

Funding results of Areas of Excellence Scheme 2020/21 announced

The following is issued on behalf of the University Grants Committee:

The Research Grants Council (RGC) announced today (December 30) the funding results of the Areas of Excellence (AoE) Scheme 2020/21 (Ninth Round). Four proposals were awarded and their total budget exceeded \$304 million with around \$277 million to be funded by the RGC and about \$27 million to be matched by the universities concerned. The list of awarded projects is set out at the Annex.

Announcing the results, the Chairman of the RGC, Professor Joseph Lee, said, "I am delighted to announce the successful completion of the AoE Scheme 2020/21. After a series of vigorous peer reviews, four outstanding projects in the areas of biomedical engineering, skeletal degeneration and regeneration, meta-materials and meta-devices, and fundamental research on two-dimensional materials have been selected for funding in this round of the AoE Scheme exercise. The project teams of the four selected projects demonstrated strong potential to build upon their existing strengths to develop their research into areas of excellence. We look forward to breakthroughs in the relevant areas and lasting impacts brought by these projects to the local society and to the world at large."

Professor Lee added, "I would like to express our gratitude to the local research community for their continued support, as well as the RGC panel members and international experts for their invaluable contributions to the Scheme amidst the COVID-19 pandemic."

Background of the AoE Scheme

The AoE Scheme was launched in 1998. The objective of the Scheme is to support the University Grants Committee-funded universities to build upon their existing strengths and develop them into areas of excellence. A total of 24 AoE projects from various disciplines have been funded in the past eight rounds of exercise.

Details of the approved projects are posted on the RGC website (www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/rgc/funding_opport/aoe/funded_research/aoe9.html).