Briefing Session for 2023 Open Call for Research Fellowship Scheme

Research Fund Secretariat
Research Office
Health Bureau
November 2023

Outline

- Overview of the Scheme
- Eligibility and Requirement
- Review Process
- Points to Note
- Monitoring and Presentation

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Overview of the Scheme

Research Fellowship Scheme

Administration	Establishment	Operation	Components
• Research Fund Secretariat, Health Bureau	• August 2015	• Annual basis	• Training programme • Research project

Objectives

Support researcher or professionals, particularly healthcare professionals, in their **early to mid-career** to enhance their skills in **public health and health services research**

Framework

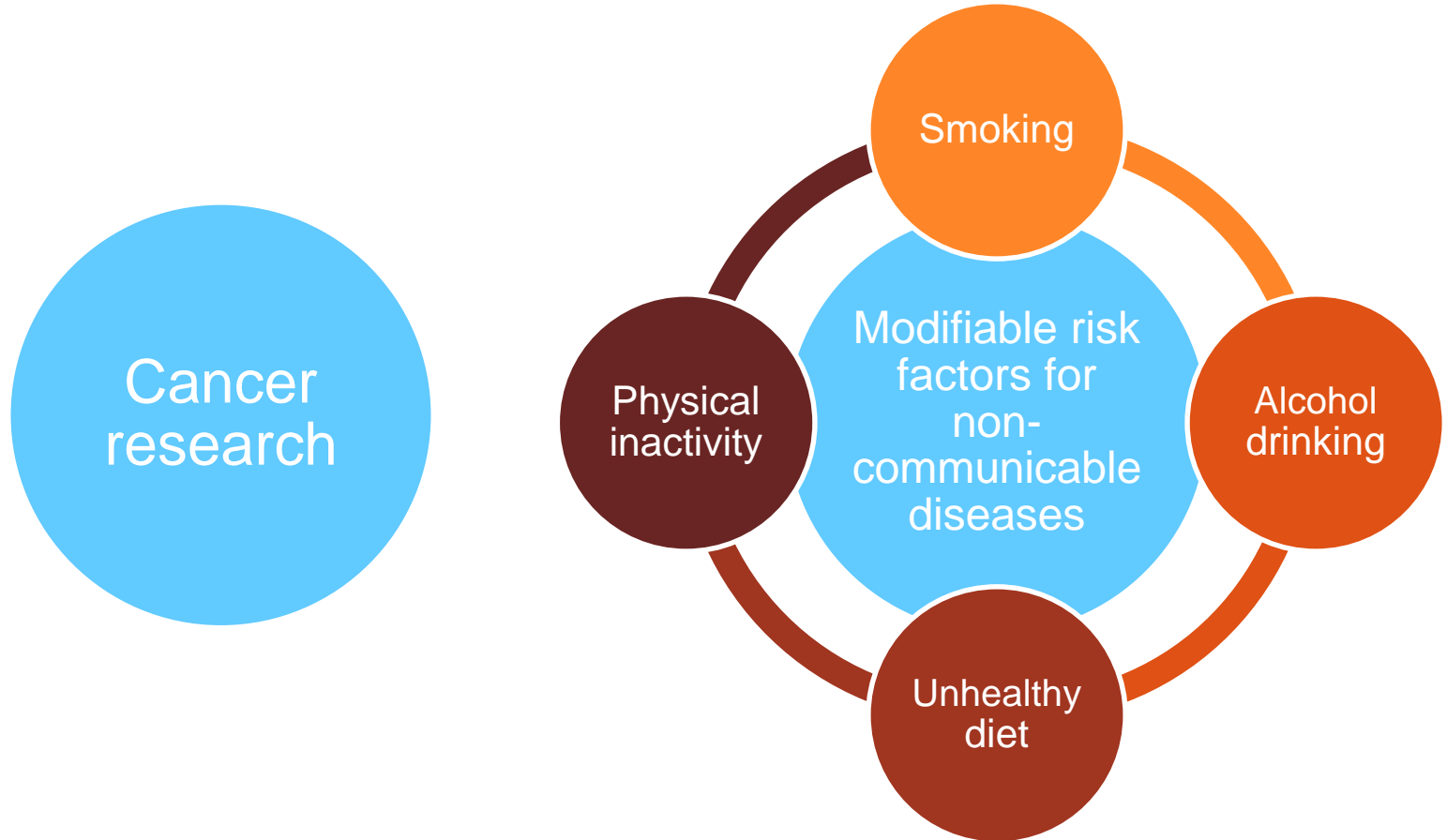**Support successful applicant -**

- To attend <u>overseas training programme</u> (at least **3** months cumulatively)

- To carry out <u>a small-scale research project</u> relating to the proposed training programme with **no more than three** research objectives

