Bills Committee on
Electronic Health Record Sharing System Bill

The Administration's Response to issues relating to the use of identifiable electronic health record for research and statistics arising from the discussion at the meeting on 31 March 2015

Further to our responses to issues (a), (b), (c)(ii), (d) and (e) arising from the discussion on 31 March 2015 (vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1215/14-15(02) and LC Paper No. CB(2)1321/14-15 (01)), this paper sets out the Administration's response to issues (c)(i), (iii), (iv) and (v) relating to the use of identifiable electronic health record (eHR) for research and statistics.

Number and examples of health and medical researches using identifiable health data

2. Usage of health data, whether identifiable or non-identifiable, for research or statistical purposes is very common internationally and of critical importance to improvement of health and medical services. Legitimate use of identifiable health data for research would be necessary for purposes such as:

(i) to register individual patients on a community / national base for certain significant disease (e.g. cancer registry, stroke registry, etc.) to evaluate the disease patterns, prognosis and treatment efficacy;
(ii) to study the relationship between certain health determinants and health status in matched groups of individuals; and
(iii) to track and monitor the treatment outcome and complications in individual patients over time.

Locally, there have also been various research projects conducted using potentially identifiable health data[1]. For example:

[1] They are completed and published researches approved under the Health and Medical Research Fund / Health Care and Promotion Fund in Hong Kong.

(i) Cost-effectiveness analysis of mammography screening in Hong Kong Chinese using state-transition Markov modelling – The University of Hong Kong
(ii) Factors influencing delayed presentation with symptomatic breast cancer in Hong Kong Chinese women - The University of Hong Kong
(iii) Identification of environmental risk factors for asthma and allergic rhinitis in adults in Hong Kong – The Chinese University of Hong Kong
(iv) Mortality and smoking in Hong Kong: a death registry based case-control study – The University of Hong Kong
(v) Health-related quality of life assessment for Hong Kong Chinese children with cancer – The University of Hong Kong
(vi) A randomized, double blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial of Chinese herbal medicine in the treatment of acute upper respiratory infections – The University of Hong Kong

3. We do not have comprehensive statistics on the total number of health and medical researches conducted in Hong Kong or readily available breakdown of statistics on use of identifiable health data. However, the total number of clinical researches approved by Cluster Research Ethics Committees (RECs) under Hospital Authority (HA) in 2012, 2013 and 2014 are 1508, 1548 and 1766 respectively. These figures give a general indication of relevant academic or professional interest. We understand that the majority of these researches involved the use of patient data (may be identifiable or non-identifiable) in HA and the concerned patients' consent was obtained for the majority of them. In this regard, relevant extracts of the HA's guidelines for clinical research are enclosed at **Annex I** for reference. As requested, the application form for allocation for 2015/16 from the General Research Fund administered by the Research Grants Council of the University Grants Committee and the explanatory notes for completing the form are also attached at **Annexes II and III**.

4. In brief, consent of research subjects should normally be obtained. Under certain circumstances, such requirement could be exempted (e.g. the research could not be practicably carried out without

the exemption, where it is not practicable to obtain the consent etc). Against such usual practices, we wish to highlight that clause 31(2) of the Electronic Health Record Sharing System (eHRSS) Bill set out the considerations that the Research Board must have regard to when making a recommendation on whether the application for use of identifiable data should be approved. These considerations are in line with local and international practices on the use of identifiable medical data. Despite the use of potentially identifiable health data in the course of the studies, any result or published material of the researches must not contain any identifiable information.

5. In the past three years (2012-2014), HA has not received any complaints concerning provision of identifiable data of data subjects for health and medical research purpose without obtaining separate consent from the concerned data subjects.

Broad principles laid down in the bill

6. Data in the eHRSS will be valuable for research and statistical purposes relevant to public health or public safety. At the same time, we acknowledge the need to strike the balance between the public interest in conducting research and protecting privacy of the participating healthcare recipients (HCRs). We have, on top of compliance with Section 62 of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (PDPO, Cap. 486)[2], set out in Divisions 2 and 3 of Part 3 of the eHRSS Bill a due process to consider applications for such uses of eHR. Any application for such uses would require the submission of a written proposal setting out the nature and objectives, the anticipated public or scientific benefit and other information specified by the eHR Commissioner (eHRC). Applications for use of non-identifiable data will be considered by the eHRC, while those for use of identifiable data will be considered by the Secretary for Food and Health (SFH).

[2] Section 62 of PDPO provides that personal data is exempt from the requirement under data protection principle 3 for "prescribed consent" where (a) the data is to be used for preparing statistics or carrying out research; (b) the data is not to be used for any other purpose; and (c) the resulting statistics or results of the research are not made available in a form which identifies the data subjects or any of them.

7. The eHR Research Board to be established under Clause 53 would assess the applications involving identifiable data and provide SFH with recommendations on whether to approve or refuse the applications, and the approval conditions. The board, comprising members with experience and expertise in healthcare, privacy protection, statistics, research, law and information technology as well as those representing patient groups (as provided for by our proposed draft Clause 53(2A) vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1151/14-15(01)), will be in a good position to determine the merits and public interest of applications on a case-by-case basis. The approval conditions for individual projects may include special requirements on safeguarding privacy. Clause 27(2) provides that the results of the research **must not** be made available in a form that would enable an HCR to be identified. Clause 45 provides that a person commits an offence if the person knowingly contravenes a condition for use of the eHR data for researches and statistics imposed under Clause 32(1)(a).

Administrative guidelines

8. At the meeting on 31 March 2015, members generally considered it reasonable to stipulate only the principles in the bill whereas operational details should be separately provided for in administrative guidelines. In drafting the guidelines, we will observe the principles in the bill, and draw reference from local and overseas experiences and practices.

9. We expect that it will take some time for the eHRSS to build up a critical mass of data meaningful for research and statistics purposes. Data in the eHRSS would unlikely be useful for research and statistics purposes in the initial years of eHRSS operation. We will formulate the relevant guidelines in due course to prepare for processing future applications and approval of use of eHRSS data.

Food and Health Bureau
May 2015

Annex I

Extract of Hospital Authority's guidelines for clinical research

Commonly Accepted Ethical Requirements in Clinical Research

In Clinical Research, the mandatory ethical requirements are the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki, and whenever applicable, the International Conference on Harmonisation – Good Clinical Practice Guidelines ("ICH-GCP Guidelines"). Legal requirements and local institution policies must also be complied with. Some of the more important requirements are:

i Clinical Research methodology must be scientifically valid and adequate in addressing the questions posed.

ii Clinical Research design must minimize the potential risks to the Research Subjects, and its anticipated benefits must justify the potential risks.

iii Equipoise must exist between different arms of a therapeutic trial comprising different interventions or different dosages.

iv To ensure voluntary participation in Clinical Research, Research Subjects must be adequately informed of the experimental nature of the undertaking; the nature of the Clinical Research, its risks, burdens and benefits; and their rights to withdraw at any time, which will not affect the care they entitle.

v As each person weighs risks and benefits differently, we must respect other's freedom to decide, based on his/her own value and belief, without coercion and undue influence.

vi Selection of Research Subjects should be equitable, overuse of any group or individual should be avoided.

vii Special precautions should be taken to protect vulnerable Research Subjects.

viii Throughout a trial, Research Subjects should be provided with updated information about the Clinical Research (including adverse events) so that they are free to decide whether or not to continue.

Review Considerations

Besides the mandatory ethical and legal requirements, the Cluster Research Ethics Committee (REC) must also consider the following aspects:

(a) whether the Clinical Research has a reasonable prospect of improving healthcare or furthering knowledge;

(b) whether the design and methodology of the Clinical Research (including statistics and sample size) are adequate in addressing the research question;

(c) whether the research team is competent in the area of Clinical Research and the study site is suitably equipped;

(d) whether the Clinical Research has a favourable risk-benefit ratio. In considering the risk-benefit ratio, the Clinical REC should consider:

(i) The risks linked to the Clinical Research as distinct from those

associated with standard care. The assessment of the risks should not be limited to the study article(s) since the Clinical Researches may involve additional invasive procedures, e.g., additional organ biopsies.

(ii) Whether the foreseeable risks are minimized to the extent possible?

(iii) Whether there are adequate provisions for monitoring risks and early detection of adverse outcome in the Research Subjects?

(iv) Whether the risk undertaken justifies the use of an independent data monitoring committee to ensure safety of Research Subjects as a whole?

(v) Whether the necessary expertise is available to carry out the Clinical Research and to manage the possible adverse outcomes?

