

2020 Open Call for funding applications for investigator-initiated research projects and health promotion projects begins

The Health and Medical Research Fund (HMRF) administered by the Food and Health Bureau today (December 30) invited applications for investigator-initiated research projects and health promotion projects.

The HMRF aims to build research capacity and to encourage, facilitate and support health and medical research to inform health policies, improve population health, strengthen the health system, enhance healthcare practices, advance standard and quality of care, and promote clinical excellence, through the generation and application of evidence-based scientific knowledge derived from local research in health and medicine. It also provides funding support to evidence-based health promotion projects that help people adopt healthier lifestyles by enhancing awareness, changing adverse health behaviours or creating a conducive environment that supports good health practices.

The HMRF will consider applications in the following broad areas:

1. public health, human health and health services (e.g. primary care, non-communicable diseases, Chinese medicine, etc.);
2. prevention, treatment and control of infectious diseases, in particular emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases;
3. advanced medical research in specific fields including paediatrics, neuroscience, clinical genetics and clinical trials; and
4. health promotion that facilitates mobilisation of local resources to promote good health and prevention of illness in the community.

Applications from locally based tertiary institutions, hospitals, medical schools, non-governmental organisations and other appropriate centres, units and services are invited. Collaboration with local or non-local organisations is encouraged. Higher priority for funding will be given to proposals addressing this year's thematic priorities, which are infectious diseases, primary healthcare and non-communicable diseases, mental health, cancer and implementation science.

The normal grant ceiling is \$1.5 million per project with a grant duration not exceeding three years. Each principal applicant is allowed to submit one application (either a new or a resubmission of an application). The principal applicant should be based in a Hong Kong organisation throughout the project period and be employed by the administering institution at the time of submitting the application.

Applications will be subject to two-tier peer review. The vetting will take into account scientific merit, local relevance and translational potential/value of the proposals, capacity of the administering institutions, sustainability of health promotion projects, the track record of applicants, value for money of the proposals and research ethics, where applicable.

Completed electronic application forms should be submitted via the electronic Grant Management System (eGMS) (rfs.fhb.gov.hk/eGMS) on or before April 30, 2021 (6pm Hong Kong time). Briefing cum Grant Skills Training Workshops and eGMS training sessions, to be held in January – March 2021, are now open for registration.

Details of the updated thematic priorities, application-related materials and the workshops can be downloaded from rfs.fhb.gov.hk. Enquiries can be made by e-mail to rfs@fhb.gov.hk.