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## INFORMATION NOTE

### Doctoral fellowship schemes in selected jurisdictions

#### 1. Background

1.1 The Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme (HKPF) was introduced in 2009 by the Hong Kong Research Grants Council. It aims to attract the best students in the world to pursue doctoral degrees in local institutions. Up to 135 PhD Fellowships are awarded in each academic year. Successful applicants for HKPF are provided with a monthly stipend of HK\$20,000 and an annual conference travel allowance of HK\$10,000 for a maximum period of three years. Individual participating universities also waive awardees' tuition fees for one to three years. According to the results of the first round of HKPF announced in March 2010, 2 996 applications from 100 countries and regions were received. A total of 148 candidates were offered a Fellowship, with 115 accepting the award. Among these awardees, 71 (62%) were from the Mainland, 10 (9%) from Hong Kong, and the remaining 34 (29%) from other parts of the world.

1.2 Against the above background, the purpose of this information note is to provide the Panel on Education with general information on the operation of similar doctoral research scholarship schemes offered by overseas governments or authorities which are open to international students. Five selected jurisdictions are covered in this study, namely, Australia, Germany, New Zealand, Singapore and the European Union (EU). Relevant information is presented in the following **Table**.

**Table – Doctoral research scholarship schemes for non-local and/or local students in selected jurisdictions**

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>The European Union</b>
Relevant scheme	(a) Endeavour Postgraduate Awards; and (b) International Postgraduate Research Scholarship (IPRS).	DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst or German Academic Exchange Service) Research Grant for Completion of a Doctoral Programme.	New Zealand International Doctoral Research Scholarships (NZIDRS).	(a) Singapore International Graduate Award (SINGA); and (b) National Science Scholarships (PhD) (NSS(PhD)).	Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctoral Programmes (EMJDs). <sup>(1)</sup>
Relevant legislation	<i>Higher Education Support Act 2003.</i>	Nil. (DAAD is a registered association under private law.)	Nil.	Nil.	"Decision No. 1298/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 establishing the Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 action programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries" ("Programme Decision").

Note: (1) EMJDs are designed and implemented by consortia of higher education institutions formed by at least three different countries which are entitled to deliver doctorate degrees, and one of which must be a member state of the EU. The selection of EMJDs is a competitive process based on the assessment of the quality of the proposal. The selected programmes will be awarded Erasmus Mundus funding for five consecutive years.

**Table – Doctoral research scholarship schemes for non-local and/or local students in selected jurisdictions (cont'd)**

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>The European Union</b>
<b>Aims</b>	<p><u>Endeavour Postgraduate Awards</u></p> <p>(a) Enabling high-achieving international students to undertake a postgraduate qualification in Australia;</p> <p>(b) strengthening bilateral ties between Australia and other countries;</p> <p>(c) showcasing Australia's education sector;</p> <p>(d) strengthening mutual understanding between the people of Australia and awardees' home countries; and</p> <p>(e) building international linkages and networks.</p> <p><u>IPRS</u></p> <p>(a) Attracting top-quality international postgraduate students to areas of research strength in Australian higher-education providers; and</p> <p>(b) supporting Australia's research effort.</p>	<p>(a) Advancing academic relations between Germany and other countries; and</p> <p>(b) promoting the fields of education, science, culture and research.</p>	<p>(a) Sharing New Zealand's excellent education system with the rest of the world; and</p> <p>(b) bringing the best academics from around the world to share their knowledge with New Zealand.</p>	<p><u>SINGA</u></p> <p>Attracting international PhD students to Singapore to carry out their graduate studies at A*STAR (Agency for Science, Technology and Research) laboratories in pursuit of a PhD degree to be awarded by the National University of Singapore or the Nanyang Technological University.</p> <p><u>NSS(PhD)</u></p> <p>Offering support to students for PhD training in various physical science, engineering and biomedical science disciplines at reputable overseas universities and research laboratories, with them returning to contribute to Singapore's research and development landscape.</p>	<p>(a) Promoting European higher education;</p> <p>(b) helping improve and enhance the career prospects of students;</p> <p>(c) promoting intercultural understanding through cooperation with "Third Countries"<sup>(2)</sup> in accordance with the EU external policy objectives of contributing to the sustainable development of "Third Countries" in the field of higher education; and</p> <p>(d) specifically, developing structured and integrated cooperation in higher education in order to design and implement common doctoral programmes that lead to the award of mutually recognized doctoral degrees.</p>