(vi) Whether the anticipated benefits to the Research Subjects (excluding extraneous ones such as free service, more attention and expert care, etc.) outweigh all risks and burdens of the Clinical Research?

(e) The Cluster REC should consider if the Research Subjects are selected on the bases of scientific principles and study goals, and not by convenience, vulnerability, privilege, or other irrelevant factors. In so far as consistent with scientific principles and study goals, a certain population group should not be overburdened. It is also important to ensure that treatment allocated to groups within the Clinical Research is reasonable and fair.

(f) The Cluster REC should review and approve all informed consent documents to ensure that adequate explanation, prepared in language suitable for the Research Subjects' understanding, will be given. Basic requirements on information to be given to Research Subjects are set out in ICH-GCP Guideline E6, Section 4.8.10, which include, but is not limited to, the followings:

(i) The research institution and investigators;

(ii) The purpose of the study;

(iii) Which aspect of study is experimental;

(iv) Details of study relevant to Research Subject's willingness to participate, e.g. nature of intervention and invasiveness, use of placebo, method of assignment to different arms and its probability, duration of involvement, sample size, likelihood of premature termination, etc;

(v) The foreseeable risks and discomforts to Research Subjects, including embryo, fetus and nursing infant, if applicable;

(vi) Any expected benefits (must specify if none is expected);

(vii) The rights to refuse or withdraw at any time without reprisal;

(viii) Alternative treatments if Research Subject refuses to participate in, or withdraws from, the study;

(ix) Possible scenarios where the Research Subject's participation may be terminated;

(x) Anticipated expenses to be borne by, or payment to be made to, Research Subjects;

(xi) Means of contact for query and urgent medical attention to adverse

outcomes;

(xii) The risk of inducement, such as payment to Research Subjects; and

(xiii) The protection of subjects' privacy and data confidentiality (subject to study monitoring and audit needs).

GRF1

RGC Ref No.

RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL

Application for Allocation from
the General Research Fund for 2015/16
Application Form (GRF1)

- Please read the Explanatory Notes GRF2 (Aug 14) carefully before completing this form.
    - To safeguard the interests of the researcher and the institution, awardee institution bears the primary responsibility for prevention, detection and investigation of research misconduct, including but not limiting to misusing of funds, data falsification, plagiarism and seeking duplicate funding for projects which the applicant has already completed partially or entirely. Concerning research grant applications, the institution is strongly advised to use anti-plagiarism software before submitting the application to the RGC.

PART I SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

[To be completed by the applicant(s)]

1. Particulars of the Project

(a) (i) Name and Academic Affiliation of Principal Investigator:

Name	Post	Unit/Department/institution

(ii) Is the PI a new appointee within 2 years of full time paid appointment to his/her first substantive position as an academic staff in a university at the time of submission of the proposal?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(iii) Title of Project:

(iv) Nature of Application

New ☐ Re-submission ☐ Continuation ☐

(b) (i) Primary Field: _____ & Code ____

Secondary Field: _____ & Code ____

(ii) A maximum of five keywords to characterise the work of your proposal

RGC Ref No.

(a maximum of 30 characters for each keyword)

(iii) Project Duration: _____ Months

(iv) Total Amount Requested: $

(c) Abstract of Research comprehensible to a non-specialist **(a maximum of one A-4 page in standard RGC Format for attaching PDF documents or a maximum of 400 words for direct input in the text box)**:

(d) Special funding template (Applicants can select more than one box)

- ☐ Clinical Research Fellowship Scheme **(Please also complete an additional form (Enclosure I) and see (Enclosure II)) (only available for applications under Biology and Medicine Panel)**
- ☐ Support for Individual Research **(see Enclosure III) (only available for applications under Humanities and Social Sciences Panel and Business Studies Panel)**
- ☐ Longer-term Research Grant **(see Enclosure IV)**
- ☐ Employment of Relief Teacher under Humanities and Social Sciences Panel **(see Enclosure V) (only available for applications under Humanities and Social Sciences Panel)**
- ☐ Provision of Research Experience for Undergraduate Student **(see Enclosure VI)**
- ☐ Support for Academic Research related to Public Policy Developments **(see Enclosure VII)**

RGC Ref No.

PART II DETAILS OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL
[To be completed by the applicant(s)]

RESEARCH DETAILS

1. Impact and objectives
(a maximum of 800 words in total for the long-term impact and project objectives)

(a) Long-term impact

(b) Objectives

[Please list the objectives in point form]

- XXXXXXXX
- YYYYYYYY

2. Background of research, research plan and methodology
(a maximum of seven A-4 pages in total in Standard RGC Format for items (a) and (b))

(a) Background of research

(b) Research plan and methodology

(c) A maximum of two non-text pages of attached diagrams, photos, charts, and table etc., if any.

(d) Reference (a maximum of three pages for references is allowed for listing the publications cited in Sections 1 – 2. All full references should be provided, including all authors of each reference.)

PROJECT FUNDING

3. Cost and justification

(a) Estimated cost and resource implications:
[Detailed justification should be given in order to support the request for each item below]
(a maximum of 500 words for each box)

	Year 1 ($)	Year 2 ($)	Year 3 ($)	Year 4 ($)	Year 5 ($)	Total

(A) One-line Vote Items
(i) Supporting Staff Costs
Types
- Senior Research Assistant / Research Assistant / Post-doctoral Fellows / Research Postgraduate Students
- Others

Monthly salary x Nos. x Months $

Justification :

(ii) Equipment Expenses $
[please itemize and provide quotations for each item costing over $200,000]

Justification :

(iii) Outsourcing Expenses of Research Work Outside Hong Kong $
[please itemize your cost estimation with justification and provide quotations for work costing over $200,000]

Justification :

(iv) General Expenses $
[please itemize and provide quotations for services/purchase costing over $200,000]

Justification :

(vi) Conference Expenses $

Justification :

Sub-total for (A) (One-line Vote Items): $

(B) Earmarked Items
(vi) Costs for Employment of Relief Teacher
[see Enclosure III for individual research and Enclosure V for relief support under Humanities and Social Sciences Panel]

Rank:
Monthly salary x Months $

Justification :

RGC Ref No.

Current Average Teaching Load: _____ classroom hours per year
[please report UGC-funded programmes only]

(vii) Expenses of Research Experience for Undergraduate Students (See Enclosure VI) $

Justification :

Quotation Provided : Yes ☐ No ☐

(viii) High-performance Computing Services Expenses $

Justification :

Quotation Provided : Yes ☐ No ☐

(ix) Research-related Software Licence /Dataset
[please itemize and provide quotations for each item] $

Justification :

Sub-total for (B) (Earmarked Items): $

(x) **Total cost of the project (A) + (B)** $

(C) Deduction Items
Less :

(xi) Institutional funding for provision of research experience for undergraduate student $

(xii) Other research funds secured from other sources $

Sub-total for (C) (Deduction Items): $

(xiii) **Amount requested in this application: (A) + (B) – (C)** $

(D) Academic Research related to Public Policy Developments

(xiv) Percentage of the total cost of the proposal related to public policy developments ((A) + (B)) %

[see Enclosure VII for Support for Academic Research relating to Public Policy Developments]

(b) Declaration on the Equipment Procurement:

☐ (i) I declare that no equipment is required

OR

☐ (ii) I declare that the equipment indicated in Section 3(a)(A)(ii) above is not available in the institution

OR

☐ (iii) I declare that all or some of the equipment (please provide details in the following text box) indicated in Section 3(a)(B)(ii) above is available in the institution but cannot be used by me in view of the following reasons (a maximum of 500 words)

Reasons: (a maximum of 500 words)

(c) Declaration on employment of relief teacher

☐ (i) I declare that no relief teacher is required

OR

☐ (ii) I declare that I currently do not hold any grant for employment of relief teacher of any on-going project under UGC/RGC funding schemes (excluding Humanities and Social Sciences Prestigious Fellowship Scheme (HSSPFS))

OR

☐ (iii) I declare that I hold grant for employment of relief teacher of the following on-going project(s) under UGC/RGC funding schemes (excluding HSSPFS) and undertake to submit the corresponding completion report(s) by 30 April 2015
Project No.:
Project Title:
Project Commencement Date:
Project Completion Date:

(d) Declaration on high-performance computing services

☐ (i) I declare that no high-performance computing services is required

OR

☐ (ii) I declare that the high-performance computing services indicated in Section 3(a)(B)(viii) above is not available in the institution

OR

☐ (iii) I declare that all or some of the high-performance computing services (please provide details in the following text box) indicated in Section 3(a)(B)(viii) above is available in the institution but cannot be used by me in view of the following reasons (a maximum of 500 words)

Reasons : (a maximum of 500 words)

(e) Declaration on the research-related software licence / dataset

☐ (i) I declare that no research-related software licence / dataset is required

OR

☐ (ii) I declare that the research-related software licence / dataset indicated in Section 3(a)(A)(ix) above is not available in the institution

OR

☐ (iii) I declare that all or some of the research-related software licence / dataset (please provide details in the following text box) indicated in Section 3(a)(A)(ix) above is available in the institution but cannot be used by me in view of the following reasons (a maximum of 500 words)

Reasons : (a maximum of 500 words)

4. Existing facilities and major equipment available for this research project
(a maximum of 400 words)

5. Funds secured or to be secured

(a) Other research funds already secured for this research proposal:
[This amount will be deducted from the total cost of the project in Section 3 of Part II above.]

