need for the purchase.
- Is there similar equipment elsewhere in other universities? If yes, please provide the following information regarding such equipment in other universities 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 or per year as appropriate);
 - the estimated number of hours (say per month or per year as appropriate) available for use by other universities 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 universities currently and in the past two years; and
 - any other reasons that preclude the shared use of the equipment with other universities.
- Level of use: Please provide the estimated numbers of staff members and/ or students expected to use the equipment in this application and the estimated number of hours per annum of utilisation.
- Will the equipment be available for use by universities other than the

collaborating universities in the application? If yes, please state the extent of shared use by other universities such as the number of hours available for sharing per week.

- (iii) Costs for Employment of Relief Teacher(s): Please state the rank of the relief teacher(s), the months and costs involved. Relief teachers engaged for this purpose are meant to relieve the awardees of their day-to-day teaching loads and administrative burden related to teaching work. Whilst nominees are encouraged to request funding support for the employment of relief teacher(s), resources for strengthening the capacity of early career researchers should not be compromised by allocating excessive teaching relief.

The actual duration of teaching relief, actual use/ expenditure of teaching relief, and actual relief of administrative duties are subject to mutual agreement between the awardee and the supporting university.

It is not necessary to find a relief teacher with equivalent salary, status and experience as the nominee concerned. The relief teacher is also not supposed to take up non-teaching related duties, such as purely administrative work, of the nominee. In this connection, the universities are requested to confirm that the salaries for the relief teachers proposed by the nominee do not exceed the salary of Staff Grade ‘G’ of the universities concerned. If the nominee or the university intends to employ a relief teacher with salary higher than that for Staff Grade ‘G’, strong and detailed justification must be provided for consideration by the RGC. If a relief teacher is required, the CV of the teacher in the standard format should be attached, if available, for consideration by the RGC.

Please also state the current average teaching load (total number of contact/ classroom hours per academic year, showing those for lecturing, laboratories and or tutorials). Universities are requested to confirm that the nominee’s declared teaching load has been verified.

- (iv) 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 nominees and their teams in order to train and develop research talent in Hong Kong. It will be legitimate for the nominees 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 nominees should have identified and possessed a high level of research expertise in their teams when they submit research proposals 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 nominees or the supporting universities (for instance, employees, friends, relatives, subsidiary companies *etc.* should be avoided) and the procurement should be done in accordance with the university's procedures and guidelines; and
- The nominees or their team members should be involved in monitoring the sub-contracting services or the supervision of the subcontracting services.

For subcontracting services or research work to be conducted outside Hong Kong, nominees have to justify in their proposals a clear reasoning, for the panel's approval. The corresponding RGC Panels will evaluate the merits and justification of the case according to the conditions specified above. For services/ work over \$200,000 (in the whole 5-year fellowship period), price quotations must be provided.

Nominees should provide detailed justification of sample sizes and costs for surveys involving participants outside Hong Kong.

- (v) 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 (iv) above should be included under general expenses. For services/ purchase over HK\$200,000, price quotations must be provided. Nominees should provide detailed justification of sample sizes and costs for surveys conducted in Hong Kong.
- (vi) Conference Expenses: 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 \$20,000 per year, irrespective of the number of investigators involved in the project, is normally allowed for each funded project.
- (vii) Travel (for non-conference research-related trip(s)): Please state the number of non-conference research-related trips required and the cost per trip (including air passage and hotel accommodation) during the fellowship period.
- (viii) Subsistence (for non-conference research-related trip(s)): Please state the amount of subsistence required during the fellowship period. The ceiling of \$900 per day should not be exceeded.
- (ix) Expenses for Dissemination of Research Deliverables: 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.

(B) Earmarked Items

- (x) High-performance Computing Services Expenses: A provision of up to \$100,000 will be allowed for the subscription of high-performance computing services for each funded project. Price quotation should be provided. Requests without quotations may not be considered.
- (xi) Research-related Software License/ Dataset: For requests for purchase/ subscription of database(s)/ dataset(s), price quotations should be provided. Requests without quotations may not be considered. The university should not use the RGC funds to purchase standard software licences/ dataset.