Note: (2) "Third countries" refer to non-European countries, according to Article 9 of the "Programme Decision".

**Table – Doctoral research scholarship schemes for non-local and/or local students in selected jurisdictions (cont'd)**

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>The European Union</b>
Funding agency	Australian federal government.	DAAD.	New Zealand government.	A*STAR.	The EU (community budget allocated to the education activities of the EU).
Administering agency	<u>Endeavour Postgraduate Awards</u> Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. <u>IPRS</u> Participating Australian universities.	DAAD and its regional offices.	Education New Zealand.	A*STAR Graduate Academy.	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).
Year of establishment of fellowship scheme	<u>Endeavour Postgraduate Awards</u> 2003. <u>IPRS</u> 2003.	Information not available.	2006.	<u>SINGA</u> 2007. <u>NSS(PhD)</u> 2001.	EMJDs are first introduced in 2009.

**Table – Doctoral research scholarship schemes for non-local and/or local students in selected jurisdictions (cont'd)**

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>The European Union</b>
Scholarship value <sup>(3)</sup>	<p><u>Endeavour Postgraduate Awards</u></p> <p>In 2011, up to a total of AUS\$201,000 (HK\$1.37 million), with a maximum duration of 3.5 years, covering:</p> <p>(a) tuition fees;</p> <p>(b) a monthly stipend;</p> <p>(c) travel allowance;</p> <p>(d) establishment allowance; and</p> <p>(e) travel and health insurance.</p>	<p>(a) A monthly stipend of €750 (HK\$7,463, for those holding a bachelor degree) or €1,000 (HK\$9,950, for those holding a Master's degree or equivalent);</p> <p>(b) travel allowance;</p> <p>(c) health insurance; and</p> <p>(d) possibly a rent subsidy and family allowance.</p>	<p>(a) Full tuition fees for three years of full-time doctoral study;</p> <p>(b) living allowance of NZ\$20,500 (HK\$113,570) annually;</p> <p>(c) health insurance allowance of up to NZ\$600 (HK\$3,324) annually;</p> <p>(d) travel allowance of NZ\$2,000 (HK\$11,080) (across a three-year tenure) for conference attendance and field research;</p> <p>(e) book and thesis allowance of NZ\$800 (HK\$4,432) (across a three-year tenure); and</p> <p>(f) one-off establishment allowance of NZ\$500 (HK\$2,770) for students travelling to New Zealand to take up NZIDRS.</p>	<p><u>SINGA</u></p> <p>(a) Full support of tuition fees;</p> <p>(b) a monthly stipend of S\$2,000 (HK\$11,300), to be increased to S\$2,500 (HK\$14,125) after passing Qualifying Examinations;</p> <p>(c) one-off S\$1,000 (HK\$5,650) settling-in allowance; and</p> <p>(d) one-off airfare grant of S\$1,500 (HK\$8,475).</p> <p>SINGA provides support for a maximum duration of four years.</p>	<p>Categories of award:</p> <p>(a) Category A Fellowships are awarded to "Third-Country" doctoral candidates who have not worked or studied for more than a total of 12 months over the previous five years in an European country represented in the consortia implementing EMJDs; and</p> <p>(b) Category B Fellowships are awarded to any doctoral candidates who do not fulfil the Category A Fellowship requirements.</p>

Note: (3) The exchange rates in July 2010 were AUS\$1=HK\$6.82; €1=HK\$9.95; NZ\$1=HK\$5.54; and S\$1=HK\$5.65.