Source	Amount ($)

(b) Other research funds to be or are being sought for this research proposal.
[If funds under this item are secured, the amount of the GRF to be awarded may be reduced]:

Source	Amount ($)

DECLARATION OF SIMILAR OR RELATED PROPOSALS

[Please refer to GRF2 for information required and implications for non-disclosure of similar or related proposals]

6. Re-submission of a proposal not supported previously

(a) Is this proposal a re-submission or largely similar to a proposal that has been submitted to but not supported by the UGC/RGC or other funding agencies?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please state the funding agency(ies) and the funding programme(s):

Reference No(s). [for UGC/RGC projects only]:
Project title(s) [if different from Section 1(a) of Part I above.]:
Date (month/year) of application:
Outcome:

(b) If this application is the same as or similar to the one(s) submitted but not supported previously, what were the main concerns / suggestions of the reviewers then?

(c) Please give a brief response to the points mentioned in Section 6(b) above, highlighting the major changes that have been incorporated in this application.

7. Submission of a new proposal or proposal similar or related to on-going and completed projects, and proposals pending funding approval

(a) Is/are there **any other** proposal(s) being submitted by **PI or Co-I(s)** to the RGC *(including those submitted by **PI or Co-I(s)** through other institutions)* in this funding exercise?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please give the following details -

Proposal(s) submitted by the PI in the capacity of Co-I
(i) Proposal no.:
(ii) Proposal title(s):
(iii) Name of PI(s) of the Proposal (s):
(iv) A brief account of the proposal(s) and an explanation on the differences between the proposal(s) concerned and this application if the two proposals are similar or related (a maximum of 400 words) [If you have difficulty in making the declaration, please explain]:

Proposal(s) submitted by the Co-I in the capacity of PI or Co-I
(i) Name of the Co-I(s) concerned:
(ii) Proposal no.:
(iii) Proposal title(s):
(iv) Capacity : PI ☐ or Co-I ☐
(v) Name of PI(s) of the Proposal(s):
(vi) A brief account of the proposal(s) and an explanation on the differences between the proposal(s) concerned and this application if the two proposals are similar or related (a maximum 400 words) [If you have difficulty in making the declaration, please explain]:

(b)(I) Is there similar research being carried out by the PI or Co-I(s) or the collaborators?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(II) Is there related research being carried out by the PI or Co-I(s) or the collaborators?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes to 7(b)(I) **or** (II), please give a brief account including names of investigators, departmental and institutional affiliations, project title(s) and nature of the project(s) (a maximum of 400 words):

(c)(I) Is/Are there similar proposal(s) being submitted by PI or Co-I(s) (in both capacity as PI/PC or Co-I/Co-PI) to other competitive funding schemes of the RGC or other funding agency(ies) or his/her institution(s)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(II) Is/Are there related proposal(s) being submitted by PI or Co-I(s) (in both capacity as PI/PC or Co-I/Co-PI) to other competitive funding schemes of the RGC or other funding agencies or his/her institutions?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes to Section 7(c)(I) **or** (II), please give the following details -

Proposal(s) submitted by PI

(i) The funding agency(ies) / institution(s) and the funding programme(s):
(ii) Reference No(s) (for RGC funding schemes only):
(iii) Proposal Title(s):
(iv) Capacity : PI/PC ☐ or Co-I/Co-PI ☐
(v) Name of PI of the Proposal(s):
(vi) A brief account of the proposal(s) including month & year of application and an explanation on the differences between the proposal(s) concerned and this application (a maximum of 400 words) [If you have difficulty in making the declaration, please explain]:

Proposal(s) submitted by the Co-I

(i) Name of the Co-I(s) concerned:
(ii) The funding agency (ies) / institution(s) and the funding programme(s):
(iii) Reference No(s) (for RGC funding schemes only):
(iv) Proposal title(s):
(v) Capacity : PI/PC ☐ or Co-I/Co-PI ☐F
(vi) Name of PI(s) of the Proposal(s) :
(vii) A brief account of the proposal(s) including month and year of application and an explanation on the differences between the similar/related proposal(s) concerned and this application (a maximum 400 words) [If you have difficulty in making the declaration, please explain]:

(d)(I) Is/Are there similar project(s)/work by PI or Co-I(s) (in both capacity as PI/PC or Co-I/Co-PI) already completed?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(II) Is/Are there related project(s)/work by PI or Co-I(s) (in both capacity as PI/PC or Co-I/Co-PI) already completed?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes to (d)(I) **or** (II), please give the following details -

Project(s) by the PI

(i) The funding agency(ies) and the funding programme(s):
(ii) Reference No(s) (for UGC/RGC funding schemes only):
(iii) Project Title(s):
(iv) Capacity : PI/PC ☐ or Co-I/Co-PI ☐
(v) Name of PI(s) of the Project(s) :
(vi) A brief account of the project(s) including month & year of application for funding, if applicable and an explanation on the differences between the project(s) concerned and this application (a maximum of 400 words) [If you have difficulty in making the declaration, please explain]:

Project(s) by the Co-I

(i) Name of the Co-I(s) concerned:
(ii) The funding agency (ies) and the funding programme(s):
(iii) Reference No(s) (for UGC/RGC funding schemes only):
(iv) Project title(s):
(v) Capacity : PI/PC ☐ or Co-I/Co-PI ☐
(vi) Name of PI(s) of the Project(s):
(vii) A brief account of the project(s) and an explanation on the differences between the similar/related proposal(s) concerned and this application (a maximum 400 words) [If you have difficulty in making the declaration, please explain]:

8. Particulars of PI and Co-Is

(a) Investigator(s) information:

Name(s) and Academic Affiliation(s) of Applicant(s):

Name	Post	Unit/Department/ Institution	Current Member of RGC Subject Panel as at application deadline (Yes or No)	Name of RGC Subject Panel
PI: with title				

(b) Curriculum vitae (CV) of applicant(s).

[For the PI and each Co-I, please attach a CV (a maximum of two **A-4 pages** in standard RGC format for attaching PDF documents or a maximum of 800 words for direct input in the text box) per person in the following format.]

(i) Name:
(ii) Academic qualifications:
(iii) Previous academic positions held (with dates):
(iv) Present academic position:
(v) Previous relevant research work:
(vi) Publication records [Please refer to GRF 2 Part II Section 8 for the format required by the RGC]:
Section A - Five most representative publications in recent five years
Section B - Five representative publications beyond the recent five-year period with the latest publication entered first.
(vii) Others (please specify):

(c) Plan(s) for collaboration in this application:
[Indicate the role and the specific task(s) the PI and each Co-I, if any, is responsible for.]
[Letter(s) of collaboration can be attached to Section 13]

(d) Number of hours per week to be spent by the PI in the proposal:

GRANT RECORD OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

9. Details of Research Projects

(i). Details of (a) unsuccessful or withdrawn or terminated proposals/projects submitted to UGC/RGC in the past five years; (b) completed research projects funded from all sources (irrespective whether from UGC/RGC) in the past five years; and (c) on-going research projects funded from all sources (irrespective whether from UGC/RGC) undertaken by the **PI** (in a PI/PC or Co-I/Co-PI capacity).

Status of proposal/ project (Submitted, Withdrawn, Terminated, Unsuccessful, On-going, Completed)	Project Title	PI/PC/Co-I/ /Co-PI	Project Ref. No.	Funding Source(s) and Amount($)	RGC/UGC Funding (Yes or No)	Start Date (if applicable)	Estimated Completion Date (if applicable)	Number of Hours Per Week Spent by the PI in Each On-going Project*

* The PI is not required to report on the time spent in the capacity of Co-I in GRF projects.