Please complete the relevant Declarations associated with equipment, relief teaching, high performance computing, software and datasets. Please confirm whether or not the requested equipment/ high-performance and computing services/ research-related software licence/ dataset is available in the university. If yes, please explain why such equipment/ high-performance computing services and software licence/ dataset cannot be used by the nominee.

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

Please provide up to one A4 page in maximum outlining details of any existing resources available for this project to be completed and not covered elsewhere in the Nomination Form.

3. Funds Secured or To Be Secured

Other sources of funds (including fellowships) can include private donations, awards or grants from other organisations, contract research funds from commercial enterprises, or special allocations made by the university from the block grant or the indicated grant for equipment, etc. Please note that there should not be duplicated funding (expenditure) on the same research work undertaken for the same research proposal/ projects or funded awards under another RGC research funding scheme. However, if an awardee, as declared on the nomination form, has secured or will secure other funds for research work that is related to the RFS/ SRFS research proposal/ project, then the other funds should only be spent to complement or supplement the research work related to the RFS/ SRFS research proposal/ project. The RGC has the sole discretion in deciding the final distribution of funding.

PART IV: DECLARATION OF RELATED PROPOSALS, GRANT AND FELLOWSHIP RECORD

(a) During the fellowship period, awardees are allowed to hold concurrent grant(s) awarded by the UGC/ RGC or other funding agencies. Awardees will be allowed to hold other fellowship(s) concurrently (not applicable to HSSPFS) only if prior approval of the UGC Secretariat, on a case-by-case basis, has been obtained. Specifically, there must not be any

overlapping of teaching relief under any approved concurrent fellowship(s) within the RFS/ SRFS fellowship period. An awardee may submit request for prior approval to hold a concurrent fellowship during the RFS/ SRFS fellowship period only if:

- (i) the other fellowship(s) is/ are only honorary in nature, and awardees are retaining only the title of the other fellowship(s) but not receiving financial consideration of the other fellowship(s) during the RFS/ SRFS fellowship period; **or**
- (ii) the funding under the other fellowship(s) is supporting a different research project or is spent on a project that can complement or supplement the research work related to the RFS/ SRFS research proposal/ project, and there must be no overlapping of teaching relief under the other fellowship(s).

Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Selection Panel Chair concerned. Any request should reach the UGC Secretariat at least four weeks in advance of the commencement date of the other fellowship(s). Cases seeking retrospective approval will not be considered.

(b) – (c) It is the responsibility of the nominee 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. Failure to declare similar/ related projects/ proposals (irrespective of whether submitted to/ funded by UGC/ RGC and not limited to those in the past five years (i.e. 2020 – 2024)) in this section may result in disqualification of the nomination and debarring from applying for future UGC/ RGC grants. The nominee is required to declare any related research work that is being/ has been conducted in relation to the proposal, and provide clarifications which distinguish that related research work from the work requested to be funded through this proposal.

It is for the RGC to make the final decision on whether two proposals/ projects/ research work are similar. The judgment of the RGC is final. Therefore, it is always advisable for the nominee to declare related research work when there is uncertainty. The nominee is advised to make the declaration and elaborate the difference in the proposals/ projects to avoid misunderstanding. Declaration of related proposals/ projects/ research work does not necessarily mean that the proposals concerned will be adversely affected. The RGC may still fund the proposals concerned if the nominee is able to justify the differences of the proposals/ projects/ research work for separate funding.