**Table – Doctoral research scholarship schemes for non-local and/or local students in selected jurisdictions (cont'd)**

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>The European Union</b>
Scholarship value (cont'd)	<p><u>IPRS</u></p> <p>(a) Full cost of tuition fees; and</p> <p>(b) standard Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the candidate and his or her accompanying dependants.</p>	<p>DAAD's support for study of whole doctoral programmes in Germany is initially limited to one year, and up to three one-year extensions are allowed, i.e. grants can be awarded for a maximum period of four years. Further, university education in Germany is free.</p>		<p><u>NSS(PhD)</u></p> <p>(a) Full tuition fees;</p> <p>(b) monthly sustenance allowance;</p> <p>(c) monthly overseas allowance;</p> <p>(d) annual book allowance;</p> <p>(e) annual return airfare;</p> <p>(f) conference allowance;</p> <p>(g) computer allowance;</p> <p>(h) warm clothing allowance;</p> <p>(i) settling-in allowance; and</p> <p>(j) thesis allowance.</p> <p>NSS(PhD) supports PhD studies at overseas universities for a maximum duration of five years. The rates of grants vary according to country and university.</p>	<p>Scholarship values<sup>(4)</sup>:</p> <p>(a) Fixed travel and establishment allowances of €7,500 (HK\$74,625) for Category A Fellowship holders and €3,000 (HK\$29,850) for Category B Fellowship holders;</p> <p>(b) For both Categories A and B Fellowships (maximum 36 months):</p> <p>(i) fixed contribution to the candidate's participation in EMJD: €300 (HK\$2,985) per month for non-laboratory-based EMJDs or €600 (HK\$5,970) per month for laboratory-based EMJDs; and</p> <p>(ii) fixed living allowance of €2,800 (HK\$27,860) per month for an employment contract<sup>(5)</sup> or €1,400 (HK\$13,930) per month for a stipend.</p>

Notes: (4) European Commission (2010).

(5) As a general rule, doctoral candidates should be appointed under an employment contract except for adequately documented cases (e.g. related to institutional or national practice), or where national regulation would prohibit this possibility.

**Table – Doctoral research scholarship schemes for non-local and/or local students in selected jurisdictions (cont'd)**

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>The European Union</b>
Number of awards	<u>Endeavour Postgraduate Awards</u> Varied (93 in 2010; 77 in 2009; 103 in 2008). <u>IPRS</u> 330 annually.	Not specified. DAAD currently awards more than 65 000 fellowships at different education levels annually (including German recipients).	Up to 10 annually.	<u>SINGA</u> 240 annually. <u>NSS(PhD)</u> Varied (54 in 2010; 46 in 2009; 36 in 2008).	Being defined on a yearly basis, the number of fellowships per category is between six and 10.
Eligibility	<u>Endeavour Postgraduate Awards</u> Must be international students (except citizens of New Zealand), who have not lived, studied or worked in Australia over the previous year at the time of application. <u>IPRS</u> Must be international students (except citizens of New Zealand).	Foreign (non-German) students, who must not have been resident in Germany for more than one year.	Must be international students (except citizens of Fiji).	<u>SINGA</u> International students studying for the first time in Singapore. <u>NSS(PhD)</u> (a) Singaporeans; (b) Singapore permanent residents; and (c) nationals of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, including Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.  Successful candidates of NSS(PhD) who are not Singapore citizens have to take up Singapore citizenship.	<u>Category A Fellowships</u> Students from "Third Countries". <u>Category B Fellowships</u> Students from any country (any doctoral candidates selected by EMJD consortia not qualifying for the Category A Fellowships).