(ii) Details of on-going research projects funded from all sources (irrespective whether from UGC/RGC) undertaken by each Co-I (in a PI/PC capacity).

Name of Co-I(s)	Project Title	Project Ref. No.	Funding Source(s) and Amount($)	Start Date	Estimated Completion Date

ANCILLARY INFORMATION

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

[Please refer to GRF2 Part II Section 10 for the responsibilities and implications]

(a) Research Ethics/Safety Approval

(i) I confirm that the research proposal ☐ involves / ☐ does not involve human subjects.

(ii) Please tick '√' in the appropriate boxes to confirm if approval for the respective ethics and/or safety issues is required and has been / is being obtained from the PI's institution. PIs are encouraged to seek necessary approval before application deadline as far as possible.

Approval not required	Approval obtained	Approval being sought	
☐	☐	☐	(i) Human research ethics
☐	☐	☐	(ii) Animal research ethics
☐	☐	☐	(iii) Biological safety
☐	☐	☐	(iv) Ionizing radiation safety
☐	☐	☐	(v) Non-ionizing radiation safety
☐	☐	☐	(vi) Chemical Safety

(iii) If approval is required by **other authorities**, please indicate below the names of the authorities and the prospects of obtaining such approval. If not applicable, please put down "N.A.".

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

(i) Is access to Government or official or private data and records critical to the research proposal?

☐ No

☐ Yes

If approval is required, please indicate below the names of the agency(ies) of obtaining such approval.

(ii) Please tick '√' in the appropriate boxes to confirm if approval for access to the related data/records has been / is being obtained from the relevant agency(ies). If approval has been obtained, please provide evidence.

List of agency(ies)	Approval not required	Approval obtained	Approval being sought
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐

[Note: PIs are encouraged to seek necessary approval before application deadline as far as possible.]

11. Proposed reviewers

(a) List of proposed reviewers:

PI assumes full responsibility for reporting all the relationship(s) between himself/herself as well as his/her Co-Is with each of the nominated external reviewers. To avoid any possible or perceived conflict of interests, nomination of external reviewer(s) having any of the following relationship(s) with either PI or Co-Is or both should be avoided –

(i) Advisor or Advisee relationship (such as Tutor and PhD student relationship)
(ii) Co-authorship of papers or publications less than seven years ago
(iii) Co-authorship of patents
(iv) Partnership or co-organizers of major events less than seven years ago
(v) Colleagues employed in the same department of an institution or organization less than seven years ago
(vi) Collaborator in research projects or programme (Co-I or Co-PI of proposals) less than seven years ago
(vii) Long-time personal friends
(viii) Serving the same editorial board with an appointor-appointee relationship

[Please refer to Part II Section 11 of GRF2 for responsibilities and implications. The PI should make the list of nominated reviewers available to the Co-Is for making declaration.]

(b) Declaration of any past and present relationship between the investigator(s) i.e., PI and Co-Is, and the nominated reviewers [minimum one tick per reviewer]:

Nature of relationship (please elaborate)	Reviewer				
	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)
Colleagues in the same organization **seven or more years ago** (please specify if in the same department)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Collaborators in research projects/ programmes (Co-I or Co-PI of proposals whether funded or not) **seven or more years ago**	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Co-authors of journal papers/ patents/ publications **seven or more years ago**	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Partners or co-organizers of major events **seven or more years ago**	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teacher at undergraduate studies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fellow members of the same editorial board	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Others (please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
None	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(c) Indicate the name of PI/Co-Is and the nature of the relationship declared in (b) (e.g. when and where the relationship was / is developed, name / nature of project(s), publication(s) or event(s) involved):

12. Release of completion report, data archive possibilities and public access of publications resulting from research funded by the RGC

(a) Is the proposed project likely to generate data set(s) of retention value?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please describe the nature, quantity and potential use of the data set(s) in future.

(b) Are you willing to make the data set(s) available to others for reference twelve months after the publication of research results or the completion of this proposed project?

RGC Ref No.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I/We understand that the RGC will release the completion report to the public and only considers data archiving requests after the completion of the RGC-funded project. The RGC has full discretion in funding the archiving requests. Data sets archived with RGC funds will require users to acknowledge the originator and the RGC. The originator will also be provided with copies of all publications derived from the use of the data.

I undertake that upon acceptance of a paper for publication,

(i) I will check whether the publisher already allows (A) full open access to the publisher's version, or (B) my depositing a copy of the paper (either the publisher's version or the final accepted manuscript after peer-review) in the institutional repository for open access;

(ii) if both (i) (A) and (B) are not allowed, I will request the publisher to allow me to place either version in my institutional repository for restricted access immediately upon publication or after an embargo period of up to twelve months if required by the publisher; and

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

13. Education Plan, Letters of collaboration and Supporting Documents

Appendix 1: Education Plan (up to one A4 page)

Upload

(A maximum of 20 words for each box to caption each uploaded pdf documents)

Appendix 2: Other supporting documents

RGC Ref No.

PART III INSTITUTIONAL ENDORSEMENT AND DECLARATION OF RESEARCH ETHICS/SAFETY

(To be completed by the appropriate authority of the institution. The institution should confirm that it has evaluated and given support to the application before submission to the RGC.)

INSTITUTIONAL ENDORSEMENT

(* Please tick '√' as appropriate in the boxes)

1. Staff Eligibility Requirement for GRF

I confirm that:

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

(b) the PI, in the staff grade_____ , meets fully the stipulated staff eligibility requirement for and is not debarred from applying for GRF grant;

[where the PI is newly appointed, the institution has formally entered into a contract of service with him/her on or before the submission deadline of this funding exercise and the contract requires him/her to report for duty on or before 1 May 2015.]

(c) ☐ the PI is/will be employed on permanent term

☐ the PI is/will be employed on fixed term contract

[If the PI is/will be employed on a fixed term contract, the PI has to be still eligible for a GRF grant at the time of the funding award being made in June in the following year as well as for at least the first year of the planned project duration.]

(d) ☐ the PI is/will be a visiting scholar

☐ the PI is NOT a visiting scholar

[If the PI is a visiting scholar, he/she has to be employed in the institution on a full-time basis covering at least one year or the expected project duration whichever is the longer.]

(e) the applicant's declared teaching load at Part II Section 3(a)(vii) has been verified (only for the case where the applicant is seeking funding support for relief teacher);

(f) the applicant will have the number of hours per week as declared in Part II Section 8(d) to supervise the proposed project without prejudice to his / her existing commitment in other research work, teaching and administrative duties;

(g) the institution will inform the RGC as soon as the PI ceases to be eligible to apply, receive or hold a GRF grant, and will withdraw the application; or recommend to the RGC for approval of a suitable new PI, if any, to take over the funded project once it is

if no confirmation of such approval is provided to the RGC by 30 April 2015, the RGC will regard this GRF application as being withdrawn and will stop further processing it.

RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL

GENERAL RESEARCH FUND (GRF) 2015/16

Explanatory Notes (GRF 2) for completing the Application Form

You must read this Explanatory Notes carefully before completing and submitting your research proposal. The Research Grants Council (RGC) may stop further processing your application if your application is found to be not in compliance with any of the requirements as set out in the Explanatory Notes.

GENERAL

(a) These notes are intended to be read by applicant(s)/related staff of institution(s) before completion and submission of a GRF application. Please note that item numbers under Parts I to III in these notes correspond to those in the application form.

(b) The form is in 3 parts, Part I : Summary of the Research Proposal; Part II : Details of the Research Proposal; and Part III : Institutional Endorsement and Declaration of Research Ethics/Safety.

(c) For applications which have genuine special needs to be completed in a language other than English, applicant(s)/institution(s) are required to provide an English version on the Abstract and Research Details (Objectives and Long-term Impact, Background of Research and Research Plan and Methodology) in pdf file format.

(d) In order to ensure consistency and fairness to all applicants, applicants must complete the applications, **including attached pdf documents**, in the following standard RGC format. **Failure to comply with the following format may lead to disqualification of their applications**.

Font : Times New Roman
Font Size : 12 point
Margin : 1-inch all round
Spacing : Single-line spacing
PDF version: compatible with Adobe Acrobat Readers 5

(e) All sections of the relevant parts should be completed. Where information sought is not applicable or not provided under a particular section, insert “NA” or “Nil”.

(f) When proposals are submitted through the Electronic System, a project reference number will be automatically generated for each of the proposals for identification purposes. The project reference number should be used and quoted in all future correspondence. While an application could be made to a particular panel, the RGC shall have the discretion to decide on the panel responsible for the final assessment of each application.