PART V: ETHICS AND OTHER APPROVALS

1. Research Ethics/ Safety Approval and Access to Government/ Official/ Private Data and Records

- (a) Research ethics/ safety approval: Please complete the questionnaire related to ethics and safety approvals. It is the responsibility of the university and the nominee 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 artefacts, living animals and/ or human subjects including social sciences research involving human subjects (e.g. potential physical or psychological harms, discomfort or stress to human participants that a research project might generate, subjects' privacy etc.). The primary responsibility for seeking the relevant approval and ethics clearance rests with the nominee. The nominee's supporting university is required to complete and sign the Statement on Submission to confirm the details on ethics and safety provided in the nomination are accurate and any approvals have been given/ is being sought. For research involving clinical trials, nominees are allowed to obtain relevant ethics approval before the release of funding and project commencement.
- (b) Access to Government/ official/ private data and records: Please complete the questionnaire. It is the responsibility of the university and the nominee 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 nominee. The nominee's supporting university is required to complete and sign the Statement on Submission to confirm the details provided are accurate and relevant approvals have been given/ are being sought.

For both (a) and (b) with the exception of research involving clinical trials, nominations should not be submitted unless the approval of the appropriate agency(ies) has/ have been or is/ are being sought. The RGC will regard the nominations as being withdrawn if no confirmation of approval is provided to the RGC by 15 April 2025. If the supporting university/ nominee has declared that no approval will be required but the RGC/ Selection Panel eventually considers otherwise, the related nomination may be disqualified.

2. Project Data

Release of completion report:

Awardees 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 the awardee) to the public through the RGC website. The awardees should assess data archive potential and opportunities for data sharing. Due additional weight will be given to a nomination where the nominee is willing to make research data available to others.

Awardees 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. Awardees 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 of publications resulting from research funded by the RGC:

- (i) Upon acceptance of a paper for publication, the awardee 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 university's repository for open access;
- (ii) if both (i)(A) and (B) are not allowed, the awardee should request the publisher to allow him/ her to place either version in his/ her university's 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 nominee should deposit a copy of the publication in his/ her university's repository as early as possible but no later than six months after publication or the embargo period, if any.

PART VI: ADDITIONAL ATTACHMENT

Appendix: Technology Transfer Plan (Optional)

Nominees are invited to submit a Technology Transfer Plan. 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 one A4 page and cover:

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

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

PART VII: SUPPORTING UNIVERSITY DECLARATIONS AND STATEMENT ON SUBMISSION

In submitting a nomination to the RGC both the nominee and the supporting university are agreeing that they have fulfilled the eligibility and other requirements for the RFS/ SRFS.

These are provided in a Statement on Submission (SoS) document that needs to be completed and signed by the appropriate authority of the supporting university, and included as Annex to the nomination form when the nomination is submitted. The SoS provides confirmation of the supporting university's agreement and endorsement for the following:

- *Eligibility for submission and accuracy*
- *Reporting, access to data and publications*
- *Support for staff and other personnel*

For the RFS/ SRFS, there are specific additional clauses related to eligibility, the selection of nominees and the identification of a Selection Panel. Please answer these additional questions on the Nomination Form.

Please ensure you read the SoS carefully before you complete the Nomination Form so that you are sure you have taken into account all the agreed requirements.

UGC Secretariat
October 2024

**(1) List of Research Field Areas and Codes for
Sciences, Medicine, Engineering and Technology**

Biological Sciences

(Subject Area: M1)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
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
Neuroscience	1129
Plant Sciences / Plant Biology	1130
Stem Cell Biology	1131
Virology	1132
Others (please specify)	1199

Medicine, Dentistry & Health

(Subject Area: M2)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
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
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

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

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
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
Personalised Medicine	1252
Rehabilitative and Physical Medicine	1254
Stem Cell Therapy	1256
Others (please specify)	1299

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

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
Building & Construction	2101
Environmental	2102
Geotechnical	2103
Structure	2104
Surveying	2105
Water	2106
Transportation	2107
Urban Development	2108
Others (please specify)	2199

Computing Science & Information Technology

(Subject Area: E2)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
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 (please specify)	2299