**Table – Doctoral research scholarship schemes for non-local and/or local students in selected jurisdictions (cont'd)**

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>The European Union</b>
Availability of sandwich or partnership model fellowships <sup>(6)</sup>	Nil.	Foreign doctoral students who intend to conduct research projects at a German higher-education institution for the purpose of gaining a doctorate in their home country are eligible to apply for the same DAAD research grant.	Nil.	Several partnership PhD programmes comprising two years' studies based at an A*STAR research institute in Singapore and two years' full-time research at a partnering university are available under the A*STAR Graduate Scholarships (PhD) scheme for both Singapore and non-Singapore individuals (i.e. Singapore permanent residents and nationals of the other ASEAN countries).	Under the Erasmus Mundus programme, support is available for the establishment of cooperation partnerships between European higher-education institutions and higher-education institutions from targeted "Third Countries", in which scholarships at various levels of studies may be provided (i.e. bachelor, master and doctoral degrees, as well as post-doctoral and professional researches).
Field of study	All academic disciplines (both Endeavour Postgraduate Awards and IPRS).	All academic disciplines. Since 2001, apart from undertaking a traditional PhD, doctoral students may take part in one of some 50 structured International Postgraduate Programmes offered by selected German universities supported under the "Doctorates at Universities in Germany" Programme.	All academic disciplines.	Physical sciences, engineering and biomedical sciences only (both SINGA and NSS(PhD)).	In 2009, there were 13 EMJDs covering various disciplines in natural sciences, life sciences and humanities.

Note: (6) A sandwich fellowship programme allows an individual to undertake an academic programme in both an overseas institution (normally of a developed country) and a home-based institution. A partnership model specifically refers to an arrangement under the framework of Erasmus Mundus for enhancing academic cooperation and exchanges of students and academics, contributing to the socio-economic development of non-EU countries targeted by external cooperation policy of the EU.



**Table – Doctoral research scholarship schemes for non-local and/or local students in selected jurisdictions (cont'd)**

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>The European Union</b>
Language and/or other specific requirements	<p><u>Language requirement</u> Applicants must meet the minimum English language requirements (both Endeavour Postgraduate Awards and IPRS).</p>	<p><u>Language requirements</u> (a) Before admission to a German university for a full course of study, a foreign student must pass a German language test. Exceptions may be granted to certain international PhD programmes; and (b) awardees of DAAD grants may be required to attend a free German language course before beginning the research programme.</p> <p><u>Other specific requirements</u> (a) Students should have completed their bachelor's degrees no longer than six years before the application deadline; (b) the minimum age for an applicant is 18; and (c) country-specific conditions may apply.</p>	<p><u>Language requirement</u> Applicants must meet the minimum English language requirements.</p> <p><u>Other specific requirements</u> Applicants are required to show evidence that they have established contact with the relevant department at their preferred New Zealand university to discuss both the proposed research and research interests, and the availability of appropriate supervision.</p>	<p><u>Language requirement for SINGA</u> The applicant's English language ability is assessed by the selection panel. International English language tests are not required to be taken.</p> <p><u>Specific requirements for NSS(PhD)</u> (a) Applicants must meet requirements for admission to the chosen overseas universities; and (b) awardees are required to undertake a one-year research attachment at an A*STAR research institute prior to their PhD studies.</p>	<p><u>Language requirements</u> (a) The use of language is determined by the EMJD consortium; and (b) as a requirement, each EMJD must provide for the use of at least two European languages spoken in the countries where the higher-education institutions involved in the EMJD are located, and offer language preparation courses for doctoral candidates.</p> <p><u>Other specific requirements</u> (a) Awardees have to spend most of the doctorate period in the European countries represented in the consortium or among the associated partners, and undertake their training or research in at least two different countries represented in the consortium<sup>(7)</sup>; and (b) awardees must complete their doctoral studies within a maximum period of four years.</p>

Note: (7) If the EMJD consortium includes "Third-Country" partners and/or associated members, Categories A and B Fellowship holders can spend a training/research/fieldwork period of up to six months and one year (cumulative or consecutive) respectively in these countries. For Category B Fellowship holders, the two countries where they undertake their training or research must be different from the country in which they obtained their last university degrees.