(g) Hard copies of each proposal may need to be forwarded to the UGC Secretariat in May 2015. Institutions will be notified of the exact number of copies needed and the timing in April 2015.

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

(i) It is the obligation of the Principal Investigators (PIs) to ensure that their respective applications contain sufficient and consistent information for evaluation. Incomplete submission (such as those lacking substantial data / information for evaluation) or inconsistent/inaccurate information would lead to the disqualification of an application.

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

(k) Applicants are prohibited to communicate with RGC Council and Panel Members on the applications submitted with a view to influencing the latter in assessing their applications. Should such act be discovered, the applications concerned will be disqualified.

(l) The on-costs related to research projects funded by the RGC will be disbursed to the institutions for their disposal. The UGC Secretariat will liaise with the Research Offices of the institutions on the calculation and

disbursement details separately. Principal Investigators are not required to include the calculation of on-costs on the application forms. They have to include the project costs only.

(m) Unless otherwise stated, all funding levels stated in this application form are in Hong Kong Dollars.

INFORMATION UPDATE

(n) A brief update of the proposal, if any, should be submitted through the GRF System to the UGC Secretariat on or before 30 April 2015, indicating any significant changes, e.g. changes in the eligibility of the Principal Investigators (PIs), , alternative funding obtained, declarations of similar/related proposals/projects, investigator(s)'s CVs, grant records, relationship with nominated reviewers, etc. It should be emphasized that such update should be confined to the above-said changes, and applicants should not use the opportunity to revise their proposals substantially. The information update in hard copy should be appended to the proposals (number of copies required and timing will be confirmed separately) which should be submitted to the UGC Secretariat.

(o) If an update is provided for ethics/safety approval for an application, the respective Research Office should submit the relevant updated data to the RGC on or before 30 April 2015. 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.

(p) If an updated is provided for approval for access to Government/ official/ private data and records for an application, the respective Research Office should submit the relevant updated data to the RGC on or before 30 April 2015. Evidence of approval should also be submitted at this stage.

ENQUIRIES

(q) Enquiries about the contents of these Explanatory Notes and other related matters about the GRF funding exercise should be directed to the Research Offices of the Institutions which, if in doubt, should consult the UGC Secretariat for clarification. Also, correspondence regarding GRF matters including enquiries, appeals and complaints should be made through the Research Offices of the Institutions.

(r) The guidelines on handling the information and personal data contained in GRF applications are at Annex A. Applicants requiring additional information about internal deadlines, application procedures or assistance in completing the application form may contact the Research Offices of

their own institutions.

PART I SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

[To be completed by the applicant(s)]

1. Particulars of the Project

(a)(i) To encourage new appointees in the academia to apply under the GRF exercise, applicants are requested to declare under this section if they are within two years of full-time paid appointment to their first substantive position equivalent to staff grades 'A' (Professor) to 'I' (Assistant Lecturer) as defined in the CDCF in any university (local or non-local) at the time of the submission deadline of this funding exercise, and their proposals should be printed in green-colour paper for easy identification. New appointees within first three years of his / her full time academic job as a substantiation track / tenure track Assistant Professor or career equivalent level are encouraged to apply under the Early Career Scheme (ECS). However, grantees and awardees of the ECS are not allowed to apply again. Those who failed in previous ECS exercises are allowed to re-submit applications, which can be a new research topic or research topics previously applied but not supported, within the eligible period. Applicants may choose to submit their research proposals under the ECS or the GRF but not both in each funding cycle. For details, please refer to the Application Form for the Early Career Scheme (ECS 1 Aug 14).

(ii) The project title should be informative, but short and concise. For all proposals, the primary and secondary fields of research and codes should be stated clearly under the "Project Title".

(iii) All applicants must indicate with caution the nature of the application being submitted. "New" refers to the application on research topic which the PI and/or Co-I(s) applies / apply for RGC funds for the first time. "Re-submission" refers to the application on research topic which the PI and/or Co-I(s) have previously applied for RGC funds but not supported. "Continuation" refers to the application continuing the work previously funded by the RGC.

(b)(i) The primary field area / code should be selected from among the list of field areas / codes as prescribed under the relevant subject area of the assessment panel to which the proposal is submitted. For example, if a proposal's primary field area / code is "Water (2106)", it should come under the subject area of "Civil Engineering, Surveying, Building & Construction (E1)" of the Engineering Panel. The schedules showing the field area descriptions and the corresponding codes are at Annex B(1) to B(5). A maximum of two fields are accepted. To facilitate the appointment of the right experts to evaluate the proposals, a PI should select a specific primary field area as far as possible. If a PI selects a non-specific primary field area, i.e. Others, for his/her proposal, 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, a PI is allowed to select the secondary field area / code from an assessment panel which is different from that of the primary field area/code. Inter-disciplinary proposals will be evaluated jointly by experts from different panels. The RGC reserves the authority to decide whether an application is inter-disciplinary or not.

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

(iii) Projects to be funded from the GRF should normally last for no more than three years except for applications for longer-term research grant, the objective of which is to cater for projects with a research objective(s) that can only be achieved in a time span of four to five years. For proposals of equal quality, preference will be given to proposals with higher impact, large scope and longer duration (three years and longer) over those with incremental advances and shorter duration.

(c) A short abstract of a maximum of 400 words comprehensible to a non-specialist should be typed in the text box. This should be informative and indicative of the nature of the research to be conducted. One A-4 page of abstract in standard RGC format should be uploaded as pdf file only when there are special symbols which the system cannot support. If a proposal is funded, the "Abstract of Research" (Abstract) will be mounted on the RGC website for public's information. The applicant will be approached for a Chinese version of the Abstract for public access shortly after the announcement of the funding results, or an English version if the original Abstract is presented in Chinese.

(d) For those applying for special funding templates, please refer to Enclosure I and II for Clinical Research Fellowship Scheme, Enclosure III for individual research, Enclosure IV for longer-term research grant, Enclosure V for employment of relief teachers under the Humanities and Social Sciences Panel, Enclosure VI for provision of research experience for undergraduate students and Enclosure VII for Support for Academic Research related to Public Policy Developments.

PART II DETAILS OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

[To be completed by the applicant(s)]

RESEARCH DETAILS

This is the major portion of the proposal. It should be presented clearly and concisely and at the same time be detailed enough to indicate the significance and merits of the proposed research and to permit a meaningful evaluation of the worthiness of the project. The RGC will not further process the application if insufficient/incomplete information is provided by on the application form.

1. Impact and Objectives

(a) Identify the key issues and problems being addressed. The key issues and the elements of the problem should be described and those elements which are critical to the solution of the problem should be clearly identified. State the possible outcome of the research project, its relevance, significance and value, such as contribution to academic, educational, scientific or professional development or potential for practical application. On proposals concerning Creative Arts, applicants should ensure that proposals submitted to the RGC should contain research elements which contribute to academic attainments. PIs should approach other funding authorities such as the Hong Kong Arts Development Council if their proposals have no research elements.

(b) The objectives of the project must be presented in point form and reasons for undertaking the project.

Item 1(a) and (b) should be limited to 800 words.

2. Background of Research, Research Plan and Methodology

(a) State whether work has been/is being carried out by you and/or others on a related subject. Outline previous and alternative approaches to the problem and their deficiencies, list 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 summarized. 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.

(b) A complete description of the research plan and the selected approach to the problem solution should be given. Where appropriate, experiments, tests and required facilities should be described. The relevant scientific principles and techniques on which the problem solution depends should

also be presented. Outline uniqueness and justification of the proposed approach with its plan of investigation, giving citation from literature where applicable. All Biology & Medicine proposals should include appropriate sample size and power estimates. For proposals applying funding for clinical trial, a protocol should be submitted in a separate pdf file as an addendum.

(c) A maximum of two additional A-4 non-text pages for diagrams, photos, charts and tables, etc., if any.

(d) The page limit in Sections 1 to 2 does not include references. All references should be provided in full and include all authors.

PROJECT FUNDING

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

Threshold Limits for Applications

The threshold limits for applications are $150,000 for projects in the fields of Biology & Medicine, Engineering and Physical Sciences, and $100,000 for projects in the fields of Business Studies and Humanities & Social Sciences.

Permissible Items

- A detailed budget for the project throughout the project period should be given. Applications for longer-term grant (i.e. more than three years) may include a budget for the 4th or 5th year as appropriate. Co-Is are not regarded as staff and must not be remunerated with salaries. Academic staff remunerated by any UGC-funded institutions 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 institution(s).

- In cases where a particular Research Assistant is employed for several projects, his salary should be apportioned accordingly.