Funding Scope

Supports applications on the following research projects -

- **Clinical research** including patient-oriented research, epidemiological and behavioural studies, outcomes research and health services research

- **Infectious diseases research with public health implications** from bench to bedside and at community level and with translational value

- Clinical research **based on Chinese medicine theory** or clinical research on Chinese medicine theory and methodology

Funding Priority

Cancer research

Modifiable risk factors for non-communicable diseases

Smoking

Alcohol drinking

Physical inactivity

Unhealthy diet

Grant Size

- **$1.2 million** for up to **2 years**

① $0.4 million (**maximum**) for **overseas** training programme

- Training/course fee
- Air package (up to **2 round-trip** economy class)
- Accommodation expenses
- Subsistence allowances

② $0.8 million for research project

- Staff costs (including cost for research staff and reliever)
- Other expenses
- Equipment

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Eligibility and Requirement

Application Streams

Stream A (16 awards)

Tertiary institutions funded by the UGC

UGC: University Grants Committee

Stream B (4 awards)

Designated **teaching hospitals** of the medical schools of CUHK and HKU, i.e.
Prince of Wales Hospital and **Queen Mary Hospital**

Eligibility

Fellowship Applicant (FA)

☑ Medical and health-related professionals or researchers

☑ < 10 years' post-doctoral or post-qualification

☑ Full-time employees of the Administering Institutions (AIs)

☑ Based at same AI throughout the fellowship period

☑ Support from a Mentor*

*A full-time staff of the AI. For Stream B, the Mentor can be a full-time staff of the respective medical school of HKU & CUHK

Ineligible Applicant

❌ FA with ongoing fellowship project

❌ Resubmission of previously rejected application

Requirement – Training Programme

✓
- Train FA to become a better scientist/researcher
- Knowledge/skills should be relevant and applicable to the research project
- Training plan should include purpose, duration, activities, relevance to the research project and deliverables

✗
- Clinical attachment that cannot improve FA's research capability
- Degree programme (e.g. Master or PhD degree)

Requirement – Research Project

✔
- Clinical research / Research on infectious diseases with public health implications
- Apply knowledge and skills acquired in the training programme
- Original with advancement in scientific knowledge
- Translational potential within short-to-medium timeframe
- Small-scale study with ≤ 3 research objectives

✘
- × Simple replication of previous overseas studies
- × Develop methods/ techniques/research platforms without evaluation of the tool in a clinical setting

Outside funding scope

EXAMPLE

A **pre-clinical study** which aims to determine the treatment effect of a traditional Chinese medicine/herbal formula for a particular disease using mouse models.

Basic / preclinical research on Chinese medicine → Non-clinical research

EXAMPLE

A study which aims to identify novel virus species by next-generation sequencing of samples collected from various animal sources, followed by bioinformatics analysis to investigate the virus evolution and the susceptibility of transmission to potential new hosts.

This study is a viral evolutionary biology project, and is unlikely to identify new viruses that can infect human and cause public health threats