Electrical & Electronic Engineering

(Subject Area: E3)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
Communication	2301
Electronics	2302
Photonics	2303
Signal & Image Processing	2305
Bioelectronics	2306
Power Electronics	2307
Power System	2308
Microwave and Terahertz Engineering	2309
Others (please specify)	2399

Mechanical, Production & Industrial Engineering

(Subject Area: E4)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
Design	2401
Engineering Management	2402
Fluids	2403
Marine Engineering	2404
Materials	2405
Mechanics & Dynamics	2406
Operations Research	2407

Mechanical, Production & Industrial Engineering

(Cont'd) (Subject Area: E4)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
Production & Manufacturing	2408
Robotics & Automation	2409
Textiles	2410
Thermal	2411
Biomechanics	2412
Fuel Engineering	2413
Others (please specify)	2499

Chemical Engineering

(Subject Area: P1)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
Chemical Engineering	3101
Biophysics	3102
Energy	3103
Environmental Sciences	3104
Biochemical Engineering	3105
Food Science and Technology	3106
Others (please specify)	3199

Physical Sciences

(Subject Area: P2)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
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 (please specify)	3299

Mathematics

(Subject Area: P3)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
Applied Mathematics	3301
Pure Mathematics	3302
Probability & Statistics	3303
Mathematical Finance and Insurance	3304
Others (please specify)	3399

**(2) List of Research Field Areas and Codes
for Humanities, Social Sciences and Business Studies**

Psychology and Linguistics

(Subject Area: H1)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
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)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
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

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

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
Archaeology	4417
Human Geography	4418
Social Policy	4419
Others – relating to Social and Behavioural Sciences (please specify)	4195

Humanities and Arts
(Subject Area: H3)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
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
Film, Visual and Media Studies	4221
History	4213
History of Arts	4214
Musicology / Music History	4215
Translation Studies	4216
Philosophy	4218
Religious Studies	4219
Sexuality and Gender Studies	4220
Cultural Studies / Cultural Policy	4222
Journalism and Media	4407
Contemporary Art	4420
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
Hong Kong Studies	4424
Others – relating to Humanities and Arts (please specify)	4299

Education

(Subject Area: H4)

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

Business Studies

(Subject Area: B)

<u>Field Area</u>	<u>Code</u>
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 (please specify)	5199

Handling of Information and Personal Data
Contained in RFS/ SRFS Nominations

Purpose of Collection of Information and Personal Data

1. Information and personal data contained in the RFS/ SRFS nomination are collected for the following purposes:

- (a) determination of the eligibility of nominee concerned for the award of RFS/ SRFS fellowship;
- (b) assessment of the merits of the research proposal/ plan submitted;
- (c) assisting the Selection Panel concerned in identifying external reviewers to assess the research proposal concerned;
- (d) compilation of periodic reports and statistical returns for analysis and research by the RGC/ 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 nominations, such data may be used for project monitoring, promotion, publicity and may also be published on the RGC website.

Handling of Information and Personal Data

2. The nomination including personal data 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 the nominee wants to exclude any individuals from access to the submitted information, please inform the RGC separately at the juncture of submission of nomination. The RGC does not accept nominations that are classified “confidential” by the nominee. It also reserves the right to stop processing or reject any nominations if the nominees’ requests render it impossible for the nominations to be adequately peer-reviewed.

3. When the RGC obtains external assessments on the nomination, 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 nominee and nomination are liable to be released anonymously to the nominee concerned upon request. External reviewers will also be advised of the RGC policy on providing feedback to nominees described in paragraph 4 below.

4. Nominees should note the following:

- (a) all nominations will have undergone a 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; and
- (b) comments from all external reviewers on each nomination (except for conference grants/ travel grants/ fellowship applications) will be provided anonymously to the applicants concerned through their universities.

Physical Retention of Nominations

5. Nominations 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 the legal right of nominee concerned to request access to personal data held by the RGC about his/ her nomination 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) Special Duties 1
Research Grants Council
7/F Shui On Centre
6-8 Harbour Road
Wanchai
Hong Kong

Fax: 2845 1183