- Detailed justification should be provided. Otherwise, the RGC will not consider the request.

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

3. Cost and justification

One-line Vote Items

(a)(A)(i) Supporting Staff

Please state the number, rank and cost of supporting staff involved. The RGC normally supports research support staff at the Research Assistant (RA) level. The grant assumes an indicative rate which is currently at $229,000 per annum for RA and $367,000 per annum for senior RA (SRA). These indicative rates are only meant for reference. The indicative rates will be reviewed before the Council decides the supporting level for the applications. The total staff costs supported will then depend on the indicative rates or the rates proposed by the PIs concerned, whichever is lower. In the case of applications for funding for Post-doctoral Fellows, the CV of the post-doc in one A-4 page should be attached if available.

(ii) Equipment

While RGC may fully or partially fund the approved projects, institutions are expected to provide necessary infrastructural and overhead supports such as normal academic equipment, consumables, postage, fax, stationery and overseas telephone charges to funded projects. RGC fund 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 institutions concerned. Institutions may be required by the RGC to confirm the availability of institutional resources prior to their acceptance of an award. This is what the RGC means by "institutional commitment".

For equipment, the following points should be addressed :

- Is the equipment essential to the project?

- Has the department / institution already provided such equipment?

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

- Provide information in supporting the estimated cost of equipment e.g. quotes from suppliers. Items costing over $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 institution already been provided with similar equipment? If yes, please explain the need for the purchase.

- Is there similar equipment elsewhere in other institutions? If yes, please provide the following information regarding such equipment in other institutions as far as possible -
  - brand / model details and the year of purchase of the equipment
  - the number of hours of its utilization and percentage of utilization (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 institutions per year;
  - whether and how it can perform more / less functions and capabilities than the equipment under application;
  - whether there is a practice of shared use of the equipment with other institutions currently and in the past two years; and
  - any other reasons that preclude the shared use of the equipment with other institutions.

- Level of use: please provide the estimated numbers of staff members and / or students expected to use the equipment under application and the estimated number of hours per annum of utilization.

- Will the equipment be available for use by institutions other than the collaborating institutions under the application? If yes, please state the extent of shared use by other institutions such as the number of hours available for sharing per week.

(iii) <u>Outsourcing of Research Work Outside Hong Kong</u>

Research grants awarded by the RGC should primarily be used in undertaking research work in Hong Kong by the PIs and their teams in order to train and groom research talents in Hong Kong. It will be legitimate for the PIs 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 PIs should have identified and possessed a high level of research expertise in their teams when they submit research applications to the RGC. The activity to be sub-contracted out, for instance, data collection work, should not be the main intellectual focus of the research project;

- The persons/organizations providing the sub-contracting services should be at arm's length with the PIs or their serving institutions (for instance, employees, friends, relatives, subsidiary companies *etc.* should be avoided) and the procurement should be done in accordance with the institutional procedures and guidelines; and

- The PIs 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, the PIs have to justify in their proposals to the Panels for approval. The corresponding RGC Panels will evaluate the merits and justification of the case according to the conditions specified above. For services/work over $200,000, price quotations must be provided.

(iv) General Expenses

Outsourcing services other than those specified in (iii) above should be included under general expenses. For services/purchase over $200,000, price quotations must be provided.

(v) 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.

Earmarked Items

(B)(vi) Relief Teacher

Please state the rank of the relief teacher, the months and costs involved. The RGC agrees in principle to provide, in cases where there is genuine need, funding for relief teachers so as to enable the PI to allocate sufficient time for research. The duration of employment of relief teachers should normally range from six to a maximum of twelve months

for a typical 24 to 36-month project. Relief teachers engaged for this purpose are meant to relieve the PIs of their day-to-day teaching loads and administrative burden related to teaching work. Nevertheless, the RGC is of the view that it is the primary responsibility of the institutions to put their resources in areas where they would be best used. Hence, such funding will be provided only exceptionally and upon detailed and sound justification. It is not necessary to find a relief teacher with equivalent salary, status and experience as the PI concerned. The relief teacher is also not supposed to take up non-teaching related duties, such as purely administrative work, of the PI. In this connection, the institutions are requested to confirm that the salaries for the relief teachers proposed by the PIs do not exceed the salary of Staff Grade 'G' (i.e. Lecturer (U)) of the institutions concerned. If the applicant or the institution intends to employ a relief teacher with salary higher than that for 'Lecturer (U)', strong and detailed justification must be provided for consideration by the RGC. If a relief teacher is required, the CV of the teacher in one A-4 page should be attached, if available, for consideration by the RGC.

Please also state the current average teaching load. Institutions are requested to confirm that the applicant's declared teaching load has been verified.

Under the existing policy, each applicant can hold at most one UGC/RGC grant with an element of relief teacher (save for Humanities and Social Sciences Prestigious Fellowship Scheme (HSSPFS)). To this end, holders of grant for employment of relief teacher under UGC/RGC funding schemes are considered eligible to apply for grant for relief teachers under this scheme by the deadline in November if and only if he / she will submit the completion report of his / her existing project (except HSSPFS) on or before 30 April in the following year. The concerned institution is requested to confirm the applicant's declaration and where appropriate, undertake to follow up with the applicant on the withdrawal of such budget item in the application in writing to the Secretariat by 30 April in the following year.

For employment of relief teachers under the Humanities and Social Sciences Panel, please see the Explanatory Notes at Enclosure V.

(vii) Research Experience for Undergraduate Students

For applying for provision of research experience for undergraduate students, please see the Explanatory Notes at Enclosure VI.

(viii) High-performance Computing Services

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.

(ix) Research-related Software Licence/ Dataset

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

(xiv) Percentage of Research Work related to Public Policy Developments

For proposals involving academic research related to public policy developments, please state the percentage of the requested funding to be deployed in handling research work related to public policy developments.

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

4. Existing facilities and major equipment

Please elaborate the existing facilities and equipment available for this research project.

5. Funds secured or to be secured

Other sources of funds can include private donations, awards or grants from other organizations, contract research funds from commercial enterprises, or special allocations made by the institution from the block grant or the indicated grant for equipment, etc. It should be noted that the amount secured from other sources will be deducted from the total cost of the project in Section 3(a) of Part II.

The RGC has the sole discretion in deciding the final funding. Even if the proposal is fully funded as requested, the RGC funds must not be spent on items that are prohibited unless it is explicitly allowed by the RGC.

DECLARATION OF SIMILAR OR RELATED PROPOSALS

6. Re-submission of a proposal not supported previously

(a) PI needs to provide details in case the proposal is a re-submission (submitted to the UGC/RGC before) or is largely similar to a proposal that has been submitted to other funding bodies. PI should re-visit the main concerns/suggestions previously expressed by external reviewers if an earlier/similar version of the proposal has been assessed before.

(b)&(c) This section allows the applicant to respond to those comments, and explain whether and what changes have been incorporated in the latest proposal. Some external reviewers' comments may be more agreeable/ disagreeable than others. However, if a rebuttal is offered, it should be scholarly and preferably measured. Under the existing policy, re-submitted proposals, will be treated as fresh applications in peer-review and handled in an identical manner to other new applications. Although subject panels will take into account the PIs' responses to the reviewers' comments, the panels are not obliged to invite the same group of external reviewers for assessment of the new application.

7. Submission of a new proposal or proposal similar or related to on-going and completed projects, and proposals pending funding approval

It is the responsibility of applicants (both PI and Co-I(s)) to ensure that no duplicate funding from all sources including the RGC will be sought/has been sought for the same/substantially similar research project. Failure to declare similar/related projects/proposals in this section may result in disqualification of the application and debarring from applying future UGC/RGC grants. In Section 7(a), PIs / Co-I(s) are required to explain the differences of all their applications submitted in this exercise in the capacity of PIs or Co-I(s) if their applications are similar or related. In Section 7(b) to (d), PIs and Co-I(s) should declare if the proposal is similar or related to any on-going and completed projects, and proposals pending funding approval. It is the RGC to make the final decision on whether two proposals/projects are similar. The judgment of the RGC is final. Therefore, it is always advisable for the PI or the Co-I(s) to declare similar or related proposals when there is uncertainty. The PI or the Co-I(s) are advised to make the declaration and elaborate the difference in the proposals/projects to avoid misunderstanding. Declaration of similar or related proposals/projects does not necessarily mean that the proposals concerned will be adversely affected. The RGC may still fund the proposals concerned if the PI / Co-I is able to justify the differences of the proposals/projects for separate funding.