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Review
Process

Application Submitted via eGMS

Complete the e-form

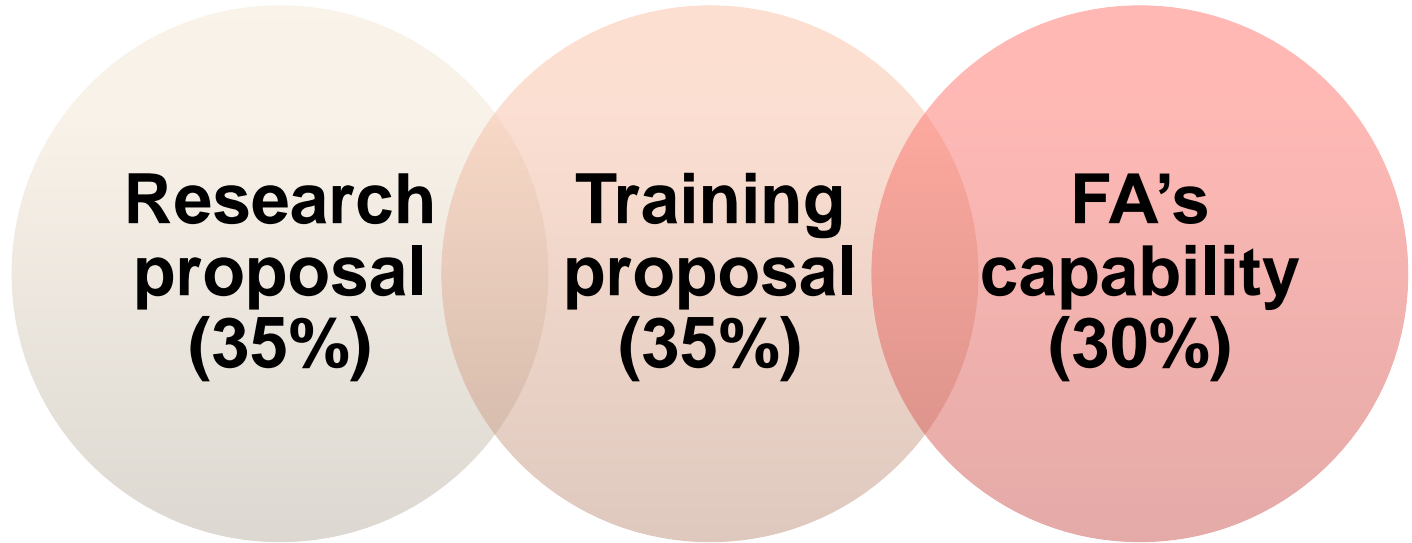- https://rfs.healthbureau.gov.hk/eGMS/

Attachments

- Nomination letter from President/ Vice-Chancellor (for Stream A) / Hospital Chief Executive (for Stream B)

- Mentor's endorsement and CV

Review Process

1. • Applications submitted by AI
2. • Initial vetting by the Secretariat
3. • Reviewed by the Research Fellowship Assessment Panel (RFAP)
4. • Interview the shortlisted FA (May 2024)*   *Tentative
5. • Announcement of result (June 2024)*
6. • Clarifications and submission of outstanding documents
7. • Issuance of approval letter and agreement^

^ Fellowship should commence within 6 months from the date of approval letter

Assessment Criteria

Research proposal (35%)

Training proposal (35%)

FA's capability (30%)

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Points
to
Note

Points to Note – Submission

eGMS
electronic Grant Management System

- Submission via AI in **eGMS** by **8 Jan 2024** (6:00 pm HKT)
- FA will receive acknowledgement email

! Pay attention to AI's internal deadline, if any

! Application with incomplete signatures/ electronic endorsement may not be considered

! 1 application per FA

! Maximum 8 applications per AI, except HKU and CUHK for up to 10 applications

Points to Note –
Ethics / Third-party Data Access

Regulatory / Ethical Approvals / Evidence for Accessing Third-party Data

- Submit within **12 weeks** (or as specified by the Secretariat) after announcement of funding decisions

- Regulatory/ethics approval(s)/evidence for accessing third-party data bear(s) the **same project title** as that in the application approved by the RFAP

- The **protocol/scope** included in such approval(s)/evidence for accessing third-party data must be the **same** as that in the application

Clinical Trial Certificate/Medicinal Test Certificate

- Confirm with Department of Health if required as early as practical

Points to Note –
Management of Track Records of Applicants

🚫 Scientific Misconduct (Plagiarism, fraudulence, etc)

🚫 Double dipping not declared

🚫 Conflict of Interest not declared

🚫 Non-compliance

Common Examples – Plagiarism / Self-plagiarism

Plagiarism

- Copies verbatim the sentence(s) from another source in the proposal without citing the reference or giving any indication that it had been previously published

- Copies a sentence or text from another source and make minor editorial adjustments (e.g. changing abbreviations or tenses) but acknowledges the original source

- Replicates the plan of investigation, research aims, objectives and hypotheses of another research group without acknowledgement

- Figure(s) used in the application was found to have been used in a previous publication or public presentation

Self-plagiarism

- The applicant reproduces text and/or figures from his/her own published work in the proposal without acknowledgement

Proper declaration of similar studies and other funding

- Applicants listed in Part I Section 11 of the e-Form should declare any duplicate funding

- At any time before the announcement of the funding decision, applicants are required to notify the Secretariat immediately about –

!   any other similar or related application submitted to other funding agencies in addition to those listed in the e-Form

!   the funding decision of any similar or related application once available

Work done before project commencement

❌ **Costs** of work (e.g. the purchase of equipment or the first working day of a project staff) **incurred before the commencement date** or the writing-up of such work are not allowed

❌ **Training or research** work (e.g. subject recruitment) **conducted before the commencement** of the fellowship which includes the period before and after application submission is not allowed. The Agreement will not be signed if such case is declared

❗ If such case is declared upfront before the Agreement is signed, the FA has to **adjust the funding scope and the funding amount** for RFAP's consideration and approval

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Monitoring and Presentation

Monitoring

Training report
(1 month after training)

Evaluation surveys

For outcomes and impacts at
2 and 4 years after completion

Commencement

Completion

**Interim report &
certified financial
report**
(every 12 months)

**Final report,
dissemination
report &
audited accounts**

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Presentation and Publication

Achievements

Project Deliverables

Learning Experience

https://rfs.healthbureau.gov.hk/

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