**Table – Doctoral research scholarship schemes for non-local and/or local students in selected jurisdictions (cont'd)**

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>The European Union</b>
Major selection criteria	<p><u>Endeavour Postgraduate Awards</u></p> <p>(a) Academic record in the chosen field of study;</p> <p>(b) a well-defined research project;</p> <p>(c) a proposal relevant to the needs and interests of Australia and the applicant's home country;</p> <p>(d) the applicant's potential to foster ongoing collaboration and cooperation with Australia and to participate at a high level in the academic or wider community in his or her home country; and</p> <p>(e) unique achievement or outstanding service in any area that provides a benefit to the applicant's nation or community.</p> <p><u>IPRS</u></p> <p>(a) Academic merit;</p> <p>(b) research experience and/or potential; and</p> <p>(c) the applicant's capability matching the chosen university's research strengths.</p>	<p>(a) A history of academic excellence; and</p> <p>(b) clarity of vision for why they need to spend time in Germany.</p>	<p>(a) Sustained academic excellence, particularly in the chosen field of study; and</p> <p>(b) a well-defined research programme or research interests and intention to study at a New Zealand university with the expertise and resources to support that research.</p>	<p><u>SINGA</u></p> <p>(a) Academic record;</p> <p>(b) publications;</p> <p>(c) recommendations from academic referees;</p> <p>(d) passion and ability to excel in research; and</p> <p>(e) performance in the selection interview.</p> <p><u>NSS(PhD)</u></p> <p>(a) Academic record;</p> <p>(b) having gained or being in the process of gaining admission into a relevant PhD programme at a top overseas university or laboratory; and</p> <p>(c) a strong interest in a research career.</p>	<p>The selection criteria are determined by the selected EMJD consortia.</p> <p>In order to guarantee a transparent and objective selection of doctoral candidates, the selected EMJDs are required to submit a comprehensive description of the relevant selection procedures and criteria to EACEA.</p>

**Table – Doctoral research scholarship schemes for non-local and/or local students in selected jurisdictions (cont'd)**

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Singapore</b>	<b>The European Union</b>
Selection committee(s) or process	<p><u>Endeavour Postgraduate Awards</u> An independent selection panel considers applications against specified selection criteria. The composition of such a panel is not specified.</p> <p><u>IPRS</u> Participating universities are responsible for determining the selection process. They must maintain an IPRS selection policy which is publicly available and accords with the guidelines and fairness requirements made under the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i>.</p>	<p>(a) A pre-selection committee made up of teachers of the home country of the applicant and German universities, Goethe Institute lecturers, representatives of relevant ministries, and representatives of DAAD's partner organizations and regional office; and</p> <p>(b) a selection committee for making the final decision, appointed by the DAAD Executive Committee on the basis of academic and regional factors.</p>	A selection committee made up of senior academics, appointed by Education New Zealand.	<p><u>SINGA</u> A selection panel for interviewing short-listed applicants. Details are not available.</p> <p><u>NSS(PhD)</u> Short-listed applicants go through at least two rounds of interviews involving the top management of the Biomedical Research Council or the Science &amp; Engineering Research Council (both under A*STAR), and researchers from research institutes and centres, universities or hospitals of the home country of the applicants.</p>	The selection process is determined by the selected EMJD consortia.
Service commitment upon completion of study	<p><u>Endeavour Postgraduate Awards</u> Awardees are expected to return to their home countries upon completion of their programmes.</p> <p><u>IPRS</u> No service commitment.</p>	<p>No service commitment.</p> <p>With the new <i>Immigration Act</i> passed in 2005, non-German graduates of German universities may stay in Germany for one year to look for jobs.</p>	Students are not bound to return to their home countries after their study.	<p><u>SINGA</u> No service commitment.</p> <p><u>NSS(PhD)</u> A four-year service commitment at an A*STAR research institute in Singapore.</p>	Information not available.

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