8. Particulars of PI and Co-Is

(a) Each application should be submitted with only one applicant nominated as the Principal Investigator (PI) and no applicant should submit more than one application in this capacity. Other joint applicants, if any, will be regarded as Co-investigators (Co-I). Each Co-I should have a clear, distinct and material role. Excessive number of Co-Is should be avoided. Save in very exceptional circumstances, the RGC will not entertain requests for the addition of co-investigators to a project after the funding award. Once the application is submitted, a change of PI during the period of processing the application will not be approved.

The PI of an RGC project grant must be an academic staff member of an UGC-funded institution with conditions of employment meeting ALL the following requirements:

(i) having a full-time[1] appointment in the institution proper[2];
(ii) being in Staff Grades from 'A' to 'I'[3] as defined in the Common Data Collection Format (i.e. from 'Professor' to 'Assistant Lecturer', see Annex C);
(iii) being primarily engaged in and spending at least 80% of time in degree or higher degree work at the institution proper; and
(iv) salary being wholly funded[4] by the institution proper.

The following categories of staff members are subject to the following additional requirements besides meeting criteria (i) to (iv) above:

(a) A newly appointed staff member should have formally entered into a contract of service with the Institution on or before the submission deadline of this funding exercise and that their appointments would take effect on or before 1 May 2015.
(b) A staff member employed on a fixed term contract should be eligible at the time of funding award being offered in June 2015 and for at least the first year of the project's planned duration; or
(c) A visiting scholar should have a full-time employment at the institution proper covering at least one year or the duration of the project whichever is the longer.

An academic staff member who is engaged in non-degree programmes which are still funded by the UGC may also apply and serve as PI. Eligible staff in this category must be wholly funded from the General Funds of the institution concerned.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, cases of exceptional circumstances may be considered by the RGC on a case-by-case basis. The institution should seek the RGC's special approval for such cases before submitting the application.

To ensure record accuracy and to facilitate identification of PIs, the PI should enter the name as shown on his/her Hong Kong Identity Card / passport (where applicable) and use the standardized format of names as agreed with respective institutions when submitting all RGC grant applications:

[1] Excluding part-time staff and staff holding honorary appointments.
[2] Excluding schools / arms of continuing education and professional training and other analogous outfits.
[3] Excluding polytechnic staff grades.
[4] Excluding staff members who is receiving income from paid appointments outside the institution proper or who is supported by external research grants.

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

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

The applicant should indicate whether he/she or any of the Co-I(s) is/are RGC Panel Member(s) as at the deadline of the application.

(b) This section should summarize the qualification of the PI and each Co-I(s) who will be involved in the project. The CV(s) to be attached should include the following information, as appropriate:

Name, academic qualifications, previous academic positions held (with date(s)) & present position (state if applicant is a visiting academic from overseas), previous relevant research work, publication records including the five most representative publications in the recent five years and five representative publications beyond the recent five years (ten at maximum) and others 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.

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

Each CV should be limited to either two A-4 pages in pdf according to the standard RGC format as stated in point (d) under "General" above or a maximum of 800 words for direct inputting in the text box.

(c) Please give details of plan of collaboration. In proposals involving more than one investigator, the role and specific task(s) of each individual (including the PI and Co-Is) in the proposed research should be described clearly. Under the Biology & Medicine Panel, proposals of clinical, translational and epidemiologic studies should show evidence that members of the study team have collective experience with the relevant design, conduct and data analysis issues pertaining to the proposed study. Inclusion of an epidemiologist and/or a biostatistician in the study team is encouraged. If the research involves collaboration with other research

team(s) or institution(s), letters of collaboration should be attached to Section 13.

(d) Please provide the percentage of work hours to be spent on the proposed project.

GRANT RECORD OF INVESTIGATORS

9. Details of Research Projects

(i) Please provide details on each of the (a) unsuccessful or withdrawn or terminated proposals/projects submitted to the UGC/RGC in the past five years, as well as (b) on-going or completed projects funded from all sources which are undertaken by the PI (in capacity as PI/PC/Co-I/Co-PI). Please also provide the number of hours per week spent on each of the on-going projects except the involvement as Co-I in GRF projects.

(ii) Please provide details on the on-going research projects funded from all sources which are undertaken by each Co-I (in only the capacity as PI).

ANCILLARY INFORMATION

10. Research ethics / safety approval and access to Government/ official/ private data and records

(a) Research ethics/ safety approval

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

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

It is the responsibility of the institution and the PI 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 PI. The PI's institution is required to complete and sign Part III of this

application form to confirm the relevant approval, if necessary, has been given/ is being sought.

For both 10(a) and (b), applications 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 applications as being withdrawn if no confirmation of approval is provided to the RGC by 30 April 2015.

If the institution / PI declared that no approval was required but the RGC / Panel eventually considered otherwise, the related application may be disqualified.

11. Proposed reviewers

The RGC encourages grant applicants to nominate external reviewers in their proposals for consideration by RGC panels. Panel members have found that the nominated lists of external reviewers are very helpful in assisting them to identify international peers to evaluate the proposals. The nomination of reviewers by the applicant(s) is optional, but is highly encouraged especially the research is a very specialised area. The PI assumes full responsibility for reporting all the relationship(s) between himself/herself as well as his/her Co-Is with each of nominated external reviewers. To avoid any possible or perceived conflict of interests, nomination of external reviewer(s) having any of the following relationship(s) with either PI or Co-Is or both should be avoided:

(i) Advisor or Advisee relationship (such as Tutor and PhD student relationship).
(ii) Co-authorship of papers or publications less than seven years ago.
(iii) Co-authorship of patents.
(iv) Partnership or co-organizers of major events less than seven years ago.
(v) Colleagues employed in the same department of an institution or organization less than seven years ago.
(vi) Collaborator in research projects or programme (Co-I or Co-PI of proposals) less than seven years ago.
(vii) Long-time personal friends.
(viii) Serving in the same editorial board with an appointor-appointee relationship.

Applicants are required to declare in the application forms their full relationship with the nominated reviewers, for fairness and transparency. Any undeclared relationships existed between the PIs and Co-Is and the nominated external reviewers, and subsequently come to the attention of the RGC will be treated most seriously, and may result in disqualification and debarring from applying future UGC / RGC grants. Any change or update in relationships between investigator(s) and nominated reviewers

should also be reported to the RGC by 30 April 2015 when submitting the proposal updates.

It is the collective responsibility of all applicants involved, i.e. PI and Co-I(s), in a grant application to complete Section 11 accurately and fully. PIs should ensure that Co-I(s) understand the requirements and has/have declared all the relationships with the nominated external reviewers. Failing to do so may render the disqualification of the application and other debarment of applying future UGC/RGC grants for a certain period of time.

If, for any reason of possible conflict of interest, an applicant wants to exclude a person from reviewing his or her application, he or she should submit the request in writing separately through the respective Research Office setting out the full circumstances and justification. Such request should not be made under any section of GRF1 which in its entirety will be sent to external reviewers for assessment. In all cases, the RGC reserves the right of final decision on the selection and invitation of external reviewers having regard to the merits involved.

12. Release of completion report, data archive possibilities, and public access of publications resulting from research funded by the RGC

Release of completion report

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

Public access of publications resulting from research funded by the RGC

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

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

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

13. Education Plan, Letters of Collaboration and Supporting Documents

Education Plan

PIs are required to provide the proposed educational activities relating to the proposed research.

Letters of Collaboration and Supporting Documents

Only letters of collaboration and supporting documents (e.g. ethics / safety approval letters) are allowed. Applicants should not make use of this section to supplement the contents of other sections. Applications will be disqualified if the proposals are found to have abused the purpose of this section.

PART III INSTITUTIONAL ENDORSEMENT AND DECLARATION OF RESEARCH ETHICS / SAFETY APPROVAL

[To be completed by the appropriate authority of the PI's institution]

INSTITUTIONAL ENDORSEMENT

1. Staff eligibility requirement for GRF

The institution should confirm that it has evaluated and given support to the application before submission to the RGC. The institution is also required to confirm that (i) a PI fully meets the criteria for the GRF grant, including the eligibility rules of Individual Research and Longer-term Research; (ii) the salary for the relief teacher proposed by the PI not exceeding the salary of Staff Grade 'G' as set out in the Supplementary Notes for Applicants of GRF for Relief Support under the Humanities and Social Sciences Panel; (iii) the existing teaching load is verified; and (iii) the applicant will have the number of hours per week as declared in Part II Section 8(d) to supervise the proposed project without prejudice to his / her existing commitment in other research work, teaching and administrative duties.

