

What do you need to have in your grant application for HMRF?

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Reviewers' perspective



Disclosures

Grant Review Board member, since
2015

Grant Review Board Chairperson,
since 2023

HMRF applicant





What we hope to achieve today:

01

Highlights

What HMRF is looking for?

02

Do's

Tips on how to write effectively

03

Don'ts

Common errors and pitfalls

01

Highlights

What HMRF is looking for?



Project Scope: **clinical research** or research on infectious diseases with **public health implications**



Patient-oriented research

Exclusion: human tissues
that cannot be linked to a
living individual



Epidemiological and behavioural studies



Outcomes research and health services research

Four broad areas



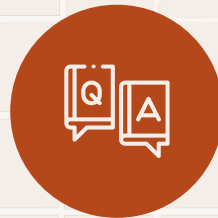
Public health,
human health
and health
services



Infectious
diseases



Advanced
medical research



Health
promotion

Infectious diseases research proposals

- Diseases prevalent or threatening HK and neighbouring regions
- HK academic community having competitive edge
- Public health implications from bench to bedside and at community level
- Translational value



Advance medical research

- Clinical studies applying advanced technologies
- Impact on clinical practice and / or health policy

Examples

- Clinical trials to **test effectiveness** of treatment using genome editing technologies
- Machine learning and artificial intelligence approaches **for treatment**
- Surgical interventions, medical devise, psychological interventions etc.



Appendix A

Please refer here for
EXAMPLES matching (and
not matching) the scope
supported by HMRF



Administrative withdrawal



Out-of-scope



**Too brief for peer
review**



**Inconsistent
with
submission
requirements**

Guidance Notes on Grant Application

Explanatory Notes on Grant Application

02

Do's

How to write effectively



Co-applicants

Get more people involved

Multi-disciplinary expertise (academic and non-academic institutions)

Multi-site, multi-country collaboration

Increases study feasibility





Only for applications rated “2” or above
in a previous HMRF open call

All reviewers’ comments addressed and
proposal **substantially revised**

Relevance to the **prevailing
thematic priorities**

Resubmission



Ethics approval

Not required at the time of grant application submission

Ethics approval need to be submitted **within 12 weeks** from the date of decision letter

Same project title

Assessment criteria

01

Relevance to the
scope of funding

- Review the **latest** prevailing scope of funding supported by HMRF

Assessment criteria

02

Significance of
research question
& Quality of
scientific content

- **WHY** this is significant?
 1. Convert the “non-believers”
 2. The research gap identified should also be a deficiency in current practice
- **HOW** you can answer this question?
- Rationale should be presented in a logical manner for reviewers who might not be familiar with the field or who (usually) have extremely tight schedules
- Use subheadings, bold type or underline

Section 10. b(i) (ii)

b(i). Research in Context: Answer the two questions:

(i) What is the existing evidence before this study based on an up-to-date literature search? State clearly whether research on a similar topic has been / is being carried out. Outline the research approaches in other studies and highlight their deficiencies and the **research gap**.

(ii) How will this study add value to existing evidence to improve patient care, population health, **influence clinical practice** and/or health services management, or **inform health policy** in Hong Kong and elsewhere?

b(ii). Introduction: Explain the relevance of the proposal to the scope of the fund. Elaborate in details with references to support the answers provided to b(i) above.

Assessment criteria

03

Study design and methods

- Choose the most appropriate study design based on your main research question.
- Present the study design clearly.
- The study design determines the research methods.
- The objectives should be able to test your hypothesis.
- Outcome measures defined clearly to match your objectives.
- Appropriate controls and confounding factors adequately addressed in non-randomized studies.



Reporting guidelines for main study types

<u>Randomised trials</u>	<u>CONSORT</u>	<u>Extensions</u>
<u>Observational studies</u>	<u>STROBE</u>	<u>Extensions</u>
<u>Systematic reviews</u>	<u>PRISMA</u>	<u>Extensions</u>
<u>Study protocols</u>	<u>SPIRIT</u>	<u>PRISMA-P</u>
<u>Diagnostic/prognostic studies</u>	<u>STARD</u>	<u>TRIPOD</u>
<u>Case reports</u>	<u>CARE</u>	<u>Extensions</u>
<u>Clinical practice guidelines</u>	<u>AGREE</u>	<u>RIGHT</u>
<u>Qualitative research</u>	<u>SRQR</u>	<u>COREQ</u>
<u>Animal pre-clinical studies</u>	<u>ARRIVE</u>	
<u>Quality improvement studies</u>	<u>SQUIRE</u>	<u>Extensions</u>
<u>Economic evaluations</u>	<u>CHEERS</u>	<u>Extensions</u>

Assessment criteria

04

Feasibility

- Sample size achievable and reasonable
- Sample size calculation according to the primary or major objective

**Be a good
story-teller**

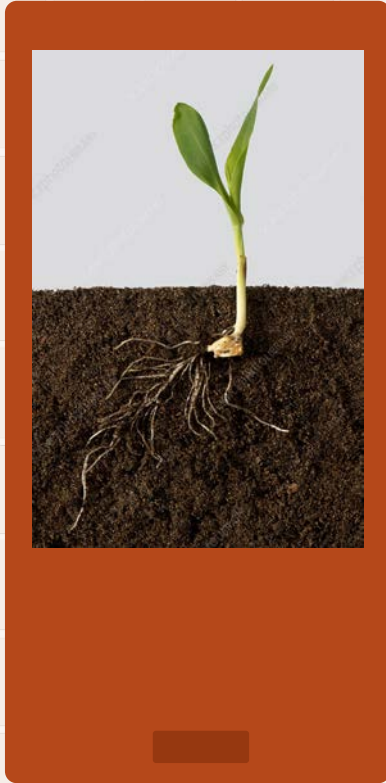


03

Don'ts

Common errors and pitfalls





Getting a seed grant is easier

- NOT equivalent to studies with lower quality
- Examples include pilot studies with a goal for larger-scale research, or improving efficacy of current practice
 - Assessed by one external reviewer

Work done **before** project commencement

Research work done before project start date is not allowed.

This includes work done **before and after application** submission.

Costs of work **before project start date** are not allowed.

Such costs include purchase of equipment and working day of project staff.

Assessment criteria

01

Lack of Originality

- Similar to previous work done by the same group
- Similar to work done in other localities

02

Lack of Preliminary data

- **NOT** part of your proposed research
- Evidence to support significance of your research question
- Evidence to support the proposed intervention
- Evidence to support feasibility of the research methods

Assessment criteria

03

Justification of
requested budget

- Avoid overlap with existing projects

Good luck!



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