

Funding results of Theme-based Research Scheme 2021/22 announced

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

The Research Grants Council (RGC) announced today (July 13) the funding results of the Theme-based Research Scheme (TRS) 2021/22 (Eleventh Round). Eight outstanding research proposals were awarded total funding of \$415 million, of which \$367 million will be provided by the RGC and \$48 million will be matched by the universities concerned. The list of awarded projects is set out in the Annex.

The Chairman of the RGC, Professor Wong Yuk-shan, said, "I am delighted to announce that the projects, which focus on themes of strategic importance to the long-term development of Hong Kong, have been selected for funding after rigorous peer reviews based on academic merits. Among the funded projects, two are related to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and the remaining six cover areas including newborn liver disease, stem cell engineering, creation of localised comfort hubs, green finance, early academic achievement of children and art technology. We look forward to the positive societal and economic impacts brought about by the above-mentioned projects for Hong Kong."

Professor Wong added, "Other than supporting the regular TRS exercise with \$230 million, the RGC has allocated special one-off additional funding of \$100 million for the TRS 2021/22 to support research related to COVID-19 and other novel infectious diseases. Additionally, to provide further support to joint institutional collaboration and collaborative research efforts, starting from the 2021/22 exercise, the RGC has set aside an additional annual budget of \$50 million for the three collaborative research funding schemes (i.e. the TRS, the Areas of Excellence Scheme and the Collaborative Research Fund), of which \$37 million was apportioned to the TRS in the current round. The two COVID-19-related projects in the current round are funded by the one-off additional allocation of \$100 million from the RGC, while the remaining six projects are funded under the regular TRS exercise."

Professor Wong expressed his gratitude to the panel members and international experts for their contributions as peer reviewers in selecting the proposals amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, and to local researchers for their continued support for the TRS and the work of the RGC. As regards the TRS 2022/23 (Twelfth Round), a call for proposals will be issued later this month. Professor Wong said he expects to receive more high-quality research proposals.

Details of the approved projects have been posted on the RGC website (www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/rgc/funding_opport/trs/funded_research/trs11_lay_sum.html) for reference.