The institution is also required to report to the RGC immediately if a PI subsequently becomes ineligible for the grant and recommend to the RGC for approval a suitable new PI, if any, to take over / conclude the commenced project.

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS

2. Support to PI and students

The institution should commit the provision of a monthly allowance of $1,250 to the undergraduate student helper up to a maximum period of ten months if this proposal is funded.

The institution is required to verify and confirm whether the GRF application is in line with its role, and that adequate supervision, research facilities and training provisions are in place to meet the need of RPg students so employed under the research grant if the application is supported by the RGC. Nevertheless, it should be also made clear that the primary duty of the PI of the RGC grant is to complete the project according to plan and that the training of RPg students and / or undergraduate students should not be used to justify any delay of project completion nor unsatisfactory project performance.

For items (d) to (h), please see the notes for Sections 3(b) to (d) in Part II.

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

(a) The institution should confirm that the approval of the appropriate authority(ies) has / have been or is / are being obtained in respect of projects involving safety hazards or the use of living animal or human subjects, including those in social sciences research (e.g. potential physical or psychological harm, discomfort or stress to human subjects in a research project, subjects' privacy, etc.). It should be noted that all applications must be vetted by the institutions to ascertain if they involve human subjects. If they do, the institutions must give approval / exemption according to their internal ethics guidelines by 30 April 2015 as is the case with other ethics / safety approval. If the institution is unable to confirm by 30 April 2015 that the required approval has been obtained, the RGC will stop processing the application which will be regarded as to have been withdrawn.

(b) The institution should confirm that the approval of the appropriate authority(ies) has / have been or is / are being obtained in respect of access to data/records critical to the proposed research. If the institution is unable to confirm by 30 April 2015 that the required approval has been obtained, the RGC will stop processing the application which will be regarded as to have been withdrawn.

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

Part III should be completed and submitted by the appropriate administrative authority or responsible person(s) in the institution.

UGC Secretariat
August 2014

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

Purpose of Collection of Information and Personal Data

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

(a) determination of your eligibility, as a staff member of a UGC-funded institution, to apply for a competitive grant from the Research Grants Council (RGC);

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

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

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

Handling of your information and personal data

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

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

4. Applicants should note the following:

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

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

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

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

Physical retention of applications

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

Right of Access to Personal Data

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

Further Information

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

Assistant Secretary General (Research)1
Research Grants Council
7/F Shui On Centre
6-8 Harbour Road
Wanchai
Hong Kong

Fax: 2845 1183

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List of Research Field Areas and Code
for Biology & Medicine Research Proposals

Biological Sciences
(Subject Area : M1)

Field Area	Code
Behaviour and Psychology	1101
Biochemistry	1102
Cell Biology	1103
Developmental Biology	1104
Ecology	1105
Environmental Research	1106
Food Science	1107
Gene Regulation	1108
Genomic Biology	1109
Growth & Development	1110
Marine Biology	1111
Microbiology	1112
Molecular Biology	1113
Morphology and Anatomy	1114
Physiology	1115
Signal Transduction	1116
Structural Biology	1117
Traditional Chinese Medicine (basic)	1119
Ageing	1120
Biodiversity and Systematics	1121
Bioinformatics, Systems and Synthetic Biology	1122
Biological Imaging	1123
Brain Pain Learning and Memory	1124
Comparative Endocrinology	1125
Comparative Immunology	1126
Fish Biology	1127
Genetics	1128
Neuroscience	1129
Plant Sciences/ Plant Biology	1130
Stem Cell Biology	1131
Virology	1132
Other Biological Sciences (please specify :)	1199

Medicine, Dentistry & Health
(Subject Area : M2)

Field Area	Code
Allergy/Immunology	1201
Anaesthesia	1202
Blood/Hematology	1203
Cancer	1204
Cardiovascular Research	1205
Clinical Trials	1206
Connective Tissues	1207
Dentistry	1208
Diabetes/Metabolism	1209
Endocrinology	1210
Epidemiology	1211
Gastroenterology/Hepatobiliary	1212
Genetic Disease	1213
Geriatrics/Gerontology	1214
Health Services	1215
Hearing	1216
Imaging	1217
Infection/Parasitology	1218
Neonatology	1219
Nephrology/Urology	1220
Nursing	1222
Nutrition	1223
Orthopaedics/Traumatology	1224
Paediatrics	1225
Pathology	1226
Pharmacology/Toxicology	1227
Population Health	1228
Psychosocial & Behavioural Research	1229
Reproduction	1231
Respiration	1232
Rheumatology	1233
Surgical Research	1234
Transplantation	1235
Vision	1236
Chinese Medicine (clinical)	1237
Proteomics	1238
Regenerative Medicine	1239

Molecular Diagnostics	1240
Biomedical Engineering	1241
Biomaterials	1242
Clinical Microbiology	1243
Clinical Virology	1244
Disease Model Development	1245
Drug Discovery and Delivery	1246
Drug Pharmacokinetics and Pharmacodynamics	1247
Genomic Medicine	1248
Genomics	1249
Human Genetics/Clinical Genetics	1250
Neurobiology and Neuromedicine	1251
Personalized Medicine	1252
Rehabilitative and Physical Medicine	1254
Stem Cell Therapy	1256
Others (please specify :)	1299

List of Research Field Areas and Code for Engineering Research Proposals

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

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

Computing Science & Information Technology (Subject Area : E2)

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

List of Research Field Areas and Code for Engineering Research Proposals

Electrical & Electronic Engineering
(Subject Area : E3)

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

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

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

List of Research Field Areas and Code for Physical Sciences Research Proposals

Chemical Engineering
(Subject Area : P1)

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

Physical Sciences
(Subject Area : P2)

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

Mathematics
(Subject Area : P3)

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

Annex B (4)

List of Research Field Areas and Code
for Humanities and Social Sciences Research Proposals

Psychology and Linguistics
(Subject Area : H1)

Field Area	Code
Psychology	4104
Linguistics and Languages	4108
Psycholinguistics	4109
Cognitive Neuroscience of Language	4110
English Languages and Literature	4121
Chinese Languages and Literature	4122
Language Development, Second Language Acquisition, Audiology	4123
Sociolinguistics and Discourse Analysis	4124
Criminology	4125
Others - relating to Psychology and Linguistics (please specify :)	4196

Social and Behavioural Sciences

(Subject Area : H2)

Field Area	Code
Anthropology	4101
Public Administration & Political Science	4105
Sociology	4106
Architecture	4401
Law	4402
Nursing	4408
Public Health	4409
Social Work	4410
Social Services/Management	4411
Urban Studies and Planning	4412

Field Area	Code
Visual Design (including advertising, graphic, visual communication, digital media)	4414
Product Design (including fashion. industrial, product)	4415
Environmental Design (including interior design , space design)	4416
Archaeology	4417
Human Geography	4418
Social Policy	4419
Others - relating to Social and Behavioural Sciences (please specify :)	4195

Humanities and Arts
(Subject Area : H3)

Field Area	Code
Media and Communication	4151
Literature	4204
Creative Arts: Dance	4207
Creative Arts: Dramatic Arts	4208
Creative Arts: Music	4209
Creative Arts: Visual Arts (including Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Film and Photography)	4210
Creative Arts: Writing	4211
Film, Visual and Media Studies	4221
History	4213
History of Arts	4214
Musciology/Music History	4215
Translation Studies	4216
Cultural Studies / Cultural Policy	4222
Philosophy	4218
Religious Studies	4219
Sexuality and Gender Studies	4220
Journalism and Media	4407
Contemporary Art	4420

Field Area	Code
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)

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

List of Research Field Areas and Code for Business Studies Research Proposals

Business Studies
(Subject Area : B)

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

Annex C

Staff Grades, Modes and Funding Sources

Academic Grades

Academic, Senior

A. Professor
B. Reader
C. Senior Lecturer (U)
D. Principal Lecturer (P)

Academic, Junior

F. Senior Lecturer (P)
G. Lecturer (U)
H. Lecturer (P)
I. Assistant Lecturer

Academic Supporting Staff

J. Instructor
K. Demonstrator/Tutor/Teacher Assistant
L. Others, including language assistant, fieldwork supervisor etc.

Technical Research Staff (Staff who spend essentially all their time on research)

M. Senior Technical Research Staff ("leaders", usually Post Doctoral)
N. Junior Technical Research Staff ("followers", usually Graduate

Non-Academic Grades

Non-academic, Senior

O. Admin, Senior
Q. Technical, Senior

Non-academic, Junior

P. Admin, Junior (including secretarial, clerical)
R. Technical, Junior
S. Others, including "Mod 1"

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